

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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20p

Howe's Proposals ...

Old and Poor Pay for Tory Failure

This week Howe unveiled the first part of the Tories coming election package. And the only word to describe what they have to offer is hopeless.

They gave no hope to the unemployed. Howe forecast that it will rise officially to over 3,500,000 next year.

Adult unemployment is expected to rise by 300,000, and a further 60,000 school leavers will not find work.

He gave no hope to those on a pension or existing off social security. They have been getting too much, the Tories say, and next year they will have their benefits cut below the inflation rate by 2-3%.

For the Tories such readjustments are only ever one way—down. Two years ago Howe cut 5% off the value of unemployment and invalidity pensions. They still have not had them restored.

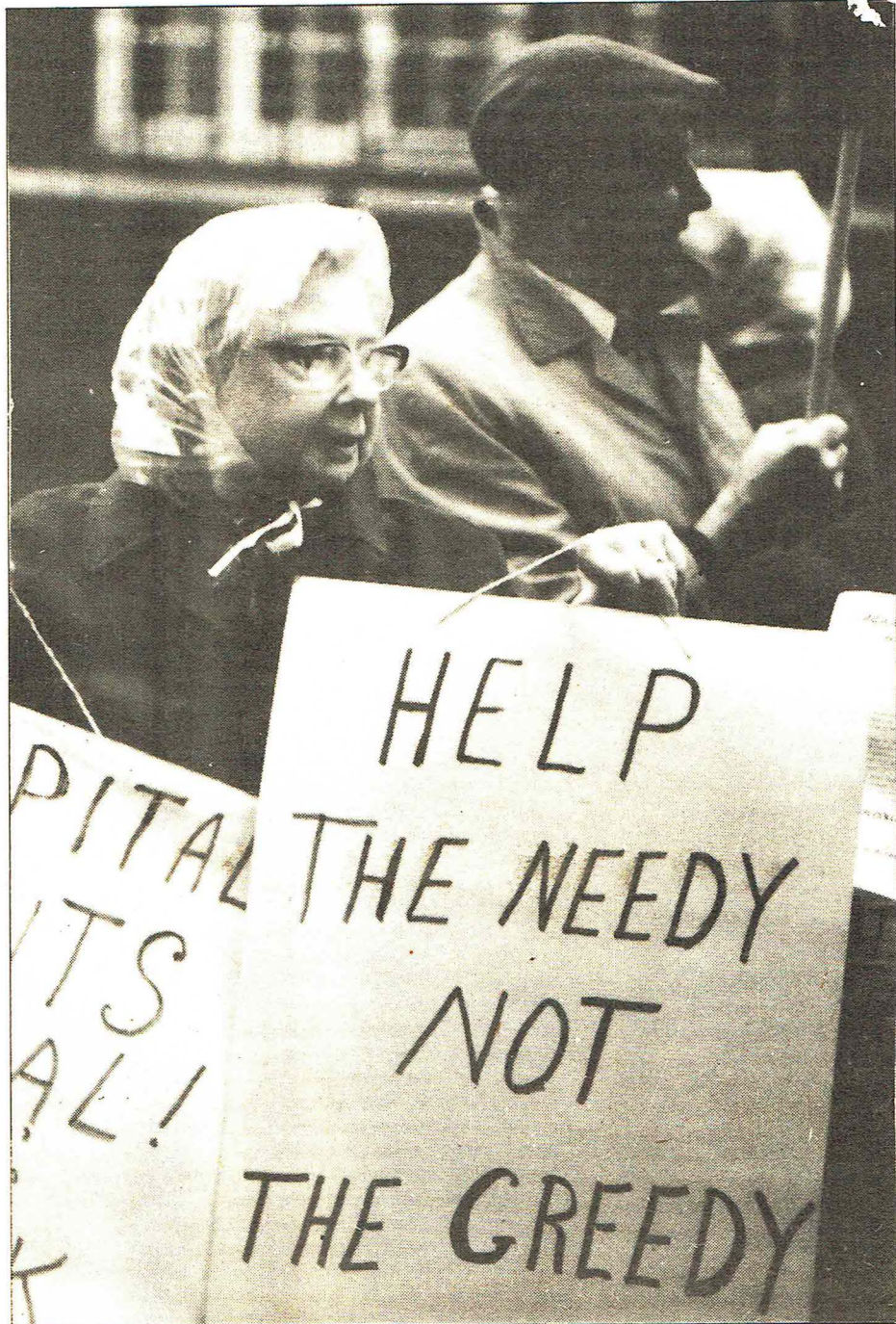
The Spastics Society and Disability Alliance pronounced themselves "astonished" and "appalled" respectively over Howe's latest attacks.

This autumn's forerunner of next year's Budget is a grim reminder of what a hopeless future the Tories offer ordinary people.

"The increase in personal living standards that took place between 1977-80 was disastrous. That increase in personal living standards has to some extent been reversed, but there is still room for improvements", Howe told parliament on Monday.

In the last year living standards have declined by 3%, and next year it will continue.

But not everything is being cut. Defence expenditure is going up by a further £622m to pay for the Falklands war. The Tories do have a plan



to deal with the consequences of unemployment. They are spending and extra

£96m on the police and prisons. That is £18m more than

the token increase of £80 on Health and the ludicrously

CONTINUED ON
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Don't stand
on the
sidelines...

Become a
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I want to help in the campaign to defend the paper and stop the witch-hunt. Please send details of how I can assist.

Name

Address

Send to *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Telephone 01-986 3828.



WITCH-HUNT

Right beat a tactical retreat

At the organisation subcommittee of the NEC, the right wing were forced to beat a retreat on the proposed witch-hunt, but only for the moment.

Jim Mortimer, the General Secretary, took a full document along to the organisation committee, outlining a range of restrictions against supporters of *Militant*, including the proposal to expel the five members of the editorial board. (For a full breakdown of the Mortimer document, see pages 8 and 9). But although it was expected that these would go through the committee, with its new in-built right wing majority, a decision was taken to postpone, at this stage, any action on the proposals.

In proposing no action, Jim Mortimer, it was reported, explained that he and Michael Foot had taken legal advice which had shown that the NEC would be culpable on a number of points if they went ahead with the proposals regardless. (see statement on page 2)

One argument given by their counsel was that it was clear that *Militant* was being singled out—in the application of the constitution, in the interpretation of the Register and in the time limit given to *Militant*, as compared to everyone else. It was also pointed out to Jim Mortimer by the QC that in the absence of a proscribed list, there was no constitutional basis for the expulsion of the *Militant* Editorial Board. The NEC, he said, would be taking an "unacceptable risk" if it went ahead with expulsions at that meeting.

These revelations are in fact a crushing confirmation of the view taken by *Militant* that the right wing were singling out the Marxists in

the party in their so-called 'defence of the constitution', and that they were bending the rules to suit themselves.

The right wing now find themselves, as Dennis Skinner aptly put it in the meeting, "in Dickie's Meadow."

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to imagine that it was only the legal question which had an effect on the committee decision. It is also clear that at least some members of the committee, and not just those on the left, are conscious of the massive opposition that there would be to a purge in the party itself, and of the damaging electoral results of an internal civil war.

Jim Mortimer actually commented at the meeting that it was obvious from the number of resolutions that had been received that the majority of the CLPs were against expulsions and the other measures in his document.

But while the witch-hunters in the Party have beat a tactical retreat, it would be fatal to imagine that they have given up all thoughts of purging the party rank and file. The last thing they want is a Labour Party committed to socialist policies by a socialist rank and file.

They will not give up their goal. The measures proposed in the Mortimer document against the LPYS may very well still go ahead, resulting in a severe restriction of the campaigning potential of Labour's youth. The rank and file of the Labour Party will have to be on guard in the coming weeks and months, to defend their democratic rights against the attacks that will almost certainly come from the right of the NEC.

By *Militant*
Reporters

Is it justified for socialists to go to the capitalist courts?

That is the question which has been raised in relation to *Militant's* recent statement that we are seriously considering legal action against the NEC if they attempt to go through with expulsions.

Marxists, without having illusions as to the nature of the courts, have never ruled out the use of the law as one form of action. The great teachers of Marxism, Marx himself, Lenin, and Trotsky were all prepared, under certain conditions to go the courts.

Marx, in 1860, attempted to take legal action against a certain Herr Vogt, who worked as a paid spy and provocateur within the workers' movement for the French dictator, Louis Napoleon. Vogt tried to discredit Marx and his followers by publishing scurrilous allegations in the German press. Legal action, wrote Marx, was "decisive for the historical vindication of the party and the future position in Germany."

In 1936, at the time of the notorious Moscow frame-up trials, Trotsky, then exiled in Mexico, faced a similar situation. One of the right-wing papers of the multi-millionaire Hearst group published, without permission, one of Trotsky's articles. This enabled the Stalinists unscrupulously to accuse Trotsky of "collaborating with Hearst against the Soviet Union." Trotsky explained why he was initiating legal action; "I believe that according to American laws I have the right to sue Hearst for infringing upon my rights as an author and for the great political and moral harm he has caused me with this infringement."

Labour's right wing are in no position to complain about legal action being taken. They have never hesitated to go to the courts, or use the threat of legal action. Invariably, it has been to prevent the authority and prerogatives of right-wing trade union leaders or officials from being challenged by their rank and file.

Recently, on the other hand, a number of rank and file trade unionists have felt compelled to resort to legal action because all democratic procedures within their unions have been blocked off. The left in the Boilermakers' Society, for instance, has twice challenged recent election results in the courts on the grounds of alleged serious irregularities in the balloting.

The London Central branch of the electricians' union is also currently making a legal challenge to the amalgamation of London branches by the EETPU leadership against the wishes of many rank and file members.

Courts and 'justice'

The function of the judges and the courts in capitalist society is to protect private property and defend the power and privileges of the ruling class. This general truth is elementary for Marxists.

But it would be too crude simply to conclude that, therefore, socialists should never go to the capitalist courts.

To make juridical institu-

tions effective, to give them authority among the majority of people when the working class enjoys democratic rights, the capitalist class has to put the power of the courts within a general framework of law, legal rights, consistent procedure, and so on.

For the legal machinery to play its role, especially when there is enormous pressure from a labour movement which has fought to establish democratic and legal rights, the courts generally have to appear to uphold impartial justice, administer the law fairly, and to give all sections of society the opportunity to go to the civil courts to settle disputes or put right grievances.

Because of this, it is possible, under some circumstances, for workers and socialists to take some issues to court with the chance of a favourable outcome. If there is a strong case in law, or if arbitrary or oppressive action against certain individuals blatantly contravenes the common law conceptions of "natural justice", it can be possible, within limits, to get a favourable verdict.

If we go to court it will be because this step has been forced on us by the right wing's attempt to impose the anti-*Militant* Register on the Party as an "accomplished fact." Legal action is a legitimate means of trying to avert undemocratic, unconstitutional measures, of trying to halt summary expulsions and the imposition of a new system of right-wing thought control.

Nevertheless, if socialists go to court, it must be with their eyes open. If *Militant* does take legal action we will not for a moment forget the class bias of the law. We will have no illusions about the 'certainty' of winning even a 'cast-iron case.'

No Substitute For Campaign

Legal action can never be the main form of action. There is no question of a legalistic substitute for a campaign in the labour movement.

But going to court would be an auxiliary move. Whatever happens, we will be stepping up our efforts to take our case to every corner of the labour movement.

Apart from *Militant* public meetings, in the next few months we will take the issues to every shop stewards' committee and union branch, to every Labour Party, and to the streets and the estates.

A legal action which stopped the purge in its track would prevent enormous damage being done to the Labour Party. But it is the verdict of the workers which really matters, and on this score we have no fears.

To take a labour movement dispute to the courts, it is true, is exceptional. But we are now facing an exceptional, if not unprecedented, situation in the Labour Party.

The right wing is using a rigged majority on the NEC to trample on the democratic rights of Party members.

The NEC has introduced the Register to suppress a trend of socialist opinion within the Party, on the spurious pretext that it is

STATEMENT- MILITANT AND LEGAL ACTION

simply "upholding the constitution." Yet it can in no way be justified by the constitution as it stands. In pushing through the Register and using it as the pretext for expulsions, the NEC is acting against the constitution.

The completely arbitrary and inconsistent way the Register is now being applied, moreover, demonstrates that it is specifically aimed against *Militant*. The idea that it applies equally to all groups within the Party is ludicrous.

Militant was from the very beginning declared "ineligible" for registration. This was on the basis of a farcical enquiry, which, in a completely one-sided way, accepted false or misleading evidence from some regional Labour Party officials and apparently gave credence to malicious gossip and ludicrous allegations.

At no time were specific allegations put to *Militant*, either of breaches of the constitution in general, or infringement of the Party's democratic procedures. The Editorial Board was given no opportunity whatsoever of commenting on the "evidence" against us or of answering the allegations on which the NEC is now basing its repressive action.

Although *Militant* was declared "ineligible", we were given a deadline for applying for registration—a deadline which expired before the annual conference. We considered that the NEC had no right to try to enforce the Register before a conference decision and therefore made an application at that time.

Return of Star Chamber

Only three months after it first announced the terms of its Register (in a holiday period), the NEC presented the Register and the 'Militant Tendency Report' to the Conference in Blackpool in a mere hour-and-a-half for delegates to discuss them, entirely inadequate for such far-reaching measures.

Nevertheless, at least 90% of the Constituency Labour Parties voted against the Register. They made it clear they would give no support to a witch-hunt in the Party.

The Register was passed on the basis of votes by trade union general secretaries who had not consulted their members and who do not have rank-and-file support for a purge. On the contrary, in a number of big unions, like the T&GWU, the NUM, and USDAW, votes were cast contrary to the opposition of their annual conferences or their executives to any form of witch-hunt.

At the Conference, as is

well-known, the right wing also increased its majority on the NEC.

But, again, the support of a number of general secretaries for right-wingers contradicted their own union's support for left-wing policies. In a number of cases, notably the NUR, the union's vote was cast contrary to a clear conference mandate.

The resignation of Sidney Weighell as NUR general secretary is one reflection of rank-and-file anger at the undemocratic anti-socialist policies of right-wing general secretaries.

However, on the basis of their rigged majority, the right are determined to carry through a purge.

Proposals are now being put before the NEC for the immediate expulsion of *Militant's* Editorial Board. The

pelled from the Party.

Michael Foot, Neil Kinnock, Jim Mortimer and the other former lefts who voted for a witch-hunt should take note of this before it is too late. Without the backing of the ex-left wingers, the right could not have initiated a purge. But once the right get going no one on the left will be safe.

All this is being done on the basis of a shameful bending of the constitution.

Even such capitalist commentators as Alan Watkins, who is certainly no friend of *Militant*, acknowledges (*The Observer*, 7 November) that we have a case.

"Everything (Michael Foot) touches seems to go wrong. Mr Foot having acted against the *Militant*, the Militants are now promising to challenge their expulsion in capitalist courts

Marxists, without having illusions as to the nature of the courts, have never ruled out the rise of capitalist law as one form of action...it would be an auxiliary move alongside a political campaign within the labour movement

five of us, as yet, have been offered no opportunity of answering allegations or putting our case to the NEC.

Yet it is clear from the NEC recommendations that the five expulsions are only the first step of a much wider purge. Thirty-four workers in the regions are going to be asked to "discontinue their paid sales organising activity for *Militant*."

They are going to be given a shameful ultimatum: give up your job on a socialist newspaper and join the 3.3 million on the dole, otherwise you will be booted out of the Labour Party!

Eight prospective parliamentary candidates who support *Militant's* ideas and Labour Party Young Socialist National Committee members are to be asked to give an assurance that "forthwith they will give no support or assistance to the organising activities of the 'Militant Tendency'."

What is this if not a return to the Star Chamber methods used by the Gaitskellite right wing in the 1950s and 1960s? First these and then inevitably other left wingers will be investigated and interviewed. If their views are found "unacceptable" to the NEC's right-wing majority and they fail to give an "acceptable" undertaking, they will be ex-

applying class-ridden, bourgeois law, and quite right too. It seems to me they have a case. Such expulsion of individuals would, under the party constitution, require a prior decision of the conference that the Tendency was ineligible for affiliation to the Labour Party. No decision of this kind has, as far as I know, been taken."

Uphold Constitution

Even Mr Watkins recognises that we have a strong case! No doubt he meant to be sarcastic in referring to "class-ridden, bourgeois law...". But he, like other Fleet Street gurus have no hesitation in helping to bring 'bourgeois, class-ridden' pressure on Labour's leadership to take action against socialists in the Labour Party, pretending it is out of concern for Labour's electoral prospects.

On behalf of the capitalist class, the media has exerted relentless pressure on the NEC, and particularly on Michael Foot and the former lefts, to take action against Labour's Marxist wing. But if Michael Foot thinks they will be satisfied with short, sharp, anti-Marxist surgery, he will have to think again.

On the contrary, the press, the Tories and the SDP, and all Labour's enemies will attempt to exploit to the full the civil war that is being opened up in the Labour Party.

In 1977-78 Newham North East Labour Party was infiltrated by agents of the capitalist class. They were trying to reverse moves by the constituency party to de-select their MP, Reg Prentice, who later defected to the Tories. Lewis and McCormick, who turned out to be financed by the ultra-right 'National Association for Freedom', disrupted the party and tried to use legal action to reverse democratic Labour Party decisions.

Members of Newham NE fought Lewis and McCormick politically, but, quite correctly, they also fought back—successfully—through the courts.

In the Newham case, even the "class-ridden, bourgeois" courts were forced to recognise the justice of the constituency party's case and condemn the totally alien, undemocratic intervention of Lewis and McCormick. Who would argue that the left should have opposed going to the courts as one part of a campaign to get rid of Prentice and establish the party's right to re-select its MP?

Militant's case, however, is even more significant. It is no longer outsiders trying to disrupt the Party. The right-wing majority on the NEC itself, under the pressure of the capitalist class and its news media, is attempting to trample on the democratic rights of Party members. In this situation, it would be completely wrong to rule out the possibility of going to the courts.

In the long run, of course, it is not the courts who will resolve the issues. We have no illusions in the role of the law in present class society. In the long run it is the rank and file of the labour movement who will decide the issues. We are already confident of their verdict. For the time being however, the right still controls the NEC and the Party apparatus. They have already shown that they will be ruthless. They are prepared to use every undemocratic manoeuvre and dirty trick in the book. Why should we, then, rule out any legitimate means of struggle to stop them trampling on the democratic rights of Labour's rank and file?

Why, when *Militant* is advised by experienced Counsel that we have a strong legal case against the arbitrary, unconstitutional measures being taken against us, why should we not also fight them through the courts?



Photo: J Wolfe (MILITANT)

Nearly 300 mainly Asian youth picketed West Ham Magistrates' court last week with the beginning of the trial of the 'Newham 8'. The large turnout was swelled by many school students who struck on that day in support. The case was adjourned until December 17, and another demonstration outside the court has been called for that day.

With 'Friends' Like These...

It will come as no surprise that the right-wing have turned on Labour's youth movement. Defeated on policy, they are looking for revenge through organisational measures. For example, they may attempt to curtail the LPYS's already meagre finances.

What will however surprise and indeed horrify Labour's ranks is that Golding, Healey and company have been joined in their attacks on the LPYS's finances—by the leadership of the National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS)! In the NOLS Budget submission for 1983, prepared by the NOLS Officers for the NEC Youth Committee, a series of proposals have been made to divert resources from the LPYS to NOLS!

The LPYS has always argued that NOLS is under-financed and the LPYS representative on Labour's NEC has always fought for substantial increases in the NOLS budget. To repay this support, when the LPYS faces attack by the right wing, by proposing cuts in the LPYS's budget is nothing short of scandalous.

The NOLS Officers propose that the LPYS Campaign budget be reduced by £3,000, the Conference/Summer Camp budget by £3,000, the

Socialist Youth budget by £500 and the Regional Schools subsidy budget by £500. They claim that this 'redistribution' is justified on the grounds of the "comparable memberships" of NOLS and the LPYS. But the evidence of the NOLS Budget submission itself proves that this claim is a fallacy.

The submission states that £4,000 will be raised in NOLS membership fees, which at 55p per member is just over 7,270—and this, as the submission explains is on the basis of a projected membership increase of 10%. Yet the NEC 1981-82 Report recorded a LPYS membership of over 10,000—all who pay the normal Labour Party subscription rates of £6 (£2 unwaged). This contribution to Labour Party funds is not matched by the '7,000' NOLS members, the majority of whom are not Labour Party members. **Indeed, this year NOLS affiliated to the Labour Party on the basis of 1,000 members!**

In fact NOLS has failed to mobilise any more than a few hundred at any national event over the past few years. This is a truer indication of NOLS active membership, compared with the LPYS!

Moreover, for 1981 they set a modest target of raising £250 from the 90 odd affiliated Labour Clubs. They achieved the grand total of between £60 and £50! Over the same period they record-

ed paid sales of just over 500 of the NOLS paper, *Labour Student*, covering two issues! The NOLS Officers have asked for £3,000 for campaign materials and publications. Just to have sold 2,000 copies of each issue of *Labour Student* in 1981 would have raised an extra £1,600.

The NOLS Officers claim they need more resources to "capitalise on our success" in taking the leading positions in the National Union of Students, to "promote the Party" amongst the students. But how have the NOLS members on the NUS executive used their position to 'promote the party'? Neil Stewart, NOLS President of NUS, backed by the NOLS leaders, wrote a letter to Tory Party Chairman Cecil Parkinson arguing that: "We at NUS need a strong and representative Conservative Student voice in order that we can be both strong and representative" (!) (Quoted in the *Guardian*, 21/7/82).

Also, the NOLS NUS leaders approved two NUS posters quoting Tory MP, Sir William Von Straubenzee and SDP leader Shirley Williams, praising NUS, with no other comment on the posters than 'NUS: The Voice of Students'.

The effect of these posters in 'promoting the Labour Party' amongst students can be gauged by the reaction at Paisley College. The Student Union there agreed to demand that NUS withdraw the posters from circulation!

The NOLS leaders are acting like vultures hovering over what they think is the dying corpse of the LPYS, trying to get the best pickings. LPYS members and Labour Club activists will no doubt show them how mistaken they are!

HANDS OFF THE LPYS!

Despite the election of right winger Denis Howell as its chairman, the Labour Party NEC Youth Sub Committee meeting represented a setback for the plans of sections of the right wing and their backers in the Tory press.

They had been calling for the LPYS to be shut down, it's National Committee to be suspended; yet most significant issues, such as the LPYS budget for 1983, were deferred or shifted sideways to other committees.

A number of actions were also approved, such as the production of 20,000 leaflets promoting *Socialist Youth*, which is a far cry from the original plans of some of the right wing to close the paper down!

Party members and trade unionists will be looking for a bold lead on how the party intends to fight the forthcoming general election, and particularly how the estimated four million 'first time voters' can be won to Labour. LPYS proposals, including plans to produce 500,000 leaflets aimed at school and further education students (outlining the demand for a minimum £20 a week grant) were not endorsed.

However, in the words of General Secretary Jim Mortimer they were 'construc-

By a Militant Reporter.

tively proposed' but shifted to the 'General Election Campaign Committee'. But unfortunately the proposal to recommend to the full NEC, to add LPYS representative Laurence Coates to the committee, was defeated by 6-5. However, it is significant that among those in favour was John Evans, Michael Foot's PPS.

During the same discussion, John Golding remarked about Labour's Programme 1982, that "in no way can it all be implemented in one government. It isn't possible in terms of parliamentary time, or financial resources".

While he didn't specifically refer to the demand for a £20 a week grant, it is clear that sections of the right wing are preparing the way for retreats on many of the

more radical reforms included in Labour's programme, and on conference policies such as unilateral nuclear disarmament. But any such retreats will be met by massive opposition in the movement.

It is clear that the pressure of the labour and trade union movement in opposition to the witch-hunt and attacks on the LPYS, is making itself felt. But the campaign must not slacken off. The movement must reaffirm the long standing democratic rights of the LPYS:

- ★ No cut in the LPYS budget
- ★ The right of democratically elected regional and national committees to meet regularly
- ★ No expulsion of LPYS members
- ★ No restrictions, organisational or financial, on the LPYS campaigning activity
- ★ No attempts to close *Socialist Youth*
- ★ No restrictions on the right of individual party members to read, support or sell socialist newspapers.

Any attempts by sections of the right to interfere with these rights and to restrict the activities of the LPYS will be seen in the movement as a sign that they are more interested in fighting socialists than preparing for a massive drive to defeat the Tories.

The record of Denis Howell

In electing Denis Howell chairman of the Labour Party NEC Youth Sub-Committee, the right-wing have made their attitude to the LPYS clear.

Soccer referee, farmer and 'Minister of drought and snow' he might be, but his own CLP, Birmingham Small Heath hasn't had a Labour Party Young Socialists branch since the local LPYS branch was shut down in 1978.

That same year, Small Heath Labour Party only had 191 individual members and was reported in *Labour Weekly* (28/9/79) as being one of the smallest parties in the country.

Likewise at 1979 Labour Party conference, when speaking about the first witch-hunting "Underhill Report", Denis Howell made his views on the Labour Party organisation clear, calling for an expansion of the number of full-time party agents "to protect the party". In the light of his own local party's record, it would appear that some of the right-wing want to 'protect the party' from working people and socialists joining it!

YS Pamphlet threatened

"In my view the publications of the Party, including the publications of the LPYS, should be used to support Party policy. Once we depart from this principle we undermine our own effectiveness as a political party."

With this argument, Jim Mortimer, General Secretary of the Labour Party hints at suppressing the LPYS pamphlet 'Northern Ireland—the Way Forward', in a letter to the party Youth Committee.

This is the second time Jim Mortimer has opposed publication of LPYS material. In July, the NEC of the party, on his initiative, suppressed the pamphlet, 'Ideals of October'.

The Northern Ireland pamphlet had the overwhelming support of the 1982 LPYS annual conference, and its publication was backed by the LP Youth Committee in April this year.

Also, the main plank of the LPYS's solution to the Northern Ireland situation has always been the creation of an independent party of Labour in the north based on the trade union movement. The idea was supported enthusiastically at the 1981 Labour Party conference itself. Yet the

Labour Party leadership have failed to act on this important conference decision—instead they content themselves with attempts to suppress Young Socialist material on the issue.

This situation cannot be tolerated and there will no doubt be opposition to this attempt to stifle ideas from LPYS and CLP branches.

Fortunately the question of the pamphlet was deferred to the next meeting of the Youth Committee, to enable a full discussion.

The LPYS has grown, thanks to its present leadership, into the largest working class youth organisation in the country. Attempting to stifle its democratically decided political ideas from above will only hinder its continued growth.

And it is hypocrisy, given the record of the right wing's total disregard for conference decisions, for Jim Mortimer to suddenly round on the LPYS, carrying out acts of censorship on the spurious grounds of 'party policy'. This is yet another example that the witch-hunt is not just an 'organisational' matter—it is a purge of ideas.

ads

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MILITANT READERS MEETINGS 'WHAT WE STAND FOR'

BLACKBURN Militant Readers' Meeting: 'Which Way Forward for Labour?' Trades Club, St Peters St, off Freckleton St, Blackburn. Tuesday 16 November, 7.30 pm. Speaker: Pat Wall (PPC Bradford North LP). Bar facilities.

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.

WIGAN Monday, 22 November at 7.30pm. 'Labour's Programme '82' at the Market Tavern, Mesnes St, Wigan. Speaker Brian Ingham.

BRACKNELL on 29 November at 8.00pm on 'The National Health Service: A Socialist's View'. Speaker: Val Pearce at Griffin House (next to Cinema), Bracknell.

NELSON on Wednesday 24 November at 7.30pm at St Mary's Church Hall, Manchester Rd, Nelson. Speaker: Brian Ingham.

CHORLEY on Tuesday 23 November at 7.30pm at the Green Man Still, Lyons Lane, Chorley. Speaker: Brian Ingham.

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.

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.

OLDHAM 'Socialist Policies not witch-hunts' on 22 November at 7.30pm. Speaker: Terry Fields (PPC Liverpool, Kirkdale). The Grey Horse, Union St, Oldham.

CAMBRIDGE Militant Discussion Meetings: Thursday 11 November: 'British Perspectives'. Thursday 25 November: 'Poland and Eastern Europe'. Thursday 9 December: 'Militant and the role of Marxism in the Labour Party'. Venue: The Bath House, Gwydir Street, Cambridge, 8.00 pm.

LITTLEHAMPTON Labour Party Young Socialists Public Meeting. Friends Meeting House, Monday 15 November 1982, 7.30 pm. Speaker Laurence Coates on 'The Case for Socialism'. Supporting speaker Gareth Rees, PPC Arundel.

COVENTRY SOUTH EAST COUNTY-COUNCIL BY-ELECTION PUBLIC MEETING. Speakers: Tony Benn MP, Dave Nellist (Candidate), J Lanwarne (NUR Divisional Organiser) at 7.30pm on Monday November 22. Venue at Central Hall, Coventry. Tickets 50p waged, 20p unwaged. Postal applications to: Coventry South East LP, 30 Couden Road, Coventry. Cheques/postal orders payable to 'Coventry Voice' at the above address.

COVENTRY SOUTH EAST COUNTY COUNCIL BY-ELECTION PUBLIC MEETING. Speakers: Joan Maynard, Dave Nellist (Candidate) at 7.30pm on Tuesday 16 November. Venue at Willenhall Wood Junior School, St. James Lane, Coventry.

COVENTRY SOUTH EAST LPYS PUBLIC MEETING. Speakers A Bevan (LP National Youth Organiser), A Beale (London LPYS Chairman); Local Shop Steward (all speakers to be confirmed) at 7.15pm on Wednesday 1 December at Sidney Stringer School (2 minutes from Pool Meadow).

Winner of Leeds Football Buster. Steve and Theresa Appleton. Bristol Rovers 16 goals.

ROCHDALE 'Socialist Policies not witch-hunts'. Public meeting sponsored by Rochdale Women's Council. Wednesday, 17 November at 7.30pm. Speaker: Pat Wall (PPC Bradford North). The Labour Party Rooms, Oldham Road, Rochdale.

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target Jan 8th.
Eastern	418		2700
East Midlands	263		2850
Hants & Dorset	218		2000
Humberside	89		1650
London East	392		3300
London West	231		1650
London South	213		2700
Manchester & Lancs	337		3000
Merseyside	332		3100
Northern	274		3900
Scotland East	76		2000
Scotland West	245		3000
Southern	358		2500
South West	66		1500
Wales East	27		1500
Wales West	67		2000
West Midlands	190		2800
Yorkshire	338		3850
Others	140		4000
Total received	4274		50000

Target £50,000 By January 8

FINANCE OUR RIGHT TO REPLY

Many times in this column over the past years we have appealed for resources to answer the right-wing press and its distortions and lies about the ideas of Marxism.

In some cases the press doesn't mention our ideas at all, just says they are perverted. On top of all this, we now have to face the additional threat on whether we are even allowed to put forward our ideas in the movement itself.

By Steve Cawley

Never mind Michael Foot agreeing 'you can't witch-hunt ideas', those who want a 'one-track party' can no more afford to have their ideas argued against than can the supporters of a one-party state! But we are urging all our readers to take the debate not only to every section of the Labour Party, but to every trade union branch and shop stewards committee, and to every housing estate, pub and club where workers gather.

There's a tremendous response whenever our ideas get a decent chance, but we are asking you to give us that

chance. We need to be able to send speakers to meeting who ask to hear our ideas, to produce posters, leaflets and pamphlets advertising our ideas, and we need to be able to print more copies of our weekly 'Militant' so we can build up our circulation to produce a more frequent paper.

Thanks this week to Yorkshire LPYS members who collected £72 for us, Basildon YS who donated £28, and Newcastle West YS members who raised money on the bus to the Liverpool demo. Openshaw Youth for Labour Group sent £10, and LPYS branches to hold collections for us included those in Birmingham, Bootle, Hull, Sittingbourne, and Teesside.

Supporters in Coventry sent us well over £15, contributed by means of 'extras' on estate sales of 'Militant',

**THIS WEEK:
£1,290**

while members of other Labour Parties to assist our funds included Stroud, (Gloucester) and members of Grinling Gibbons Ward LP (Deptford). A £60 collection was made personally by readers on the DHSS SEC of CPSA, and over £13 came from a Labour Party Conference report-back from the Northern College, Barnsley.

Thanks also to students at Leicester Polytechnic, and members of the Labour clubs at University in Southampton, Manchester and at Imperial College London.

Individual donations include TV and interview fees passed on (£60), £20 from M Holmes (Basildon) whilst C Stott (SOGAT, Gosport) and A Lomas (Leeds) sent us tenners. £7 came from the Dinsdales (Camberley), and fivers from L Roson

(NALGO, Tyneside), C Churchward (Exeter), M Rafferty (Brodsworth NUM), and A Connolly (Reading). Other subscribers to 'bump up' their renewal included J Vernon (Kidderminster), J Beirne (London), J Issac, D Wiseman both (Sutton), D Lincoln (Somerset), and Yorkshire subscribers G Moran and Mrs Robson.

Health workers continue to support Militant—thanks this week to M Bailey, Doris and Doreen from the London Hospital Group, and to NUPE steward H Cielozeki (Notts) amongst others. And if health workers, with much reduced income out of their already meagre money, can find the cash to assist us, we are sure many others of our readers will be able to follow suit. Are you with Marxism, or are you with the "Rest"?

Militant Supporters Association

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

WINTER HOLIDAY DRAW

Tickets are now available 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 lifetime? Contact your Militant seller for details, or write to 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

JOCK WALLACE -Red Clydesider

It is with deep regret that we report the death of Jock Wallace, a life-long class fighter. Born in 1901 in Alexandria, Dumbartonshire, Jock was involved in the 'revolt on the Clyde'. Here he learnt through experience and discussions, including Marxist discussion groups with John MacLean and Willie Gallagher, of the need to change society.

Jock held many positions in the trade union movement, including London District official of ASSET, the forerunner of today's ASTMS. He was the proud holder of the Tolpuddle and two gold merit awards from the AUEW. His experience

as convenor at Napiers in Acton and Liverpool, have been included in the recent book, 'Engineers at War, 1939-1945.'

Jock, a member of Fulham Labour party and AUEW, spent the last years of his life campaigning for decent facilities and pensions for OAPs. But his lasting attention was always to impress upon youth the need to be organised and to learn from past struggles.

Our condolences go to his wife, Ivy, his daughter Margaret Ingram, and all his family and friends.

By KEITH DICKINSON (Hammersmith North CLP)

What we stand for

WHAT WE STAND FOR

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

CLASSIFIED

GET YOUR XMAS CARDS NOW

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 of six cards and envelopes and prices are as follows:

1-5 sets £1.25 per set (including 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 p&p)
40 sets £20 (plus £2 p&p)

Cash must be sent with every order.

All proceeds to Militant Fighting Fund. Send your order now and save money!

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

FOR SALE: Self-contained, spacious, comfortable basement flat in centre of Canterbury one lounge, one kitchen, one bedroom and one bathroom. £16,000 o.n.o. — ring Richard Suffee Canterbury 57895.

Katherine Marie Brown, born Halloween 1982, Manchester. No witch-hunts.

Militant Readers' Meetings

Scotland gets the message

The resolve of ordinary rank and file members of the Labour Party to fight against expulsions was clearly shown by 90% of CLPs voting against the register.

What is also clear is that the campaign against expulsions stretches throughout the length of Britain.

This was demonstrated at two meetings in the north of Scotland addressed by Eddie Donaghy, Scottish LPYS Vice Chairman.

Ross and Cromarty CLP voted at the conference against the register—the feelings of the members was the same at the meeting they had to discuss *Militant*.

The following day a meeting of 20 in Inverness heard *Militant's* programme and our feelings on the register. An excellent discussion took place and afterwards 16 *Militants* were sold along with many pamphlets.

The *Militant* is now being sold for the first time in Inverness on a regular basis.

It is significant that in the north of Scotland *Militant* has had a receptive audience. In Arbroath, and Aberdeen speakers have addressed Labour Parties and have had a favourable response. Indeed it was very significant that South Angus CLP

By Pat Craven

elected Tony Cox, a young engineering apprentice and locally well known *Militant* supporter in the area, to represent the CLP at this year's Labour Party Conference.

Militant's message was also taken to south east Scotland last week with a series of meetings attended by 100 people.

At a meeting in Galashiels organised by Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles LPYS branches, Keith Dickinson spoke alongside Rab Stewart, District Secretary of the TGWU, who spoke on the health dispute.

The following night in Edinburgh, Keith Dickinson referred to a TV programme shown earlier that day in which an unemployed youngster from Edinburgh was asked what his best course of action would be. "Committing suicide" was his answer. What an indictment of the kind of society we live in!



'Militant' supporters played a major role in building support for the mass Labour Party demonstration in Glasgow last year. Scottish workers do not want these socialists expelled from the Labour Party. Photo: MILITANT

"In 1957, the Labour Party produced a pamphlet calling for action against the 639 monopolies which control the economy. The number has declined, but the problem is the same—if you

don't control the monopolies, they will control you."

The final meeting in Trant was addressed by NUM member Chris Heriot.

Sevenoaks AUEW

The first occasion on which a trade union in this area of Kent invited a speaker from the *Militant* proved very successful.

There were 20 engineers at the Sevenoaks AUEW meeting, where Dave Webb of Hackney North LPYS impressed everybody with his analysis of the recent events in the Labour Party. Ten papers were sold and over £8 raised for the fighting fund.

It is vital that every union branch in the country has the opportunity to hear and discuss our ideas.

By Andrew Gilbertson
(Sevenoaks LPYS)

Cardiff success

"*Militant* is the spearhead of socialism in this country." This was the reaction of one worker to the 120 strong Militant Readers Meeting held in Cardiff last week.

The main speaker of the evening was Ted Grant, the political editor of the *Militant*, who explained the reasons for the crisis of capitalism. He stressed that even with the recent events at Labour Party conference there was no way they could separate Marxism from the Labour Party and for all those they expel there will be back in the Labour Party with thousands more behind them, as more and more workers now realise that the only solution is the path to socialism.

This excellent attendance at the meeting coupled with over £240 being raised for the fighting fund summed up the increasing support that *Militant* is getting in Cardiff.

By Richard Barnett
(Reigate CLP)



Part of the massive anti-witch-hunt rally at Wembley in September. There is no mood for expulsions amongst rank and file Labour Party members. Photo: MILITANT

with its consequent injustice for working people; *Militant* stood for "utilising resources, not according to profit, but according to how they're needed."

There was full discussion, particularly on the question of proportional representation. It was pointed out that this held no answer to the problems facing workers. The real levers of power were in the hands of the city and the judiciary, as Lord Den-

ning had proved, who could overturn the wishes of the electorate.

The need to solve the problems of unemployment was also raised, highlighting the fact that this area of the country has not escaped the effects of the present crisis.

Fourth time lucky

A total of 95 hardy members of the public turned up on a rain-sodden Tuesday night at the Winter Gardens in Cleethorpes, to herald the long awaited, much publicised arrival of Pat Wall, prospective parliamentary candidate for Bradford North. Most of those in attendance were local shop stewards and Labour Party members.

Chairing the meeting, Mike Foster explained to everyone present the tremendous difficulties *Militant* supporters in the town had had in inviting Pat Wall to address their meeting. Three times permission had been refused to hold a meeting. Mike also quoted Grimsby Labour councillor Alec Bovill. He had told a local evening paper that we deliberately get our meetings cancelled in order to gain publicity! If that was true it had cost the local supporters over £100 to do so.

Pat Wall then addressed the meeting explaining how it was his own experiences that had turned him to the ideas of Marxism.

After a witty appeal for money by Keith Williamson, £60 was raised for the fighting fund. During the discussion that followed, a 71 year old pensioner gave an emotive speech saying we were all workers and 'united we stand, divided we fall'.

For need not profit

The first readers' meeting in Redhill in Surrey attracted over 30 people to hear Mike Waddington (Basildon LP conference delegate) explain the need for Marxist policies.

Mike explained that whilst *Militant* was labelled as extremist the real extremists were those that wanted to continue the capitalist system

27 November conferences against witch-hunt

"Expel the Tories, not the socialists" will be the slogan at the Glasgow rally against the witch-hunt on November 27. Speakers, all in a personal capacity, are, Bob McTaggart MP; Scottish TUC general council member Bob Gillespie; Jimmy Livingstone of the TGWU national committee; Tommy Brennan, convenor of the Ravenscraig steel works; Jim Divine, Scottish regional officer for COHSE; Frances Curran of the LPYS; Terry Fields, Parliamentary candidate for Liverpool Kirkdale; and Bob Wylie representing *Militant*. The conference will be held at the Partick Burgh Halls, off the Dumbarton Road, Glasgow, starting at 10 am.

And at the rally in Cardiff, the speakers will be Prospective Parliamentary Candidates Ron Davies, Derek Hatton and Llewelyn Smith; Tyrone O'Sullivan of the NUM; Ken Smith of the LPYS National Committee; Andrew Price of Cardiff SE Labour Party; and Tony Saunio, secretary of the Labour Steering Committee against witch-hunts.

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

CREDENTIALS	VENUE
LIVERPOOL	
R VENTON, C/O 46, THE WOODLANDS, BIRKENHEAD, L41 2SJ.	ROYAL COURT, ROE STREET, (NEAR LIME ST STATION), LIVERPOOL.
BRIGHTON	
R APPS, C/O 216 WISTON RD, BRIGHTON.	BRIGHTON CON- FERENCE CENTRE, FOYER HALL, KINGS ROAD, BRIGHTON.
BRADFORD	
P WATSON, C/O 12 TILEY SQ., WEST BOWLING, BRADFORD, BD5 7UQ.	CAESAR'S (TIFFANY'S), MANNINGHAM LANE, BRADFORD.
CARDIFF	
F CUTHBERT, C/O 12 SALOP ST., CAERPHILLY, CF8 1FX.	TOP RANK CARDIFF SUITE, QUEEN ST, CARDIFF.
NEWCASTLE	
DAVE COTTERILL, C/O 5 RICHMOND TERRACE, FELLING, GATESHEAD, NE10 9DY.	TYNESIDE CINEMA, PILGRIM ST, NEWCASTLE.
BIRMINGHAM	
J BIRCH C/O 109 NOR- THFIELD RD, KINGS NORTON, BIRMINGHAM, B70 1JE.	DIGBETH CIVIC HALL, BIRMINGHAM.
LONDON	
BOB LABI, C/O 23 IRONSIDE HSE, HOMERTON RD, E9	FRIENDS MEETING HSE, EUSTON RD, NW1
GLASGOW	
BOB WYLIE, C/O 137 MALLARD TERRACE, EAST KILBRIDE, G75 8UF.	PARTICK BOROUGH HALLS, GLASGOW.
Also: 11 DECEMBER, BRISTOL	
VENUE: Hall of Memory, Central Hall, Old Market St., Bristol.	



Paying the bosses' price

How much is a life worth? For Jarmains' company their workforce comes cheap—£750 each. Adrian Sykes died when he went into the large bin cleaner after it had got clogged up.

He did not know much about the machine. Two years ago it had had a safety device on it, which locked off the power before anyone could go inside it. But the firm, Jarmains, removed the device. When Adrian entered it the power was still on. So no-one heard him scream as a metal spike went through his hand and he was carried along the conveyor, until finally he was crushed to death.

But the bosses' justice has been severe upon Jarmains. At Huddersfield Magistrates Court at the end of October, they pleaded guilty to having unfenced machinery and were fined just £750.

Any suggestions?

Acting, so they claim, on the basis of overwhelming demand, BBC radio chiefs are bringing back the programme that has made more factory workers miserable than any other, "Music While You Work". It has been off the air for 15 years.

Regardless of your musical tastes, however, what a name for a programme. It's obviously encouraging wild expectations. Wouldn't it be more up to date to have "Music while you wait for your giro cheque", or "Music while you YOP". Any other suggestions for appropriate music programmes for Thatcher's Britain should be sent not to us but to the BBC.

South African access to British government files

Strange questions were asked of applicants who replied to a jobs advert appearing in the Tyneside Daily Journal, 3 November. People who phoned in were asked not only the usual: name, address, experience, qualifications etc, but also their National Insurance Number and Driving Licence Number. What made these questions relevant, is that the jobs offered it transpired were in South Africa.

The only use that a number from the driving licence or insurance card would have, is if the recruiting agency had access to a national computer. The police and government use the two numbers as a base for their files. After recent revelations about the close links between the British and South African secret police it now seems that the ties are much deeper than anyone suspected.

Missing Weighell

"I much regretted Sidney Weighell's resignation as General Secretary of the NUR. He had contributed enormously to our industry over many years. His wisdom and breadth of vision will be missed in the coming months." So chief executive of British Rail, Bob Reid, laments the resignation of Sid Weighell in the November edition of *Railnews*.

He is surpassed only by BR boss, Sir Peter Parker, who said, "Sidney Weighell's resignation is a great loss to the railway industry which he has served as a dedicated and wise trade union leader." How could it be that these two nationalised industry bosses, in an industry that has been rundown with thousands of railmen's jobs lost, be so full of praise for the leader of a trade union that was in the frontline of their cutbacks? Answers on a post card to...

50 Years Ago

"Fascism crowns its ten years' record in Italy with an amnesty that will add warmth to the world's congratulation. The proof that magnanimity was not omitted from Signor Mussolini's endowments will enhance his fame, multiply his friends and give humanity at large a welcome reassurance.

"Fascism has repelled the sympathies of a large fraction of mankind because it seemed to be infected with more than the normal cruelty of creeds. Its proscriptions and punishments have been the chief obstacle to a full recognition of achievement. Those who have never been blind to that achievement must rejoice more than any in what the amnesty implies."—from the *Observer* 29 October 1932 (reprinted by the *Observer*, 31 October 1982).

Youth in Cleveland have no future with Tory policies. The summer school leavers have had their hopes destroyed. Out of nearly 6,300 a terrible 82% are still seeking permanent employment

For more than 5,150 the only choice is the dole or YOPs. 62% of the school leavers are on the YOPs. Most have no chance of a job after the scheme finishes. Two examples are here below:

"I'm fed up of no future. Since leaving school all I've had is two YOPs schemes. Out of my class of 30 only 5 got jobs.

"On the schemes I was just cheap labour. At the first I swept the floor and did the 'preps' for the welding. I did one every 30 seconds. The only opportunity was to be a robot.

"The place was dirty and had no proper accident facilities. After my six months there I was back on the dole.

"Then a couple of months later another scheme. I got lots of training. I learned welding, fitting, turning, milling, sheet metal and electrics. A week for each. But it was mostly the same dirty jobs, labouring and mate. I was working at the top of a distillation tower, where I shouldn't have been.

"But what of the future? I got £25 for a 40 hour week plus travel, an extra £3.50 over the dole. The worst of it is that after all that work I still got paid by a Giro. It adds insult to injury standing waiting with a Giro. It's not worth it.

"I asked the boss if there was any chance of a job at the end. He said no. So now I'm going to tech part time. That might be a better opportunity.

"I get sick of it all. I've joined the union and been on demos like 16 October and the Jobs Express. They were good but our leaders need to fight as well. I joined the Labour Party Young Socialists to fight, not get closed down."

By Johnathon Bulmer
(Stockton LPYS)

"I've just started my first YOP. It is the only thing I could get. It is at Rediffusion doing assembly work. It is real work except the money isn't real.

"When I started I got one day's training then straight into it. Now I'm wiring boards. We have to do 360 every day. The other people are full time staff and get wages. The company gets my work for nothing.

"I want to join the union but haven't been asked. Something has to be done. These YOP schemes are being used. This is a real job. The TUC should back the LPYS campaign.

By Alison McCabe
(Stockton LPYS)

WE WANT WORK



YOPsters study a petition on rights at work from YOP Trainees Union Rights Campaign

THE ONLY SPENDING THAT'S RISING

Basildon Development Corporation is to spend £25,000 erecting an iron fence on the top floor of the multi-storey car park to deter suicide attempts. This was announced when the local coroner's office heard that six people had died since March 1979 by jumping from the top floor. Local suicides have so far this year already passed last year's total of 17.

Basildon now boasts unemployment 2% higher than the national average. In fact when Basildon was built mass unemployment was thought to be so unlikely that only a pokey old Department of Employment building was squeezed in between the car park, office block, pub and cinema. Now with 42 people chasing every vacancy the DoE just cannot cope.

When I went to register as

unemployed I was told to sign on every second Thursday. But I didn't actually have to turn up because there was no way they could sign so many people on. I would be told when to come back, after portakabins had been moved on to a site near the main road.

The effects of the recession are everywhere. Rent arrears due to Basildon Council rocketed to £124,672—more than double last year's total. The South East Essex Marriage Guidance Council has reported another effect: "Unemployment is claiming new victims—in the marital home. For couples are being torn apart by rows over money and out of work husbands at home are getting on their wives' nerves."

The government have told Basildon Council to cut its 1983 budget by 8% despite inflation, population growth and growing social problems.

Basildon New Town was supposed to be a new start

with new homes for many people, particularly from the East End of London. Decent houses were to be found with a secure future. Instead we have the old story—capitalism means unemployment, poverty and crisis.

The living standards of the working class in Basildon have been thrown violently into reverse, shaking every opinion that people have ever held. I believe that the anger of the young working class will be all the greater for having been promised a future only to have the dream taken away when it came into view.

The old Essex village of Basildon is mentioned in Marx's *Capital*. That certainly will not be the last reference to the town in the "soft South East" in the future struggles of the working class.

By Mike Waddington
(Basildon CLP)

'Women of the year'

This year's "Women of the Year" ceremony was even more sickly than ever. All of them tucking in to a meal, with wine or champagne, that most of us only eat in our dreams.

Then the guest speakers, Mrs Sadat and others telling the Princess Michael of Kent and all the rest of us of their terrible hardships in their

lives, the death of "the great, peace loving President Sadat" etc.

Then Pamela Stephenson saying what an honour it was to mimic the Royal Family in "Not the Nine-O-Clock News", to show that they are real people!!

I found it so hypocritical that they all went on about how wonderful it was to

have this ceremony to raise money for a charity, and then spend twice as much on all the pomp and glory.

But my husband had the punchline of the night, "all the women of the year have been on the picket lines this year." The nurses of course.

By Lynne Tice.



"Universities in Crisis" demonstration last November.

Photo: C. Augusto IFL (II)

FREEDOM DOUBLE-TALK

The Tories have dredged up some old methods of reducing educational opportunities for ordinary working people: student loans and voucher systems. And all in the name of "freedom of choice".

They suggest that students should be given loans instead of grants. Most students, who don't have rich mummies and daddies, run up banks loans and overdrafts to make ends meet.

But to ask someone to pay back the whole of their grant, no doubt with interest charges if repayment is delayed, would effectively mean that only people with well-off families would dare to go to college. What working class youth would be able to run up a debt that may never be paid back, due to the terrible employment prospects facing graduates?

The voucher system is yet another way of ensuring that better-off people get what they want out of the education system. Every parent with a school-age child would get a voucher.

Vouchers benefit better-off

The voucher is presented at the school of the parents' choice, that school takes the child, and the government pays out money to the school in proportion to the number of vouchers received. This applies to private as well as state schools—yet another subsidy for private education. But even Ted Heath, ex-Tory Prime Minister, said "the government's first duty is to the more than eight million children in the state

schools, not the half million in private schools."

In the state sector, presumably if a school is thought to be good, then the number of children attending would go up. So where do the extra classrooms, chairs, toilets, etc. spring from? Will teachers be expected to become nomadic, trekking from school to school as numbers vary from year to year?

How will schools be able to sensibly plan timetables and curricula if the number of staff and pupils is not known in advance?

Spiral down for others

And what will happen to the less favoured schools? The "slum" schools in old, crumbling buildings, the schools without rich parent-teacher associations to buy minibuses, computers, swimming pools etc? They would spiral rapidly down with fewer and fewer pupils, lower income from the government, fewer teachers and therefore a much smaller choice of subjects, less equipment, and a less flexible approach to solving the problems and meeting the needs of the pupils.

And who will be the pupils forced to attend these run down schools? The children of the low paid and the unemployed, of course, who cannot afford the high bus fares to send their children to schools further away, or cannot pay for the uniform that will no doubt be demanded by the so-called "better" schools. What kind of freedom of choice is this?

By Helen Mullineux
(NUT)

'Means test pushes us below poverty line'

Last week, the National Union of Students launched a national Grants Campaign to back its claim for 1982-83. This includes a national demonstration on Friday 19 November.

This campaign is of vital importance for all students. The real value of the grant has fallen continuously over recent years. The student grant on its own provides slightly less income than Supplementary Benefit.

Although most students claim Supplementary Benefit during the summer, the average student with a full grant still ends up only 22% better off than someone on the dole.

But the majority of students don't get a full grant. Around 60% have to rely on their parents to make

By Terry Hopkinson
(Welsh Labour Students Rep. on NOLS NC)

a contribution to their grant. The Tories' decision this year to freeze the scale of parental contributions despite inflation, meant an extra 20,000 students had to rely on parental contributions this year. But an estimated 50-60% of parents can't afford to make up the grant.

Many students suffer

great hardship as a result of this 'means test'. Sir Keith Joseph's answer is simple: "Many people in the country are being squeezed and there is no self-evident reason why university students and their parents should be regarded as immune." (*Times Higher Educational Supplement*, 23.4.82).

There lies the key to winning the NUS claim: by going to the 'many other people' i.e. the labour movement, being 'squeezed' by the Tories. The NUS leaders are calling for:

- ★ A minimum £25 a week grant for FE students, the majority of whom get absolutely nothing.
- ★ The raising of the parental income threshold so that students whose parents earn less than £9,000 a year get a full grant.
- ★ An increase in the full grant of over £200.

This claim can only be won with a massive mobilisation of students, supported by the labour movement. This will be the real test of the NOLS leaders who form the largest group on the NUS Executive.

Labour Clubs must make every effort to build the campaign. The Welsh Labour Students will be producing a leaflet for students in Wales. Motions should be moved at Student Union meetings to book coaches, organise Departmental meetings and canvass the student Halls of Residence. By linking the grants issue with the cuts, which affect all college workers, and the public sector wage 'limit' of 3½%, support can be gained from the college trade unions. In this way the 19 November demonstration can be the first step in a massive campaign to win students a decent grant.

Threat to Welsh Labour Students

The Leaders of the National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS) revealed their real attitude to the witch-hunt in the Labour Party at the NOLS Officers meeting of 1 November.

They passed a resolution which made unspecified allegations that the Welsh Labour Students (WLS) Regional Committee of NOLS had broken NOLS policy and was thereby in "gross breach" of the NOLS constitution.

Since the election of 'Militant' supporters to the leadership of WLS in May, WLS has pursued a number of successful activities. It was responsible for the original production of the LPYS leaflet publicising the Labour Party's commitment

to a £20 a week minimum grant for all 16-18 year olds in full time education. The WLS Regional Committee has produced a broadsheet to help students at Further Education (FE) colleges to set up Labour Clubs.

During the anti-cuts 'Week of Action' in mid-October the WLS Regional Committee produced and distributed leaflets in many Welsh colleges. It recently published a regional bulletin, the WLS Newsletter. Perhaps the NOLS leaders were 'peevish' at this particular publication—after all, last year's WLS editor, elected as a supporter of the NOLS leaders, defected to the SDP!

However, the activity which has most embarrassed the NOLS leaders, is the petition launched by the WLS. It calls on the NOLS leaders to break their links with the Stalinist, state controlled "Student Union" in Poland, the SZSP. The Polish "Communist" Party and the official "unions"

represent no-one but the privileged bureaucratic elite that rules Poland. As soon as Solidarity emerged, and its student section the NZS, as an independent union to fight for the interests of workers and students, the state "unions" collapsed.

But the NOLS leaders have persisted in their support for the official "unions" while opposing a programme of workers democracy for Eastern Europe. A programme, which would include:

- ★ Free elections and the right of recall over all officials.
- ★ No officials to receive more than the wage of a skilled worker.
- ★ For all bureaucratic positions to be rotated amongst the people.
- ★ For no separate regular army controlled by the bureaucracy but an armed working class.
- ★ The right to organise independent Trade Unions, to strike and vote freely.

The real reason for the move against the WLS is the NOLS leaders fear of the petition. They themselves had a 'flexible' attitude on Poland. The 1981 NOLS conference agreed to support Solidarity and the NZS. NOLS leader John Mann 'interpreted' this, at the November 1981 NC meeting, to mean support for both the NZS and the Stalinist SZSP!

'Flexible' support for Stalinists

The April 1982 NOLS conference did decide to support both the NZS and the SZSP by 84 votes to 81. However, after having heard the fraternal speaker from the NZS expose the SZSP as a stooge 'union', the mood of the conference changed and voted by 93 votes to 71 in favour of a re-vote on the Poland debate. But the real feelings of the conference were not allowed to be voiced by a standing order re-

quirement that a two-thirds majority was necessary to reopen the debate.

But, having secured a 'majority' at the 1982 NOLS conference to recognise the Stalinist union SZSP, they have now, under pressure, decided to draw back a fraction. At the October 1982 National Committee (NC) meeting, John Mann presented a motion to de-recognise the SZSP until the suspension of Solidarity is lifted.

Whereas the WLS petition is only meant for Labour Students and is aimed at changing NOLS policy at the conference, John Mann's resolution calls on the NC to take his policy to the National Union of Students.

There is one constitution, it seems, for the NOLS leaders and another one for the WLS! This 'flexibility' is revealed again in the fact that the officers took the decision about the WLS and not the full NC. Yet constitutionally the officers meetings are only meant to

deal with emergencies which arise between NC meetings. Consequently the WLS representative on the NOLS NC was not allowed to attend and hear, let alone answer, the allegations!

Labour Clubs are asked to send resolutions of protest to the NOLS NC calling for the NOLS NC meeting on the 12 December to overturn the officers' decision. In addition, every Labour Club should be asked to support the WLS petition and canvass its members to sign it. In this way the attempt to clamp down on the campaigning activity of the WLS will be defeated.

Copies of resolutions passed should be sent to the WLS Secretary, Andy Murray, c/o 181, Hanover St., Swansea. Petition forms can also be obtained from this address.

By Clive Heemskerck.

EXPULSIONS RESTRICTIVE

Mortimer Document Proposals

Become unemployed or be expelled

Candidates must give undertakings

LPYS Committees face restrictions

What in some respects is the most disgraceful recommendation of the Mortimer document is the suggestion that some of the employees of *Militant* have to go on the dole to stay in the Labour Party.

The Regional Organisers of the Labour Party will be asked to police the party; they will be asked "if they know of the names of regional 'paid sales organisers' of *Militant*", and then having identified the names the NEC will threaten them with the dole or expulsion.

"A letter should be sent to each named 'paid sales organiser' enquiring whether he/she confirms that he/she is engaged as a 'paid sales organiser' for *Militant* and if so whether, so long as they maintain individual membership of the Labour Party, they are prepared to discontinue their 'paid sales organising activity' for *Militant*."

It is a shameful day for the Labour Party when says it is necessary to add to Thatcher's four million unemployed, in order to

stay a member.

The sales of this newspaper cannot be arranged through commercial outlets. Indeed, the capitalist firms which control such distribution have refused to do so. The only way that a labour movement paper can build up and increase its sales is by its own sales organisers.

Those who do this work are themselves Labour Party members of very long standing, comrades who have given years of very hard work building up the Labour Party, its membership, and so on.

No inquisitions, note, have been suggested against the paid organisers of Labour Solidarity or other right-wing groups, nor against those right-wing Labour MPs who make money writing for (i.e. being part-time employed by) Tory papers. It is one thing, it seems, to make a few hundred quid on the side through writing for a Tory paper like the *Daily Star* or the *News of the World*; it is a crime to work for a socialist paper.

Those Prospective Parliamentary Candidates who support the political ideas of *Militant* will be asked "to give an undertaking that forthwith they will give no support or assistance to the organising activity of the *Militant Tendency*".

The report recommends that the replies from the PPCs named by the Organisation Committee. Whether or not the "undertakings" are satisfactory will depend upon the whims of the right-wing majority of the NEC and its sub-committees.

No undertakings are being asked of right-wing Parliamentary can-

didates, as to whether, for example, they support the socialist Clause IV (4) of the Party constitution.

If the NEC is in a position to veto the proper selection of a candidate by a Constituency Labour Party, then re-selection is dead. All the struggles of rank and file Party members over many years to introduce regular re-selections will be meaningless because the right-wing NEC will simply veto candidates of whom they do not approve.

They have already done this with Peter Tatchell of Bermondsey and Pat Wall of Bradford North and they will be able to do it as a matter of course with left wingers in the future.

In his own youth, Jim Mortimer was expelled from the Labour Party for having, as a member of the Labour League of Youth, a point of view different from that of the Party itself. The same totalitarian methods employed by the right wing then are now being proposed against Labour's youth section today.

The Labour Party Young Socialists is the most active and energetic section of the party. While the Labour Party itself has not organised one national demonstration this year, the LPYS have organised two. There was a magnificent lobby of Parliament over the YOPs trade union rights earlier in the year and last month's demonstration against youth unemployment in Liverpool attracted thousands of youth.

Whenever it comes round to election time, the LPYS are always ready to do the work. CLPs up and down the country will testify to the hard work done by their own youth sections.

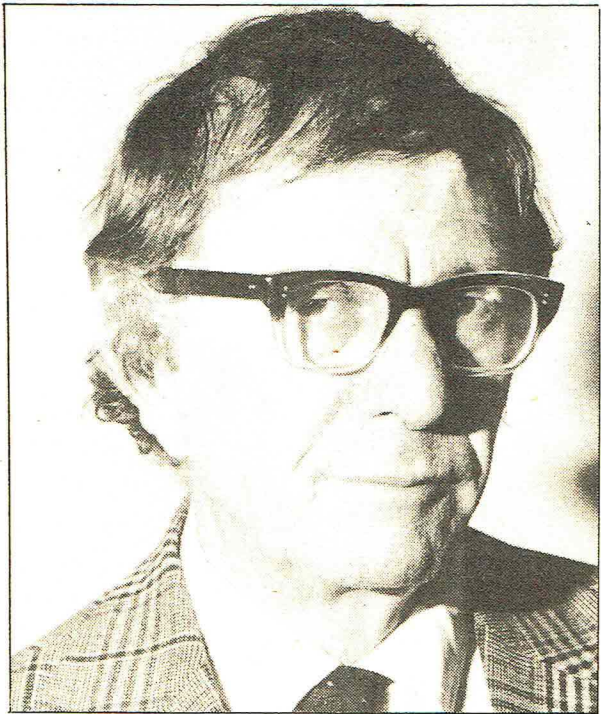
Now it is proposed the LPYS are to be punished by the NEC. Their crime: they have a point of view different from that of the Party itself. The LPYS policy is a lot closer to of-

ficial party policy than that of the right wing, but nevertheless, the Party youth have committed the unforgivable sin of supporting the same Marxist ideas as *Militant*.

Consequently, it is being recommended that the campaign budget of the LPYS be scrapped and absorbed into the Party campaign budget. It is also suggested that the NEC Youth sub-committee and the full-time staff "ensure that the literature, campaigning role and other activities of the Young Socialists should be in support of the policy of the Party."

Furthermore, "members of the National Youth Committee (YS NC), including the National Youth Officer, should be asked that forthwith they will give no support or assistance to the organising activity of the *Militant Tendency*."

CLPs and trade unions should protest this proposed stifling of the activities of the LPYS. Youth will not be attracted to a party which asserts a rigid and dogmatic control over its youth section. The LPYS has a point of view. It should be allowed to put that view without the Walworth Road thought-police interference.



WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

The NEC must be made aware of the feelings of the rank and file of the party, over the proposed witch-hunt.

The Labour Steering Committee Against Witch-hunts appeals to the the labour movement that:

1. In the Constituency Labour Parties. Resolutions are immediately sent protesting against the proposals. The CLPs should make it clear that they will not accept any expulsion of their members and they should demand that duly selected

Parliamentary candidates be endorsed by the NEC. Letters and resolutions of protest should be sent to the members of the NEC and the Party leader, Michael Foot.

2. In the LPYS. Branches should immediately get their CLP to submit resolutions to the NEC defending the LPYS from the proposed attacks. The LPYS branches should make clear the support that exists for the YS, for the work done by Labour's youth. The LPYS budget, publications and elected officers must be defended.

3. In the Trade Unions. Every member of the trade union section of the NEC should be reminded about the feelings of their union rank and file.

USDAW, GMWU, Boilermakers, TGWU, POEU, APEX, ISTC, NUR, NUPE, NUS, AUEW and COHSE all have members on the NEC of the Party. But all union branches, shop stewards' committees, district, divisional and regional committees should be urged to oppose the undemocratic proposals of the Mortimer document.

4. The Regional Conferences against the Witch-hunt, November 27. (details on page 5). The maximum turn-out by delegates of labour movement organisations is essential to show the extent of opposition to the witch-hunt among Labour's rank and file.

By Tony Saunois,
(Secretary Labour Steering Committee Against the Witch-hunt.)

The five members of the Editorial Board facing expulsion. From left to right: Ted Grant, Peter Taaffe, Clare Doyle, Lynn Walsh (above) and Keith Dickinson
Photos: MILITANT

ONS & MORE ENQUIRIES

Five to be expelled 'forthwith'

"The members of the editorial board of *Militant*...should be expelled forthwith from individual membership of the Labour Party...they should not be accepted again into individual membership without the consent of the National Executive Committee."

These are the recommendations contained in the Mortimer document on the Register. In total, the five members of the editorial board, Peter Taaffe, Ted Grant, Lynn Walsh, Keith Dickinson and Clare Doyle, have 121 years' membership between them.

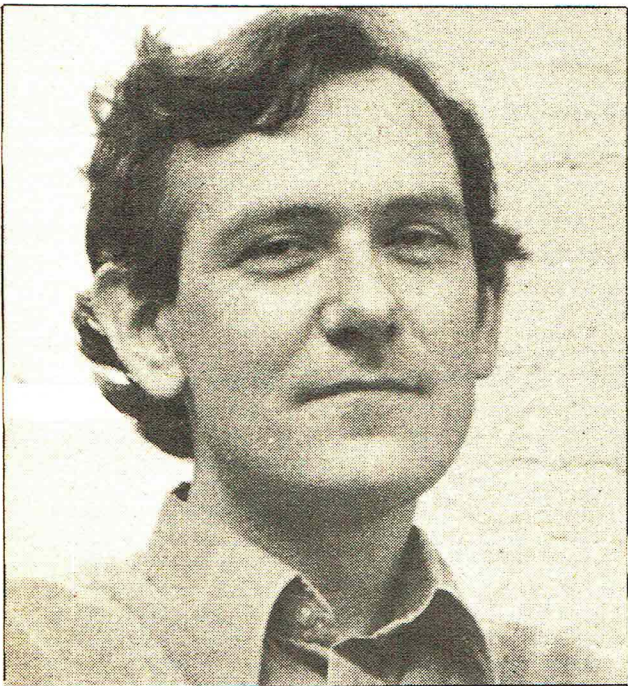
Their expulsion is ostensibly a 'constitutional' issue, but, in reality, it is the beginning of an expulsion of ideas. When Jim Mortimer, General Secretary, moved the acceptance of the register at the recent Labour Party conference, he spent half his speech criticising the political ideas of *Militant*, liberalising those ideas to suit his purpose.

On the very day that

these recommendations to expel reached the media, Neil Kinnock, on BBC 'Newsnight', let the cat out of the bag by stating that the "ideology" of *Militant* was unacceptable. On many occasions in the past, right wingers have made it abundantly clear that they are not interested in the constitutional niceties; they are dead set on ridding the Labour Party of Marxist ideas.

The expulsion of the five members of *Militant's* editorial board would not be enough to mollify the extreme right of the party. These five may be charged, tried and condemned, without so much as a hearing before the NEC, but that is still not good enough for the right wing. If the five are expelled, the right wing go for fifty; if fifty are expelled, they will go for five hundred.

The only way to stop the right wing wrecking the Party is to adopt the motto "one expulsion is one too many."



Pat Wall, twice selected by Bradford North CLP

Mortimer document riddled with contradictions

By John Pickard

The recommendations going forward to the organisation sub-committee to the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party are a shameful stain on the history and past practice of the Labour Party.

At a time when the party should be gearing itself up to an attack upon the Tories in the run-up to a 1983 general election, Walworth Road would be organising expulsions, reports, 'undertakings' and yet more enquiries, in a way that runs against all the best traditions of debate and tolerance. The energies of perhaps hundreds of Party members, not to mention the Labour Party's regional staff and the Walworth Road head office, will be consumed in an internal battle that would bring great cheer to the Tories and the Liberal/SDP Alliance, but will bring dismay to Party members and supporters.

The recommendations are those of Jim Mortimer, the General Secretary, contained in a document presented to the committee. The document is a tangle of contradictions and cross-meanings that makes utter nonsense of the attempt to portray the 'register' and the attacks on *Militant* as anything other than an ideological purge.

The document makes it clear that there will be one law for the Party Right, and one law for the Party Left. Two right-wing groups within the Party, the document explains, have been refused membership on the register of non-affiliated organisations. The *Labour Friends of Israel* and the *Labour Movement for Europe* were turned down because "a significant part of their income came from outside the British labour movement".

'no discipline' against right wing groups

If they can arrange their affairs in such a way that the proportion of their income coming from outside the movement is reduced, then their applications will be accepted. But, the report adds, should they still be unable to give the necessary assurances, "no disciplinary steps should be taken against them—other than expulsion from the register". The reason for this, we are informed, is because "they are not organisations with their own programme, principles and policy for distinctive and separate propaganda from that of the Labour Party."

Labour Party members may rub their eyes with disbelief, but that is what the Mortimer document says. Party members know full well that the whole purpose of the *Labour Friends of*

Israel and the Labour Movement for Europe is precisely to campaign and put forward propaganda "separate and distinct" from that of the Labour Party.

Hours after the last Labour Party conference agreed a statement and resolution on the Middle East, the *Labour Friends of Israel* were condemning the decision. Does Jim Mortimer seriously expect Labour Party members to believe that the *Labour Movement for Europe*, financed from outside the labour movement, is putting forward a "programme, principle and policy" in line with Labour Party policy of withdrawing from the Common Market? Why doesn't Jim Mortimer and the right wing come clean and admit that these organisations are facing no disciplinary steps because they have powerful friends on the right wing of the Party?

Double standards applied

The same double standards of discipline have been applied to other right-wing groups. The *Trades Unions for a Labour Victory (TULV)* is, the report says, a "group of representatives of affiliated trade unions", yet although its main purpose is to discuss the Labour Party it is apparently "not a non-affiliated group of Labour Party members". Without a word of serious explanation the whole TULV issue is neatly side-stepped with the statement that, "The NEC accepted that TULV did not come within the scope of the register."

Similarly, the so-called "St Ermin's Group" of right-wing trade union leaders will be exempted from any need to register. The group meets, according to Roy Grantham, "to discuss important issues affecting the trade union movement" and on his say-so—that the group has "discontinued" its discussions with MPs and trade union leaders within the Party—the NEC will exempt it.

On the general issue of registration and non-registration, the document of Jim Mortimer gets itself into a hopeless tangle, in order to give the appearance of constitutional 'legality'. "Experience so far," the document says, "...suggests that a distinction should be drawn between groups which are not acceptable for registration (because, for ex-

ample, of the source of their funds) but which do not contravene the constitution, and groups which are in violation of the intention of Clause II (3)."

The reason for this new distinction is to avoid the horrible embarrassment of large numbers of groups refusing to register.

The report explains, "The NEC could take some form of disciplinary action against groups refusing to apply or against groups not accepted for the register but, nevertheless, not in breach of Clause II (3). Any such disciplinary action might divert attention from the purpose of the exercise, namely to uphold Clause II (3). Moreover, it might encourage a number of organisations deliberately to defy the NEC even though they were legitimate groups not in breach of Clause II (3). It might also lead to damaging internal strife in the months approaching a general election. For these reasons this disciplinary course is not recommended."

Calling this by its proper name, this is making up the rules as you go along. Many Party members will now be asking, if the witch-hunt is to be conducted on the basis, supposedly, of Clause II (3) of the constitution, then why go through with the elaborate charade of the register in the first place? Answer: because a witch-hunt always needs to keep the appearance of tolerance and legality.

'Closing date' before conference agreed register

In total, the long convoluted arguments and preamble to the recommendations against *Militant* are simply a means of giving the witch-hunt a veneer of respectability. Right-wing organisations are free to operate in the Party whether they affiliate or not and whether they register or not.

There is a category of right-wing pressure groups not even mentioned in the Mortimer recommendations.

They are organisations like the *Labour and Trade Union Press Service*, financed by NATO and associated with Labour right wingers as well as SDP members, and *The British Atlantic Committee*, financed by the Tory government, and associated with Denis Healey, Giles Radice, and other right-wing MPs. These two organisations issue propaganda directly opposed to the policy of the Labour party, but their supporters in the Party are not obliged to register or anything of the kind.

In making the specific recommendations on the *Militant*, details of which are on this page, there is no attempt to answer a single one of the points made by the editorial board in its long letter to Jim Mortimer last month. The letter, of about 6,000 words (published in full in *Militant* three weeks ago) contained a detailed statement of the position of the editorial board in its application to join the register.

This letter is contemptuously brushed aside on the spurious grounds that it was sent in October! "In view of the failure of *Militant* to reply to the NEC during the following three month period (from July—Ed) disciplinary action against them should now be taken."

What the document of Jim Mortimer forgets is that the 'closing date' for *Militant*—September 21—was three months earlier than that for all other groups in the Party and was even before the conference had approved the register! If the General Secretary, in desperation, is now seeking to expel long-standing Party members on the grounds that they 'missed the deadline', it will only increase the fury of the Party rank and file.

Should the recommendations be carried into effect, it will represent the introduction of Stalinist methods in the Party—"conform or be expelled". A climate of witch-hunting is already in the making. The NEC is being asked to reserve the right "to conduct an enquiry into any group of Labour Party members which does not submit an application for registration". *Militant* today, other left groups tomorrow.

When the Party rank and file realise the full import of these measures, they will be justifiably horrified. The Mortimer proposals are a disgrace to the labour movement. They imply the introduction of a regime of inquisition and intolerance profoundly alien to Labour's tradition.

Party members will react with anger to attempts at having the Party racked by a purge and a police regime when all the energies of the movement should now be directed towards getting rid of this hated Tory government.

USA - 32 Million Live in Poverty

This is the first of a two-part article on the USA. It analyses the causes of the crisis in the American economy. The second part of the article, which we will carry in a later issue, will take up the main issues facing the American working class and discuss the need for a genuine American party of labour that will implement socialist policies.

After three decades during which living standards in the US rose consistently, family income remained static in the 1970s. On top of this the number below the poverty line rose by 8.2% between 1970 and 1978. 32 million Americans now live in poverty.

During the 12 months of 1981 the purchasing power of labor fell by 5%. During the last week in October 300,000 workers were thrown out of work. Unemployment, now at 10.4% of the working population, is at its highest level since the great slump of the 1930s.

It is now clear that American society and American labor has entered into an entirely new period. It will be a period of economic and political crisis unprecedented in US history.

It will be a period when US big business will seek to take back the gains won by labor during the years of the post-war boom.

The Reagan administration, carrying out the wishes of its big business backers, has launched an attack on wages, employment, health care and social services. Wages are to be cut, workforces are to be cut, health and safety standards at work are to be reduced, speed-ups are to be the order of the day and job classification is to be eroded. The objective of big business is to drive labor back to the conditions of the 1930s.

The offensive against living standards and organized labor is not being conducted because of some idea dreamt up by Reagan and his advisors. It is rooted in the

By Rob O'Neill
(New York)

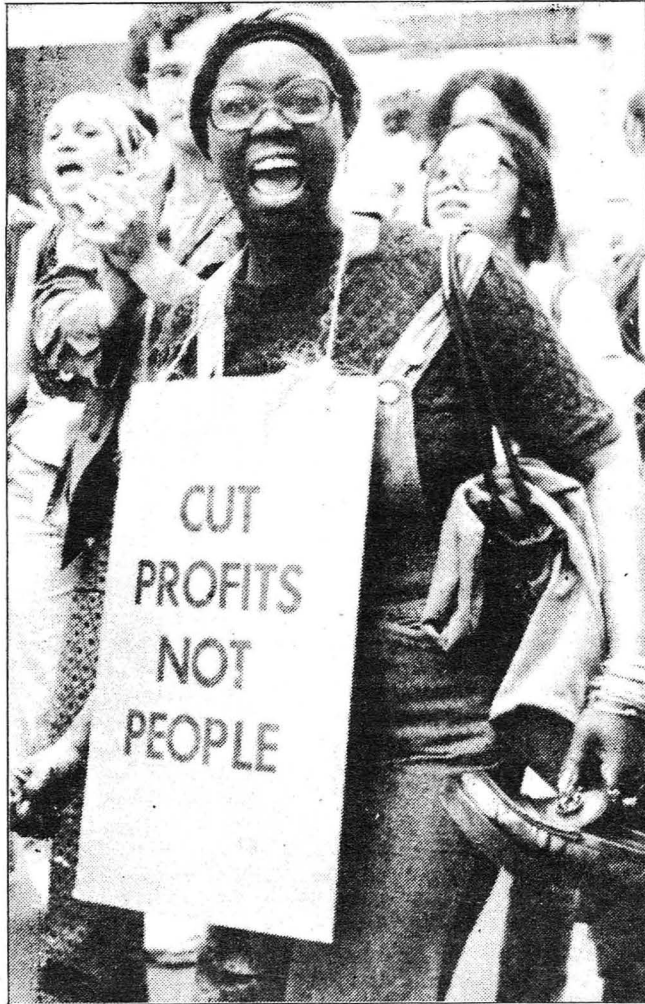
economic crisis now facing American capitalism as it loses both its home and foreign markets to its rivals.

In the immediate post-war period US capitalism accounted for 30% of world trade. By 1981 their share had shrunk to 10%. In all the major sectors of the economy US industry supplied over 90% of the home market in the early 1960s. By 1981 their share had fallen to 81.3% in passenger cars, 81.5% in electrical components, 74.1% in metal cutting machine tools, and 40% in radios and TV receivers. Similar falls have been registered in all the other major sectors of the economy.

Faced with these defeats at the hands of its rivals, big business and its political representatives in the Reagan administration set about cutting the living standards of the working class. They blamed the crisis on the wage levels of the workers. The real reasons for the crisis, however, are to be found in the actions and policies of big business itself.

American industry has lost ground to its rivals because of its failure to sufficiently plow back its profits into investment in machinery, plant and equipment. Since 1960 30% of Japan's GNP has gone into investment. The equivalent figure in the US is a miserable 14%. Japan with half the population of the US buys more new equipment each year. At the beginning of the 1960s the US topped the league in the amount of capital available per worker. At the end of the 1970s it had fallen to sixth place.

American capitalists meanwhile were living in unimaginable luxury on their super-profits. However, this was not the main reason for their failure to invest in developing the productive base of the economy. In the immediate post-war period 10% of GNP was being spent on arms, i.e. scrap metal, as US big business sought to police the rest of



American labour will not give up without a struggle the gains it has won.

the western world. 6% is the figure at present. The equivalent figure for Japan is less than 1%. Japanese big business were plowing the difference back into their auto industry, their electronics industry, etc.

Big business in the US had a huge productivity advantage over their rivals in the 1940s. They rested on this advantage. Meanwhile their rivals were catching up. Between 1962 and 1981 output per worker hour rose by only 61% in the US. Mean-

There are now more workers making McDonalds hamburgers than there are working in the steel industry.

while it rose by 97% in Britain, 153% in West Germany, 162% in France and in Japan by 396%. This relative decline in productivity was accelerating in the four years from 1977 to 1981 when US productivity grew at only one quarter the rate of the previous five years.

With the rate of profit in manufacturing and commercial companies in the US falling from 9.9% in 1960 to 6.9% in 1975 the US bosses were looking for other areas

of investment. A massive \$200bn has been invested abroad. More capital is also pouring into the retail sector or into speculation in property and commodities. In April 1982 for the first time in US history there were more workers employed in the service sector than in production. There are now more workers making and serving McDonalds hamburgers than there are working in the steel industry.

It has been these irresponsible and profligate policies of big business which are responsible for the crisis in the US economy. At the end of World War II the American economy produced 52% of the total output of the top 24 capitalist countries organized in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Today that figure is down to 34%. American society has thus now entered into a new period in its history. The years of the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s when it bestrode the western world like a colossus are gone and gone for good.

As is always the case historically and internationally when big business enters into crisis they seek to put the blame on the labor movement. Make the workers pay for the crisis which they have caused—this is their motto. The Reagan administration is seeking to carry out their wishes and cut the living standards of the working class. His policies are those of Thatcher in Britain. As

In the immediate post-war period, US capitalism accounted for 30% of world trade. By 1981, their share had shrunk to 10%.

happened there, these monetarist policies will only make the crisis worse.

Thatcher's cuts in wages and state spending cut into the home market so severely that while the rest of the western world experienced a recession Britain experienced a slump. In the years 1979-81 production in Britain fell more than in the years of the disastrous world slump of 1929-31. 20% of British industry has been destroyed by Thatcher's policies and output in Britain today is 17% below the level of output in 1979. At the same time 4 million workers, 15% of the workforce, are unemployed.

The economy has experienced three recessions in the last seven years. This is twice the historic rate since World War II. Reaganomics only exacerbate the economic crisis and do so at the expense of labor. Reagan's monetarist policies threw the US economy back into recession in 1981. Factories are closing and productive capacity is being destroyed. With industry working at 70% of capacity, cuts in wages and state spending only increases the crisis and prolongs the recession. Any concessions made in wages or employment only further undermine demand and lead to further increases in unemployment.

Reaganomics will only exacerbate the economic crisis and do so at the expense of labor

There is no solution to the developing economic crisis on the basis of capitalism. The post war upswing has gone for good. The years ahead will be marked with weak and short-lived booms followed quickly by more prolonged recessions. Each recession will make millions more unemployed, whom the weak booms will be unable to replace in employment. It is also most likely that the 1980s will experience a slump of 1929-31 proportions.

This is the period in which American labor now finds itself. A return to the 1930s can only be avoided if it is understood that there is no solution on the basis of big business and if the movement develops a program and strategy to defend its living standards and organizations which has as its objective the ending of the rule of the giant privately owned corporations which comprise American capitalism.

6% of GNP is spent on arms

Sri Lanka

After his victory in last month's presidential elections, President Jayewardene has moved quickly to consolidate his power.

Already several of the main opposition papers have been suppressed. One hundred and fifty people are held in custody for an alleged plot to 'subvert democracy'—It is Jayewardene and his big business backers who should face this charge. The people arrested are mainly from the main opposition party, the Sri Lankan Freedom Party (SLFP). Some members of the Communist Party have also been imprisoned.

President Jayewardene wants to ensure that the leadership of the SLFP is not taken over by leftists. He has said he will ensure that 'democratic' leaders will take control of the SLFP. A referendum has been called for 20 December. This is to change the constitution so that parliamentary elections can be postponed for another six years.

The Supreme Court of Sri Lanka has approved the amendment by four judges to three, i.e. three judges hold that the amendment is in violation of the constitution, even if the referendum is held.

These recent developments in Sri Lanka indicate that the country is developing towards a bonapartist, military dictatorship. Only a determined, revolutionary struggle by the workers in Sri Lanka, involving the peasant masses also, can cut across any moves to sabotage the democratic rights of the population.

Germany

A couple of weeks ago, the 8-million-strong DGB union federation organised demonstrations against government cuts.

These cuts were originally planned by the Liberal/SPD coalition government. It fell over this and other issues some weeks ago.

The bosses' government has been in power for only a few weeks—and more than 200,000 followed the unions call to demonstrate.

The train from Cologne and Bonn was packed, posters of all the big unions in the windows. The platform in the local station was too small. "Can't stand that face" one worker shouted pointing at Kohl, the leader of the Conservatives, whose picture was on the front page of the VORAN (German marxist paper). "The SPD has failed in government, no way do I want the Blacks' (Conservatives), what can we do?" Another one says, "SPD to power on a socialist programme!" The group of workers stop talking, some nod, buy a paper and discussions start at once.

Temporarily the position of the right wing SPD leadership is strengthened because of the Liberals' manoeuvring to form a government with the Conservatives. 40,000 people joined the SPD since. But they don't want past mistakes to be repeated, their feelings are surely in tune with the 200,000 on the demo: no wage freeze, fight the cuts, fight the bosses' government!

Dieter Affeln
Koln Jusos
(Youth section SPD)

1962 Cuban missile crisis

ON THE EDGE OF ARMAGEDDON?

Twenty years ago this autumn, millions of people throughout the world feared that there were only days before World War Three.

The discovery that Russia had placed missiles in Cuba and the decision by US President Kennedy to blockade the island and turn away Russian missile ships seemed to herald the start of a slide to nuclear conflict. A Gallup Poll found that over 20% of people thought they were on the brink of full-scale war.

In parts of America there was panic as people stocked up on food. Such reactions were natural and as a teenager at the time I remember well sharing the feeling of imminent destruction.

But a study of the Cuban missile crisis actually shows that although both leaderships were prepared to go towards the brink to safeguard their political prestige, they were not prepared to go to full-scale nuclear war.

The Cuban missile crisis was a part of the post-1945, world-wide confrontation between the super-powers, US imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy, who represent rival social systems. The threat of nuclear destruction has prevented turning the different disputes into an all-out conflict. And this restraint was very much to the forefront in the Cuban crisis, when unique in the post-war period, the super powers confronted each other physically, face to face.

Locally, the crisis stemmed from the overthrow in 1959 of a US-backed dictatorship in Cuba by Castro's guerrillas. Economic attacks by US business only drove the new regime further to the left, till, on an island only ninety miles from the US mainland, capitalism was overthrown.

CIA Invasion

In the 1960 Presidential elections Kennedy accused his opponent Vice President Nixon of not doing enough to end this threat to US interests. Nixon explained that they were already planning a military overthrow of Castro, just as they had done to a reformist government in Guatemala in 1954: "What can we do? We can do what we did with Guatemala. There was a Communist dictatorship...the Guatemalan people rose up and threw him out." (TV debate, October 1960.)

That was Nixon's euphemism for the CIA invasion of Guatemala from neighbouring Honduras.

On becoming President,

By Jim Chrystie

Kennedy took over the existing CIA plan and in April 1961 sent a force of US-trained-and-supported Cuban exiles to invade Cuba. The invasion ended in disaster, with virtually all the invaders being captured or killed at the Bay of Pigs. The kind of society US imperialism wanted to see re-established can be gauged by Castro's revelation that the 1,500 invaders had between them previously owned: 1 million acres of land, 10,000 houses, 70 factories, 5 mines, 2 banks and 10 sugar mills.

The Bay of Pigs did not end attacks on Cuba. Economic sabotage continued, guerrilla assaults were made and Defence Secretary Macnamara recommended the assassination of Castro (a contract later hired out by Kennedy to the Mafia). Pushed by Republican opponents for action, Kennedy cagily told them, 24 August 1962: "I am not for invading Cuba at this time."

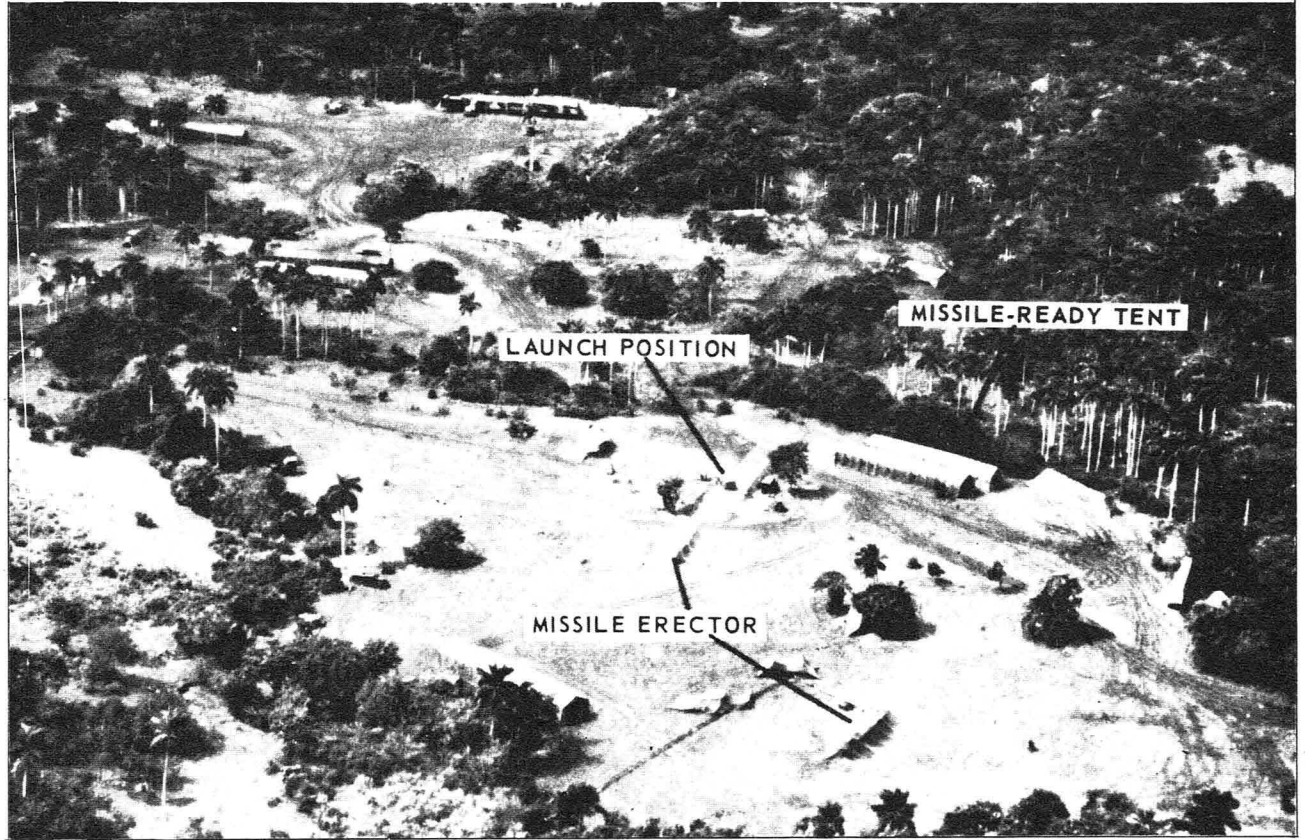
No change in military balance

His intentions were clear. In October 1962, before the crisis broke, US marines were secretly practising an assault upon an island off Puerto Rico. The task force consisted of four aircraft carriers, 15 destroyers, 14 amphibious ships and three submarines. Their orders were to take the island and overthrow the imaginary target, Orsac (Castro spelt backwards).

But Kennedy was unable to publicise such activity, and in the run-up to the November Congressional elections, his Republican opponents concentrated upon his 'weakness' over Cuba. Kennedy was politically vulnerable. In the 1960 election he had only got 0.3% more votes than Nixon, and opinion polls in October 1962 registered the lowest ever support for his Presidency.

On 15 October a U2 spy plane discovered that Russia was installing missiles in Cuba. Militarily the missiles did not alter the balance of power. As Kennedy explained later in a TV interview, 17 December 1962: "Not that they were intending to fire them, because if they were going to get into a nuclear struggle they have their own missiles in the Soviet Union. But it would have politically changed the balance of power, it would have appeared to—and appearances contribute to reality."

Khrushchev and the Russian leadership were aiming for a propaganda victory. Castro had wanted their installation, as a show of force to deter another invasion. And although the missiles



U.S. U-2 spy plane's photograph of missile site on Cuba.



During the crisis President Kennedy (left) had to restrain the military, especially his Air Force Commander Curtis LeMay (right). Six years later LeMay, standing as a Vice-President candidate advocated the nuclear destruction of Vietnam, thereby earning the slogan: "Bombs away, with Curt LeMay."

were secretly taken to Cuba, and Russia publicly denied they were there during the crisis, no attempt was made to camouflage the sites or stop US planes from photographing the sites.

Khrushchev probably also considered that a propaganda victory over the missiles would silence critics of his rule within the Russian bureaucracy and reduce the influence of the rival Stalinist power, China both internationally, and in Cuba itself. He further saw it as a bargaining counter in negotiations over Berlin and probably expected Kennedy to raise the matter privately through diplomatic channels.

Kennedy saw Russian Foreign Minister Gromyko three days after he had learnt about the missiles, but nothing was said about their existence. Instead Kennedy decided, for reasons of both domestic and international prestige, to undertake open power-play.

"Nuke Cuba"

On 22 October he went on TV and told of the missiles' discovery and announced a blockade of Cuba. 63 ships encircled the island with orders to turn back any ship

carrying military equipment. The decision to go for a blockade rather than a direct military assault on the bases had been made over the opposition of some of the military. The dangers which a US military regime would have for world peace came out clearly from the Cuban crisis. One of the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff even recommended an immediate nuclear strike upon Cuba.

Prestige the key

But the direct representatives of capitalism were concerned primarily with safeguarding their system, not military madness. They wanted to come to a deal with the Russian bureaucracy, not be mutually annihilated.

The US government calculated that the Russians had no intention of going to war over the missiles; this was confirmed by their high-ranking spy in the Kremlin, Penkovsky.

But a danger of some conflict was present and all steps were taken to limit the scope of the danger. The boundaries of the blockade were fixed so that it would be days before Russian ships came to

its perimeter. When a U2 plane was shot down over Cuba by Russian missiles a few days after the announcement of the blockade, no retaliatory action was taken.

The first ship to be boarded was not Russian, but the Panamanian 'Maruda'. It was allowed through, to show to the Russian bureaucracy that the blockade was limited, but also that it was not a bluff.

Brinkmanship was taken near to the limits. The US government planned an invasion of Cuba for Monday 29 October. The Russian government knew this and the day before came to an agreement with the Americans. Both sides were concerned to portray it as a victory.

As in the beginning of the crisis, so at the end, prestige was all-important. In return for an American undertaking not to invade Cuba (and secretly to withdraw their missiles from Turkey within five months, the Russian bureaucracy agreed to withdraw their missiles from Cuba.

Kennedy proclaimed it as an enormous victory, and in the November Congressional elections the Democrats did well. Three months later the

missiles in Turkey were quietly withdrawn, and anti-Cuban activities were 'limited' to economic sabotage and assassination.

But the victory was one of prestige, not a military turning-point. It helped spark off increased Russian naval expenditure. A decade later Russia had nuclear submarines, with nuclear warheads, in Cuba, but the then US President Nixon did nothing.

Annihilation threat remains

The Cuban missile crisis was the most dangerous potential flashpoint since 1945. Neither before or since have the two super-powers come so face to face.

Yet it shows that under the present balance of international forces, world war is unlikely, despite the massive arsenals of destruction on both sides. Nuclear war would not just mean nuclear genocide, it would also be suicide on the part of the capitalist class.

Whilst weapons of mass nuclear destruction exist no-one can be complacent. The experience of the Cuban missile crisis also shows how dangerous it would be if the decision of whether or not to use nuclear weapons rested in the hands of military dictators. Such a danger exists as capitalism falls deeper and deeper into crisis and resorts to the open face of military repression.

Military-police dictatorships, freed from the normal restraints of the ruling class and unbalanced by the threatened end to their system, certainly would contemplate nuclear war. But such regimes would only emerge after a series of terrible defeats for the working class.

Armageddon, despite outward appearances may not have been facing the world in the autumn of 1962. But to ensure that it is not just postponed, but cancelled forever, the campaign for nuclear disarmament has to be linked to the struggle to change society and take all weapons of annihilation out of the hands of the capitalists.

Letters

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

MILITANT, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Down and Out in London—1982

Dear Comrade,

The person this letter is about may never read it. For him, reading is a thing of the past. Survival is now his main pre-occupation. He may do well to get through this winter because he is a down-and-out living rough somewhere in London. His name is George and he used to be a friend of mine.

George is as much a product of the system we live under as Margaret Thatcher or the Queen. Their difference was always one of class. George used to work beside me in a low-grade, poorly paid clerical job. He at first lived at home, then with his girlfriend, and when

they split he moved into a bed-sit.

A heavy drinker, his only brake was his commitment to the Labour Party and the friends he made through that involvement. George was also a good trade unionist.

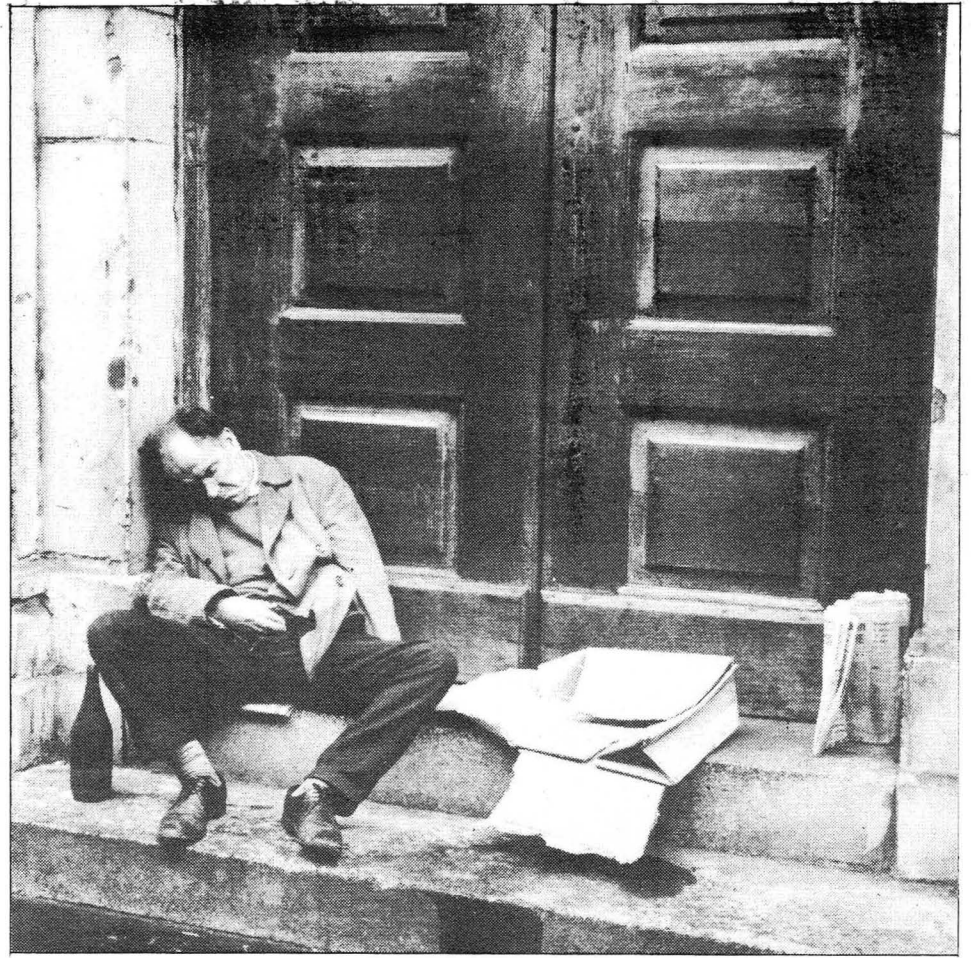
Yet all this eventually proved insufficient and through despair and demoralisation, George gave in the fight. Without warning, a year ago, he gave up his job, left his flat and moved anonymously out of Glasgow without saying a word to any of his former comrades. Just a few weeks ago he was spotted, a dosser, a wino, on the social securi-

ty. The system has a lot to answer for.

Any system capable of reducing a self-respecting human to view, as a viable alternative, being a tramp rather than holding down a dead-end job; to being an alcoholic as preferable to facing the realities of Tory Britain is indeed a system that is doomed.

I hope George survives the winter. I hope he reads this letter and this paper. Most of all I hope he 'opts in' again to society and the fight against the Tories and for socialism.

Eddie Phillips,
Glasgow.



Thousands of people who leave their home town to find work, end up down and out in a strange town.

Disability—reply

Dear Comrades,

May I through your columns, put what I think a disabled person's reaction to the letter by Fiona Winders will be. I was a member of UPI(AS). I left because the majority of members put more importance upon the emancipation of women, than they put upon, what in my view, are the fundamental issues of being disabled by society i.e. the complete lack of a development programme for wheelchairs.

After all, a wheelchair should be a motor-disabled persons legs, so I don't think I am asking too much when I ask for a wheelchair that will enable me to achieve, what you can achieve on your legs. Think about this, when was the wheelchair first invented? When was the last time a consumer helped develop the chair? When was the car first invented? When was the last time a consumer helped develop the car?

The answers are all summed up by Ms Winders, 'the Labour party provides the material resources and political will to ensure that disabled people can live independent lives free from poverty and misery. Funny, we have had Labour governments; wheelchairs have not changed.'

Then again, Lord Snowdon has developed a wheelchair not to provide independence though, his makes it easier for ordinary people to push disabled people around. I am not blind, I am not a geriatric, I am not a juvenile, and disability is relatively new to me. Therefore why do you say the disabled are looked after, God gave me a life for me to independently live. Your answer is not satisfactory. I need help to be independent, I do not want help as if I am incapable of thought. I want reasons why I should vote. I do not want to be spoken about.

Fraternally,
S. Doyle,
Plymouth.

Editors Note

Have any comrades got any views on this issue? Use the letters page to voice your opinion.



Disabled people fighting to save their day centre.

Militant and Democracy

Dear Comrades,

I am an ordinary member of the Labour Party. I joined on my second attempt after being given a membership form by one of your sellers, while passing through Peterborough. (My first attempt petered out when I handed an earlier form to the then ward secretary, who has since stood as an SDP candidate!)

I do not conform to the capitalist press' stereotype of a 'left-winger'. I have never lived in a bed-sitter, nor yet could Mr Healey accuse me of having earned my living as a polytechnic lecturer, while I am a lay reader in my local Church of England parish church.

Having recently heard Mr Ted Grant speak in Walsall,

I found myself admiring the forbearance of this gentleman in urging support for Spellar in Northfield. I'm afraid I should be tempted to believe that that constituency might as well have an MP who honestly calls himself a Tory, rather than Spellar who objectively is one while masquerading as a Labour candidate!

May I also express my admiration for the thoroughly democratic way in which the meeting was conducted, with all present being allowed to contribute freely to the discussion. So much for the claptrap of the capitalist press about Militant being anti-democratic.

Yours fraternally,
Alan Harrison,
Walsall.

USDAW—Rank and File Against the Witch-hunt

Dear Comrades,

I would just like the national executive of the shop workers union, USDAW, to know I was totally disgusted at their vote to implement the register at the Labour Party conference. I don't know if any of them read the Militant but hope they begin to 'get a grip of themselves' and start to read it right away.

I am an eighteen years old shop steward on the branch committee for Edinburgh St Cuthberts branch of USDAW, and I attended a

political conference in Glasgow on 17 October, the day after I attended the Labour Party Young Socialists demo in Liverpool. The speaker was Sid Tierney, president of USDAW. First he 'wandered off on a trip around China', as a couple of delegates put his speech, then he tried to put the boot into Militant but even though there must be very few supporters of Militant who are USDAW shop stewards like myself in Scotland, he got more than he bargained for.

Upstairs Downstairs

Dear Comrades,

Having recently left college, and searching for that rare item of a job, I was surprised to receive a phone call offering me the very same. Over the phone came the smooth voice of the trained upper classes.

She had been told on good authority that I had need of a job, and that she wanted a good cook for her Scottish residence. Duties would primarily include cooking for large dinner parties, guests up for the shoot, plus cooking for her family, and general light domestic duties to keep the house in order.

Of course the hours were long but the work was very worthwhile and challenging! And what were the rewards for all this exciting work?—One's own room with a lovely view, alternate Saturdays off and Sunday mornings, plus the princely sum of £28 per week.

It would seem that if these are the only jobs available, waiting on the upper crust, then the Tories are not merely dragging us back to the thirties, but to the upstairs downstairs world of the Victorian era where the bosses ruled and the starving workers knew their place. Therefore comrades let us fight for a better world for ourselves and our children in a fair socialist society.

Yours in comradeship,
Eleanor F McLaughlin,
(Edinburgh Pentlands LPYS)

How Marxism helps you see through the bosses

Dear Comrades,

I became a supporter of Militant's ideas only a few months ago at the beginning of the summer. Once you've seen capitalism, every day you find you meet someone in some predicament, or you experience something yourself, which deepens your disgust with this system and reaffirms your commitment to replacing it with socialism.

So, three months later, here I am, Militant's under my arm, fighting for socialism. Only the other day I was in the bank explaining my overdraft when the manager remarked, on seeing my 'Defend Militant—Fight the Tories' badge; "And I suppose that's your stock of Militant Weekly is it?"

"Yes, it is," I seethed, "Fancy a bit of nationalisation?" "Not 'arf", he replied, "Does it mean we'll get more holidays?"

From there, the 'chat' took a turn for the better and he bought a paper. So did another clerk who came running out of the bank after me. And a third. And a passer-by in the street, watching the commotion, also came up, intrigued, and bought one. They've all taken a second paper and that passer-by gave £1 for the Fighting Fund.

All this in three months? Whatever will happen next?! Yours fraternally,
Mandy Langmead,
Bristol NE LPYS.

Right wing caucus for NEC

Dear Comrade,

It has been revealed on the TV news bulletins that the right-wing members of the NEC had a caucus meeting prior to the 27th October NEC, in order to agree on sub-committee slates, etc. In view of this can we expect this group to apply to go on the Register and also to open its meetings to all interested Party members?

Yours fraternally,
David Sellers,
(E Leeds CLP).

CLAP HANDS HERE COMES NORMAN



Forgetful Tebbit

Dear Sir,

I note that Mr Norman Tebbit appears now to have abandoned his advocacy of cycling as a means of securing employment. Perhaps there are now not enough bikes to go around? He contents himself, however, with blaming the unions for securing 'excessive wages' for workers, taking care not to specify what he considers to be 'excessive', or to identify the recipients themselves.

To an old codger like myself the flaw in this line of argument is obvious, because I can remember a time some fifty years ago when an almost carbon copy of the present unemployment debacle existed and not even Tebbit in his wildest flights of fancy could blame high wages for that situation, wages at that time being generally at subsistence level.

As Norman remembers so well the exploits of his athletic father, it is surprising that the point just made has seemingly escaped his recollection.

Yours faithfully,
John Charles,
Liverpool.

Industrial Features



NHS Interview

Last week, before the recent round of negotiations, Brian Ingham interviewed Peter Doyle, an area organiser for the National Union of Public Employees, about the course of the health dispute in his area.

As is clear from the text, this interview was conducted just before the new offer and the negotiations of the last week, and as we go to press it is not clear whether or not a deal will be agreed between the government and the NHS unions.

Nevertheless, the article based on the interview contains many useful lessons for health workers and for workers generally and for that reason we have decided to publish it.

Organising the Health Workers Struggle

The health service dispute has now lasted about seven months. Throughout this period, health workers have shown enormous determination to fight for their full pay deal and also to stave off any attacks on the NHS.

Throughout the dispute, the Northern Region of the National Union of Public Employees (NUPE) has been seen as one of the pacemakers in terms of industrial action, but this wasn't accidental.

For a start, we weren't caught off balance when the decision came for industrial action. We'd already discussed the health service dispute a good three months before it actually started.

We had plans developed and a whole series of suggestions that had been put in by branches and stewards, so we already had a very good idea of where we were going. When the decision came that two groups of workers should be stopped we immediately moved to all general hospitals in the Northern region and stopped the central stores (CSSD) departments which prepare operating packs for operating theatres.

On top of that we stopped, for limited periods of time, central laundries, driving, and one or two other departments that had key positions within hospitals. We also organised series of lightning strikes so that there has been for the eight months a constant and permanent state of accident and emergency cover only and the management hasn't been able to alleviate that situation.

We've been able to maintain this high level of activity in the Northern region for two reasons.

The first, and possibly the most important, is the co-ordinating committees between the various trade

unions, where for the very first time in the health service all the unions have sat down and carried out joint planning, and joint activities. In many instances it hasn't only been NUPE members this time taking action, but members of other trade unions.

Joint levies; raising monies; joint activities; joint demonstrations etc have been of invaluable importance and they are also a pointer to future battles. The only way we're going to have effective action is for all unions in the health service to get together and stick together to fight this government, because the next battle on the horizon is over cuts, and we cannot win that one if it is NUPE fighting alone or COHSE fighting alone.

Regular meetings have been important

The other way that we've been able to achieve and maintain this momentum and unity, is through the regular organising meetings. We've had in some instances weekly mass meetings—at least meetings once a fortnight—of all grades and all sections within my own union, where we've kept them regularly informed.

We've produced bulletins on a hospital basis and a regional basis to keep members informed of what's happening both in their own hospital and others in the region. We've also managed to keep up a great deal of pressure through leafleting campaigns and demonstrations where whole hospitals would be on the march, down to the administrative centre or a shopping centre or a local industrial estate where we would have mass leafleting.

For the 22 September day of action, for example, all the people out on strike were

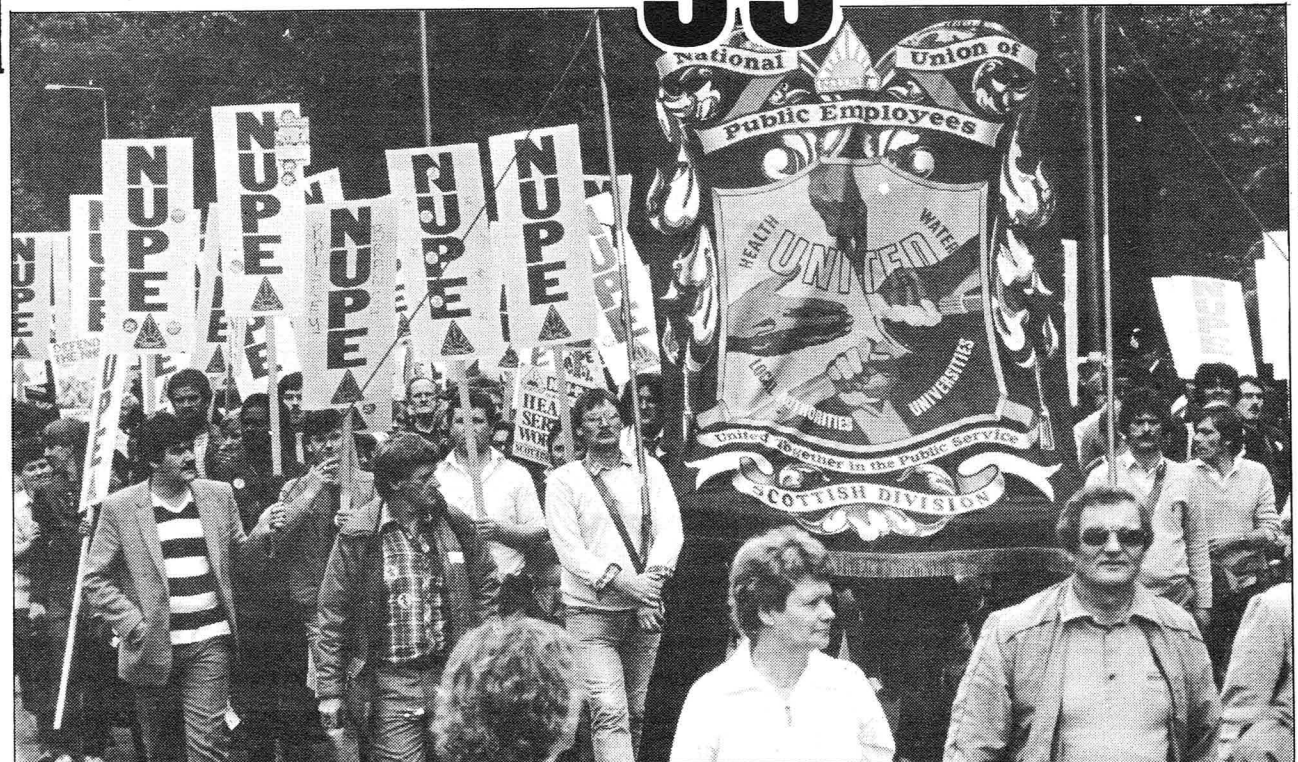


Photo: Militant

brought into our Divisional Office and were bussed and taken by car around to all the bus depots, shipyards, pits, industrial estates, and factories, and we actively campaigned for a week and a half to a fortnight before 22 September for a stoppage. And we achieved it.

The response was absolutely magnificent. On the picket lines of one hospital in the North East, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Gateshead, we had representatives from 17 major factories out on strike. We had road haulage representatives, busmen's representatives, pitmen, shipyard workers—it was absolutely terrific. We reached a really high point in the dispute on the national day of action.

The dispute has shaken up the union

The dispute is now obviously at a turning point, at a watershed, but whatever happens in this dispute in the next few months we will not lose in the sense that we've increased the original offer from 4% to 6%.

We've also had a complete

shake-out in the union. Lots of new people have come forward to be activists inside the union. The branch secretaries are much more confident of what they can do and what they can't do, much more confident in the fact that they've conducted a strike now for 7 or 8 months. So in that sense we can't lose.

As far as the 12% claim is concerned, the only way that we could win at this stage is for two things to happen. An all-out strike providing accident and emergency cover by health workers and industrial action by the TUC

A 24-hour general strike would mean that there would be no longer any vague appeals from the General Council but a firm instruction by all the trade unions that all union members would cease work, that private industry would be immobilised, the length and breadth of Britain, and that pressure be brought to bear on the stragglers. This fight is everybody's fight.

We've got the sympathy not only of organised labour—that's all of the members of the TUC affiliated trade unions—but

we've got support from the general public as well, who aren't necessarily union members, like pensioners and housewives.

The Tories are prepared to see workers suffer

School kids have stopped in the street and have given in collections out of their dinner money! That's a fact. It's actually happened. If we could collect money off school kids then we should have expected more support and better support than we've received from the TUC.

Many, many workers in the health service have now realised the brutality and the callousness of this Tory government. The Tories are prepared to accept the NHS on an accident and emergency basis; they are prepared to have ordinary working class people on enormous waiting lists and have operations cancelled and suffer pain. That's of no consequence to them.

So the only way that we could win such a dispute would be by private sector workers effectively taking industrial action and hitting the Tories where it hurts—in their pockets.

I think that the TUC should have said to the government "you are going to have a general strike on such-and-such a date", which date would coincide with an indefinite strike within the health service.

But I think that the TUC should have been prepared to commit themselves further than simply a one-day general strike. I would like to have seen action following the one-day general strike, in, for example, the whole of the engineering section of Britain.

I think that the pressure should be continually kept up on this government. The whole of the organised labour movement recognises that this fight has been a just fight—it's a fight that could still be won if the whole energy and the whole resources of the trade union movement were thrown into it.

In future issues of Militant we hope to carry further articles on the conduct and lessons of the NHS dispute.

On this page, the editors hope to have regular features on trade union and industrial issues. What is work like in a factory, office, shop or shipyard? How have strikes been conducted, successfully or otherwise? How does a union activist conduct his work?

These and other issues we hope to feature here. But it is vitally important that our readers participate in producing these features. Why not write to Militant about your union organisation, your workplace or issues discussed among your workmates?

COWLEY REACHES BOILING POINT

Workers at BL have undergone years of trial and tribulation since Edwardes arrived.

He has pushed plant closures; dismissals; and threats to run down all of BL, victimisation of active trade unionists; withdrawal of facilities to made unions less effective, all this for lower wage settlements and maximum output.

But this process met unexpected resistance at Cowley last week. A car worker was accused of damaging the roof of a Rover car, (the damage was no bigger than a ten pence piece). He was sworn at and threatened with disciplinary action.

When the innocent worker denied the charge and demanded an apology, Mr D Dickson, plant director refused to apologise. His attitude angered the workers and resulted in a walkout.

Embarrassed management softened their attitude but still refused to apologise. Workers anger was clear when the senior stewards' recommendation to return to work was voted down with only four in favour and five hundred against.

Cowley workers have been boiling for some time. Low wages, bad working conditions all build the frustrations which have taken many forms such as one worker beating his workbench and other workers following suit just as prisoners do.

Other examples are walkouts when workers receive small wage packets and stoppages of work as line speeds accelerate or when workers leave the factory for good to join the unemployed.

Equally, workers' discontent towards their union leadership increases daily. After the dismissal of Derek Robinson at Longbridge confidence had declined. Members feel the union has lost its teeth and some long term members would even like to discontinue membership if they could.

The decision to return to work this Monday was very close. The union asked both day and night shift to attend though most night shift did not attend. After the return to work though, trouble started on the Rover Ambassador line when management picked on the same worker as they had attacked before and accused him of unsatisfactory performance.

Union attempts to end this "swearing strike" did not get off the ground. Monday's meeting only got a very narrow majority and trouble started after two hours and there was a new walk out in the afternoon. Night shift too wasted little time and went home at 10pm.

The abominable attitude of management has kindled the fire in the bellies of the workers which will not be easy to put out. The strike goes on.

By a TGWU member, assembly plant, BL Cowley.

Industrial Reports

TELECOMS-WE NEED DECISIVE ACTION

The 20 October action by the unions in British Telecoms against denationalisation was a great success.

In Overseas Telegraph, nearly all 700 engineers were out, a position mirrored up and down the country with marches and picketing being very effective.

Where do we go from here? Our branch committee held a special meeting to review the day of action. The action had mobilised our membership, and each of our workplace buildings was picketed through the day with a huge mock "For Sale" sign hung from our plush building. The Stock Exchange and railway stations were leafleted, and our

branch banner had been on the 10,000 strong London demo.

The press almost ignored our action even though the demo went through Fleet Street. We decided that although we couldn't rely on the Tory press, we would keep putting our case to the public, complementing the national campaign with our own badges, stickers and lunchtime leafleting sessions.

Unanimously we agreed that further single day stoppages would be counter productive. The 20 October action showed us our strength and unity but further such days would only sap the members' enthusiasm.

Our experience in the 1978 35 hour week campaign showed that selective actions were most effective, and we favoured escalating sanc-

tions against those with most to gain from denationalisation, particularly the financial institutions.

The POEU is in a better position than most unions to take action which isolates its targets so it doesn't hurt ordinary phone users but hits the Tories in their money belts.

For a special conference

But it was also emphasised that industrial action could not be waged by proxy and this selective action would have to be backed up with activities which involved all members and a commitment to all out strike if that proved necessary.

But what of the national campaign? When POEU

members asked their executive before 20 October what plans they had for the dispute the ludicrous answer came that "Plans had been drawn up but were locked away in a safe at HQ".

The success of the 20 October was in spite of, not because of, the leadership. The date for action was only announced well into October and failed to coincide with government announcement of the sale. Publicity from head office is now arriving at branch offices—weeks after the event.

The right wing leaders totally underestimated the members' response and many believed it would be a flop. The virtual 100% support on 20 October has left them floundering without plans. Three weeks after the action, that safe door still

hasn't been opened.

The demand for a special conference is growing and not just in traditionally militant branches. At least eight branches are independently circulating the country calling for a conference with literally hundreds of branches supporting but the executive is resisting these demands, hiding behind rules requiring two-thirds of branches to force a conference.

The right are terrified that a conference will force them to take decisive action—but it is only such action which can beat the Tory plans for dismantling our industry.

By Colin O'Callaghan

(POEU Overseas Telegraph)

Raindi

Three hundred Asian workers have been on strike for union recognition at T.S Raindi Supreme Quilting in Birmingham (see *Militant* 29 October) for five weeks and morale is as high as ever, despite management threats.

The employers latest move has been to use the now common threat of sacking the strikers. A letter from the company said that if workers didn't turn up for work on Monday morning (8 November) the company "shall assume you have resigned your position and employment". The letter however has had no effect in breaking the strike.

Raindi's workers have tried to organise themselves in TGWU to improve their criminally low wages. Workers have produced wage slips with net payment of less than £40 for 50 hours work. The employers claim they cannot afford to pay more but as pickets pointed out they can afford to drive around in Lotuses and Mercedes.

Donations and messages of support to Raindi strike committee 22 Paignton Road Retton Park Birmingham.



PHOTO: John Smith (IFL)

Stop Victimisation of NALGO Activist

On 29 October, Roger Bannister, senior Social Services steward and NALGO branch vice-chairman was suspended by the Director of Social Services of Knowsley Borough council with a recommendation that he be dismissed.

The reason? Roger had distributed a letter from himself as senior steward to the Director at a Social Services Committee Meeting to acquaint councillors with NALGO members' views on the subject being debated,

confidentiality of departmental files. A Labour councillor Fred Curran praised the NALGO and moved the successful motion.

But the next day Roger was telephoned by the press to ask his opinion on being disciplined, showing someone on management had broken nationally agreed procedures by discussing an employee's private affairs with the press.

Four days later he received a letter from the Director saying he was thinking of disciplinary action against Roger for a "breach of confidentiality" even though the letter named no individual

and contained no information unavailable to the ordinary lay person.

The stewards' committee called a departmental general meeting which unanimously backed Roger as senior steward and organised a lobby of the disciplinary meeting attended by over a hundred people.

NALGO members strike

But the Director, apparently deciding the union was too much of a threat to him rejected NALGO's suggestion

to publish a statement of clarification but suspended him with recommendation to dismiss.

That was Friday afternoon. On Monday morning a packed work time meeting of NALGO members in Social Services voted to strike for the rest of the day and to call on the branch for further support.

A special branch meeting on 3 November overwhelmingly agreed to blacklist all posts in the authority, end all management talks and instruct all NALGO members to refuse to carry out Roger's work duties. It voted

to reconvene if the sacking were confirmed to consider more drastic action including a 24 hour cross-borough strike.

The branch have shown what they think of this maverick chief officer. It is now up to the controlling Labour councillors not to permit chief officers to harass and intimidate fellow trade unionists and Labour Party members like Roger Bannister.

By Irene Buxton
(Knowsley NALGO secretary)



Industrial Reports

NURSES SAY NO DIVIDE AND RULE

The latest "offer" to the health service workers is a blatant and pathetic attempt at divide and rule.

The offer gives no more to ancillary workers but the government have produced an insulting offer of an extra half of one per cent next year to nurses and midwives.

"Another case of jam tomorrow" commented one nurse, "but so little jam you can hardly taste it. It's farcical" Most of the rest of her comment was unprintable.

All attempts to pose the offer as a 12% rise are sheer nonsense. The offer for ancillary workers remains at 6% this year and 4% next, for one of the lowest paid

sections of workers. For nurses, it would be 7.5% this year and 4.5% next.

Health workers have not had an increase now for 17 months. A staff nurse on the minimum scale now gets £85.49. The offer could increase that by £10.49, but in two instalments and this offer is to last until April 1984.

Even the pay review body which is to report on nurses wage levels in 1984 will offer little joy. Social Services Secretary Norman Fowler would make no guarantee that this body's findings would be implemented by the government.

See interview on NHS dispute. Page 13.

"The half per cent increase isn't enough to buy a packet of sanitary towels. We would do just as well to go in the street with a guy and beg for a

penny. We would have made more money that way"

Two nurses at Bethnal Green Hospital, East London

Paddington

Ruth Herdman, NUPE shop steward at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, told *Militant*: "Nurses are disgusted at the attempt to divide us from other workers. The offer is just a kick in the face.

"The feeling is still strong. A group of nurses picketed the DHSS offices this week and also went on strike on

Monday even though the transport strike was off.

"We're not going to accept this offer. The unions have met, the joint shop stewards committee meet weekly, we've got a Paddington nurses' group and a joint Paddington workers' group and we all want to fight for the 12%."

Stanford's

For six weeks staff at Stanford's bookshop, central London have been out for trade union recognition. First the management tried to change working hours without consultation. Then when the workforce carried on working the old rotas they dismissed Paul Hobbs then eight other trade unionists out of a staff of 17.

The nine, all TGWU members are demanding reinstatement and recognition of their union. The case went to ACAS which recommended reinstatement of the victimised trade unionists. Management response was to withdraw form ACAS.

Now their line has hardened further and they say they will only take the nine back with totally different contracts and for different jobs. They are trying to break the union.

Pickets are turning back reps, book deliveries, post and up to 50% of potential customers. Management and scabs can't run the shop and stand to lose a lot of money in the Christmas rush. All trade unionists should support this struggle for union rights.

AG Standard

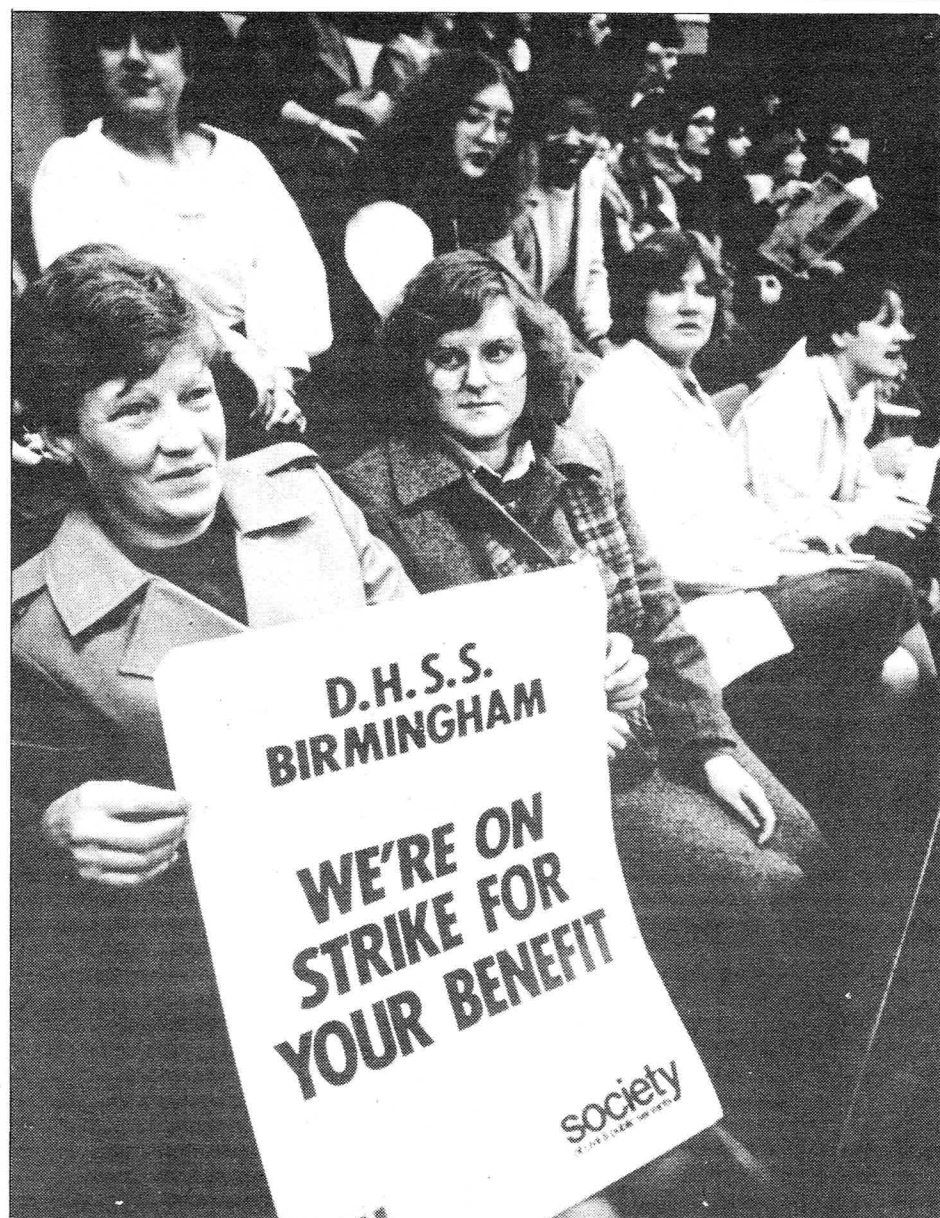
The South East TUC held a day of action and rally at the printing firm of AG Standard in Borehamwood, Herts on 8 November in a dispute about union recognition, and the sacking of workers.

When the company found out two workers had been recruiting for the union they were made redundant and given half an hour to get off the premises, calling the police the next day to remove them. They refuse to recognise the union, and sacked workers for protesting at the dismissals.

AG Standard are now being blacked nationally by suppliers and customers, the dispute has been made official and backed by South East region TUC. All supplies of ink and paper have been stopped. Bill Freeman, SOGAT '82 commented that the firm "either and to recognise the union or we'll close the place down."

Support for the union rights of workers who earn £90 for a 46 hour week with compulsory overtime has been great. So successful has the action been that management have been forced to go to the arbitration service ACAS.

By Dave Herinx



DHSS strike meeting in Birmingham, 5 November.

Photo: John Smith (IFL)

Some six weeks into strike action by the DHSS workers involved in the current staffing dispute, there is no weakening of the resolve of members.

They are insisting on action by the government and DHSS to provide sufficient staff in DHSS local offices both to provide a satisfactory service to claimants and to relieve pressure on staff.

Members of the civil service unions CPSA and SCPS from the eleven offices in Birmingham and the DHSS

local office in Oxford are now on strike and are absolutely determined to wrest significant concessions from management.

So far, management have failed to deliver an offer which members find acceptable. They rejected an offer at a meeting a fortnight ago overwhelmingly.

Inevitably in a dispute which arose spontaneously there have been differences of opinion on the best way forward.

The original demand of the strikers was for an immediate injection of staff into Birmingham and Oxford offices and an overall review of the DHSS and its "com-

plement" system.

That remains the objective and the unity and determination already shown by strikers can wrest further concessions from management.

At this stage of the dispute, the chief priority has to be to raise donations and send messages of support. Send to Richard Horton, Room 337, Fiveways House, Islington Row, Birmingham and Morag Robertson, Tynedale House, Cowley Road Oxford.

Kevin Roddy, president of CPSA spoke to 'Militant'

USDAW- end low pay

The recent announcement in the Queen's speech that the Tories plan to abolish Sunday trading hours is a declaration of war on shopworkers working hours!

By allowing a free for all on Sunday trading, USDAW members are faced with a return to the 1890's. This attack is only the latest in a whole series of events which have forced USDAW members further into an abyss of low wages and poor working conditions.

For years, the members through their annual conference have demanded a lead from the Executive Council to achieve a decent living wage. In 1982 USDAW members accept that £90 for a 35 hour week is the absolute minimum which could be described as 'decent'. No lead though has been forthcoming from the right-wing leadership. Accordingly, the living conditions of USDAW members have suffered.

Some examples of wage levels are detailed in the USDAW Central Office Research Bulletin (May 1982):

Worker, porter (Retail COOP) £52.47 per week.
Warehouse (Retail COOP) £45.47

Warehouse and office cleaner (Associated Deliveries Ltd, Coatbridge) £56.00

The list of poverty wages goes on and on. These outrageous figures are not exceptional. These companies are organised. In the poorly organised and unorganised sector of the retail trade covered by the Wages Council, rates are even lower. Clearly this warrants radical solutions.

Firstly a leadership determined to tackle the problems in a determined manner is needed. The biennial Divisional Councils will commence at the end of January.

Only the candidates who support the USDAW Broad Left will be prepared to carry through a campaign to remedy the scandal of low pay. Only the Broad Left presidential candidate, Jeff Price recognises the need for a campaign of action in conjunction with other unions in the retail and distributive trades.

The need for national solidarity of retail and distributive unions has never been stronger if the vicious circle of low pay is to be broken.

By George Williamson
(Eastern Divisional Councillor, personal capacity)

CHLORIDE

Workers at Chloride Power Storage Ltd in Clifton went on strike last Monday afternoon, a picketing rota was organised and began turning away lorries bringing in supplies.

The TGWU convenor John Sumbland told *Militant* the workers have been offered a pay increase of 5.2%. As five months of the financial year had gone, this would in practice be 2.6% for the year.

In exchange for this the company was insisting on an 8.3% increase in the hours worked, i.e. a cut of half an hour a day off meal breaks, smoke breaks etc.

Considering that the Chloride factory deals with the metal lead, all breaks away from the production process are essential safety factors. While negotiations were taking place over wages, management attempted to reduce manning levels in certain areas of the factory.

They argued this had nothing to do with the wages issue but was merely to reduce overheads.

When stewards challenged management to look at the whole issue of "overheads" management refused point blank.

A mass meeting of the entire shop floor voted by three to one to reject the offer and impose an overtime ban. The meeting declared that if the management attempt to move people to reduce manning levels without full consultations they would enter into dispute. This is what happened on Monday.

It could be argued that Chloride workers had accepted worse indignities over the past three years. Certainly there have been widespread redundancies. This is the straw that broke the camel's back.

The determination on the picket line shows trade unions may lose a battle, even suffer defeats, but nothing can stop workers' determination to fight for their rights.

Messages of support and donations to TGWU 6/153. R. Butcher, 8 Ethel Avenue, Pendlebury, Swinton.

By Gerry Lerner

Railway Broad Left

The Broad Left for Railway Workers will be holding a national rally on Saturday 11 December starting at midday. The main theme of the rally will be "Now for a

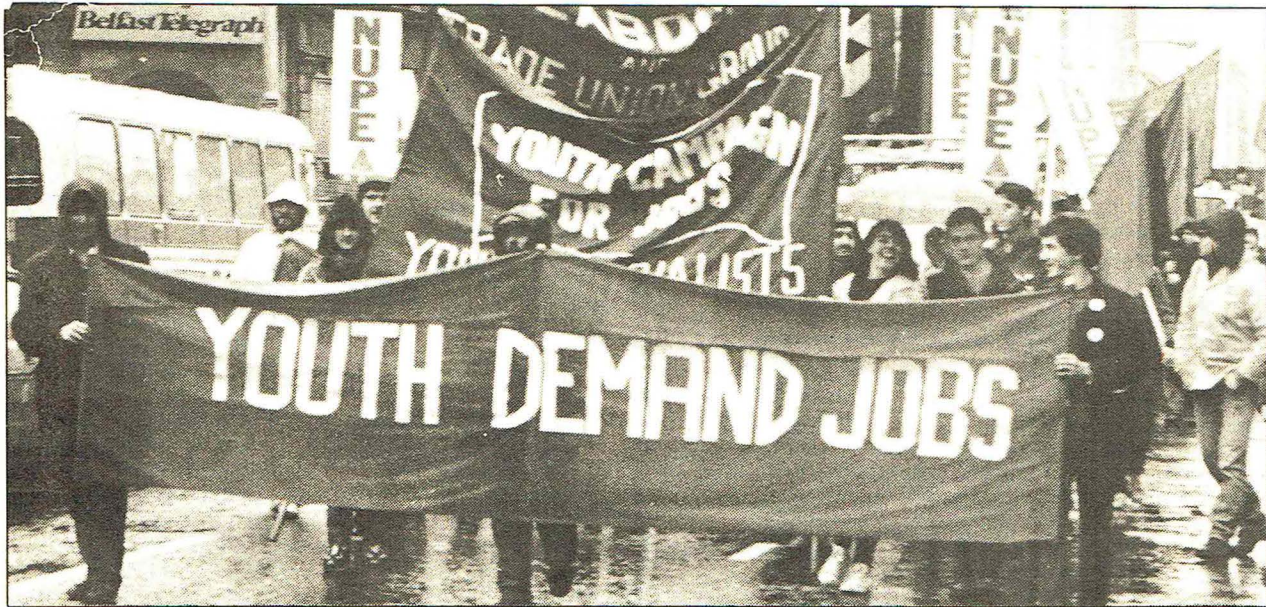
fighting NUR leadership". The venue is the Hampden Community Centre, 150 Ossulton St, London NW1, which is near Euston station.

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Northern Ireland...

Photo: MILITANT



Part of the Young Socialists demo in Belfast, undeterred by rain, on 6 November

CLASS ISSUES UNITE WORKERS

History was made in Belfast on November 6. Undaunted by torrential rain, 500 young people marched for jobs and against the Tories, in the first ever demonstration organised by the Northern Ireland Young Socialists.

By Dennis Tourish
 (South Belfast YS)

The march ran its full route cutting across the catholic Falls Road and protestant Shankill, as well as Belfast city centre. Working class youth were solidly united against the common class enemy.

The march was noisy and colourful, reverberating with chants against the Tories. Demonstrators roared "Workers, united will never be defeated" as they criss crossed through the 'peace line' at Unity flats and the Shankill Road.

Dozens of red flags and anti-Tory placards were carried. Banners were there from Young Socialists branches throughout the north of Ireland, Labour Youth (the youth section of the Irish Labour Party in the south) and from Merseyside LPYS. Trade union banners denoted the presence of NIPSA, the main civil service union in the north, NUPE, ASTMS, and a number of trades councils.

This march was one of the liveliest and most enthusiastic Belfast had ever seen. Hoarse and wet marchers still stayed for the rally at the end of the demonstration.

Speakers were heard from NUPE, NIPSA, the LPYS and Irish Labour Youth. But the hall erupted into a prolonged standing ovation for Pat Wall, Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Bradford North.

Pat delivered a searing indictment of life under the Tories. He pointed out that youth unemployment in Bradford was eight times the level of 1932. In Northern Ireland it was estimated that by the end of 1983, 90% of school leavers would either be unemployed or on youth training schemes. He hammered home the reason for this, explaining that the

demands of the youth campaign for jobs—guaranteed jobs, a 35 hour week and a £100 minimum wage would be possible if the 200 monopolies controlling 80% of the economy were nationalised and production planned.

A number of speakers called for a campaign to kick out the Tories replacing them with a socialist Labour government and for a Labour Party to be built in Northern Ireland.

Lucy McShane from the Youth Campaign for Jobs also took up the need for the campaign to be stepped up. "It doesn't end here or tomorrow," she explained, "We must take our programme to every section of the trade union movement and the youth."

Workers' unity around common class objectives was a major feature of the rally. From the floor Muriel Tang of the East Belfast Labour and Trade Union Group outlined the jobs crisis in her area, and explained how everywhere she went people were discussing the misery of life under the Tories.

Paul Quinn from the newly established Twinbrook YS graphically brought home how capitalist policies have devastated the area. "I can see the De Lorean factory from my window. It's typical of the waste that now goes on." Paul said before joining the YS he'd never been involved in politics. "But now I'm convinced that on-

ly the YS gives youth a voice."

A speaker was also heard from the strikers at Eastwood's scrap merchants in Belfast. Victimised for union activity and now facing the sack, they got a thunderous response from the rally and promises of support from the YS.

Everyone had a chance to make some kind of contribution—and it was eagerly taken up. A tremendous collection raised £750. Lucy McShane pointed out that more rallies, demonstra-

tions and campaigning were needed to build a mass Young Socialists in Northern Ireland. But the very best way to help this was by joining the YS itself.

Later that night a packed YS disco gave comrades the chance to dry out their clothes and relax after what all agreed had been a brilliant day.

As one comrade said, "This week we've been on the radio, TV, the papers and on the streets. Nothing will stop us now."

YS Member killed in bomb attack

On Tuesday night Helen Woodhouse, secretary of the Fermanagh Young Socialists was killed in a bomb explosion in Enniskillen. The car which she had been offered a lift home in by policeman Gary Hewing, who was also killed, had been booby trapped.

The Saturday before, Helen, 29, had attended the Youth Campaign for Jobs demonstration and rally in Belfast. Over the past year, Helen, who was also active in the public sector union NIPSA, had supported the demand for the building of a mass party of Labour in the north of Ireland, believing that protestant and catholic workers could best resolve the problems of poverty and sectarianism united under the banner of

socialism.

Once again, the false campaign of violence of the Provos and their kind have shown their total bankruptcy, with this murder of a young worker who believed in workers' unity and socialism.

The working class will remember this death. Fermanagh Young Socialists are saddened by this loss but will take strength from this tragedy and will continue to offer the youth of Northern Ireland the socialist alternative to the bomb and the gun.

By Fermanagh Young Socialists.

Tory failure

continued from page one

low restoration of £49m worth of the cuts made in recent years on housing. Since the 1982-83 White Paper was announced, defence spending has risen from £14,073 to £15,900m, whilst housing expenditure has fallen from £3,561m to £2,800m.

They have tried to paint the package as a first step to the recovery of industry. However British business is no baby trying to walk, but a dying system incapable of forward movement.

Even the £1,000 million cut in National Insurance Surcharge (back-dated for business, of course) will be partly clawed back by increases in ordinary insurance contributions from both workers and industry.

Next year the Tories plan an election Budget with a £2 billion tax cut. This will not restore living standards.

Since they came to power, a family with two children, earning three quarters average earnings, has seen its tax payments of all kinds rise by 17%, after allowing for inflation. A similar family earning five times the national average now pays 6% less taxes in real terms.

But ordinary people's sacrifices have been in vain. The Tories' economic strategy lies in ruins.

'Slimmed-down' industry has become a skeleton. British manufacturing now has "total allergy syndrome" and is incapable of living in the late 20th century.

Next year manufacturing is only expected to reach 89% of its 1975 level. Manufacturing investment is now 30% below, in real terms, its 1970 level.

In fact it is not clear what the Tories fear most—a con-

tinued recession or a minor recovery. The Treasury forecasts that if there is a 2% recovery in world trade, then Britain may be able to climb on to the back and experience a 1½% growth.

But even such pathetic depths are fraught with perils for the British capitalist class. For the Treasury statement points out that British industry would be totally incapable of competing with foreign competition, and all that would happen would be a massive increase in imports.

In such circumstances, they forecast, Britain despite North Sea Oil, would be heading for a balance of payments crisis: "With the British economy expanding in 1983 nearly in line with the world economy, and with Britain's tendency to lose its share in domestic and overseas markets continuing, a further deterioration in the volume of net trade is forecast."

Whichever way the capitalists look they can only see trouble for their system. Even a boom only offers them gloom.

Labour instead must offer a clear alternative to 'no-hope Howe'. But that can only be done if the programme it campaigns upon is a clear socialist alternative to a decaying capitalist system:

- ★ Massive programme of useful public works to expand the economy and end unemployment.

- ★ End wasteful spending on arms and nuclear weapons

- ★ £90 minimum wage, linked to cost of living.

- ★ Take-over banks and manufacturing monopolies, so industry is run for people, not profit.

- ★ Socialist plan of production.

That is the only way to give a realistic message of hope to ordinary people.

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