

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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20p

LABOUR MOVEMENT CONFERENCE SUCCESS



One worker's response

Please find enclosed cheque for £100 in payment of IOU given on Saturday 11 September at Wembley Conference Centre. I was very impressed by the speeches and the tremendous feeling in the hall.

I came away feeling rejuvenated and for a short time I forgot the bitch that resides at No. 10. If

that feeling that was at the Conference Centre was over the whole country we would today be living in a socialist society.

I thank you for a tremendous conference and this £100 is a small measure of how I felt.

Yours
Mr J Moran
GMWU branch
delegate, Birkenhead

Give them what they deserve...

12% FOR NHS WORKERS

THE BOOT FOR THE TORIES

"Health Service workers have enjoyed unique job security over the last three years and manning has been increased."
(Health Minister Kenneth Clarke speaking in Nottinghamshire)



WERE YOUR FRIENDS KENNETH AND WERE TAKING YOU TO A PLACE WHERE YOU'LL BE HAPPY AND PEOPLE WILL BE KIND TO YOU LIKE YOUR MUMMY WAS.

By Heather Rawling

September 22 will go down as an historic show of labour movement solidarity.

Workers will not only have demonstrated their support for their brothers and sisters in the NHS, but also their deep resentment and bitterness towards this Tory government.

No-one, not even the Tories, can deny that the health service workers do a vital job for society. Yet their value would seem very little, if it were judged by their scandalous pay.

The latest government offer to the NHS workers is 6% for ancillary staff and 7.5% for nurses. 6% would give a health service domestic worker £3.54 per week gross on top of a current weekly basic of £59.05 gross. £1.48 would be the net increase. Yet 4% gives an MP an extra £10.57 per week. It would give Norman Fowler, Secretary of State

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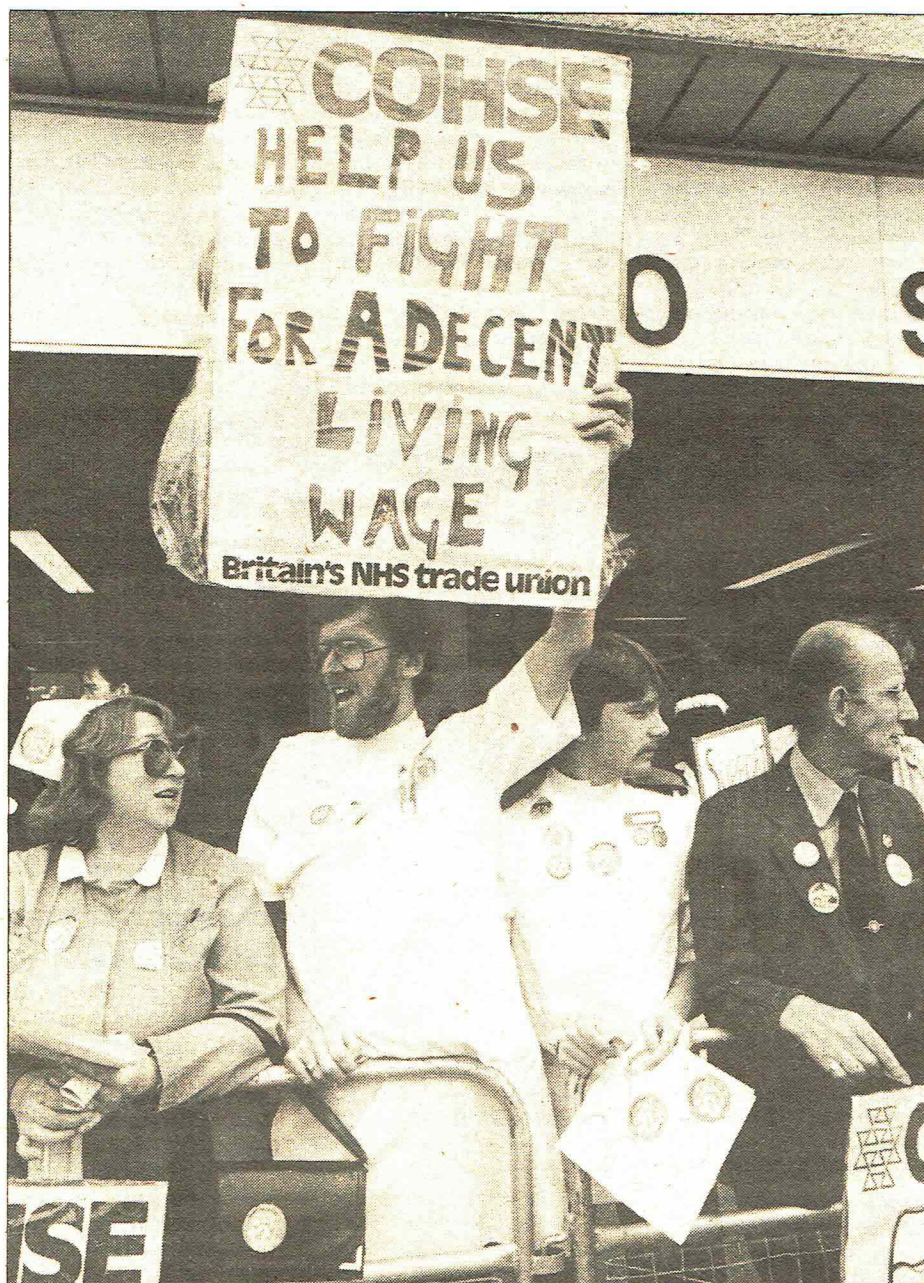


Photo: Militant

Hospital's 5 day Wards

The Tories weep crocodile tears over hardship "caused by the NHS workers." But their cuts in the health service have caused untold misery.

I am a patient at Whipps Cross Hospital, Leytonstone in East London. My ward is a "five day" ward open Monday to Friday. This means that patients staying more than five days have to be moved to other accommodation, wherever it can be found within the hospital.

One young man has had a kidney transplant operation. Every movement is agony. But he must be moved come Friday. First from bed to trolley—two nurses and two porters, being as gentle as possible, could not prevent him from crying out. I gritted my teeth!

At his new ward, the same process would be gone through again. No the bed can't be moved—it won't fit in the lift.

This is not an isolated in-

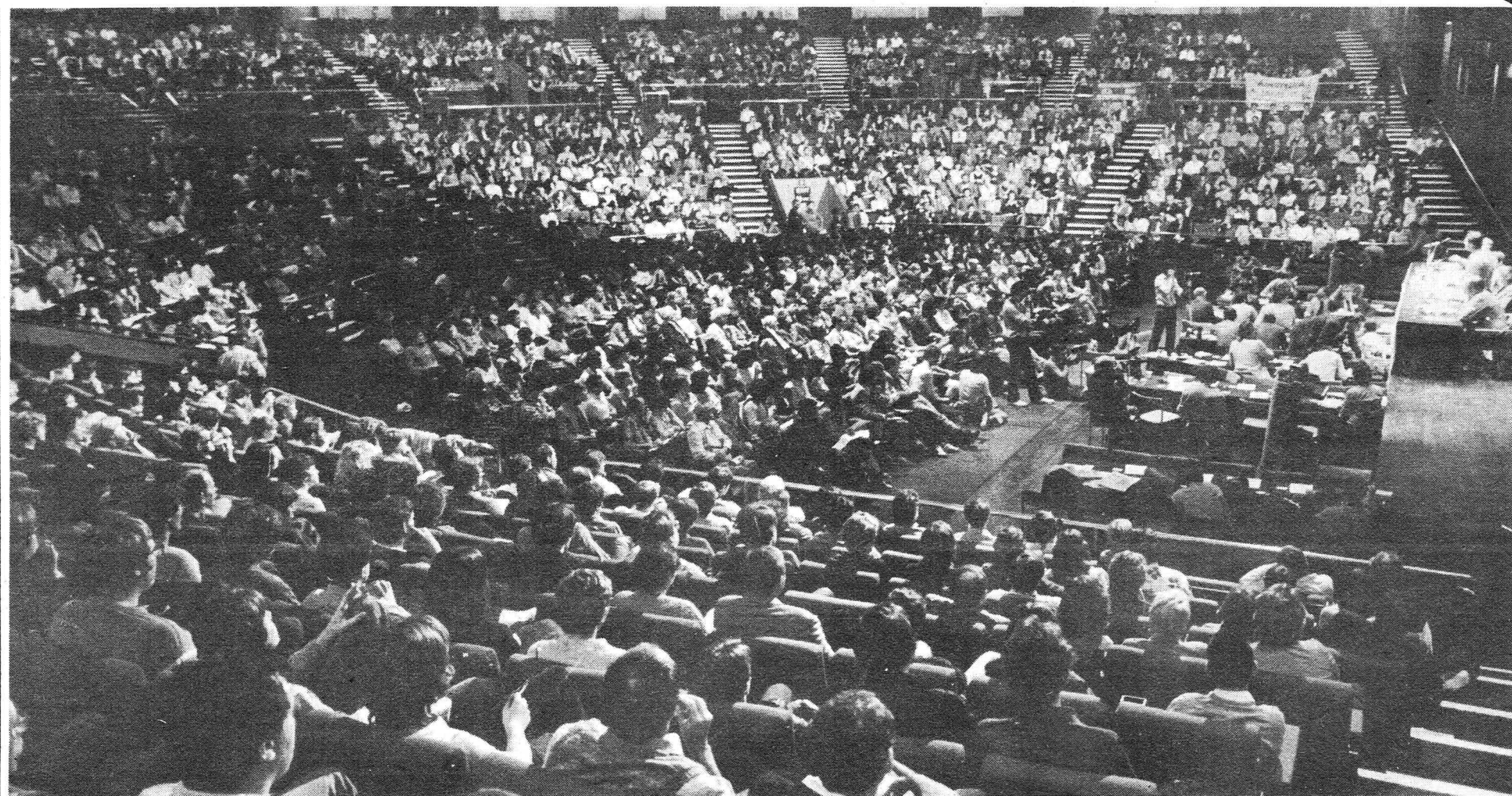
By a Leyton
Labour Party
member

cident. Last year the 'Guardian' reported that some hospitals operate a 'share-a-bed' system for some day surgery patients...patients have to spend part of the day in their dressing gowns in the day room watching the television.

Cuts in the NHS have led to 1,713 hospital beds being closed between January and September 1980, with proposals to cut a further 3,000. Meanwhile half a dozen new private hospitals opened in 1980/81.

Did the 'faceless ones' who 'save money' by thinking up schemes like the 'five-day ward' ever think of the agonies their decisions cause?

With workers' control of the health service, the comfort of patients would be put before productivity and economies.



The photograph the press wouldn't publish

Photo: Militant

Rank and file will not accept a purge

The September 11 Labour Movement Conference against the witch-hunt was a resounding success.

1,622 delegates from Labour Party bodies, 412 from trade union organisations and another 642 visitors filled the Wembley Conference Centre to capacity, surpassing in numbers even the Labour Party conferences that have been held in the same place.

The assembled delegates, from shop stewards' committees, trades councils, union branches, union executives, Labour Party branches, constituencies, Young Socialist branches, Women's Sections etc. were unanimously opposed to the witch-hunt looming in the

Party.

The sheer scale of the conference, organised in the most difficult period for the labour movement, must have staggered the right wing and the press, and is an indication of the opposition that will be put up by the grass roots of the Party if there are moves to expel activists.

Although not all those present were supporters of 'Militant', the meeting was nevertheless also a good indication of the extent of support for Marxist ideas in the movement today. In that sense it represented an historic landmark for the Party.

The press have played

down the significance of the conference, but the right wing of the party will have got the message: mass expulsions are not on.

Since the conference, it has become clear that the right wing are preparing for a strategy to purge the party by first expelling leading supporters of 'Militant', variously described in the press as the editorial board or, mysteriously, the 'inner group', along with those PPCs who support the paper.

"Let's cut off the head," Michael Foot was reported to have said at the recent NEC organisation sub-committee, "and see what happens to the rest of it."

The Right of the Party are clearly abandoning any pretence of opposition to 'Militant' on constitutional grounds: although future Parliamentary candidates

will face what the 'Guardian' described as an "inquisition", those PPCs who now support the ideas of 'Militant' will be barred. Labour Party headquarters, it was said, will "assume" them to be part of the mythical 'inner group'.

Then again, some on the Right would push for mass expulsions, fully conscious of the fact that they would wreck the Party in the process.

Moreover, although the 'Militant' newspaper has been given until September 21 to register, all other groups and campaigns within the party have been given until December 31.

It has also been reported that Michael Foot has had secret talks with Michael Cocks, Labour's Chief Whip, and Judith Hart, Party conference chairman, in order to minimise the

debate on the register at Party conference.

The decisions of the organisation sub-committee are in part an admission that mass expulsions will fail: the Wembley Conference showed that. But the right wing are living an illusion if they think that the policy of a swift 'cutting off of the head' will be any more fruitful.

They will not get away with a short and stifled debate, stamped through at the beginning of the annual conference. If the witch-hunt goes ahead, if the register is agreed, it will be an on-going issue for party activists everywhere. It will be a long, long way from being a dead issue.

Labour Party constituencies will simply not be prepared to give up their members and their Parliamentary candidates on

the whim of a handful of right wingers on the NEC. CLPs making selections will not be prepared to have their new PPCs face any NEC "inquisition" as to whether or not they support 'Militant': that would amount to a return to the worst days of the witch-hunting of the 1950s.

The NEC will find to their cost that they are out of touch with the feelings of the grass roots membership of the Labour Party on this issue. Marx explained that *ideas* can attain a *material force* when they inspire mass social and political movements. Marxism is gaining ground in the movement today, not because of a sinister plot, but as the Wembley conference showed, because it reflects the actual experiences of working people. No amount of right-wing inquisitions can change that.

Press disguises character of conference

As cameras clicked away, taking hundreds of photographs of the Labour Movement Conference on Saturday, you might have been led to believe that some would have found their way into the Sunday papers.

Not one Sunday paper showed the filled to capacity seats, magnificent banner, or the response of the delegates and visitors to calls to fight the witch-hunt.

Whilst the press relayed their viewpoint of the conference, which of course is biased towards their Tory bosses whom they frequently deride in private, in public they perpetuate the press barons' untrue version of events. Yes, they tell you about the numbers. But do

they tell you how the 1,600 delegates from Labour Party branches or the 540 trade union delegates made clear to the conference about the register or the return to bans, proscriptions and expulsions? No! Why? Because it would mean explaining our ideas. And ideas are the reason socialists are being witch-hunted in the Labour Party.

On Sunday 12 September and Monday 13 September, editorials in most of the daily papers outlined the strength of the conference and the quality of its organisation, but did it in a derogatory manner. For example, 'The News of the World' editorial: it was "menacingly impressive" and "after Wembley they (the people of Britain) have been warned."

These are the hysterical words issued by Fleet Street as a warning to workers. Be warned. 'Militant' could win

the argument by democratic debate. Yes we will.

The headlines of the Sunday papers say it all: **Sunday People**: "Militants in a war with Foot." **Sunday Mail**: "Labour's civil war." **News of the World**: "Monster swallows Labour" and "Foot facing civil war." **Sunday Mirror**: "Red War

One of the conference delegates did notice, however, that when the time came to sing the 'Red Flag' and the 'Internationale', all the members of the television teams, both BBC and ITN—cameramen, soundmen, interviewers and all—respectfully rose and remained on their feet throughout. No-one noticed if their fists were clenched.

on Foot Purge." **Sunday Times**: "Militant Civil War—Threat to Labour

Unity." **Sunday Express**: "Left defies Foot purge." **Sunday Telegraph**: "Militants told—Foot will be cast aside." This is blatant sensationalism.

Then there was the television coverage that went out of its way to cut statements to suit their slander. The BBC took Ted Grant's statements and cut them as to make them appear like an ultimatum rather than the reasoned argument it was.

A large part of the press's time was spent making a story out of the refusal to accept anyone from the press without a TUC affiliated press pass. The organisers did turn away a political correspondent from the Press Association (while another PA correspondent was admitted on producing an NUJ card), because he refused to say publicly whether he was in a union; privately he admitted he left the NUJ some

years ago.

Two quotes from prominent Fleet Street journalists show what they really think, but did not write. Julian De Havilland ('Times' political correspondent): "I've been to both Labour Party Special Conferences and this is the first time I've seen Wembley full." Adam Raphael ('The Observer'): "The Labour Party should take a leaf out of the organisers of this conference's book about how to organise a conference."

Once again, the press has confirmed workers' fears about objective reporting.

MP opposes expulsions

Barking MP Jo Richardson recently explained to Militant supporter Mark Avis (Barking CLP) that she is "totally opposed" to the proposed register of non-affiliated organisations in the Labour Party. "Militant have a right to have their paper and to put forward their views—we are all bound by Conference decisions. What we need in the Party is more ideas not less."

"The right are not able to take honest debate—we are not calling for a witch-hunt of the right...I hope the Labour Party uses its common sense and adopts a liberal approach."

Reflecting the fact that the witch-hunt will not stop at Militant supporters Jo concluded "Where does it end?"

By Pat Edlin

UNION BACKING FOR OCTOBER 16th

Norman Tebbit has just come up with what he describes as a "super" idea. He is having secret discussions with an unknown company which reckons if it set up a special state subsidised factory in which youth were paid £25 a week, it could undercut imports from the Far East.

In other words, Tebbit is proposing that the miserable wages and sweat-shop conditions that exist in the Far East become the norm for young workers in Britain. The "super" idea amounts to nothing less than using youth as slave labour.

The Youth Against the Tories demonstration in Liverpool on 16 October was called to protest against youth being used as cheap labour.

Support for the demonstration is growing every day. At the TUC conference delegates raised over £250 for the demo. Over 40 attended a lunchtime meeting organised by the YOP Trainees Union Rights Campaign where Kevin Roddy (CPSA President) spoke.

Leading individuals who are sponsoring the demo include Walter Greendale (President, TGWU), Alex Kitson (TGWU), Alan Fisher (NUPE), Bill Deal (FBU), Moss Evans (TGWU) and details of the demo are to be sent to all TGWU branches.

Following the decision of this year's NUPE conference to fully support the activities of YTURC, Bristol LPYS approached the divisional council who gave £200 to sponsor coaches.

In South Wales the response to the 16 October demo has been absolutely staggering. Swansea POEU donated £100 to the cost of the train booked by the LPYS. Over 130 youth from dole queues, FE colleges and factories have signed up to come on the demo.

All 54 TGWU branches in Swansea have been written to and are being visited over the next few weeks. In Aberystwyth one ward Labour Party has booked a coach to the demo.

In the Eastern Region NUPE are paying for a coach in Cambridge, a TGWU driver is taking a coach up free from Peterborough, and coaches are booked from Luton, Stevenage, South Herts, Harlow, Basildon, Ipswich and Norwich.

In Yorkshire the NUM have agreed to sponsor any youth who wants to attend the demo. They've already booked two coaches.

In Sheffield, three coaches have been booked, five in Humberside, three in Bradford and four in Leeds.

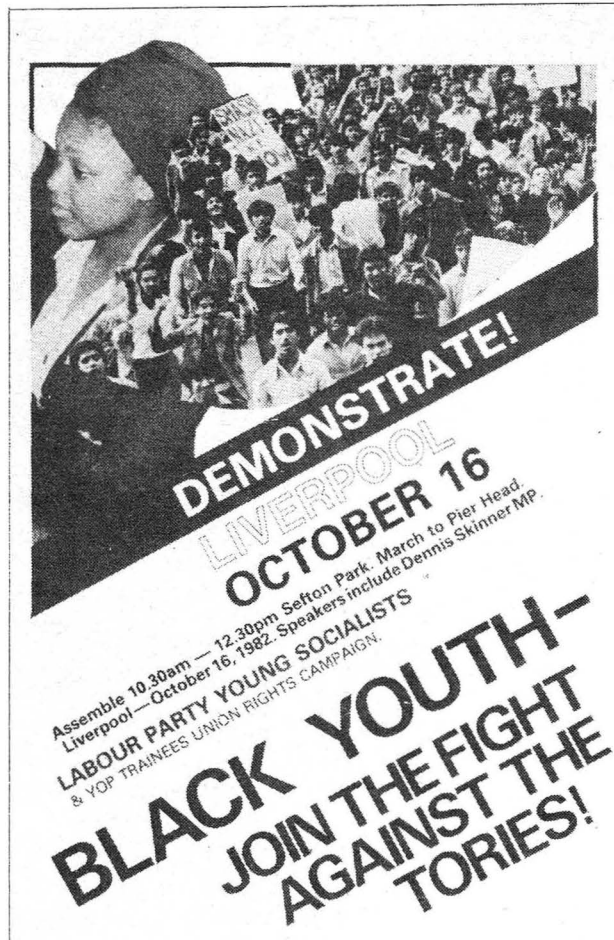
In Leeds YS branches have linked up with NUPE and TGWU to sponsor coaches.

In Manchester the shop stewards' committee at Metal Box is sponsoring the demo and every LPYS branch has organised a coach (16 in total).

LPYS members have been staggered at the response to the demo from union branches and shop stewards' committees.

The message is clear—if your branch hasn't already done so, book transport now and get in contact with the unions. Every union, every factory will be sympathetic to sponsoring the only national demonstration against the Tories this year.

The LPYS has produced a special leaflet to urge black youth to come to the October 16 demonstration. The leaflets are free and can be ordered from: Andy Bevan, National Youth Officer, Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.



STOP PRESS: NUPE backs YOPs demo! The National Executive of the National Union of Public Employees have agreed to sponsor the demonstration on 16 October. They have donated £50 towards organisation costs and are circulating all branches urging support for the march.

YOPs demo No. 1 priority

At the present time, Brighton and Sussex are no longer the 'Soft South'. The effects of Thatcher and her crazy policies are hitting Sussex as hard as anywhere.

Unlike the 1930s, Brighton has not been cushioned from the worst ravages of unemployment. In the Brighton area there are now 16,000 people out of work.

Youth unemployment is also high and against this background, Brighton LPYS has made building for the October 16 demonstration in Liverpool, it's number one activity over the coming weeks.

Very good progress has been made so far. We have booked a 44 seater coach, which we are pledged to fill as soon as possible, so we can book further transport.

Of course, fund-raising is important because the majority of youth will probably be unable to afford the full fare. So far £147 has been pledged from the local



The LPYS campaigning on the streets for jobs last year

Photo: Militant

labour movement, in response to appeals we sent out. Also, Labour Party members have agreed to sponsor unemployed youth to go to Liverpool. Other YS branches should try to do this, because you will find a lot of sympathy amongst most party members towards the unemployed. We also have planned a 'trample on Tories' concert.

To really publicise the demo we have many events

planned. As well as the usual visits to the dole, YOP schemes etc, we are going to leaflet the 'Jam' concert, when they visit Brighton.

We are fortunate or unfortunate, depending on which way you look at it, to have the Tory Party conference in Brighton this year. During this, we have organised a demo and a meeting on one of the council estates which will provide a great opportunity to recruit

working-class youth into the LPYS and to go to Liverpool.

We have a debate planned with the Young Tories as well, all of which should mobilise a large contingent to go to Liverpool from Brighton, to what promises to be a really great day.

By Martin Smith
(Brighton LPYS)

NEC— Witch hunt's double standards

The September 13 meeting of the Organisation Committee of the Labour Party National Executive clearly proved that the witch hunt against Militant has nothing to do with the 'constitution of the party' but is a purge against the left.

The Organisation Committee decided that whatever action the NEC takes against Militant will be decided at the first meeting of the new NEC after annual conference.

General Secretary Jim Mortimer, in presenting his report on the NEC's register of non-affiliated groups, argued that any action which the NEC takes should be directed against the 'inner group' (?) of the Militant Tendency, rather than the wider layer of Militant supporters. "The last thing we want before a General Election is a purge within the party", he said.

But there will be outrage from the Labour Party rank and file at any expulsions of long standing Labour Party members, on the flimsy reasoning that they belong to some mythical 'inner group'. It will indeed be looked upon by Labour Party members as a purge, and the right wing and their friends in Fleet Street will do their best to make sure it becomes just that.

Jim Mortimer was echoing the comments of Labour leader Michael Foot, made over the weekend, who admitted that Militant supporters "make a good contribution to the party... I don't want to kick them out". They want their cake and eat it! Michael Foot, imprisoned by the right wing, admits that in many areas Militant supporters are the mainstay of the Labour Party and through hard work and bold socialist campaigning have built the membership and in areas such as Liverpool have increased the Labour vote during elections. It's all right for Militant supporters to do the donkey work it would seem, but if they win positions and candidatures through gaining support in the democratic process, well that's not on!

However, the vote on the General Secretary's report was passed, by 14 votes to 7. For; Healey, Foot, Golding, Boothroyd, Hadden, Tuck, Hough, Varley, McClusky, Kinnock, Hart, Hoyle, Tierney and Williams. Against; Benn, Allaun, Maynard, Richardson, Huckfield, Skinner and Heffer. Although those voting against will be applauded, it should be noted that the Tribune Group of MPs have applied to be entered on the register.

The majority in favour was boosted by Judith Hart and Doug Hoyle adding their support since the NEC's original decision. Labour's ranks will undoubtedly question how Judith Hart and Doug Hoyle, elected to the NEC as leftwingers, can justify voting with the right-wing to back the witch-hunt.

In a clear indication of the double standards operated by the right-wing dominated NEC, the Organisation Committee accepted the Labour Solidarity group and the Manifesto group onto the register, subject to ratification by the annual conference.

'Solidarity' admits a membership of more than 5,000, has paid organisers and organises on a national scale. In one case brought before the committee, several members of St Helens CLP were refused entrance to a Solidarity meeting because they refused to sign a declaration of support for Solidarity and its aim of expelling Militant.

According to Mortimer and the majority of the committee, Solidarity does not violate Clause 2 because it does not have its own programme, policy and principles separate from the Labour Party. Yet, as LPYS representative Laurence Coates (present as an observer) pointed out, the Solidarity leaders have made no secret of their aims to reverse conference decisions on mandatory reselection and the democratic election of party leadership. Laurence said, "This organisation originates from the old Campaign for Labour Victory which split down the middle, half of its members joining the SDP and half forming Solidarity."

There were further revelations at the meeting. Both the Labour Movement for Europe and Labour Friends of Israel have applied to register and have been turned down at this stage, on the grounds that they both receive a considerable sum of money from outside the labour movement. They have been asked to correct this position in order to be eligible for the register. But the meeting decided even if their financial position remains the same, they would be excluded from the register—yet no disciplinary action would be taken against them. At worst they would be excluded from the Labour Party Diary and head office would not circulate their literature!

Also Militant has only till September 21 to register, before Labour Party conference, while all other groups have until the end of the year. Such double standards clearly show the register is a facade with which to carry out a witch hunt. But presented with hypocrisy such as this, the rank and file of the party will reject the schemes of the right-wing and throw out the witch-hunt.

When Labour fought the 'Czars of Big Business'

The trouble with Marxists, we are told, is not necessarily what they say but to whom they say it.

Many is the time a contribution is applauded by the right wing who "agree with the sentiments" but feel that the public would never agree with what had been said. Socialism for the Right is something that is inherently unpopular among the workers.

By Mike Waddington

monopolies which may be likened to totalitarian oligarchies within our democratic state."

The Manifesto asks the question, "Does freedom for the profiteer mean freedom for the ordinary men and women, whether they be wage earners or small business or professional men or housewives? Just think back over the depressions of the 20 years between the wars, when there were precious few public controls of any kind and the Big Interests had things their own way. Never was so much injury done to so many by so few."

The document goes on to policy commitments, adding, "...we give clear notice that we will not tolerate obstruction of the peoples' will by the House of Lords..."

The section on 'jobs for all' says: "the Tories say 'Full Employment? Yes! If we can get it without interfering too much with private industry' We say

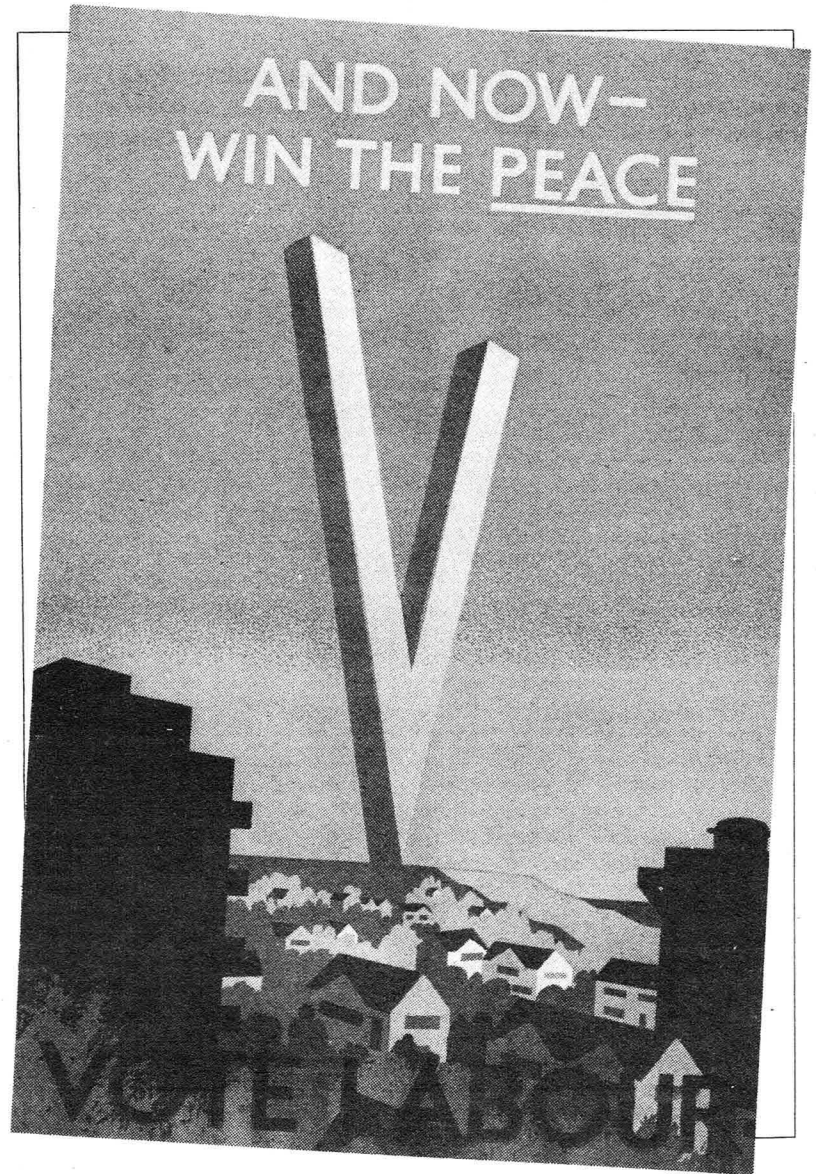
'Full employment in any case, and if we need to keep a firm public hold on industry in order to get jobs for all, very well.

"No more dole queues, in order to let the Czars of Big Business remain kings in their own castle. The price of so-called economic freedom for the few is too high. It is bought at the cost of idleness and misery for millions.'" (p4)

Page 6 tells us, "The Labour Party is a socialist party and proud of it..." It's worth bearing in mind that the Labour leadership of the time assumed they were going to lose the election.

That was one of the reasons they didn't field a candidate against Churchill in Epping Forest (in the event an independent stood and polled 10,000 votes against Churchill). When the votes were counted nationally, Labour had been returned with an overall majority of about 150!

It will probably come as a great shock to the right wing to hear that such 'sensible' men as Atlee and Morrison could be associated with such a radical programme. Nevertheless, these quotes show what can be done when the leadership give only half a lead. Faced with mass unemployment once again, we must once again 'face the future' with socialist policies.



We 'idealists', on the other hand, point out that the more bold and enthusiastic you are in your demands for socialism, the more clearly you explain your policies, the greater support you receive. If the same confidence in socialism was shown by the movement's leadership, workers would be won to those ideas.

"Let us face the future" was the manifesto the Labour Party published in 1945 for that election and it really proves this argument. Page 2 begins:

"Great economic blizzards swept the world in those years. The great inter-war slumps were not acts of God or of blind forces. They were the sure and certain result of the concentration of too much economic power in the hands of too few men.

"These men had only learned how to run industry in the interest of their own bureaucratically-run private

Support Pat Wall for NEC

- ★ For a mass, democratic, socialist Labour Party to defeat the Tories!
- ★ For rank and file representation on the NEC!
- ★ For the right of CLPs to select the candidate of their choice!
- ★ Defeat the witch-hunt!



Pat Wall, Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Bradford North, condemned Labour's right wing in his speech at the Labour Movement Conference "for giving the youth of the country no vision for the future."

"We must give youth," he went on, "the perspective and the confidence that a socialist society can build."

Labour MPs should cut business links

"My work is to teach socialism, to get recruits for the socialist army. I am not a general, but a recruiting sergeant. The most useful thing you can do is to join the recruiting staff yourself and enlist as many volunteers as possible."

Robert Blatchford, 'Merrie England' 1895

This quote from Blatchford's book illustrates graphically the spirit of the earlier pioneers of the labour movement.

It brims with optimism and bristles with a zeal which was typical of those eager to bring about the socialist transformation of society. It was the belief that the movement would be the vehicle for change—and not a vehicle for personal ambition—that led to great sacrifices by our forefathers. How fresh these ideas are!

Unfortunately, today, the Labour Party and trade unions' leadership have lost much of this fighting spirit. In fact, the Labour Party in Parliament has been transformed from a working class body to largely a middle-class professional one. Originally founded to obtain independent working class representation, the PLP has been transformed to accommodate those seeking a comfortable career.

The PLP is now largely made up of doctors, lawyers, solicitors, etc. A few years ago a survey by Timothy May was done on the social backgrounds of successive Labour Cabinets. In the Atlee Cabinet of the late forties, he found half the cabinet came from working class backgrounds. By 1964

By Rob Sewell

the Wilson Cabinet had only 26%. It fell progressively to 17% in 1966 and after the Cabinet reshuffle in 1969 to nothing at all. By 1970, the Cabinet had 10 who had been to public school and 13 to Oxford.

Big Business has built up enormous links—direct and indirect—with MPs, including a large number Labour. Four years ago, the *Financial Times* explained "a major initiative aimed at increasing the number of MPs who have direct experience of working in industry was launched today by the CBI. Companies will be recommended to help their employees to become MPs by giving them time off when they become Parliamentary candidates and by re-employing them if they are defeated." (24/7/78)

Many Labour Party members will be alarmed to see the degree to which this web of business interests has entangled some of the PLP and its leaders. Many will recall John Stonehouse, Postmaster General in the 1964-80 Labour Government, who, while attacking

trade unionism, ran up a personal overdraft of £350,000.

In his business activities he associated with the likes of millionaire Sir Charles Forte (of the Forte catering empire) who was on the board of Stonehouse's London Capital Group, and Andrew Scott from the infamous Lonhro company.

To safeguard his financial interests he established a family trust fund in the tax haven of Lichtenstein. Eventually, Stonehouse's shady business deals and sharp practices led him to a stretch in Her Majesty's Prison.

Forte was fond of mixing with Labour MPs. Richard Crossman, another former Labour Cabinet Minister, in his diaries, recalls how he and Barbara Castle (presently Manchester North Euro MP): "rushed off, ironically to the Café Royal, right up to the top of a delicious flat, where Charles Forte now lives.

"He owns the Cafe Royal and has made it into a slap-up restaurant. He is a tiny, clever man, with a big voice and a long head who has proposed that we should borrow his motor-yacht and crew at Whitsun. We decided to cruise from Rome down to Naples and we've booked flights to Rome for four Crossmans and two Castles.

"Barbara is so tremendously keen to keep it quiet that we are going on Charles Forte's yacht, so we are simply saying that we are going to a villa near Rome."

Whatever his deficiencies as an employer, Mr Forte obviously spares no expense

in entertaining his friends. "When we got to Rome last night," Crossman goes on, "there were two cars waiting for us and a very sleek Cafe Royal waiter, Gino, who had been specially flown out to look after us. Within twelve minutes we had been motored to a tiny little port and we were on board prowling around exploring this gorgeous vessel..."

The wining and dining that goes on and the associations of some right wing Labour MPs with the captains of industry and the representatives of the ruling class is a disgrace. It is hardly surprising that cynicism about the motives of politicians is widespread—particularly amongst Labour supporters.

Our parliamentary representatives and leaders should stop hobnobbing with the Tories and big business and put themselves on a working class standpoint. Blatchford, Keir Hardie, and the early pioneers of the labour movement would turn in their graves if they could see certain of our leaders.

All connections—both direct and indirect—with big business and finance should be ended completely. Any income derived from TV, radio or press interviews and articles should be paid back to the Labour Party.

This will ensure that we have representatives that are not there for their own personal ends and careers, but for the struggle to change society itself. That requires working class fighters who are prepared to live the lifestyle of ordinary people.

BRADFORD: A future if we fight for it

The city of Bradford is being destroyed.

By Keith Narey
(Vice-chairman,
Bradford West CLP)

The dilapidated mills are a grim reminder of the textile wealth on which Bradford was built. But now growing unemployment figures herald an even more stark and depressing future for the working people of the city.

Already, this year has seen record levels of unemployment with, with 26,706, (15.6% of the population), out of work, and record short-time working with redundancies in textiles up 48% on last year.

550 jobs have gone from GEC, 600 at International Harvesters, 300 jobs from Mintex, 350 jobs from Rank Wharfedale and now there are rumours that the Renold operations in Bradford may close with the loss of over 2,000 jobs.

With a Tory/Liberal/SDP council in charge of a £5½ million cut in local expenditure the traditional escape

valve of a job on the corporation has disappeared. The old answer of male emigration is now impossible due to high unemployment right around the country.

This nightmare certainly doesn't result from years of militancy or of high wage demands. The last major strike in Bradford was in the 1930s, and wages are between 13% and 18% below the national average.

Workers here have worked long hours for low pay with few complaints and are now reaping their reward—the sack. Nor can the Tories blame high spending councils for frightening away jobs because of extravagant rate demands. The amount spent on school pupils per head in Bradford is the lowest in the country.

This year, Bradford plans to spend only half as much per pupil as Inner London. A Department of Education report says that our city has the most socially deprived school children in West Yorkshire with more poor, large and badly housed families; more single parent families; more children receiving free school meals than any other metropolitan area.

Is it then, any wonder, that more and more are looking towards an alternative that gives them some hope?

Already, two factories have set up work-place branches of the Labour Party and over 40 workers have been recruited so far. The Labour Party, for so long dominated by corrupt right-wing councillors has now moved dramatically to the left, whilst at the same time the sleeping giant of the trade union movement is beginning to stir.

The Trades Council and Bradford North Labour Par-

ty have called an emergency conference of the entire labour and trade union movement to discuss the fight for jobs, on Saturday September 25th at the Queens Hall, Bradford, commencing at 10.30 am.

This will be the launching pad for an all-out campaign in the city to expose the appalling prospects and consequences of unemployment and to publicise the socialist alternative.

We must seek to draw together not only the unions and the Labour Party but the immigrant groups, tenants groups, community groups and special interest groups. An appeal must also be made to the small businessmen, many of whom such as publicans and shopkeepers face bankruptcy as a result of factory closures.

We must show the people of Bradford that there is a future for themselves and their children—black and white—if they are prepared to fight for it.



Dangers of 'positive discrimination'

'Militant' has repeatedly pointed out the futility of the demand of 'positive discrimination' on the question of employment of black workers, a demand championed by the SDP, the Liberals and some left wingers. We warned that this policy would be meaningless if implemented under capitalism—has the Sex Discrimination Act solved the problems of low pay and Unemployment for working women?

Also, if positive discrimination was left to the bosses to implement in the present crisis of capitalism in recession it would not mean 'sharing out the jobs' but sharing out the redundancies. This was graphically illustrated by an article in the Times Educational Supplement. Some years ago a court ruling in Boston, USA, ordered the educational authority to improve its ration of black teachers to white. Now the authority is making 1,000 teachers redundant, and because of the court ruling, they must all be white. If there is no clear class leadership given to fight these sackings, it can be imagined how the US bosses will use this issue to sow division between the black and white working class. Socialists should not spend their energies fighting for policies that are unrealisable under capitalism, but instead struggle for the socialist system that can give jobs to all.

Two sides of education

Sir Keith Joseph is to offer £2 million to help the bottom 580,000 children in need of extra educational assistance. How generous of him.

But don't forget that he makes £50 million available to buy places at private schools for 12-15,000 pupils, while state schools are being closed down due to falling numbers of pupils.

Love for Sale

As part of his offer to one of the wives he is in the process of divorcing, Sheikh Mohammed Al-Fassi is said to have offered five thousand dollars a month pocket money plus a household staff of at least eighteen, including four nannies, two cooks, security guards, chauffeurs and a fleet of cars.

All of it just spare change. His ex-wife is claiming a half share of his £6,000 million fortune, which he increases daily by an estimated £1.7 million. As for the fleet of cars, a man with 270 cars can afford to give away a fleet or so. He has already spent 18 million dollars on an onyx and marble mansion in Florida with full in house cinema, discotheque, video game arcade, two swimming pools, (fresh and salt water) beauty salon, ice skating rink, sauna, steam room and gymnasium. A local builder described it as the "most expensive piece of crap ever put on this earth".

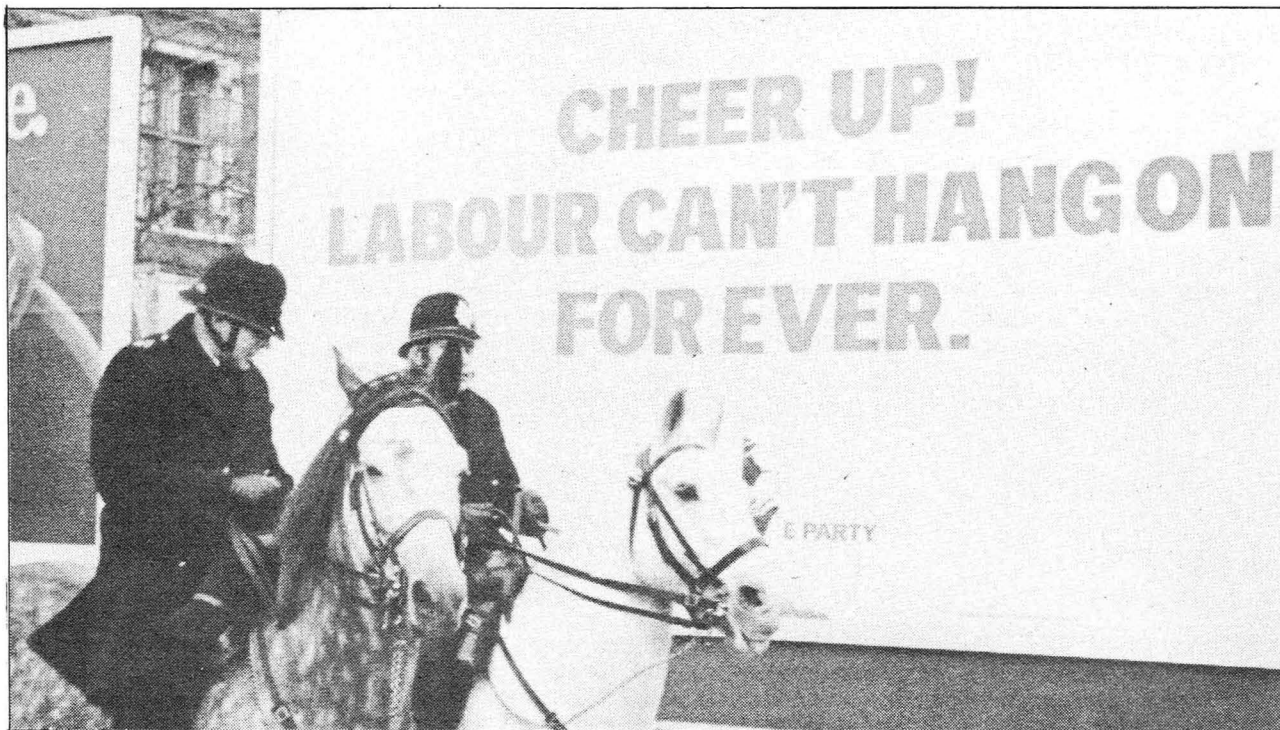
But the sheikh told the Daily Mirror he only wanted to be loved, and to aid this difficult process, he is giving away more small change in a tour of hard-up US cities. The Daily Mirror duly obliged. Like the rest of the press they loved him. When it comes to the less affluent people of either the USA or of the feudally-run Arab states which produce his oil wealth, that could be a different matter.

50 YEARS AGO

Hounded by the Stalinist secret police and banned from entering most capitalist countries, Trotsky spent the 1930's in exile from the Soviet Union.

The bosses worldwide were horrified that Marxism would gain an echo amongst workers and they tried to inoculate them from such revolutionary ideas. An example of this is shown by what happened fifty years ago this month.

On 7 September 1932 the capitalist government of Czechoslovakia announced: "The Cabinet has given permission to Trotsky to visit Czechoslovakia in the second half of the month to stay at Pistany spa, on condition that he does not reside there permanently, interfere in Politics or cause any excitement". But even these restrictions proved too exciting for some bosses. A few days later the government announced that they had withdrawn permission for Trotsky to visit altogether.



Dateline Winter 1979. The "winter of discontent" Two policemen pass a Tory poster promising an end to the misery of the Callaghan government! Three years and 2 million extra unemployed later, workers don't want the Tory government to "hang on" a minute longer and want to use 22 September to hasten their demise

NO RETURN TO 1932! By John Leech

From school on to the dole. That is the future facing young people today—and the Labour Party Young Socialists say this is no future.

Rotting on the dole queue or on a cheap labour scheme, that is the alternative offered us in Birkenhead where unemployment, at 22%, is higher than Liverpool's.

The Tories have pushed us back 50 years to 1932 when the unemployment level nationally was 22% and in desperation the jobless of the town reacted in riots in the autumn of that year.

In 1932 the rich slandered the unemployed workers of Birkenhead as being "parish fed bastards." Is there much difference today? The Tory press daily call us, the victims of Tory policies nothing but "scroungers".

Thatcher tells us it is the workers' fault for being 'lazy' and asking for too high wages. Just ask the health workers if they are overpaid! Tebbit tells us to

get on our bikes and look for work which just doesn't exist.

The LPYS tell the truth. We say it is the Tories and big business chasing after more profit which have been closing down the factories and destroying the hope and future of young people. We are organising a demonstration "No return to 1932" on Saturday 25 September at

10.30am at Park Gates Birkenhead.

The demo will be a build up to the 16 October national demonstration on Merseyside (see page 4) but come to Birkenhead and hear Terry Harrison (Labour Prospective candidate Edge Hill) Richard Venton (Merseyside Militant spokesman) John Hunt (LPYS National Committee)

and Steve Bimson.

It will be almost exactly fifty years since Birkenhead's riots. This demo will say clearly that the youth of Merseyside will fight against the Tories, who are bringing back the horrific conditions which provoked the riots. No return to 1932!

Labour rally in Liverpool

Liverpool Labour Party's traditional pre Labour Party conference rally has taken on added significance this year.

It is to be held on Tuesday 21 September, the day before the massive strike action in support of the health workers and against the government. The theme will be "fight the Tories not the socialists".

Tony Benn will be speaking at the meeting which is expected to attract about 3,000 people. Other speakers include MPs Allan Roberts and Bob Parry, Militant supporter Derek Hatton, Labour PPC for Wavertree, Eddie Loyden from Liverpool Trades Council and a prominent speaker from an NHS union. Tony Mulhearn, Presi-

dent of Liverpool Labour Party and PPC for Toxteth will chair the meeting.

"Fight the Tories, not the socialists" is not just a slogan, it is a burning necessity. If you agree we hope to see you at the meeting which will be held at St. Georges Hall, Lime Street on 21 September at 7.30pm.

Cervical Cancer - CAUSED BY PROFIT NOT PROMISCUITY

Cancer kills one person in five. Four out of five cancers are caused by environmental factors.

Between 20% and 40% of future cancer cases, according to a US Government Committee, will be caused by the jobs people are doing now.

It is well established that working with asbestos causes the cancer called mesothelioma, and that the mineral oils used as cutting fluids in engineering factories cause skin cancer. But, more recently, research has suggested that cervical cancer is also related to occupation.

By Vivien Seal
(Manchester
Ardwick CLP)

rates for getting the disease, while the men themselves are also more likely to die of cancers related to their occupations.

Working with tars, dusts, metals and chemicals, or living with someone who does, causes cancer, and under the profit system will continue to do so.

Cervical cancer is fairly simple to detect and is one of the cancers which can be treated successfully in a majority of cases. Yet GPs are only paid by the NHS to perform routine cervical smear tests (for cancer detection) every five years, and on women who are over 35, or have had three or more pregnancies.

Clearly many younger women are at risk, but the NHS cuts are not likely to increase the rate of screening. The TUC is rightly demanding an extension of screening during work time, but this will only be achieved when the Tories' attacks on the NHS have been defeated.

Even more important in the long term is the prevention of cancer in the first place. At best, safety legislation is designed only to protect workers, not workers' families (eg by protecting the lungs, but not the rest of the body, from dust).

It is limited in practice to the provision of protective clothing (often hot, uncomfortable and cumbersome) or the modification of existing equipment, rather than the design of processes that avoids the use of dangerous chemicals, equipment and materials to begin with. But in any case, safety legislation, too, is under attack.

Every year thousands of new chemicals are introduced, and no-one has any idea what effect they have on the human body or the environment. Only drugs, food additives and one or two other groups of chemicals have to be tested before being used.

The labour movement has been critical of drug safety for years, but most materials handled in industry are not tested for health hazards at all. American workers have been protected to some extent by the Toxic Substances Control Act (now under attack) but—in defence of profit and "free" enterprise—the Tories here have steadfastly opposed such legislation (even though passed by the EEC).

There is no doubt that the fight against cancer is the fight against the Tories and their system.

LEFT is a detail from one of four excellent new wall posters produced by the Labour Research Department.

The picture shown here is taken from 'Dangerous Substances at Work', and is captioned 'our workers aren't afraid of handling chemicals'

The four posters are "Dangerous Substances at Work", "Noise at Work", "Accidents at Work" and "Safety Policies at Work."

Price (minimum orders 4 posters of any type) is £1.50 (inc p&p). Reduced rates for bulk from Labour Research Department, 78 Blackfriars Rd, London SE1 8HF.

Cancer of the cervix (or neck of the womb) kills around 3,000 women a year. For years doctors have been telling us that "promiscuity" is the cause of the disease. Since 1842, when it was noted that nuns hardly ever got the disease, women's sex lives have been studied to the point of obsession in relation to cervical cancer.

Obviously no one noticed that nuns hardly ever worked in the textile industry either, and generally did not have lovers who worked with dusts, metals or chemicals. For over 100 years women with cervical cancer have not only had to cope with the trauma of having the disease, but have been made to feel guilty for having active sex lives as well.

It is overwhelmingly working class women who die of cervical cancer, especially women who work in certain jobs such as spinners, doublers and twisters in the textile industry. Wives and partners of fishermen (who work with tar), miners, quarrymen, gas, foundry and chemical workers also have higher than average



Violence in the home

'TOO MANY CASUALTIES'

Reading Militant's recent article 'Violence in the Home' an issue for the Labour movement' brought a lot of memories flooding back to me.

I finally left my first husband seven years ago. He had been a caring and loving partner who for reasons unknown to me at the time became very violent when drunk. On the night that I ran out in my torn dressing gown for the last time he was making yet another attempt on my life.

Fortunately for me his coordination was usually poor after he'd been drinking and I had never been seriously injured; just badly bruised very frightened and humiliated. That night it was different and I was certain that if I didn't get out then there was no way I would get out alive later.

After four years of similar treatment I had lost most of the love that I had had for him and was intimidated by his presence. I was incapable of making any effort in understanding his position and reacted badly accusing him of ruining a happy partnership. Looking back I can understand that we were

By a comrade from Barnsley

both bewildered and frightened people.

At that time I did not see the wrong in a system which made him unemployable due to bad health and although I suspect he saw it, he obviously felt there was nothing to be done about it. His frustration turned him to drink which seemed to alter his personality.

The man who practically every weekend and some week nights spat at me, kicked me around the bedroom floor, screamed insults at me and urinated in the bed was the same man who cried in my arms in the morning asking me what he had done, where I hurt and saying sorry, sorry.

He did not understand what he was doing any more than I did and was probably as ashamed and miserable as I was.

Now that I understand the callousness with which a capitalist society treats its workforce I can understand the indignity and frustration felt by those people cast aside on the scrapheap of unemployment or sentenced for life to poor housing and

conditions.

For men, seen by much of society as the natural breadwinner for a family (no matter how economically impossible this is for many families) the indignity may be particularly humiliating. Although there can never be any justification for marital violence we must try and understand it and not ostracize either the sufferers or those men who resort to it.

How many other battered wives nursing their black eyes, bruised bodies and shattered self respect also nurse repentant husbands in the morning after?

Shattered and almost destroyed

The help that battered wives get is minimal, the help that the battering husbands get is even less. Most of our friends pretended they didn't know. I tried to get our GP to visit my husband but he refused saying that unless he was physically incapable of getting to the surgery he was not making a home visit.

I tried the local psychiatric hospital which had a drying-out unit in it but they weren't

interested without a doctor's referral note. My husband refused to go to the surgery and the doctor refused to come to us.

No doubt if I had been more persistent I could have found some way round it but I was mentally and physically exhausted and defeated. When the drinking and violence increased I left.

Both of us were shattered and almost destroyed by the experience. He made several suicide attempts. I moved out of the area too frightened to stay and lucky enough to be able to do it.

Through the pages of Militant I have since begun to understand the pressures that capitalist society placed on us, the disregard with which capitalism treats its workers, its sick and its unemployed. More importantly Militant has also shown the way out—the way forward.

There have already been too many casualties with capitalism. It is time we channelled our frustration our anger, not negatively against our partners, but positively in the fight for a socialist society where nobody, man or woman, need sink in the depths that my first husband and I had been thrown into.

The other side of health care

Sue Carter is a nurse at the Nuffield Unit attached to the Fleming Hospital in Newcastle. Her's is the other side of medicine, not the stuff that 'Angels' is made of, but the long term help given young children suffering from psychological problems.

They are the unseen victims of a society where mass

unemployment and poverty drive parents to despair and where family break-ups are becoming more and more common, young children are forced to bear the mental scars of Britain's ailing economy.

At the Nuffield Unit a team of dedicated people from the Nursing Assistants to doctors and consultants, try to help the children and their families, but increasingly their ability to help is caught between the health cuts and the effect of years of low pay on the staff. No one can doubt the dedication

of the people who work at the Nuffield Unit, but even Sue admits that worries about making ends meet are now having an effect on the staff, and recruitment.

As Sue explains, today nurses need a living wage, they are not just working to supplement a family wage, but in many cases their wage actually supports the family.

The nursing staff where Sue works are 100% behind the joint unions campaign.

They would be opposed to all out industrial action, without any emergency cover, but up to that point

they will back the unions. At one time the Royal College of Nursing was seen as the professional body for nurses but increasingly nurses want it to act as a proper trade union.

But staff are not just getting militant about pay; it is also the general funding of the Health Service. Today charities are playing an increasing role in the way the Health Service decides its priorities.

Staff have to take up more and more valuable time in fund raising.

The Nuffield also shows

up the other side of medicine; prevention. How do you tackle the underlying problems of poverty and social problems?

It is not just kids from deprived backgrounds that find themselves under Sue's care; even comparatively well-off families find their children sent to the Unit.

Pressure to succeed, fears of redundancy, the whole management machine, turns people into the policeman of the profit machine. It creates the orphans of wealth, neglected, abused, violent and sullen children, who in-

stead of leading the trouble-free life of childhood become the casualties Thatcher prefers to ignore.

The staff who have to patch up the mess the Tories and their system leave behind, are offered a miserable 4% yet policeman have had massive pay rises. Sue explained 'Mrs Thatcher needs the police to stay in power, but she doesn't need us.'

**Interview by
Jeff Price**

'A very British coup'

TERESA CAIRNS reviews "A Very British Coup" by Chris Mullins, published by Hodder and Stoughton, price £6.95. Soon available from 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Chris Mullin, (Editor of Tribune), has written a political thriller set against a stark background of massive social instability, Britain in 1989. The inner cities have been abandoned to roaming hordes of unemployed youth, police patrol in armoured cars and bullet-proof vests.

Around city centres riot police prevent gangs breaking out to the suburbs where

owner occupiers with jobs live. The Labour Party, out of power for a decade, has just won the General Election with a new leader, Harry Perkins, former steel worker.

The intrigue and sculduggery starts even before Harry enters Number 10. Labour's landslide victory is greeted with dismay and a determination that the threats of the manifesto will never reach fruition: "One or two runs on sterling. A whopping balance of payments crisis. Only takes a few

telephone calls to lay that sort of thing on!"

The task of "preserving civilized standards" is accomplished by Sir Peregrine Craddock, head of 'D15' (Defence Intelligence), ably assisted by an assortment of newspaper proprietors, TV producers, journalists and one or two 'tame' Labour leaders.

One of Perkins greatest enemies is Reg Smith, leader of the United Power Workers, an avowed 'moderate', cheated of his expected seat in the Lords by

changes in LP policy. In the early 80's he'd become involved with the Ditchley Foundation and found himself acting as a link in an international network of very powerful people; the ruling class knew that Reg would one day prove useful!

Another adversary is Wainwright, newly appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer. The preferred choice of MPs as leader, he considers himself robbed of his rightful inheritance by a change in the electoral rules.

The book's main weakness is the unequal treatment of the two sides in the struggle for power. The plot rips along with the Security Services deeply involved in political scheming and character assassination activities authenticated by the memoirs of Crossman and Wilson.

But where is the labour movement, what is its response to the power struggle?

The left wing Cabinet is abandoned to drift in a flood of political intrigue whilst Perkins becomes an increasingly isolated figure, open to manipulation. We are presented with a pessimistic view of the possibility of the working-class not just winning but keeping state power.

Apart from these criticisms, it's a 'good read', with leading TU and LP leaders suggested by some of the characters.

Left: Tanks roll down Baker Street. Chris Mullin's new book sets the scene of a left Labour government being destabilised by the capitalist state.

Photo: Mike Sheridan (IFL)



2000 FEET UNDERGROUND

Whilst the rest of the community begins to stir, or sleeps soundly on, you descend into the darkness, two thousand feet under ground.

You've just had your last cigarette of the morning and changed from your clean, soft clothes into the dirty grease and mud-coated uniform of the mine.

At the bottom a walk of about five minutes, through well-lit, whitewashed roadways brings you to the fitters' cabin. The inside is crowded with men collecting tools and spare parts, some arguing, joking or just tiredly waiting for the foreman to give them a job, if they did not already have one.

After about 10 minutes, most of us move off to the diesel loco or "paddy" station which will take you the two and a half miles or so to the district you are to work on.

You sit cramped in the uncomfortable carriages, playing cards, reading papers, chatting with mates or just trying to have a "couple of minutes" as the deputy marks them into the time book. With the blow of a whistle, the "paddy" moves off on its journey towards the Duncul seam.

Within a few minutes the bright lights of the pit bottom are left behind, as the diesel moves through unlit and unkept roadways. About half way in towards the district, the "paddy" goes through a set of ventilation air doors, into the

return airway, and the change in atmosphere is noticeable straight away.

Not the cold fresh air of the pit bottom, but hot stuffy, dust laden air now, which smells of rotting vegetation. The effect makes you realise the very early hour of the day, and the lack of sleep the night before.

All know that work is getting closer, but weary limbs cry out for the journey to last a few minutes longer. Eventually, the arguable comforts of the "paddy" ride come to an end, and you move off on the last stage of your journey, a walk towards the coal face.

Passing through another set of ventilation doors brings you once again come into the cold atmosphere of the intake airway. Only a

hundred yards of the main gate roadway now stand between you and your work.

On the surface it would take you a minute or so, but this journey takes considerably longer. Due to the floor rising and the roof coming in, there are very few sections of the roadway which allow you to walk upright. Much of your progress is made on hands and knees, or at a walking crouch. Oil covered machinery and waste material has to be negotiated; god help anyone who is injured on the face, and has to be stretched through this lot.

At last, two and a half hours after waking up, you eventually arrive at the coal face.

Your first job is to check

a coal face machine to ensure that it is mechanically in order, and that it is safe for the men to operate. This is done as quickly as possible, while the men file off along the face, to their respective tasks.

When this has been done you move under the safety of the roof supports. By now the men have stripped down to their vests and shorts, donned knee pads and are ready for work. Frantic shouting is heard on the intercom system as conveyors are requested to be started up.

Soon the steel face chain conveyor is moving with a deafening scream from the electric motors. The noise being made by the steel flights on the conveyor make it impossible to hear what the machine man, two

yards away from you, is saying.

He proceeds to switch the water on to the machines' disc sprays. This increases the noise level and soaks anyone within a twelve foot radius.

At last the machine is switched on, and with a deafening roar the disc begins to rotate cuts into the coal and brings large lumps of it crashing onto the conveyor. Production has started, and coal moves along the face.

Mick Rafferty
(Brodsworth NUM)



'These are the door-knockers, the leafletters, these are the campaigners'

Nearly 3,000 delegates and visitors packed into the Wembley Conference Centre to express their determined opposition to the proposed register which opens the door to a witch-hunt in the Party.

From all over the country—Scotland, Wales, the North East, the South West, the Midlands, London, etc.,—coaches, minibuses and cars brought them. Despite the cynical comments of some of the press hacks later, it was clear that the sheer size and enthusiasm of the conference had staggered them.

Organised throughout late July and August—the worst possible time of the year for arranging any labour movement conference—the meeting was nevertheless representative of the majority of the activists of the Labour Parties and trade unions.

Pat Wall, twice selected as the Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Bradford North, was the first platform speaker. He described the bureaucratic witch-hunting days of the 1950s and 1960s, when it was Michael Foot who was said by the Tory papers then to be 'wrecking' the Labour Party.

Pat also described the consistent way that Militant supporters worked in the Bradford area, earning the support of Labour Party and trade union members. "It isn't an accident," he said, "that there are today over 50 delegates from labour movement bodies in Bradford. For example, every single Asian workers' movement in Bradford is supporting the conference because of the work that was done by Militant supporters in combating racialism in the past."

Tony Mulhearn, Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Toxteth in Liverpool was the next speaker. He described the horrifying social and economic conditions faced by many workers, not least in Toxteth last year, itself, and pointed out that "The party rank and file are scandalised that

when they are facing such conditions, the party leadership should choose to expend their energies attacking socialists in their own party."

After Tony had been among those who showed Michael Foot around the riot-torn streets of Toxteth, he received two letters from Foot warmly thanking him and offering "to assist the Liverpool labour movement in tackling the social problems faced there."

"It's very strange," Tony said, "to follow this letter up by a threat to expel me!"

Following Tony's speech, there were a number of contributions from the floor.

Reg Lewis, from Liverpool NGA, likened those seeking expulsions to "flat-earthers" who were trying to witch-hunt all those who believed the earth was round.

Kevin Roddy, the President of the Civil and Public Services Association, was delegated to the conference by his local Washington East Labour Party branch in Chester-Le-Street. Kevin explained that he had been a member of his GMC for 13 years and even though the right wing had a majority of about two to one at the AGM, "The NEC would find it necessary to dissolve Labour Party branches to expel Militant supporters."

Kevin pointed to the irony of the situation that faced his own CLP. The NEC, he said, was forcing the Constituency against its wishes to take back former Labour Party members who had been expelled years ago for corruption. Yet the same

NEC was embarking on a course that would force the CLP to expel members who had worked openly, honestly and consistently for years!

Kevin also pointed out that as President of the CPSA he and his Executive were committed to campaign for re-affiliation of the union to the Labour Party. "How much more difficult will that be," Kevin asked, "when the Labour Party NEC is trying to expel the president, a good proportion of the NEC and many of the union's activists from the Party?"

Cathy Wilson, PPC for the Isle of Wight, described how the Labour Party in that area had been built up painstakingly by Militant supporters among others, and she said, "No Michael Foot, no NEC, no anyone, can tell a Labour Party who they can have representing them in the next election."

A union delegate, **George Smith from TGWU 1/724 branch**, told the conference that his branch had written to Alex Kitson, after he had voted in favour of the register on the NEC, "As one holding high office in our union, you should be aware of our union's total opposition to bans, proscriptions and expulsions."

He went on to appeal to the TGWU delegates in the audience to "bombard the EC" with resolutions on the question before the Labour Party conference.

Rob Chalmers, an FBU delegate from Strathclyde, told the conference that he might have joined the Labour Party a lot earlier than he did, two years ago, but for the behaviour of the last Labour government towards the firemen in their dispute in 1977. The firemen at that time "did not see the Labour government as one fighting for workers." He complained of the way that that Labour government had used troops in 'Green Goddess' fire engines to break the strike.

The delegate following, **Bob Harker from Gateshead**, admitted that he had, in fact, been one of the young soldiers on the Green

Goddesses who had been used by the Labour government to scab on the firemen. "The sooner we get trade union rights for servicemen," he said, "...the better!"

Les Huckfield, NEC member and MP for Nuneaton, praised the organisation of the conference when he spoke from the platform. He had had the privilege, he said, to have been on the platform of the special Labour Party conferences, one on the electoral college and the other on 'Jobs, Peace and Freedom', both of which had been held in the same Wembley Conference Centre. This conference, he said, not only matched the other two in size, but was in fact bigger.

He hoped that the press would note that the people present represented the real Labour Party: "These are the door-knockers, these are the leafletters, these are the campaigners."



Bob Harker of Gateshead East Labour Party

Jenny Ray of the Air India Strike Committee outlined the lessons of their eleven-week strike and appealed to the labour movement representatives for support, while stressing her support for fighting the witch-hunt (strike report on page 14).

Terry O'Neill, President

Statement by Tony Benn, sent to the conference: "If Labour is to campaign together for victory in the next election it must remain a broadly-based democratic and tolerant party."

"The proposed register is just a cover for expelling good socialists, which has failed before. I hope that the Blackpool conference rejects the register and closes ranks to defeat the Tories."

Tony Benn, September 1982

of the Bakers Union and a former activist in the Bradford area, also spoke, declaring that he had never been to a meeting before that gave as clear and unmistakable a mood as this one did. "When Pat Wall is the candidate for Bradford North," he declared, "I will go to Bradford and go on the doorsteps to tell people that Pat is a fighter for the working class."

Representing the LPYS on the platform, Teresa Wrack said, "Without the Militant the LPYS would be nothing. We're here to stay and fight for our ideas. We shall meet fire with fire." She went on to say, "The best answer to the right wing and at the same time carry on the struggle against the Tories will be to ensure a massive turnout for the LPYS demonstration on 16 October."

Bob Wright, Assistant General Secretary of the AUEW, blamed the right wing for the "cold war" that was being waged in the party and said it was a tragedy that the right wing should push this witch-hunt now when the fight should be against the Tories.

Labour City Councillor and Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Liverpool Wavertree, Derek Hatton, put paid to the myth that Militant was an electoral liability. In Liverpool in the 6 May local elections there was a swing to Labour, while in other areas the votes had gone down.

Mike Marley, a COHSE shop steward and a Young Socialist from Foot's constituency of Ebbw Vale, brought laughter to the conference when he read out a 'Daily Express' from 1960. The article could have been

a typical example of the Tory press today when it attacks Militant, but ironically it was an attack on 'left-wing' Michael Foot by Sir Thomas Williamson, then the general secretary of the GMWU.

Rod Fitch, Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Brighton Kemptown, brought cheers when he announced himself as an 'unregistered socialist'. Explaining how the witch-hunt would fail, Rod told the story of his father who was expelled from the party in 1939, yet went on to be a Labour councillor for 25 years!

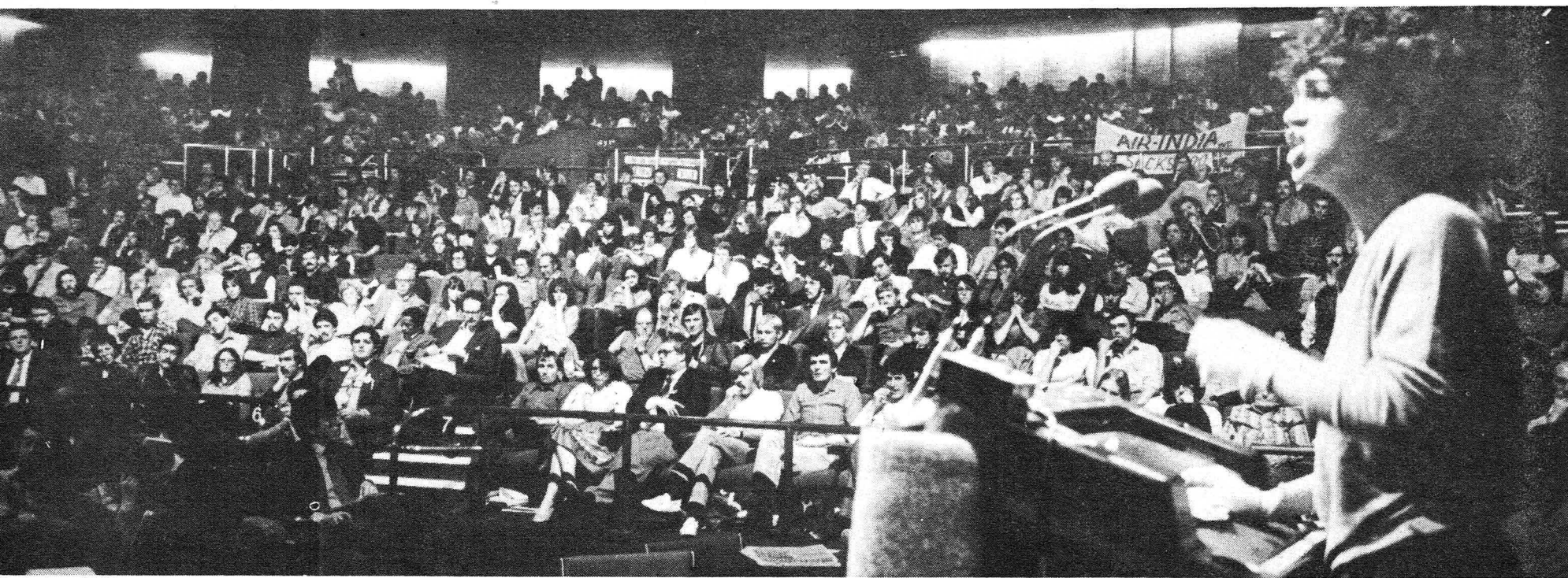
And telling how adopting bold socialist policies had built the party in Brighton, he said, "When I was selected 20 people left the party—but since then 500 new people have joined."

TGWU executive member spoke

Ken Livingstone, leader of the Greater London Council, said, "The people fighting to get rid of Militant were previously fighting alongside those who deserted to the SDP in London. They would spread their nets as far as Tribune and the GLC to make the Party safe again for traitors."

Militant supporters had fought for cheap fares, he said, not those attacking Militant.

Alan Quinn (TGWU EC) exposed the hypocrisy of the "enquiry". "When I was on the North West Labour Party executive no one ever asked my opinion on 'Militant'. The enquiry was done behind closed doors."



Photos: D Doran

These are the 'gners'

— Les Huckfield MP

The total collection raised at the conference to cover the costs was £2,911.92, including IOUs.

He also pointed out that the Tories' headlines that the T&G backed the witch-hunt were wrong. The union understands the impact of bans and proscriptions. The executive had still to meet to consider its attitude, and he hoped they would reflect the attitude of rank and file activists and oppose witch-hunts.

"I belong to an organisation which believes in a 35-hour week, extension of nationalisation and with international perspectives. It's called the TGWU."

Terry Fields (Merseyside and Chester FBU) who is also Labour PPC for Liverpool Kirkdale, said it was an insult to the labour movement to say he or other Militant supporters were part of a 'conspiracy'. "I was nominated by 14 trade union branches and seven Labour Party branches."

"There is a conspiracy in the Liverpool Labour Party—one to get rid of capitalism. Michael Foot should join it." It was the lessons of 17 years of Labour rule since the war which pushed workers towards Militant.

Terry said he had been put forward by his union, the FBU for Labour's NEC "not to elevate Terry Fields, but to give the rank and file backing in their struggles. They can't chuck Marxism out of the Labour Party."

Chandra Dasgupta (NUPE steward and Hackney Central LPYS) spoke of the black women workers who frequently bore the brunt of Tory policies with weekly wages of £50 or less. Support for 22 September was vital.

Past Labour governments may have disillusioned

workers with immigration laws etc., but LPYS and the Militant could be proud of continued campaigns against racism from the 1974 LPYS demo onwards.

In the final contribution from the platform, political editor of Militant, **Ted Grant**, pointed to the real conspiracy in the Labour Party, the conspiracies of the right wing with their capitalist friends and even reactionary organisations like the CIA and NATO.

He said there was an unprecedented unity between the right wing and the Tories and SDP traitors who were all united in their wanting to expel Militant from the Labour Party. He ridiculed the capitalist press for their 'concern' for the well being of the Labour Party.

Outlining the situation in society today, Ted described the irreversible decline in British capitalism, explaining how Britain was once the second largest car manufacturer in the world yet today it produced fewer cars than even Spain. He said, "Even the CBI has protested at the situation, although that's like the Devil coming out against sin!"

Concluding, Ted said, "We are certain because of the correctness of our ideas that the working class will arrive at the programme of the Militant. And then abolishing the House of Lords and the monarchy, will transform society ending the nightmare that capitalism has become. Trotsky said that no one can break the will of the working class to change society. We must prepare the way for a socialist Britain, a socialist United States of Europe, and a socialist world."



Peter Taaffe, editor of 'Militant', spoke in the morning session of the conference. Peter made it clear that the right wing will fail if they try to remove Marxism from the Labour Party. "For every one they expel," he said, "ten will take their place."

Delegates' comments:

"...the best conference I have ever attended..."

Ian Lowes, Convenor of Liverpool Parks and cemeteries G&MWU No 5 Branch.

"This is an excellent conference. It definitely reflects an opinion amongst the rank and file of the Labour and Trade Union movement, in declaring total opposition to the register and witch-hunt. If the leadership of our union bothered to consult the membership, on the basis of today's conference, they would vote against the Register at the Labour Party Conference."

"I've come to this conference to express opposition to the register and pledge full support to the fight against it."

Pat Harshorn, NUPE Shop Steward, Delegate from Gateshead Central Branch.

"It's the first time I've ever been to anything like this. I must admit, I thought it might be boring—one speech after another—but I'm not bored at all!"

"The atmosphere is fantastic. And just hearing the experiences of others has made me feel so close to my

own union and the whole Trade Union and Labour Movement. I've learnt such a lot, things I didn't even realise were happening in this country."

"I wish thousands more were here. I wish I didn't have to go home tonight. This conference should last at least 2 days!"

"I've been thinking that the Trade Unions and the Labour Party were divided, but today for the first time I realise our strength."

Stan Pearce, delegate from Monkwearmouth NUM, Sunderland.

"This is the best conference I've ever attended. There's even more people here today, than the Peace, Jobs and Freedom Conference held at Wembley two years ago."

"My lodge sent 5 delegates, as well as visitors to the conference. There's a definite mood against the witch-hunt in my Lodge."

"The lodge is affiliated to three constituencies, and most of the members are also active in the Labour Party. They see the struggle

The steering committee elected by the conference to carry on the campaign against the witch-hunt was as follows:

Joint Presidents: Terry O'Neill (President of the Bakers Union) and Ken Livingstone (GLC Leader); **Secretary:** Tony Saunio; **Treasurer:** Kevin Ramage (LPYS chairman); **Alan Quinn** (TGWU General Executive Council member); **Ray Apps** (Brighton Kempton); **Bob Labi** (London LP executive); **Teresa Wrack** (LPYS NC member); **Laurence Coates** (LPYS rep on NEC); **Nick Barstow** (Islington South CLP); **Vidya Anand** (London LP Executive).

against the right wing in the Labour Party and the Trade Unions as the same struggle."

Joe Anderson, Convenor National Union Seaman, Liverpool.

"I would like to thank the organisers of the Labour Movement Conference for bringing together so many Militant supporters and supporters of Socialist policies."

"I first became aware of Militant and what it stands for, when the National Union of Seamen were involved in an industrial dispute. The management threatened the jobs of 200 people in 2 ships, which I worked on, and where I was convenor of one. A sit-in was organised on board the ships."

"With the help of Militant supporters, particularly Tony Mulhearn, and the threat of a National Seamen's strike, we won through in the end. It wasn't the right wing in the Labour Party or the Trade Unions who gave us their help and support, but the Militant supporters. That is why I came to the conference."

"The dispute we were involved in then was the self same struggle that the Health Service Workers are involved in now. Just as it was the Socialists in the Labour Party who supported us then, its these same Socialists that I can see today on the Hospital picket lines."

Eddie Clarke, Perry Barr Birmingham CLP

"This is not just about a witch hunt against Militant but will be an attack on the whole left of the Labour Party, if the right wing get their way. My constituency has come out against the witch-hunt and I think it will be the same throughout the Labour Party."

Barry Grist, Dagenham CLP.

"I don't support the Militant but I read the paper and I know Militant supporters in the Labour Party and they work very hard for their ideas. It would be terrible if they were expelled and I think the majority of the rank and file are against it. "There must now be a

massive campaign by the left throughout the party and the trade unions to stop this witch-hunt."

Chris Barnaby, SE Essex CLP

"I was fed up with Labour after the last government to the point of thinking about abstaining in elections. But then I read about Labour Party renationalising any industry the Tories denationalise. To me it showed there were still people in the party fighting against the right wing."

"I think this witch-hunt is evil, and it can't work anyway. The Militant's too big now. If they ban Militant what are they going to do when someone gets up in a meeting with the paper or puts forward the ideas—call the police? Mind you I can think of some right wingers who would!"

Fred Bournier, Canvey Island LP

"In the '30s I joined the army because of the unemployment. They said then there was a 'crisis', and they say the same now—but crisis is a permanent feature of capitalism. And the capitalists can't see a way out now—even these idiots wouldn't turn to war with all these nuclear weapons, they wouldn't get anything out of it."

Jimmy Cheek, TGWU Branch Sec. Bristol Buses Region 3, and T&G Regional Committee.

"This witch-hunt is an attempt by the right-wing to purge the party of all the gains made over the past three years in the Labour Party. Despite its past record it has always been, and will be, looked upon as the party of the working class because of its socialist clause, clause IV."

And what has angered the right wing is that the youngsters in the Militant and the Labour Party Young Socialists have protected this socialist principle."

"If the register does go through conference, there will be a backlash amongst the rank and file of the party. This conference today is obviously just the beginning."

The Autumn's class battles in Italy will be decisive for the whole direction of the struggle over the next few years.

On 1 June the Confindustria (the Italian CBI) withdrew the 1975 agreement on the sliding scale of wages, linking wages to the cost of living.

The workers' reaction was immediate—a spontaneous general strike with workers coming out on to the streets as the news was announced on the radio.

If the workers' leaders had acted as decisively, it would have been possible to bring down the government, split the Christian Democratic workers away from their leaders, and prepare the way for the election of a Socialist-Communist government with a programme of socialist transformation.

Instead Lama—General Secretary of the CGIL, the Communist-Socialist trade union federation—appeared on television appealing for calm, telling the workers that the struggle would be “hard and long”.

The trade union leaders were, however, forced to call a four-hour general strike for the next day (only one hour for public employees). About 100,000 marched in Milan, thousands shouted for a whole day strike, and many factories did in fact stay out the whole day.

The trade union leaders then decided to call a general strike and a march in Rome—but more than three weeks later, on 25 June.

Nevertheless, on the 25th, 500,000 workers from all over Italy walked miles in the sweltering heat to hear their leaders speak. Despite the Republican Prime Minister Spadolini's formal condemnation of the Confindustria, and the Socialist presence in the cabinet, the workers understood the class nature of the government. When Spadolini passed by in his car to wave to the demonstrators, after 30 seconds (the time it took them to recognise him) he had to flee for his life.

The workers' leaders, however, only mouthed empty phrases about the defence of the sliding scale and gave the workers no perspective or strategy for the struggle.

A long drawn out, purely defensive struggle is likely to demoralise the workers and anyway, just a few days after the Rome march, the leaders started saying that they would, after all, be prepared to negotiate (i.e. compromise) over the sliding scale.

Many workers will be asking themselves what is the point of carrying on the struggle with leaders who have already declared their intention of selling it out. Many of the less politicised ones have torn up their union cards over the last few years, and more will do so this autumn if the leaders get away with a ‘sell-out’.

On the other hand, the more advanced workers in the unions and workers' parties are increasingly fighting to democratise their organisations and change their policies.

With unrest growing in his own party, Socialist leader Craxi could see that the political price for remaining in an unpopular Christian-Democratic government was likely to get higher, especially with the Communist Party

By an Italian Shop Steward

enjoying the luxury of opposition. At the beginning of August the Socialist Party withdrew from the government, which then fell.

If the Communist Party leaders had taken up a clear class position for workers' unity on a socialist programme, it would have reopened the debate in the Socialist Party on the “left alternative”—a Socialist-Communist government—and made it increasingly difficult for Craxi to re-join a bourgeois government.

This could have opened the way for a general election and the election of a workers' government.

Instead, faced with a direct choice between class opposition and class collaboration, the Communist Party leaders chose collaboration in spite of the fact that their rank and file was crying out for class alternatives to the bosses' economic attacks.

Bitterness and disappointment of Communist workers ran deep

At first the CP leaders proposed a presidential government of honest men from all parties, directly responsible to the President. Later, when the only alternative seemed to be a general election which the ruling class was desperate to avoid, the CP leaders offered passive support, on condition that it respected certain points in their programme.

But in present economic conditions the Spadolini government can only be worse than its predecessor as far as the working class is concerned. The anger of the Communist rank and file was such that the leaders were forced quickly to switch over to hard line opposition to the new government.

The bitterness and disappointment of Communist workers ran all the deeper after the period of “national solidarity” during which the Communist Party paid the political price for collaboration without even getting into the government. The CP leaders had to promise never again to give external support to another Christian Democratic government, and to abandon at least in words the “historic compromise” (the idea of a coalition with the Christian Democracy) and talk about a democratic alternative government.

No one understood very clearly exactly what the ‘democratic alternative’ was supposed to be but to the Communist workers it clearly did not mean the Spadolini ‘Mark II’ government.

At the unity festival in Milan Communist Party members were openly blaming their leaders for allowing this government to be formed and talking about the possibility of a split in the party. Communist workers

Decisive class battles loom in Italy

The Communist Party rank and file are looking for a socialist way forward as an alternative to the “inter-class” position of their leaders



must now fight for their party to clarify its position, and campaign for a Socialist-Communist government with a programme of socialist transformation on which to offer a united front to socialist workers.

There is a mood of growing confusion and uncertainty among Socialist Party members too. Many who have supported Craxi over the way in which the Socialist Party brought down the government were shaken when the leaders entered another almost identical one a few weeks later.

Building left unity on a socialist programme

The left of the Socialist Party must redouble its opposition to the party's present involvement in the bourgeois government, and instead build links with Communist Party members who are fighting to push their own party towards a Marxist programme.

At the end of June a left-wing Socialist Party section, on the initiative of some Marxist comrades, organised a public meeting, inviting the Communist and Socialist Party branches and the Factory Councils in the area (Milan is divided into 20 areas) to discuss the question of left unity and how to answer the attacks on living standards.

The following extracts from the debate show how the most advanced elements in both parties are looking for a class alternative.

The debate was opened by the secretary of the host branch: “We believe that a solution can only come from a mass mobilisation, and by linking up the struggles of those directly involved (the workers) and all other layers of the population (students, housewives, unemployed, etc.) who are hit by the attacks on wages.”

Torelli (Communist President of the local Council): “The sliding scale today doesn't satisfy anyone. With inflation in two figures it is not enough. The defence of workers' purchasing power will have to be reviewed, but not starting from an indiscriminate attack on living standards and jobs.”

Pozzoni (area trade union co-ordinating committee): “The crisis is world-wide and affects things that were previously taken for granted. But having said this, ideas of how to overcome the crisis are diametrically opposite. The bosses say that the easiest way to become competitive again is to reduce workers' living standards. But let's not forget that while the Confindustria carries out a moral lynching of trade unions and workers, they themselves give no guarantee that they will keep down the price of food, clothes, etc. The attack on the sliding scale, this disgusting crusade against the cost of labour, is just a

Trojan horse in order to push through indiscriminate redundancies and weaken the left and the trade unions.”

Then a document from the Alfa Romeo factory council was read: “... (we) ask the trade unions to continue the general mobilisation until the Confindustria unconditionally withdraws, and not to accept the bosses' blackmail of ‘choose between a work contract and the sliding scale’.”

Workers parties should guide the movement towards the Socialist transformation of society

Then a document from some PSI members: “The left parties and the trade unions should guide the workers towards the socialist transformation of society but they tail-end the movement instead of leading it. The PSI must stop sitting in governments with bourgeois parties, and make the natural choice of aligning itself with the left and the workers' movement. The PCI must stop trying to take up an inter-class position and conduct serious opposition to the capitalist economic position.”

“The bourgeois parties in the government are just as responsible as the bosses for the attack on the sliding

scale. The trade unions and left parties (PSI and PCI) must prepare an offensive struggle to change the social system of production, linking themselves closely to the international workers' movement. In this way the workers' struggles can lead to the formation of a left government with a Marxist programme capable of carrying out the socialist transformation of society.”

Nespoli (PSI): “We must pass from defence to attack. We must fight for real reforms that change the system irreversibly, not for temporary concessions. Work, health, a house, education are all basic rights. To defend them we must nationalise land and the banks

to stop speculation. We must fight for the 35-hour week, nationalise and plan the economy. In the USSR the mistake has not been to nationalise and plan the economy, but to plan in bureaucratically. We must have democratic planning, under the control of the Factory Councils and District Councils.”

Stefani (PSI): “Left unity will start from the factories, and I'm sure that Communist and Socialist workers will carry it into their parties and open a debate that will lead to a common programme. For years the trade union leaders have been talking about economic planning, but the bosses continue to do as they like—closing factories, moving capital abroad, etc.”

“How can we plan what is not ours? In France the nationalisation of the banks was a step forward, but when 80% of the economy is private, it will obviously decimate the 20% that is public. A left government must reverse these proportions, then we will be able to talk about economic planning.”

A Napoleme (PSI): “I would like to propose the election of a United Front Committee of the Socialist Party, Communist Party and the unions to defend wages and jobs in the area.”

F Formenini (PSI): “I agree with everything that has been said and propose that we draw up a document and send it to all the factory councils in the area.”

Chile 9 years after the coup



Picket outside the Chilean Embassy in London on 11 September. The labour movement will never forget the struggle of their Chilean brothers and sisters as it recovers from the bloodbath of 1973. Photo: Stefano Cagnoli (IFL)

Last month saw the third cabinet reshuffle by Pinochet's military regime in the last year.

The total failure of Chile's military rulers to solve the problems of mass unemployment (reaching levels of 25-30%), the slump in production, and the record number of bankruptcies, has led to open divisions amongst the ruling class and the army.

After the overthrow of Allende's Popular Unity government in 1973, resulting in the murder, imprisonment and banishment of thousands of workers, Pinochet's junta promised to revitalise the economy by adopting the policies of the free market. Through the introduction of the 'Monetarist Model', Chile's capitalist class hoped to be able to compete in the world market, exporting the goods in which they had an 'advantage'.

As far as the capitalist class was concerned the key to their success would be Chile's cheap labour, made possible after the defeat of the working class in 1973. Internationally, the whole of the capitalist class showered praise on Latin America's new 'Economic Miracle', turning a blind eye to the brutal repression which was the only way their rule could be sustained.

The generals' experiment with monetarism has turned out to be a horrible nightmare especially for the working class and agricultural labourers, for whom the clock has turned back decades in terms of their living conditions and rights.

It was only in 1980 that the economy managed to surpass the levels of growth achieved during the years of Popular Unity. Yet even during this so-called boom year manufacturing industry was operating at only 82% of the levels reached in 1970!

Whole industries like textiles and home electrical ap-

Ruling class in disarray

By a Chilean correspondent

pliances, which were geared mainly to the home market, have disappeared as a result of the sharp fall in living standards and the policy of cheap imports.

Unemployment increased from 4.8% in 1973 to 18% in the year of the boom, and has since further increased. At the same time only one-sixth of the unemployed get unemployment benefit—with a value equivalent to a pair of shoes.

Even this 'boom' soon dissipated, 1981 saw a sharp slump, with output in the first three months of 1982 being 15% down on that of the same period in 1981.

The regime was forced to intervene to stop the collapse of four banks and four finance houses. Since then there has been a record number of bankruptcies.

The last couple of months have seen the bosses attempting yet again to reduce wages by 15%-20%, though even at the height of the so-called boom real wages were still lower than in 1970.

Despite fierce repression the workers are fighting back

In their desperate attempt to deal with the chaos they have created, Pinochet's junta is being forced to modify some of the main planks of their economic policies. Recently they announced a devaluation of the currency in an attempt to reactivate the economy. Measures like these, however, will in no way be capable of reversing the rapid decline.

Workers demonstrate in support of Allende on the eve of the coup in 1973.



Despite the fierce repression, the suppression of trade union rights, the banning of political parties and the daily raids into workers' neighbourhoods, workers have fought back against the attacks on their living standards.

Throughout the late 1970s there were strikes and demonstrations. Last year, 4,600 coal miners came out on strike against redundancies. 15,000 dockers struck against changes in the labour laws which threatened established working practices, with several serious clashes with the police as a result of picketing which the Junta had declared illegal.

In the textile industry there was a series of strikes and occupations against redundancies. In Santiago, around the industrial estates, workers have set up organisations linking up all the unions in the area as well as the local neighbourhood organisations. Here they organise solidarity action in support of workers on strike and to help the unemployed, as well as

trade union schools.

Through the 1973 coup the capitalist class and army officers thought they could wipe out the organised labour movement from Chilean society. After nine years of bloody repression they have failed.

It is this realisation and the failure of the Generals to solve the crisis that has led to open disagreements amongst the ruling class.

Some sections like the Christian Democrats—who in 1973 welcomed the generals with open arms—are now calling for a return to 'democracy' in an attempt to find a way out of the crisis.

The perspective that opens up is one of further instability and struggle. Capitalism has proved incapable of solving any of the problems facing Chilean workers. In the new battles that loom ahead the labour movement has to base itself on the perspective of the Socialist Revolution if mass unemployment and poverty are to be eliminated and democratic rights guaranteed.

TGWU MORE SUPPORT FOR LINKS WITH S.AFRICAN WORKERS

By Graham Casey
TGWU 6/612

The solidarity felt by many sections of the Labour and Trade Union movement towards the struggle of the black working class in South Africa was clearly shown at a meeting of the 6/612 branch of the TGWU in Liverpool earlier this month.

A resolution was passed calling on the TGWU to give full support to the South African Allied Workers' Union in its dispute with the British-owned Rowntree Company for union recognition and re-instatement of union members. It calls on the T&G to do all in its power to help the Rowntree workers in South Africa win the strike, and to take up the appeal by SAAWU for a delegation to South Africa, reporting back to the workers in Rowntree UK for the purpose of securing victory for SAAWU.

Objections were raised to the resolution by some members, who, while supporting SAAWU, opposed the idea of a trade union delegation to South Africa. The debate that followed was long and extended to a second branch meeting—an indication of the seriousness with which British workers look on the struggle of our South African brothers and sisters.

The points raised by some of the speakers against direct links could be of interest to other workers in Britain. It was said, for example, that South Africa is a fascist country, where trade unions could not exist, except as bodies controlled by the state.

However, it is patently clear that the South African black working class has carried out a magnificent struggle over the past years, where a number of black trade unions do exist in conflict with the state—one of which is SAAWU.

Similarly, the argument was put forward that visits could endanger secret organisations. This, of course, is quite true and it would be a criminal act for British delegations to try to contact secret trade union groups. However, SAAWU and other black trade unions are open trade unions with a leadership known to the state, and therefore already in the firing line.

This also applies to the threat of victimisation,

another objection raised to direct links—those people met could be victimised.

Yet if we take the case of Thozamile Gqweta, President of SAAWU, it will be seen that this argument misses the point. Gqweta has been forced, for example, to escape through a window of his house when the door was wired shut and the house set on fire. In a similar fire, his mother and uncle were killed and at their funeral, his 20 year old girlfriend, Deliswa Roxiso, was shot dead by Ciskei police.

Gqweta himself has been imprisoned, tortured and institutionalised. Against this background, could the sending of a delegation be said to raise the danger of victimisation?

We must also make it clear that any such delegation would be composed of workers' representatives from, e.g., similar factories or trades. Some previous delegations have been made up of trade union leaders and TUC General Council members, and failed to meet black trade unionists.

A point raised in the meeting was that, with millions unemployed in this country, why bother about South Africa?

Yet workers in any country must support the struggle of workers elsewhere. Particularly in the case of South Africa, we often have the same employers. Attacks on South African workers' living standards weaken the labour and trade union movement world wide, with firms closing down to move there to take advantage of cheap labour.

Despite the opposition, the resolution was carried. The case for direct links was strong enough to make many objectors review their position. The part played by the South African Labour Education Project in publicising the appeal from SAAWU has been of great importance in showing the necessity for direct links between workers in Britain and South Africa.

The call for a delegation to assist the strike in East London is now Region 6 policy and it is expected that other regions of the T&G will also give support to the South African workers' call for direct links.

It is true, as one speaker at the meeting said, that not enough is being done in this country to link up with the SA workers. Hopefully, we will see the renewal of action here, so that both in Britain and South Africa the power of the multi-national companies can be matched by the strength of international workers solidarity.



Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

What flexi-rostering meant to me

Dear Sir

Watching Sid Weighell's tirade against 'Militant' on ITV (Sunday 29 August) brought back memories of his union's activities.

For over 20 years I drove a bus for the then Wilts and Dorset Company, a nationalised firm, and for some bizarre reason we had to be in the National Union of Railwaymen. During all those years we worked long and hard hours, no extra pay for unsocial hours, no sick pay, no pension and having to work much overtime to make a living wage.

In the early 'sixties (yes the early 'sixties) flexible rostering was forced on us together with split shifts. Some of

these shifts extened to nearly ten hours, others only six, so financially we gained nothing and lost our overtime. These schedules were worked "under protest" until our depot closed and all were made redundant.

The general secretary of the NUR during this enlightened period went by the name of Green, now of course Lord Green.

But then of course the NUR has never had a history of militant general secretaries, especially when one remembers Jimmy Thomas, the arch traitor of them all, of 1926. And irony of ironies, ASLEF's sell-out by the TUC was on Tolpuddle day. When will they ever learn?

Yours very sincerely
J Bowden
Amesbury, Wilts.



Sid Weighell, general secretary of the NUR, (left) being lobbied by angry workers at a special TUC meeting earlier this year against the Tebbit Bill. Photo Militant

Questions on the disabled

Dear Sir

Can I please receive a couple of answers from you about the following. Firstly I became unable to walk after having a motor cycle accident in 1967. I was 22 years old, I am now 37. My father was a socialist, and I have always been similar.

What I want to know is, what is the Labour Party's view of the quality of life that should be provided for people who lose their ability to walk? Should we be pushed aside into segregated disabled clubs and be outnumbered by people who have known nothing but living with a disabled body?

Therefore the leader of this club has a very narrow selection of activities to offer to these 'disabled people' because the majority have no active experience.

Secondly, I want to know why I should vote for any political party. I am a member of the UPI (Union of Physically Impaired). My members have been asked by me not to vote until we have an answer. If we are seen as effective weapons, it can be effective for us by abstaining. I want two satisfactory answers, please do not fob me off by trying the educated fly, which is usual. But I want answers.

Yours fraternally
S Doyle
Plymouth

The thoughts of an NUR guard

Dear Comrades

During the ASLEF strike the media put out a lot of propaganda about the "pig-headed" attitude of the train drivers in comparison with the "reasonable" NUR whose leaders accepted flexible rostering.

The following message, written on the inside of a guard's van on the Eastern Region, gives a clear answer to this propaganda and shows the irreconcilable gulf

that separates the NUR leaders from the ordinary rank and file:

"How about Sid Weighell doing some flexi-work. How about Sir Peter Parker doing some unsocial hours. And Lord McCarthy did two months in the Bahamas last year. That's what I call flexible. These men all make more in a month than most of us make in a year. That's why it's important to be flexible to help them keep the cash coming in. So they can lord it all around the world at the best hotels and restaurants and do sweet ****-all for it."

Yours fraternally
East London reader

One of the 'lucky' ones

Dear Comrades

After being unemployed for twelve months—during which time I had searched for work till I was sick to death of looking—I finally managed to find a job in a hamburger bar.

At last I was of some use. At first I was so pleased that I thought the hours and pay were great.

But things changed after a few weeks. There was a cut in the weekly working hours which meant a drop in earnings. There is no co-ordinated pattern to the shifts and one doesn't know from day to day what hours

will be worked. I sometimes have to go in on my day off to find out what time I have to report the next day.

If it's not busy in the shop I am expected to clean up, sometimes doing the same things over and over again to look busy, because if I'm caught standing around or talking to my mates I will get into trouble—maybe even get the sack from a manager who won't listen to what his employees have to say about the job.

What kind of future have I got to look forward to? I'm looking for another job, but I don't suppose I'll get one any better.

Yours fraternally
Uxbridge LPYS member

Teachers wanted —to make up for education cuts

Dear Militant,

While I was looking through the Times Educational Supplement for a job, yet another teacher the state spent thousands educating now rotting on the dole, I came across an interesting job advert.

Grimsby College of Technology was advertising for lecturers for YOPs courses but unlike the £25 a week YOPsters get they would be on something like £5,355 to £11,964 a year compared to the £1,300 a YOPster would get over an equivalent period.

With all the cuts in education spending, putting

teachers on the dole, not filling vacancies, buying fewer books and teaching aids etc. means a poorer education for youngsters. This is made clear in this advert as these lecturers would be teaching literacy and numeracy, amongst other things. What a ridiculous system that sacks teachers on one hand and then has to employ others to teach what they would willingly have been teaching given the chance.

What we need is a united struggle to fight for a system that would guarantee a decent education for all, and a worthwhile job at the end of it, which capitalism has shown itself incapable of providing, and only socialism can.

Yours fraternally
Andrea Hughes
E Nottingham LPYS

How we built up our LPYS branch

Dear Comrades,

Tranent LPYS has been going since 1976, although at one time there was an active Labour League of Youth branch.

Since 1976 there has been no more than 6 or 7 people at LPYS meetings.

About six weeks ago there was only four people coming to the meetings.

So we had to get down and build the YS now, or it would just die off.

We started by holding a

public meeting and leafletting almost 2,500 houses between the four of us.

The public meeting came off and about five new people came along, so another way had to be found to get people into the YS.

In Tranent, like most other places, there is a place where most of the youth gather.

One of our comrades went along and sat down and talked to the young people, about the Tories, unemployment, YOPS and so on, and asked them to come along to the LPYS. Each comrade was given a target to bring one new person along to the

YS each week.

Because of local government cuts, the youth club, the only place for the young people in this small mining town of 12,000 to go to at night, was going to be closed down.

Our YS put a resolution to the local Labour Party GMC calling on the local councillor to intervene and save the youth club.

The councillor has since told us that for the time being, the club will stay open. The YS has been asked by the youth club for YS posters and someone to go along and speak on what the YS is about. Out of all this, two

weeks ago ten new people came along to the meetings. Last week 26 people were at the meeting!

The YS must intervene and try and help in all local campaigns.

The youth in this country is looking for the YS and the programme of the YS, it's the job of all YS members to go out where ever the youth gather—the local chip shop, pubs and youth clubs.

In this way we can build a mass socialist Labour Party

Yours fraternally
Ali Hughes
Tranent LPYS

There is a place for Marxism in the Labour Party

Dear Comrades

Hardly a week goes by without someone from the right of the Labour Party stating how the beliefs and activities of 'Militant' are scaring the electorate and destroying Labour's chances of victory at the next general election.

Taking the complete opposite view I write as an individual who only this year started to read 'Militant' and joined the Labour Party because of the publicity given to 'Militant'.

Until recently, I, like

many people in this country, thought the ideas of Marxism were no longer relevant in a world approaching the 21st century. Such a false and ignorant attitude was likewise put forward by much of the daily press for obvious reasons. The aging 'White House cowboy' recently tried to reinforce such beliefs in the west by declaring the determination of 'free peoples' everywhere to leave 'Marxism-Leninism on the ash heap of history.'

I now, of course, treat such a statement with the contempt it deserves, especially when it comes from a country like the United States that pursues a despotic foreign policy. Such attacks on Marxism,

along with attitudes shown by this government and some members of the public can only reinforce the determination to see its eventual success in the world.

There are too many reactionaries in our society who would happily dismantle the welfare state tomorrow on the grounds that it is a drain on resources and encourages sloth among the 'work shy masses'.

As long as such attitudes remain in society, Marxism will always be relevant and on these grounds there must be a place for it in any truly democratic Labour Party.

Marxism, I now realise, is the only way forward in the struggle to change a society that is obsessed with the

massive and unnecessary accumulation of personal fortunes. A society that measure a person's success on the basis of their material possessions, the more the better.

I am glad to have been awakened to the ideas of Marxism and look forward to the day when all of society is planned on the basis of social need and it is capitalism, not Marxism, that lies on the 'ash heap of history'.

Yours fraternally
Colin Campbell
Inverness

Two views on capitalism

Dear Comrades

Healey is very worried that the world's banking system may collapse "unless the IMF do something". Yet fifty years ago, you report in a recent issue, George

Lansbury told the TUC conference that workers must rise throughout the world to end the capitalist system. He said there was "no security for any standard of life under capitalism" and to establish in its place the "co-operative commonwealth of the world."

Yours fraternally
Kenneth Stump
Worthing, Sussex

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target Oct 9th.
Eastern	981		2,000
East Midlands	683		1,800
Hants & Dorset	627		1,300
Humberside	527		1,100
London East	726		2,100
London West	384		1,000
London South	1067		1,500
Manchester & Lancs	934		2,000
Merseyside	900		2,100
Northern	731		2,500
Scotland East	374		1,300
Scotland West	591		2,300
Southern	721		1,700
South West	266		900
Wales East	130		1,000
Wales West	1496		2,000
West Midlands	753		2,000
Yorkshire	1016		2,500
Others	2626		3,900
Total received	15,531		35,000

Target £35,000 By October 9

OUR APPEAL TO WORKERS

By Steve Cawley

THIS WEEK £2,520

Some of the Tory press had to grudgingly concede that last weekend's Labour Movement Conference showed growing support for Marxism amongst trade unionists.

Ever since Militant started out 18 years ago, Militant's fighting fund has been assisted by individual trade unionists. But now what other paper is able to appeal the way we did at the TUC conference?

The collection at the Militant meeting there raised £1025 and there were other donations including £16 in "extras" on sales of Militant outside the conference. Special mention should be

made of the CPSA supporters, who put a large proportion of their expenses to the best possible use, and who also collected £120 for us separately.

Scottish workers have been particularly generous with their support for Militant, and with the appeal for the Labour Movement Conference, such as Wallacetown Shop stewards' Committee (£50). Thanks to Corkerhill Joint Trade Union committee (£15), Rolls-Royce, Hillington SSC (£10), member of Scottish Graphical Division (SOGAT), workers at Chloride Technical, Salford, and so on.

Some of these bodies pointed out that their members do not necessarily agree with many of the ideas

of Militant, but they see the need to protect our right to argue for our views in the movement.

It's particularly indicative of the type of support we're getting that many of our readers are prepared to make donations out of redundancy pay. Thanks amongst others to M Davies (Rotherham) who has given us £40!

Meetings in Blyth, Fleetwood, Leicester, Hartlepool, Stockton-on-Tees and Hull raised well over £160 and there are still some IOUs to come in! The meeting at the East Midlands LPYS summer camp benefitted our funds by another £40, while LPYS Branches in Glasgow Queens Park, Sunderland, Stretford, Blackley and Littlehampton were among

those to take collections either at or after meetings. Are there any other LPYS branches whose members will support our ideas in cash?

Thanks also to members of Labour Parties in Coventry South West, Harrogate, Peckham, Tunbridge Wells, and a host of other areas where readers of Militant put their money and names on our appeal sheets. We can't mention you all, but just some of the contributions were from Selly Oak TU. expenses, M Campbell (Headingley LP, C Cawley (Bridgend) £10 Rugby supporters £10, B Fee (Hull) £10, J Beaken, (Bristol, GMWU) £8.00, L Smith (UCW, E London).

Fivers came from R MacArthur (Wiltshire), F Murphy (Merseyside), D Taylor (Torbay), J Pridge (Leyton), J Severs (York) and L Dease (Middleton).

Sums of between £1 and £4 were received from E Gulliford (Pontypridd), J Thompson (Ayrshire), G Lowson (Rugby), D Pope (Toxteth), B O'Shaugnessy (UCATT Division 5), T Grewar (AUEW) and Cllr J Atkinson (both Hull), T Miller (E Kilbride) and someone who describes himself as "One of those ---- from the Tory Press"!

We've now got nearly half way—but £20,000 needs to be raised in the next four weeks—nobody can say they don't know where our money comes from if all our sellers ask for contributions!

MILITANT CALLING!

Sales drive 26 September—9 October

"Hello, I'm a member of your local Labour Party. I support the Militant Tendency. This is the socialist paper Militant. Want to buy one?"

"I thought for a minute you were a messenger from Michael Foot but I see you're a Militant—give us one of the papers, what the hell is Foot playing at?"

"Hullo I'm a member of your—"

"Ah the Militant. I've been looking for that for ages, where have you been hiding? Saw your man on the telly the other week."

"Hullo I'm a member of your local Labour Party. I support the Militant Tendency this is..."

"You're the reds in the Labour Party aren't you. Just as well there are some socialists in the party, finding socialists on the right wing would be a full time job for Eddie Shoestring. Give us a paper."

"Hullo this is the Militant. Want one?"

"Can you tell me what you think about Russia?"

Just some of the favourable responses we got recently on a door to door sale in East Kilbride. In three hours work four of us sold more than fifty papers. If we

had to repeat that throughout the town there would be a potential sale of 2,000!

Now what is potential and what is achieved are two different things. But the interest is there. The right wing in the party and in the press and media have done us the biggest favour of our life. All we have to do is go to the doors—people are there waiting for us!

Mind you there are a few things to watch for—the odd rampaging dog and the odd rampaging right winger—there are plenty of dogs but the others are very thin on the ground!

Before we went out I said "Now remember, smile, be enthusiastic, we're offering people a way out of capitalism, not tickets to the gas chamber. If we get stuck in we'll sell twenty or thirty easily". "You've been spending too much time in Peter Taaffe's company, steady son steady", came the reply.

After the sale I asked "well what do you think". "You were over cautious when you said twenty or thirty!" was the answer.

By Bob Wylie
(East Kilbride LP)

ads

Classified

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

Linda and Dave announce the birth of a wee baby boy, Ian, on Monday 6 September.

Anyone from Liverpool/Southport attending Tony Benn/New Socialist Forum in Blackpool? Can I scrounge a lift? Frank, Formby 79309.

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 in the South African mines. Available for hire from SALEP, 28 Martello Street, London E8 3PN. (Tel: 01-241 0434). £5 to LPYS branches/Labour Party Women's Sections. £10 to CLPs, TUs, etc.

LABOUR CAMPAIGN FOR GAY RIGHTS Fringe Meeting. 'Why the Labour Party should fight for Gay Rights'. Speakers include: Joan Lester MP, Ken Livingstone, Jo Richardson MP, Peter Tatchell. 8.00 pm, Tuesday 28 September. Venue: The Cliff Hotel, Queens Promenade, Blackpool.

BIRMINGHAM Rally Against the Witch-hunt. 'Fight the Tories, not the left'. Called by Birmingham Central ASTMS. Monday 20th, 7.30 pm, Digbeth Civic Hall. Speakers: Pat Wall, Audrey Wise, Fred Orton-Jones (ASLEF), health worker.

NORTH EAST Marxist Discussion Groups.

ASHINGTON: Sunday 26 September, 10.30 am, Ladies Room, Ashington Leisure Centre. Further information ring Ashington 817092.

FOREST HALL: Sunday 26 September and then fortnightly. Details: Dave Metcalfe, 0632 665277.

LPYS REGIONAL DAY SCHOOL, Saturday 18 September, 11.00 am, Retreat Hotel, Ashley Road, Parkstone, Poole. Features: 'Harlan County USA' film of miners' strike. Debate: 'Women and the struggle for socialism'.

ROTHERHAM Debate: Registers? Witch-hunts? Is this the way forward for Labour? JS Crowther MP (Rotherham CLP) v Kevin Ramage (YS National Chairman). Thursday 23 September, 7.30 pm, Clifton Hall, Wharnclyffe Street, Rotherham.

BIRKENHEAD LPYS Demonstration against unemployment. Saturday 25 September. 'No Return to 1932'. Assemble 10.30 am, Park Gates. Live Band.

YOUTH CAMPAIGN AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT Weekend School. 17/18/19 September in beautiful rural Shropshire. Cost only £5! This includes accommodation, food and guided tour around the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, birthplace of the industrial (socialist?) revolution.

Also debates and discussion with leading speakers. Cheques to YCAU, c/o The Peoples Centre, Madeley, Telford, Shropshire, or phone Telford 598433 for details.

NEWCASTLE West: Every Sunday. Contact Rob Lowther, 0632 775636.

NEWCASTLE North: Every Sunday. Contact Karen Walker, 0632 732959.

GOSFORTH: Every Sunday. Contact Rob Dennison, 0632 844918.

SANDIFORD: Every Sunday. Contact Gavin Dudley, 0632 652906.

GATESHEAD: Every Sunday. Contact Tom McGuinness, 18 Lumley Gardens, Gateshead. (Gateshead 783262)

WASHINGTON: Wednesday evenings from 22 September to 13 October. Details Washington 478424.

ads

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

POLLOK: Monday 20 September, Arden Primary School, 7.30 pm.

RENFREW: Thursday 23 September, Trinity High School, Renfrew.

SPRINGBURN: Tuesday 21 September, Springburn Sports Centre.

NORTH EAST Readers' Meetings: 'Fight the Tories not the Socialists'.

Thursday 23 September, 7.30 pm: SEAHAM, Carlton Arms, Vane Terrace. Phone 0783 653994.

Sunday 26 September: WASHINGTON, Columbia Community Association.

Sunday 3 October: NEWCASTLE Bridge Hotel. Speaker: John Pickard.

Monday 4 October: MID-DLESBROUGH. Details Middlesbrough 211364. Speaker: John Pickard.

Wednesday 6 October: SUNDERLAND, The Central, 32 Bridge Street. Speaker: John Pickard.

EASTERHOUSE: Thursday 23 September, Westwood School, Easterhouse, 7.30 pm.

EAST KILBRIDE: Monday 20 September, Westwood Hall, Westwood, 7.30 pm.

GORBALS: Monday 20 September, Blackfriars School, Cumbernauld Street, 7.30 pm.

GOVAN: Thursday 23 September, Govan Town Hall, 7.30 pm.

MOTHERWELL: Thursday 23 September, YMCA, Motherwell, 7.30 pm.

PAISLEY: Thursday 23 September, Paisley Town Hall, 7.30 pm.

PARTICK: Thursday 23 September, Partick Burgh Hall, 7.30 pm.

WEST OF SCOTLAND Militant Public Meetings. 'The Fight for a Socialist Britain'.

CASTLEMILK: Monday 20 September, Social Work Dept., Dougie Road, 7.30 pm.

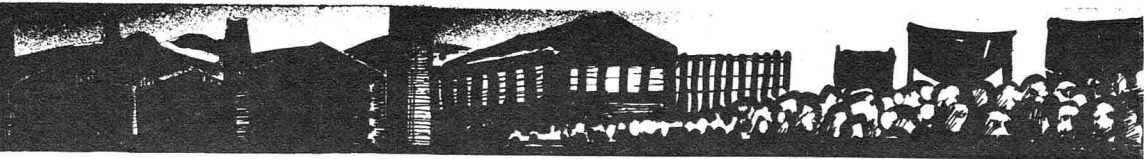
CLYDEBANK: Thursday 23 September, St Andrews School, Whitecreek, 7.30 pm.

COATBRIDGE: Contact Jim McVicar, 041 773 0999.

CRAIGTON: Monday 27 September, Crookston Castle School, 7.30 pm.

DRUMCHAPEL: Monday 20 September, St Ninians School, Blairdardie, 7.30 pm.

Industrial Reports



Heathfields workers defy harassment

Despite the continual harassment of pickets, by management, police and racists, the dispute at Heathfields in Slough continues

The 40 members of the GMWU, locked-out by Heathfield's management since 15th July, are tightening their grip on the factory to win re-instatement.

During the last week a delegation of strikers lobbied TUC conference and received the support of many leading trade unionists. Consequently trade union pressure is now being brought to bear on Heathfield's main customers BICC and British Telecomms.

At the factory gate the 7-day picketing continues in earnest with last Thursday's mass picket being a great

By Dave Carr

success. Delegations from GMWU branches from Fulham and Cambridge were in attendance as well as local Labour Party members, and Party members from Reading.

Joan Lester (Labour MP for Slough) who arrived later that day pledged to give her full support to the strikers. The strikers are hoping to get mass support for the demos planned outside the factory on 16 and 23 September.

On and off the picket lines the strikers are subject to intimidation and harassment. On the day of the mass picket, a large police

presence (who took no action against a lorry-driver who came close to running down three pickets as he drove into the factory at high speed) arrested a young picket for allegedly throwing a stone at a scab lorry. As in previous weeks no charges were brought and the picket was later released.

For all the problems and obstacles facing these GMWU members, they have shown unstinting resolve in the nine weeks of the lock-out. This determination must be matched by support of the trade union movement both by attending mass pickets on the 16th and 23rd and by raising the issue in Labour Party and union branches.

Send all donations and messages to; GMWU Heathfield Dispute Committee, 105 Greenford Avenue, London W7.

AIR INDIA

A leading member of the Air India Strike Committee, Jenny Ray, spoke at the very successful Labour Movement Conference last weekend and explained the issues which faced workers there in the eleventh week of their strike.

"During the dispute, on 3 August, 100 TGWU members were sacked in what had been partly a dispute about arbitrary rosters imposed by the management. When the TUC sold out ASLEF, this was a body blow to us. Nonetheless, when the NHS dispute started we picketed.

"Though we're only a small group of workers we are not intimidated. We were sent the same kind of threatening telegrams that ASLEF got in their dispute, but we said that we were not so terrified of losing our jobs as to sell our rights!

"We are fighting as part of the labour movement, we are not standing back aghast waiting for another time to fight. We know there is no other time.

"We are fighting the threat of redundancies and longer hours for less money, an issue which affects all airport workers, so we have asked fuellers to black Air India.

Jenny Ray speaking at Labour Movement Conference
Photo: Militant



"So far we have received no support from there but we are asking people from the TGWU, Fire Brigades Union, CPSA etc. who have any members involved with the airways to help get support, not just symbolic but real practical help.

"There is too often a gap between the shop floor workers and union tops. We

must not be let down as Grunwick workers were. If we lose it will be a setback for the TGWU as a whole. We are asking for resolutions of support, and practical support in particular finance."

Messages and donations to Ms J Ray, Air India Strike Committee Fund, 61 Sydney Road, Staines, Middx.

Rail pay

The long awaited decision of the Railway Staffs National Tribunal (RSNT) on this year's national pay rises for British Rail workers will savagely disappoint any rail worker who thought it would recognise their modest and just claim.

The RSNT has recommended an increase in basic rates of 6%—roughly half the union's claim. Furthermore, that rise is to take effect not from the agreed pay anniversary date in April but from 6 September, the date the British Rail Board (BRB) originally wanted.

The offer therefore over the whole year is worth only 4%, just one per cent more than the BRB's original insulting offer which the NUR National Executive quite correctly rejected and called strike action over this June.

Only for the most lowly paid will the rise take effect from April with a recommendation that the present poverty line Minimum Earnings Level (MEL) be increased by 6% from last April.

However, take heart, just to sweeten this pill, the RSNT recommend a further review of pay and conditions just before the expiry of this agreement and also that the Board and the rail unions should agree to one additional day's holiday in 1983!

On productivity, rail workers can expect no recognition of past sacrifices or any mercy in the future, as the now familiar strings are attached to the findings.

Firstly come pilot schemes to test the Board's proposals for "driver only" operation of some freight trains with the consequent loss of guards' jobs. Secondly, the St Pancras-Bedford electrified service to be driver only with guards retained for ticket duties for a minimum of six months after which "the parties are free to decide whether or not to retain them permanently." So

much for job security.

They propose discussions on single manning of trains meaning a further loss of footplate grades "if no agreement is reached the parties should agree to refer the issue to the RSNT." No doubt many railway workers bearing in mind the RSNT position on flexi rostering will find that ironical.

ASLEF and NUR are expected to provide joint proposals within three months for introducing the trainman concept. Once more we are told that changes in the responsibilities of staff should be rewarded additionally as under the terms of the 1981 pay agreement. In fact most staff are still awaiting any such blood money.

The proposals show that increasingly this tribunal is

becoming an echo of the BRB and the government and source of pressure from them. The report openly blames disputes and the unions for BRB's bad financial situation, not the chronic underinvestment or the recession. They also say that further productivity is a "prerequisite for defending living standards and jobs" without pointing out that BRB's productivity schemes have seen an attack on living standards and jobs.

The special recall NUR conference to be held next month must not see these proposals accepted. We must see the start of a real fight against these proposals.

By Bill Esmond
(Nottingham No 2 NUR personal capacity)

Steel closures

"You find this woman, Thatcher and her cabinet so unimpressable that if her own son were here he would be made redundant as well". So said Jimmy Burtney, Chairman, Joint unions committee, Clydebridge plant plate works in Cambslang Glasgow.

Under the programme of savage cutbacks organised by the Tories and big business, which are devastating the steel industry. Clydebridge works, which had a workforce of 3,000 a few years ago, is now down to 700 jobs. Thatcher's latest plans are to cut this to 150.

"We will become only an annexe to our sister mill", said Jimmy Burtney. "575 direct jobs and 300 indirect jobs will be lost." The shop stewards consider that this will mean complete closure within 2 years.

Meetings are now being held with shop stewards from other factories, trades councils, and local housing action groups to mount a campaign to defeat these plans. "We will invoke the full help of the triple alliance", warned Russell Cleery, secretary of the joint

unions committee.

They will also be sending a delegate to the STUC all-shop stewards meeting, and planning industrial action and solidarity with the NHS workers. "We are all well known to assist other struggles throughout the labour movement" stated Russell Cleery.

Johnstone, Frith & Brown, a privately owned steel company at Parkhead, previously known as Beardmores, employed 4,000 workers in the '70s. Today with only 350 jobs remaining, they face complete closure.

Joe Kearney, Convenor, Terry Scally, ISTC steward, and Dave Barry complained that nine tenths of the machinery was pre-war. A typical example of the capitalist class and their inability to invest.

Terry said he regretted not staying in the Labour Party to fight those "who are only there to feather their own nests." "We need more nationalisation" said Dave Barry. These stewards are also meeting with other stewards in other factories.

TUC readers meeting

"You can't expel ideas. 'Militant's' programme will gather support as the capitalist crisis deepens and workers learn from their experiences."

This comment by Joe Marino (General Secretary of Bakers Union) really hit the nail on the head at this years TUC Militant Readers Meeting attended by over 90 delegates and visitors.

Kevin Roddy recently elected President of the CPSA opened the meeting and explained the apparent contradiction of what has formerly been regarded as a very conservative "semi-union" becoming radicalised and electing the first Marxist president.

It was reality that forced white collar workers leftward. Kevin attacked the witch hunt campaign of Labour's right wing "How absurd it would be, when the CPSA leadership is cam-

paigning for the union's affiliation to Labour for part of it to be expelled from the Party on the grounds that they were Militant supporters".

Brian Ingham (Militant Industrial Editor) described how the contrasts in society were being heightened by the continuing capitalist recession. Working class families are dragged into despair through unemployment and low pay whilst £2,900 million could be made overnight by Stock Exchange speculators.

But despite the dole queues and a number of defeats for the unions the fundamental strength of the movement had not been destroyed. The Tebbit and Prior legislation showed that the bosses knew how much power rests in the trade unions.

Brian quoted claims from an opinion poll that "only" 31% of trade unionists wanted to use industrial muscle to bring down the

Tories. Just imagine how long the Tories would last if a positive lead was given to these workers from the tops of the movement.

When Dudley Edwards, a veteran socialist and trade unionist, described how in 1926 the British working class struggled and was defeated only because of betrayal by its leadership, nobody thought of this just as an abstract history lesson.

What befalls the working class in the 1980s—a repeat of past betrayals or a successful outcome to a struggle for a better society? Much depends on replacing many of the trade union tops with genuine class fighters with socialist perspectives.

The collection of £1025 showed the determination of the delegates in the meeting to aid this process and to help Militant grow in influence.

By Tim Harris

What we stand for



WHAT WE STAND FOR

Find out what the bosses and their media, and the right wing of the labour movement are so scared of. Only 30p, post-free, from Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



Industrial Reports

September 22: Make the action bite

Health workers will be delighted to see the growing support for their fight against the government for their 12% pay claim. Throughout the dispute the aid given to NHS workers by rank and file trade unionists has been tremendous.

There will also be relief that delegates to this year's TUC conference called for increased action. The call for at least an hour of action but

more from those who can give more is far below the clear demand for a 24-hour strike most activists would have wanted.

But NHS workers and other trade unionists will be demanding that 22 September nonetheless becomes a day of real action which the Tories cannot ignore. The press will be looking under every stone to find examples of trade unionists who "don't want to strike" as they did on the TUC "Day of Action" on 14 May 1980.

This predictable press campaign can only be undercut by keeping clearly in mind the purpose of the action. The health workers whose ability to strike is severely limited by the emergency nature of much of their work need the active support of all workers.

The Tories have given another reason for solidarity with their attacks on trade union rights, legislation trying to ban effective picketing and sympathy strikes which must be shown to be inoperable.

The Tories have used the unveiled threat of the dole queue to slash living standards. They can only be defeated by the muscle of the labour movement, by class action. There must be a lead before 22 September and a purpose to activities on the day. The day of action must not just be a holiday with a few speeches which the government can ignore.

Pressure must be on to make 22 September a 24-hour general strike and a focus for the whole movement to ensure the fight con-

tinues after the strike and wins. In every area, trade union organisations at district, regional and local levels should be organising rallies and demonstrations on the 22nd.

Workplace meetings before the day of action are vital to build full support. If the issues at stake are explained, how the health workers can be helped, why and how the Tories must be defeated, the propaganda of the press media can be made irrelevant. Leaflets, posters, literature to explain to the

public why the action has been taken would also have a tremendous effect.

If the whole labour and trade union movement organises and puts its weight behind the full NHS claim, the defeat of the Tory government and the return of a Labour government committed to socialist policies, the Tories would be forced into a rapid retreat.

E. MIDLANDS

"I'd like to see £104 on my wage slip!" was the reaction of one picket at the Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, to the wild claims of Norman Fowler about the wages of health workers.

Paul Swift, NUPE, took home £48.65 last week. "I can't afford to strike," he said, "but it's the principle. We've got to strike for a living wage for ourselves and people coming into the NHS in the future."

Across the East Midlands, there were mass pickets at key hospitals during last month's week of action which drew support from workers outside the health service.

Owen Page, ASTMS branch secretary at the Der-

by Royal Infirmary said the picket at the DRI "was superb. We must have had at least 300 people coming out, mainly from the Manor, City and Royal Infirmary. There have also been some people from Nottingham—sisters and charge nurses." All the staff at the Area laundry walked out and the picket line was swelled by members of the NUR, POEU and Labour Party.

Owen felt the picket boosted the morale of many workers. "The mood was very good, which maybe wasn't true a week or before. But because of the good turnout, things like the newspapers stopping to show support, the Fire Brigade coming up here and

everything else, the morale is tremendous. I see no reason why we can't win the 12%."

The local media has tried desperately to make out that patients are suffering because of the dispute but patients interviewed at the DRI said they were not suffering and were fully behind the staff. One woman felt that they were "too soft going for 12%. They ought to get 24%!"

In the East Midlands there is a lot of solidarity and sympathy for the health workers, while the mood of a growing number on the picket lines was perhaps best summed up by a NUPE member at QMC who said: "We've got to fight to the end."

By Chris Ridge



Pickets at an Oldham hospital

Photo: Militant

Guy's hospital

Derek Palmer, Branch Secretary of NUPE for Guy's Hospital District in London spoke to Tim Harris at TUC Conference where the district brought a coach-load of members of NUPE, COHSE, GMWU and TGWU to lobby.

"Selective strike action has been taking place at Guy's Hospital in various departments such as the sterilising department (CSSD), stores, laundry and so on on a rotating basis. This is going on indefinitely with 100% support.

"The dispute should have been settled by now and the only way to do this is to adhere to NUPE policy of all-out strike except for accident and emergency cover.

TH: What do you think of solidarity action by non-health workers?

DP: "You either fight Tebbit's bill or you don't. Some of the larger unions could use this health dispute to fight Tebbit.

"We'll have spasmodic action on the 22nd, 24 hours from the miners, one hour from the electricians. That is not trade union solidarity.

"There has been a totally ineffective lead from the Health Committee. Members don't know which way they're going. It's hard to sustain action of that duration—it prolongs the suffering of the patients, and it doesn't bring home to the government the total solidarity of the unions.

"The TUC is facing two ways at the same time—the movement must be starting

to unite around the TUC if we're to change conditions in the country at the present time. Support is there from the public. Some of the unions and the TUC have not capitalised on that support.

"If 22 September is not successful, there must be the adoption of NUPE policy—an all-out strike in the health

service with accident and emergency cover. Otherwise there'll be total anger and resentment amongst the ancillaries and other staff."

By Tim Harris

BRADFORD HOSPITALS

Selective action inside and pickets outside, increase the pressure on Bradford hospitals. Unions involved remained solid in their determination to fight for a living wage and in resisting Thatcher's attacks on the NHS.

Last week we got an unexpected bonus in the form of a statement by Mr Brian Gadsby-Peat, Consultant Specialist and Chairman of the Consultants' and Specialists' Association.

Mr Gadsby-Peat called for the sacking of the strikers and their 'ring-leaders'. He said that many of their jobs were 'unskilled' and that there were plenty of people on the dole who could do their jobs and 'that they did not deserve a lot of money'!

This statement resulted in spontaneous walkouts by staff. The trade unions have blacked Gadsby-Peat. He went on to accuse us of caus-

ing hardship to patients on the waiting lists. I have no doubt that if some consultants paid less attention to private patients, there would be no waiting list in the first place.

Under pressure he apologised if he had hurt anyone. Gadsby-Peat's statements highlight a number of things.

Firstly, he looks on us from the pinnacle of his consultant's salary, secondly he ignores the fact that his work and his life-style depend on the co-operative efforts of workers who are struggling on the breadline.

Thirdly, we are not some kind of cannon fodder for the officer class in the hospital service or the government.

By an NHS worker

The whisky barons

Any nurse or doctor will tell you that too much drink causes accidents. You might think therefore that the tops of the whisky industry would be aware of the danger that can follow from abuse of their products and would be supporting the Health Workers claim. Not so.

When flying pickets from the Royal Infirmary at Glasgow asked for a collection at the Long John distillery in London Road, they were refused permission from the management.

We spoke to the Health Workers involved, who were disappointed but not downhearted:

"We'll come and meet the workers at the gates" they chorused when told of the whisky baron's decision.

They were delighted by the action of the Electricians in Fleet Street. "Nobody is happy about breaking the law but it is Thatcher's law they were breaking. It has come to the point where that is necessary to save the National Health Service" one nurse commented.

MANCHESTER

During the recent five day NHS strike, LPYS branches in Manchester joined the picket lines. YS members spoke to NHS worker Graham Rice, on the picket at Withington Hospital:

Q. "What are your feelings

towards Norman Fowler?"

A. "Very angry. Fowler stated on television that £48 is not a typical wage. What Norman Fowler was implying was that NHS workers' wages were far higher than £48, this statement made me completely angry."

Q. "How resentful are you against the Thatchers' government?"

A. "Very resentful, ever since her people came in we've seen nothing but cuts, cuts, cuts. I'd like to see a government that would be prepared to give the NHS top priority as far as development and finance is concerned. In future the NHS should be run by the people who work in it, and the only way that will be achieved is with a socialist Labour government with a socialist programme."

The other interview was with hospital cleaner, Jean Mayers.

Q. "Besides low pay how bad are redundancies?"

A. "Well among people like me its very bad, they've spent too much time taking on administrative staff and at the same time they've made cuts in our section of work."

Q. "What have been the feelings of the management towards your situation?"

A. "Bloody terrible. During work hours they give us a lot of stick, also we get trouble from reactionary nursing officers who treat us like dirt!"

Q. "Whats your attitude towards the Labour Party?"

A. "The only organisation I'm going to listen to in future is the Labour Party Young Socialists because

they have views and ideas about the state of the country. The LPYS have lots of determination and militancy, they are the only people who have faith in the working people and youth."

Derbyshire Royal Infirmary

"Militant' has been the best paper that has supported us," pickets at Derbyshire Royal Infirmary told me.

Some pickets have been out on the picket line for seven weeks. One worker said, "Up until last week, weekend workers were coming in to cover accident and emergencies. Then management came along and told us our services were no longer needed at the weekend.

"What is the mood of the workers at the moment? Very good, though we wish more health workers would join us.

"We have had a lot of support from the public and from other unions. We are confident of getting the twelve per cent, even more so since we heard the result of the RCN ballot.

"We are hoping that there will be a genuine 24-hour strike. Obviously accidents and emergencies will be covered but it's pointless coming out just for a few hours!

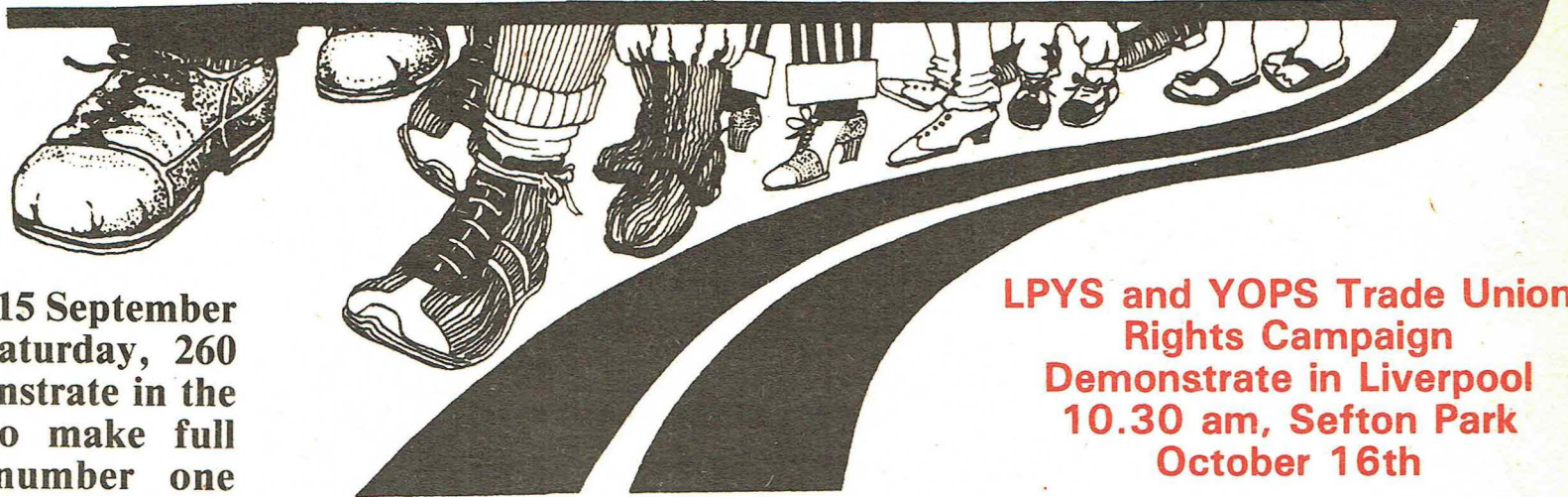
"I know it's all right doing that to show support but if we are going to get back at management, it's got to involve everyone."

By Chris Fernandez

Militant

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By Richard Evans
 (On the West Midlands march)



“From Wednesday 15 September to the following Saturday, 260 marchers will demonstrate in the West Midlands “to make full employment the number one priority”.

The Midlands Peoples March for Jobs will touch every part of the region going through 26 towns and cities. Not only Stoke, Wolverhampton, Walsall and Derby—the famous cities of the Midlands—but also Redwich, Tamworth and Telford, the new towns built to accommodate the post-war boom that now have unemployment way above the national average and deserted sites that were to be the warehouses and industry of those overspill towns.

On Saturday, all the marchers converge on Birmingham, a city that typifies the decline of British capitalism. Once the industrial centre of the world, relatively unscathed by the depths of the 1930 slump, unemployment in Birmingham has now hit 17%. In the last three years unemployment has nearly trebled in the West

Midlands March for Jobs - Link it to 22nd Strike

LPYS and YOPS Trade Union Rights Campaign
 Demonstrate in Liverpool
 10.30 am, Sefton Park
 October 16th

Midlands.

It is because of this devastation that I am preparing to march for the second time in little over a year, having been on the original Liverpool to London march. But it is right that we learn the lessons of that march.

The organisers started out then with the idea that it was a ‘non-political’ event and that everyone including Liberals and Tories should

join together to campaign against unemployment, as if it wasn’t the bosses that were creating it in the first place. On that march we even saw Tory councils refuse to hire us rooms to sleep in.

But by the time we reached Salford and after we had been addressed by the Tory mayor of Irlam we voted overwhelmingly to ban Liberals and Tories from our platforms.

This time we are only on the road for four days and therefore it is imperative that we take up anti-Tory slogans and chant right from the beginning. The people on the side of the roads, the people stopping work when the march passes will be trade unionists and their families. Even if we only attract 10% of the support of the Liverpool march we will gain the sympathy of tens of

thousands of working class people.

We have to make sure that they are given a lead by the trade union movement, and therefore it is vital that the question of the march is linked with the call for a general strike for 22 September. It is clear that Thatcher does not listen to marches and demonstrations, we now have to raise the level of the campaign to bring down the

Tory government.

The YOPs Trade Union Rights Campaign will be active throughout the march to build support for the LPYS demonstration on 16 October in Liverpool against low pay and unemployment. On the basis of the support we expect to achieve, we have already booked a train from the West Midlands for that demonstration.

12% FOR NHS WORKERS

From page one

for the Social Services, an extra £27.98 per week.

Admiral Sir John Treacher, the boss of ‘Playboy’ (hardly a vital job for society) received an estimated £5,000,000 for his five-year contract. Victor Lownes, his predecessor, was dismissed with a £350,000 golden handshake. What kind of society allows this state of affairs to exist?

It seems that Health Minister Kenneth Clarke has totally gone off his rocker. In a speech he made in Nottinghamshire at the weekend he claimed that “health workers enjoyed unique job security over the past three years.” Health service workers are much more in touch with the real world than this Tory worthy. Some of them have been forced to leave the NHS because they can’t afford to live on the poverty wages!

Dr Peter Crome, a consultant physician in geriatric medicine, said at a recent conference of the Medical Practitioners’ Union that cuts in staffing and services imposed as a result of DHSS, i.e. Tory government, policies were undermining the future of the National Health Service. In one ward in his department he said, “24 patients had no nurses at all for four or five eight-hour shifts each week, care being given by nursing auxiliaries and domestic assistants.”



Photo: Militant

The ‘Daily Express’ of 7.9.82 blurted out the real truth...“the guts of the financial problem is that only a finite amount of money is available to spend on an activity of the state that earns nothing. That may seem brutal but it is true.”

For this Tory government, the health of workers and their families counts for nothing before interest and profit. £13 billion can be spent on defence, £8 billion on Trident missiles, but valuable members of our society have to fight for a decent wage!

If you’re born poor, you stand a good chance of having poorer health and dying younger than the more privileged members of society. The fact that class inequalities in peoples’ health still exist is a great embarrassment to the Tories. The Thatcher government has suppressed two reports which document widespread inequalities in the health of the nation.

The irony is that the very

people expected to run the health service are also among those low paid sections of society most at risk from bad health!

It’s all right for the Tories to tell the health service workers to make do, they won’t have to suffer. With millionaires packing the Tory Cabinet—reputed to be the richest this century—they don’t exactly have to suffer any hardships. If they need medical treatment they go private, as Thatcher did last month.

But the lies and distortions of the Tories and their press have cut no ice with the majority of the population who are sympathetic to the cause of the hospital workers. Even the Medical Practitioners’ Union, representing about 5,000 doctors, has called for the support of the hospital workers’ pay claim and their action on 22 September.

Peter Doyle, a NUPE area organiser for the North East, has reported on the support being prepared for the NHS

workers: “On 22 September,” he said, “we expect all the major engineering factories to shut down for the day, including CA Parsons who intend to march to the picket line at the local Walkergate hospital.”

“Two shipyards on the Tyne will be out. The Boiler-makers’ union have instructed their members in the Northern region to stop work for the day. The Tyneside buses will be off the roads for at least two hours during the morning and afternoon rush hours. The pits are all out. And this is only the tip of the iceberg.”

“At ‘worst’ the response we have got from workers has been to organise workplace levies of £1 or £2 per head. We get a good response everywhere we go.”

“Teams of about 50 flying pickets go out and leaflet factories in the mornings, then visit the shop stewards’ committees later in the day. We are awaiting a decision from ASLEF. If they come out and the trains stop on the 22nd we will have to cancel our demonstration in London.”

“If that happens, we have already drawn up contingency plans. We are hiring 100 buses to picket every major factory and trading estate in the area.”

This response from the workers in the North East shows the groundswell of support that exists for health workers. It is typical of the support that has been organised nationally.

The trade union leaders

must now prepare to carry the struggle further after 22 September. The labour movement cannot rest until all NHS workers get their justified claim and this vicious Tory government is

given its marching orders.
 ★ Support the NHS workers!
 ★ All out on the 22nd!
 ★ Kick the Tories out, bring back Labour to power on a socialist programme.

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