

# Militant

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20p



**FRANCE**  
See Centre Pages.

Is this what Thatcher meant by a "slimmer and fitter Britain"?—people queuing for 'seconds' at a bakers in Newcastle recently.



Photo: D Doran.

## Tories trap millions in... **DOLE QUEUE** **POVERTY**

**"We do the best we can for the kids, but it really hurt when I couldn't afford to let the kids go on the school trip.**

"They don't get many treats these days. I'm dreading Christmas—I don't know what I'll be able to give them," Barbara Poole, mother of three small children, told of the despair she sometimes feels. Her husband is unemployed.

This month's unemployment figures have just been announced. Despite a drop of 48,000, over three million unemployed workers and their families are still suffering the misery of life on the

**By Heather Rawling**

dole. The Tories' claim to be 'the party for the family', yet workers' families have to bear the brunt of Tory cut-backs. Over one million children live in homes where the 'head of the household' is unemployed. Mrs Poole, who lives in Brighton, explained what that meant for the family; "Me and my husband seem to be arguing more and more. He gets so depressed. Making the money go round

is a nightmare. I spend hours walking round the shops. I do a lot of walking because I can't afford the bus fares. But I have to get the cheapest food. I often get vegetables from the market about closing time—stuff that would be thrown away when they're shut. Very often, by the end of the week, I go without so the kids can have a decent meal." The grinding poverty of the 1930s is with us in the 1980s.

"I ought to be called 'Second Hand Rose'," Mrs Poole said, "I haven't had any new clothes for ages. It would be nice one day to go out and buy a new dress and a pair of shoes".

But not all mothers whose husbands are unemployed suffer in the same way. Last week, Princess Diana went on a shopping spree. After just two hours of shopping,

two Harrods delivery vans arrived at her London home of Kensington Palace. While millions of working class families suffer untold hardship, the 'unemployed' rich fritter money away on all sorts of luxuries.

For the one in eight who are on the dole, unemployment is more than just a statistic, it is a cruel fact of life. More and more children are learning the realities of living on state benefits.

The Study commission on the Family recently showed that the rate of unemployment for married men with dependent children is higher than for men without children, and for men with four or more children, it is even higher. And once unemployed, it is difficult for married men with dependents to break out of the poverty trap, an MSC study of the long term unemployed has found.

Continued on Back Page

## **N.Ireland** **Sectarianism** **No Answer**

Yet another Tory "solution" has run into the ground in Northern Ireland. Prior's unworkable plan for a new Assembly and "rolling devolution" has been shattered by the results of last week's election.

The election has proven that, on the basis of the existing Northern Ireland political parties and the Tory policies, there can never be political stability in Northern Ireland.

To the capitalist media, the emergence of Sinn Fein with 5 seats and 10% of the first preference votes was the most significant outcome of the poll. Startled by this vote, they have missed another feature of the election, of even greater

significance

Traditionally, Northern Ireland records one of the highest polls in Britain and Ireland—often 80-85% of the electorate vote. The valid poll this time was 58%. Where Sinn Fein candidates drew 64,000 first preferences, a staggering number, almost 425,000, either did not vote or spoilt their votes.

Significantly, the lowest poll was in the urban areas. Among workers there had been little or no interest in this election. The failure of the Assembly was taken as a foregone conclusion. All this was reflected in the size of the poll, as was the growing disillusionment, especially of the youth, in the old, traditional and established political parties.

Above all else, the outcome was a vote of no con-

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## **Only Labour armed with socialist policies can end this nightmare**

# SECTARIANISM NO ANSWER

from page 1

confidence in the Tory government and in the batch of local Tories, orange and green, in Northern Ireland.

In the months before the election the sectarian issues had been pushed to the background. Political life had instead been dominated by united struggles involving catholic and protestant workers and on a scale not seen for decades. Health workers have been marching shoulder to shoulder. Tens of thousands of other workers have taken supportive action.

On the Monday before the election, water service workers in Northern Ireland made this one of the most solid regions participating in their 24-hour strike. On the day of the poll itself, CPISA and POEU members were picketing British Telecom buildings, striking against the sale of Telecom assets to private industry.

Overall, the mood in the North was and remains anti-Tory and anti-establishment. If all workers have one thing in common, it is their hatred of Thatcher and her government.

Yet because of the absence of a genuine party to represent workers, this mood could not find any positive expression at the polls. The lowest polls were in the mainly protestant areas.

In East Belfast, almost entirely protestant, while 39,417 people voted, 34,856 either abstained or spoilt their ballots. In protestant North Down, 54,619 voted while 49,000 did not. South Antrim, again mostly protestant, recorded a ballot poll of 66,443, leaving 65,291 who mostly voted with their backsides by staying at home.

In other words, the largest vote was for those who said no to all the parties. And small wonder, given the choice workers in such areas were faced with!

In East Belfast the ballot paper listed 9 assorted unionists, 2 Alliance, 1 SDLP and 1 from the so-called Workers Party. The voters of North Down had a chance to pick from a magnificent selection of 11 candidates representing different variants of unionism, 3 from the Alliance Party and 1 SDLP. Putting it

another way, they had a choice between 15 Tories of different colours. Rather than select from among these brands of poison almost half the electorate voted no.

## SDLP split three ways

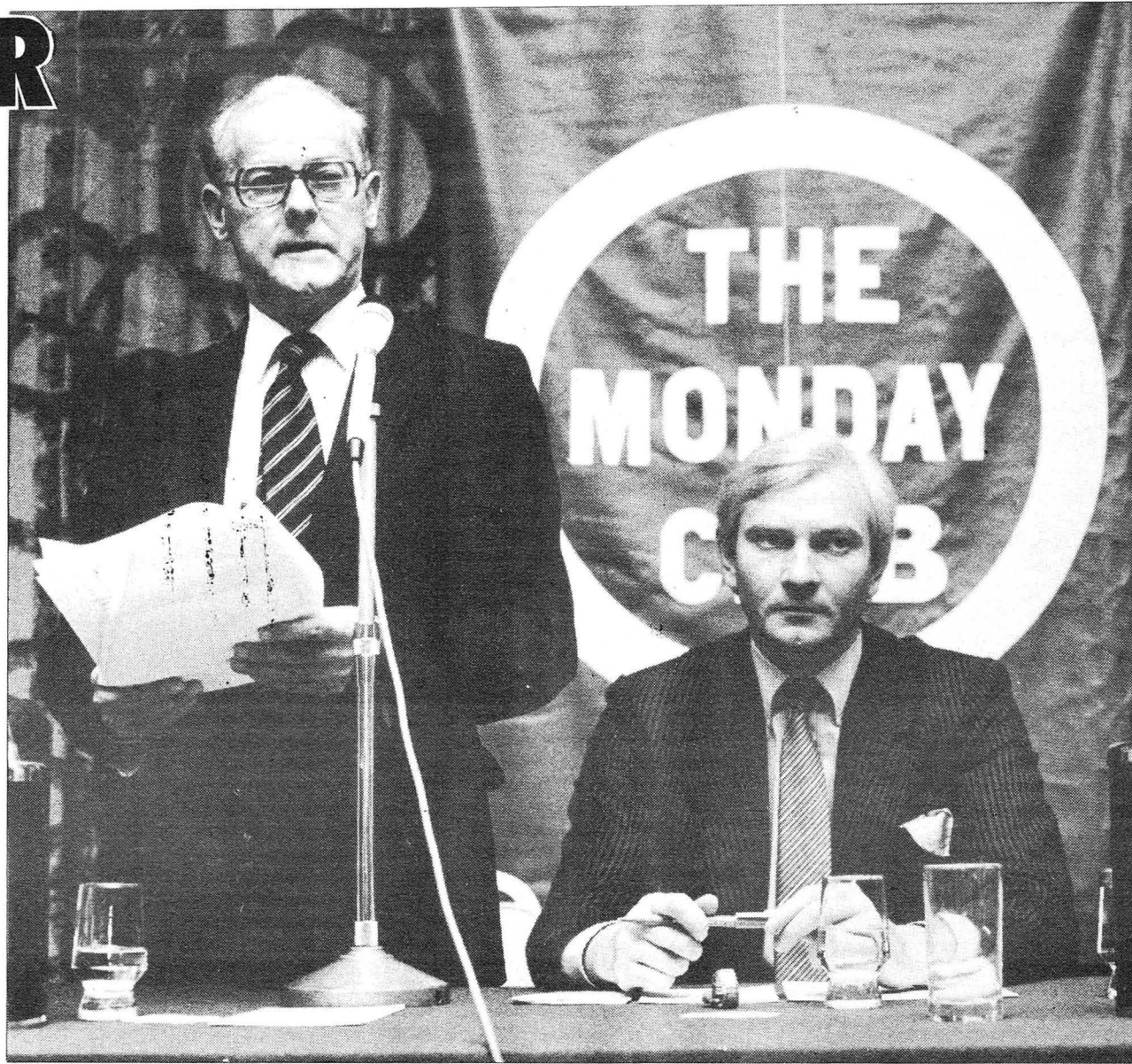
This political vacuum explains the vote for Sinn Fein. As in protestant areas, the mood among catholic workers is anti-Tory, but even more bitterly so, due to the repression which is a daily part of their lives.

To catholics, the main choice was between Sinn Fein and the SDLP. With the SDLP split three ways on the question of whether and how it should fight this election, disrupted by resignations and divisions, incapable of mounting a serious campaign, and voicing only the meaningless slogan "stand firm with the SDLP", Sinn Fein could not have had a weaker opposition. To most catholics the SDLP is now seen as the party of the establishment, representing the comfortable middle-class, exactly akin to the old Nationalist Party which it had pushed aside 12 years ago.

In rural areas, such as Fermanagh and South Tyrone, Sinn Fein got the traditional republican vote, largely of a right-wing character. In the urban areas, especially in Belfast and Derry, there has never been the same base for right-wing republicanism.

Here the Sinn Fein candidates carefully laced their propaganda with anti-Tory and even semi-socialist phraseology. Appearing as the only anti-establishment party, and the only party challenging the state on the issue of repression, they were able to capture a significant anti-Tory and radical vote especially among the youth, many of whom are unemployed, and without the remotest prospect of a job.

Sinn Fein can offer no way forward for its working class voters. If the vote leads to a re-escalation of the Provisionals' military campaign, this will only serve to increase sectarianism and provide the government with an excuse for even more severe repression. The IRA cam-



James Molyneux, leader of the official Unionist Party addresses a fringe meeting of the extreme right-wing Monday Club at this year's Tory Party conference.

Photo: MILITANT

paigned of individual terror is a blind alley which can never succeed.

Nor can Sinn Fein show a way forward politically. Nationalism, even when it is interwoven with a few socialist phrases, will not solve a single one of the problems of catholic workers. Rather Sinn Fein's result will only increase sectarian polarisation of politics.

It is the unity of the working class, both industrially and politically, not barren Tory solutions and not sectarian based political organisations, which can provide an alternative. The vote for Sinn Fein should be taken by the labour movement as a sombre warning. There is a vacuum in politics in Northern Ireland. But if the labour movement does not move to fill this vacuum, other organisations of a sectarian nature will. Not only Sinn Fein, but loyalist groups could re-emerge to take protestant working class

votes, unless a socialist alternative is provided.

Already the return to vile sectarian atrocities—the death of Joseph Donegan, the murder of a Sinn Fein election agent in Armagh, the kidnapping and murder of a UDR man in South Armagh and the atrocities of the INLA in particular—are a serious warning of what will happen if the bigots are allowed to make a comeback. Only the trade union movement can act to unite workers and put an end to all the killings.

## Genuine Labour candidates needed

Only within the trade union and labour movement can workers be united. This also was conclusively proven by the Assembly poll. The Workers Party, the political descendants of the Official

Republicans, tried to intervene on the basis of a few slogans for class unity. But the right-wing social democratic ideas of this party, such as its demand for a centre-left coalition in the new government, denied it any appeal. Also, because it stands outside the Labour movement and is seen as a wing of republicanism, it can never have an appeal to protestant workers.

In the 12 constituencies there were more spoiled ballot papers than the 17,216 who voted for the Workers Party. Likewise the ultra-left sect—People's Democracy—who opportunistically won two seats in Belfast City Council standing on an H-Block ticket in 1981, and who put the same candidates up for the Assembly, this time received a grand total of 442 votes.

Overall, no Labour candidates of any significance even stood. The now defunct NILP did not even attempt

to fight this election. This means that the field is now entirely clear for the emergence of a genuine Labour Party firmly based on the trade union movement and fighting on socialist policies.

Within a year there is likely to be a Westminster election. The trade unions in Northern Ireland must begin the work now to ensure that there is a Labour candidate fighting every seat. The Labour and Trade Union Group intend to use the sectarian Assembly poll as a warning to the entire trade union movement of the dangers of political inaction and will now be stepping up the campaign for a Conference of the Labour and trade union movement to build a Labour Party.

By Peter Hadden  
(Labour and Trade Union Group)

## Belfast: YS march against unemployment

**Saturday November 6.** This the date for the historic demonstration organised by the Young Socialists in Northern Ireland.

This is the first time since their formation three years ago that the YS have decided to hold such an event, reflecting the strength and confidence of the growing number of YS branches.

The streets of Belfast will echo with the shouts of "Tories out! Socialism in!" as young people from both protestant and catholic backgrounds make their opposition to unemployment

and cheap labour schemes known.

It is almost 50 years ago to the day, that workers from the Shankhill and the Falls stood and fought together around class issues. Not since that time has there been such a united movement of youth demanding a better future.

The demonstration promises to be a colourful and noisy event with banners, flags and bands filling the streets. Support has been flooding in from Trades Councils, Trade Union bodies and Labour organisations throughout Northern Ireland.

Belfast, Derry, Ballymena

and Galway Trades Councils are supporting the march, along with the Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance and the Northern Ireland Divisions of ASTMS and NUPE. Messages of support have been sent from Labour MP's Tony Benn and Dennis Skinner.

A large delegation from branches of Labour Youth in the South will also be present.

Youth are not prepared to accept unemployment, nor are they going to be fooled by phoney training schemes and low pay. The demands of the campaign show the only way forward:—

- ★ A 35 hour week
- ★ £100 per week minimum wage
- ★ Full pay at 18

Proper training and a guaranteed job for all.

These can be achieved by a government which is prepared to commit itself to socialist policies.

It has been estimated that by the end of 1983, 90% of young people in Northern Ireland will be without a proper job. Crossing peace lines, and passing through catholic and protestant working class areas of Belfast, this march gives all young people the opportunity to fight back against the system which allows such

unemployment and offers them nothing.

Tens of thousands of leaflets and badges have been distributed. Many more are being printed. 10,000 posters have been produced. Public meetings and mass activity have taken place in many areas.

The Labour and Trade Union Group Young Socialists have made enormous progress in Northern Ireland, but the campaign has been an expensive one. Financial donations and messages of support would be welcome. The YS also send an invitation to all those in Britain who wish to participate in our

demonstration. Come over. Bring your banners and enthusiasm and help make this occasion a giant step forward on the road to socialism in Ireland

By Benny Adams  
(organising secretary  
Youth Campaign for jobs)

**Demonstration leaves Art College York Street Belfast, 12 noon, Saturday, November 6th.**

On the day it was reported that the Belfast De Lorean factory was to be closed, Mr John Zachary De Lorean himself was "out of town" and unavailable for comment.

If the allegations of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation are anything to go by, he will be "out of town" for quite a while...about 15 years in fact.

The accusations of cocaine-dealing have brought high-flier De Lorean down to earth, but, unfortunately, they have also dashed the hopes and prospects of thousands of workers in Northern Ireland and Britain.

While the press has built De Lorean up to be something approaching a modern day folk-hero, almost glamourising his extravagant life-style ("life in the fast lane" etc.) and while devoting acres of newsprint to the heart-rending appeals of his millionairess-wife, hardly a word has been spared for the workers whose own lives have been ruined.

At its peak the De Lorean factory in Belfast employed 2600 workers, but by last week, after eight months in receivership, there were only 30-odd left to pay off. There seems little prospect of the 2600 getting their jobs back.

De Lorean has left behind debts of up to £100 million and there are another 20 companies, employing 2000 workers, which may go to the wall as a result.

The whole unsavoury affair of John De Lorean raises important questions for the labour movement, because it was a Labour government that set the company up in Northern Ireland in the first place. It was in August 1978 that the then Labour Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Roy Mason, described the De Lorean deal as a "tremendous breakthrough".

The deal provided massive government finance, on the basis that money would be recovered by the government in the form of 'royalties' on the sale of the revolutionary new De Lorean sports car. De Lorean was given government aid totalling over £50 million (although in total it eventually reached £80 m.) after what Don Concannon, Junior Minister for Northern Ireland called a "searching examination".

Yet previous to being given millions by the British government, De Lorean had

By John Pickard

been denied aid by the normally-generous Dublin government, for building his car plant in the south of Ireland. The Irish government had considered De Lorean too risky.

Within two and a half years, De Lorean was back for more money. The company asked for more and threatened that if it did not get the money it considered it was due by its agreement with the government, then the government would not get its sales royalties.

By May of 1981 the (now Tory) government guaranteed a further £7 million bank loan for De Lorean. When all the aid, grants and loans to De Lorean are totted up, the cost of providing the jobs in Belfast came to a total of £26,000 each.

De Lorean's own lifestyle was flamboyant and showy...and expensive. His salary was £295,000 a year, including £50,000 expenses. He travelled across the Atlantic regularly by Concorde and only stayed at the poshest hotels in London.

While he was squeezing more money out of the British government in the Spring of 1981, he was also busy buying himself a mansion in New Jersey, with 35 rooms and 430 acres of grounds, for a cool \$3.5 million. He is reported to have spent £10,000 on gold plated toilet accessories at a famous London store.

### De Lorean's network of companies.

His New York office expenses consumed \$1.3 million a month and even the receivers, referring to directors' salaries, were moved to comment that "\$1.5 million seems rather extravagant for the directors of a company which couldn't sell cars."

What trade unionists in Northern Ireland will be asking is how much of this was paid for by the British taxpayer? How much was the De Lorean deal a "breakthrough" for jobs in Belfast, and how much was it a "breakthrough" for John

# DE LOREAN - millionaire whizz kids cannot provide jobs

De Lorean workers occupying the factory in May of this year.



Photo: John Smith (IFL)

De Lorean's expensive tastes?

It does not appear in hindsight that the "searching examination" really got to grips with the De Lorean set-up. It is now clear that De Lorean operated through a network of companies, (including his other interests in real estate etc.) registered in various countries. He had companies registered in Panama, for example, and a safe-deposit box in a Caribbean bank.

The US tax agency is currently investigating why De Lorean companies channelled £10 million through an unregistered Swiss company, the implication being that some of the cash was either diverted in "commission" on the way, or that it was used

to play the currency markets, neither of which are very helpful to workers in Northern Ireland. He is accused by FBI officials of having sold off half the US subsidiary of De Lorean in order to make a payment for illicit cocaine.

The House of Commons Public Accounts committee is to investigate the means by which payments were made to De Lorean over the years, but most workers would see the exercise as little more than closing the stable door after the horse has bolted. De Lorean, in any case, is the tip of an iceberg. Capitalism itself is 'legalised robbery' with its tax havens, Swiss bank accounts, secret deals and hidden commissions.

With this whole affair coming out into the open, workers are more than justified in being sceptical about grants and aid given to flashy businessmen 'to provide jobs' in the regions. *Militant* has never supported the view that unemployment blackspots like Northern Ireland can be provided with permanent jobs by lavish handouts to private enterprise. The De Lorean affair has shown where a lot of the money really goes.

The labour movement must demand that the factory, plant and machinery at the De Lorean site be taken firmly into public ownership. The last Tory government was forced to nationalise the prestigious Rolls Royce company within days

of its bankruptcy in 1971, and the labour movement must demand that the De Lorean site is not taken out of the hands of one shark and given to another. The company should be nationalised and converted to the production of socially useful products.

But above all, the De Lorean affair shows that the labour movement must fight for a socialist government with socialist policies for unemployment. A socialist plan of production, democratically and rationally using the skills and resources, owning and running the majority of industry and finance, is the only basis for providing investment and permanent jobs.

## SOLIDARITY 'ORGANISATION' ADMITTED

For a long time the members of the right-wing Solidarity organisation in the Labour Party denied that there was an organisation at all.

Now that the Solidarity group has in fact joined Jim Mortimer's 'register' of approved non-affiliated groups, there is little point in them denying that they are organised. A recent circular sent out this month over the signatures of Labour MPs Ted Graham and Roland Moyle and Richard Tomlin-

son of Ealing North CLP, invites Solidarity supporters to a meeting in the House of Commons on November 23.

But part of the letter makes it clear that Solidarity is trying to build groups in the localities: "Labour Solidarity is attempting to form groups in the localities to promote the objects of the organisation. If there is not one already in your area we would like you to help us form one. You will be given as much help as possible to do this." (Our emphasis).

Rank and file Labour Party members will want to know why this witch-hunting organisation is allowed on the register when the newspaper *Militant* is not. It is yet another indication of the fact that the right wing NEC are not serious about proscribing *Militant* on constitutional grounds: it is political ideas that they want to expel.

## Frank Field's new campaign

"A political campaign to win over the young idealistic Militant supporters" is one of the latest calls of witch-finder general Frank Field MP, according to a recent issue of *The Guardian*.

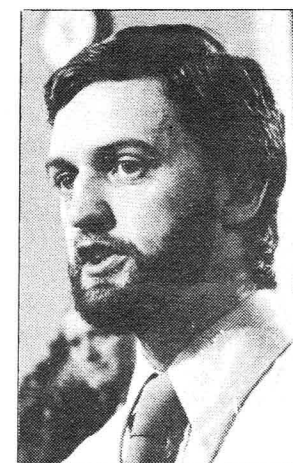
Undoubtedly, LPYS members and *Militant* supporters will wait with baited breath for Mr Field's "campaign". If it is anything like his past efforts at debating ideas with the LPYS we will have to wait a long while.

Earlier this year Mr Field was invited to speak in a debate with a representative of *Militant* in front of 600 "idealistic young LPYS members". How did Mr

Field respond to this opportunity? With open arms? We print his reply below:

"Thank you very much for writing and inviting me to speak about *Militant* at this year's LPYS Summer Camp.

"As you may know, I spend a fair amount of my time speaking about and against *Militant* in my own area. This is a necessary task given the composition in Merseyside, but when I go to speak elsewhere I do try and talk on topics which are constructive and may help the Party formulate policies for fighting the next election. I must therefore decline your offer of yet another platform



Frank Field is forced to debate often with Militant supporters in his own Birkenhead CLP. This one, Richard Venton, was delegate to LP conference last month.

to debate my views about Militant Tendency."

We wait with eager anticipation to see how Mr Field intends to proceed this time.

## MILITANT READERS' MEETINGS

**"I am against any kind of witch-hunt and certainly support the *Militant*,"** said Cliff Hawley at the Chesterfield meeting.

**By John Dale**  
(Bolsover CLP)

Cliff, President of the North Derbyshire NUM (speaking in a personal capacity), went on to explain how he had joined the Labour Party in the early 'sixties and found it controlled by a small clique of right-wingers.

The local Labour MP, a Mr Neal, was like "visiting nobility" and was also on the board of the Derbyshire Coalite company! Fortunately, the present MP is Dennis Skinner.

Cliff also said, "Look at a paper which puts forward socialist ideals and socialist proposals...to lose a paper like *Militant* and its supporters would be a real tragedy...At Labour Party conference one of the most moving things was to hear Pat Wall say you can't witch-hunt ideas."

Wayne Jones, speaking on behalf of *Militant* assured Cliff and the meeting that there was no way we would give up the *Militant*. On the contrary, plans are being drawn up to make it more

frequent in the future.

He explained that *Militant* supports Labour policies—the difference is we want a Labour government that will implement them. That means breaking with capitalism by nationalisation of the top 200 major monopolies.

In the discussion, Ian Whyles of Whitwell NUM pointed to the huge stockpiles of coal and the threat of pit closures while pensioners were dying of hypothermia. "That shows the importance of *Militant* to miners."

The discussion also covered workplace Labour Party branches, the miners' ballot, how Labour could nationalise the monopolies and how the witch-hunt will be defeated. £34 was collected from the 23 people present.

Last word to Cliff; "I hope to goodness the *Militant* carries on and does become a daily. I am sure they will succeed."



Pat Wall, prospective parliamentary candidate for Bradford North, who spoke at the Bradford meeting. Photo: MILITANT

### GOOD RESPONSE IN BRADFORD

A magnificent attendance of over 100 people, on a miserable rainy evening, turned out to hear Bill Reed, Bradford North LP conference delegate and Pat Wall, Shipley CLP delegate, speak on the recent Labour Party conference.

Pat Wall received a warm reception from the audience, who listened intently to the arguments put forward.

The meeting was reminded that Labour had been in power for 17 years in the post-war period. Both speakers posed the question: how many years of Labour government are needed to restore full employment and solve the chronic social problems that beset workers?

These right-wing supporters of capitalism, Fabian 'socialists', want unity and a purge of socialists at the same time. Thus a register is not a constitutional arrangement to set debate and organisation inside the Labour Party on an agreed footing, but is the precursor to wholesale expulsions in an

atmosphere of intolerance and fear.

Labour's right-wing, the politicians of gradual change are the former (and no doubt, still) close associates of the SDP traitors who have attempted to cripple Labour. Hattersley, Shore and Healey want an antiseptic Labour Party that can happily join in coalition government with the SDP. At the conclusion of the meeting, a return was made to the real issues facing workers. The emphasis about the need for a socialist solution to the crisis was not lost on the audience. Many speakers addressed themselves to this theme, even opponents of *Militant*.

That *Militant* has much support among Labour members was attested to by a magnificent collection of £135.

**By David Robinson**  
(Bradford North CLP)

## 27 November conferences against witch-hunt

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STATION),  
LIVERPOOL.

#### BRIGHTON

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

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

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

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

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TOP RANK CARDIFF  
SUITE,  
QUEEN ST,  
CARDIFF.

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GATESHEAD,  
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TYNESIDE CINEMA,  
PILGRIM ST,  
NEWCASTLE.

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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.

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

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

## DISMAY AT PARTY CONFERENCE

"The right wing are blind to the processes taking place in the labour movement. There's no way the register can stem the advance of the left."

This was the defiant message hammered out by Wayne Jones to a meeting in Mansfield recently.

Wayne said workers were angry because of the failure of the Labour Party leadership to use the Blackpool conference to expose the Tories. Millions of workers had followed the conference and were dismayed that the leadership had spent so much time attacking genuine socialists or going on TV to say that conference policies wouldn't be included in the next election manifesto.

A speaker pointed out from the floor that the right wing wanted to close down

the YS because the majority of its members were supporters of *Militant*. He explained how *Militant* supporters from Mansfield YS had helped set up new branches in the neighbouring areas of Ashfield, Olleston and Blidworth and were on the verge of setting one up in Normanton.

Another speaker, a YOP scheme worker who had recently joined the YS, quoted right-wing MP Austin Mitchell who said that the YS was full of disillusioned youth—he agreed with this statement—youth were disillusioned with a capitalist system that gave them no prospects!

**By Dave Millington**  
(Mansfield LPYS)

## MILITANT ANSWERS 'THE TIMES'

*The Times* in its editorial recently bemoaned the situation in the Labour Party. As *The Times* is recognised as the semi-official voice of British capitalism, Peter Taaffe, editor of *Militant*, penned this reply:

Every Labour Party member will be heartened by *The Times'* touching concern for the Labour Party's electoral prospects.

You assert that unless Labour's right wing proceeds with the expulsion of *Militant* supporters, "it will never again appear credible to the electorate".

In reality a purge of *Militant* supporters, which would split the Labour Party from top to bottom,

would give the opportunity for the capitalist press, including *The Times*, to play up the divisions within the party. This, as you are well aware, will do the maximum damage to Labour in a run-up to the general election.

*The Times*, moreover, sees the expulsion of *Militant* supporters as just the first step towards burying the radical proposals in Labour's programme: "Now purge policy," demanded your editorial on 1st October.

In other words, you want to make the Labour Party once again safe for capitalism, as it was when right-wing leaders like Gaitskell, Wilson, Callaghan and Healey dominated it.

An essential instrument of this domination was political thought-control in the form of the infamous proscribed list, which was enforced by

McCarthyite methods. *The Times* deplores that the "former practice of proscribing such factions" (*Militant* and others on the left) "was allowed to slide." This betrays the real motive of *The Times*: to witch-hunt, with mass expulsions and removal of democratically selected parliamentary candidates deemed "unacceptable" by *The Times*, big business and their shadows, Labour's right wing.

It is because of the powerful urge for unity in Labour's ranks against the Tory and SDP/Liberal enemies that *Militant*, while still opposing the undemocratic nature of the Register, has nevertheless applied for registration. The party can have a purge or unity, but cannot have both.


There is no doubt that the great majority of party workers will ferociously

resist expulsions, particularly carried out by a rigged majority on Labour's NEC. If the NEC spurns *Militant's* offer to meet and discuss our application to join the Register, they will be seen as the real barrier to unity on the basis of Labour's policies, not *Militant*.

If they go ahead with a purge, in the teeth of the opposition of Labour Party members and in violation of the constitution, they will not escape the political or possible legal consequences of their actions.

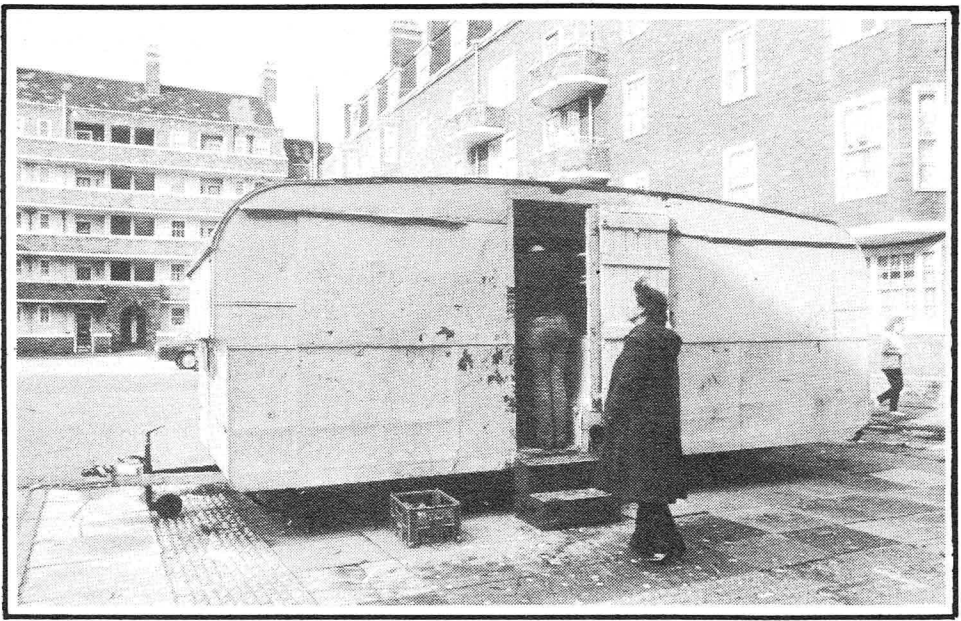
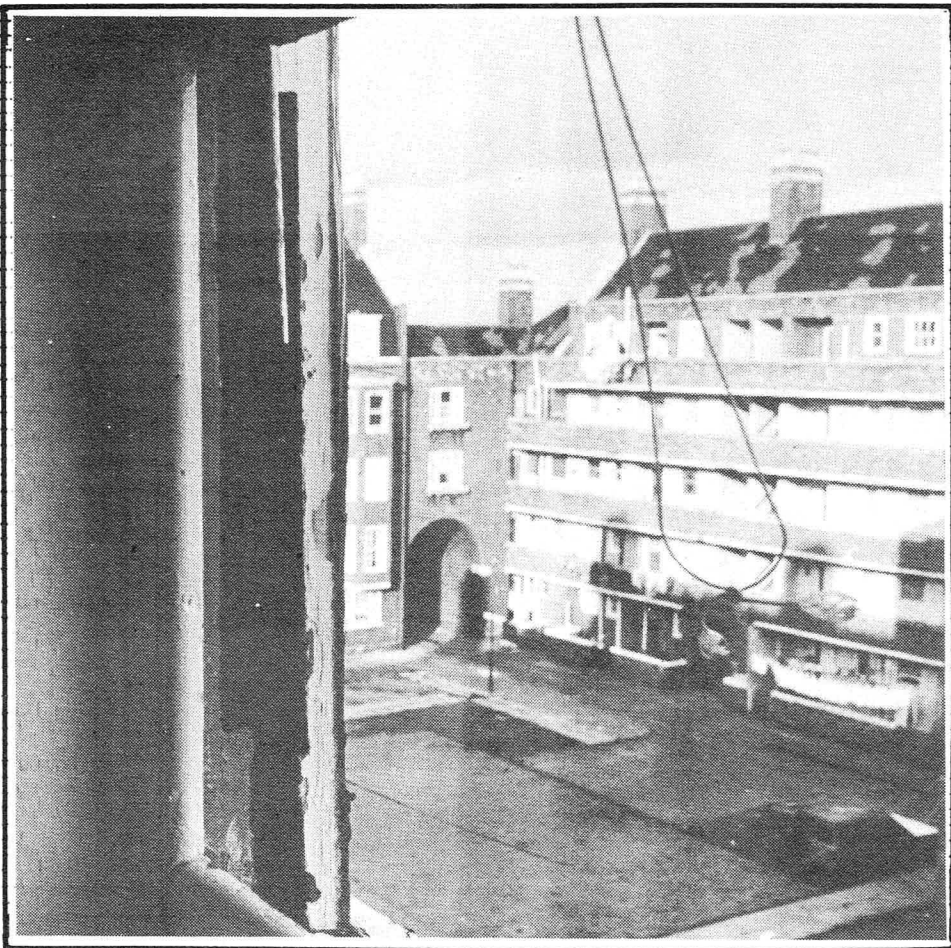
There is absolutely no possibility of a midnight stabbing where the cries of the victim are muffled. *Militant* intends to take our opposition to every corner of the labour movement.

Yours etc,  
P Taaffe,  
Editor, *Militant*.



## WHAT WE STAND FOR

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



## LIFE AT 'TOMMY WHITES'



Photographs in a clockwise direction: 1) The living room 'window' of Maire Vaughn. The rotting window frame needs replacing, but the council offered to board it up until they could replace it, leaving no light for the living room. It has been like that since June. 2) The shop on Tommy Whites. During the riots at the estate this summer, the youth were careful not to damage this meagre facility to the estate. 3) The 'big square' in the middle of Tommy Whites—it has been used as a race track by people driving stolen cars. One child has been knocked down twice. 4) The Gardener family. They are frightened to leave their flat unattended because of the number of break-ins in the area.

PHOTOS BY DENIS DORAN.

**“Once you mention Tommy Whites, they look at you; you get knocked back.”**

Maire Vaughn describes how council tenants at Sir Thomas Whites Gardens are victimised because of the slums they are forced to live in. 'Tommy Whites', featured in *Militant* last week, is situated in the slum area of Liverpool Kirkdale.

Marie was describing how it is impossible to get hire purchase if you live in these tenements. The same problem faces John and Julie Gannon. They applied to Rediffusion for a television. They filled in the forms, but when they mentioned they were from Tommy Whites, the company told them the area was blacklisted.

Tommy Whites is a direct result of unemployment and cut backs in council direct labour works. Any worker with illusions in the Liberals as an alternative to the Tories should take a look at these tenants. The Liberals have been in control of Liverpool city council for

some years and they have proved themselves no different from the Tories when it comes to 'protecting the rights' of council tenants.

Says Marie, "They promised everything before the election but we've got nothing from them." Mrs Gannon: "They came around with a proposal to spend £10,000 per flat on modernisation. I wouldn't let them in. These flats need pulling down."

The tenants are rightly cynical about council promises of modernisation. The flats were modernised about 15 years ago. This modernisation included the instalment of the basic necessities of a gas fire, and cabinets in the kitchen. Pre-war wiring and window frames still appear to exist.

Marie has been waiting since June for a replacement window frame in her living room. The council wanted to board up the window until they got round to replacing it—this would have left her no light in the living room.

The slum conditions are affecting health. *Militant* reported last week how even tenants have to endure ef-

fluent overflowing into their bathrooms from the flats above them.

In the forecourt, repairs have been ignored and children play alongside broken glass and burnt out wrecks of stolen cars.

A doctor has seen Mrs Gannon's children three times since Autumn when they developed chest complaints. They expect their children to be sick throughout the winter.

The social deprivation is affecting children and youth in other ways. The Gannons can see their children changing using bad language and getting into trouble.

Ron and Francis Gardener have been unable to insure their possessions from theft because of the number of break-ins on the estate. The insurance company will only insure them for life and fire. They used to go to the coast for weekends but even this temporary escape has been ended as they are frightened to leave the flat unoccupied. Once they left the flat for barely an hour—it was broken into, the door being taken right off its hinges.

Tommy Whites is not an isolated case. There are still 'Tommy Whites' up and down the country, from inner-city London to Glasgow or Northern Ireland. Those tenement slums that have been pulled down have been replaced with hastily constructed, concrete monstrosities, like the infamous Spine Block that was thrown up in nearby Neatherly (see *Militant* 530).

Under this insane profit system, builders are on the dole, bricks lie stockpiled in their millions and land lies waste. There's not enough profit in building houses for the liking of the banks, finance institutions and the building industry bosses, as their apologists in the Tory and Liberal councils keep reminding us.

The answer lies in the election of a socialist Labour government, which could nationalise the construction industry throughout, freeing the resources from the hands of the bosses for a massive programme of public housing construction, providing decent homes for all.





## A Fair Comparison

The next time a Tory Minister goes on about how nurses must accept the 'going rate' in private industry he should be asked which jobs he is talking about. A management consultant survey of 555 firms and 6,312 executives has found that executives' wages rose by an average of 11% in the last year. Their average salary was £16,072 with take home earnings of £11,466. But that was not the only improvements they have achieved. 78% of them drive company cars, and five weeks holiday is now the norm. Managing directors' salaries varied from £18,575 to £56,527, depending on the size of the company. Just like a hospital worker.

## The Road to Defeat

Who said that their prime objective was to reduce the rate of inflation, even if this meant measures which might prove unpopular in the short term? Margaret Thatcher or Ronald Reagan? Actually it was Jim Callaghan speaking as Labour's Prime Minister on *Panorama*, 26 February 1979. He explained that his government's forthcoming budget would probably be a package of public expenditure cuts and tax increases. What a prospect to put before the electorate. Yet the right-wing in the Labour Party still complain that it is left wing policies which lose elections.

## Stopping Subversion

Russian bureaucrats certainly have an eye open for preventing subversive literature entering the country. *The Times*' newly arrived correspondent had Plato's 'Symposium' and the memoirs of Maxim Gorky confiscated. But recognising the main threat to their rule as being a Marxist led workers' movement they took from another visitor one of the most dangerous books of all: Lenin's 'What is to be done'.

## Priority Use

The age of computers is here. But instead of putting them to people's benefit, some authorities seem to have a strange sense of priority. Faced with a water bill for £750,000, Gwent County Council in South Wales has instructed its 800 employees at the council offices to reduce the flushing of lavatories as an economy measure. Use of lavatories will in future be monitored by computer.

## Animal Tendencies

The strangest accolade for *Militant* recently has been the indirect praise from Lord Douglas Houghton, former Chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party. Explaining why he and others were trying to get the RSPCA to become a more campaigning body, Houghton declared: "There is a militant tendency everywhere at the present time, not only in the Labour Party and the unions. We have it in the animal movement too—those who want to be going places." At least, we think it's praise, because we're certainly not going out of the Labour Party.

# CLASS SYSTEM WITHIN THE POLICE

By a former Glasgow policeman

I joined the police force at the age of 18½ years, a somewhat naive recruit into the establishment.

During my time in the force I managed to keep an open mind and view the role of the police from both the point of view of the establishment and of the bystanders in the game—that is you the people.

I was, I must admit, not popular within the job for my criticism of the system, or my attempts to show some of my fellow workers a more human approach to the task of dealing with the considerable social burdens which the people bear, particularly in the areas where I was posted—Blackhill, Royston, Easterhouse, Springburn. All are areas of Glasgow with great social deprivations.

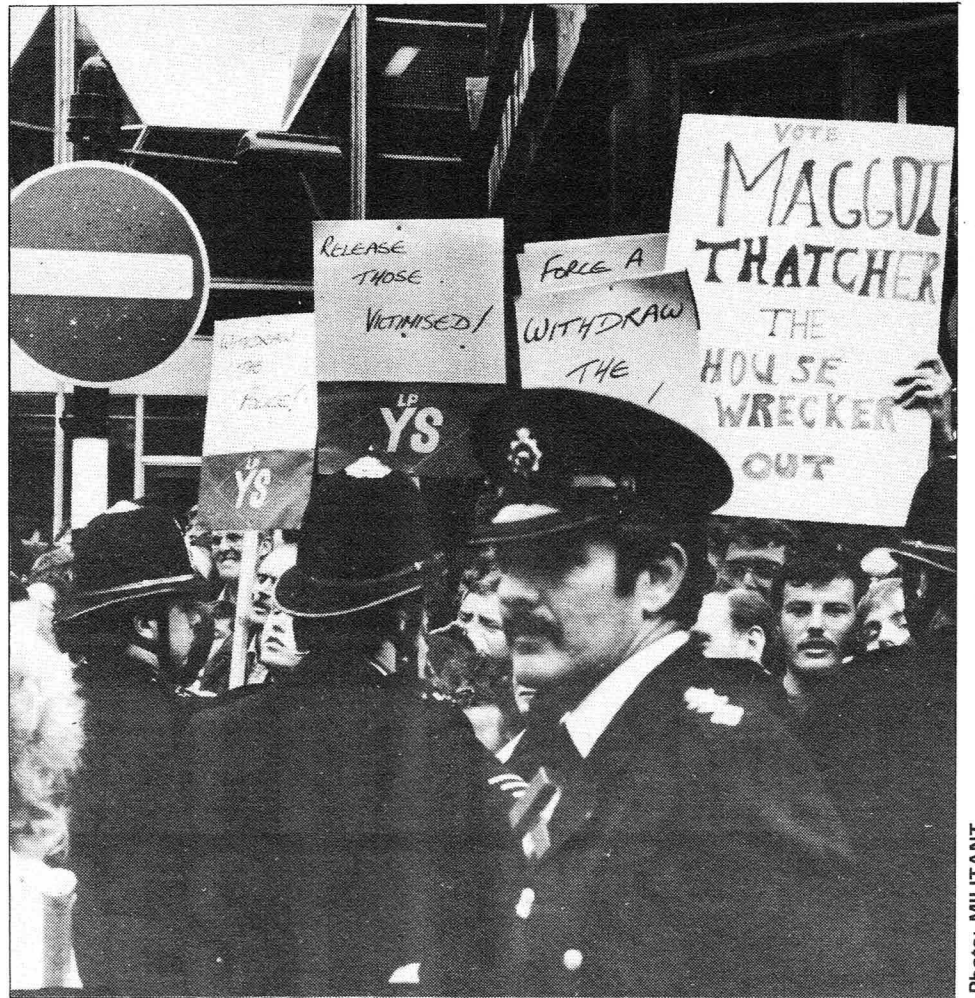
For this I was the subject of many dressing-downs from senior officers, who regarded my attitude as one of not taking a positive view of the job. This meant I was not arresting as many people as possible. I was thinking too deeply into the role they thought I should play without question.

I have a keen interest in politics and am proud to be a member of the Labour Party. I was in the police, but when I talked of socialism I was ridiculed.

It was during a day's riot training near Glasgow that I decided I could stay in the police no longer.

I reported to Oxford Street, the Police Training Centre for Strathclyde police, and was told to go to room where I found 50 other officers, from PC to Inspector, assembled. We were greeted by an instructor who went through the theory of our training.

He read from prepared information giving some general comments on the riots which had recently taken place in Toxteth and Moss Side. He informed us that the Moss Side police had eventually included police



Police hold back a LPYS picket of a visit by Thatcher to Liverpool following the riots of 1981. A senior officer supervises the 'crowd control.'

from 15 different forces, and had fared badly as a result of their limited knowledge of the use of shields, and suffered numerous injuries.

From the theory onto the practice. We put on headgear and shinpads, and two instructors appeared with plastic bins containing wooden blocks.

An instructor demonstrated the correct method of holding the shields. He explained what the respective actions each member of the section (five in all with three shields) were. The two flank men were to push forward and the man in the middle, normally a sergeant, was to hold back the other two men by pulling backwards.

It was explained that the

sergeant was to act as a calming influence on younger officers and stop them running after demonstrators who were casting doubts as to the fidelity of his wife or girlfriend. This had resulted in a number of injuries during the 1981 riots.

The effort to keep the shield in some sort of contact with the other two was my main priority, so eliminating any space through which a missile could penetrate. We spent some two and a half hours practising, with lumps of wood and bricks thrown at the three shields as we advanced. It would appear that it was just your bad luck if you were hit by a missile. I was glad when the day

was over for I was singularly unimpressed by this type of modern policing. Indeed I was wondering if the police as an establishment was not considering itself to be the arbiters of the destiny of the struggle of the people, or indeed wished to take some part in stamping on the genuine aspirations of the people. It was with a resolve not to take part in this type of policing that I went home that night.

I am now unemployed—some would say voluntarily, but I could no longer work within a system which seeks to superimpose the views of a group of senior police officers over the genuine and legitimate wishes of the people.

## "I had to face my father on the picket line"

In no way can every member of the police force be labelled as a 'fascist thug'. One police constable explained his dilemma to me, whilst I was selling the *Militant* on the street.

"During the last steel strike I had to face my father and mates on the picket line. There was no way I was going to move them on. They are my friends. I drink in the same pub as them".

My conversation with him and another police constable developed along the lines of what *Militant* stood for.

In putting the paper's point of view I covered a host of topics to which the constables nodded in agreement.

I asked them if they thought it fair that they en-

joyed a 10% wage rise, while others in the public sector were restricted to an insulting 6%. "Even if the health workers were offered my wage rise," answered one "there'd still be uproar. For me it means an extra £7.00 in the hand. What can I do with that?"

Their overall attitude was hardly that of a hard line 'tool of reaction'. As socialists we must call for the introduction of trades unions into the police and armed forces so that in the future these "workers in uniform" can stand alongside their brothers and sisters in the labour movement in achieving the socialist transformation of society.

By William Williams

(Swansea LPYS)

## Write for Militant

Since the inception of *Militant* in 1964 have continually strived to make our paper reflect the struggles and loves of working people as accurately as possible. The only way this can be done is for as many of our readers as possible to contribute to our columns, whether in a letter, report or an article.

Lenin in explaining the need for workers to write for the papers they read explained:

"It is a misconception that writers and only writers (in the professional sense of the term) can successfully contribute to a publication; on the contrary, it will be vital and alive only if for five leading and regularly contributing writers there are five hundred or five thou-

sand contributors who are not writers—a really live paper should print only a tenth of what it receives, using the rest as material for the information and guidance of the journalists".

Every one of our readers is able to contribute! Whether its sending reports of the activity of their LPYS, Labour Party, or trade union, or sending a little about their own experience. All of us hear comments on the picket line, in the bus queue that typifies our feelings toward the system and the Tories. You don't need to write a couple of pages, a few lines often encapsulate exactly a dispute or a mood of a meeting.

Writing need not be all that difficult; it is committing to paper events that you have witnessed and a certain skill can be acquired with experience.

By Dave Farrar



Dave Nellist on the platform at the October 16 LPYS demonstration in Liverpool. Dave is PPC for Coventry SE and is to stand in a county council by-election

Photo: MILITANT

# Coventry

## Slump hits motor city

Recent speeches by the Tory leaders have claimed that the "recession is over". Coventry has certainly had some good news recently. 'Jobs boost for city firm' claims the headline of the local paper.

By Jim Hensman

(Press Officer,  
Coventry SE CLP)

And yes, it was true. Jaguar's Radford plant were recruiting. But the reality, for Coventry's 43,000 unemployed, whose hopes may have been raised was quickly dashed when the number of jobs on offer was revealed to be 12!

Even less promising was the explanation by a management spokesman that with the calibre of people required, it was likely they'd have to be attracted from other firms!

Relentlessly, jobless figures increase, particularly in the machine tool industry, with the two subsidiaries of John Brown Engineering (Webster and

Bennet, and Wickmans) announcing another 240 redundancies.

Over 2,000 workers have been sacked from machine tool firms in recent years. Yet many of these, particularly subsidiaries of giant engineering groups, have continued to declare profits and pay dividends.

Labour's right-wing have run the campaign for *Militant* "to open its books" and show where its donations come from. What a greater service they could be doing for workers and their families by leading a national campaign to discover what happened to the

millions of pounds profit made, but not re-invested, by these firms over the years.

What of the future? Not a day goes by without those Tory leaders calling on workers to raise production. Unless the money exists in the pockets of workers that purchase the finished articles, greater productivity just leads to higher unemployment.

According to the *Times* (October 20th), "If Britain were to produce its present economic output with a productivity performance equal to that of Germany, 7.5 million jobs could disappear tomorrow. If British workers were to produce the same output per head as their American counterparts, 9.5 million jobs would go."

To deal with the problem of unemployment in Coventry it needs a massive expansion of jobs. Last year 8,000 workers lost their jobs with the closure of B.L. Canley. To end unemployment, we would now need at least 6 factories the size of Canley to re-create the 50,000 jobs necessary to guarantee every

COVENTRY SOUTH  
EAST LP  
PUBLIC MEETING

'The Wargame'  
—film & meeting.  
Speaker: Dave Nellist  
(West Midlands County  
Council by-election  
candidate)  
Thursday, 4 November,  
7pm. Room D14 (opposite  
Odeon), Coventry,  
Lanchester Poly.

worker, young and old, the right to work.

Nothing short of the total transformation of society along planned socialist lines could guarantee that.

If the *Times* is correct that the present output could be generated with half the workforce, then all workers could work 30 hours a week and produce a 50% increase in production and wealth.

Those are the sort of ideas Coventry (SE) Labour Party will fight the coming by-election on, and continue to struggle to build the Labour Party and to see the adoption of a leadership who could make the reality of Labour's promise, "to shift the balance of wealth and power in favour of working people and their families."

## County election 'trial run'

On Thursday, November 25, working people in Coventry South-East will have an opportunity to give a verdict both on the savage impact of Tory policies on industry, and also on the intent of Labour's right-wing to hound out party members, preferably selected parliamentary candidates.

Due to the resignation by one of the constituency's West Midlands county councillors (through leaving the city) a vacancy has arisen for exactly the same area as the parliamentary seat.

At its meeting of October 13, Coventry South East Labour Party decided to stand Dave Nellist, Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, a supporter of the ideas of *Militant*, in this important by-election.

The implications of such a decision are clear. Labour's right-wing allege that socialist policies are 'damaging' to Labour's electoral prospects. Our constituency is convinced that the best way to answer such attacks is to win this by-election, and through the campaign to build a strong Labour Party.

The by-election also gives

party members the opportunity of conducting a "trial-run" for a future general election. Plans have been drawn up for a series of local meetings and canvasses; issuing specific leaflets to youth, women and Asian workers, in addition to the election address and a campaign newspaper.

At the full county election in May 1981, the main attacks of the Tory manifesto were the accusations that Labour in the West Midlands had managed to create a "Marxist state, where freedom of choice will cease to exist." The propaganda in this by-election is not likely to be any less rabid.

Coventry South-East Labour Party would welcome help from any LPYS or LP member within travelling distance, to secure this seat for Labour and socialist policies.

For details of the campaign write to Tom Smith, Coventry South East Labour Party, 30 Coundon Road, Coventry CV1 4AW, or ring 0203 552059.

## 'Monday Fever'

Some people call it "Monday fever". When you go back to work on Monday morning you feel you can't breathe.

You are gasping for air, your chest is tight, and you wonder if you'll choke to death. It's the early stages of byssinosis, the lung disease caused by breathing in cotton dust in textile mills. At a later stage its not just Mondays that is bad but the whole week.

"I just started to smother," said one woman spinner. "My work began to slow down. The boss told me I wasn't moving fast enough. I stopped taking a lunch break, but I still couldn't make my quota. It was all that cotton dust flying

around. I couldn't breathe. I finally had to leave work five years early."

A young lad who works in a weaving shed described conditions as "hot, humid and filthy, with humidifiers and the roof dripping—making the floor lethal—and cotton waste lying around.

"Its very uncomfortable to breathe with the cotton fibres in the air and the hot damp atmosphere necessary for weaving. The men had to comb cotton fibres out of their hair at the end of the shift."

The fine particles of cotton dust penetrate deep inside the lung to the air sacs, lodge there and form hard scar tissue or rip the air sacs walls. The oxygen can't get into the blood properly, and expanding and contracting the lung is much more dif-

icult. Cotton dust also creates a hypersensitivity, or allergic reaction in the lungs, giving you an asthma-like wheeze.

Tory minister Patrick Jenkin doesn't seem to think there's much problem. In a reply to Joel Barnett, MP, he said "the number of cases had fallen from 466 in 1969 to 32 in 1973." This is a misleading selection of statistics to say the least.

Those figures were the new cases receiving compensation from the DHSS, Pneumoconiosis Board. The total number of people getting benefits rose to around 3,000 in the early seventies and hasn't decreased. Secondly, you have to have byssinosis of at least "grade 2" severity to get benefit and if you don't get benefit, you're not included in the

statistics. (The US government have estimated that as many as 30% of American textile workers suffer from the disease.)

Thirdly, Jenkin omits to say 1973 was the lowest ever year for new cases—the numbers have increased ever since. Also, if you measure the number of people with byssinosis and the percentage of textile workers employed, the figures show a different trend. The number of new cases of the disease in 1980 was only 16% of the number in 1969. But the number of women employed as spinners, have gone down even more: the 1980 figure is less than 13% of the 1959 figure.

Women's jobs have been hit worse than men's, and the total reduction of textile jobs is a bit less than the reduction in the byssinosis cases; but considering the years of campaigning about health and safety and the Health and Safety at Work Act, the improvement is minimal.

The hazards of cotton dust were recognised back in

1863 and factory inspectors' reports have periodically recommended various methods of reducing the dust. In 1973 it was calculated that concentration of less than 0.5 mg per cubic metre of airborne dust would give 10% of workers byssinosis over a period of 40 years.

As a result 0.5 mg per cubic metre was chosen as the acceptable level! In other words it was decided that 10% byssinosis rate was acceptable. The complete irradiation of the disease was announced to be "practically and economically unrealistic."

By 1977 the Health and Safety Executive noted that "in some instances airborne dust concentration had been reduced by at least 50%, which in several cases had brought dust levels down to the recommended hygiene standard." (My emphasis—VS)

So in most cases the dust levels were at least double the recommended standard. But there have been no pro-

secutions for years, while the average fine in the asbestos industry, where there have been prosecutions, is only £200.

Health and safety legislation is no effective deterrent to the bosses. With a small number of inspectors—recently cut by 150— and a tiny fine, it represents no real deterrent to employers wanting to make more profit by ignoring safety regulations.

The legislation can be used as a lever, however as long as it is backed up by a strong and effective union organisation on the shop floor. This is the frontline of defence for workers.

But to end this intolerable situation for good, it means the end of the capitalist system which offers textile workers either an early painful death or the misery of unemployment.

By Vivian Seal  
(Ardwick CLP)

# FRANCE

## The sweeping victory of the Socialist-Communist alliance last year left capitalists the world over holding their breath.

The left parties won the presidency of the Republic and an overwhelming majority in the National Assembly in one of the most spectacular election victories in the history of the working class.

President Mitterrand declared the new power would lead France "on the road to socialism." And with such massive support, what could stand in its way? Today, 17 months later, this same government has imposed a wage freeze. It has cut hospital budgets, begun selling off housing stock, announced redundancies in the nationalised steel sector, and embarked on a policy of "public austerity and sacrifice in the national interest."

Two devaluations in the last 12 months have cut deeply into the value of workers' wage packets.

The experience of the retreat of the Socialist/Communist (PS/PCF) government, cruelly dashing the workers' aspirations for a genuinely socialist transformation of society, contains lessons which are of crucial importance for the working class movement internationally. The socialist governments already elected in Greece and Sweden, and the expected socialist government in Spain, will face the same challenge as the left government in France.

In Britain, the leaders of the *Tribune* left within the Labour party, as well as their shadows in the Communist Party, regarded the "French experiment" as a test case for their own programme of social reform, partial nationalisation and the 'stimulation' of the economy by means of a massive increase in state expenditure. The crisis in France therefore deserves the most serious attention of every thinking worker.

Initially, the government introduced a whole series of reforms, the minimum wage was increased by 20%, with corresponding increases in pensions and family allowance. A fifth week of paid holidays was granted, the working week was reduced by one hour to 39 hours as the first instalment towards a 35-hour week by 1985.

A series of nationalisations gave the government control of virtually the entire banking sector, 80% of the steel industry, 84% of aeronautics, 75% of textiles, 54% of the base chemicals industry, 40% of electronics, and 35% of glass. Overall, 32% of French industry is now in the hands of the government.

Laws were enacted extending the rights of trade unions, and granting new civil liberties. Investigations were begun into the right-wing military organisation, the SAC (*Service d'Action Civique*), which led to its dissolution.

Deprived of the levers of

By Philippe  
Roland  
in Paris

governmental power for the first time in almost a quarter of a century, the ruling class in France was thrown off balance. The two main political parties of the capitalists, the UDF and the RPR (Gaullists) were split, discredited, without programme or perspectives.

Giscard d'Estaing (UDF—the former president) and Chirac (RPR) disappeared from public view, hounded as scapegoats for the defeat. Neither they nor their class had anything to offer. At the conference of the CNPF (the French CBI) last summer, the chairman described the situation in France to be "worse than during the revolution of 1936."

The left government had massive support, not only in the towns but also in the traditionally conservative rural areas. If the leadership of the Socialist and Communist Parties had explained the necessity of going over to a socialist plan of production in order to provide a solid economic foundation for social reform, they would have received overwhelming popular support for a transformation of society.

### The leadership was content with the mixed economy

But the workers' leaders unfortunately had no such perspective. They were content to have a "mixed economy" in which the decisive levers of economic power remained in the hands of the monopoly capitalists.

This meant that whilst the political representatives of French capitalism had been chased from office, the capitalists themselves remained in overall control of an economy they were no longer capable of developing, and as such remained the fundamental obstacle to social and economic progress.

Long before the hated politicians of the right had recovered sufficiently to launch a political opposition to the new government, the enormous economic power of monopoly capital had made it known to the government that it was irreconcilably opposed to its ambitions for social reform. Not in words but in the unmistakable language of cancelled investments, the flight of capital abroad, rapidly rising unemployment and relentless speculation against the currency, which was first devalued in October 1981.

That other great instrument of reaction (which the government also left in the hands of the enemy), the press, posed the question daily in one form or another: "when will the government take measures to restore business confidence."

Thus from its first weeks in power, the PS-PCF government stood before the problem which confronts every government of the working class parties—which is posed all the more brutally in our epoch of world economic crisis, with the capitalist system internationally in decline. Either the government would have to go further ahead and break the power of monopoly capital, or else it would be forced to adapt its policies to the profit interests of the capitalists.

The left government tried to work within the limits set by the profit system. It launched a massive programme of reflationary measures, giving 'aid' to big business in an attempt to 'stimulate' the capitalist market, which it hoped would give the capitalists the necessary incentives to lend the way to an economic recovery.

In the first six months alone an estimated £3,000 millions were pumped into the French economy. Enormous amounts of state money were paid over to big business on a whole series of pretexts.

Subsidies for 'research' were increased by 700% on the previous year. The state wholly or partially financed investment profits by big business. All kinds of 'modernisations' were paid for from the state purse, and 55,000 million francs were paid as compensation for nationalisations.

Subsidies were given to encourage exports, to cut the cost of imports, to assist in the reconquest of the home market, and to smooth the way of the capitalists in every respect. In response to the capitalists' complaints that the reforms introduced by the government reduced business confidence, losses in profits arising from these reforms were compensated!

President Mitterrand: the French Socialist government is beginning to buckle under pressure from big business.



The state paid for the one-hour reduction of the working week for provisions for early retirement, for the fifth week of paid holiday, for the employment of youth, for everything. Capitalists have been paid to move into the regions vacated by other capitalists in order to make unemployment 'blackspots' into unemployment 'grey spots'.

According to the employers' magazine *L'Usine Nouvelle*, "Today it is truer than ever to say that no government has put so much money freely at the disposition of our enterprises. The floodgates are open everywhere and to put a figure on it is impossible."

### The Finance Minister called a 'pause' in reforms

Under the pressure of big business, a halt was called to the reforms. Delors, the Finance Minister, announced as early as October last year the necessity for a "pause" in the reforms. Meanwhile Mitterrand, speaking to a conference of businessmen, assured them: "You will not be swept away by any more social reforms until the government renews its mandate in the next elections to the National Assembly."

However, the avalanche of reflationary cash and the pause in the journey along the 'road to socialism,' far from solving the capitalist crisis, have only served to aggravate it.

Investments, which the government's pay policy was designed to encourage, will have fallen by at least 7% in 1982 as a whole, the first 8 months of the year showing a fall of 5.2%. The balance of payments deficit has been steadily deteriorating.

In June, with a record foreign trade deficit for the month of 13,000 million francs, a growing state deficit of 117,000 million francs, falling production levels, and an increasingly undermined currency, there

came a decisive turning point in government policy. A second devaluation was accompanied by the imposition of a wage freeze, to the applause of big business.

The freeze came after a year when prices had risen considerably faster than wages. The official figure for overall price increases over the 12 month period before was 12%; but the increases in food prices and basic expenditure for a working class family have been between 20% and 30%. The initial reforms in wages and social benefits had already been wiped out.

Having pursued an extremely inflationary policy of massive public expenditure on the basis of state borrowing, the government are now asking the working class (all except those on minimum wages) to take a cut in living standards in the name of "the struggle against inflation!"

True, the wage freeze was only imposed for four months—but this was the four months in which most workers receive their annual increases. Furthermore, even after the freeze ends at the end of October, the government intends to maintain its struggle against wage increases.

"Above all," claimed Pierre Mauroy, the prime minister, "wages must not increase as much as prices, as that is inflationary."

Taking a leaf out of the book of other governments embarked on a policy of counter reform, the Socialist-Communist government in France intends to make a special 'example' of public service workers. They are to be kept to increases of 3% over the 12 months following the wage freeze. The government hopes that the working class as a whole will consider this the norm.

From the point of view of working people, the controls on prices introduced along with the wage freeze have been virtually ineffective. All fuel and most foods were exempt, together with all imported goods.

In all, some 30%-40% of commodities were exempted from the wage freeze, most of which were the very things upon which a worker's wage is spent.

Hospital budgets have been cut, and to the astonishment of both tenants and housing department workers, public housing stock and a large part of the administrative apparatus are to be handed over to private firms.

"We always said," explained the prime minister, "it would need an annual growth rate of 4% before we could stop unemployment from increasing." Yet the government only felt able to set a target of 3% annual growth for 1982, thereby resigning itself to increasing unemployment.

As things turn out, however, the most optimistic forecasts speak of 1.7% growth this year. This means an unemployment figure of 2,400,000 expected in the coming winter.

What has become of the



Workers from the Socialist and Communist Parties: unemployment expectations that

## They can do it, but the

plans for the gradual reduction of the working week by 1985? Breaking a long silence on this question, Mauroy announced: "At the beginning of 1984 we will examine the question of whether or not the working week is to be further reduced as one of the means of combatting unemployment."

The organised working class movement and the working people as a whole have been stunned by the about-face of their representatives in the government. The leadership of all the trade unions grudgingly accepted the wage freeze and the 'accompanying measures' as a fait accompli, with the exception of the CGT, which formally registered its opposition but in practice has co-operated with the freeze.

The workers are being bombarded by the press and by speeches of their own leaders with arguments to which they have no ready answer as yet. Yet an enormous fund of goodwill and credit still exists amongst the workers towards the present government, who they see as having inherited the economic crisis from the government of Giscard-Barre. In the Socialist Party, the Communist Party, and





Communist trade unions, the CGT and CFDT, demonstrate jointly in Marseilles in 1978. With the coming to power of the Mitterrand government, there were great hopes for jobs and a rise in living standards. Yet it is set to rise this winter. Photo: Mike Sheridan (IFL)

## Can the government satisfy one side or the other? Can it satisfy the workers or the capitalists? The answer is: they cannot satisfy both

amongst wide layers of the trade union movement, many workers are inclined to give the government time, and feel the need to rally round it through this difficult period. This attitude, however, will not last forever.

Living standards are steadily declining. Growing numbers of workers are thrown into poverty and despair. In Paris, in other main cities and in the small industrial towns of the north and west, millions of people inhabit decaying slums.

In the factories, in spite of the newly won rights of the workers, the regime of the employer is hardening. Strikers must face the knives, clubs and guns of the militias which every self-respecting capitalist has at his disposal.

In the recent Talbot strike, for example, one of the bosses sat up all night outside the home of a shop steward with a shot gun, and struck him with the rifle butt when he came out in the morning to join the picket line. A number of workers have died this year in battles with strike breaking thugs which the bosses recruit from the most demoralised layers of society.

Criticism of the conduct of the government is moun-

ting within the Socialist Party. One militant of the PS at the national conference of factory branches expressed the thoughts of many party members when he said: "If there has to be an austerity policy, let's impose it on those who didn't elect this government. Nothing will ever satisfy the bosses under a government of the left, whatever concessions are given."

### Discontent amongst the rank and file socialists

Another PS militant from Paris said: "At the beginning I was fully confident in Mitterrand and the socialist government. I was certain that unemployment would go down with the victory of the left. Yes, I knew it needed time, but 18 months is a very long time."

"Now I don't think they are going to change anything. I don't have any confidence in them any more. They can satisfy one side or the other, the workers or the capitalists, but they can't satisfy both."

What this discontent lacks is a programme and a leader-

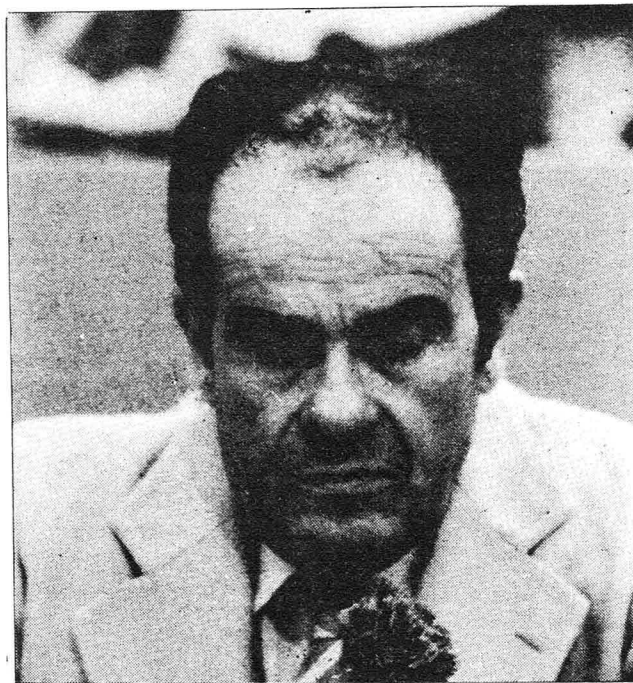
ship. The leaders of the old left wing in the Socialist Party have offered nothing. Jean Paul Chevenement, the leader of the left-wing CERES fraction, appeared in the press when the wage freeze was announced and explained to workers that they "must not be disappointed" but must understand that "the present objective is not socialism. Nobody must be under any illusions about the nature of the objectives of the government."

In practice, the Communist Party leadership fully supports the austerity policy of the government. When the wage freeze was discussed in the counsel of ministers, not one of the four Communist ministers raised a single word against it or any of the other counter-reforms.

Charles Fiterman, Minister of Transport, interviewed on TV the same night, explained that the PCF had "shared the good times of the government and was certainly not going to desert it in its difficult hour."

The Communist daily, *L'Humanité*, saw the wages freeze as a necessary measure due to the "sabotage of the bosses".

However, George Mar-



George Marchais, leader of the French Communist Party, the PCF. With some Communists in the government, the PCF are playing a 'double game'.

chais (PCF general secretary), declared from Corsica an opposite line of march: "There is no question of the PCF accepting a wage freeze or any loss of buying power."

Since that time, whilst continuing to participate in the government, the PCF line has shifted to the left: "No more gifts to the bosses!" "Carry on with the reforms!" "Fight the bosses' sabotage!"

This new line would seem to be leading towards a split between the two workers' parties, with the PCF retiring from the government and attacking it from the left. Such a rupture is implicit in the whole situation; but it may not necessarily come about.

The aim of the PCF leaders is to gain support from socialists on the basis of disillusionment with their administration. Many workers will accept the argu-

ment that the Communist participation is a check on the Socialists in government putting pressure on them from the left.

The PCF is showing a certain steady growth in membership. In elections the PCF has generally gained in relation to the Socialists. The Communist controlled trade union federation, the CGT, has also gained in relation to the Socialist-orientated CFDT because of its more militant stand over the recent period.

### Communists set to gain but internal pressures grow

Thus even while sharing responsibility for the retreat in reality, the PCF are also exploiting it to their own advantage. Another factor in the PCF remaining in power

is the enormous attraction which governmental prestige holds for the PCF leadership.

In any case, there will be no moves towards a rupture before the municipal elections next March, where Socialists and Communists are running on common lists.

Nonetheless, there is a growing discontent in the ranks of the party with the "double game" of the leadership. No real alternative is being put forward to the policy of the Socialist leadership.

The internal pressures within the PCF are finding their reflection in the intrigues and innuendo in the upper echelons of the party. Rumours are rife about the insecurity of Marchais' position. At the same time, many rank and file Communists have been subject to the harassment, 'isolation', and expulsion as 'dissidents'.

In the last year there have been some magnificent struggles waged by the French workers, especially in the motor car industry. In spite of the ferocity of the employers, all the major strikes were won.

In general, however, there is a definite lull in the militancy of organised labour, because of loyalty to the government on the one hand, or disillusionment in it on the other. This is how Raymond Oiraud, a lorry driver (CFDT) viewed the situation since the victory of the left.

"Don't you think the union have become too political? Oh, I know anything they do is going to have some political effect...but what I mean is, if Giscard had tried to do what Mitterrand is now doing, imposing a wage freeze, there would have been a general strike. But now, simply because it's the Socialists, the unions just accept it. They have forgotten what they used to stand for all for the sake of politics. Trade unions should stick to trade unionism."

This idea is undoubtedly widespread amongst many trade union activists. Nonetheless, in the future the failure of the PS-PCF government to show a way out of the crisis will bring about big struggles within these parties for a working class policy, especially if the capitalist parties win the next elections.

At the first opportunity, big business wants the return of their own representatives. Poniatoski, a minister in the Giscard government, is always impatient to settle accounts. He recently permitted himself the following outburst:

"Frenchmen, Frenchwomen! Chirac was right to say this government will not last more than two years! Be prepared for any contingency! Remember 1958!"

Speaking to the RPR deputies, Claude Labbé called for the dissolution of the National Assembly, and a referendum to bring the Right back to power. He said he did not think the situation permitted the alternation of right-wing and left-wing governments, as this was "to overlook the possibility of a revolution under the cover of democracy...The opposition must be under no illusions as to the chances of a transformation of society. A rupture is necessary!" (24 September)

Continued on page 10

# The Rule of the Parasites

The deeper the capitalist system sinks into the mire of its worldwide crisis, the more desperately capitalist journalists and politicians clutch at any propaganda point to blacken the name of socialism.

These representatives of a dying system have a goldmine in events in Russia and the Eastern European Stalinist states.

How better to try to hoodwink us that "there is no alternative" to capitalism than to show the Polish military regime attempt to crush the working class and the independent trade union 'Solidarity' in the name of 'communism'?

This new edition of *Bureaucratism or Workers' Power* is an excellent Marxist analysis of these Stalinist states. The pamphlet, originally produced in 1967 for the fiftieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution, graphically describes the meaning of the revolution which Lenin and Trotsky saw as the first stage in the socialist transformation of the world.

The abolition of capitalism and the installation of a planned economy lifted a backward, mainly peasant country, barely half a century out of serfdom, and dwarfed by the capitalist nations whose millionaires owned most of its industry, into an industrial giant.

But even this economic progress has been obstructed and slowed down by the malignant growth of a bureaucratic caste of millions of officials who have maintained state ownership of the economy but usurped the political rights of the working class.

The bureaucrats, an educated minority when the revolution was isolated in the backward economy of Russia have stolen power from the working class, imposed on the workers a degree of state brutality rivalling that of Tsarism and given themselves ostentatious wealth mimicking that of the capitalist ruling classes.

Roger Silverman's new introduction, written shortly after Jaruzelski imposed military rule in Poland shows this Marxist analysis

**Bureaucratism or Workers' Power** By Roger Silverman and Ted Grant New edition out now with an extensive new introduction Price 60p + 20p postage. Reviewed by Roger Shrikes

to be more relevant than ever.

Geriatric nobodies like Brezhnev are clinging on to power in the USSR as the bureaucracy fear for the future. How long can their privileges last? Their danger does not come from the impotent crisis-torn capitalism but from the working class which the economic growth of the Stalinist economies has developed.

## Workers' democracy

The pamphlet compares the clear safeguards the Bolshevik leaders laid down for the defence of the revolutionary gains of October 1917 with the position of today. Where Lenin aimed to stop careerist place seekers by giving officials the wages of an average skilled worker, many top officials these days have bigger differentials than managers in capitalist societies, plus access to special luxury stores and goods.

Where administrative duties were to be rotated to prevent a fossilised bureaucracy growing, now increasingly the top posts are semi-hereditary and officials guard the most powerful positions jealously.

The defence of the revolution was to be entrusted to an armed working people. Now the state forces are indeed heavily armed but mainly against the working class.

Where in 1917 power was to be vested in workers' councils, the soviets, with delegates from workplaces elected, accountable and recallable, the word 'soviet' is 'honoured' in the name of a state whose total lack of democracy mocks the ideals of 1917.

As the pamphlet shows, these Stalinist regimes of Russia and their post-war carbon-copies in Eastern Europe are in deep crisis unable to run a modern high technology economy without workers' democracy in the factories and in society as a whole.

The economic progress of the past is reduced to a snails pace. As example after example in this pamphlet proves corruption is everywhere, it is "essential" in such a sick system. Red tape, a thriving black market and vicious repression paralyse society.

The bureaucracy, scared stiff by what are now educated illiterate and overwhelmingly proletarian populations, tremble and try to suppress independent working class political organisations which would put the very existence of this parasitic caste in jeopardy.

The battles by the Polish workers in 1980-81 and the less spectacular strikes and embryonic political movements in Russia and elsewhere show workers' willingness to struggle despite the savage consequences. The working class are capable of taking the fight through to its proper conclusion, the ending of the rule of the bureaucracy and the taking of real power by the working class.

This pamphlet will be eagerly read by all socialists. It answers the lies of the apologists for Stalinism, not in the smears of the bosses' press but in facts, figures and arguments. Order your copies now.



Photos: Above. A workers canteen in the USSR. Contrast condition here with the privileges of the top bureaucracy as in the swimming pool in Khrushchev's private dacha (country mansion). PHOTO BELOW.

## History Re-Written

As a bizarre contrast to the honest and critical examination of the Soviet Union by Roger Silverman and Ted Grant, it is instructive to read an official Kremlin approved booklet entitled *The First Soviet Government*.

Purporting to be "the true story of the Russian Revolution and the building of socialism" the book can not completely falsify the revolutionary years after 1917. But it makes a bold attempt. Perhaps the most revealing aspect of the booklet is its cavalier treatment of the main historical figures, other than Lenin, involved in the revolution.

Among the few individuals mentioned for praise is one Joseph Stalin, a nonentity during the revolu-

tion who is named as being responsible for Nationalities. A number of minor figures from the Bolshevik leadership are praised as are a number of self-sacrificing military heroes.

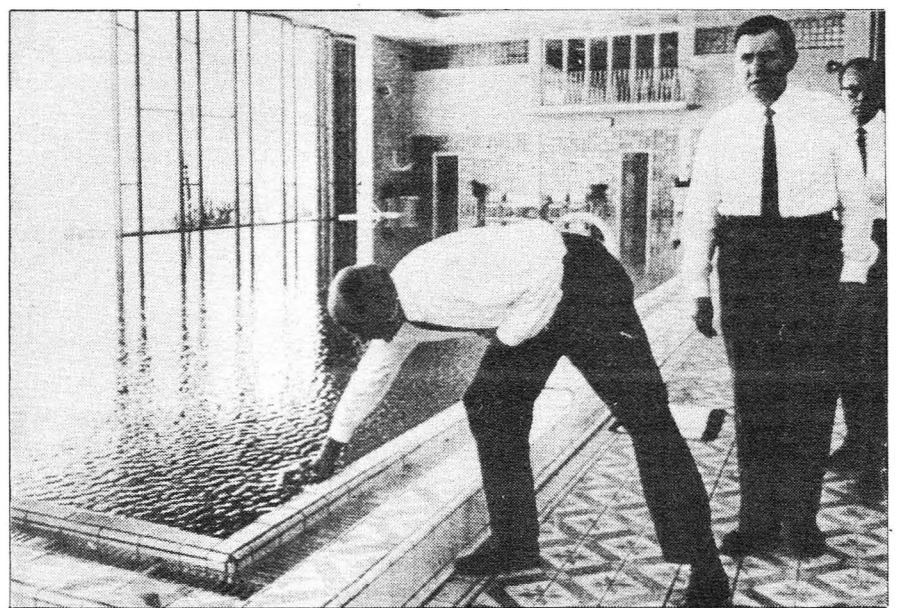
Most of the leaders who were murdered or imprisoned during Stalin's reign of terror get not one word of recognition. Prime amongst them is the co-leader with Lenin of the Russian revolution, Leon Trotsky. How can you write a history of 1917 and after without mentioning Trotsky? It's not easy but his ideas are too dangerous to the bureaucracy for them to give him any credence.

When the workers regain real power in the USSR, workers will then be told that

Trotsky was the first commissar for foreign affairs in the soviet government, the founder of the Red Army and commissar for war from 1918 to 1923.

They will learn that Trotsky, the co-founder of the Third International and writer of its manifestoes for the first five congresses, a man whose revolutionary struggles had started before the turn of the century and who had been elected president of the Petrograd soviet in the 1905 revolution was hounded and eventually murdered by Stalin's agents, because of fear of his ideas.

In the meantime, all the bureaucracy can do is to try to rewrite history.



## VICTORY! — Dutch authorities release Pakistani socialists

Last week, *Militant* reported the arrests of 18 Pakistani socialists in Amsterdam on trumped up charges of plotting a hi-jack. Sixteen were later released. Two were held as illegal immigrants. If they had been deported to Pakistan, they would have faced certain execution.

Due mainly to the pressure exerted by the Dutch trade union and labour movement Nasir Nazmi Chouhan and Muhammad Ajmal have been released. Their applica-

tion for political asylum will be processed 'in the usual manner.'

Messages from British socialists and trade unionists received by the Dutch embassy in Britain also helped. The comrades from Pakistan would like to thank all those individuals and organisations who helped secure their release.

The Urdu edition of 'The Struggle' is published regularly every 6 weeks. The new English edition is just out. It

is the only Pakistani Socialist paper published at the moment.

This issue covers the arrest in Amsterdam, five years of military dictatorship, the programme of the Pakistan Peoples Party, and articles on India and Bangladesh, plus news from Pakistan and Europe.

Price 25p. Obtainable from 'The Struggle' Post Box 46, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8.

## FRANCE

Continued from pages 8-9

An "extra-parliamentary" adventure is extremely unlikely in today's conditions, however. Yet this ill-disguised threat of a coup d'état must be a warning to the workers as to the kind of people who would take over from the PS-PCF government should it fail to launch a struggle against capitalism.

The brief experience of the Socialist-Communist government in France is living proof of the hopeless inadequacy of an 'Alternative Economic Strategy' on a capitalist basis.

The crisis of capitalism is too deep-rooted to be resoly-

ed by partial or superficial measures. Whatever reforms will be won by the working class under a future left-wing Labour government in Britain or in Spain—as also the Greek workers are finding out to their cost—will be undermined and cancelled out as long as the decisive levers of economic power remain in the hands of big finance capital.

At the same time the "French Experiment" is a real confirmation of the arguments of Marxism that the only way to prevent the further erosion of the conquests of organised labour

and to guarantee that new gains of the movement are kept, is by linking the struggle of the working class for immediate reforms to the socialist transformation of society.

This is the programme which in the years ahead will become the programme of the French working class. Armed with such a programme the French working class, which from its inception has a history of fighting heroically against oppression and exploitation in all its forms, will be able to bring this struggle to a successful conclusion.

## Reading the financial pages of the capitalist press recently, it would be hard to believe that the British economy is in any kind of crisis.

The lowering of the official figures for inflation, along with the lowering of interest rates, have produced a new optimism in the boardrooms of the City and in the Stock Exchange, where share prices are touching new record levels every day. But the euphoria, like the Tory boasts about economic recovery, are completely illusory.

In the past three years of Toryism, there has been no let-up in the long and protracted decline—the irreversible decline—of British capitalism, which has gone on for decades. Indeed the decline has been accelerated.

Most workers would in any case deny that the official inflation figures have any real meaning. The Retail Price Index is weighted in such a way as to understate the true rate of inflation for low-paid workers and when taxes are taken into account, inflation is higher even by official figures.

The Tories introduced the so-called 'Taxes and Prices Index' (TPI) to take account of tax rises and falls. According to the TPI, the real rate of inflation in the last year has not been 7.3% but 7.9%.

What the papers are not rushing to blurt out is the fact that the reduced rate of inflation has been due on the one hand to the world recession—world trade this year will not increase at all, for the first time ever since the war—and on the other hand to the massive decline in British manufacturing and the permanent recession in Britain. In other words a dubious reduction in inflation has only been bought at the cost of an extra 2 million on the dole.

It was not as long ago as eighteen months that Geoffrey Howe, Tory Chancellor, was talking about the economy "coming out of the recession". In fact since then British industry has gone from recession to deeper recession.

The Tories have presided over an industrial decline of 13% and a collapse of manufacturing production of over 18%. Particular key industries, like metal manufacturing and heavy engineering have declined even more steeply.

The decline in the manufacturing base of the British economy has been the steepest since the Industrial Revolution. During the 1960s, the British economy was able to export almost twice the volume of manufactured goods that it imported. By the late 1970s, manufactured exports accounted for only about a fifth more than imports.

### £500m deficit in non-oil trade each month.

This year, for the first time in probably two hundred years, Britain has become a net importer of manufactured goods. That is a true measure of the state of health of British capitalism. It is clear that the monetarism of this government has only accelerated the decline of the economy.

The small print in the press can reveal the course of the descent of British industry. The August figures for the balance of payments showed an overall surplus of £163m. But behind that ap-

parent success for British capitalism lies a disaster.

The oil surplus for August was over £480m, more than the oil surplus for the whole of 1981, yet the overall trade balance was in the red by £37m. In other words, if the oil sector is excluded—and the oil cannot of itself guarantee the health of the economy in the future—there was a net trade deficit of over £500m in one month!

The City may not have been too displeased overall because the profits made by the banking and insurance sector (the 'invisible' earnings) were £200m so that with oil exports it covered the trade deficit in non-oil goods. That may be all very well for the insurance brokers and bankers, but the living standards of a 55 million population cannot rest on the precarious basis of the banks and markets.

Moreover, an examination of the trend of imports and exports shows that the illusory 'health' of the economy (i.e. from oil and banking) have masked the collapse of British manufacturing and has created a rapid acceleration in the trend towards greater imports and fewer exports. The volume of non-oil exports in August were 13% below the figures for spring of this year. Non-oil imports on the other hand, were 14% above the level of two years ago.

**Some of Thatcher's advisors are warning that if she delays the next general election too long she may well find that she has to fight it during a period of sharply rising inflation, combined with high unemployment.**

Neither is the decline likely to be reversed. Unable to take up a massive amount of unused capacity and unable to guarantee profits from a shrinking market, British capitalists have refused to invest in the home economy.

The Tories may prattle about 'recovery', but their friends in business have a more sober appraisal of what is happening in the economy and they are not prepared to invest where they cannot get a return. While funds flow overseas in large amounts, British industry is starved of investment.

In the second quarter of this year capital investment was 2% down on the previous quarter. In the first six months of this year, it was 3% down on the previous six months. This decline comes, furthermore, after a fall of 19% in the two years 1980 and 1981.

The perspective put forward by even the most optimistic of capitalist economists is that the economy this year—



Margaret Thatcher inspects a robot assembly line on her recent visit to Japan.

Photo: Popperfoto

# CAPITALISM DESTROYS INDUSTRY

By John Pickard

**Wages in the last quarter rose by less than 7% whereas profits rose 24%. Industrial production continues to stagnate—down again in the last quarter—with a 10% fall in steel production alone, one of the steepest falls on record (Times 14 Oct).**

including the oil sector—will increase output only by about 1%. That will not, however, be enough to stop the relentless rise in the levels of unemployment. On the contrary, spokesmen in industry have indicated that there may very well be a new round of 'clearing out' from 'unprofitable' sectors.

Next year, at best, there may be a further growth of 1½-2% in the economy, but that will also bring problems with it—even a slight upswing in the economy will start inflation rising again.

Indeed, some of Thatcher's advisors are warning her that if she delays the next general election too long—say, into late 1983—she may well find that she has to fight it during a period of sharply rising inflation, combined with high unemployment. In other words, the recent fall in inflation is temporary. Not only that, but any new upswing in the economy will create new demand for goods which will almost certainly have to be met by imports, because the British manufacturing base will not be able to cope. So British industry will slip further behind even on the home market. Overall, the future of British capitalism is one of disaster.

No British worker, and no labour movement activist

should be under any misapprehensions about the state of the economy. On the basis of capitalism there is no other future except that of greater and greater sacrifice.

The decay and decline of the manufacturing base of industry inevitably means the decay and decline of living standards. All wealth ultimately stems from production, and in a modern economy that means industrial production. Sections of the capitalists seem to have forgotten this basic law of economics: they celebrate the rise of the Stock Exchange Share Index as if it had any real meaning for industrial production. They are like blind men, tobogganing to disaster.

All those yardsticks by which workers judge the quality of life: their pay packets and what they can buy with them, the quality of health care, education, public transport, social welfare, the standards of housing etc., etc. All these things in the final analysis depend upon the ability of the economy to create wealth. In all these respects living standards will be squeezed in the coming

months and years, as long as the economy remains on the basis of capitalism.

A massive reflation of the economy or a devaluation of

**"Much of the gain has resulted from the severity of the recession. Rising unemployment has restrained pay settlements; commodity prices have fallen to a 30 year low..." reported The Times editorial on Oct 16.**

the pound, as advocated recently by Peter Shore, would only substitute one problem for another, or, more accurately, it would compound one problem by another. If the economy remained on the basis of

capitalism, a reflationary policy would only push up prices again well into double figures, without in any way providing any 'incentive' for capitalists to invest: in other words, there would be no let-up in the decay of British industry.

**Labour Party must put alternative to capitalism.**

The key task for the Labour Party and the trade union leadership is to bring to light this basic truth: that on the basis of capitalism there is absolutely no way forward for British workers. It is the task of the Labour Party to show another way forward.

Labour must be the defender of all the gains in health, education and welfare that were achieved by post-war Labour governments. It must defend the rights of workers to a proper job and a decent living wage. It must fight for the right for all workers to have a decent roof over their head and a comfortable environment. But it should not just be a case of protecting living standards against the attacks of the Tories, but of advancing living standards.

Technology and science has provided the means to modernise industry to automate processes and increase production as never before. Micro-chip technology is almost capable of automating the whole of industry. Labour must advanced as its basic demand the public ownership of the main industries and finance companies: the nationalisation of the top 200 giant industrial monopolies, the top clearing banks and financial institutions, in order to be able to plan production rationally and democratically.

The capitalists do not invest in British industry. They have little faith in their own system: then why should workers have any faith in it? On the road of capitalism, the so-called 'market economy', there lies only ruin. Socialist policies are the only basis upon which workers' livelihoods can be defended and enhanced in the future. Therein lies the justification of Clause 4 part 4 of the Labour Party constitution, and the policy and programme of Marxism.

#### Comparative Productivity in Manufacturing. British Output Per Worker as a percentage of that of other countries.

	1973	1981
Japan	69	52
Italy	65	62
France	62	53
Germany	53	47
USA	35	38

Source F. Times (from NIER)

# Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## We want to fight the Tories not the Socialists

Dear Militant,

I have just obtained my first copy of *Militant*, and having read it, it won't be the last.

Unfortunately I am one of the 4 million who have had to tighten their belts for Thatcher, however that's not the reason why I am a socialist.

The reason I have written to you is this. Being unemployed I had the chance to see the various party conferences, and the thing I found so striking was the fact that the Liberals, the Conservatives and I'm afraid to say the right wing of our party were saying more or less the same things.

The consolation for me was listening to most of the delegates from the CLPs who were saying the sort of things that working men and women want to hear.

I think it is about time that real socialists stopped apologising for their politics and let people know what those politics are instead of letting garbage like the *Sun* misrepresenting what left wing policies are.

I have been out of work now for about eighteen months. I am not a scrounger but I am not go-

ing to sell myself cheaply just because it is such an employers' market. I also don't like my children to see me out of work.

The biggest disaster that could hit working and non-working people would be the expulsion of *Militant*. If the right wing is supposed to be such a bastion of democracy, why aren't they voted into power in their constituencies? I don't often see people of Roy Hattersley's ilk selling papers on a Saturday morning.

If it is wrong for Tony Benn not to tow the party line, how is it that it is right for Denis Healey to oppose unilateral disarmament?

Having said that however, I think it is correct that Denis Healey should be able to air his views within our movement, but what is good for the gander. Argument is the only constructive way to form policy. Without argument you have fascism, and the sort of 'dictatorship' you have in the Tory Party.

If *Militant* do ever take over the Labour Party that will be because the members of the Labour Party want it so. Surely this is democracy. So what do the right fear—if their policies are as popular as they say they are, the party will reflect that.

While the right are busy trying to expel *Militant*, more people are losing their

jobs, more hospitals are being threatened, more councils are privatising their public companies and more councils are selling off their council houses which are not theirs to sell.

If we are to stop the heartache of Thatcher's regime we must stop fighting ourselves and start an out and out attack on this inhuman government.

People are not interested in registers, they are interested in jobs and a decent quality of life and they look towards the Labour Party including *Militant* to give it to them, because we know that you are the only people that care.

I am looking forward to the next election confident that we have the policies that will give working people what they really deserve, and when the Tories ask where will the money come from, we can tell them that there is plenty of money available—from their friends in big business.

Finally in conclusion, I wish you, *Militant* and the Labour Party all power and success in the future. We have the will, we have the policies and we have the support to win.

Yours,  
Mr C J Ryan,  
Erith,  
Kent.



There was mass support amongst trade unionists on the September 22 day of action in support of the health workers. Above, the massive demonstration that day through London. Photo: Militant

## Starving? Give them cable TV

Dear Comrades,

Is it not sickening that big business and the media are discussing as a matter of prime importance whether we need cable TV or not?

Splashed all across the papers, and the topic of several documentaries we hear of the benefits of "star" as opposed to "branch" distribution. Whether coaxial cable is better than fibre optic, or whether private enterprise should install the system, or whether BTC should allow private enterprise to use its ducts.

At a time when health workers are fighting for a weekly take home pay that would only just pay for a colour TV licence; when YOPS and unemployed would have to give two weeks' benefit to acquire this document, I of course with my £22.50 a week will be plugged into cable TV as soon as its available.

Yours faithfully,  
N Waite  
Gateshead East LPYS

## Early retirement only?

Dear Militant

I have read a couple of *Militants*. Your theme about minimum wages of around £90 weekly and a 35-hour week sounds all right.

What surprises me is that you fail to campaign for an early retirement for working people at the age of say, 60 or even 55. This is far more important than Britons working 35 hours weekly. In fact, I was very disappointed that the Labour Party conference did not discuss this

very important subject. Furthermore, working a 40-hour week is not going to cripple anyone—it never has, but asking a man to work until he's 65 certainly has.

In my opinion 40 hours weekly is just the right figure a person in the £80 bracket should expect to work, remembering that millions do not now work Saturday mornings. Never mind the 35-hour week—let's have the pensioners retired, and the sooner the better.

Yours respectfully  
Allan Telfor-Fox  
Village Farm  
Harrogate  
North Yorkshire

## Make 'TV Eye' a party broadcast

Dear Militant,

The *TV Eye* debate on *Militant* was the best argument for socialism I have ever seen on television.

When the left regain control of the Labour Party it should be re-run as a party political broadcast. Well done *Militant*, its good to hear socialists talking about socialism and representing the working class.

Yours fraternally,  
Peter Jepson MMPA,  
Manchester.

## Invasion of the juggernauts

Dear Comrades

Determined efforts to allow juggernauts on the British road network are now in progress. Regardless of the bickering as to safety and damage to road and property, the real menace lies in the certain vasectomy of the

railways.

Instead of a modernised and efficient railway system—electrified, re-tracked, and labour intensive, it will mean massive redundancies and the first total collapse of a union.

Yours fraternally  
L J Corcoran  
Southport  
Merseyside

## How the cuts have hit Portsmouth Poly

Dear Comrade

Please find enclosed a cheque for £1 as a donation to the fighting fund. As a first year student at Portsmouth Polytechnic it is easy to recognise the need to kick out the Tories, not the socialists who are tirelessly recruiting new members to the party.

Not content with existing cuts, they have 'suspended' the BA Economic History course and there is no more money for replacing old equipment in many departments. In three years of Tory savagery, £2 million has been cut from the Poly's budget, and there have been nearly 140 staff 'lost'. At the same time more students have been attending.

At least another 130 jobs must be 'lost' by 1984, the government has told the Poly.

There has never been a time more urgent for all socialists to unite behind the policies of withdrawal from the EEC, unilateral nuclear disarmament and the AES (while recognising its shortcomings) and boot out the Tories once and for all!

Yours fraternally  
David Levis  
Southsea, Hants.

## Success on September 22

Dear Comrades

For the past year I have been working in a small cardboard packaging factory in Gosport. Even though it is a closed shop, there are only a few staunch trade unionists. In fact many of the workers are Liberals or in some cases Tories.

However, when the call came for the Day of Action, by 5.15 am there were three people on the picket line outside the factory. The Managing Director, for the first

time in four years, was at work by 5.30 am. Much to my surprise, and his, only six workers went in on Shift 1, 12 on Shift 2, and 6 on Shift 3, so out of a total workforce of 41, only 24 people worked that day.

This shows to me that the working people are beginning to understand what the Tories want to do, and it also shows their readiness to oppose this by withdrawal of labour.

I was even more heartened when I took our home made union banner round the hospital picket lines dur-

ing the rest of the day. I met many workers from my union and I was warmly welcomed by the NHS workers.

That day proved to me that union strength and solidarity exists in the rank and file, even if sometimes the leadership refuses to admit it. Incidentally, my FOC wants to buy the *Militant* every week now.

Yours fraternally  
Chris Stott  
Solent Branch SOGAT  
Gosport LPYS

## Thatcher trades in Hong Kong

Dear Comrades

The absolute hypocrisy of both Thatcher and the British bosses on the one hand and the Chinese bureaucracy on the other, was clearly revealed during the recent visit by Thatcher to the Far East.

The lease on Hong Kong runs out in 1997. The Tories are worried that their lucrative exploitation will also be up. The Chinese Stalinists are concerned that the exploitation continues but to their advantage. Already 40% of foreign earnings comes via Hong Kong.

There is of course no mention of the thousands of Hong Kong residents working in slave conditions, in inadequate housing, harassed by immigration officials. It is more than possible that a deal will be done to hand the colony over to the Chinese with British administration a la Angola where American oil mono-

polies were safeguarded.

Despite Thatcher's "Falkland spirit" it would be impossible for Britain to forcibly retain Hong Kong militarily due to the complete run down of British bases east of Suez. But the Chinese bureaucrats are more concerned that imperialism remains in Hong Kong so that they can reap the benefits vis-a-vis trade and techniques and they are trying to impress everyone that business interests will be safeguarded.

Even so, the Hong Kong stock exchange has fallen dramatically and it's odds on that a deal will be reached similar to the one that was arranged with Portugal over Macao. The irony is that all these colonial enclaves were ceded by the last enfeebled Feudal dynasty over 80 years ago under the pressure of gun boat diplomacy, and now when the capitalists are too weak to enforce their hold the Chinese bureaucracy are moving might and main to preserve capitalism on their doorstep.

The only solution is a socialist federation of the Far East linked in with a socialist west to eliminate exploitation and competition between workers for good.

Yours fraternally  
Dave Farrar  
Tower Hamlets

## USDAW thank 'Militant' supporter

Dear Sir,

May I on behalf of the federation thank you for allowing Mr Finlay to attend our June meeting, it came right at the time when our politicians are speaking against the freedom of thought and speech in our political system.

Although we all did not always agree with Mr Finlay's interpretations at times, never the less it was very interesting food for thought.

Yours fraternally,  
Dennys Warren,  
Secretary, Northants  
Federation USDAW.

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target Jan 8th.
Eastern	103		2700
East Midlands	94		2850
Hants & Dorset	112		2000
Humberside	32		1650
London East	176		3300
London West	127		1650
London South	9		2500
Manchester & Lancs	109		3000
Merseyside	73		3100
Northern	74		3900
Scotland East	57		2000
Scotland West	149		3550
Southern	236		2300
South West	37		1500
Wales East			1500
Wales West	27		2000
West Midlands	51		2800
Yorkshire	125		3850
Others	2		3850
<b>Total received</b>	<b>1592</b>		<b>50000</b>

## Target £50,000 By January 8

# A FIGHTING START

We must have astonished the Tories and Labour's right wing by the strength of support for *Militant* shown by the record fighting fund collections in the last three or four weeks.

Not surprisingly our readers have taken things a bit more easily in the last week. But only a bit. Nearly £1,600 has already come in since the end of the quarter! What other paper in Britain could manage it?

Our thanks to everyone who helped us, whether as members of labour movement organisations or as individuals. Members of the UCW in Oldham sent us £40, and an individual member from the same branch sent his expenses, on top. Lay officers of ASTMS (West Midlands) and of NALGO (Dorset) sent us their expenses, totalling almost £60.

Our thanks are also due to Pork Farms Shop Stewards Committee, CPSA members in Glasgow, Merseyside print-workers, an NSMM branch committee member, and Spitalfields Claimants Union for collections and contributions. Expenses have also been passed on from Labour Party members as far apart as Jarrow, Poole, and Hull, whilst Militant supporters have been collecting extras at Labour Party meetings in East London.

We've got cash collected at the Freshers Fair at Sussex University, and contributions from students in Glasgow and at Totton Sixth Form College, but are there any other students who still have the major portion of their grant intact? If so the most painless time to make us a donation is now!

Meetings in Cambridge (£53), Chesterfield (thanks amongst others to C Hawley, NUM), Carlisle, Bracknell and Oxford benefited us to the tune of well over £100 after all ex-

## LAST WEEK: £1,592



The LPYS march against the Tories on 16 October. Has your YS branch contributed to Militant's fight to get a socialist daily paper?

penses! LPYS branches ideas of *Militant* have contributed this week from Lon-


### Militant Supporters Association

Registered Promoter: D Smith, 73 Armond Rd, Witham, Essex.

### WINTER HOLIDAY DRAW COMING SOON!

Tickets will be available from the end of next week for our annual draw, where you can win a £500 holiday, to be taken where and when you like, for the ridiculous price of 10p!

We're also giving away a VIDEO, and there are other prizes of electrical goods and books! Will you make a donation to your favourite good cause and have the holiday of a life-time? Contact your Militant seller for details, or write to 1, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.



Fifth Socialist Bookfair 1982  
5th and 6th November  
Camden Town Hall  
Euston Road, London WC1

Opening times: Friday 5th November  
12-6.00.  
Saturday 6th November 11-5.00.  
Further details: phone 01-802 6145.

A comprehensive display of Socialist, feminist and radical books, pamphlets and periodicals from a wide variety of publishers will be displayed.  
They will be available for purchase by trade and public alike.

don, Southampton, Liverpool, Newcastle and Hastings: does your YS branch want to see Militant grow into a daily?

Thanks especially to D Chapman (Glasgow ASLEF) for £50, and to M Mathews (Withington Hospital NUPE), £15, V Baird (Wem), D Isles (Kingswood YS), B Shillingford (Oxford), P Stevenson (Cumbernauld), V Kelly (Poplar), S Donnelly (Leyton) and GMWU member (Dorset), all of whom donated £10 or more.

Sums of between £2 and £10 came from S Lawlor (Notts), Mr & Mrs Cunningham (Chesterfield LP), D Bintley (Loughbough), H Wobey and Min Ching (both Hackney), F & A Cotter (Havant), C Gwynne (Poole LPYS), C & B Butterworth (Chingford), K Sullivan (South London), C Mason and S McLindon (Liverpool), Sunderland readers T Houghton (ASB), N Raffeeek (UCATT) and F Anderson (GMWU), M Carberry and J Carty (Renfrew area), J Hebblethwaite (Leeds), F Toner (Leamington), B Murray (Frankly APEX), S Warwick (Bracknell), D Darkin and G Kardinsky (both Bristol), G Wood (Retired, Sheffield), and Kent supporters A Gilbertson (Sevenoaks), T Sans (Maidstone LPYS), M Parkes (Tunbridge Wells), and 'Lawrence' (Marden LP).

We can't mention everyone who has given us something, but the list is growing longer each week; A Feldman (Hackney), C Atkins (Cotgrove NUM), two Tunbridge Wells readers, Mr & Mrs Hogan (retired, Tyneside), S Garland (Frome), A Lambirth (Sussex), L Vasquez (Rochester), and P Jepson (Manchester) are just a few.

Don't forget *Militant*—perhaps you and your mates can arrange a fund-raising event for us! *Militant* supporters in Perth have just raised £30 from a sponsored walk, and they tell us there's another £15 on the way from another project! We need readers in other areas to show initiative like this to achieve our final target!!

# ads

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

### MILITANT READERS MEETINGS 'WHAT WE STAND FOR'

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

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

**LEWISHAM** Militant Readers Meeting: "Fight the Tories, not the socialists" Speaker: John Bulaitis. Monday 15 November 7.30pm. Small Hall, Lewisham Concert Hall, Rushey Green, Catford SE6.

**WANDSWORTH** Militant Readers Meeting. Hear Peter Taaffe (Editor of *Militant*) 'No witch-hunts, no expulsions. Fight the Tories not the socialists.' Lower Hall, Battersea Town Hall, Thursday 18 November 7.30pm.

**WOOLWICH** 'Militant' Public Meeting. "Socialism on Trial" 8pm, Tuesday 2 November. Woolwich Town Hall, Wellington St, SE18. Speakers: Nick Bradley (Conference delegate, Deptford CLP), Eddie McParland (Executive Committee, London Labour Party,

**SALFORD:** Speaker: Peter Taaffe, Ashfield Labour Club, Seedley Tce., (off Langworthy Rd.) Salford 6. Tuesday, 9 November, 7.45pm.

**IPSWICH** Thursday 28 October, 7.30pm, Room 7, Castle Hill Community Centre, Highfield Road, Ipswich. Speaker: Bob Edwards (Harlow LP)

**PERTH,** Militant Readers Meeting "Witch-hunts—or socialist policies?" Hear Bob Wylie. Tuesday 2 November 7.30pm. County Hotel, Perth.

**TRETHOMAS** Militant Readers Meeting. Speakers: Andrew Price and Tony Burns. Note changed date: Wednesday 10 November 7.30pm. Venue: Tynyrwern School, Trethomas.

**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.

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

**MILITANT IRISH MONTHLY** Fighting Fund Book Raffle, drawn on train to Liverpool, 16 October.  
1st prize, "Ireland Her Own" Fawn ticket No 39 (serial No ENO 739)  
2nd Prize, "Life and times of Connolly" Fawn Ticket No 13 (serial No ENO 739)  
Contact Box 3, 1 Mentmore Terrace London E8 3PN.

**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.

**Hackney Central LPYS:** Lost on Liverpool demonstration: megaphone, oblong black box with separate microphone.

A daughter to Steve & Theresa Appleton, Siobhan Alice born 13 October.

**BERMONDSEY CND** is having a disco at the Fitzmaurice Hall, Rotherhithe Civic Centre, London SE 16. Saturday 13 November, 1982, 8-12pm. ALL WELCOME. Tickets £1.50 waged, £1 unwaged. Nearest tube; Surrey Docks.

**LIVERPOOL,** Church Ward Labour Party. "16-18 Education: Comps v Colleges." Speaker: Dominic Brady, Labour Party Education Subcommittee. Lamb Hotel, Wavertree High Street. Monday 1 November, 8.30pm. ALL WELCOME.

# Industrial Reports

## Build a real Triple Alliance

"Enough is enough." The run down of heavy industry in Scotland must be halted, and only a united fight can do this.

This was the overwhelming theme of the march and demonstration in London's streets organised by Scotland's triple alliance unions on 26 October. They were given support by other workers from both Scotland and London.

It followed the tremendous show of solidarity and power by the Triple Alliance in Edinburgh the previous Saturday. The march from Congress House included ISTC members from Ravenscraig and Clydebridge, NUR members from Glasgow, and NUM members sporting stickers reading "Vote Yes" (referring to the NUM industrial

Report by  
Martin Elvin

action ballot on 27/28 October) and "Stop pit closures."

They were also joined by members of ASLEF, NUPE (including several nurses), TGWU etc.

At a rally in Central Hall Westminster, the best response came for Dennis Skinner who called for a yes vote on the NUM strike ballot. He said we shouldn't be mealy mouthed about extra parliamentary action, every battle has started outside parliament.

Calls for united action got a good response. Dennis Skinner commented "We had three strikes on different days last week, why doesn't the TUC get together, we could frighten

all the Fleet St editors on £50,000 a year, Thatcher and her cohorts because you produce the wealth in this country"

He also got huge applause for saying "to Jim Mortimer and Michael Foot, no more nonsense about driving people out of the Labour Party. We need to concentrate every effort on fighting this government, fighting on jobs for the most important tendency of all, the unemployed tendency" This got a standing ovation.

The feeling was clear, the fight had to be kept up and it was essential to get real action from the Triple Alliance not just a paper agreement. When the Triple Alliance unions with their power and strategic position move into action, other unions can quickly move in behind. A foretaste of this was the NUPE banner which read "Build the Triple Alliance" Unity is strength, we must build and use it.



Workers from rail, steel and coal industries in Scotland march in London on 26 October. They are conscious of their potential strength and determined to use it to stop the Tories in their tracks.  
Photo: Militant

## STEEL

### Llanwern

Frank Cuthbert spoke to ISTC Branch committee members Glen Eynon and Gary Finch at Llanwern steel works, Newport, Gwent.

Gary condemned the Tory tactics of rundown of steel. If there is an upturn in manufacturing industry or if the next Labour government try to expand steel production the industry will face problems due to cut back capacity.

Private contractors have been brought in to fill the spaces caused by "slim line" redundancies. Production

was as efficient as anywhere in Europe but the orders were not there. Gary thought some older men might accept redundancy but that mood could change if effective union leadership was given and the Triple Alliance invoked.

Glen echoed this, calling for an immediate overtime ban, and all out strike backed by the Triple Alliance if any plant was threatened with closure.

### Teesside

On Teesside the steel strike was well supported despite Tory press campaigns over the previous weeks suggesting that thousands of

workers would defy the strike.

Unfortunately the Labour MP for Redcar Jim Tinn also urged workers not to strike but to put faith in appealing to the Tories "better nature" to save Redcar.

Pickets were active from 5.30 in the morning with each gate having 50 to 100 pickets, men and women, and succeeding in turning back vans. Management were the only section to try to work and even some of them turned back realising their jobs were at risk.

A mass meeting of several hundred pickets cheered the comments of a Labour Party prospective candidate against BSC management and his remark that it was a political fight.

## MINES

On 17 October, Arthur Scargill addressed a meeting at a packed Leigh Miners Welfare Club. After a somewhat subdued welcome, he told NUM members why a 'Yes' vote should be returned. He stated that it was not in fact the NUM, but the NCB that linked pit closures with the wage claim when they talked about "unit costs" and about "technological unemployment".

He told us that out of last year's 'hit list' of 30 pits, 14 of these have since been shut down. Even now they are trying to close 3 more—Britannia in south Wales, Kinneil in Scotland and Snowdown in Kent—although these pits still have millions of tons of coal in reserve.

He went on to tell how at

an earlier meeting he had challenged a member of the Coal Board to mount the platform and guarantee that there would be no pit closures except on the grounds of exhaustion. Needless to say, the member of the board declined his invitation.

### Where did the money go?

Arthur then told us that the Board say there is no more money available for wage increases—what has happened to the £450 million the Board has saved with the 37,000 job losses since 1975 or the £141 million increases in productivity?

The recently announced increase in the price of coal

will bring in £300 million—which would meet our wage claim in full and these are just some of the figures he used. One increase he told the Board that we would gladly accept was the 8% rise of James Cowans.

It seemed to me that by the end of his speech—in what is known as a moderate area—Arthur had got the support of the majority of members there. He ended up receiving a standing ovation. Let us hope that he receives the same support in the ballot on the 28-29 October. Outside the Club 35 copies of 'Militant' were sold.

PS I didn't get paid nor did I want £4 to go to see him.

• **Len Jones**  
NUM (North Western Area)

## RAILWAYS

The NUR special general meeting on 13 October was lobbied by many union members including a number from Liverpool.

Conversation on the train revolved around Weighell's "flexible mandating" practices, on Sir Peter Parker's laments for his demise and Tebbits praise for certain "moderate union leaders". If reactionaries like Parker or Tebbit lauded Weighell, it was being asked what room was there for him in the trade union movement?

We were told by a reliable source that of the 60 visitors tickets available, most went to pro-Weighell branches and none to those sending resolutions calling for his dismissal or containing Broad Left or Militant supporters.

It was during the meeting

of the Broad Left that news of Weighell's crash landing came, and was greeted with great jubilation. Speaker after speaker called for five yearly elections for General Secretary and for the right of recall.

They enthusiastically took up the demands for conferences with a delegate from every branch on a card vote according to numerical strength. For a 35 hour week and a £90 minimum wage and for greater democratisation of the NUR.

Significantly the Fleet Street platoon, on hearing of Weighell's defeat all converged on the Broad Left meeting where a hastily convened press conference announced the intention to use the election to campaign for a fighting NUR leadership.

A new issue of Left Lines

appeared in time for the lobby which the Broad Left played a big part in organising. Sales were brisk, backed by a special edition of the journal dealing with the pay and productivity issues which also went well.

The lessons of the union leadership's attitude to the McCarthy report and the need for urgent action to build the Triple Alliance to fight the Tory butchery of the rail steel and coal industries is coming home to railway workers. The Broad Left is more and more being seen as a serious force for change within the union.

By Danny  
Birmingham

(Liverpool NUR No5 personal capacity)

## Birmingham NALGO strike

By Bill  
Mullins

More than a thousand members of the Northern Ireland Public Services Alliance came out on strike for half a day in solidarity with the Birmingham workers on 22 October.

resolved, that if any member was victimised by the Tories there would be a complete walk-out of all union members.

Already, there have been 24-hour strikes for the school meals workers and caretakers of NUPE. Sisters

Margaret Woolley and Lyn Davies and brother Andrew Porter were summarily sacked on Thursday 21st October after refusing to co-operate with the consultants.

The local union leadership, have now promised that if any more members were sacked before next Monday (a distinct possibility) they would call an all out strike immediately. Militant supporters in the council are demanding:—

★ an all-out strike of the council workers in NALGO, NUPE, T&GWU etc.

★ Solidarity action in other West Midlands Councils

★ The whole of the trade union and Labour movement to oppose the privatisation plans of Thatcher and her local cronies.

# Industrial Reports

## HEALTH- Decisive action vital

After six months of their dispute health workers are still bitter at the government's contemptuous pay offer and at the continual threat to NHS jobs and services poised over their heads.

Like so many workers, particularly in the public sector, they have been championing at the bit for action which can really force the Tories to concede. The grim determination can be seen in the resolution passed by members of the Northern Ireland public service union NIPSA at a public meeting last week.

They expressed their support for the TUC Health Services Committee move to consult members of the unions on all out action with accident and emergency cover only. But they pointed out that a lot of hard work would be needed to rebuild the earlier mood of optimism which had dropped off due to the lateness of the TUC's call.

Any action taken would have been far more effective some months ago, but representatives of all shop stewards committees in Northern Ireland are meeting this week to make preparations for the success of the all out action.

The 22 September national day of action showed the potential for success with massive support for health workers from other trade unionists. But we warned at the time that unless hospitals were quickly reduced to accident and emergency level only, and plans laid for more back-up action from the

muscle of industrial workers, the mood of support could wane.

Health workers; as shown in the activists meeting in Sheffield this weekend are determined they must not lose. Health workers must campaign for all out action in the union consultations. If there is a 'yes' vote the health unions must return to the TUC to demand support from other unions.

But time is not unlimited. No date has yet been set for

strike action if it is agreed and the unions' correct desire to consult members must not be allowed to extend the process of consultation for even more weeks.

A clear recommendation from the health unions can still inspire the members who have shown magnificent solidarity. The demand must grow for firm action and for the TUC to call a 24 hour general strike in support of the health workers' heroic fight.



At 7.30 on the morning of the London health unions day of action, 20 workers, including laundry, domestic, sterile supply and midwifery staff occupied the main administrative offices of Guy's Hospital.

Half an hour earlier the Domestic Administrative offices had also been occupied but management later evicted these workers.

Sue Blennerhassett, community midwife and NUPE steward involved in the action explained that in a ballot of all union members, 3/4rds had voted for a continuation of industrial action and a continuation of the levy.

"We have no choice but to continue fighting to save the NHS and for a living wage," said Philip Hounsell from

ASTMS, and chairman of the Joint Union Committee at Guys.

We occupied because we want to show Fowler we'll go on fighting. Members are not going to accept a third year of pay cuts."

Philip showed the support for the action from workers outside giving the example of a cheque for £1,200 expected later in the day from APEX.

"I agree with Rodney Bickerstaff that a national escalation is needed, whilst the support is there. I'm very much in favour of unions outside the NHS calling for a 24 hour general strike. We rest on support outside the health service."

**Health workers at Guy's spoke to Tim Harris**

## Telecoms: After 20 October strike

### "Don't demob us now!"

Bristol Telecom workers came out solidly. Only four people crossed the picket lines out of several thousand. Despite torrential rain, picket lines were strong, numbering between 30 and 50 at six separate sites.

Many of the strikers opposed the view that this was a non-political strike. It was obvious that a strike against the political decisions of the Tory government is a political strike.

At a public meeting in Bristol, a POEU NEC member made it clear that there were no further plans for industrial action. Instead, the union would approach the Liberals, the SDP, the Tories and even the Women's Institute!! (oh yes, and the Labour Party too) The intention of the union leadership is to mount a purely parliamentary campaign against privatisation. This would be disastrous.

By itself, the Day of Action will be useless. If it is to mean anything it must be as a preparation for further industrial action. The membership must not be "demobbed" now that they have become involved. Instead, the key demand must be for a special conference to plan out a specific campaign of industrial action.

The joint action between POEU, CPSA, SCPS serves to highlight the need for a single "industrial union" for

British Telecom. The campaign must be strengthened for a single union at national level incorporating at least POEU, CPSA, and UCW. Unity is crucial. Of the six unions in BT, three were on strike on the Day of Action; the other three instructed their members to work normally.

Last week saw the waterworkers, BT workers, steelworkers and NHS workers all taking part in strikes. The mineworkers and council workers are lining up for future battles. It is crucial that these groups do not struggle individually against the government but struggle collectively.

The call must go out for a "public sector alliance" at a national and local level involving rank and file members of all public sector unions. The task of a "public sector alliance" should be a campaign for the overthrow of this Tory government as the only way of protecting jobs, conditions and services.

- ★ No to privatisation
- ★ No redundancies—35 hour week now
- ★ Recall national conference to plan further industrial action.
- ★ For a single rank and file BT union.
- ★ For a one-day public sector service strike.

**Brian Kelly**

Bristol External POEU (personal capacity)

## Arlington House

Strikers at Arlington House hostel in Camden, North London, are organising a mass picket of the Mount Pleasant Hotel in Kings Cross to publicise their dispute on Saturday 30 October from 10am to about midday. Support from the labour movement would be welcomed by the sacked union members.

In Sheffield the strike was absolutely solid from POEU and CPSA members. Solidarity in action against the Tories also came from telephonists in the UCW who ignored the instructions from their union to work normally and joined the picket line.

They were particularly angry at their unions seeming willingness to allow them to cross picket lines as no instruction to the contrary was forthcoming. The local UCW representative was given a 'roasting' by these women, his reply being that no decision had been made by the union conference as to what action should be taken!

Their determination has now hardened even more and to ensure the protest was a complete success they remained on the picket line to persuade and encourage the next shift of telephonists not to go into the exchange to work. This choice had already been made somewhat easier by the refusal of the cleaners to open up the 14 floor building. They had previously informed the PO engineers, that if a picket line was waiting for them when they turned up in the morning at 5.30 am they would not cross it. The picket of POEU and CPSA was ready and waiting!

Despite the lack of national direction from the UCW leaders solidarity was cemented ready for the next phase in the battle.

**Rob Morton**

(POEU member, Sheffield.)

## HEATHFIELDS

It is now over 13 weeks since management at Heathfields, Slough, locked-out 39 members of the GMWU. The resolve of the locked out workers has not wavered during this difficult period.

Intimidation has had little effect on the sacked workers at Heathfields. Delegations of the pickets have been visiting areas of the country to get fellow trade unionists to black Heathfields goods during the duration of the dispute. It is of vital importance that trade unionists at BICC and British Telecom, the main customers of Heathfields, refuse to handle these products produced by scab labour. Only then will sufficient pressure be brought to bear on management and the dispute resolved in favour of the dismissed GMWU workers.

Labour Party members and Trade Unionists can also assist the pickets by visiting the picket line whenever they can. The sacked workers are picketing the factory 12 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week. Many have been arrested during the course of the dispute.

Contributions and messages of support are still welcome and should be sent to GMWU/Heathfield Dispute committee, 105 Greenford Avenue, London W7.

**Dave Carr**

(Reading South, CLP)

## P.S. RAINDI

Over the past fortnight over 300 Asian workers, mostly women, have been on strike over union recognition. The firm, P.S. Raindi of Smethick together with the adjoining firm Supreme Quilting is owned by an Indian boss who has made fat profits by paying starvation wages.

Men receive just 85p an hour, whilst the women take home £25 a week or less. The dispute began when the company sacked workers for daring to join the TGWU. Immediately, all the union members in Supreme Quilting walked out.

Last Monday the strike was made official. The same afternoon management called a meeting of all workers and threatened the sack if they joined the union. Over 250 workers replied by walking out and joining the 11 members on strike.

Since the dispute started the union has recruited over 200 new members. So far the strike has been solid with both men and women picketing, with the help of the local Asian community.

Up till now, P.S. Raindi, like hundreds of other sweatshop firms have used the recession and high levels of unemployment to keep the wages well below the poverty line. The workers have served notice of their intentions. They need the help of organised labour to succeed.



The Raindi/Supreme Quilting picket line

Photo: John Smith (IFL)

# Militant

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## NHS Dispute

# DEFEAT TORIES WITH ALL OUT STRIKE

### ...emergency cover only

The health service workers are determined. We must win our dispute, not only for a decent living wage but to stop the destruction of the NHS.

By Pete Taylor  
 (Secretary, Sheffield Health Workers Joint Shop Stewards Committee)

That is why hundreds of health workers are coming to Sheffield on 30 October, including representatives of strike committees up and down the country. We want to recharge the enthusiasm engendered by the 22 September day of action. That day was a shining example of Labour Movement unity and strength in many parts of the country, certainly in Sheffield, where tens of thousands of workers stopped work for 24 hours in support of the NHS workers.



In those areas of the country where NHS workers are well organised, it was the local shop stewards and activists who made sure that solidarity action went well beyond the TUC's call for at least a one hour stoppage. How was this done?

In Sheffield it was achieved by well organised grass roots organisation. There were two shop stewards working full-time on co-ordination and there were scores of activists available. Thousands of workers in the city were asked for their support, pointing out that our dispute is not just about pay, but the very existence of our health service.

We did not stop at steelworks, engineering and heavy industry. We approached schools, colleges, the university and many other groups of workers throughout the city. The result was probably the largest single strike in Sheffield since 1926. But what did this achieve?

The major gain in Sheffield was that we learnt how to organise properly, but in terms of our dispute, the government has not moved. The great success of the 22nd was followed by the TUC Health Services Committee calling a series of regional strikes.

These were in reality a complete anti-climax and it has caused in many quarters a loss of the drive and fervour built up by the 22nd. Where do we go from here?

Certainly the majority feeling amongst stewards and activists in Sheffield is that there must be a significant escalation in our action, not just in strikes in the hospitals, but more impor-

tantly in industry. The situation in the country could not be better for this. British Telecom workers are fighting 'privatisation', the water-workers are already in dispute, steelworkers are fighting further massive redundancies and closures, and the NUM may soon be joining the list.

We are at a crucial stage in the dispute. That's why Sheffield Health Workers Joint Shop Stewards Committee in conjunction with stewards from Leicester have called this weekend's meeting, to gauge the feeling of the people who would actually get the TUC's call put into action and convey it to the Health Service Committee.

Unfortunately, Mr Peter Jaques, (secretary of the TUC Health Service Committee) has not-seen fit to reply to invitations to attend. This is regrettable, since in no way are we attempting to set up an alternative structure—as we are being accused of.

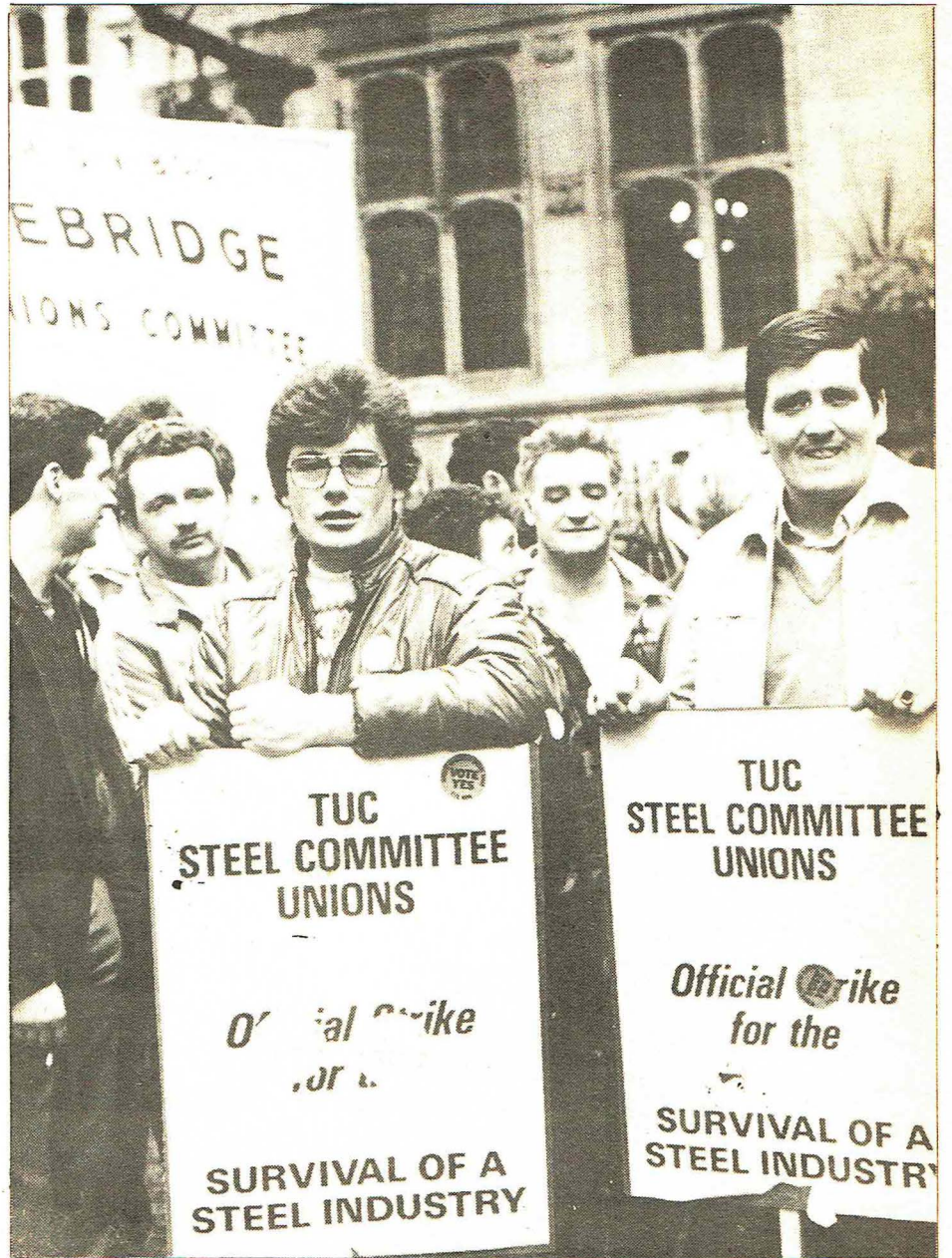
What we do want is to win a dispute which may soon start to slip away from us. We must win, what is possibly the most important fight in the Labour movement for a long time.

The dispute has now gone far beyond the claim for 12%. It is patently obvious that it has become a question of the very existence of the one piece of socialist legislation ever carried in this country.

A defeat for the workers in the NHS could have far reaching consequences. For if, with all our huge public support, we are defeated, the Tories will take up attacks

on other sections of the welfare state and the public sector with an unprecedented fury.

But we can win! With strong leadership and the correct organisation at grass roots level, we can win a battle that this government is determined not to lose.



A fight for jobs is a fight against poverty. Scottish steel workers demonstrate in London to save jobs. See page 14. Photo D. Doran.

## DOLE QUEUE MISERY

Continued from page 1

A staggering one in twenty of men registered as

unemployed have been out of work for over three years.

In 1981, one-quarter of the unemployed had been out of work for over one year. But despite this, the National Insurance Scheme is constructed on the basis that unemployment is an occasional short term social 'accident' for people with regular earnings. It isn't. Unemployment is a product of the capitalist system. Moreover, the Tories have deliberately lengthened the dole queues in order to drive down the standard of living of all workers—employed as well as unemployed.

The long term unemployed suffer particular hardship, because alone among groups on supplementary benefit, they cannot qualify for the long term rate, currently £9.60 higher than the short term rate.

Hardly surprisingly, poorer educational attainment has been identified amongst children of the unemployed. A study in the mid 1970's found that parental unemployment doubled the risk of children being admitted to hospital and that poverty caused by unemployment was a contributory factor.

Studies in Birmingham and Portsmouth found that about half of those parents whose children were taken into care, were unemployed at the time. What sort of future will the children of Tory Britain have? Having known nothing but poverty

in their childhood, they look forward to leaving school and joining the dole queues!

Labour's Programme for 1982, promises 'to eliminate poverty and to bring about a massive redistribution in income and wealth.' Millions of workers and their families will be looking to the next Labour Government to fulfill this promise. If a Labour Government was elected tomorrow in order to wipe out poverty and unemployment, it would not come a day too soon for thousands of families who have reached breaking point. Instead of campaigning against socialists in the Labour Movement, the leadership of the Labour Party should be actively campaigning for the downfall of this hated Tory government and working towards the election of a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

Under capitalism, there is no future for workers and their children. A socialist society is the only way forward to eliminate the nightmare of living on next to nothing. Only socialism can eradicate the dole queues and the despair they bring. And the sooner the better!

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