

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 615
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20p

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WORKERS DEMAND

STEP UP NHS ACTION!

See Reports pages 7 and 8

The week of action by the National Health Service workers showed their increasing determination to win their justified claim.

Far from scaling down, it is clear that the overwhelming mood of NHS workers is to increase the scale of action and a growing number of areas have reported that an all-out strike, leaving only emergency cover, is being demanded by the workers involved.

PAT DUFFY, chairman of the shop stewards' committee for north and west Belfast reports that "during last week's intensive action every major hospital or social service unit in Northern Ireland was hit by with-

drawal of key workers, lightning strikes, mass pickets and other forms of selective action.

In Belfast on Thursday of last week over 1,500 health workers marched to an indoor rally in the city centre. The call to take on the Tories with an all-out strike almost raised the roof.

On Friday of the week of action bus loads of workers travelled from Belfast to rallies to support their fellow workers on days of action in other areas, and they were cheered as they passed

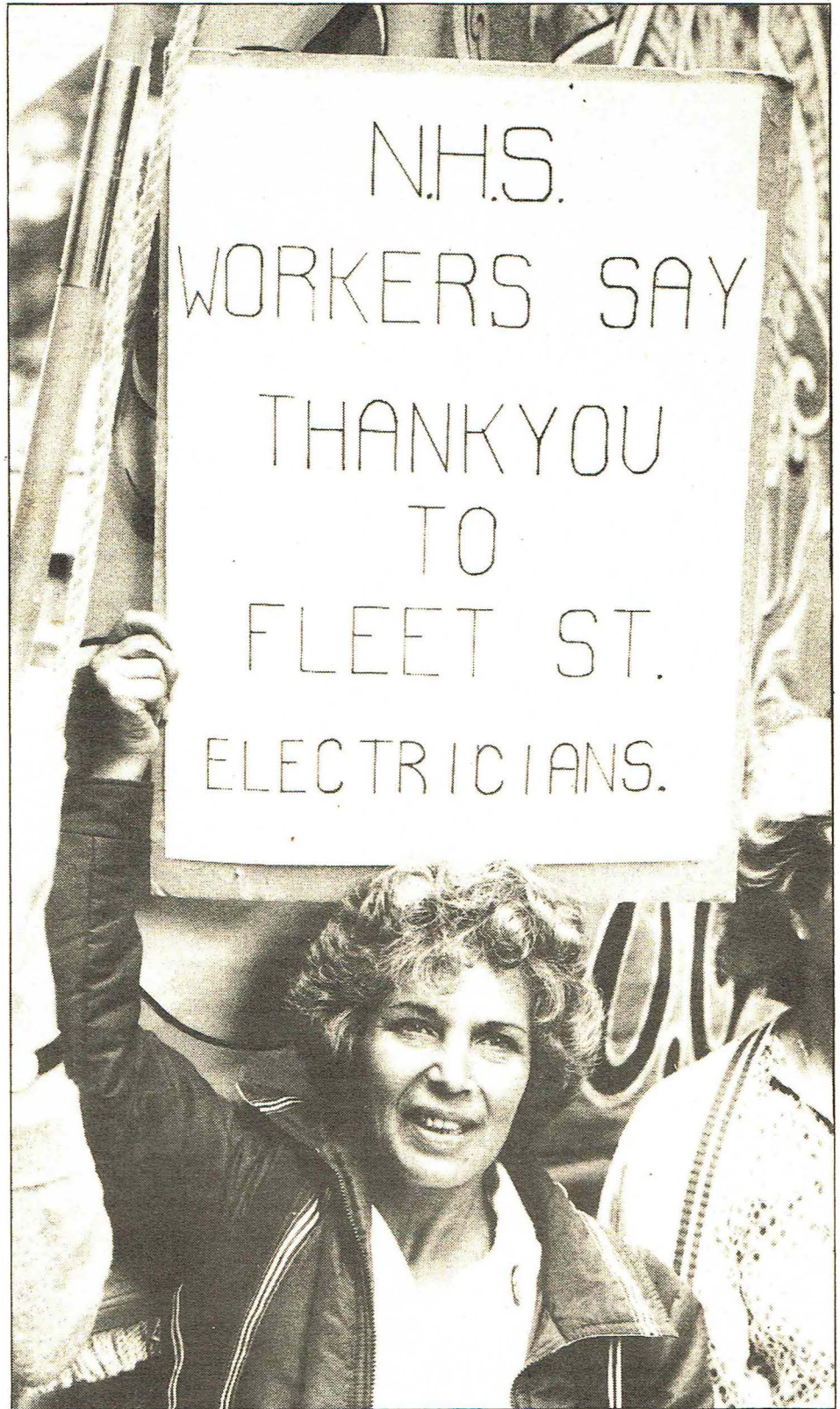
through towns and villages on their way. Workers from De Lorean, Post Office Engineering Union, the Amalgamated Transport Union, the engineering unions and other unions attended these rallies with fraternal greetings and also financial support.

At the Derry rally the call for an all-out strike received enthusiastic and almost unanimous support.

Yet despite the continuing solid support for the 12% struggle the membership here have now become extremely angry and almost disillusioned with the TUC leadership.

Last week the local strike co-ordinating committee demanded a meeting with

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NHS workers up and down the country have expressed their support for the Fleet Street electricians. Had Sean Geraghty been sent to jail, nothing would have prevented a massive walkout of NHS and other workers. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

Support September 11th Conference

Emlyn Williams, President of the South Wales Miners explained why the South Wales Miners Executive had decided to send delegates to the Labour Movement Conference on Sept. 11.

The Executive were totally opposed to a witch-hunt in

the Labour Party and had written at the time of the inquiry into Militant to Ron Hayward, then General Secretary, to tell him so. The reply they received from the National Agent, that the inquiry was not a witch-hunt, was not accepted by the Executive— "It was a load of tripe."

The Executive decided to send delegates to the September 11th Conference to listen and report back to

the executive, appreciating that the fightback against the register had to start somewhere.

The Labour Movement is declaring its opposition to the register. Up and down the country, the rank and file of the movement are demanding an end to the purge. "I was amazed when the NEC agreed to support the register of groups within the Labour Party. It is obvious to me that this is just a cover for a

purge of the Party—starting with Militant and leading to other groups.

"The September 11 Conference should be the ideal starting point for the campaign to reverse this decision. I shall certainly be raising this at my Shop Stewards Committee."

These words from the secretary of the Shop Stewards Committee at West Thurrock Power Station, Bill Bridger, are no doubt

being repeated by many other people the length and breadth of the labour movement.

A branch of the GMWU in Liverpool has donated £100 to Dingle Ward (Toxteth CLP) to send 5 delegates to the conference—a clear reply to the right wing who had argued that they couldn't afford to go! What Labour cannot afford is for the leadership to attack the socialists instead of attacking

the Tories.

The September 11 conference is a chance for the movement to demonstrate, through large numbers of delegates, that there must be no purges in the party. Fight the Tories not the Socialists!

By Mike
Waddington

(SEE DETAILS PAGE 3)



The march to the Law Courts (above) showed what the bosses feared—united struggle by trade unionists. Photo: A Wiard (Report)

Bosses avoid conflict - for the moment

Last week the ruling class avoided outright confrontation with the trade union movement.

If Sean Geraghty had been jailed for contempt, Fleet Street would have been at a standstill at once.

The immediate response by the rank and file to the threat of imprisonment of a trade unionist had been to prepare for and organise widespread solidarity action, including strikes.

Up and down the country health workers who had not previously taken strike action did so because of the issue involved. Within 24 hours a demonstration was called by the London Region of NUPE to march from St. Bartholemews Hospital at Smithfield, through Fleet Street and along to the Court where he was to appear.

Over 1000 workers marched from Barts but, joined en route by Fleet Street electricians and other workers, the march swelled to over 2000 by the time it reached the law courts in Fetter Lane. The angry mood of defiance was humourously summed up by one Fleet Street spark: "Sean Geraghty eats three shredded wheat but he won't eat porridge".

It was this glimpse of rank and file solidarity that forced the Tories to back down.

The bosses and the Tories would have liked to use the full weight of their laws against Sean Geraghty to intimidate the rest of the trade union movement from fighting for their rights. And as far as the working class are concerned the NHS is a basic, treasured right not a secondary issue confined to the arena of legal niceties.

Thus, in supporting the health workers by striking, the Fleet Street electricians were acting in the best tradi-

tions and interests of the whole of the working class.

At a packed meeting of the London Press branch EETPU on 17 August, Sue Pearce (nurse and NUPE shop steward, St. Mary's) thanked the electricians for their tremendous stand. She spoke, and received generous applause, of the need for the TUC to organise a 24-hour General Strike in order to achieve the full claim. The meeting also heard of numerous letters and telegrams of support for the Press branch's stand which had been received from nurses, housewives, and EETPU members all over the country.

Lord Marsh, erstwhile Labour Cabinet minister, took the employers and the Tories to the brink. From here he nearly became the villain. According to the Observer, the Newspaper Publishers Association, who took out the injunction under Prior's 1980 Employment Law to prevent sympathy action in industrial disputes, believed the unions would give in.

Unfortunately they made the mistake of judging the members by their 'leaders!' Shrugging off the shameful attempts by Frank Chapple to call off the action and ignoring the similiar pleas by both Albert Spanswick and Len Murray, the London Press Branch of the EETPU and their Branch Secretary, stuck to their guns.

After appearing in court Geraghty was fined £350 plus an estimated £10,000 costs. Compared with the £4m lost in production by the Fleet Street proprietors the fine is a derisory one, although the costs are the sting in its tail.

But the relief expressed by Marsh after the verdict was evident. He saw looming before him and the rest of his class an explosive confrontation if Sean Geraghty had been jailed. Another 'Pentonville' would have killed off this hated Tory

Government.

The outcome is a victory for the working class but it is not an unconditional one.

The sentence meted out, no doubt after long and careful consultation, will be seen by workers as a warning that the government is prepared to use legal restraint against the trade unions whenever it can. Had Tebbit's proposals been law, the union branch concerned would have been liable to compensation from trade union funds.

The Geraghty judgement presents, in that sense, a warning for the future.

Therefore the reply of the whole movement must be equally defiant and resolute in defence of democratic rights and conditions.

In future there must be no question of going before the Tory Courts. As Sean Geraghty pointed out, the role of trade union leaders is to carry out the wishes of their members not to be responsible to judges for their actions. The Courts must have no place in the business of trade unionism.

"Geraghty eats three Shredded Wheat but he won't eat porridge"

Our reply should echo that of Arthur Scargill on TV recently when asked about the consequences to the miners if they gave support to ASLEF and thus broke the Employment Laws: "What laws?", he replied, "we don't recognise biased anti trade union laws."

Under Heath's Industrial Relations Act a whole special legal apparatus was set up to 'try' the trade union movement. Now the laws have been changed to allow the existing network of Law Courts to carry out the bosses' dirty work; either way there should be no compliance by the trade union movement.

Neither, to re-affirm the decision of the TUC Special Wembley Conference of

Trade Union Executives, should any money or special funds be set aside to pay legal fines or costs.

The money, over £1m, already collected by the TUC should be used to organise and mobilise mass action against the Tory anti-trade union laws.

The events of the last week have again shown that although the ruling class would dearly love to batter the organised trade union movement out of existence, they are still very unsure about how and when to do it—they are still fearful of the reaction that could explode in their faces.

The qualified victory achieved in this case was entirely due to the pressure and action from the rank and file of the labour movement. Yet if the TUC leaders had shown the same strength and willingness to fight, then the Tories would not have gained a useful legal precedent—in fact they would not last five weeks let alone five years.

The mood and feelings of those workers demonstrating outside the Courts on Friday was a mirror of the present state of the labour movement: Apprehension, yet deep and bitter anger at the Tories and their policies; a preparedness to fight and struggle; only lack of confidence in the present leadership is holding back a full scale onslaught.

With one or two honourable exceptions, the leaders of the Labour movement were conspicuous by their absence at the court on Friday. Apart from the entry and exit of Sean Geraghty the biggest cheers were received for calls to replace Len Murray and Frank Chapple, and also the call made by a nurse asked to speak to the demonstration. She called for a 24 hour general strike to unite the movement against the Tories as a first step to bring the government down, and defend workers' rights.

That should be a call now taken up by trade union branches and committees everywhere.

By Wayne Jones

Apprentices, come to 16th October demo

Marconi, the cream of the GEC empire with profits pouring in from defence spending by the governments at home and abroad, are on the verge of another profitable campaign. It entails erasing young workers and apprentices from the shop floor and replacing them with cheap unskilled low paid trainees!

Other employers are following suit, for instance in Fords, where profits are equally as rash, apprenticeships have been dramatically cut and are being replaced by Tebbit's YOPsters.

Within the near future apprentices will be a thing of the past and YOPsters training for one year with no college release, will be all there is in job training.

Because of the cut backs in apprenticeships within Fords, apprentices are finding it more difficult to obtain equipment such as tools, donkey jackets, and other items necessary for their type of work. Also, training within Fords leaves a lot to be desired with apprentices being used more and more for 'dogs body' jobs which are not only unpopular but boring and do nothing to further the training of apprentices.

Therefore it is essential for all young trade unionists and apprentices to join the demonstration held on the 16

By Colin Adams
(Brentwood LPYS)

October by the LPYS in Liverpool. The protest demands trade union rights in conditions and pay for all YOP workers, stopping the abuse against YOPsters, defence of living standards, wages and conditions, and the ending of mass youth unemployment.

The LPYS up and down the country are visiting factories, union branches and shop steward committees. London LPYS has booked a train with a thousand seats and Birmingham LPYS are booking a train as well.

It is essential that LPYS branches up and down the country follow this lead in building a mass turnout for the demonstration, in the fight against the Tories.

NOW CHAPPLE BACKS KINNOCK

The right wing are clearly organising for the Labour Party Conference, in the hope of maintaining a 'moderate' National Executive Committee, who would then be given a free hand to purge the party of the left.

The Electricians Union, the EETPU, whose internal regime gives an indication of the right wing's view of the future Labour party, is currently circulating (in its July Political Bulletin) its preferences for the constituency section of the NEC.

Predictably it contains the names of most of the Labour right wingers like Hattersley, Kaufman and Shore. But

another preference of the EETPU is Neil Kinnock!

This same issue of the Political Bulletin also carries three articles attacking the 'Militant.'

Neil Kinnock was elected to the NEC as a left winger and socialist. We are sure that Neil Kinnock did not seek such a recommendation from this right wing union leadership. But his alliance with right wingers on the NEC in their attacks on the left and particularly the attempts to expel 'Militant' supporters has it seems endorsed him to the right wing.

Labour's ranks will no doubt take note.

Militant

Don't stand on the side-lines...Defend Militant!

I am prepared to help in your campaign to defend the paper and stop the witch-hunt.
Please send me details of how I can assist.

Name

Address

Rush to Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN
Tel. 01 986 3828

Liverpool Wavertree MASS CANVASS



Over the years, Liverpool has been turned into an industrial wasteland. The Liberal council and their so-called "community politics" have presided over a dramatic worsening of housing, unemployment and deprivation. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report).

In the local elections in May, Liverpool was one of the few areas in the country which had a swing to Labour, a remarkable achievement when you consider that those well known electoral liabilities 'Militant' supporters, are extremely active here!

It isn't that remarkable, though, when you consider that the area suffered decades of right-wing neglect which allowed the Liberals to gain a footing in several working class areas, like for example the Edgehill constituency in the inner city.

Due to the work of the left, including 'Militant' supporters, the working people of Liverpool are beginning to understand that the Liberals' so-called community politics aren't solving their problems and they are turning increasingly to the Labour Party as they demonstrated in May, despite the most vicious anti-Marxist campaign waged by the Liberals.

This coming Sunday, 22 August, our first mass canvass of Wavertree consti-

tuency is taking place. This will mean that the whole constituency will have been canvassed once, the majority of it twice.

Of the wards that have already been canvassed, the Valley ward, a solid Labour ward with mainly council housing, responded well to a statement by Derek Hatton, PPC and a 'Militant' supporter, on the Falklands. In Church Ward, which in contrast is mainly owner-occupied, our leaflet concentrated on the witch-hunt.

In most areas copies of 'Militant' were sold very easily. A number of people applied to join the party and the problems taken up on the doorstep have been taken up with the local authority by Derek Hatton and the local councillors.

In an area where we have a particularly reactionary Tory MP and in a constituency which is a Tory marginal, the response is extremely encouraging. Last Friday Derek addressed a meeting of stewards at a local factory. It was a very successful, friendly meeting with offers of help in the leafletting and canvassing. Remarkably, not one of the stewards present was a Labour Party member—but they all are now!

Sunday's canvass will drive another Marxist nail into the coffin of Anthony Steen, the sitting MP, who at this early stage of the campaign is showing signs of wear. And no wonder—the next general election will see him joining the dole queue that his government has done so much to extend!

By Lyn Caldow
(Sec., Wavertree CLP)

OPPOSITION TO THE REGISTER

In last week's paper we carried a copy of a letter from John Golding, right wing Labour MP, circulated to all constituency Labour Parties under cover of the POEU seeking support for the register, along with a Solidarity scandal sheet.

This letter was read out at the last meeting of Tynemouth CLP where it was agreed that it be circulated to all wards—together with copies of the Militant Witch-hunt special (copies still available). The GMC proceeded to pass a resolution opposing the register as well as sending delegates to the September 11 conference.

ASTMS 827 (Manchester) passed a resolution opposed to the register and called on the Executive of ASTMS to vote against it and said that if Doug Hoyle MP didn't vote against it, the Union should consider withdrawing sponsorship from him!

In a previous issue we wrongly reported that Ilford South were opposed to the register—we apologise but are pleased to report that they now are (22 July, 17 votes to 10)!

We have received reports that the following organisations have recently carried resolutions against the register, Llanelli CLP and Womens Council, Reading 750 ASTMS, Wallsend CLP,

Altrincham and Sale CLP, TGWU 6/389, Hampstead CLP, Angus Trades Council, and Mid-Oxon and Braintree CLPs.

We are now receiving regularly requests for Militant speakers at the next round of Ward and Trade Union meetings—the holiday is well and truly over. Militant is prepared to speak at any meeting in the country and we are sure that upon the basis of a fair hearing you will agree with us that the only future is a socialist future and that the ideas weekly discussed in the Militant represent precisely that future!

by DAVE WEBB

LABOUR MOVEMENT WEMBLEY CONFERENCE CENTRE SEPTEMBER 11th 10.30am

Fight the Tories - not Socialists

Dennis Skinner and Reg Race MP have added their names to the list of sponsors for the conference. This conference, representing the rank and file of the movement will be a big demonstration of the total grass roots opposition of the labour movement to any witch-hunts and purges.



Ray Buckton, ASLEF leader, is sponsoring the conference.

ties are clearly looming—when the ranks of the working class could be won solidly back to Labour by using the conference as a public platform from which to drive home the socialist solutions to the crisis of capitalism.

The September 11 conference is an attempt to warn the right wing of the battles they will face at the Party conference should there be an attempt to witch-hunt the socialists out of the Party. It is the right wing's choice.

Despite the holidays, we are now well on our way to 1,000 delegates and are expecting about 1,300 by the end of next week. We can no longer print all the delegates that have been notified to us so we can only give readers a resume of the response.

We have received requests for about 100 delegates credentials in the Southern region so far. We have received reports that we can very well expect nearly another hundred by the time

Sept. 11 arrives.

In the North West, on the trade union side, we have been requested to send credentials to the POEU, the FBU, the TGWU, USDAW, AUEW, and the CPSA.

Yorkshire add to that list COHSE, ASLEF and the GMWU. The Ross Shop Stewards Committee (GMWU) on Tyneside are sending 4 delegates. How about your shop stewards committee?



Tony Benn, also sponsoring the conference.

The Conference will be a major success if the response of the press is anything to go by—sixty press credentials have been applied for. We cannot promise to get you all onto the telly but you never know.....

PLEASE NOTE. A creche has been arranged for the day; but we will need to know details of how many children (plus their ages) will be coming. There are coach parking facilities at the conference centre.

Sponsors include:

Wavertree CLP; Brighton Kemptown CLP; Bradford North CLP; Isle of Wight CLP; Coventry South East CLP; Bradford District LP; Bakery Food and Allied Workers Union Executive; Labour Party Young Socialists National I Committee; TGWU Sussex District.

And in personal capacity: Tony Benn, Ray Buckton (ASLEF); Bob Wright (AUEW); Les Huckfield MP (NEC); Joan Maynard MP (Vice-Chair, Labour Party); Jo Richardson MP (NEC); Ernie Roberts MP; Ken Livingstone (GLC leader); Kevin Roddy (CPSA President); Rod Fitch (PPC, Brighton Kemptown); Terry Fields (FBU NEC & PPC Kirkdale); Derek Hatton (PPC, Wavertree); Tony Mulhearn (PPC, Toxteth); Dave Nellist (PPC, Coventry South East); Terry Harrison (PPC, Edge Hill); Cathy Wilson (PPC Isle of Wight).

Speakers will include: Ken Livingstone (Leader of the GLC); Les Huckfield MP; Pat Wall (PPC for Bradford North); Terry O'Neill (President of the Bakers Union and candidate for LP NEC); Peter Taaffe (Editor of Militant); and other leading figures from the labour movement.

Please send credentials for delegates (maximum 5 per organisation) on behalf of (name of organisation)

I enclose a cheque/PO for (£1 for each credential)

My organisation agrees to become a sponsor of the conference (tick if applicable)

We would like a speaker (tick if applicable)

Name

Address

Return to Labour Movement Conference, c/o 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



The deathly toll of asbestos

A recent study published in the British Journal of Industrial Medicine, has shown for the first time that asbestos exposure leads to cancer of the ovaries. Second World War gas masks contained asbestos and were assembled mainly by women. This study followed 500 women employed at one Nottingham factory. Of whom 135 had died. There were 18 extra deaths from cancer due to asbestos exposure and, surprisingly, six of these asbestos cancers were in the ovaries, when only 0.63 would have been expected in a population of women not exposed to asbestos.

Most of these women were exposed to asbestos for only short periods of time (for example 1 in 3 worked in the factory for less than 6 months) and more early and painful asbestos cancer deaths may occur as the remaining 365 die.

From the horse's mouth

"Actually Denis Healey is my candidate. He is, in fact, much nearer to me and Mrs Thatcher than he is to Wedgewood Benn. He is a man of very great intelligence, a patriot, a man of proven courage, he is a worthy leader of any party.

"There is an enormous common ground between Denis and the Tory Party. He is a great protagonist of defence; he's built up and sustained a nuclear deterrent; he believes in use of the money supply; he is against import controls; he doesn't believe the country ought to be governed by the trade unions and above all, he doesn't think the leader ought to be elected by this wholly unrepresentative caucus that they propose."

Lord Thorneycroft, then Tory Party Chairman, BBC Question Time, 30 October 1980.

The YC's friends

The inquiry by the Tory Party into their student section, the Federation of Conservative Students, has uncovered bribery, vote fiddling, slush funds and other erstwhile activities that workers would expect from the party of big business. More seriously, the links between Tory students and fascists were discovered. As 'Militant' stated in issue 603, there is even more evidence of collusion with Nazi groups amongst the Tories' other youth group, the Young Conservatives. This trend is continuing. The August issue of the anti-fascist magazine 'Searchlight' reported how members of Tyndall's newly-formed fascist party, the British National Party, attempted to drive CND members out of a peace camp set up outside the Fairford US air base in Gloucester. Stopped by police they held a protest march instead, their meagre ranks being swelled by 30 members of Cirencester Young Conservatives.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

The Tories would love to see restored the kind of society where individuals were totally dependent upon the grace and favour of the rich. In 'The Times' of the early 1930s there would appear five or six columns of adverts asking for, or people offering themselves as, parlourmaids, chauffeurs, scullery maids, men servants, etc.

One example from 'The Times', 8 September 1932 illustrates the dependency: "Can any lady or gentleman recommend male cook? Must be quiet, superior man, experienced cook, teetotal and very clean, RC preferred: four in staff. Please state wages etc. Replies from employers only considered. Please write to Box J559, The Times, ECA."

FOR A FIGHTING NEC

I am standing for election to the NEC and I am seeking the support of your CLP.

I stand in support of socialist policies; to reaffirm the right of CLPs to select the candidates of their choice; and in total opposition to a witch-hunt in the Labour Party.

The need for a mass socialist Labour Party has never been greater. The lives of millions of workers and their families have been blighted by mass unemployment and a calamitous fall in living standards. Now the Tories are sharpening their knives for an assault on the trade unions.

I stand for a concerted campaign around socialist policies to force an election and drive the Tories from office.

However, rather than conduct such a campaign against our enemies, the right wing of the Party seem intent on a witch-hunt against the Left, particularly the supporters of Militant.

This would have disastrous consequences for Labour. It would split the party wide apart, wrecking any hopes for a united struggle around socialist policies—the only way to defeat the Tories and their Liberal/SDP shadows.

I believe that the resolutions passed at Annual Conference must be translated into reality. A 35-hour week with no reduction in pay; a guaranteed minimum wage; a massive increase in spending on health, housing and education—these must be the demands of a determined struggle by the whole labour movement. However, we must learn the lessons of previous Labour governments which attempted to introduce reforms whilst remaining within the

confines of a decaying capitalist system.

At the insistence of those who really run society—the banks, the CBI and the monopolies—the reforms promised were abandoned.

To avoid the same pitfalls a future Labour government must break the grip of these parasites. That is why Clause IV part IV of our party constitution has immediate importance.

Only by taking over the 'commanding heights' of the economy, facilitating the drawing up of a socialist plan of production, will it be possible to implement and maintain such radical reforms.

I believe that the right of CLPs to select parliamentary candidates of their choice must be defended. There can be no 'second class' members of our party.

I firmly believe that the attack launched against the supporters of Militant is just the first strike in a campaign against the whole left. It won't stop at that. Many on the right want to undo all the gains of recent years allowing greater democracy within the Labour Party. They would like to jettison the radical policies adopted by Annual Conference.

To defend these gains and fight any attempted witch-hunt, it is essential that NEC members who stand for building a fighting socialist Labour Party are elected.

It is with this view that I appeal for the support of all Constituency Labour Parties in the elections to the NEC.

By Pat Wall

(Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, Bradford North)



Pat Wall: he joined the Labour Party in 1950 and is also a member of ASTMS. He is presently President of Bradford Trades Council and is a past Labour Councillor for Liverpool and Bingley.

Now more than ever the Labour Party needs an NEC committed to fight for socialist policies, and opposed to witch-hunting party members. To maximise the possibility of securing an NEC supporting conference decisions, Ray Apps has decided to withdraw his candidature. In the past some have stood on a "left ticket" and have then sided with the right wing on major policy issues, some even supporting a witch-hunt. A vote for Pat Wall will be a vote for a reliable, determined and consistent supporter of socialist policies opposed to purges. It will be the best answer to those now trying to drive 'Militant' from the labour movement.

★ For a mass, democratic, socialist Labour Party to defeat the Tories!

★ For rank and file representation on the NEC!

★ For the right of CLP's to select the candidate of their choice!

★ Defeat the witch-hunt!

Homes for heroes?

Gosport has been welcoming the Task Force home over the last couple of weeks, but the Union Jacks and streamers haven't covered over the realities of life in Tory Britain. One of the biggest problems in Gosport is housing, illustrated by this example.

"I was in the navy for 8 years. I got a job in the Post Office and I got married three months ago. Since that time I have lived with my parents and my wife has lived with hers. All the Tories on Gosport council ever tell us is that they have no houses.

"They say that even though they have had the option of buying two-bedroom flats off the navy and have earmarked the last bit of housing land to build factories. As if there weren't enough empty factories in Gosport already.

"The Tories tell me I have to live apart from my wife and yet it wasn't long ago that ex-Tory councillors were found to have sold their own houses and moved into



Strain and relief show on the faces of families welcoming home relatives in the Task Force. But what are the 'Falkland heroes' coming home to? Photo: Militant

th luxury "Council" flats by the harbour. I went to see the Mayor because I was so fed up going down the housing department every day.

"She couldn't spare the time to see me but a couple of days later she was down the sorting office where I work, drinking sherry and eating stickies, to commemorate 75 years of something. Typical Tory.

"After being put off for so long I went to see a solicitor. He told me the council were wrong and I'd been homeless for three months, so they've got to house me. There's one law for the Tories and another for everybody else, the sooner we get rid of them the better. That's why I've joined the Labour Party."

Thatcher talks of her pride

in the men of the armed forces for scoring her a "victory" in the Falklands. This is the reality of life for those workers when they leave the navy and meet the Tories as they really are.

By Alison Hill
(Gosport CLP)

In May 1982 Janos Kadar, first secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, became 70 years old. To celebrate the event Laszlo Gyurko, a prominent Hungarian writer and playwright, brought out Kadar's biography. The title is a modest 'Sketches of a Portrait with Historical Background.'

In the 1980s Kádár is one of the longest surviving Communist Party chiefs in Eastern Europe and certainly one of the very few who had their roots in the pre-war underground.

He was recruited into the Communist Youth League in 1931 and rose to prominence in an era when a handful of persecuted activists comprised the Hungarian Communist Party. His underground life was eventful and hard with many arrests, beatings and imprisonments. But after 1945 his star quickly rose when first he busied himself with party organisation, later becoming Chief of Police and Minister of the Interior.

When the post-war purges started with the arrest, trial and execution of László Rajk, his position became precarious. He was arrested in May 1951 and stayed in prison for three and a half years. During the so-called 'thaw' after Stalin's death in 1953 many political detainees, amongst them Kádár, found freedom again.

Kádár is best known world-wide for his role in the suppression of the 1956 revolution. His biography cannot escape references to the events of 1956 and it is indicative of the general attitude of the regime in Hungary how this is approached.

The fact that it is talked and written about at all is a symptom of the 'liberal' nature of the Hungarian regime. Some allowances are made for some 'honest and well meaning' elements in the struggles of 1956. What has not changed one iota, however, is the familiar myth of it having been a counter revolution aimed at restoring capitalism and landlordism.

Of course the changes do not come out clearly in the book, he does not say in a clear and concrete way who were the counter-revolutionaries, how many of them and with what programme. Neither does he even attempt to explain how they could have gained the upper hand amongst thousands of ordinary workers, peasants and youth under arms.

Hazy and ambiguous, though this biography is, it commits the biggest, Goebelsian smear when it suggests that the Workers' Councils were organs of counter-revolution, little is said about them, because in spite of the 25 years that have passed, and the mass murder of the cream of the revolution, there are still people who remember them.

Kádár disappeared in November 1956 to meet the Russian General Staff at Szolnok. From here he proclaimed his "Revolutionary Workers and Peasants Government" on 4 November - the same time as 6,000 Russian tanks returned to crush the revolution.

He says in the book: "The hour came when I could no longer hope that the events will not end in counter-revolution".

What were those events that convinced him of the coming counter-revolution? There were no such events and he knew it. How could he still smear the name of the Workers' Councils and the Revolutionary Councils with fascism and counter-revolution? Today it rings as hollow as it did then.

There was a threat, of course - but that was to the privileged position of the likes of Kádár and his Moscow masters, not to the building of socialism.

His hypocrisy needs reading to be believed. One proof of the reactionary nature of the Central Workers' Council, according to him, is that it called a strike for 11 December. The country - says Kádár - was on the verge of economic collapse; this new call to strike could not be tolerated.

What he omits to mention that this strike was called in protest against the ever-increasing harassment and arrests of revolutionary workers. When it came on 11, 12 and 13 December, it was the most solid general strike in Hungarian working-class history.

Kádár is portrayed as the great humanitarian who was ever so patient and kind with the 'fooled' and 'misled' workers. Nothing could be further from the truth. Kádár had to pretend to 'negotiate' with the Central Workers' Council because in the first few months of his government he had nothing but 6,000 tanks to rely on. The real power for a time remained in the hands of the Councils. Not until the terror of summary jurisdiction and uncontrolled persecution made them ineffective could Kádár feel safe to a degree.

The lie of counter-revolution still has to be kept up, that is still the all-embracing official justification for the 'difficult times' - as the writer calls them - that followed 4 November 1956. 'Difficult times' during which some 5,000 worker militants were murdered in Kádár's jails.

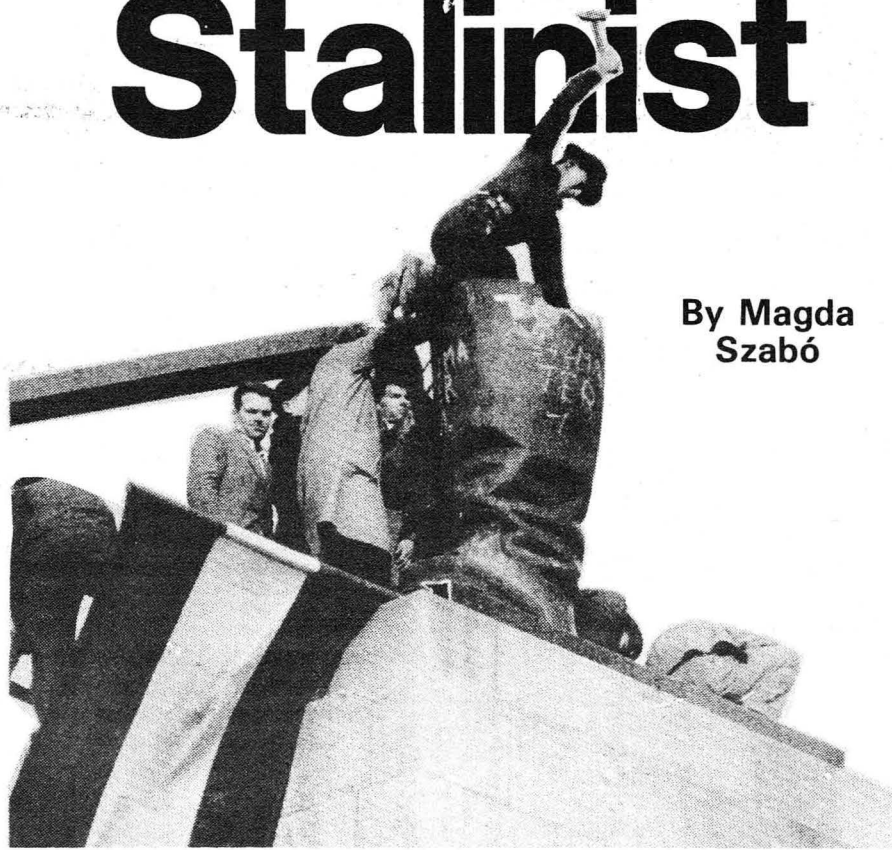
After the slaughter of the workers a 'liberal' course was set

The years since 1956 point to some extent towards a consolidation of Hungary's much-acclaimed 'liberal' regime. The Hungarian economy, often termed the Hungarian 'miracle', is held up by Brezhnev as the example to be followed.

Certainly Kádár after the bloodbath of thousands of workers, and the consolidation of the rule of his bureaucracy, set about a 'new course.'

The countryside was collectivised still with ruthless bureaucratic compulsion, but eventually showing results which made it seem worth while. However, when

Biography of a Stalinist



By Magda Szabó

Above: workers demolish a statue of Stalin in the 1956 uprising. Below: Hungary today. At first glance Hungary appears a stable state, but the social conflicts that have racked Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia are fermenting beneath the surface.



a 'Times' journalist visited Hungary in the spring of 1980 at the time of the Eighth Party Congress, many told him that if Brezhnev knew that the secret of the Hungarian miracle meant that "we are half-way back to capitalism" he would not be too pleased.

What Kádár's famous new course means in reality is sham democracy in the political sphere, decentralisation, and the re-introduction of the profit motive and the private sector in ever increasing degrees.

Hungary's economy is the most orientated towards foreign trade of all in Eastern Europe. Moreover, nearly 50% of its foreign trade is with the West. It has to produce cheaply, efficiently and competitively both in terms of price and quality to cope with the economic crisis.

But as history has shown many times before, a Stalinist (beginning with Stalin himself) will do anything - liberalise and oppress, centralise and decentralise, even allow the private sector to flourish -

but it will not get off the workers' backs.

All the new zig-zags of the Hungarian regime are the attempts of a bureaucratic system to overcome its own contradictions, and not - as the book tries to make out - the fruits of the great brain of Kádár himself.

A lot of emphasis is placed on how much freer and more prosperous Hungary is now, compared with the viciously oppressive regime of Rákosi in the pre-1956 era. That is partly true. It is also true that compared with the total shambles of Poland's economy, and the cracks opening up in Rumania, Yugoslavia and elsewhere, Hungary seems stable. But that is just the surface.

In its current five year plan, the projected growth rate for industry between 1 January 1980 and 31 December 1984 is 12% - 14%. There are already indicators suggesting that it will not be fulfilled. But even if it is, what an indictment of bureaucratic mismanagement that Hungary's centrally-planned

industry cannot hope to grow by more than 2.5% to 3% per year. Even many capitalist countries can manage that.

When these signs of economic distress manifest themselves once more in the form of social unrest, the great 'liberal' man will perhaps revert to his darker self, so monstrously displayed during and after the 1956 revolution.

The anger of '56 has not disappeared

However, the Hungarian workers, with their long tradition of fighting and sacrifice, will not take that lying down. They suffered terrible blows in the crushing of the 1956 Revolution. Some freedom of speech, the relative growth in living standards etc, have put off the day of reckoning for the regime. But discontent is seething just under the surface.

Life on the shop floor is a drudgery, workplace democracy a sham and infla-

tion more and more eats into living standards. The current five-year plan projects a nil growth rate in living standards until 1984. This, with a semi-official inflation rate of or above 10% a year, means sharp drops in living standards year after year.

Politics, and not the soulless, boring, official variety, is the favourite past-time of most Hungarians. They discuss it, argue over it and joke about it. In spite of the artificially manufactured image of the most loved Hungarian statesman of all time, the ordinary worker in the street knows what Kádár stands for.

As a recent visitor to Budapest said: "Waiting for the No. 109 bus in the centre of the city, just a few days after the publication of Kádár's biography, the following graffiti was clearly visible on the bus stop sign: 'You are lying again, Kádár!'"

A new generation of fighters would have grown up since 1956. The convulsions in Poland, now beginning also in Rumania and elsewhere in Eastern Europe, will have their echo in Hungary. **The difference this time is that a new 1956 in the completely changed international situation - coming, as it will, at the time of the irreversible decline and crisis of both capitalism and Stalinism - will lead to a victory and the establishment of a free and democratic socialist system.**

When the Hungarian workers will move again, building on the fighting traditions of the past and especially the lessons of 1956, it will take them a matter of days to establish those structures that are so "difficult to create", according to the book.

László Gyurko says with astonishing mock naivete and dishonesty that "In Hungary the rights and possibilities are there for people to govern their own lives. The people show willingness to participate in running the country. I think, the greatest shortcoming of our state apparatus is that our political structures are not properly thought through and not properly worked out."

This liberal-sounding claptrap means only one thing: the great traditions of the Russian Revolution of 1917 with their fully democratic soviets are dead in official Hungary. It is the bureaucrats who cannot for their lives come up with something "properly thought through" and "worked out" that looks like democracy but sustains their own rule!

When the workers move they will assign Kádár and his system to the dustbin of history. Experience has shown both in 1956 and recently in Poland, that there is no alternative. It is either the people taking power into their own hands, or inevitably bureaucratic reaction will follow.

Readers of Militant may regret that this book is not available in English. Don't! As a piece of Stalinist public relations it has got its merits. However, the way forward for the peoples of Eastern Europe will come from their own fighting traditions and the ideas of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky. Books on these are plenty and can give comrades all the information they need.

ads

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All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY.

WHAT THE MILITANT STANDS FOR Public meetings

WEST HULL: Friday 3 September, Nerd Hotel, Anlaby Road, Hull. Speaker: Pat Wall (PPC Bradford North LP)

FLEETWOOD: Thursday 26 August, The Ship Inn, Warren Street, 7.30 pm. Speaker: Ted Grant.

PRESTON: Tuesday 24 August, 7.30 pm, Textile Centre, Sedgwick Street (by Meadow St Labour Club). Speaker: Ted Grant.

WIGAN: Wed 25 August, 7.45 pm, Grand Hotel, Wallgate. Speaker: Ted Grant.

NEWPORT, GWENT: Thurs 26 August, 7.30 pm, Reception Room, Civic Centre. Speaker: Pat Wall.

MERTHYR TIDFIL: Tues 21 Sept, 7.30 pm, Miners Hall (Lesser Hall). Speaker: Alec Thraves (AUEW)

DONCASTER: Fri 3 September, 7.30 pm, Co-op Hall, Spring Gardens. Speaker: Tony Mulhearn (PPC Toxteth), George Brumwell (Yorkshire Sec., UCATT) and speaker from NUM.

WAKEFIELD "Tories attack the unions" at 7.30pm on 20th August. Speakers Tony Mulhearn (Prospective Labour Party Candidate Liverpool Toxteth), Ken Capstick (Sec. Park Hill NUM and on NUM Area Council), at Wakefield Labour Club, Vicarage St (Below market).

GATESHEAD and surrounding area Marxist Discussion Group. Programme: 8th August: Role of a Marxist paper. 15th: Nationalisation. 22nd: Marxist economics. Group Programme: 15th August: Nationalisation. 22nd: Marxist economics. Anyone interested contact Tom McGuinness, 18 Lumley Gardens, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear. Transport available. Ring Gateshead 783 262. All meetings Sundays at 7.00pm.

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OXFORD Militant Supporters Tote results. Week 610: No 180, Steve McDonnell, Cowley, Oxford. Week 611: No 81, Catherine McDonnell, Oxford. Week 612: No 58, Andrew Glyn, Oxford.

South Africa—13,000 black goldminers struggle for a living wage! South African Labour Education Project presents: "We Live Like Dogs"—the struggle of black migrant miners on the South African mines. Available for hire from SALEP, 28 Martello St, London E8 3PN. (Tel: 01-241 0434). £5 to LPYS branches/Labour Party Women's Sections. £10 to CLPs, TUs, etc.

WOKINGHAM Constituency Labour Party invites applications for nomination for prospective parliamentary candidate. Interested party members contact the Secretary, Griffin House, Bracknell, Berks (telephone Brookside 2251) by 30 September with all relevant information about themselves.

LEICESTER LPYS Weekend summer camp on 27-30 August at Church Langton. Includes: films, seminars, sports, socials and debate: 'Militant' v Solidarity.

GREET LABOUR'S CONFERENCE

Get your Labour Party or YS branch, trade union or shop stewards committee to place their greetings to Labour Party Conference in the pages of Militant. This year more than ever Militant needs your support.

Rates for greetings:
Semi-display: 3 column centimetres £3
6 column centimetres £6
Display: one-sixteenth page £10
one-eighth page £20
quarter page £40

Closing date for copy is 14th September, but send your greetings as early as possible to the Circulation Department, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

LOST & FOUND AT LPYS CAMP

FOUND:
Fiat tool kit, 3 pairs specs (1. pink metal frame, 2. broken one lens only gold frame, 3. brown plastic frame owl motif), LCD lady's watch, C60 cassette 'Double Trouble', black tobacco pouch or purse, tupperware strainer (part of), flat cap, denim jacket with Pink Floyd badge, radio, 3-year old's blue cardigan, 5-year old's blue/red tracksuit top, adult's V-neck jumper bronze size 10-12, white canvas bomber jacket.

LOST:
Green combat jacket, green light-bulb harness, radio mains adaptor and plug, extension cable, four socket splitter box.
Information phone Walworth Road, 01-703 0833.

— KEEP IT ROLLING IN —

This week's total of nearly £1,200 has been made up from excellent collections at meetings, but increasingly by collections at work places.

Thanks to TGWU 5/909 Branch (£20), 27 readers at Crossville Bus Depot (Liverpool, £15), BAT Liverpool workers (£6.50), four members of St Thomas's Hospital SSC (London, £15), and those who contributed outside the High Court on Friday afternoon last week!

Meetings in Stourbridge, York, Sheffield, Leyton, Blyth and Dalkeith brought in £95, whilst three LPYS branches in Newcastle and Liverpool sent us regular donations.

Individual contributors in-

THIS WEEK: £1141

clude J Legg (Glasgow NALGO) £20, Cllr S Byers (PPC Hexham) £10, E W Thomas (Stockport), D Pattison (Chester-le-Street), M Clowes (Heswall), C Ashley (Yorkshire NALGO) and I Morris (Kirkby LPYS) all fivers. S Jarvis (Melton Mowbray) collected £3 in 'extras', J Fitzgerald (Liverpool, £2) and a large number

of £1s including D Francis (St John's Hospital, N London) and J Phillips (Burnley).

Stockport banner makers made a £50 surplus for us (quotations available via this office) and the traditional 'Driffild Dance' from Humberside supporters left us £100 better off. Macclesfield's video evening,

courtesy P and Y Holmes, made £9: this is something that can be done in most areas, to our mutual advantage.

Two readers in Neath this week collected £9 from 'extras' on 64 copies of Militant! This shows the mood of many of our readers, and it's something that can be copied to good effect—if all our sellers did this, we'd go way over our target in a few weeks!

Looked at this way, our target of £35,000 by 9 October is quite modest—but we DO need £14,000 each month for the next two months. And if it can be done in Neath, why not in the rest of the country?

By Steve Cawley

The man behind the 'Times' attack

Militant's articles on the CIA's attempt to penetrate the labour movement, through the undercover backing of organisations and journals which have given support to the right have obviously struck home.

Writing to The Times to defend Dennis Healey, Lief Mills, who (although he did not advertise the fact) is right-wing General Secretary of the banking workers' union BIFU, claimed that our exposure of the CIA connection of organisations with which Healey was associated with was an attempt to establish "guilt by association".

Shortly after, Shep Stone, who played a key role in channelling US and business funds into various right-wing organisations and journals, himself wrote to The Times indignantly denying that he'd ever worked for the CIA.

Then, on 16 August, The Times carried an article by Brian Crozier. This was an attempt to give more weight to the allegations of Labour's right-wing against Militant. Behind the Militant, Crozier claimed, there is a clandestine conspiracy. He attempted to give this credibility by providing amazing factual details—a few of them correct, most of them wrong, and some of them absolutely ludicrous. Much of it reads like the kind of minutes found in the reports of assiduous intelligence agents energetically hunting for plots and conspiracies. Crozier, of course, makes no mention of the source of his information.

But who is Crozier, anyway?

Feature articles in The Times usually carry a note giving the author's credentials. Unusually, in this case there is no information. And

no wonder! When workers in the labour movement learn of Crozier's real background, he will instantly lose all credibility.

Crozier, whose articles have frequently appeared in The Telegraph, The Times and other Tory papers, has also been a key figure in three right-wing organisations which have been linked with members of secret intelligence organisations and which have generally promoted an extreme right-wing view point.

These organisations are: (1) **Forum World Features:** Crozier was for five years the chairman of Forum World Features which came out of the CIA—founded and funded Congress for Cultural Freedom, which rached various "cultural" magazines with a "strong ideological content" favoured by the leaders of U.S. Imperialism. Forum supplied the world's capitalist press, particularly in under-developed countries, with political features written from the anti-Communist, pro-Capitalist view point of the American government. The CIA was evidently pleased with FWF's work. An internal CIA memo to its then director, Richard Helms, said: "Forum World Features has provided the United States with a significant means to counter Communist propaganda and has become a respected feature service well on the way to a position of prestige in the journalism world." At the bottom of the memo was written: "Run with the knowledge and co-operation of British Intelligence."

In 1975 F.W.F was hastily folded up when it became clear to the CIA that Forum's under-cover backing was about to be exposed in the radical press.

(2) **Institute for the Study of Conflict:** In 1970 Crozier founded I.S.C. which had its origins in Forum World Features. A number of retired, former senior members of the British Intelligence Establishment were on its council, and I.S.C. specialised in "expert"



Grunwick, 1977: the National Association for Freedom gave much backing to the reactionary boss George Ward. Crozier, author of 'The Times' latest attack on 'Militant', is a founder member of NAFF. Photo: Militant

reports on terrorism and subversion, including alleged "subversive activities" by trade unionists and Labour Party members. I.S.C. staff and publications have been used by both police and army training establishments for teaching cadets and officers. In effect, Crozier was given high-level intelligence clearance for his new private propaganda and research business. This meant he had access to many members of the defence and intelligence establishment. Not only that, but the tops of the intelligence service gave Crozier some unofficial help in recruiting a fund-raiser to approach businessmen and others for funds for I.S.C.

Underlying I.S.C.'s studies on terrorism and subversion is the clear right-wing view that any moves by the Labour movement, or even Liberals and radicals, to change society is merely a cover for "Communist-inspired" subversion.

(3) **National Association for Freedom:** Crozier was also a founder-member of NAFF, which has since changed its name to the Freedom Association. NAFF includes members of I.S.C. and also a number of prominent right-wing academics. They have called for a purge of "Communists" and "subversives" from the educational system,

even producing lists of those they think should be kicked out. During the strike of Asian workers at Grunwick, the North Camden film processing factory in 1976-77, NAFF supported its boss George Ward, organising strike-breaking and initiating legal action against unions giving support to the Grunwick workers. Since the Thatcherites took control of the Tory party, NAFF has temporarily receded into the background.

Crozier's article undoubtedly reflects the keen interest taken by the strategists for the British ruling class and the tops of their intelligence service in the developments within the Labour Party. The carrying through of the democratisation of the Labour Party would mean the end of the situation where the ruling class could determine the leadership and policies of the Labour Party, as a more or less reliable "second eleven" to the Tories. This is why they are prepared to use people like Crozier to back up their press campaign against Militant and the Labour left.

This surely underlines the need for the Labour movement to conduct its own enquiry into the penetration of the movement by the CIA and other intelligence services.

British Telecomms— STOP TORY PLANS NOW!

The government intends to introduce a second privatising Bill to denationalise British Telecom which is one of the most profitable firms in this country.

POEU research estimates the following effects will result from this move:

★ The Tories' plans will directly threaten jobs with BT as well as jobs in the telecommunications private manufacturing sector.

★ Services provided by BT which make negligible or zero profits will be eliminated once the industry is run on a completely commercial basis. Rural areas and the kiosk service are examples.

★ The ordinary customer will pay by increased tariffs as a result of privatisation.

★ Increased imports will not only undermine jobs but will also add to the existing trade deficit in information technology.

★ The pay, conditions and pensions of the remaining BT workforce will come under further attacks.

Our General Secretary has also emphasised there is a new turning point in the Tories' privatisation plans. If BT goes next will come gas, electricity and even water.

In other words the basis is there to forge an alliance between the BT unions, the manufacturing workforce (communications), unions in other public services, and the public. Traditional Tory rural areas could be worst affected in the continuing provision of a decent telephone network.

The Broad Left within all BT unions have been advocating the following programme for the last 2-3 years:

A campaign of explanation first amongst our own members and all BT employees. This campaign to be conducted jointly with those other BT unions who can be won to an alliance to defend the industry by action if necessary.

Having convinced and won our own membership they should be turned toward campaigning amongst the public. The Labour Party's electoral machine could also be asked to aid in leafleting every household on the detrimental effects of privatisation to them.

As an extension of a BT union alliance, all public sector unions should be approached to form a Committee of Unions for the mutual defence of the public sector.

An industrial action strategy should be worked out concentrating the attack on the Tories' main backers, i.e. the financial institutions. Whilst being amongst the main supporters of hiving off they are also the most vulnerable to POEU action.

It now seems as if the campaigning of the left is

By Phil Holt
(Branch Secretary,
Liverpool Internal
POEU)

starting to show results. Following their conference decision the executive of the CPSA P&T group wrote to all BT unions calling for a joint campaign to defend the industry. POEU members will wonder why our union didn't initiate this long ago.

As a result of a joint BT union meeting the unions are committed at last to a mass communication exercise amongst the members and the public. This is warmly welcomed. However, the use of industrial action to defeat the Tories' plans is to be deferred until after the next general election, if it is returned to power. BT workers will be stunned by the complacency of this!

Not only will the Tebbit bill be law but taking action against an Act of parliament instead of just 'proposals' will also be used against the union. We would be breaking the law twice over. Not only that, taking action at a time of the return of a victorious Tory government is hardly the best line. So the POEU executive has either picked the most inappropriate time due to complete lack of foresight, or it has no intention of taking action.

Demands are now being made for a recalled POEU conference to discuss ways on how to really fight to defeat this second BT bill. This should be fully supported in order that all POEU members can unite behind a conference decision which has genuine support.

As a final footnote it seems that ASTMS has joined with the EETPU in supporting aspects of the privatisation of BT. In other words important sections of the movement have not yet been won to the POEU case. This underlines the need for urgency in our campaign within the Labour Party as well.

However, at this time of extreme urgency for BT workers, the POEU executive has written to all CLPs not to win support for our defence of BT but to circulate Solidarity leaflets and put pressure on POEU delegates to vote for the witch hunting register. This will only antagonise CLPs precisely at a time when we need their support politically and physically in arguing for us. The POEU executive have utilised funds and time for their political vendettas on behalf of one faction when their resources should be used elsewhere instead of turning LP activists against us.

'One in - all out!'

Two thousand angry trade unionists gathered outside the law courts in support of Sean Geraghty, the branch secretary of the EETPU London Press Branch last week.

The fantastic turn-out at extremely short notice reflects the ever-growing support for health workers, and also the determination of the rank and file of the trade union movement to fight against any attempts to shackle the trade unions through the courts.

Nurses and other hospital workers stood side by side with electricians, print-workers, railwaymen and many others, from as far away as Manchester and Scotland, with a large contingent having marched from St. Bartholomews hospital. Angry chants rose to a crescendo as Sean was sighted being led into the court, and the air was filled with 'one in—all out', making clear the level of feeling and understanding of what was at stake as far as workers are concerned. With Sean having gone into the court, the demonstration was left with a long wait.

NUPE officials arranged a rally and speakers included members of NUPE's executive, trade unionists from the EETPU press branch, health workers and many other trade unionists. Another nurse and myself were asked to speak. We'd come with a large contingent from St. Mary's group of hospitals in London. Everyone thanked each other for the magnificent turn out.



These Coventry nurses took our Norm's advice and 'got on their bikes'—not to look for different jobs, but to cycle down to the Houses of Parliament and give the Tories an earful! En route they publicised the case for the health workers. Photo: John Arthur

Criticisms were levelled at the lack of support from some unionist leaders, especially Frank Chapple, and the COHSE speaker made it clear that many COHSE members did not share the views of the general secretary, Albert Spanswick.

Five hours after the start of the picket rumours circulated that Geraghty was to be fined £350 plus costs. The anticipation of victory spurred the mood further and Sean walked out of the court to a hero's welcome and the chants of 'don't pay the

fine'.

The demonstration dispersed in good cheer with the knowledge that the courts had not felt confident to jail this trade unionist. It was pledged at the rally that should further support be needed it would be there.

UCW conference

This weekend in Birmingham delegates to the Union of Communication Workers Triennial Rules Revision Conference will be faced with making some of the most important decisions in the history of the union.

With the attacks on working conditions and living standards that are now taking place against the working class by the most vicious Tory government of this century, rank and file post office workers are searching for ideas that will require the leaders of the UCW to be more responsive to the demands of the membership. With the whole structure of the trade union movement, under threat by the Tebbit Bill, it's vitally important that the delegates support the addition to rule 5 calling for the General Officers elected after this conference to be for a term not exceeding five years. This will ensure that General Officers keep in touch with the every day problems that face UCW members.

No doubt post office workers will wonder why, in the present economic and political climate, the ex-

ecutive has chosen to introduce two new paragraphs to rule 1 and 2, which will only be seen by the membership as a direct attack on the democratic traditions of UCW. Post Office workers should be under no illusions that under rule 1 "Use of the name and initials of the UCW, and rule 2 "no other meeting or conference shall discuss the business of the Union without the authority of the EC", are a divisive way of undermining members of the UCW, and an attempt to stifle discussion and policy in the union.

The UCW has no need of organisational manoeuvres in attempting to shackle the rank and file. What we need is a leadership that is confident of its ideas deduced by conference and a will to carry them out.

Conference delegates should unanimously reject amendments number 2 and 5 on the agenda pad and show the executive council we would sooner see them fighting the enemy of the working class rather than those that are fighting for the working class.

By Eddie Thorpe
(Branch sec,
UCW Oldham,
personal capacity)

A brain surgeon speaks out!

The voice of the British Medical Association has been quiet about the Health Workers dispute. That closed shop has had little to say. However, in the Glasgow area a group of doctors have broken this silence. They are headed by Sam Galbraith, the consultant brain surgeon at the Southern General Hospital.

When I asked Sam why he had spoken out in favour of the Health Workers being paid he said, "I can no longer work beside people that are being paid a wage that they cannot live on. If all the doctors in the country would stand up and say that the Health Workers claim is justified, surely the government would see the sense of paying up and the strike could be finished

tomorrow."

As he looked over the ranks of Health Workers gathered in George Square in demonstration he commented; "I'm amazed at this demonstration; this all started in May and it is getting stronger. They have won the argument hands down".

I asked Sam whether there had been any reaction from his colleagues in the most learned professions to his stand. "No-one has said much although one consultant did phone me and say that it was a disgrace for me to be associating myself with the likes of Shipyard workers in supporting the Health Workers action. He described me as a rabble rouser and third rate McGahey. I said that was an insult to Mick McGahey!"

The bosses show their colours

Fairey Hydraulics make control systems for Harrier Jump Jets. On Monday 9 August they locked out 180 workers because of a dispute over bonus payments.

The workers came back off holiday to find management had completely changed the bonus scheme without any prior consultation with the unions, which meant a cut in wages. During the Falklands crisis the bosses

with all their talk of patriotism demanded long hours including all-night working from employees; some were even expected to give up their holidays! They repay the workers in this disgusting way.

These workers must win this struggle. All messages of support and financial contributions to go to T S Takhar, 44 Wellington Avenue, Hounslow, Middx.

TORY LAWS WON'T BREAK US!

It wasn't long ago that the Tories and their friends were telling how the health workers were caring, self sacrificing 'angels'.

But now they realise that hospital staff need more than sympathy to live on, and are prepared to fight for a decent wage rise, the Tories have turned on them.

A continuous barrage of Tory propaganda has poured out of Fleet Street (save a one day respite courtesy of the Fleet Street electricians who struck in sympathy) and the health workers have faced increasing harassment from the police on the picket lines.

By Pete Watson
(Bradford North LP)

But as last week's events at the Halifax General Hospital showed, the health workers are not to be cowed by these Tory attacks.

Eight pickets were arrested at Halifax General Hospital last week in a deliberately planned exercise by management and police.

Management came out to negotiate over emergency cover with union stewards, but this was only a cover for organising a laundry van, driven by the district nursing

officer, to cross the picket line. In what must be an amazing 'coincidence', the police arrived at the same time! Four pickets were arrested to be followed by two more. Price, the personnel manager, showed his understanding of industrial relations when he was overheard telling the police to keep them locked up for several hours.

The police obliged. The arrested pickets were held in separate cells at the police station for five hours with no communication with anyone being allowed. The pickets were eventually charged with obstruction and the solicitor got their release on bail.

The police, however, then decided to re-arrest Tony Bescoby, a NALGO shop steward (who the management regard as a "ring-leader") before he could even leave his cell! Since then

it appears that the police have ransacked his house to try and find something to pin on him.

Rumour has it that he is being charged with the possession of four biro pens! Seriously though, this could mean a £200 fine and a six month suspended sentence.

At the court hearing the next day the atmosphere was electric. Pickets had arrived from all over Yorkshire and the public gallery was packed. The appearance of the six pickets was greeted with massive applause. The court decided to postpone the case but not before the prosecution made a speech saying that "It was with some regret" that the police were prosecuting the pickets!

On leaving the court room many people started whistling the Red Flag. One NUPE steward was immediately hauled to the dock for

whistling in court. However, with the rapid return of the health workers into the court room the magistrates decided to "overlook the interruption"!

Since then two more pickets have been arrested. Total fines for the eight could exceed £1,000, for dar-

ing to exercise their trade union rights. Send donations and messages of support to Halifax Health Workers Defence Fund, c/o Jean Normington, Branch Secretary NUPE Health Workers, 3 Newstead Place, Halifax, West Yorkshire.

HEALTH WORKERS CALL STRIKES

Gateshead Area Health Authority have taken the unprecedented action of cutting basic pay of the laundry workers by 10%. They have now threatened that in the future the basic wages of any workers participating in industrial action could be cut.

In response the ancillary workers at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital have declared a total strike. Vast numbers of pickets now man the gates. At a mass meeting the workers agreed to picket other hospitals in the Gateshead area.

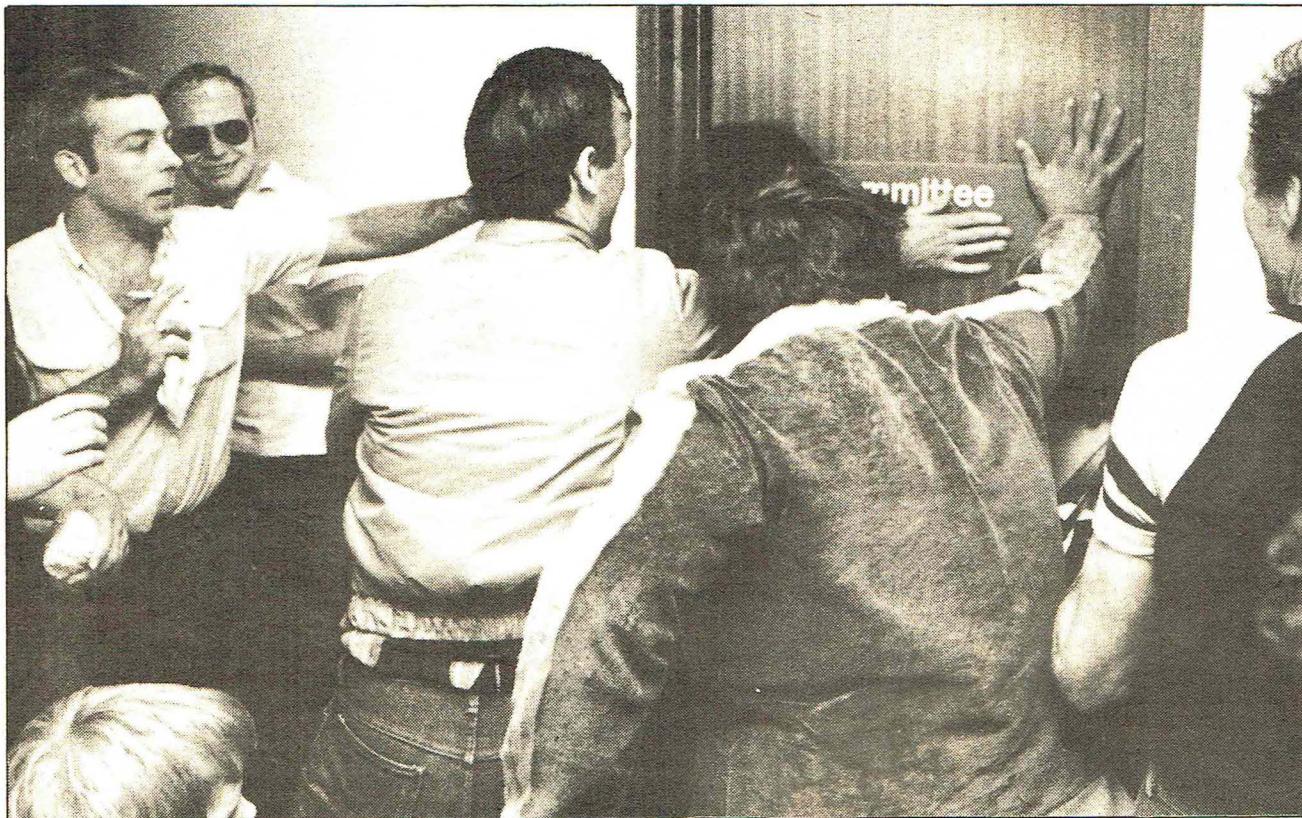
Support is also being sought from hospital throughout the region. This dispute is of historic importance. Workers involved in providing accident and emergency cover are being told that they will suffer because of their support for those taking selective strike action. In effect management are declaring a lock-out. If hospitals close the

responsibility will lie with management.

The response of the unions has been a united one. What they need now is the solidarity and support of other workers in the Northern region.

By Ella Sanderson
(Branch Sec, NUPE, Queen Elizabeth, personal capacity)

Health workers at the London Hospital in Whitechapel have come out on strike after the suspension of a NUPE shop steward. The hospital's laundry staff came out with the news of the suspension of steward Trevor Haley, and after a meeting on Monday 16 August they were joined by the remaining hospital staff. The workers see the action as another management attempt to break their decisive stand over pay.



Following the failure of management to pay the workers their wages at the Southampton General Hospital, workers storm the administration offices. Continuing the protest, 150 health workers then occupied the room. Photo: Paul Carter

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the Regional co-ordinating committee and at the latter the full-time officials were forced to agree to convene meetings of representatives from all the local co-ordinating committees before they took any future major decisions in the dispute. This is a big step towards democratising the regional co-ordinating committee in the North of Ireland.

At the last joint meeting of the local co-ordinating committees and the regional co-ordinating committee the Northern unions calling for a total withdrawal of key workers on indefinite strike from Friday of this week. The meeting also called for a one-day general strike to be organised by the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

A warning was also made that if, when they meet on Thursday 26 August after the RCN ballot, the TUC fail to call for an all-out strike, then the Northern

Ireland Health Service unions will be forced to consider the move themselves, and we will appeal to the other regions in Great Britain to follow our lead."

In health authority regions in Britain, the mood of the workers is no less determined. In Scotland for example the week of action in Glasgow ended at a rally of thousands of health workers in Glasgow city centre.

But they were not alone. There were banners from the mines, firemen, from Rolls Royce, Wills workers and Albion Motors joining the hosts from the hospital.

George Bolton, the Vice-President of the Scottish NUM, received roars of applause when he called for the entire Scottish labour movement to support the health workers with a 24-hour general strike.

"In the next week there must be meetings of shop stewards from all over the country to plan a one-day strike in support of the health workers," he declared. "That is the way we will win the claim, win

justice for the health workers and get rid of this Tory government.

He then launched a blistering attack on the gutter press of Fleet Street, "the...Sun' has been scouring the country looking for corpses that could be blamed on the health workers. We will wait for ever to read them criticising Thatcher's murderous cuts in public expenditure."

George Bolton's call for action was echoed by Govan shipbuilders' leader Sammy Gilmore. "The time has come," he said, "for the movement generally to take over this fight. If this means all-out strike action then so be it. The government should be given a deadline from the TUC—if we don't have a settlement for the health workers by a certain date then you don't have any workers."

To continued applause and roars of approval Sammy shouted, "It is not really in the interests of the health service that you have been forced to take this action. You should be doing

the healing. It is time we did the fighting."

The overwhelming support for the NHS workers in the grass roots of the trade union movement must be channelled into concrete support. If the NHS unions were to escalate the strike to an all-out strike, leaving only emergency cover, they would get enormous backing.

There would, in addition, be enthusiastic support from workers for a 24-hour general strike in support of the NHS workers and against the viciousness of the Tory government: a viciousness that has been felt by all workers in cuts, lower living standards and unemployment.

The mood of the NHS workers must be taken up by the leadership of the NHS unions and the TUC. The Tories are long overdue for a bloody nose, and the NHS workers, with the backing of all other workers, can give it to them.

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