

TORIES CONDEMN COUNCIL TENANTS

Tory Policies have condemned hundreds of thousands of working class families to frustration and despair in inner city slums and ghettos.

Sir Thomas Whites Gardens is a tenement block in Brickfield, Liverpool. Tenants pay between £18 and £21 a week for the dubious privilege of living there.

The tenements are four storeys high, without lifts: with open staircases and broken lights. Even taking children shopping presents problems. Either the children or the shopping have to left downstairs while the other is carried up.

Living conditions in "Tommy Whites" are primitive. Repairs of most basic facilities are ignored. It is common to see broken soil pipes overflowing and children playing in the mess.

The tenements are built around large courtyards that are neglected and badly cleaned, frequently covered in broken glass, with the shells of burnt out or derelict cars scattered around. The

By Felicity Dowling
(Liverpool Labour Party)

place has become a dumping ground for stolen cars and it is not unusual for cars to be driven around the tenement like racing cars around a track.

One child has been knocked down twice already—and he is only five years old. Many parents keep their children in for safety's sake, but being housed above the ground floor means that there are no places for the kids to play.

Many tenants are afraid to leave their flats because of the high incidence of burglaries—blamed on young dossers sleeping rough in the blocks. Old people are particularly afraid to venture out.



Tenants at 'Tommy Whites' tenements in Liverpool want the whole block demolished. Photo: Denis Doran

The tenants want and need to put a stop to all these burglaries, but at present relations with the police are poor following a riot in the area a few months ago.

One family (man, woman, and 3 young children) explained to *Militant* the conditions in which they live: "During the winter we all have to sleep in one room to try to keep warm because the

bedroom was so cold and damp. A thermometer in the bedroom recorded -2° at one point."

They described the problems they have with their drains. "When the tenants in the flats above flush their toilet, it sometimes happens that the effluent overflows into our own bathroom from our toilet."

Complaining to the coun-

cil, they were told that the next time it happened they should lift the cover to the drain outside the flat and let the effluent overflow into the street! But they explained that as well as messing their own bathroom, the effluent from upstairs already overflowed into the courtyard.

These tenants believe that one of their children has

already contracted enteritis through the conditions they are forced to live in. Theirs are typical of the problems faced by the majority of tenants in this modern slum.

What's more, they are typical of the problems faced by workers in many housing estates and blocks of flats, all over the country.

Continued on back page

Pakistani socialists framed

By Roger Silverman

journal of the Socialist wing of the Pakistan Peoples' Party.

Meanwhile, tanks surrounded Schiphol, Amsterdam's airport, and the editorial offices of *Struggle* were raided and ripped apart.

Struggle has twice been banned in Pakistan and is particularly feared by Zia's brutal military regime. Having failed by its own resources to curb its growing influence, Zia's 'dirty tricks' department concocted this vicious frame-up in an effort to use Dutch police to do

their dirty work.

Since the brilliant demonstration held at the recent Netherlands-Pakistan hockey match, when a huge banner calling for Zia's overthrow was unfurled in front of Pakistani television cameras during a live broadcast, Zia has been hell-bent on revenge. Already five television directors have been sacked!

During the police rampage, no weapons were found, and all eighteen repudiated hi-jacking as a means of struggle. Police had to release sixteen, but two are still being held as illegal immigrants.

If Nasir Nazmi Chouhan and Muhammad Ajmal are

deported, they face certain public execution under Martial Law Regulation No.53 as soon as they set foot on Pakistani soil.

To cover their embarrassment at being made monkeys of by General Zia, the Dutch authorities have resorted to barefaced lies. The Attorney-General has retracted his original admission that the arrests were prompted by a "tip-off" from Karachi, and claimed that those arrested had confessed that there was such a hi-jack conspiracy, but that there was at present insufficient evidence to hold them.

In a statement *Struggle* Continued on back page

Don't stand on the sidelines...

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Oct 16 LPYS demo..

YOUTH



Youth on the demonstration in Liverpool.

Photo: D. Doran

“What struck me most was the very warm reception we got in Liverpool. Some demonstrations get a hostile reaction from some people but not here.”

This comment from a member of Erith and Crayford Labour Party Young Socialists typified the mood of exhilaration after the LPYS march and rally against youth unemployment on 16 October.

The weather was as foul as it could be, starting with pouring rain and finishing in gale force winds. “It was like a scene from the Hound of the Baskervilles,” said one unemployed girl from Liverpool. But it takes more than rough weather to put off the YS.

Banners from every part of England, Scotland and Wales; red flags and placards showed the LPYS's determination to fight against the Hobson's Choice given by Thatcher's government of the dole queue or a YOPS scheme.

The local commercial radio station said there were 12,000 on the demonstration, but no one on the march had time to count the legs and divide them by two. They were too busy getting their socialist message across and making enough noise to drown out the roar from Anfield where Liverpool were playing at home.

As the procession left Sefton Park, the chants started, and LPYS members started selling Socialist Youth and Militant and giving out leaflets. Unfortunately the police broke the demonstrations into four separate sections but even that couldn't stop the impact of the march. One section was led by a

hired bus with placards of the YOPs Trade Union Rights Campaign, with slogans like “Jobs not YOPs”, “Get Organised” and “Jobs not slops” on the top. Members of the campaign told the people of Toxteth what they were fighting for and led chants and songs.

As we passed the local hospital, the speakers on the bus called out for support of the full 12% for all health workers, who have been in battle with the Tories for 5 months.

On the streets and the estates, YS members spoke to local people, selling papers and explaining that there was a real alternative to Thatcherism and how the LPYS's socialist policies could solve the crisis which has made Merseyside a no hope area over the past decade or more.

Dave, who is 16, and has had no job since leaving school this summer told Militant “It's good to see something like this, someone who's fighting for us, not against us”.

Two old age pensioners, working class women out shopping told me “I thought you were all supposed to be violent people, but what you're saying sounds like sense to me. What has Thatcher ever done for areas like this except insult us?”

“This demonstration will bring attention to the fact that most young kids are sick of this Tory Government.”

Things were bad in the 1930's. People said they would never return. but they are back.

TYNESIDE

Brian Wilkinson

“I'm fed up looking for jobs. I've been on the dole four times this year. I've been to Holland, Germany, Aberdeen, Peterhead, Inverness and Edinburgh for jobs because there's no work on Tyneside.

“This demonstration will bring attention to the fact that most young kids are sick of this Tory Government.”

Jack Rawling, 76

“I'm here because my heart is with the LPYS. The youth are having a worse time today than I did in the 1930's. Because there's no future with the Tories.

“For the first 30 years of my life, I knew only poverty. I never had a regular job. It's my duty as a pensioner to link up with the youth to fight against Thatcher—she's the worst Tory I've ever known—even worse than Baldwin.”

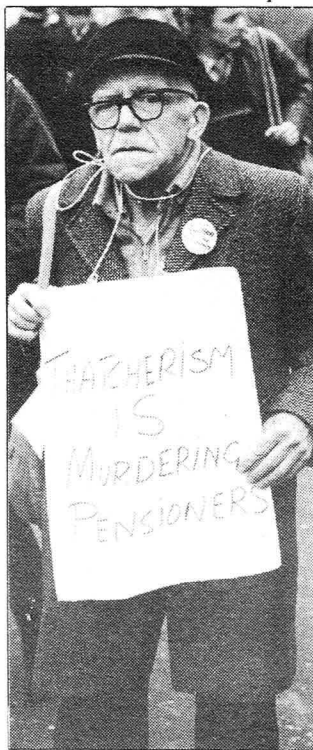
WALES

Stephen Evans, 22 unemployed for three and a half years. From the Rhondda where there is 50% unemployment.

“I became unemployed when I was 18. After 18 nobody wanted to know. Being unskilled is also a handicap.

“I'm sickened with the way the Tories push youth, especially working class youth about. Socialism is the only way out.”

Photo: Andrew Wiard Report.



Jack Rawling



Tom Mellon Photo: J. Woulfe

The Tories came to power in May 1979. By March 1980 6,000 jobs at Corby steelworks had gone.

Unemployment in Corby is now well over 20%. It is said that YOP schemes employ the largest number of workers in the town. Without a change in society, the future for youth is grim.

But some Corby youth came on the demonstration to show they are prepared to fight for a better future.

Mandy Ford, 19, Unemployed for 3 months.

When I was 17, I had to leave home to get a job. I don't think anyone should have to leave home when they are that young.

Before I left home I was on 2 YOP schemes. Nothing came of it. They just laid you off and took on more YOPsters. The money wasn't very good anyway.

I believe in the labour movement and the LPYS. I liked it when the demo went past that hospital. The nurses waved from the windows. The sooner we get rid of the Tories the better.

Carol Davie. Unemployed for three months.

“The money you get on the dole is disgusting. I can't live on it. I was offered a job with a Youth Opportunities scheme, but I turned it down. £25 for a 40 hour week is slave labour.

“But I'm also on the demo because of the NHS cuts being made in Corby. They're closing the Community Hospital. (NB Corby a steel town with a population of 50,000 has no general hospital—Ed)

I found out about the demo 2 weeks ago when I bought a copy of the Militant. I'm definitely joining the LPYS now.”

Tom Mellon, 22, ISTC member and steelworker, Corby.

“I'm fed up with this Tory Government and the capitalist system. I want it changed as soon as possible.”

Margaret Deacon, 18, CPSA sub branch secretary.

“Trade union rights for YOPs workers is important—it's a basic right. Also trade union rates of pay so that bosses don't use them as cheap labour. We must stop the bosses taking on YOPsters and sacking other workers.

“It's important for young people to show they're active in the LP. Because we're the Labour Party of the future.”

Mandy Tokelove (Scunthorpe LPYS) “YOPs schemes are a farce. How can these schemes replace the jobs there used to be in Scunthorpe's steel works and the jobs that depended on it?”

“I walked out of a YOP scheme in a chemist shop. The careers officer wouldn't let me go to college full time, so I went anyway. The boss who's a really arrogant type gave me all the most menial jobs while other people were left standing around. There was no question of any training.”

A retired worker, Joe Buckingham told Militant “I have been in the Labour Party since I joined the Labour League of Youth in 1928-29 in Poplar. I've worked for Labour since then and been active.

“Just lately I've become fed up with the Party but coming here today has put new spirit in me. This is the Labour Party I knew in the '30s though even then they were going to expel the Labour League of Youth.

The Tories have lit a fire under the youth and when you start getting burned, you start moving. Now they've got someone taking their part. It's great to see young people fighting.”

TAKE ON THE TORIES

Reports by
Roger Shrives
and
Heather Rawling



Oct 16 LPYS Demo

Photo: D. Doran



Margaret Deacon, Mandy Ford and Carol Davie at the Pier head.

Photo: J. Woulfe

“The message of the LPYS has been made quite clear to the people of Liverpool. We want the Tories out, and their system as well!”

With these fighting words, **Kevin Ramage**, national chairman of the LPYS introduced the rally at Liverpool's Pier Head at the end of the most successful LPYS demonstration so far.

Dennis Skinner MP said how good it was to see so many in Liverpool. If the Labour Party moved away from witch-hunts, they could get more demonstrations like the large rally they held in Liverpool a few years back.

“I want to carry out Labour policy on the 35-hour week, the national minimum wage, retirement at 60, £20 grant for all at school, to get rid of YOPs, and I want to do it alongside every single member selected by their constituency parties.”

Terry Fields, prospective Labour candidate for Liverpool Kirkdale and FBU national executive member told the audience the day had been a tribute to the LPYS. What an inheritance the youth had from the Tories, but the YS proved they could give enthusiasm and a lifeline to young people.

“The movement should take a leaf from the LPYS book. You can't mess about with the system. It has to be taken over by the workers. We must turn our backs on capitalism. Any attempts by insignificant leaders of the party and trade unions to attack the LPYS will meet firm opposition. Be bold, don't put up with second best, only the best is good enough for the working class.”

Laurence Coates, LPYS rep on Labour's NEC warned the press, if they even mentioned the demonstration, would show it as a gathering of extremists. “But what is extreme about a 35-hour week and a £90 minimum wage? Whether you are on the dole, on YOPs, at work, at school or college you can organise and fight back for decent treatment and for a living wage. He called on all present to join the LPYS and the

Labour Party and join with ‘Militant’ in the fight to transform society.

Dave Nellist PPC Coventry South East, showed how Tebbit in his usual inimitable way, had spilt the beans about the purpose of YOPs, to salvage companies down the pan, boosting their profits by slave labour to compete better with the Far East. They were using fear at a time when the odds against getting a labourer's job in the West Midlands were 671-1.

Tony Mulhearn (Labour PPC for Toxteth) also congratulated the LPYS. “This is the greatest event for the labour movement since Weighell's resignation!” The march was an inspiration.

“In parliament too we want real working class fighters like the LPYS, not people there for their own careers, but working on the average wage of a skilled worker with the rest going to the labour movement. Unless we fight for socialism, we will be failing the youth of the country.”

Kevin Roddy, president of the Civil Service union CPSA, told us that on the historic day when the national banner of his union had been on an LPYS march for the first time, the first heavy blast of wind had blown it to bits!

“Among CPSA members who administer the social security system there is much sympathy for this demonstration and the position of YOPs workers. Strikes in Birmingham and Oxford for more staff to deal with growing dole queues underline the huge increase in unemployment. It also shows the way this government hits at both employed and unemployed. The struggle they are facing is the same.”

The optimism of the meeting defied the attempts by the Tories to crush the fight out of us by mass unemployment, defied the weather, defied even the poor quality of the public address system (rumoured to have been sabotaged by the Tories.)

Given the enthusiasm, the determination and the fighting Marxist programme and policies of the LPYS, the working class would indeed be undefeatable.

A group of young lads were on the demonstration from Yorkshire. They came because they want to fight for a better deal. But what are they asking for? Do they have wild expectations that cannot possibly be fulfilled?

Their comments show that the things they want from life don't include going to Caribbean islands with sexy filmstars, but it seems that simple things like youth clubs at weekends are beyond their reach.

Charlie.

“We want Maggie out. I need more dole money. YOPs aren't worth going on. You're no better off once you've paid your bus fares and everything.”

Mark 16, on a YOP scheme as a construction worker at Henry Boots.

“We need more money for housing work.”

Richard 15, school student.

“We need better education. If we lose a book we have to pay for it ourselves.”

All said, “We want more jobs. We need better entertainment. Youth clubs in our area should be open on Wednesday nights and weekends.”

“We need more discos and concerts and less Police hassle. Coppers should let youth dress how they like and not pick you up just because you're a punk or skinhead or wha



BELLY-FLOP

What a difference a year makes. Last year Roy Jenkins talked of his SDP aeroplane as having broken into the stratosphere and heading for a majority SDP-Liberal government.

This year, more prosaically, even their rolling 'Conference train' broke down before its final resting place at Great Yarmouth.

The latest opinion polls shows the Alliance, holding bottom place with 23%, and the SDP are now very much the junior partners; and when people are reminded of the existence of the Alliance, support for them fell to 21½%. There is no more talk of Prime Minister Jenkins.

Gone "mouldy"

Their former supporters from big business are concerned that they have failed in their task, which was to split the Labour Party. On 9 October, the Economist, (Shirley Williams' favourite paper) described the SDP as having gone 'too mouldy'. It was just offering old souped-up recipes which would mean a "return to rule by permanent secretary and quango bureaucrat."

Even its existing membership has fallen from 78,000 in March this year, to 64,000 in September, with so far less than 70% renewing membership.

When it was launched the SDP received the fanfares of the millionaire press. "We wish the social democrats well" proclaimed the Financial Times, 3 March, 1981. And the Who's Who of big business, which backed the SDP, made their position clear. "We are quite simply offering a more stable environment for business". Lord Sainsbury told the Sunday Telegraph, 20 September, 1981.

But such revamped Toryism has had little appeal amongst working people and the unemployed. None of the policies adopted at last week's SDP conference will change that. Whatever minor differences of style, the SDP showed it was united in curbs on trade

By Jim Chrystie

unions, in wanting an incomes policy and in opposing an expansion in social welfare.

Any SDP government would be vicious in its attacks upon working people. "Roy Jenkins suggested penalising strikers with loss of benefit to help wage moderation," The Times reported, 24 February, 1981, and this approach was adopted by many at the conference. The leadership had to constantly try to tell their members that they were not an anti-union party, as they still hope to split Labour. But the lifestyle and approach of many delegates was a million miles away from working people.

The SDP conference showed that now the novelty has worn thin, and the media have lost interest, the SDP has reverted to what it always really was—a group of extreme right-wing Labour politicians, who had been rumbled in the Labour Party and tried to set up a party to fulfill their careerist ambitions.

Big business gave them initial backing, with lavish funds and donations from companies. They wanted to use the 'Gang of Four' to split the Labour Party and trade unions, and so stop the election of a Labour government with radical policies. But in a period of capitalist crisis their 'tried and failed' right-wing policies had little appeal.

Failed to split Labour

The SDP may now be faltering but to make sure that it is finished off once and for all Labour must campaign against their policies, not by fudging, and least of all by imitating them. A clean break from its own Williams-Owen-Healey-Callaghan past must be made, posing instead a clear socialist alternative.



Praying for a return to better electoral days? William Rodgers, former organiser for the right wing in the Labour party at last week's Cardiff SDP conference. Photo: D Doran

Hattersley 'rumbled'

On Panorama, 27 September, I accused right-wing Labour MP, Roy Hattersley of calling for the SDP traitors to re-join the party while at the same time he demanded the expulsion of Militant supporters.

Hattersley indignantly rejected the charge. But unfortunately for Roy, the Financial Times of 3 October, 1981 reported: "Mr Hat-

tersley in a speech to the Solidarity campaign in London last night, said that the Brighton Conference had been a good conference for Labour. The gains at the expense of the far left had shown there was now 'not even a plausible excuse' for desertion by the founders of the SDP, which was simply a vehicle for the ambitions of a handful of politicians fearful of their prospects in any other parties.

"Many ex-Labour members who thought their ideals

could be realised in the SDP must now appreciate what a rag of opportunism and discontent that party has become. Now that the Labour Party can be seen as a broad-based party once again, I hope that they will come back home and work with us."

To use a favourite phrase of your mentor, James Callaghan, you have been 'rumbled' Roy. Either the Financial Times reporter got it wrong or you are a little bit 'confused' about what you

actually said. In any case it is indelibly printed on the minds of the rank and file of the party, that you wish to expel those who have helped build the party, while opening the door for the re-admission of these traitors who have set out to wreck the Labour Party. For this, the rank and file of the Labour Party will never forgive you.

By Peter Taaffe.

Hammer Tories in by-elections

PECKHAM

Peckham in south London is one of the worst inner-city, deprived areas that can be found in this country. The problems facing people are tremendous with unemployment and housing being the main issues.

There are 18,000 people unemployed in the borough and a lot of industries have moved out of the area over the past ten years.

80% of Peckham's population are council tenants, and the conditions on Gloucester Grove estate are typical. Completed at a cost of £18 million for the GLC and now transferred to Southwark, one tenant summed it up as "just a human dustbin for the GLC." Social deprivation is so serious that a third of the tenants on this estate alone are in arrears.

The Tory candidate, John Redwood, can offer no solutions to the problems Peckham faces. He is a staunch supporter of Thatcher's monetarist policies—the very policies that have considerably worsened the plight of Peckham's people, and its youth in particular.

Dick Taverne, the SDP

candidate, enjoys wandering from constituency to constituency—his latest hobby is to try and care about the homeless and jobless of Peckham.

It is the Labour Party, whose members are unemployed, and who know what the problems of Peckham really are. At the last election in 1979 Labour had a majority of 10,000; in the May 1982 council elections, the SDP did not get a single candidate onto the council. The LPYS is working hard in this by-election to build upon this and elect Harriet Harman to Parliament with a thumping majority.

MASS CANVASS: Sunday 24 October, 10.30 am, 52 Mawbey Hse., Mawbey Rd (off Old Kent Rd), SE1.

By Chetan Patel (Peckham LPYS)

NORTHFIELD

Labour has not won a seat from the Tories at a by-election for more than ten years. The Northfield by-election must surely provide Labour with its best chance.

Previously a solid Labour seat with a 10,500 majority in October 1974, the Tories won it by the slenderest of margins, just 204 votes, at the last election. But that was at a time of bitter disillusionment with the last Labour government's wage restraint and the social contract.

Leyland car workers (the Longbridge plant is situated in the Northfield constituency) particularly felt let down not only by pay policy but also by Labour's appointment of Michael Edwards. Now with a fighting socialist campaign Labour could win back all those disenchanted Labour votes.

For unemployment and despair have come suddenly to Northfield during the life of Thatcher's government. With closures, cut backs and especially with Longbridge redundancies, unemployment in the constituency has trebled in three years from 2,701 to 9,346. The Northfield Social Security Office is on strike as part of a city wide dispute about overwork.

As for the Conservative candidate Roger Gale he is the typical smooth middle class, pretending to be youthful, aspiring Tory MP. But Northfield workers should beware; it was this

self-proclaimed Tory trade unionist who moved the resolution for state interference in the internal running of unions at the recent Tory conference.

Labour's candidate, John Spellar, was also prominent at party conference and clearly well to the right of the Labour Party. An EETPU full time officer, his introductory leaflet is made up of personal recommendations from "his friends", as the leaflet puts it: Dennis Howell, Roy Hattersley, Terry Duffy, Frank Chapple, Dennis Healey and Clive Wilkinson.

Labour workers will obviously be wanting to strike at least one blow back at the Tory government with a victory in Northfield. But they have the right to expect that the sort of radical policies confirmed at the conference—35-hour week, no incomes policy, nationalisation of the top 25 companies—will be to the fore in the campaign to inspire the activists who then in turn will convince other workers to vote.

By Jeremy Birch (Selly Oak)

Cable TV: Speculators given green light

The recently issued Hunt report on cable TV shows the tremendous developments that have taken place in communications technology.

Under a socialist planned economy, such scientific advances could be put at the service of society, in all the fields of entertainment, art, education etc.

But predictably enough the Hunt report is only concerned with giving the green light for a few monopolies to make massive profits. Although it would cost between £3 billion and £4 billion to cable half the country, and profits would be comparatively small for the first six years, after that the money would come rolling in.

25% return on capital

This year American companies will make over £4 billion profit, a return on investment of between 20% and 25%. The Hunt report recommends that even less restrictions are placed on the operation of British cable TV than exist in America.

In Britain the franchise will be awarded to a cable operator, a group of companies covering one area of the country. In effect they would have monopoly control over that area. Firms such as Racal, Rediffusion, Visionhire and Thorn-EMI are eager to get in on the act. Twenty-one organisations with manufacturing and commercial interests contributed to the original report on cable TV prepared for the Cabinet Office.

Because of the limited area covered by each franchise there will be a greater tendency to buy existing programmes, from America for example, instead of putting investment into new programmes. This raises the nightmare prospect of gutter TV on dozens of different channels.

The Hunt report only recommends limited control: "Programme schedules should not require advance approval. Advertisements should not be subject to pre-vetting". Franchises would be awarded, first for ten

years, then for eight, with only limited rules to ensure maximum opportunity for profit.

Not for everyone

Between 30 and 100 channels could be provided but not everyone would benefit. In the first place it is planned to only cable half the country i.e. those areas which are most profitable. Secondly cable will be expensive. Rental charges will be between £100 and £120 a year.

TV companies will also raise further revenue by advertising or sponsorship of programmes. There will be nothing to prevent one or other of the companies, who make up the cable operator consortium, from sponsoring their own channel or own programme. Political parties and organisations will be excluded from participating as cable operators, but no doubt the Tories' allies in big business will have their say.

The main broadcasting Union, ACTT, has criticised the report as it "makes the old licence to print money look like a kindergarten exercise...it is a carte blanche for speculators". They have also pointed out that it could turn the industry into a haven of cheap labour, undermining the earnings



Twenty-one commercial organisations, eager to cash-in on the electronics boom, contributed to the original report for the cabinet office.

and job security of those already in the industry. Such consequences are the danger if cable TV is introduced on the basis of big business.

New Technology Should Benefit People

Socialists do not oppose new technology. We welcome it, as long as it is put to the benefit of ordinary people. To ensure this occurs, all new developments

in broadcasting should be brought firmly under public control, democratically governed by those working within the industry and by the labour and trade union movement and public as a whole.

Under socialism broadcasting could bring about enormous benefits. Political parties, minority groups and other interest groups could have access to TV on the basis of their true representation in society. Television

could be linked into a massively expanded education system. Already there is talk of 'electronic newspapers' available in your home, at the flick of a switch.

The profit barons may be licking their lips now at the profits to be made, but the labour movement must campaign so that their joy is short-lived.

By Ben Eastop
(Peckham CLP)

Why disabled should support Labour



Disability is a class issue. National League of Blind and Disabled marching on TUC demo against Tories.

I'd like to attempt to give some answers to the letter "Questions on the disabled" (in which S. Doyle asked why disabled people should support the Labour Party. (see opposite)

Firstly it must be stated that, like everything else, disability and its resultant handicaps is not an act of God but is a class issue. The lack of proper anti-natal and peri-natal care, because of cuts in the NHS, has meant that many babies are born with disabilities that could have been prevented.

These same Tory cuts mean a lack of aids, equipment and services which would enable disabled people to lead independent lives

and often leave them prisoners in their own homes. This primarily affects working class people who haven't got the money to pay for private care or the necessary adaptations to their homes.

In addition to this, many more thousands of people become disabled because of industrial accidents, working with dangerous substances or simply through the rigours of working long hours for low pay for nearly 50 years of their lives. And all to make profits for the bosses.

The Tories and their system have no interest in helping disabled people or any other section of the working class. Disabled people have suffered from the Tories vicious public spending cuts and also in employ-

ment, where as many as 50% of severely disabled people are unemployed.

Furthermore, the Tories are trying to scrap the minimal legislation, such as the quota, which exists to protect the employment rights of disabled people. After all when there's such a huge pool of unemployed able bodied people, why spend money on special machinery and facilities for disabled people?

These are only a few of the reasons why disabled people should reject the Tories. But Labour has to have an alternative on offer. Its present policies on full implementation of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act, the introduction of a comprehensive scheme of benefits according to severity of handicap and the ex-

pansion of the economy to ensure decent transport, housing, social services, education and jobs for disabled people deserve disabled peoples' support.

Centres should exist with facilities for the disabled, but their orientation should be to enable them to play as full a part as possible within the community. Day centres with disabled people doing basket-weaving is no answer. It is vital that social isolation is broken down.

Policies must be fought for

Similarly, sheltered accommodation is also often necessary for the disabled. These must not be segregated ghettos, but as an integrated part of an estate.

These are policies, that need not just to be voted for,

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

Letter to Militant, 17, September

but need to be fought for, by disabled people within the Labour Party, to ensure that they are not obstructed by the bosses who are quite happy to consign disabled people to the scrapheap.

Cde Doyle did not want any "educational fly", to be fobbed off with long words and statistics on the plight of disabled people. Judith Oliver of the Association of Careers summed up her experiences in the International Year of Disabled People under the Tories by saying "I never thought that I'd see severely handicapped people starving or living like rats in a hole, or in tears because the doctor is refusing to come to see them and his surgery is inaccessible.

"I couldn't imagine a situation in which a disabled person is suffering from

hypothermia because he can't afford fuel or, having bought it, can't get it from the coal-shed to the fire. I never thought I would experience the smell of someone sitting in his own excrement because he hasn't a lavatory he can get to. But I have now, and things are getting worse".

Our task is clear. It's up to us; disabled and able-bodied to join the Labour Party and fight for socialism in order to provide the material resources and the political will to ensure that disabled people can live independent lives free from poverty and misery.

By Fiona Winders
Reading North LPYS

THE RAILWAYS AFTER WEIGHELL

In June this year, the Annual General Meeting of the National Union of Railwaymen voted to call off pay strikes in both British Rail and London Transport and refer them to their respective tribunals, to be approved or turned down by a later Special General Meeting.

By Martin Elvin

The Railway Staffs National Tribunal findings affect the livelihoods of thousands of BR workers, and Sidney Weighell's arguments at the October SGM for accepting the decision showed how correct conference had been earlier to accept his resignation.

His swansong was sung to the same old tune the union leadership have sung for years of the "joint approach" between management and unions, where changed working practices with new technology and fewer jobs are accepted in return for promises of better pay and conditions and higher rail investment. That has been Weighell's policy.

He used the same arguments to push through the RSNT findings. New technology was emerging and if guards thought they could escape change they were "living in a different world," he claimed, but "no guards jobs are now at risk and changes would take twenty years to achieve." The NUR, he said, had to harness change and get longer holidays, shorter hours and more pay.

Why then, despite lost jobs, changed working practices, cuts and other sacrifices, were railwaymen offered so little with so many strings?

The summer strike had been left to the tender mercies of the RSNT with the words "The NUR's record in negotiations with BRB will stand examination by any impartial body". Alf Wild group 30 delegate Shef-

field Tinsley said "Well it damn well didn't. It's doubtful that a body exists with impartial views about the railway industry"

For all Weighell's thunder about broken government promises he still echoed BRB and Tribunal attacks on ASLEF blaming them for much of BR's financial problems, repeated the Board's figures of £224 million lost during the flexi-rostering dispute, and £16 million due to the NUR's action, claiming it was necessary to "look realistically" in the light of the problems this caused!

A resolution was proposed from Coventry to "totally reject the RSNT pay award and all its implications, and that the strike decision be reimposed." An amendment from Glasgow No 5 referred to the award as "miserably inadequate and insufficient". However, a further amendment from Lancaster Rail Branch urged acceptance of the RSNT findings.

Sacrifices for what?

A sharp and sometimes angry debate followed. Brother Gooden, Group delegate from Coventry said, "The time has come to stand and fight. We don't believe our fight will be alone. We believe that the united strength of the trade union movement is unbeatable."

Tony Donaghy pointed out, "We've had restructuring exercises, no grade is left untouched; freight ra-

tionalisation, withdrawal from C&D Parcels, a 60% reduction in staff over the past 20 years and changed working practices for new technology.

"What have we to show for this industrial patriotism? We are bottom of the pay league, our pension and sick arrangements are abysmal, and the government have reneged on investment. We have paid in blood to keep this industry alive."

As a result of the decision to accept the pay offer, railworkers will receive a rise of 6% on basic rate, not from the April pay anniversary, but from September and therefore worth less than 4% over the year, one of the lowest settlements anywhere this year.

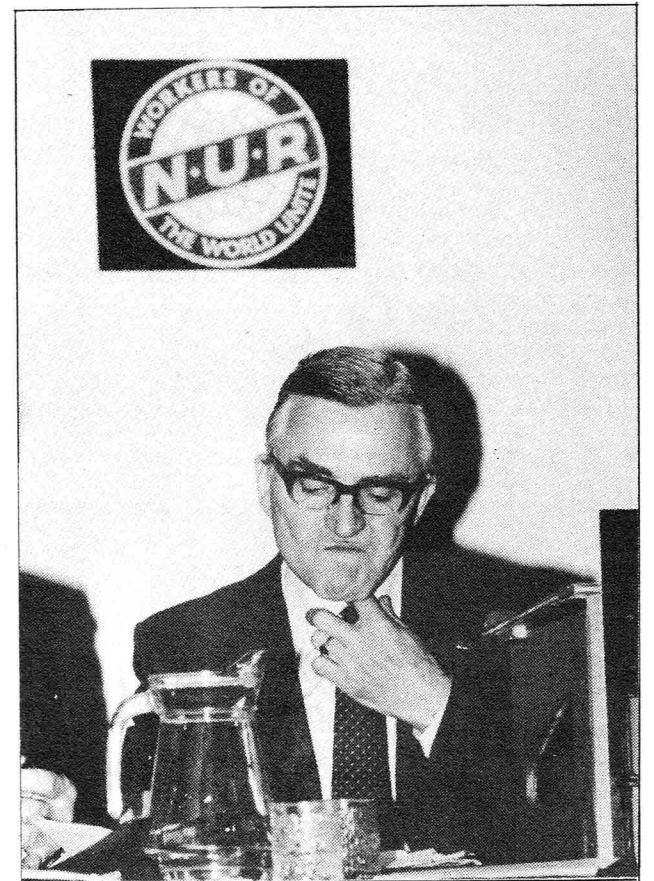
In addition, this means acceptance of one man operation on the Bedford-St Pancras route, with no guarantees for displaced guards after a six-month period. The NUR will agree to test the validity of driver-only freight trains. Sid Weighell revealed that experiments are to be tried on the Llanwern-Port Talbot route, the Willesden-Garston route and in the Immingham area.

The capitalist press and media were quick to praise this decision, claiming that NUR members may have rejected the man but still accepted his policies. The vast majority of railworkers do not support the joint approach which Weighell championed. Even Weighell admits it has failed to deliver the goods.

The lessons of the calling off of this summer's strike must be learned. We can have no trust in "impartial" bodies only in our own industrial power.

The constant BR propaganda, fears for the future of the railway and high unemployment plus a fear that the members would not strike may have affected the decision to accept McCarthy. If a clear lead had been waged throughout this period by the union, particularly during the summer these could have been overcome.

Far from accepting the inevitability of job losses, closures etc., NUR members are crying out for an alternative in policy as well as leadership. Union members will be preparing for new battles in the future.



Sidney Weighell, the departing General Secretary of NUR. The new leadership must be prepared to fight for its members. Photo: John Arthur



Weighell's swan-song: persuading NUR delegates to accept the RSNT pay award. Photo: John Smith (IFL)

The confirmation of Weighell's resignation occurred despite attempts by the right wing and full-time officials to ensure the return of their prodigal son.

The SGM delegates were surprised when union president Tommy Ham said that a large number of letters had been received at head office. The majority of these, claimed Ham, besought the general secretary to reconsider his resignation.

He had no hesitation in ruling that a resolution from York No 5 which he believed represented the majority of correspondence would be placed before the AGM for its consideration.

The delegates' surprise turned to dismay as the president ruled that nobody from the top table would participate in the debate, effectively denying the right of NEC members Jock Nicholson and John Milligan to put the NEC's position.

The general secretary was then asked to leave and retired to the Albany Hotel,

satisfied everything was set for his triumphant return.

After a narrow defeat by 40-37 of a motion that the York motion be not accepted, the branch secretary from York No 5 argued that although Sid was guilty of breaking the rules he did it in the best interests of the membership as he ensured Russell Tuck, NUR candidate for the NEC was duly elected. He also went on in a rambling spiel about the evils of the Militant Tendency!

Over 17 delegates spoke from the floor, with supporters of Weighell floundering and clutching at anything to discredit the NEC and the left in general. One delegate demanded an enquiry as to the NEC's use of trade union headed notepaper and envelopes for what they thought an "unofficial" circular stating the NEC's decision on Sidney Weighell's resignation.

Another delegate even demanded criminal action be taken against these delegates and intertwined it with the fraternal call for unity while hitting at the left. The ma-

majority of speakers, however, accepted that Weighell had discredited the union and that the SGM should endorse his resignation. Comments were made that he could no longer be trusted and if they accepted him back they would be giving him absolute power.

The revelation of Bob Kettle, a member of the Standing Orders Committee at Labour Party conference, added yet another twist to the farce. The NUR vote had not been withheld as stated by Weighell at his press conferences, but had in fact been cast for Breakell, the right-wing candidate from the EETPU!

The recorded vote was a tense affair and delegates had their names called in alphabetical order and shouted for or against the resolution. The voting figures were announced to cheers of delegates.

By an NUR member

"A leadership prepared to fight"

Sidney Weighell had been one of the most prominent right wingers in the trade union movement.

He was a leading light in the campaign for Militant's expulsion from the Labour Party for allegedly breaking the constitution. He even exacted fines on NUR members using the same excuse. How ironic that he should now have been found in clear breach of a binding mandate of the NUR AGM and thus infringing the NUR constitution!

Voting for Tom Breakell of the EETPU ensured an overall right-wing majority on the National Executive. Withdrawing his vote for Eric Clarke was damaging in view of the NUM being part of the Triple Alliance and can only fuel suspicion and cynicism from the other trade unions involved.

It is scandalous that the NUM, long at the forefront in fighting redundancies and lower living standards and

for union freedom now have no representative on Labour's NEC for the first time in many decades.

Contrary to the propaganda churned out at union headquarters for the mass media's consumption, there was widespread anger within the union, and even before Weighell announced his resignation there was a flood of demands from branches for resignation or censure.

The BRB are undoubtedly preparing for a wholesale slaughter of jobs. The future of the railway industry depends mainly on the willingness of the rail unions' leadership to take up struggles against the BRB, and their political paymasters the Tories in their attempts to dismantle the industry. In elections for General Secretary now being put in motion, the left must back a candidate who is prepared to do battle.

We need a General Secretary prepared to back

proposals to make the union machinery more democratic such as the election of General Secretary and all union officials every five years, an AGM to consist of one delegate per branch, for the NEC to have the right to decide their own agenda and issues to be discussed at their own annual general meeting.

The campaign must start to achieve a 35-hour week linked to a £90 minimum wage, and these issues must be put to the forefront and not to be merely paid lipservice to. A General Secretary campaigning on these issues would undoubtedly gain full support from the members and linking up with other unions in the federation and the triple alliance could make massive gains for all railwaymen.

By Bob Russell
(Wilkesden No 1 NUR, personal capacity)



Photo: Denis Doran/Militant

The Register

Our reply

to the NEC

Following the decision of the Labour Party Conference to accept the 'Register of unaffiliated groups,' *Militant* this week formally applied for registration. The following is the full text of our letter to Jim Mortimer, the Party's general secretary:

Dear Comrade Mortimer,

This is the reply of the *Militant* Editorial Board to your letter of 1 July 1982, in which you informed us of the NEC's decision of 23 June to accept the *Militant* Tendency Report and implement the Register. You also enclosed your circular to Constituency Labour Parties and affiliated organisations setting out the NEC's recommendations and enclosing the questions being asked in relation to registration.

We are now making a formal application for registration and submitting a full reply to your questions.

We did not respond immediately in July because, in our opinion, the NEC had no right to implement a Register prior to a full discussion in the party and a decision at Annual Conference.

While claiming merely to be upholding the constitution the NEC was, in practice, setting out to enforce a major amendment to the existing constitution in order to restrict the democratic rights of party members. Pretending the arguments were all constitutional and organisational rather than political, the NEC evaded the correct course of action for making a major change to the rules which would have been to submit to Conference a constitutional amendment. This would have allowed a full debate on the real political issues involved.

The *Militant* was singled out for attack, with the NEC deciding in June that "the *Militant* Tendency as presently constituted would not be eligible to be included on the proposed Register...". Unlike any other paper or groups, we were given three months from 23 June to apply, a dead-line which

expired before the Annual Conference!

At its September meeting, moreover, the NEC demonstrated that its approach to registration is likely to be far from even-handed. Among other groups accepted onto the Register were *Solidarity* and *Manifesto*, both with secret organisations and with leading members who oppose both Labour's basic socialist aims and much of Labour's current programme.

The NEC, it is true, refused to accept the Labour Friends of Israel and the Labour Movement for Europe onto the Register, on the grounds that both are financed from (non-labour movement) sources abroad. Both campaign against Labour policies: the first is clearly opposed to the formation of a Palestinian state; the second opposes Britain's withdrawal from the EEC.

Yet the NEC decided that even if they could not register "no disciplinary steps should be taken against them"! Is this not in marked contrast to the demands from right-wingers on the NEC for the wholesale expulsion of *Militant* supporters?

In spite of the way the issue was presented, however, the Register was ratified at Conference. Delegates at Blackpool, moreover, expressed the strong desire of Labour's ranks for unity against the Tories and Social Democrats. In the light of this *Militant*, which stands for a united fight to defeat the Tories and return a Labour government on socialist policies, is applying to register and is prepared to discuss with the NEC the conditions of registration and possible changes which the NEC considers *Militant* should make.

Nevertheless, one thing must be made clear from the start. It is not possible to have both party unity and a purge of socialists. The NEC gained Conference's acceptance of the Register against the opposition of nine-tenths of the Constituency Labour Parties and only on the basis of the undemocratic misuse of a number of trade union block votes. The trade union general secretaries who voted for a witch-hunt do not have their rank and file behind them.

Delegates, including trade union delegates, were in no way giving the NEC a mandate for expulsions, to remove democratically selected parliamentary candidates, or to attempt to repress a particular trend of socialist ideas within the party. If the NEC sets out on such a course it will be a recipe not for unity, but for civil war in the party. Workers face the horrifying prospect of another five years of

Thatcher government if Labour fails to win the next general election. If the right wing tear the party apart by going on with the witch-hunting tactics they have started, they will bear a heavy responsibility for the consequences in the eyes of working people.

Our answers to your questions in relation to the Register are as follows:

(1) What is the name of the group?

'Militant'.

(2) Who are its officers?

Militant is run by the Editorial Board, which is made up as follows: Peter Taaffe, the Editor; Ted Grant; Lynn Walsh; Clare Doyle; and Keith Dickinson.

(3) What is the membership of the group?

Militant is a newspaper and not an organisation and therefore has no membership. However, we have a large sale among Labour Party members. Several thousand party members are supporters of the paper and its ideas, and a large number contribute donations to *Militant*.

(4) What are the aims of the group?

Militant's aim is to further the struggle of the working class in Britain and internationally.

We support the basic socialist aim of the Labour Party embodied in Clause IV, part 4 of the constitution, which we believe means, under modern capitalist conditions, the nationalisation of the big monopolies, banks and insurance companies, workers' control and management, and a socialist plan of production. We are committed to fighting for the return of a Labour government on the basis of a socialist programme. We fully support the implementation of Labour's programme and the radical policies adopted by conference. We believe, however, that to secure all the reforms included in the programme and secure a permanent change in the interests of the working class it is necessary to take over the "commanding heights" of the economy.

Militant also believes that the struggle for socialism is international. We support the struggle of workers throughout the capitalist countries for socialist transformation of society. We support the struggle of the workers, peasants and all exploited people of the ex-colonial and semi-colonial countries against imperialism and its puppets, but we believe that national and social liberation can only be carried through on the basis of international socialist perspectives. In the Stalinist states of Russia, Eastern Europe and China, which have nationalised, centrally planned economies but are ruled over by totalitarian, one-party dictatorships, we support the struggle for workers' democracy.

As *Militant* campaigns for the return of a Labour government and supports and campaigns for the implementation of Clause IV part 4, and Labour's present programme, we entirely refute the idea that we breach Clause II(3) of the constitution. We do not have our "own programme, principles and policy for distinctive and separate propaganda." *Militant* has always urged support for Labour's duly selected

council and parliamentary candidates regardless of their views within the party. We are urging our supporters in the Birmingham area, for instance, to work for John Spellar, Labour's candidate in the Northfield by-election on 28 October, regardless of his vociferous support at Conference for witch-hunting measures against *Militant*. We support Labour's policies, but like others in the party we reserve the right to criticise and amend or change these policies through democratic debate and decision making. Our position is in marked contrast to that of groups like Solidarity, Manifesto, and other right-wing groups which are opposed to the implementation of Clause IV, part 4, and many key elements of Labour's current programme.

(5) Does the group employ anyone and if so, how many and who are they?

The *Militant* newspaper, as we have told the NEC before, has 64 full-time staff. There are 34 at the *Militant* office in London, who include journalists, administrators, printers, and other technical workers. Outside London *Militant* employs 30 full-time staff, who are either journalists or sales managers, as *Militant* cannot rely on commercial distributors (who have declined to handle the *Militant*) but has to rely on its own sales efforts.

In principle, we are prepared to provide the names of all these workers. All of them carry out essential tasks for the production and sales of *Militant* and there is nothing to hide as far as their activities are concerned. They are all well known to Labour Party members and active trade unionists.

However, we are not prepared to give a list of the names until we are given a categorical assurance from the NEC that they will not be placed on a hit list for expulsions. When such an undertaking is given we will give full details of our staff.

(6) Is membership of the group open to all Labour Party members and if not is the group prepared to change to open membership?

The *Militant* (as explained in answer to question 3) has no membership, but it is open to any party member to support the *Militant* and attend the meetings it holds (see answer to question 7).

(7) Are the group meetings open to all Labour Party members? If not, is the group prepared to change to open meetings?

Militant, as is well known, organises public meetings, *Militant* Readers' Meetings and Marxist Discussion Groups in every area of the country. These meetings are open to all Labour Party members and trade unionists, and are publicised in *Militant*, in the local press, and through leaflets and posters. Ours are the most democratic meetings in the labour movement. It is *Militant's* practice, unlike many other groups in the party, to allow plenty of time for questions and discussion from the floor at our meetings, and we encourage our opponents to come along and put their point of view.

In the past, as the Militant Tendency Report notes, we have held an annual sellers' rally which has not been open to all party members and the press. As we indicated to Ron Hayward and David Hughes in our earlier discussions, *Militant's* editorial board is prepared in future to open these national rallies to all Labour Party members and the press.

We request now that we should be informed of any other changes which the NEC or the General Secretary consider that we should make.

We would point out that while much has been made of *Militant's* alleged "secret meetings", there is ample evidence that groups like Solidarity organise secret meetings both nationally and locally from which non-Solidarity Labour Party members and the press are excluded. We would also point out that Solidarity at its public meetings does not allow questions or discussion from the audience. The fact that, in spite of this, Solidarity has been accepted for registration while *Militant* was declared 'ineligible' from the beginning indicates the blatant double standard with which the Register has so far been implemented.

(8) Does the group operate any kind of internal discipline?

Militant, which is not an organisation, does not operate any kind of internal discipline amongst its supporters.

We note that while the Militant Tendency Report (section 2: conclusions, paragraphs ii and v) refers to the Militant Tendency as "a well organised caucus" or alternatively as "an organisation" (for which it presents no evidence), it makes no allegation that *Militant* supporters have broken any of

the rules of the party in their activity. The Report makes a general assertion that we are in breach of Clause II (3), but it does not in any way suggest that *Militant* supporters do not observe the democratic procedures of debate and decision-making, the democratic election of delegates to labour movement bodies, or the democratic selection of council and parliamentary candidates.

If anyone is suggesting that *Militant* has in any way encouraged or supported the violation of the Labour Party's democratic procedures, we challenge them to give concrete examples and produce evidence to substantiate their allegations.

The Report claims (conclusions, paragraph iii) that "a small number of *Militant* supporters who are accredited delegates from branches and affiliated organisations...can exercise an influence out of all proportion to their numbers simply because many of our affiliated organisations do not take up their full delegation entitlement." However, *Militant* is in favour of the fullest possible participation of ordinary Labour Party members and delegates from affiliated organisations, especially the trade unions, and our supporters have been to the fore in attempting both to build the membership and increase the participation in local parties. It is absurd to imply that we benefit from, or in any way encourage, a low level of participation in the party.

Our supporters are working to build the party and always observe the democratic procedures and discipline of the party itself. The real grievance against *Militant* of those who initiated the Register is that, while their policies have been increasingly rejected by Labour's ranks, our policies and ideas are winning widespread and increasing support within the party and the trade unions.

(9) Is the group associated with any international organisations not supported by the Labour Party or the Socialist International?

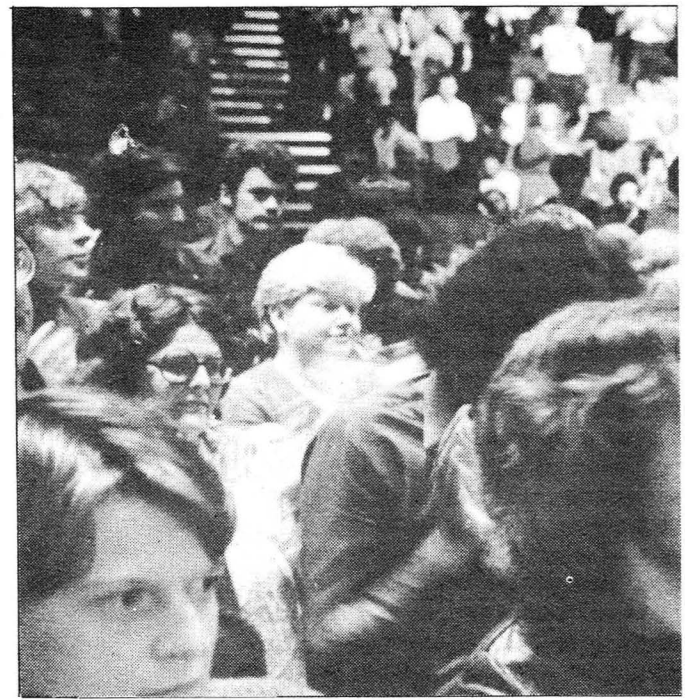
The *Militant* Editorial Board has no links with any international organisation. Of course, as internationalists we have contacts with co-thinkers in many countries. We contribute articles to Marxist journals abroad, and we regularly publish articles by socialists active in other countries. The right wing of the Labour Party also has international links. But there is a "small" difference between us and the right. Our contacts are within the international labour movement; the right has links with international organisations and journals which are supported and financed by the enemies of the labour movement, like the Labour Committee for Trans-Atlantic Understanding, the European Movement, the Bilderberg Group, the International Institute of Strategic Studies, and other bodies backed directly or indirectly by the CIA or the US government. We believe it is high time the Labour Party conducted a thorough investigation into the right's sinister connections.

(10) Is the group entirely financed by its own members? If not, what is the source of its funds and does it receive any financial assistance, direct or indirect, from persons who are not members of the Labour Party or from foreign sources?

Militant is entirely financed by its own supporters within the Labour Party and the trade unions. It has no outside sources of finance, either in Britain or abroad. As we have explained before in detail to the NEC (see NEC Report 1982, page 137), the loans from WIR Publications Ltd, which acts as a "collecting box", to Cambridge Heath Press Ltd, which publishes *Militant*, are also entirely derived from the donations of *Militant* supporters in the Labour Party and trade unions.

In connection with this question we would also like to refute the allegations made by some right wingers that *Militant*, by raising money from Labour Party members, is in some way draining the Labour Party of funds. *Militant* supporters are among the most active and energetic in working to build the Labour Party Young Socialists, to increase Labour Party membership, and to develop campaigning activity. Through this activity we help to bring enormous additional funds into the party. Our supporters also take their share of collecting subscriptions, organising jumble sales and socials, and other fund-raising work.

It is from the right of the Parliamentary Labour Party that some of the most vociferous attacks have come. We would draw the Party's attention to the fact that, while the total income and expenses of Labour MPs at Westminster and in the European Parliament must be in the region of £5-£6 million (apart from consultancies, directorships, TV appearances, etc.) they are estimated to be contributing a mere £15,000 to the Labour Party annually. A modest levy from Labour's 238 MPs and



Pictured above and on page 7: the massive, 3000-strong

17 MEPs would wipe out Labour's current financial deficit at a stroke!

Militant advocates that Labour MPs should be prepared to represent the labour movement and the working class on the average wage of a skilled worker, plus legitimate expenses. All the rest of their salaries and expenses should be donated back to the labour movement.

(11) Does your group accept that its membership records and accounts will be made available for investigation?

Militant has no membership, but we confirm that the accounts of Cambridge Heath Press Ltd and WIR Publications Ltd are available for inspection.

In answer to the final two paragraphs of your questionnaire, we once again reject the idea that *Militant* contravenes Clause II (3) of the constitution. We support the basic socialist aim of the Labour Party, embodied in Clause IV (4), we are campaigning for the return of a Labour government, and we support Labour's current programme and policies. Like other groups, caucuses, pressure groups and individuals in the Labour Party, we believe that we have the right to criticise policy and argue for new policies within the democratic procedures of the party.

We note that in your circular you assure us that the "NEC's decision will be implemented with understanding and respect for the rights of Labour Party members. No group need fear expulsion from the register without discussion and without having the opportunity to bring its arrangements into conformity with the party's constitution."

We see no reason whatsoever, if this is true, why *Militant* should not be accepted on the register. If we continue to be declared "ineligible for registration" we consider that you have a duty to explain and discuss with us precisely why we are ineligible and what concrete steps we would have to take in order to become eligible for registration.

We will continue to oppose the witch-hunt and campaign for a reversal of the decision on the Register

We are applying for registration in the light of the Conference decision at Blackpool. But we want to make our attitude to the Register absolutely clear. We will continue to oppose the Register, and we will take our campaign of opposition to every section of the Labour Party and trade unions in an effort to reverse this decision.

There are, in our opinion, several important reasons which justify our continued opposition, and the opposition of, we believe, a majority of the labour movement's rank and file:

(1) The Register is a revival, under a new guise, of bans and proscriptions, the system of right-wing thought-control which existed in the party in the 1950s and early '60s.

(2) The Register, which was only decided at the June NEC meeting, was pushed through conference against the opposition of 90% of the CLPs without a full and adequate discussion of its implications, particularly within the trade unions.



Labour Movement Conference Against the Witch-hunt, held at Wembley Conference Centre on 11 September, 1982.

(3) Despite the claims that it is simply to "uphold the constitution", the Register is, fundamentally, a political manoeuvre, an attempt to separate a trend of Marxist ideas with deep roots in the labour movement and widespread support in the Party, especially among youth.

(4) Despite your assurance that the Register "will be implemented with understanding and respect for the rights of members and of organised groups within the Labour Party", the statements of right-wing members of the NEC make it clear that they see the Register as the instrument of a major witch-hunt within the party. They are demanding the expulsion of *Militant* supporters and the de-endorsement of parliamentary candidates; and the right have publicly stated their aim of reversing the democratic reforms on re-selection and the election of the leader and deputy-leader, and of abandoning the radical policies adopted by recent party conferences.

We would like to explain these points in more detail:

(1) The Register replaces the old and completely discredited proscribed list with a new but equally undemocratic proscribed list.

The Register is an attempt, in fact, to introduce into the Labour Party the methods of bureaucratic centralism, methods which are entirely alien to the democratic traditions of the labour movement. It has been presented as a harmless list of groups in the party. Yet the *Militant* was arbitrarily excluded in advance. It is already clear, moreover, that the Register is regarded by the right wing of the Parliamentary Party and the temporary, rigged majority on the NEC as the means by which an elite at the top can control the rank and file, trampling on their democratic rights. Labour Party members and groups will be allowed to say what they like and do what they like...but only so long as this does not seriously challenge the leadership's policies. As soon as any paper or group is successful in winning support within Labour's ranks, as *Militant* has been, then the Register will be used against it.

Incredibly, it is even being argued that the Register is an attempt to democratise the party. In reality, it revives bans and proscriptions. Where in the past groups deemed by the right wing to be 'undesirable' were proscribed, now the right wing will try to prescribe which groups it will tolerate. What is the difference?

Arguing for the Register at Conference, Michael Foot said the Constitution, "handed down to us by our forebears," was the "sheet anchor" of the Party. Perhaps Michael has forgotten, incidentally, that Clause II (3), which is being used to justify the Register, was only adopted after 1945, specifically to preclude possible moves by the Communist Party to affiliate.

Far from upholding the Constitution as it is presently formulated, however, the NEC is bending it to its own political ends. The NEC's new interpretation of Clause II (3), which is in no way justified by the wording of this clause or any other clause, would not hold water in a court of law. Clause II (3) lays down the conditions for affiliated membership of the Party. It reads:

"Political organisations not affiliated to or associated with a National Agreement with the Par-

ty on January 1, 1946, having their own Programme, Principles and Policy for distinctive and separate propaganda, or possessing Branches in the Constituencies or engaged in the promotion of Parliamentary or Local Government Candidatures, or owing allegiance to any political organisation situated abroad, shall be ineligible for affiliation to the Party."

This clause does not say, or even imply, that members of non-affiliated organisations cannot be members of the Labour Party. In some respects, the NEC apparently accepts this. In its original letter to CLPs the NEC itself said organisations like CND and the NCCL, which clearly would not be eligible for affiliation under Clause II (3), would be exempt from the Register. The reason given was that the membership of these organisations included both Labour Party and non-LP members.

Yet Clause II (3) is still being used to justify the Register, which is aimed primarily against *Militant*. We find this particularly strange when there is another clause, that is II (4), which specifically deals with the conditions of individual membership.

Apart from the age qualification and a commitment to accept the Clause III membership conditions, the only specific disqualification from individual membership is membership of other "political parties or organisations ancillary or subsidiary thereto declared by the Annual Conference...or by the NEC in pursuance of the Conference decision to be ineligible for affiliation to the Party."

Under this clause, of course, the NEC could draw up a list of **non-affiliated organisations outside the party**, membership of which would be incompatible with Labour Party membership. In other words, there would once again be a list of banned and proscribed newspapers and journals!

Why, we would ask, has the NEC not used Clause II (4), the appropriate rule, as the basis for the Register? Is it not because to do so would immediately expose the Register for what it is, a return to bans, proscriptions and thought-control?

A further difficulty for the NEC, however, would be that Clause II (4) could not then be used against *Militant* any more than II (3) legitimately can be used. *Militant* is not a separate political party, nor is it "ancillary or subsidiary" to any other party or organisation. It is run and supported by members of the Labour Party who accept the aims and discipline of the Labour Party.

To justify its completely new interpretation of the Constitution, the NEC is acting on the "intention" of Clause II (3). Surely, a constitution must be enforced on the basis of **what it says, not what the leadership arbitrarily decides it "implies"**, otherwise the Constitution, the "sheet-anchor", is reduced to nonsense!

Why, if the NEC places such importance on upholding the Constitution, did the NEC not attempt to give the Register an actual constitutional basis by submitting a rule-change to Conference? We can only conclude that the NEC imagined that, by claiming simply to be upholding the existing constitution, it could avoid justifying the real political purpose of the Register with political arguments. The right wing, who have been defeated on all the political arguments in the Party, prefer to hide behind 'The Constitution.'

We would point out to the NEC, for their information that *Militant* has had legal advice that (1) the Register is, in fact, unconstitutional and could be subject to review in the courts; and (2) any individual members expelled under the provisions of the Register could challenge his or her expulsion in the courts.

The arbitrary character of the Register is shown by the fact that *Militant* was declared "ineligible" after a so-called "enquiry" which had more in common with a Diplock court than a democratic tribunal of the labour movement.

According to reports, the enquiry accumulated evidence based on the poison-pen letters of out-and-out right-wingers, some of whom were self-appointed spies and some simply malicious gossips. The most substantial reports, it seems, came from right-wing regional officials, many of whom are survivals from the Gaitskell era. Some of them seem to have spent most of their time in the last couple of years not building the party, but collecting "evidence" to use against the *Militant*. To their credit, some of the regional officials who are much more in touch with today's rank and file refused to give this kind of information. On the other hand, the enquiry was clearly not interested in the testimony of Labour Party members as to the work of *Militant* supporters in building up the Labour Party, building the Labour Party Young Socialists, fighting the Tories and campaigning for the return of a Labour government.

Despite the fact that three members of our Editorial Board willingly went to discuss with the then general secretary, Ron Hayward, and the national agent, David Hughes, none of the allegedly incriminating evidence about our activities was put to us. We were not given the opportunity of answering or even commenting on the attacks on *Militant* and our supporters. Yet it was on the basis of such an "enquiry" that the NEC reached its verdict—that *Militant* should be excluded from the Register.

(2) After this farcical 'enquiry', the Register was forced through with indecent haste with insufficient time to debate the issues involved.

The NEC agreed the Register on 23 June. Then, after three months mainly covering the holiday period, the *Militant* Tendency Report and the Register were put to Conference. Yet in spite of the holidays, at its 22 September meeting, the NEC had before it 107 resolutions opposing the Register and condemning the Report, compared to only 17 in support of the Register.

In particular, however, this speedy process ruled out full and democratic discussion of the Register within the ranks of the trade unions. The haste of some right-wing general secretaries on this issue is in marked contrast to their delaying tactics on the implementation of re-selection. Even after Conference had accepted the principle of re-selection, union leaders insisted that the necessary rule changes should not be put before Conference for another year—on the grounds that their rank and file had to be consulted!

Yet the majority for the Register at Blackpool was impressive only on paper.

Nine out of ten CLPs voted against the Register. In the case of a number of big trade unions whose block votes were vital to the acceptance of the Register, their votes were cast contrary to clear policy decisions by their annual conferences or national executive committees.

The votes of the Transport and General Workers Union, for instance, were cast against the clear rejection of the Register by that union's executive. The votes of the General and Municipal Workers Union, NUM, USDAW and the T&GWU, were cast against the clear rejection of bans, proscriptions, and any witch-hunt at their annual conferences. In the case of other unions whose votes were cast in favour of the Register, moreover, there was strong opposition from members of their delegations at Blackpool, and those who opposed this undemocratic measure are much more in tune with the feelings of active trade unionists.

Neither should it be forgotten that a number of trade unions, including NUPE, UCATT, ASLEF, ACTT, FBU, and the Bakers' Union voted against the Register.

The right wing may consider that with a majority on the NEC they now have a mandate to use the Register for a witch-hunt. Their majority, however, is an entirely bogus majority, achieved only on the basis of broken mandates. It will be short-lived. The angry and speedy reaction from the ranks of the NUR against Sidney Weighell, who ignored his mandate and was forced to resign as general secretary, is an indication of the opposition which will make itself felt against other right-wing trade union leaders who are supporting a witch-hunt.

Militant intends to take its opposition to the Register to every corner of the labour movement. When rank and file trade unionists hear the case and are able to discuss the issues there will be a whirlwind of opposition against those leaders who are prepared to tear the party apart by supporting a witch-hunt against socialists.

(3) The Register is a weapon of political repression.

The Register, it has been claimed, is simply to "uphold the constitution." But both spokesmen of the right and advocates of the register who claim to stand on the left have themselves made it clear that it is precisely a question of ideas and policies.

In introducing the Register at Conference you, Comrade Mortimer, said that it had nothing to do with ideology. Yet a large part of your speech was precisely an attack on the alleged policies of *Militant*. Your attack on our ideas, however, was "profoundly mistaken". There is a tradition in the British Labour Party of taking up the real ideas of opponents within the movement, and opponents outside the movement for that matter, and honestly answering them with facts, figures, and arguments. There is no sympathy, as you will be aware, for the Stalinist method of misrepresenting the ideas of opponents and trying to lump them together with the right-wing enemies of the working class. We would therefore like to correct some of your profound misunderstanding of our position.

We can only take up some of the points you raised.

You attacked our "mistaken" views on nuclear disarmament, for instance. Yet our recent pamphlet, *What We Stand For*, restates our consistent position on this: "Massive cuts in arms spending...support for unilateral nuclear disarmament, but with the recognition that only a socialist change in society in Britain and internationally can eliminate the danger of a nuclear holocaust."

It is also a fact that at the 1980 Annual Conference it was two *Militant* supporters, Chris Ballad and Pat Wall, who successfully moved the composite resolution which was passed on unilateral nuclear disarmament (1980 Report, p.160). Unlike others on the agenda, this resolution called explicitly for this policy. This was the first time Conference had supported unilateral nuclear disarmament since the 1960 Conference—at which one of our present Editorial Board, Keith Dickinson, spoke in favour of the policy which was later reversed by Gaitskill and the right wing!

We were particularly surprised, moreover, that during your speech you asserted that *Militant* supporters were "the ideological allies of the right wing of the Conservative party". This was on the grounds that we allegedly opposed "detente", that is discussion between the super-powers on arms reductions.

We find this incredible. Who in their right mind could oppose negotiations between the powers to reduce nuclear arsenals? We support any attempt to reduce the danger of war and cut the grotesque waste of arms spending.

However, we do not believe that talks between the powers will ever really eliminate the danger of war, as all the unsuccessful talks and agreements of the last thirty years show. Even if temporary reductions are achieved (which we would welcome), the danger of renewed tension and a revival of the arms race would remain so long as the class roots of conflict are not eradicated.

The problem of war and peace, which is fundamental for the labour movement, will not, in our opinion, be solved by talks between the leaders of the super-powers—but only by the working class themselves. Ultimately, only the socialist transformation of society throughout the capitalist world and the overthrow of the totalitarian regimes and the establishment of workers' democracy in Russia and Eastern Europe can eliminate the danger of world war and nuclear annihilation. Are you really saying that this view makes us the "ideological allies" of Thatcher and company?

In your speech you also implied that we are opposed to the struggle of women and blacks. Again, this is a complete distortion of our position.

In *What We Stand For*, we call for 'Opposition to discrimination on the basis of sex...for equal pay for work of equal value; for a crash programme to build nurseries, schools, etc.'" *Militant* supporters, moreover, have been prominent in building the women's sections of the Labour Party and in bringing working-class women into activity in the Labour Party and trade unions.

In *What We Stand For* we also call for "Opposition to racism and fascism, and all racist immigration laws...we also recognise that only by unifying black and white workers in the struggle for socialist change can racism and fascism be effectively abolished."

The allegation that we do not support the struggle of blacks is particularly ironic in view of the record of *Militant* supporters in the Labour Party Young Socialists, a section of the labour movement which has an unparalleled record in fighting against racist and fascist organisations and in campaign-

ing for the demands of black and Asian workers and youth.

There was also the allegation that *Militant* has attacked trade union leaders and Labour ministers as "renegades" and "traitors" to the working class. We challenge you to substantiate this allegation. Where in all our published material have we used language of this kind in relation to the trade union leadership or past Labour governments?

We have always fought for the return of Labour governments. *Militant* has consistently repudiated the ultra-left idea that it "makes no difference" whether there is a Labour or a Tory government.

We supported all previous Labour governments, and welcomed the reforms they introduced. But we have also repeatedly warned that, on the basis of capitalism, especially today's diseased British capitalism, it is impossible for Labour governments to secure permanent improvements for the working class.

Before the 1974-79 government, we again warned that, unless it was prepared to mobilise the working class to carry through a socialist change of society, it would be forced, under big-business pressure, to implement counter-reforms. That government did implement some reforms, which we welcomed. But basing itself on the policies of the right wing, it began the cuts in public spending and the monetarist policies which have been built on by the Tories. It was under the leadership of the right wing that the Labour government began to undo the gains of the past, and led Labour to defeat in 1979—opening the door to Thatcher. It is the right who were responsible for Labour's defeat, not us. Yet these are the people who are now calling for our expulsion!

We entirely reject the idea that *Militant* has its "own programme, principles and policy for distinctive and separate propaganda." We support Labour's programme and the other radical policies adopted by recent conferences. We support the 35-hour week, the £90-a week minimum wage, and the nationalisation of 25 of the top 100 companies. We believe, however, that like other groups in the Party we have the right to criticise this programme and argue for its extension.

In particular, we believe that the programme does not go far enough. To secure all the reforms included in Labour's programme a Labour government would have to carry through the nationalisation of the top 200 companies, the banks and insurance companies. This, in our opinion, is what Clause IV(4) means in practice under conditions of modern monopoly capitalism.

It is *Militant* which is accused of opposing Labour's programme and aims. On the other hand, the right-wing spokesmen of groups like Manifesto and Solidarity have made it absolutely clear that they are opposed to the implementation of Clause IV(4). Interviewed recently on BBC2, for instance, Roy Hattersley stated that he did not "regard public ownership as an objective in itself." He agreed that Clause IV "may imply...complete socialisation", but "you know very well that never in our existence have we, in theory or practise, been anything other than a mixed economy party." What does this mean other than that right-wingers like Hattersley are opposed to the basic socialist aims embodied in Clause IV? They stand for the defence of the "mixed economy", that is of capitalism.

After all the major decisions at Conference on unilateral nuclear disarmament, withdrawal from the EEC, and on the rejection of any form of incomes policy, right-wing spokesmen of the Parliamentary Labour Party hastened to assure the capitalist media that they had no real intention, in a future Labour government, of actually implementing these policies. But they are not prepared openly and honestly to state their reservations to the rank and file of the Party and the trade unions.

When the SDP traitors left the Party, spokesmen of Solidarity appealed to these renegades to return to the Labour Party. Right-wing members of Manifesto and Solidarity have also made it clear that they would be ready to accept some kind of coalition or informal pact with the SDP/Liberal Alliance in the event of a "hung parliament". That would be the end of radical conference policies.

In reality, the right do not believe that they can win a majority of working-class support on the basis of Labour's programme, which they do not fully support, in any case. Yet it is *Militant*, which supports Labour's programme and is prepared to fight for it, which is condemned as being allegedly opposed to Labour's programme and aims!

(4) As far as implementation of the Register is concerned, there is one law for the Left and another for the Right.

In your circular to CLPs you assure us that "it

is not in any way the intention of the NEC to inhibit open and democratic debate within the party...the NEC's decision will be implemented with understanding and respect for the rights of members and of organised groups within the Labour Party." Yet right-wing spokesmen like Denis Healey, Roy Hattersley, and John Golding have made it clear that they intend to use the Register to carry through a witch-hunt.

Let there be no mistake about it. If we, the Editorial Board of *Militant*, are expelled from the party it will be for the 'crime' of producing a newspaper which advocates Marxist ideas and policies. If any of our full-time staff are expelled, it will also be for the 'crime' of campaigning and propagating socialist ideas within the party. But numerous reports make it clear that some of the right wing would like to expel a hundred, two hundred, even one or two thousand, for the 'crime' of supporting *Militant*. After those "running *Militant*" have been hit, and then those "working for *Militant*" are expelled, how long will it be before the right-wing moves against those simply "thinking *Militant*"?

The right on the NEC have also made it clear that they intend to move against a number of democratically selected (and NEC-endorsed) parliamentary candidates. This would be a frontal attack on the right of Constituency Labour Parties to select candidates of their own choice. If *Militant* supporters are de-endorsed as candidates now, how long will it be before other left-wing candidates, "undesirable" to the right-wing, are vetoed by the NEC?

It would be in no time at all, because this is the inevitable logic of a witch-hunt. Once it starts, there is no limit to how far the right will go—unless they are defeated by the rank and file.

We would also warn the left on the NEC and all Labour Party members that behind the organisational manoeuvres to repress Marxist ideas are moves to shelve or reverse Conference's radical policy decisions.

At the end of Conference *The Times*, the voice of the City and big business, carried an editorial which demanded: "Now, purge policy!". If any of the NEC now think that, after passing the Register and moving against *Militant*, the capitalist media will be satisfied and start to give a fair hearing to Labour's radical policies, they are sadly mistaken. On the contrary, the bosses' representatives will be exerting pressure on Labour's right wing precisely to expunge any radical policies which under the next Labour government could pose a threat to the wealth and power of the capitalist class.

It is clear from the 22 September meeting of the NEC, moreover, which considered applications for the Register, that the right on the NEC consider there is one law for the left and another for the right.

The 'Labour Solidarity Campaign', for example, was accepted. Yet this right-wing grouping has its own full-timers, its own funds, publishes its own material, holds secret meetings nationally and locally, and opposes many key points of Labour's programme and policy. Similarly, the Manifesto Group, which was also accepted, is organised and has members and secret meetings. These are just two examples, so far, of the blatant double-standard being applied by the right.

The NEC refused to accept the Labour Friends of Israel and the Labour Movement for Europe on to the Register. In spite of this decision, however, which was because of their foreign (non-labour movement) sources of finance, the NEC recommended that "no disciplinary steps should be taken against them—other than excluding them from the Register—because they're not organisations with their own programme, principles and policy for distinctive and separate propaganda."

Yet Labour Friends of Israel is financed by the Jewish Agency, and in effect campaigns for the foreign-policy aims of the Israeli state—in direct contradiction to Labour Party policy which now supports the formation of an independent Palestinian state.

The Labour Movement for Europe, for its part, is financed by the European Movement, which was originally launched with secret United States and CIA funds to promote European policies favoured in Washington. Is it necessary to say that the Labour Movement for Europe is totally opposed to Labour's policy of withdrawal from the EEC?

Yet no action will be taken against them, despite non-registration. Contrast this to the action that the right wing are demanding be taken against *Militant*!

★ ★ ★

We look forward to your reply to our application for registration and to our comments on the Register.

Yours fraternally
Peter Taaffe

Editor, for the *Militant* Editorial Board.



AMERICA - No dreamland for poor

America used to be known as the 'land of opportunity'. But millions of American workers know different.

With unemployment at 10.1%, the highest since 1940, life has become intolerable for those 11.3 million Americans out of work.

Living in the luxurious surroundings of the White House, President Reagan claims that the poor are better off with his economic programmes. The Urban Institute, (an independent think tank), has just published a detailed study of the Reagan Administration's domestic policies which proves otherwise.

The proportion of Americans living in poverty (according to the census definition) rose from 13% in 1980 to 14% in 1981. That 14% represents 32 million people. 44% of the poor are single mothers and their families.

But Reagan, like Thatcher, doesn't care about the plight of the poor. New welfare rules, passed as part of his latest budget, will make the situation far worse



Unemployed men queue for food, 1930—Reagan would like to return American workers to such grinding poverty

for those already on the poverty line.

One rule change is aimed at making applicants to the nation's largest welfare programme prove that they are looking for jobs. The programme? The £20 billion 'Aid to families with Dependent Children'—almost all

of whose 10.4 million recipients, receiving an average of \$2,000 each year, are single mothers and their young children. Reagan, who originally planned to cut more than \$1 billion from the programme claims that \$181 million will be "saved"—only to be spent

on armaments or presidential holidays.

Neither Republicans nor Democrats have explained how, with unemployment running at 10.1%, busy mothers are going to find jobs, even if they had time to do them.

The real reason for this

rule change is the need for the bosses to drive down the level of wages by piling more and more desperately needy workers into an already overcrowded "job-market". In this respect, Reagan's policies are no different from Thatcher's.

Everyone who has ever

tried asking for a rise has heard the reply. "If you don't like what you're being paid, there's twenty other people waiting for your job". Throughout the USA, hundreds of thousands of workers in small unpublicised disputes are trying to save their jobs or defend their living standards through union activity.

Yet, in the first half of 1982, almost 60% of workers covered by new wage settlements received no increase at all, not even one to keep pace with inflation; so in effect 60% had their wages cut. The current catchword in wage bargaining is "giveback"—the renunciation of benefits won in the past.

Only a new party, fighting in the interests of labour, without worrying about the bosses' profits will be able to prevent Reagan and others like him, from returning America to the 19th century world of poverty, starvation wages and child labour.

By Steve Edwards

(Kroch's and Bretano's Organising Committee, Personal Capacity, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 881 Chicago)

JAPAN: No work - no job, no pay

Japan—the country where everyone works hard and enjoys it. The economic miracle where there is hardly any unemployment. The place where production goes forward unhindered by trade union problems etc. etc.

These are the usual kind of terms employed by the capitalist press to 'show what things could be like if only British workers would work harder'. But there is another picture of life in Japan in the 1980s.

"If you go into the older suburbs of Tokyo, you will soon smell soluble oil, or hear the sound of a press. Slide open the door, and inside you will find two, three or four people working at lathes, grinders or small presses.

"These are the people that give the Japanese auto and electrical industries their

competitive edge. You can forget the glossy stories about lifetime employment, massive fringe benefits and a 40-hour week. These people work in the real world, where no work means no pay and no job." (*The Engineer*, 13 May 1982).

Nearly four million Japanese workers work in companies like this, with between one and three other workers. These companies are used by the Zaibatsu (large companies) like Nissan to supply them with components.

No job security

"Nissan leaves the nuts and bolts jobs to the component firms, so freeing itself to invest in the latest technology for car assembly. Furthermore, if there is a downturn in the market, sub-contract work is hauled in, leaving the small businessmen to fend for themselves... (*Sunday Times*, 23 May).

It is through this kind of

operation that the so-called lifetime employment system is maintained. In fact, only one third of Japanese workers enjoy job security.

According to Professor Yushi Kato there are 1.4 million day labourers. "Most of them are virtual beggars," he says.

Conditions in these backstreet 'bucket shops' are appalling. In 1977 there were 3,302 fatal accidents, 709 of them in manufacturing industry. In Britain the comparative figures were respectively 358 and 179.

John Hartley in *The Economist* reports seeing "a man arc welding without goggles; people operating presses by foot, while inserting the components by hand without guards or safety systems; a man sitting welding a cylinder block lying on the pavement outside the workshop; people working a six-day week with no fringe benefits; part timers working from 9 am to 4.30 pm for half the normal

wage..."

The day labourers, mostly single, live in primitive lodgings known as 'doya'. There can be up to 20 in the small rooms with communal bathing and toilet facilities.

Desperation of poverty

But life is even more desperate for the unemployed. An article in the *Guardian* on 4 August headed, 'Cut off fingers insurance swindle', explained how in Kawasaki, a coal mining centre where 20% of the population are reliant on welfare payments after pit closures, police have uncovered an insurance fraud being worked to pay off debts. Eighteen people are already in custody, with another 60 wanted, for slicing off index fingers and then claiming for 'accidents' from insurance companies. One 54-year-old woman received about 3 million yen (about \$6,000) for her acci-

dent, then had to immediately repay 2 million yen to a loan shark.

The degeneracy of capitalism even in one of the most advanced countries, which has seen the biggest growth in the post war years, is such that there are even 'surgeons' who specialise in back street amputations, at 100,000 yen a time (£200).

Nor is this the sole barbaric example of society's decay in the 'wonderland' of capitalism. Throughout Japan crime and particularly violent crime is on the increase. The number of under 20-year-olds convicted of criminal offences reached a post-war record in 1981, and under-20-year-olds accounted for 52% of all criminal offences.

A correspondent writing in *The Times* on 27 August, reported: "If there was one country that would not appear to have to worry about being competitive it is Japan." Yet as he points out, the main feature of the

Japanese Economic Planning Agency was the stress laid on the need to improve efficiency and thereby faster growth.

Precisely the same arguments are used by the British bosses in every single attack on the working class. The enemy of the working class is the capitalist class all over the world.

The Japanese workers, having just won a 7% increase through the annual Shunto (Spring Offensive)—3% higher than the rate of inflation—are showing that they are recovering from the defeats of the past. The time is not far away when the workers will move for the socialist transformation of society in Japan as well as in Britain.

By Mike Waddington & Kevin Ramage



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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

The rank and file speak out

Since the Labour Party conference decision to instigate a witch-hunt against *Militant* supporters, *Militant* has received many, many letters from ordinary Labour Party members and voters. All are angry at the right wing of the party and express their solidarity with *Militant* in fighting off this attack on Marxist ideas. Because of space we cannot unfortunately print them all, but below we print extracts from a few:

Personally, I see Michael Foot's decision to 'expel'—purge—*Militant* as the most retrograde step he has taken in his political, parliamentary life. Furthermore it will do harm that will be seen for many years to come—the stature of the party will not be enhanced by this course of action. Supporters of *Militant* are some of the most active within the Labour Party—left to the right wing of the movement we might just as well turn the party over to the SDP for all they are prepared to do for the working class; this we all saw to our detriment with the last Labour government—and I for one do not want a repeat of that.

Tony Biles, Brentwood, Essex.

Having recently been retired at the ripe old age of 58 I have, through my young son, Paul, become increasingly interested in what *Militant* is fighting for. Paul is

still at school and in the Labour Party Young Socialists. I know that I am going to have a tough time finding employment, I understand that we middle-aged people must make way for the young, but I refuse to accept that I'm finished. So in the meantime, I would like to help your cause.

Mrs A Ursell, Kent.

A fellow member of the Labour Party said recently that too many Labour MPs behave as if they had joined a cosy club, and forget what they are really in the Houses of Parliament for. Too true! I am not in need of a job, nor particularly hard up (yet) but I have a family, and it does not seem to me in anyone's interest to have large numbers of unemployed. I feel that any member of the Labour Party who does NOT feel militant right now is in the wrong group!

Mrs Frances Manktelow, Ashford.

Please find enclosed £1 towards your fighting fund. I'm sorry its not more but like four million others I am unemployed and a single parent family. I read your great paper for the first time last Saturday at a CND rally in Trowbridge. After watching party conference on television and hearing all the so-called socialists on the right of the party condemning *Militant*, anyone watching would have thought

you were controlled by the Kremlin itself.

I read your paper and found that all you are advocating is what myself and millions of other working class people want—a truly socialist society and a truly socialist Labour Party.

J Bedford, Frome, Somerset

This evening I took some washing down to the launderette. A few minutes later a bloke I recognised from my Labour Party came up and started chatting. His first words were, "How can I go about making a contribution to the *Militant*?" He then wrote out a cheque for the fighting fund for £30.

Chris Ballard, Cambridge.

The feelings of Labour voters in our area after the Labour Party conference were clearly expressed—94 *Militants* sold in all, double the previous week's sales, and this in the safe Tory seat of Stockport.

On Saturday my husband was collared by the local butcher, who on finding Martin had been a conference delegate, wanted to know 'what the hell Foot was playing at.' On Sunday I sold a paper to a neighbour who wanted to know what Hattersley was doing in the party in the first place! Another neighbour has asked for a paper every week—and it's

not long since I was accused of lowering the tone of the neighbourhood by putting a poster in my window!

Maggie Harbour, Stockport.

As two 'young, gullible, idealist Trots' from Sevenoaks, we did a paper sale around our council estate during Labour Party conference. Beforehand we had been selling three or four, which wasn't so bad as we might sign one or two people up to the party. On this occasion we actually sold 28.

Andrew Gilbertown and Richard Moore, Sevenoaks LPYS.

In their August publication, *Solidarity* talks of the loan from WIR Publications to Cambridge Heath press, which prints *Militant*, and says the loan is from a "sugar daddy, but no one knows his name or his allegiance." Talk about distortions! Talk about misleading people! The *Militant Witch-hunt Special*, as *Militant* has explained many times before, points out that WIR acts as a collecting box to protect the donations given by workers. The only 'sugar daddy' *Militant* has, comes in the form of the thousands of ordinary working class people who do want to read undistorted, non-misleading news—and so donate to *Militant*.

Kevin Slattery, Nottingham.

ference went against its own Annual Delegates' Meeting decision and voted for the register. The 1982 ADM of USDAW passed a resolution (No.34), expressing its opposition to the reintroduction of bans and proscriptions, which in its view would destroy the Labour Party.

Though it did go on to say any action taken as a result of the enquiry within the Labour Party should only be carried out after a thorough debate within the labour movement, I noticed that when approached to sponsor the Labour Movement Conference at Wembley, the General Secretary, Bill Whatley, declined. Perhaps he only wants a thorough debate with the right wing or *Solidarity*, the Tory branch of the Labour Party.

I noticed at the Wembley Conference that there were substantial numbers of USDAW delegates and was even more pleased when I thought that the large majority of USDAW workers normally work Saturdays, so some of these delegates had taken the day off to be there.

I, as many other USDAW members, felt sure that their conference decision would be the way the delegation voted on the register. So I urge all USDAW members to write to Bill Whatley expressing our disgust.

Yours fraternally
R P Grogan
USDAW C40 Barking

Stairway to the stars

Dear Militant,

I read with great interest Steve Amor's article, 'From Sputnik to Space Wars' (Oct 8). He said only a united socialist planet can secure the means of exploring the stars. This is true.

It is only at a time when the flower of human endeavour has been released from the constrictions of capitalism, when the working week no longer gets in our way, when a cultured and educated classless society inherits the Earth without the repression of nationalism, that we can really begin to take up man's great quest.

The higher stage of socialism is what I am talking about. It always amuses me when our detractors accuse us of 'utopianism' on this issue in particular, without understanding the Marxist perspectives.

Marx never laid down or stated when the higher stage, after revolution, will be reached. There are no set time periods for this. It is only logic that a planned international economy can take us forward towards a time when achievement of this can take place, but there is no defined time or limit, it is up to all of us. Lenin said that this social and economic level will only be arrived at as a conclusion to what has gone before.

In other words, the sooner revolution on an international basis is secured and the sooner humanity works towards de-nationalism and reducing the working week by using the means of production to benefit all, instead of a capitalist clique, the sooner we will arrive at the ultimate conclusion and the higher stage, and then, as I have said, mankind's greatest quest beckons, as Steve Amor in his article put it, 'the stairway to the stars'.

Yours fraternally,
Gary Nightingale,
Maidstone LP.

Thatcher's achievements spelt out

Dear Comrades,

Last Saturday, I had the dubious pleasure of flicking through the *Daily Mail* (9/10/82). I quickly turned to the editorial—headed "The Liberating of Margaret Thatcher" and was astounded to find a rough interpretation of Mrs Thatcher's exploits in government.

It said "...a growing number of men and women in this country respect her for what she is." I expect this meant the grateful British executive, whose taxes have fallen by 13.7% under the Thatcher government.

It carried on—"She did

not make a speech about the Falklands. She did not have to." Of course, this tragic and fruitless incident speaks for itself.

"She is by nature...a forceful woman who delights in the cut and thrust of politics and scorns her enemies." Indeed since 1979, she has "cut" British investment, "thrust" well over 3 million on the dole and 10 million below the poverty line. There is no doubt that she pours "scorn" over school leavers hoping for jobs, old people wanting a decent pension and the sick expecting treatment.

To use the words of the *Daily Mail* once more—"she is a fighter"—fighting down working class living standards, wages, and wars for mere profits and pride.

This most descriptive editorial ended with the words "trustworthy woman". Of course she's "trustworthy" and even predictable. 3,343,075 out of work will testify to that fact.

Yours fraternally,
Tracey Mc Gaughey,
Swansea LPYS.

Anger at the USDAW leadership

Dear Comrades

I am disgusted at the way the USDAW delegation to the Labour Party Con-

27 November conferences against witch-hunt

Please state when applying, whether you want to use creche facilities.

CREDENTIALS VENUE

LIVERPOOL

R VENTON,
C/O 46, THE
WOODLANDS,
BIRKENHEAD,
L41 2SJ.

ROYAL COURT,
ROE STREET,
(NEAR LIME ST
STATION),
LIVERPOOL.

BRIGHTON

R APPS,
C/O 216 WISTON RD,
BRIGHTON.

BRIGHTON CON-
FERENCE CENTRE,
FOYER HALL,
KINGS ROAD,
BRIGHTON.

BRADFORD

P WATSON,
C/O 12 TILEY SQ.,
WEST BOWLING,
BRADFORD,
BD5 7UQ.

CAESAR'S
(TIFFANY'S),
MANNINGHAM
LANE,
BRADFORD.

CARDIFF

F CUTHBERT,
C/O 12 FALOP ST.,
CAERPHILLY,
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SUITE,
QUEEN ST,
CARDIFF.

NEWCASTLE

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C/O 5 RICHMOND
TERRACE,
FELLING,
GATESHEAD,
NE10 9DY.

TYNESIDE CINEMA,
PILGRIM ST,
NEWCASTLE.

BIRMINGHAM

J BIRCH
C/O 109 NOR-
THFIELD RD,
KINGS NORTON,
BIRMINGHAM,
B70 1JE.

DIGBETH CIVIC
HALL,
BIRMINGHAM.

LONDON

BOB LABI,
C/O 23 IRONSIDE
HSE,
HOMERTON RD, E9

FRIENDS MEETING
HSE,
EUSTON RD,
NW1

GLASGOW

BOB WYLIE,
C/O 137 MALLARD
TERRACE,
EAST KILBRIDE,
G75 8UF.

PARTICK BOROUGH
HALLS,
GLASGOW.

BRISTOL ON 11 DECEMBER

ROBIN CLAPP,
C/O 55 ORMESTONE
HSE,
WITHYWOOD,
BRISTOL 13

HALL OF MEMORY,
CENTRAL HALL,
OLD MARKET ST,
BRISTOL.

OBITUARY

Dennis Mould died suddenly last Thursday. He had been a Labour Party member for over thirty years. A regular reader of the *Militant*, he was an ever active fighter as a shop steward at work, as a county councillor, as treasurer and tireless campaigner with

Shipleigh Labour Party. As Pat Wall (an ex-councillor with Dennis) said, 'No one I have ever met worked harder for the party or for other people than he did. I will miss him enormously'.

Our deepest sympathy to Mary and the family.
Steve Wilkinson,
Shipleigh CLP.

ads

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

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target Oct 9th.
Eastern	1605		2,000
East Midlands	1291		1,800
Hants & Dorset	933		1,300
Humberside	935		1,100
London East	2044		2,100
London West	750		1,000
London South	2086		1,500
Manchester & Lancs	1440		2,000
Merseyside	1558		2,100
Northern	1715		2,500
Scotland East	689		1,300
Scotland West	1436		2,300
Southern	1564		1,700
South West	1190		900
Wales East	486		1,000
Wales West	1888		2,000
West Midlands	2058		2,000
Yorkshire	2024		2,500
Others	9403		3,900
Total received	35095		35,000

Final chart for last quarter

RECORD WEEK!

As the chart shows, 'Militant' readers have given us record-breaking support to ensure that for the second quarter running we have reached our target. All our readers have been giving us what they can afford—from Anon (W Midlands) £500 to £1 unemployed single parent (Somerset).

A 'Cambridge launderette-user' donated £30, £40 came from Bracknell supporters, £31 from Thanet and Medway readers to assist us included B Thompson, AUEW(Const) secretary for Gravesend. R Servian, Wolverhampton, sent us £20, and £74 came from a Barnsley LP conference report-back and social evening.

Thanks to S London photographer (£100), Knowsley NALGO readers (M Peat among others), Merseyside SOGAT 82 supporters, Solent Labour Students (they didn't say exactly which college), Greenock COHSE nurse (£1), Gloucester literature (badges and expenses re-donated), Hackney Central LPYS (from part of jumble sale profits), D Batchelor (Shipley), and Shipley rock sales.

F O'Loughlin, (W Bromwich West LPYS), gave us £4, K McCombes and E Lennon (Rutherglen CLP) £25 in total, V Russel (NHS worker, E Kilbridge) £5, and donations came from Paisley Tech and Glasgow University Labour Clubs. Peter Taaffe's £225 from Thames TV went as usual straight into our funds, and B Buitekant, a member of SCPS's Telecomms GEC personally sent £20.

A Stirling folk night added £40, and a meeting there raised £38, from which a donation to the health workers was made. A £1 note came anonymously from Kirkaldy, and other £1s came from J Goldsmith (POEU London), and O O'Neill (Corby). G Broadbent (Rossendale) sent £5, and £27 came from a

By Steve Cawley

meeting sponsored by Altrincham and Sale LPYS.

K and L Hollins (Blythe Bridge) sent in £7, while £13 came from a sponsored marathon and £40 from a NUPE shop steward's commission came from Hull. L Midgely (Leeds ASMTS) sent £5, and £31 came from a meeting in Kidderminster and £50 from supporters in Rhyl, N Wales. J Hutchison (Leamington) sent £10, and £16 after expenses came from a Derby meeting, and £50 from one in Mansfield.

£81 was raised at a meeting in Leicester on 'What next for Labour', £40 from Oldham's meeting, £29 from Wolverhampton, and a collection from workers at Self-Changing Gears, Coventry. Other work places to help us included the Bromley-by-Bow Gas depot, and TGWU 5/909 branch (£20 regular donation), from Solihull.

R Page (Secretary, South Herts LP) sent us a £25 personal donation, and P Bishop (Bath TC Youth Officer) a fiver. J Roberts (one of the four million, from Taunton) sent £2, with the promise of more as soon as he get a job. Thanks to H C Brown (Piltdown) for £14, Rochester & Chatham LPYS for a fiver, a Reading meeting collection £54, and Hastings LPYS for their collection.

R Miller, a Glasgow student, paid £5 for a 'Militant', while Partick sup-

LAST WEEK £13,201

porters held a social for us. Collections after meetings in Rainhill and St Helens, plus the proceeds of a discussion group in Huyton, and over £40 in donations from Bootle readers, all boosted the Merseyside line on our chart.

A reader in Crook, Co Durham, sent us £50, Rotherham's Red Referee £9, Handsworth readers £66, Bristol readers G Kandinsky and 'anon' made up £9, Birmingham Sparkbrook LPYS sent us £2, and T Borton (E

London) £5. Hull readers held a social, and this, with donations from S Simms, B Owen, M Burton and P and K Spooner, came to nearly £40.

You don't need to either run or sponsor a marathon to bring nearer the 'Daily Militant'—just make sure you (and all your mates) send us a regular donation according to your means! Our next target is £50,000, and the new chart will be published next week.



Liverpool was not just saturated by rain last Saturday. Hundreds of papers were sold. Two lads from the Vauxhall area who just came along, were so impressed that they insisted on selling 'Militant' on the demo.

MILITANT READERS MEETINGS 'WHAT WE STAND FOR'

NORWICH: Fight Tories, not socialists. Wednesday 27 October, 7.45 pm, Duke Street Centre, Norwich.

MERTON: Speaker Tony Sauniois at Vestry Hall, London Road, Mitcham on Tuesday 2 November 8.00pm.

REDHILL: Wednesday 27 October at 8.00 pm. Speaker: Ray Apps (delegate from Brighton Kemp Town to Labour Party Conference). At Progress House, 164 Garlands Road, Redhill.

BEDLINGTON: Marxist Discussion Group: Thursday 4 November 7.30 pm 'History of the Labour Party'. Details P Marsden, Blyth 62098.

CROYDON: Tuesday 9 November at 8.00 pm at Cerar Hall, Ruskin House, 23 Coombe Road, Croydon. Speakers: Bob Faulkes (EETPU member, personal capacity); Andy Flett (Waterloo ASLEF, personal capacity).

PORT TALBOT: Monday 25 October, 7.30 pm, Dalton Community Centre, Sandfields, Port Talbot. Speaker: Brian Ingham (Industrial Editor, Militant)

WEST YORKSHIRE series of Marxist Discussion Meetings.
Week 1: The need for a socialist planned economy.
Week 2: How to win the next election.
Week 3: What role for parliament in the transformation of society.
SE LEEDS: Wednesdays.
NE LEEDS: Wednesdays.
E LEEDS: Wednesdays.
NW LEEDS: Wednesdays.
S LEEDS: Mondays.
W LEEDS: Tuesdays.
WAKEFIELD: Mondays.
BATLEY & MORLEY: Wednesdays.
For further details contact Jon Ingham, Leeds 741961.

CARDIFF: On Wednesday 27 October at 7.30 pm. Speaker: Ted Grant. At Royal Hotel, St Mary St, Cardiff.

GALASHIELS: Monday 25 October at 7.30 pm in TGWU Hall, 70 Overhaugh Street. Speakers: Keith Dickinson (Militant Editorial Board), Rab Stewart (T&G District Secretary).

EDINBURGH: Tuesday 26 October at 7.30 pm at Edinburgh Trades Council, Picardy Place. Speaker: Keith Dickinson (Militant Editorial Board).

TRANENT EAST LOTHIAN: Wednesday 27 October. Speaker: Keith Dickinson (Militant Editorial Board). For details see local sellers.

BEDLINGTON: Marxist Discussion Groups: Thursday 4 November 7.30 pm 'History of the Labour Party'. Details P Marsden, Blyth 62098.

IPSWICH: Monday 28 October, 7.30 pm. Room 7, Castle Hill Community Centre, Highfield Road, Ipswich. Speaker: Bob Edwards (Harlow Labour Party)

NORTH EAST Marxist Discussion Groups:
FOREST HALL: Details Dave Metcalfe, 0632 665277
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: Details, Washington 478424.

CLASSIFIED

GET YOUR XMAS CARDS NOW

6 Original Alan Hardman Cartoons
Following the tremendous success of last year's cards we are again offering a set of Xmas cards featuring original Alan Hardman cartoons. The themes of the set will be Anti-Tory, Anti-Royal, Anti-SDP, Anti-Witch-hunt and Anti-War. The set will comprise six cards and envelopes and prices are as follows:

- 1-5 sets £1.25 per set (incl P&P)
- For Resale:
- 10 sets £5 (plus £1.25 P&P)
- 20 sets £10 (plus £1.60 P&P)
- 30 sets £15 (plus £2.00 P&P)
- 40 sets £20 (plus £2.00 P&P)

Cash must be sent with every order.

All proceeds to Militant Fighting Fund. Send your order now and save money! All orders received before 1st November will be sent out post free.

Send to Eddie McParland, Revolution Graphics, 81, Troughton Rd., Charlton, London SE7. (All cheques/Postal Orders to be made payable to Revolution Graphics)

COVENTRY SE LP
Mass Canvass, 'Fight the Tories not the Socialists' Saturday, Sunday October 30/31. Meet 10.30 am. 26, Coundon Road, Phone: Coventry 552059.

WANTED: Accommodation in East London area. Anything considered. Contact Tim White, Box 4, 1 Mentmore Terrace, E8.

Winner of Hackney bottle of whisky raffle on London train to Liverpool demo: Green ticket 469 (sold in coaches A, B or C). £24.25 proceeds have been donated to Militant Fighting Fund. Thanks for support. (Winner please send ticket to Box 5, c/o 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN)

Hackney Central LPYS: Lost on Liverpool demonstration: megaphone, oblong black box with separate microphone. Contact Box 3, 1 Mentmore Terrace London E8 3PN.

MILITANT PAMPHLET
"CIA Infiltration of the Labour Movement"
Price £1.00 (incl p&p) from Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Industrial Reports

DHSS staff strike against cuts

"The Tories want to make the DHSS inaccessible to the public"

So commented Richard Edwards, chairman Birmingham No 1 CPSA branch, as his members in the Northfield office in Birmingham continued their strike action over manning levels.

"The members have never been so united and determined to see it through".

In the West Midlands region of the DHSS, over the past 12 months, the number of applicants has increased by 27%, whilst management have cut staff by 15%.

Ian Reading, branch treasurer, said that in the last 8 weeks alone applicants to the Northfield office have jumped by 600 to around 4,000 in any week period.

"With this added workload it's no wonder that there has been a notable increase in absence through nervous illness".

But it's not just DHSS workers who are suffering; "We are having to abandon whole areas of our work, like home visits to pensioners. The government doesn't want people to go to the DHSS, but wants voluntary organisations to replace us. The average waiting time for an interview is now 4.4 days, in some cases 2 weeks."

As reported in issue 620, a 24 hour strike of 35 offices in the West Midlands, and some in the east has already taken place, but according to Bro. Edwards, "The show of solidarity was very good,

By Bill Mullins

but it meant that two days work had to be done in one when we got back. What is needed now is national action by the union, controlled escalation, a further turn of the screw."

OXFORD

A hundred members of SCPS and CPSA, who work at the DHSS office at Harcourt House, Oxford, have been on strike for three weeks. They are asking for an extra 25 staff. Their workload has increased by 25% during 1982 but staffing levels have actually been cut. This is in line with Tory policies to cut staff even though they have increased unemployment!

The staff want to give an efficient and prompt service but cannot do it. Problems include:

—urgent claimants cannot be interviewed and paid promptly

—students have to wait 4 weeks for an appointment and even longer for payment

—visits to claimants are subject to long delays

—the uprating of benefits in November is seriously in areas.

Management say that staf-

ing levels are adequate and no more staff are needed. The strikers have official union support and also support from claimants organisations, welfare rights groups, social service workers and probation officers. A resolution of support for DHSS workers taking action, which originated from Oxford, was passed unanimously at the probation officers conference.

Donations and messages of support etc., to: M Robertson, 4, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

By Barry Shillingford
(Oxford LPYS)

HARTLEPOOL MARCH

The quiet afternoon shopping of Hartlepool was stirred by a lively demonstration of nearly 2,000. The march, the largest in years, was against unemployment which stands already at 22%. The threatened closure of Buxted Chicken will add another 642 to the jobless.

The workforce of Buxted was supported by workers from other factories who finished early to show their opposition to Hartlepool becoming a doombomb. The slogans made many references to stuffing, and reminded Mrs Thatcher that there was plenty of rope left from the monkey hanging.



The Birmingham DHSS strikers travelled down to London to picket the DHSS head office at Elephant and Castle, on October 7. Photo: John Smith (IFL)

'We'll never surrender the NHS

Birmingham

Longbridge, Rover, Hardy Spicer, Lucas Foremans Road were just some of the Birmingham factories striking for part of the day in the West Midlands day of action on 15 October.

3,000 workers marched in Birmingham with other demonstrations taking place in Coventry, Rugby and Stafford, Nuneaton and Worcester.

At Longbridge a dinner time mass meeting rejected the Leyland two year wage offer of 9.5% and also voted not to go back for the afternoon, but to come out in support of health workers.

On the 22 September national day of action, all Leyland plants and most of Birmingham's factories were on holiday. So this was their first opportunity to take solidarity action.

No one on the Birmingham march was in any doubt that the health workers' fight was a political fight. Peggy Gilbert, NUPE secretary, Birmingham Central Health District branch, told the rally, "This is not just about a pay claim. It is a political fight against privatisation. We will never surrender the principles of the NHS.

"Now our dedication is being played on. Health workers feel disgusted by this offer. The next Labour government must ensure that this never happens again."

Unfortunately her call for more decisive action was not echoed by Len Murray. He denied there was any question of 'smashing the government' which was democratically elected. The aim was to build public support to press the "government to negotiate sensibly". But after six months health workers want the trade union leaders, in the words of Peggy Gilbert, "to stop pussyfooting around", step up the national action and to win this battle as soon as possible.

Coventry

About 2,000 workers demonstrated through Coventry City Centre on 15 October. Contingents came from local Rolls Royce factories, Talbot, Massey Ferguson and Coventry Trades Council.

At the rally the loudest applause was given for calls to intensify the action. Roger Poole, national officer NUPE, said the "TUC should call on all workers to take industrial action in support of health workers. If this means a general strike, so be it."

The response from bystanders showed the enor-

mous sympathy from the working class. What is needed is a bold plan to win the dispute before the NHS workers' spirit begins to ebb. Dick Jones, representing white collar workers at Rolls Royce, Parkside, reported that a 6,000 strong mass meeting had that morning passed a resolution supporting the call for a 24-hour general strike on 8 November, maximising the national transport strike on that day. A similar call was put to the rally and unanimously accepted.

By Paul Smith
(Coventry South East LPYS)

Ipswich

Last Thursday saw one of the biggest rallies and demos ever seen in Ipswich, as health workers and other trade unionists from all over the region came by the busload to Suffolk's capital.

According to the local press and radio only 500 were on the march. But it was nearer 1,500.

In parts of Suffolk response from health workers to show their support had, up until now, been very poor. My own hospital, St Audrey's psychiatric, is set in a rural area and the workers there have not shown much support for the present claim. But now they are beginning to realise that



Print workers at the Oyez factory in Liverpool man the picket line after their workmate Tony Jones was disciplined by management for supporting the health workers. Tony (second from right) attended the regional day of action in Liverpool on October 4.

they must take action to combat Fowler's arrogant attitude.

Such was the support that there was a 100% withdrawal of labour from both the wash-up and the kitchen staff. Also nurses, carpenters, gardeners, painters and other staff took action causing surprise to our colleagues down the road at Ipswich hospital.

By a member of COHSE
(Melton branch)

Chester

Chester health service unions called an emergency mass meeting last week at the city town hall. Over 700 attended the meeting and all emergency cover was withdrawn for the two hours of the meeting.

Bob Quick, COHSE full time official, explained the tremendous support the NHS unions had received. In the Metal Box factory in Liverpool, £3,500 was raised. He said the next step

would be the national transport strike on 8 November.

Graham Nicholls, full time NUPE official, dealt with a most urgent matter. Police intimidation of the local unions. He said, "The police and management are working together to smash the trade unions."

Graham Nicholls went on to say, "This isn't just a pay campaign—they're out to smash the union. We can either back off or fight. There is no half way."

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

Industrial Reports

WATERWORKERS SHOW THEIR STRENGTH

Despite heavy rain there was an excellent turnout of NUPE and GMWU pickets at Beckton Sewage Treatment Works in East London, the largest of its kind in Europe.

There was also a solid response from EETPU and AUEW members who, to a man, refused to cross the picket line.

In fact many joined in knowing they would be looking for support when their claim comes up later in the year.

However, Reg Green, the NUPE steward, made the point that it wasn't a case of being on strike for 15% as the newspapers reported. What they really wanted was comparability with gas and electricity workers, which they were promised two years ago.

Another grievance is the plan to introduce British-Rail type flexi-rosters. As GMWU member Jack Stell said, "We'll have no social life at all. We'll probably have to work one weekend in two and who wants to go out

on a Friday night knowing you've got to get up at five o'clock the next morning?"

"Even the 6½% we're being offered will mean nothing if we lose overtime payments for weekend working."

'They'll play off one region against another'

Charlie Holton, the EETPU senior steward, talked about the government's plans to divide the National Water Council into Regional Councils, all having separate bargaining and pay settlements.

"They'll play one region off against another, try to split the workers up. But you've got to stick together. That's why we're not going in. If you've got a union card

you can't cross a picket line. That's what trade unionism is all about."

Unfortunately, although some contract workers and supervisors turned their cars around, most of the office workers crossed the picket line, because they'd been given no clear directive from their NALGO union rep. As one worker said "Do they think they're immune from redundancy? They should realise whose side they're on."

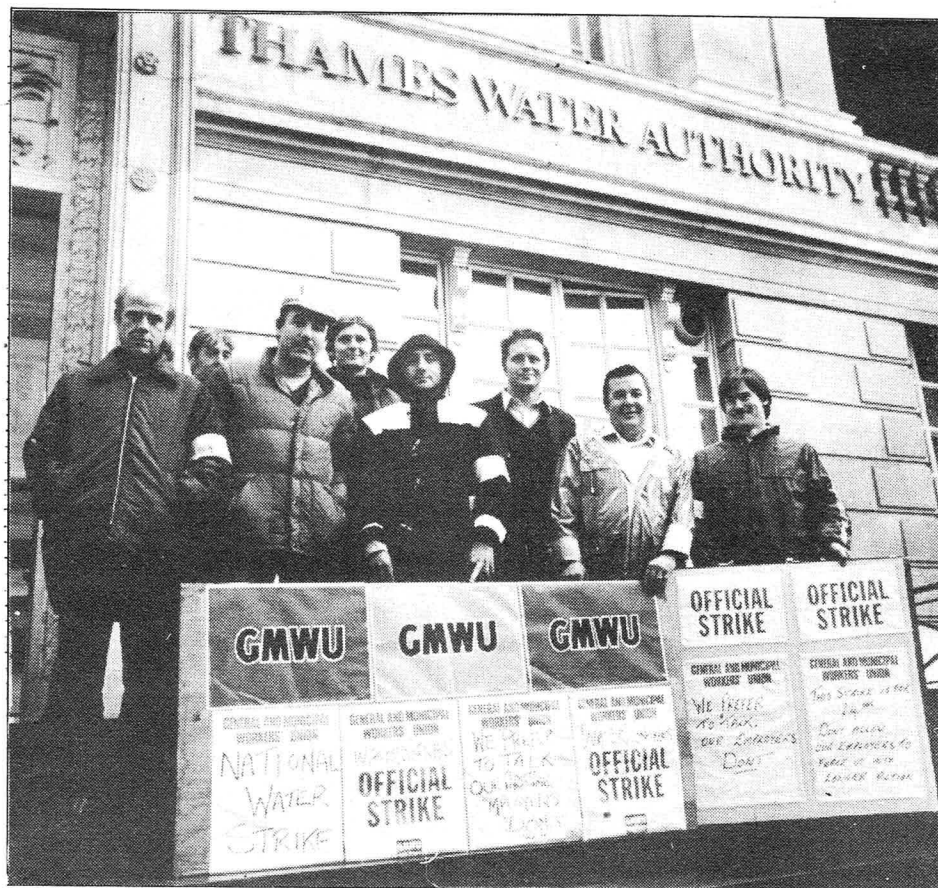
Every one agreed that today's strike—the first ever national water strike—was just a show of strength, only the beginning.

The mood on the picket line was summed up by Jack Steel; "We'll need to step action up, if we went on all out strike we'd soon get our claim. Nobody wants to see sewage on the streets. We don't want to hurt the public but the water council—and the government are behind them—has taken us for granted for too long."

By Maggie McGinley

(Barking Labour Party)

and Steve Feely
(AUEW Beckton STW personal capacity)



Waterworkers, members of the GMWU, picket the Thames Water Authority in London during the strike on October 18.

Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (IFL)

Bitter but confident

With 25 pickets at the Anstey Lane depot in Leicester and 100% support for the strike, the jokey atmosphere was matched by a bitter determination to force management to talk before 11 November. For too long management have drawn out negotiations after the pay date (first full week in December).

This year it was going to be different, especially as comparability with gas and electricity workers, estimated at about £15 a week, was left

over from the previous years.

The pickets turned back food and other deliveries and sub contractors, including a not too happy non-union man.

One gentleman in a posh car wanted to bring in a £½ million tender—no way! As one picket said, "we'll be fighting you next." In the Soar division, all main laying is done by contractors. If that went to the service mains then the men would be without a job. The posh car

driver tried to take the picket's name; 'Mr GMWU' he was informed.

One staff member had been allowed in to ensure supplies for the city centre and dialysis machines. But when he tried to leave the depot with a radio, he was stopped by the pickets and was not let by until an assurance was given that he would not turn on any other watercocks.

By Gary Freeman
(Beaumont Leys LP)

Tories get their answer on Blackpool privatisation

The Tory dominated council of Blackpool has taken Heseltine's speech at Tory conference as a green light to follow in the footsteps of Southend by setting in motion the wheels of privatisation.

On 14 October cleansing workers in Blackpool staged a one-day stoppage in order to lobby the Council's Policy and Resources Committee which met on that day.

Demonstrators began to assemble outside the Town Hall to lobby the incoming councillors. The union involved, NUPE, had around 150 of its cleansing department there and these were joined by NHS workers, NALGO members and members of the Labour Party and LPYS, who were out in force. It was conspicuous that the Tory councillors entered the Town Hall by the backdoors.

All of the demonstrators crammed into the public gallery.

In opening the debate on tenders the Tory chairman took great pains to explain that privatisation could mean up to 10% reduction, citing the example of Southend. But Labour coun-

cillor Ivan Taylor explained that the 10% cut would mean cuts in the wages, conditions, holidays and pensions of the workers. He also pointed out that since privatisation in Southend trade refuse charges had trebled.

Cllr. Taylor also attacked the comments of the local Tory MP, who said that privatisation would mean greater job security. How does the hiring and firing of private firms amount to greater job security?

His contribution was received rapturously from the public gallery.

Several Tory councillors spoke saying they did not think that in the end the cleansing service could be privatised. In replying to this Cllr. Taylor said that the Tories were either lying or wasting money by looking into the possibilities.

As expected the Tories won and Blackpool council is now seeking tenders. But as NUPE full-timer Bill Campbell explained at the end of the meeting, "We have lost the battle—we will win the war!"

By Pete Farrow & Kevin Taylor
(Blackpool North LPYS)



Photo: J. Woulfe (Militant)

Above, members of the Arlington House strike committee with their convenor, Jack Jenkinson (left) raise cash for the strike fund at the LPYS march in Liverpool.

Management in the dispute in London (see *Militant* September 24 and October 8) went to court last week on Friday in an attempt to get the strikers removed from their live-in accommodation.

Meanwhile the 45 strikers, members of the TGWU,

have extended their picket lines to the other hotels owned by the parent company of Arlington House, Rowton Hotels.

Help is still greatly needed, not only donations, but also help on the picket lines which are taking place at all the hotels on a 24 hour basis. Contact Arlington House Strikers, c/o Camden Labour Centre, 8 Camden Road, London NW1.

Militant

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MINERS' BALLOT SUPPORT THE NUM EXECUTIVE

A standing ovation greeted Arthur Scargill, president of the National Union of Mineworkers, when he addressed a rally of South Wales miners on the current wage claim.

The 2,500 miners present listened to the speakers attentively. Mick McGahey, vice president, reminded members that this was the first time since 1935 that the union's national executive committee had been so united in their resolve to win a decent wage increase.

Arthur Scargill outlined the main points of the claim, particularly emphasising that the NCB has the money to concede the miners claim in full. £150 million had been discovered from stocks undervalued on the annual account. Price rises in coal due next month meant another £300 million. Also, a one percent saving in overtime would mean extra available for wages—at present 14% of time worked in industry is overtime; less overtime would mean more jobs and more on the basic wage.

Scargill warned that in the

By Ian Isaacs
 (St John's NUM, S. Wales)

build up to the day of the ballot for strike action, there would be an unprecedented campaign of vilification against the union leadership. His words were borne out the next day—the *Daily Express* amongst other Tory rags carried attacks and distortions about the NUM. In addition the NCB themselves are spending £100,000 on an advertising campaign in South Wales newspapers in an attempt to deter the miners from taking strike action.

But Scargill, at the meeting challenged the NCB—he was prepared to convene a delegate conference of the NUM to reconsider the wording of

the ballot papers on the condition that the NCB gave a categorical assurance that no pit closures would take place, other than those where seam exhaustion is proven.

The ballot papers, following the unanimous decision of a national delegate conference, authorises the executive to call industrial action to prevent closures of "any pit, plant or unit (other than on the grounds of exhaustion) and at the same time bring about a satisfactory settlement of our wages claim."

The demands of the NUM are just and timely—they must win their wage claim in full:

- ★ Increase the minimum grade to £115, with same monetary levels applied to all grades.
- ★ Payment of new rates from November 1 on a salaried basis.
- ★ Introduction of retirement at 55 for all workers in the industry.
- ★ Revision of all allowances paid in the industry to keep their original value by keeping pace with inflation.

TORIES CONDEMN COUNCIL TENANTS

From page one

This Tory government has set about grinding down the conditions of workers in general, but they have vented their spite on council tenants more than most. Tory cuts have bitten deep into housing finance and by 1984, they will have cut spending on public housing by 53%, or £3 billion. The Tories wax lyrical about 'wider freedom of choice', but for tenants like these in Tommy Whites, the only choice is "take it or leave it!"

Nor is there much hope of a transfer. There are fewer council houses being built now than at any time since 1925. The Tories are making sure that tenants in slum conditions have no hope of getting out, by stopping new council building and by rushing to sell off all the quality housing still owned by councils.

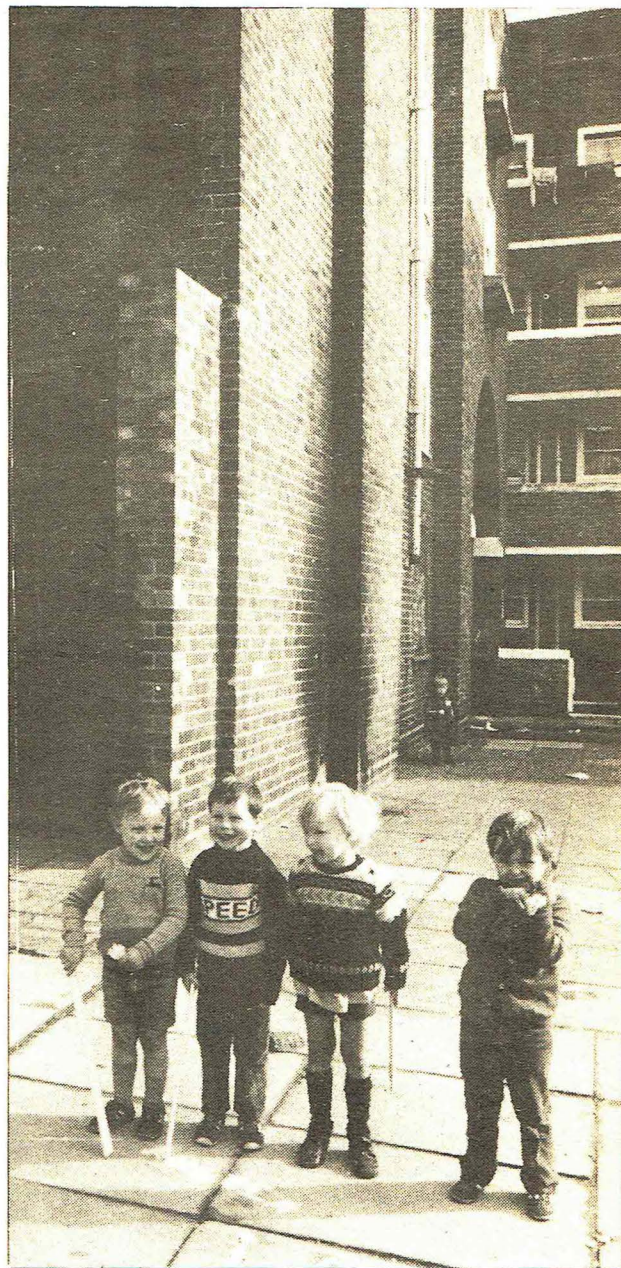
The Liberal council in Liverpool have adopted Thatcher's housing policies with enthusiasm. The Liberals may be a small version of the Tory Party nationally, but in this City they are the Tory Party. They have not put brick to mortar to build a council house in two years and they show no signs at all of changing.

Tenants in Tommy Whites have nothing but contempt for the Liberal councillors who, for all their talk about 'community politics', have nothing to offer the tenants.

At a meeting last week the tenants at Tommy Whites resolved to suffer these conditions no longer. They have set up a campaign committee to fight to get the block demolished and to get themselves re-housed. Unfortunately, all their local councillors are Liberals, but other Liverpool City Labour councillors have agreed to help.

Tony Byrne, one of the Labour councillors, explained that the Labour Party was committed to demolishing all the tenement blocks, no matter how hard the fight, because "it would be wrong to leave our children a legacy of such housing conditions." The City council have come up with promises of 'renewal', but the tenants want out; they want to see the blocks pulled down.

It is in conditions like these that workers are being



The place has become a dumping ground for stolen cars...one child has been knocked down already. Being housed in tenements means that children have no safe place to play.

Photo: D. Doran

forced increasingly to turn for help to the Labour Party. The tenants of Tommy Whites will not be rushing out to vote for Labour candidates whose only claim to fame is being able to 'out-moderate' any other 'moderates'. What the tenants want is a fight, a determined campaign: they want answers.

Moreover, the social problems of Liverpool are no different to those faced by millions of working class families in the inner cities up and down the country.

The Labour Party conference agreed on policies including a dramatic increase in the supply of public sector housing. But if that is to become a reality, if the next Labour government is to be able to satisfy the needs of all those tenants in modern slums, those waiting for basic amenities or those

homeless altogether, they must be prepared to change fundamentally the whole basis of the building industry and the financial sector.

Private domination of finance, land, building companies and supply industries presents a permanent obstacle to the nation's housing needs and the employment of hundreds of thousands of building workers now on the dole.

The next Labour government must take over the building and related industries, the finance houses and the land to ensure that a public building corporation provides homes—decent homes—for all workers. Families in conditions like those in Liverpool must be given a hope for the future. Only a socialist Labour government can fulfil that hope.

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'FIGHT THE WITCH-HUNT' RALLIES

Details on page 12

Tories out! Socialism in!

Demonstration organised by the Young Socialists in Northern Ireland. Leaves Art College York Street, Belfast 12.00 on November 6. For further details, telephone Belfast 232 966.

PAKISTANI SOCIALISTS FRAMED

From page one

has denied all charges:—

"We do not believe in individual terrorism... We firmly believe that the dictatorship can only be overthrown by a mass movement... The Dutch Government should not rely on the false slander of the military regime in Pakistan because this regime wants to use Dutch state forces against Pakistani activists. We will continue to struggle for democracy and social justice in Pakistan."

Under pressure from the

FNV (Dutch TUC) and several Labour and Pacifist Socialist MPs, consideration is now being given to the application of the two still under arrest for political asylum. But there is still a very real danger, not only that these two could be deported, but that the others could be re-arrested and extradited. This would mean certain death.

The filthy tactics of Zia's secret police will discredit, not the Pakistani Marxists who are working to develop a mass workers' and peasants' struggle, but Zia's

own regime which has no answer but lies and murders, and its accomplices and apologists in the West.

The Dutch labour movement, true to its long internationalist traditions, is rallying around the Pakistani militants, but they need the protection of the international labour movement.

We appeal to all workers' organisations to send protests to the Netherlands Embassy, 38 Hyde Park Gate, London SW7, and messages of solidarity to *Struggle*, PO Box 71780, 1008 Amsterdam, Netherlands.