

Tories launch attack on workers' rights

Union Power Can Wreck Tory Plans

The Queen's speech at the state opening of Parliament last Wednesday outlined the Tories' plans for a renewed assault on the rights and living conditions of working people.

The lavish pageantry surrounding the opening, the presence of hundreds of Lords, Ladies and flunkies—the ruling class in fancy dress—is a grotesque mockery of the reality of life for millions of workers and their families.

Already over 10,000 redundancies have been announced since the election. A recent economic forecast predicts unemployment rising steadily to a figure of 4.3 million by the end of the decade. Yet the Tories offer no solutions. Their economic strategy remains unchanged—the Queen's speech promised "more of the same".

Behind the bland generalities of the speech lies a serious attack on workers' rights. Measures to be introduced are supposed to give trade union members "more control" over their unions. In reality the legislation will be an attempt to weaken shop floor organisation and power. They are likely to include the imposition of compulsory ballots for the election of union leaderships, and the removal of the trades unions' 75-year old legal immunity unless "ballots" are taken before strike action.

The "ballots" they have in mind are sham democracy, intended to take decision

By Paul
Cove

making from the shop floor and the branches, where every member has the right to attend and hear the arguments and advice of the local leaders.

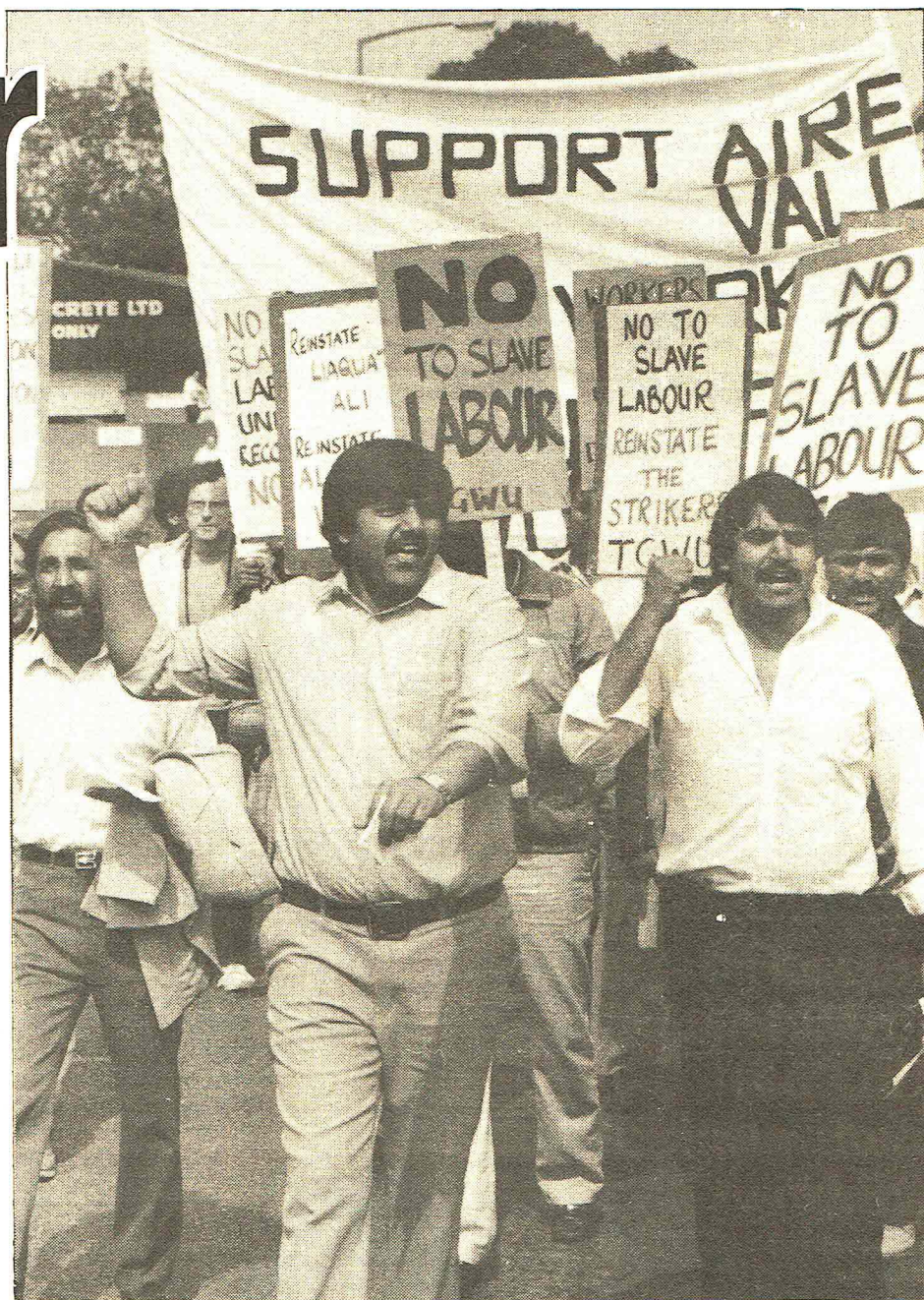
Instead Fleet Street and managements will be given every chance to bombard workers with lies and propaganda. *Militant* supports moves towards genuine democracy in the trade unions, including regular elections of officials and the right of recall. But the Tory proposals have nothing to do with democracy, they are a crude attempt to shackle the trade unions.

There was no mention in the speech of moves to attack Labour Party finances by changing the operation of the political levy and trade union affiliation to the Labour Party, though there has been no shortage of discussion about this in Tory ranks. It is still possible that such a blatantly cynical attack may be made. If it isn't, it will only be a recognition of the resistance such changes would meet.

Part and parcel of the Tories class based programme, are proposals for the abolition of the Greater London Council and its six

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A worker in
Parliament
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Workers in Bradford demonstrate against the employers' attacks on union rights at Aire Valley Yarns (see page 14). A united fight by the whole movement can stop the Tories.

Photo: John Smith (IFL)

Coalite's Golden Fleece

THE TORIES and their puppets in Fleet Street were quick to bang the drum of jingoism over the Falklands war.

Yet now they remain virtually silent over the revelations that the Derbyshire-based Coalite company have made massive profits from the war.

Coalite have shown that the profit system knows no sides. Coalite have made money out of the Argentinian troops, British troops and the Falklanders themselves.

While the Falkland islanders lived in anxiety during the Argentinian occupation last year, Coalite were calmly selling the Falklands' main



British soldiers in the Falklands. Coalite have profited from both British and Argentinian armies.

Photo: PA (iii)

raw material, wool, to the Argentinian forces. Coalite made a cool £93,000 to add to their present pre-tax profits of over £27 million.

Coalite claim that the Argentinian forces "would have taken the wool anyway". So why didn't they? As it was, Coalite charged them

over the odds for the wool, but that just meant Coalite made greater

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Labour Leadership-Support Heffer

ERIC HEFFER deserves the support of Labour's rank and file in his campaign for the Labour leadership.

Although the Tory press and media have attempted to portray the leadership elections as, in the words of Tony Benn, a "Eurovision song contest", what are important are not the various personalities involved, but the crucial political issues that now face the labour movement.

After the most serious election defeat for many years, a keen struggle will now ensue, as the lessons of this defeat are absorbed. The right-wing in the Labour Party, the supporters of Roy Hattersley and Peter Shore, are now fighting for their political survival. They bear full responsibility for the election defeat.

It is the bankrupt and discredited policies that they represent which ended in disaster in 1979—and which were still being thrown back at canvassers during the recent general election.

The right's support inside the Labour Party has declined steadily over recent years. In last year's elections to Labour's NEC both Shore and Hattersley only received the support of about one-quarter of CLPs. Their vote was, again, down on previous years.

For the trade union leaders like David Basnett, the election necessitates the "jumping of a generation". But what is the point of replacing older figures with younger ones, if the 'new faces' continue to advocate yesterday's failed policies?

This is the decisive issue underlying these elections—the need to commit Labour firmly to socialist policies, to reject completely the right-

wing's support for the 'mixed economy' i.e. capitalism.

The only candidate who stands for the radical policy decisions of recent party conferences is Eric Heffer. He is the only candidate to announce in his election address, full support for Clause IV, part 4 of Labour's constitution.

Militant has differences with Eric Heffer on a number of important policy issues. These we have debated with him in the past and will continue to do so in the future. Nevertheless in this election he is the only candidate who can legitimately represent the left.

The acid test in this respect, is the record of the candidates in relation to witch-hunts within the party. The McCarthyism of the recent period has only served to divide and weaken Labour in the face of its enemies. Of the four can-

didates, only Eric Heffer has opposed witch-hunts and defended the 'Militant 5'.

On this crucial issue, Neil Kinnock's record is no different to Hattersley, Shore and the right-wing. It is true that many Labour Party members and trade unionists may not see it this way, because of Neil Kinnock's reputation as a left-winger.

But what is his record? His call for abstention rather than support for Tony Benn during the 1981 deputy leadership contest, meant in reality that he campaigned against the candidate who stood for conference policies.

In abstaining, left-wingers like Neil Kinnock handed the election to Denis Healey, and this delayed for a time, an enormous shift to the left inside the Labour Party, which would undoubtedly have taken place had Benn's campaign succeeded.

Whatever the outcome of

the leadership contest, important as that is, the decisive issues facing party members are the policy and programme to take Labour forward, and these must be raised by party members and trade unionists in their branches, as the leadership elections are discussed.

The party's June 9 defeat has posed the question sharply of the need to rebuild the party, as a mass, campaigning party, rooted in industry and the workplace. It needs to win back the confidence and support of working people.

The idea proposed by the right-wing, that this will be achieved by a watering down of conference policy, by the adoption of a more 'moderate' stand, has been proved by bitter experience to be a blind alley. The task in the weeks and months ahead, during and after the leadership elections, is to ponder the experience, not

just of Labour's defeat, but of the decades preceding it.

The party's decline is the consequence of 17 years of Labour government since the war, in which the right-wing held the reins. There is the responsibility for the scepticism that grips large layers of the working class.

The Labour Party must distance itself from the Labour governments of the past which, to paraphrase Tony Benn used the capitalist crisis they always inherited as "the excuse to postpone rather than the occasion to introduce fundamental change". Workers faced with social and economic crisis in the future will seek fundamental change as the only way out. Only a Labour Party with socialist policies can offer such change.

With Friends Like This

IT WAS bad enough that the President of the TUC and union general secretary Frank Chapple should support an SDP candidate in opposition to Labour during the election.

Now he seems intent on rubbing salt into the wounds of Labour's defeat. The rank and file of the labour and trade union movement will be incensed by the article Chapple wrote for *The Times* on June 17.

In it Chapple scandalously declared that the two arms of the labour movement—the Labour Party and trade unions—should split and go their separate ways. The unions, he said, should not be tied to the "no-hope Labour Party".

Chapple refuses to understand that the Labour Party was born out of the trade unions, when the early pioneers of the movement realised that the conditions of the working class could not be protected and taken forward by industrial action alone, but in addition a political force was needed.

The two arms of the movement cannot be separated—if that was to happen it would leave the labour movement and therefore the strength of the working class enormously weakened.

That is why the Tories are intent on breaking the iron link between Labour and the unions, understanding it is the workers' front line of defence against the Tories'



attempts to push through the policies of deprivation. This is even understood by Len Murray, general secretary of the TUC, who sharply criticised Chapple for his comments.

Actions by right-wing union leaders such as Chapple in no small way aided the Tories to victory. Yet Chapple now uses the Tory victory as an excuse for pushing forward his demands of taking the unions on a 'non-political' road.

In the article Chapple claims the movement is faced with a choice between "socialism or survival". He claims in response to Labour's election defeat, that "...it is Labour and not the Alliance which is a wasted vote in nearly half the country....If we had not been so completely tied to the (Labour) Party's coat-tails we could have urged our members to vote SDP or Liberal if they had a better chance of winning..."

This is a strange logic. Despite Labour's defeat it is still the main opposition party. The Liberals only picked

up a few seats, whereas Chapple's friends in the SDP were reduced to a rump of six seats.

Certainly, especially in the south, thousands of workers were wooed by the siren voices of sections of the media, the Alliance itself and right-wing elements like Chapple, into tactical voting to keep the Tories out.

But if union leaders like Chapple had used their positions to lead a bold campaign of decisive support for Labour, this drift could have been halted. For example, in the heart of the south, Brighton Kempton, a bold and vigorous campaign by the local Labour Party, against all the odds, kept Labour's support steady

pushing the Alliance into third place.

Chapple's answer to the Tories is not a bold fight to push them out. Instead he floats the idea of proportional representation, even though he says it would "probably mean that a socialist government could never be elected". Certainly the bosses' class would be prepared to introduce PR if they were faced by a left Labour Party which looked set to take overall power under the present parliamentary system. And Chapple by his own admission would accept this. He argues it would be a price worth paying in order to protect the trade union movement.

But even if under PR a coalition government could be cobbled together by the wet Tories and the Alliance, would the trade unions be any less threatened?

Chapple has a short memory. The arch-Tory 'wet' Ted Heath also tried to shackle the unions under the Industrial Relations Act and drive down workers' living standards during the 1970-74

government. He was only beaten by massive struggles by the labour movement.

And the experience in Liverpool where until recently the Liberals were in control, show that the Liberals are just as prepared to wield the axe as the Tories.

The reactionary policies of the present Tory government are not because Thatcher, Tebbit and co are somehow 'nasty people', but because they are carrying out—albeit enthusiastically—the dictates of a capitalist system in crisis. Liberals and soggy Tories would be under the same pressure.

At a time of mass unemployment, falling living conditions and the destruction of public services, it is a time for unity of the labour movement—united around socialist policies with a democratically accountable leadership to fend off the Tory attacks which demand sacrifices from the workers in the name of profit. To use Chapple's own words, "Anything less would be a betrayal of the working people."

POST-ELECTION RALLY CALLED BY MILITANT, THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR AND YOUTH 'Thatcherism—the fightback starts now!'

Speakers:

Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant)
Ted Grant (Political Editor, Militant)
Terry Fields MP
Dave Nellist MP
Rod Fitch (Brighton Kempton LP)
Eddie McParland (London Labour Party Executive)

Monday 27 June, Friends Meeting House, Euston Road, London NW1 (opp. Euston Station) Doors open 7.15 pm

A Worker in Parliament

TERRY FIELDS, Labour newly elected MP for Liverpool Broadgreen described to *Militant* what it was like to enter Parliament.

The first day back after the election was obviously exceptional, with hundreds of new MPs trying to find their way around. It was a real madhouse. I'd have been completely lost if a member of the staff hadn't shown me around.

The first thing that strikes you is the ecclesiastical atmosphere, and the cloistered feel of the place. It's known as the most exclusive club in Britain, and that's true. Everyone is very chummy—MPs meet up with their buddies from all parties. It was like an old boys reunion. Everyone was rushing

around trying to get all the form filling and formalities out of the way, mixed up with loads of flunkies and officials dressed in archaic fancy dress. I see the opposition as class enemies, and though I'd obviously expected it, it was still quite a shock to encounter the chummy relationships between the "old hands".

There was a long queue with MP's pushing and shoving to take the oath of allegiance to the Queen and the law. More than one Labour MP took it with

fingers crossed and standing on one leg.

The atmosphere in the Chamber is unreal. People just jeering and shouting at each other. It is all a very sixth form debating society 'Yah-boo' mentality. A lot of the business seems to take place in the tea rooms. For people used to the democracy and fair play of the labour movement the conduct of the debates and standards of speeches is quite a shock. If you are isolated you'd be intimidated and soon conform to the atmosphere and ritual nature of the place.

However I'm concerned with the United Biscuits closure in Liverpool, and I'm hoping to make my maiden speech soon on that issue.

Gentle persuasion

IT IS AMAZING how the bosses and their organisations rage at Labour candidates during an election campaign, yet when they are elected they begin intensive lobbying and courting them within days.

Within the first few days of taking up his position as Labour MP for Coventry South East, Dave Nellist, like all 649 other MPs, was showered with reams of glossy letters and leaflets. He has received fawning letters from the British Road Federation, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders and the British Maritime League, not to mention the *Business Leaders Manifesto* from the Institute of Directors, and many others.

On the international front there was a no doubt unbiased

document on the situation in the Lebanon—from the Israeli embassy. There was also a rambling press release from multi-millionaire Sir James Goldsmith on his latest court battles with the media.

In it Goldsmith says, "I was invited by the Media Committee of the Conservative Party to give evidence on the infiltration of the media by the far left." This discovery will be news to Dave Nellist who was hounded by the Tory press in his election campaign.

The Association of British Chambers of Commerce wrote to "congratulate" Dave on his election to Parliament. You can bet there were champagne bottles popping in the Association's Shaftesbury Avenue headquarters in London's West End at the news of his Coventry South East victory!

The Engineering Employers' Federation went even further. "Dear Mr Nellist", they say, "Congratulations

on your excellent win". However, they also included their publication which calls for "strike-free operations" in the public sector, and even means that the economy is being wrecked by "militant union action"!

These are the very Tory ideologues that Dave stood against in the election—which is why he got such "excellent" support from Coventry's engineering workers.

Nearly all the bosses' letters urge the MPs to "put our document at the top of your pile". Not content with the overwhelming backing of Fleet Street, big business leaders obviously spare no efforts in their attempts to lobby and contact MPs personally.

This avalanche of propaganda to one MP in one week emphasises the importance of Labour MPs keeping a firm contact with the rank and file, so as not to lose touch with their real purpose—to represent working people.

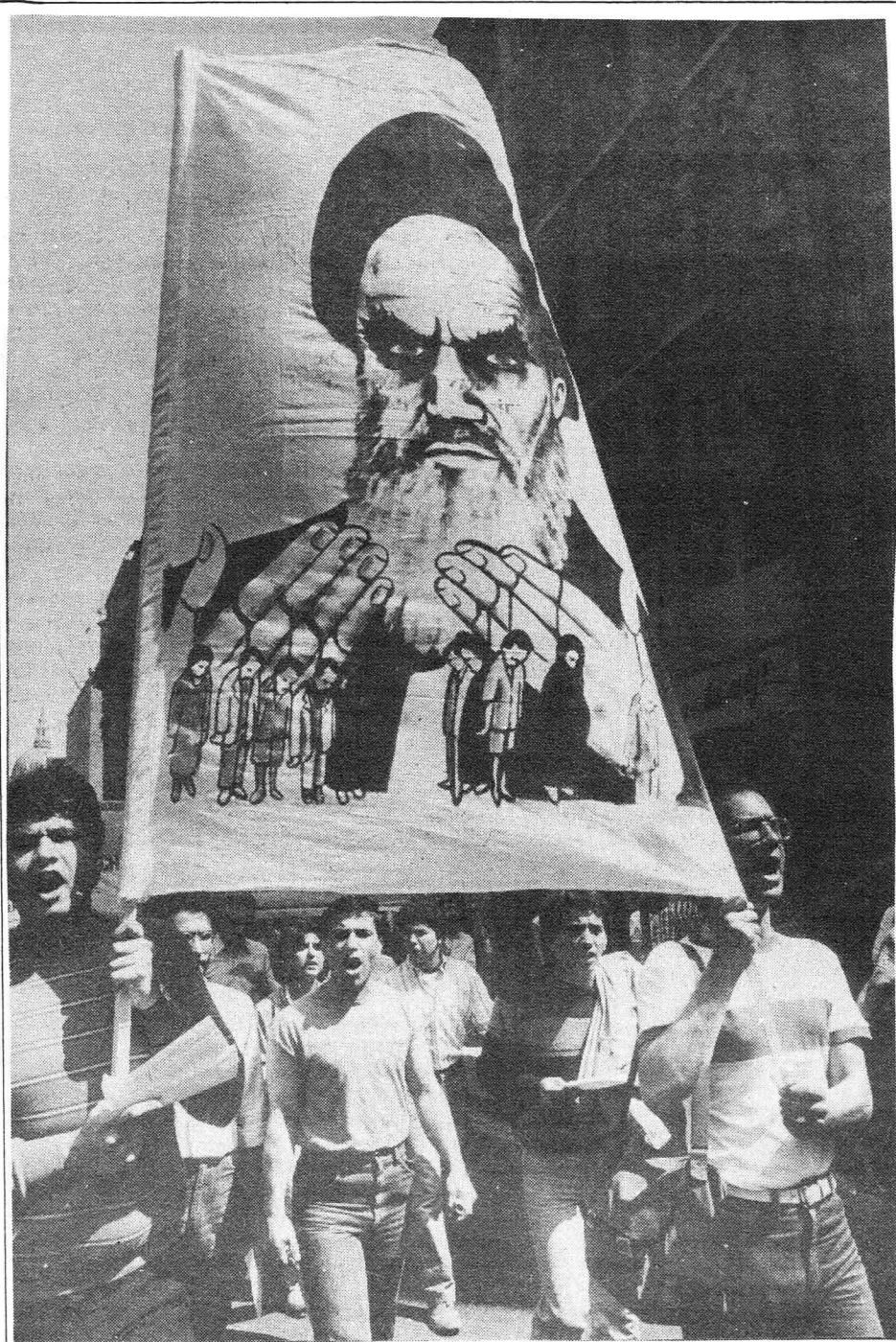


Photo: D. Doran

Iranian students protested in London on Monday against the repressive rule of Khomeini in Iran. The day marked the second anniversary of a peaceful demonstration in Tehran in 1981 that was fired upon by Khomeini's supporters. Since then tens of thousands, including labour activists, have been executed or imprisoned by the regime. The march, addressed by Richard Balfe, Labour MEP, was supported by the Labour Party and also the general secretaries of the ISTC, TGWU and COHSE.

GENERAL ELECTION—how the regions fared

South West

THE South West Region of the country has now only one Labour MP.

Undoubtedly the boundary changes were consciously used by the Tories to split up and carve out the Labour areas. This, coupled with the general swing to the Tories and SDP/Liberals, led to a whole series of safe Labour seats and Labour marginals falling to the Tories.

For Labour activists and the left generally, the biggest blow is the loss of Tony Benn, who will not be in Parliament for the first time in 33 years.

There were high spots in the campaign here. Bristol East Labour Party organised over 15 public meetings with Tony Benn at each. The response at these meetings was excellent. The workers and youth who attended showed a real

determination to fight Thatcher.

The 'Youth for Labour' rally with a demonstration through the town also had a good response, with hundreds of leaflets and stickers being eagerly taken by the shoppers.

At one Sunday afternoon meeting on the Police Bill, over 100 workers attended.

However, these activities aside, it was felt by

some that the campaign was generally low key, which unfortunately allowed the Tory in by a couple of thousand votes. For example, there were no mass canvasses held on a Sunday.

No doubt the lessons of the election defeat in this area will be discussed fully so that in future the mistakes and errors made will not be repeated and Labour will win all the seats lost on June 9.

Eastern

THE MAIN and most significant debate at the conference of the Eastern Region Labour Party on June 18 was on Labour's defeat in the election.

In the 1974-79 period, Labour had 12 MPs in the region. Now there are only two.

A large section of the conference of 200 delegates felt that the Tories didn't so much win the election as that

Labour lost. Evidence was given that large sections of potential Labour voters—the youth, hospital workers, the unemployed—deserted Labour in their droves. There was no inspiration to vote Labour and beat the Tories.

Delegate after delegate pointed out that Labour's policies on a broad range of issues didn't come across. It was felt for too long the leaders of the party had turned inward—attacks within the party had wasted much time and energy—Labour's

Scotland

ALTHOUGH a mood of resignation has existed for several days in the Glasgow area, with many people realising that the Tories would probably win the election, *Militant* sales here have reached all-time highs.

One major success in Glasgow was undoubtedly Cathcart. The Tories' major onslaught failed and the Labour majority of over 4,000 was a body blow to what the Tories hoped to be a major success in the West of Scotland.

Unfortunately in Hillhead the same was not the case. Neil Carmichael, the Labour candidate was defeated by over 1,000 votes by Woy Jenkins. Jenkins was greeted with derision as he entered the count at Kelvin Hall, and was hardly audible when he made his acceptance speech.

programme was not explained to the workers.

This was best explained by one delegate who argued that "Attending a general committee and one ward meeting a month isn't enough—it's the other 28 days that count. Socialist policies, no matter how impressive, are class policies and must be got across."

"The campaign to win the election is not a three or four week campaign but a continuous campaign. Let the campaign to win power begin now."

Thanks from Brighton

Militant has received the following letters of thanks from Labour officers in Brighton:

Dear Comrades,

I am writing to thank all the comrades that came to help get elected what should have been, Brighton's first workers' MP. It is tragic that if the gutter press had printed the true facts about Rod, instead of a slur campaign, and the Soft Doughnut Party had gone where they belong into obscurity the result would have been totally reversed.

The dedication of the comrades, and the way they organised things, should be a lesson to all the other Party workers in how to conduct themselves. We have proved, beyond any doubt, that we are not the trouble makers but people dedicated to seeing a government with policies of a socialist ideal.

We are now moving into an era where people are going to realise their tragic mistake in voting Tory or

SDP and will see how capitalists like to dictate in a democratic society. I would say to the comrades do not give up hope, as far as history shows, right will conquer over wrong and good will boot out capitalists.

Yours fraternally,
R Davies,
Labour Councillor
Brighton

Just the beginning

Dear Comrades, We would publicly like to thank all those who came to help us in Brighton Kemp-town during the election campaign. Although sadly victory was not ours, this should not be seen as a defeat but the beginning of the real battle for socialism.

Yours fraternally
Rod Fitch
Brighton Kemp-town candidate
Nobby Clarke
Brighton Kemp-town CIP Election Agent

Two weeks to go

£32,000 To raise

| Area | Received | % of target achieved | Target 9 July |
|-----------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Eastern | 837 | | 2700 |
| East Midlands | 879 | | 2600 |
| Humberside | 528 | | 1300 |
| London East | 1048 | | 3300 |
| London West | 542 | | 1650 |
| London South | 1703 | | 2500 |
| Manchester & Lancs | 1137 | | 3000 |
| Merseyside | 1192 | | 3400 |
| Northern | 766 | | 3550 |
| Scotland East | 677 | | 2100 |
| Scotland West | 892 | | 3000 |
| Southern | 1517 | | 3150 |
| South West | 623 | | 2000 |
| Wales East | 524 | | 1500 |
| Wales West | 370 | | 2100 |
| West Midlands | 627 | | 3100 |
| Yorkshire | 942 | | 3400 |
| Others | 2833 | | 5000 |
| Total received | 17637 | | 50000 |

TARGET—£50,000 BY JULY 9.

By Kath White

THIS WEEK we are appealing to all our supporters, all our regular readers and also our new readers to make donations of "tenners" or "fivers" to get us back on target.

The struggle for socialism must continue; even more so now the Tories are back in power. In fact, we have to build up our resources now to ensure that Labour wins the next battle. We have to build up our resources to counter any possible attacks from the right-wing dominated NEC of the Labour Party in the future.

But we need help. We need your donations to guarantee our continued fightback against the Tories. Workers' donations built this paper and we need workers' donations now to ensure a successful fightback. In the past your response to our appeals has been tremendous. So, despite the vast sums spent by all our supporters during the general election helping to the campaign we hope you

will be able to rally to our appeal again.

Remember, every donation we receive is another step forward. It's up to you. Thank you to the supporters who attended the *Militant* public meeting in Liverpool which raised £526! Another public meeting in Bristol raised £73, one held in North East London raised £87 and a Leeds Election Rally raised £36.

An appeal sheet from Brighton supporters collected over £21. Are you taking your appeal sheet round your paper sales?

Thanks to TGWU 5/909 branch from Birmingham for their donation of £20, a collecting tin at ASLEF National Conference raised over £7, NUPE members Hull, £3, and AUEW No. 12 members Hull £3.

A London NUR member gave us conference expenses of £80. Many thanks comrade. Thanks also to Tony Kearns, UCW Broadgreen £15, P Crack Bristol South East Labour Party £15, and D Robertson Riverside CLP £10.

A donation of £5 came with a letter which said

**Total received
This week:
£1637**

"Congrats to Terry Fields and Dave Nellist", P Brooks Bermondsey £5, D Richards Aberystwyth Labour Party Young Socialists £5, Bill Murray Bromsgrove APEX £5, J Smith TGWU Sheffield £5, F Morgan Riverside CLP £2, Mr & Mrs Arnold two Old Aged Pensioners from Nottingham £2, G Clack Wimbledon LPYS £2, D Neale Partick LPYS £2, J Maxwell-Taylor Coventry £2 (he has promised us £2 every week), Frank Porter who donates £1 a week, Simon Duerden unemployed from Sheffield £1, Sarah Rold (Branch secretary, Southend NUPE) £1, Brian and Dorothy White from Maidstone £1.40 and D Queen East Kilbride LPYS 50p.

There is still a fortnight left to have a final push on

the raffle tickets. Supporters from Southampton have sold £53 so far (and one supporter has sold most of those), Hull £47 and Rotherham £34. Has every supporter in your area bought a book yet? And there is still time to organise a last minute social. An election social in Hull raised over £54.

How many people won from betting on the election results? How about a donation to the fighting fund?

How many people attending their trade union conferences received good expenses? How about a donation?

So there might only be 2 weeks to go but there are still plenty of opportunities of raising the rest of the target. With your help we can do it.

How we boosted sales



Read Militant! Sell Militant!

DAVE FARRAR (Circulation Manager) interviewed **ALEX PANDOLFO**.

DF: How have the sellers in South East Lancs increased their paper sales by 86%

over the year?

AP: Two ways. One by having a drive on paying the money in regularly and by setting up sales in all the town centres in South Lancashire.

DF: What has helped in setting up the sales?

AP: We started in Rochdale, selling in competition with the NF and a lot of people bought the paper as we were combatting fascist ideas.

DF: How do you sell *Militant* on the street sales?

AP: We shout slogans and generally attempt to attract attention; we are not trying to start street meetings. We

also found flyposting useful as it got the paper known and created an audience for the ideas. We also held readers' meetings in each area and with leafletting also got us known to a wider audience.

DF: How are you planning to increase sales further?

AP: We are now establishing sales at the dole and encouraging sellers to build up rounds at work as well as expanding the sellers' own local rounds. We are also looking at selling at the major workplaces and the important trade union meetings.

ads

CLASSIFIED: 10p per word, minimum 10 words.
SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres.
All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY.

Militant Readers' Meetings

CHESTER-LE-STREET. Speaker: Dave Cotterill at 7.30 pm, Sunday 26 June at the Labour Hall.

COVENTRY. Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor, *Militant*), Dave Nellist MP at 7.30 pm Wednesday 29 June at Methodist Central Hall. Crèche provided.

CARDIFF. Speakers: Ted Grant (Political Editor, *Militant*), Terry Fields MP on 30 June (details from local sellers).

TUNBRIDGE WELLS. Speaker: Ray Apps at 8 pm Thursday 30 June at Len Fagg Hall, 7a St John's Road.

BRADFORD. Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor, *Militant*), Pat Wall on 10 July (details from local sellers).

EDINBURGH. Speakers: Ted Grant (Political Editor, *Militant*), Dave Nellist MP (details from local sellers).

MARXIST WEEKEND SCHOOL MIDDLESBROUGH

Saturday 9-Sunday 10 July

AT TEESIDE POLY, MIDDLESBROUGH
(in town centre, off Borough Road)

Courses on: 1. Introduction to Marxism; 2. Internationalism. 3. Marxism and the British labour movement. 4. Permanent Revolution.

Saturday evening Disco.

Sunday afternoon, 2 pm, Rally. Speakers: Ted Grant (Political Editor, *Militant*) and Dave Nellist MP.

Cost £5.00 (£2.50 for unemployed and school students). Crèche provided.

MARXIST WEEKEND SCHOOL LONDON

Saturday 2-Sunday 3 July

AT QUEEN MARY COLLEGE STUDENTS UNION, MILE END, LONDON E.1.

Courses on: 1. Introduction to Marxism; 2. Internationalism; 3. Marxism and the British labour movement; 4. The Permanent Revolution.

Saturday evening, 7.30 pm, Film *Missing* and disco.

Sunday afternoon, 2 pm, Rally. Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor, *Militant*) and Terry Fields MP.

Cost: Full weekend £6.00 (or £3.50 for unemployed and school students). Sunday sessions only £3.00 (£1.75 for unemployed and school students). Crèche provided.

CLASSIFIED

Congratulations to Lorna and Tony Hindle on the birth of a son, Karl, 20 June. From Preston *Militant* supporters.

BLACK YOUTH RALLY to be held London 2-3 July now postponed. Further details of future venue and date will appear in later issues.

WHAT WE STAND FOR: THE PROGRAMME OF *MILITANT* 20p each. 30p for one, including post. 10 or more post free. Available from World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

INAUGURAL Meeting. Labour CND, West Taunton CLP Meeting Rooms, 24 East Reach, Taunton. Sunday 26 June 2.30 pm. "Protect Composite 81". LP members only.

URGENT... URGENT

MILITANT SUMMER RAFFLE

1st prize: Video equipment worth over £400.

2nd prize: Colour TV worth over £200.

Eight other prizes, electrical goods, books.

Draw 9 July. Tickets 10p from local *Militant* sellers.

SOUTH WALES MILITANT SUMMER CAMP

August Bank Holiday

Friday 26 August-Monday 29 August

For the eighth time we are organising our highly successful camp in the beautiful surroundings of Horton on the Gower Coast (10 minutes' walk from Port Eynon and Horton beaches).

It will provide not only an excellent introduction to the ideas of Marxism, but also a superb holiday for the family. Price £10. Write to 181 Hanover Street, Swansea SA1 6BP.



Last year's conference against the witch-hunt filled Wembley Conference Centre

Photo: Militant

And now for the real Wembley rally

"COULD LABOUR have held a rally like this?" boomed Thatcher addressing a Young Tories' election rally at the Wembley Conference Centre. Ignorant as ever, the Young Tories roared "NO!".

Ignorant that is of the 3,000 strong conference supported by *Militant* against the witch-hunt on September 11 last year at the Wembley Conference Centre.

Now we can prove the Tories doubly wrong. Saturday September 10 is the date for the national *Militant* rally titled "Marxism in our time—Socialist policies for Labour", to be held at

Wembley again.

The rally will be a real festival of Marxism with discussions ranging from the Russian revolution—including a contribution from 96-year old Anton Neilson, who flew in the Red Army during the civil war and personally knew several of the Bolshevik leaders—through to the struggle for socialism today, with Peter Taaffe, editor of *Militant*, Ted Grant, Dave Nellist MP and Terry Fields MP.

In between speakers, and during the lunch break, archive films will be shown, together with a full

length political feature film at the end of the day (about 5.30-7.30).

There will also be stalls and displays on Marxism, and the development of *Militant*. Not to be forgotten are the children who will be provided with a crèche throughout the day.

Book now, mark the date in your diary, and start making transport arrangements. Publicity material will be available shortly.

Send for tickets now! £2, £1 unemployed (Make cheques to MILITANT RALLY). Write to Militant Rally, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

LPYS election success

DESPITE the defeat of the Labour Party in the General Election, the Labour Party Young Socialists who are without doubt the most outgoing and campaigning section of the party, recruited hundreds of new members up and down the country.

Over 170 applications to join Labour's youth came into the YS office in the past three weeks. All the applications received show the way that the LPYS has continued to grow in spite of the Tory election victory, due largely

to the role of the campaign we fought.

In Scotland, for example, 200 people attended a school students mock election debate at Lasswade High School, Bonnyrigg. In the voting afterwards 170 people supported the LPYS and the other 30 were divided between the Young Conservatives and the SDP. 30 school students applied to join the LPYS after the debate.

Again in Scotland, in Paisley, 70 people attended an eve of poll youth rally and both local Labour MPs praised the role played by the LPYS. As Allen Adams, the new Labour MP for Paisley North, told the local newspaper, "we fought this campaign on the right platform—youth unemployment—and I must thank the Young Socialists for the vital part they played in our success."

SUMMER CAMP

LPYS SUMMER CAMP 1983

◆◆◆◆

Saturday 30 July-Saturday 6 August
Bracelands Campsite, near Coleford, in
the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire
PRICE: £25 for adults; Children under 12
£12.50 (under 3s FREE)

◆◆◆◆

Bring a tent, sleeping bag, stove and
cooking utensils. Food can be bought on
the site from the LPYS campshop or
bring your own.

◆◆◆◆

BOOK NOW! For further details write to
LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

Start the fight-back now!

WITH THE Tories' victory many Young Socialists are asking what do we do now. The answer is to continue to build the LPYS and start organising to defeat the Tories. The LPYS Summer Camp gives us an immediate opportunity to start doing this.

At the Summer Camp we will discuss what is the best way forward for the labour movement. It is clear that youth will not stand another five years of misery and poverty under the Tories, so it is important for us to discuss how to build the LPYS.

There will also be Seminars on the labour movement internationally.

The Camp costs £25 and lasts for a whole week and is held in the Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire. At the Camp we provide a LPYS shop so that you can buy food. We even provide the entertainment! For Summer Camp is not just a political event but a good laugh as well.

You can play all sorts of sports and go to the numerous socials held throughout the week. You also get an opportunity to meet socialists not only from

all over Britain but from other countries as well.

If you've got kids, bring them along: they have a better time than anyone else with loads for them to do. It costs £12.50 for children under 12 and under 3s get in free.

It is now vital that every LPYS branch begin their fund raising to help sponsor the unemployed or school students who want to attend the camp. One way of raising money is to approach newly elected MPs, where the LPYS played a key role in getting them elected, and ask them for a large dona-

tion to help towards covering the costs of getting people to the Summer Camp.

After the election of Thatcher and the Tories this year's summer Camp will be more important than ever before. So don't just sit there and be down in the dumps about the Tories' victory, start the fightback straight away by coming to LPYS Summer Camp.

By Leo Mc Daid

East Belfast: 500 votes for socialism

AGAINST the background of a massive electoral victory for the Tories, socialism has gained a firm foothold in East Belfast.

Only one genuine 'Labour' candidate faced the Tory bigots in Northern Ireland.

The campaign to build a Labour Party has not yet reached fruition so the Labour and Trade Union Group stood one candidate in East Belfast.

We had no national coverage and little local coverage in the media, but we still won 584 votes. 400 copies of the *Militant* were sold and 50 people expressed an interest in joining the Young Socialists and the LTUG. The leaders of the Northern Ireland Congress of Trade Unions should see our vote as the expression of 584 people in East Belfast demanding a Labour Party.

During the campaign the established parties waved green and orange flags at each other, while we quietly built up socialist support in the area. Fear at our growing support from the established parties manifested itself in an attack on Muriel Tang's ideas by the election agent of Peter Robinson, the DUP MP for the area. While we were canvassing, he jumped out of his big car and accused Muriel Tang of being a "Trotskyist and a Bennite" (!). In turn, the DUP agent denied being a Tory, but his friend said they would not vote Labour if they were in Britain! Indeed at his election speech the re-elected DUP MP called for the reintroduction of hanging.

The Democratic Unionist Party won with an 8,000 majority. Its two main rivals, the Official Unionists and the Alliance Party polled over 9,000 each. However, it was significant that at the other end of the poll, the LTUG was only 98 votes behind Sinn Fein and beat the SDLP (519) and the Workers Party (421).

The Workers Party vote was halved since the last election; they have been incapable of building support in protestant areas. No matter how genuine individual members of the Workers

Party are, their party is distasteful to the Protestant working class because they present wishy-washy reformist policies and have an unforgettable connection with the now defunct Official IRA.

The SDLP, who support nationalism and right-wing ideas, always lose their deposit in East Belfast.

The 584 people who voted for us knew we hadn't a chance of winning but voted 'Labour' because all other parties disgusted them and they knew we presented the only alternative to the capitalist system. One old man bent completely in half by rickets (a disease of capitalism) said he had supported Labour all his life and had never voted for either a nationalist or Unionist organisation.

Many of the people who voted for the Alliance Party did so because they wanted to get the DUP MP out of the seat. Once those workers who voted Alliance see that party for what they are—a party of middle class opportunists—they will turn to us.

Now that we are in the area, we will build on the vote and paper sales we have made. The next time we stand in an election in East Belfast we will do so to win electoral victory.

The response in one street typified the whole campaign. Madrid Street runs from Catholic Short Strand into the heart of Protestant East Belfast. In this one street 30 copies of *Militant* were sold. An equal amount were sold on both sides of the 'Peace Line' and two individuals in the street, one a Catholic and one a Protestant, expressed an interest in joining the Young Socialists. No other political party can claim to have achieved this result in East Belfast. Had they campaigned in the same street on both sides they would only have left a trail of anger behind them.

Now we have established a foothold we intend to continue to work and build up the support for Labour and the true ideas of socialism in East Belfast.

By Glenn Simpson
 (Newtonards Road Branch,
 East Belfast LTUG)



Socialism on the doorsteps in East Belfast

Banks rob workforce

WORKING for a High Street Bank is often seen as a very cushy and secure number. This 'security', however, is based upon intimidation.

This intimidation begins the day you agree to employment; you are compelled to hold your account with the bank you work for. The advantages to the bosses are: your salary is immediately ploughed back into the capitalist system, they have direct access to your personal financial position, and by scrutinising cheques they can even find out what you are spending and where.

The contract further prevents staff from working for another bank, unless there is a gap of four years between jobs—in effect you are tied to the same employer for life.

In the past when inflation was well into double figures, the banks claimed that they couldn't afford to pay higher wages because the profits were too small. In the past few years we have seen the banks make huge profits but

wage rises have still been kept well below the national average.

The bosses argue that staff shouldn't think about short-term benefits when they have a secure job and will obtain higher wages as they get promoted. This year the employers offered 4%; ACAS improved this to 5%.

Now the banks have refused to accept any further binding arbitration. The shareholders meanwhile are receiving a 20% increase in dividends. It often takes four years' service to earn £90 per week while many of the younger staff earn less than £50 per week before tax.

Another element of banking is mobility; the management expect all male staff to move within the area.

You are given very little notice of a move so when the transfer comes through, you have about a week to find somewhere to live. The bank doesn't even go out of its way to find accommodation, and should you refuse to move you might as well forget about any further career.

The banks are officially held in high esteem for their

moves towards sex equality, yet it is virtually impossible for a woman to be promoted beyond Grade 2. They are deterred from taking banking examinations, which are essential for any career in a bank.

Therefore, although women are remaining in the bank far longer than they used to, they are still unable to progress at the same speed as most men. Women also find it difficult to obtain a bank mortgage; the management feel that a woman will leave after a few years to start a family so it is not worth going through all the trouble.

An outsider would think that in view of this antagonism the unions would be thriving. Unfortunately the opposite is true. In my branch there are thirty staff and only two union members; I am branded as a troublemaker for being a member of BIFU, the bank workers' union, and standing up for myself.

For too long the staff in banks have sat back in a state of security and prestige; the bosses realise this and take every opportunity to exploit the workforce.

In attempts to keep more of the profits they have attempted to stop overtime. This doesn't mean that we clock off at 5 o'clock though. Barclays have a wonderful system whereby overtime can only be claimed after a full half hour; they keep you working up to 5.25 pm then kick you out. This gives them 25 minutes' work and production completely free.

The one benefit that I have been able to draw from my five years in Barclays Bank is that it really shows you how the other side live. The well heeled customer is allowed to get away with murder. They can, and do, treat the staff like slaves because they know that just one complaint will lose somebody a job.

It is about time we woke up to what is going on around us, built a strong workers' movement in the clearing banks and took them over.

By a BIFU member



• Reviews • Reviews •

CHRISTINE JONES reviews Men Should Weep by 7:84 Theatre Company (Scotland) on at Theatre Royal, Stratford, East London until 2 July

THIS IS a powerful evocation of working class life in Glasgow of the 1930s. It is an excellent production and all the characters are well-portrayed and believable.

The strongest characters in the play are women, on whom the burden of keeping body and soul together mainly lies. Maggie is the mother of seven children, helps look after her mother-in-law, her husband is unemployed and they live in a tenement.

The privations of life are strikingly shown. For example, Maggie's sister helps out by bringing food for the family; this week—a tin of baked beans. Maggie and her husband sleep in blankets on the kitchen floor, as they do not have

Opening 2nd June for a limited time

7:84 THEATRE COMPANY SCOTLAND presents

MEN SHOULD WEEP

Previews: Tuesday 31st May and Wednesday 1st June
Press Night: 2nd June at 7.30 pm
Seats: £1.00 - £5.00

Concessions: Monday - Thursday
£1.00 for best seats for OAP's, Students and Claimants.

enough room or beds.

The other residents in the tenement play a part in the Morrison family's lives as "it's only rich blokes who can keep themselves to themselves. Poor folk have to depend on themselves".

The influence on the characters of socialist ideas is hinted at in the conversations. John, Maggie's hus-

band, spent his time down at the library and we assume he is a socialist. However, the problems that the family face are not directly blamed upon the capitalist system.

Maggie's sister-in-law blames the situation on John who has made no effort to take Bertie, who has TB, to hospital, pushed for a council house or tried to get a job. However, the social problems such as crime and prostitution are shown to be as a result of the economic circumstances in which people live.

In order to survive Alec, the oldest son snatches purses from old ladies. And Jenny, the oldest daughter, becomes a prostitute.

The programme accompanying the production states that, "any theatre that concentrates on emotional plots and does not question the structures that underlie its characters lives is being political by default". It also points out that today, nearly forty years after the play was written, "roughly 10,000,000 people are suffering from poverty, over 4,000,000 of them in families with children. About 50,000 are received as officially homeless in any one year".

a millionaire and the poor don't exist.

The most shocking thing about the strike, which took place only nine years ago, was the ferocity with which it was fought. The coal bosses hired gunmen, and the pickets were regularly shot at and machine gunned. The pickets responded by arming themselves and adopting more effective and militant tactics.

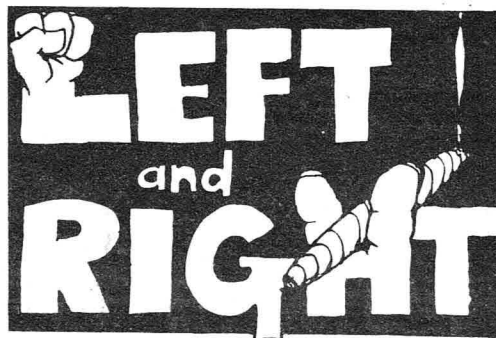
A settlement was only reached after the brutal murder of a young picket. The class consciousness and militancy of the miners, and particularly their wives, shines through, a clear pointer to the potential for building a party of labour in the bastion of world capitalism.

Paul Traynor reviews **Harlan County USA**

Harlan County

To people whose vision of the USA is the world of Dallas and Dynasty, watching *Harlan County USA* (Channel Four, 15 June) must have come as quite an eyeopener.

An Oscar winning documentary of a miners' strike in Kentucky the film showed the reality of life for millions of American workers, a million miles from the glossy dream world of the TV where everyone is



Peering into the past

Thatcher wasted no time in turning the clock back after returning to office. In her enthusiasm for the Victorian era, she's gone even further back. She's resurrected the feudal practice of creating hereditary peers, in disrepute since 1964.

While Tory 'wet' Francis Pym got the sack, William Whitelaw, former Home Secretary was made a hereditary Viscount. Whitelaw's main "problem", characteristic for such a blimpish relic, was his search for a male heir to the title. He doesn't consider it "appropriate" that the title should go to his eldest daughter on his death.

The next recipient of the controversial honour is likely to be that well known socialist, George Thomas, former Labour MP and Speaker of the House of Commons. Other likely future beneficiaries of this undemocratic procedure, according to *The Times*, are Sir Keith Joseph and Lord Hailsham of St Marylebone, currently 'only' a life peer.

The Tories talk about defending 'Parliamentary democracy'. In reality only half of Parliament is elected—the other half is appointed. And now they are ensuring that more descendants of 'notables' will have a say in how the country is run, purely through an accident of birth.

Jenkins hits jackpot

Roy Jenkins' dream of becoming Prime Minister may lie shattered, but at least it gives him time to count up his finances. For he is very wealthy indeed. The Labour Party which he now so viciously attacks, gave him his career, and he has profited mightily from it.

After depending on the efforts of rank and file party activists to get him elected, he totally ignored party policy and went off to head the EEC, earning a salary of £89,000 a year. Since leav-

ing it in 1981, he was given half pay, an arrangement which does not end until 1984 followed in a couple of years by his EEC pension of £200 a week.

In addition to his parliamentary salary, and allowances he also gets £10,000 a year (plus chauffeur-driven car) as a part-time director of the Morgan Grenfell merchant bank. We can expect a few more companies to be offering him such posts, now he is no longer leader. But the really big money may still lie ahead. For it is rumoured that he will now start writing his memoirs. And the estimated price of such a work is around £250,000.

Wining with Anna

By now you will have read and re-read the account of how Anna Ford threw wine at her former TV AM employer. ("Plonk" was the *Sun's* imaginative contribution to world literature.)

But what may have escaped your attention is who else was at the do, described by the *Evening Standard* as "a post-election celebration" and elsewhere as just a binge. Amongst the former US diplomats, Tory MPs, publishers, TV personalities was none other than Labour right-winger Jim Callaghan.

Perhaps he feels more at home with these supporters of nuclear weapons than he does at Labour Party meetings. And with his wealth he can mingle more as a social equal with the rich than he can with Labour's rank and file.

Labour say he's black—Tories say he's an "illegal immigrant"

Remember that infamous Tory advert about not being black but being British. Well Louis Providence may well be thinking about it now. He has lived in Britain for twenty years, since coming over from St Vincent in the West Indies. He joined the Navy and as a petty officer, served through the Falklands' battles on board HMS Cardiff.

But when he came back, the Tories had a surprise waiting for him. They said he wasn't British, because of their new Nationality Act. If he wanted citizenship he would have to try by filling in an application form, price £70.

РОССИЙСКАЯ СОЦИАЛЬНО-ДЕМОКРАТИЧЕСКАЯ РАБОЧАЯ ПАРТИЯ

ИСКРА

„Из искры возгорится пламя“
Ответа декабристов Пушкину

№ 1

ДЕКАБРЬ 1900 ГОДА

№ 1

НАСТУПАЮЩИЕ ЗАДАЧИ НАШЕГО ДВИЖЕНИЯ

Русская социал-демократия не раз уже заявляла, что важнейшей политической задачей нашего рабочего движения является демократическая революция, совершение политической свободы. Это означало прежде всего то, что мы представляем русскую социал-демократию, а также русский „Ок. Труда“, это движение для ст. рабочей массы трудящихся и представителей революционной социал-демократической организации, образованной весной 1900 года (Социал-демократическая Рабочая Партия). Но не только...

человек вышел от переломки... (The text continues with a detailed analysis of the political situation in Russia at the time, discussing the role of the working class and the need for a democratic revolution.)

...и так же тогда... (The text continues with further political commentary and analysis.)

НИКОЛАЙМЪ ЛЕНИНЪ

(Вопросы 20-го марта 1926 г., номер 7-го номера ИСКРА)
Со смертью старейшего члена старейшей социал-демократической революционной организации нашей страны, нашего товарища Николая Ильича Ленина, мы вспоминаем его великого вклада в революционную борьбу и в историю нашей партии.



'ISKRA'-AND THE BIRTH OF BOLSHEVISM

A look at the history of the workers' press can give us ideas and inspiration for our own political activity.

This applies particularly to the history of the Marxist—as opposed to modern-day Stalinist—press in Russia, because Russia remains the only country where the workers have consciously overthrown capitalist exploitation for good.

The newspaper of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) was born into a backward land of brutal repression. The Tsarist empire spread over a sixth of the world and 130 million peasants. When the first issue of *Iskra* came out in December 1900, Russian industry and the Russian working class were still relatively new.

Although the working class was small, it was concentrated in huge factories and big industrial districts within the main cities. This concentration, in contrast to the wide scattering of the peasantry, gave it a social significance well out of proportion with its numerical size.

“WE DECLARED WAR ON THE AUTOCRACY. OUR WEAPON—THE WORD” —TROTSKY

Most workers were young and from peasant families. These two factors made for a very revolutionary working class. Lacking the years of discipline of factory life suffered by their European brothers, they were less willing to submit to the system.

Russia was ruled with an iron fist, strikes were bloodily put down. Democratic rights were unknown to Russian workers. Such were the conditions in which the workers' press began.

In the 1890's the first illegal leaflets, printed on home-made hand presses and hectographs, were

secretly distributed around the factories. These leaflets soon became a common feature. In every city where there were factories, several attempts would be made by small circles of revolutionaries—some radical students and some workers—to produce leaflets for the workers.

Every attempt would end with the circle being smashed by the police and its participants suffering imprisonment and exile—or sometimes a worse fate. The widespread but short-lived nature of these circles, and the high hopes they had, is indicated by the proliferation one-sheet local newspapers; they hardly ever got beyond issue number one or possibly number two.

Trotsky, who collaborated with *Iskra*, was himself twice exiled to Siberia, and twice he escaped. He wrote of this period: “Hiding in the nooks and crannies of ‘legal’ society, we had declared war on the autocracy, a struggle for life or death. What was our weapon? The word.”

“If anyone were to calculate the number of hours of prison and exile our party paid for each revolutionary word, the figures

would be horrifying—a gruesome statistic of vital energy and life's blood!

“On the long road strewn with traps and pitfalls, there stand between the illegal writer and the illegal reader a number of illegal intermediaries: the typesetter, the carrier, the distributor. What a chain of effort and danger! One false step and the work of all is lost.

“How many printed presses were confiscated before they were able to commence work! How much literature was burned in the courtyards of the gendarmie offices before it



St Petersburg Socialist Group 1895. Seated centre Lenin, right Martov.

was able to reach the reader! How much work wasted, how many forces paralysed, how many existences ruined!”

But the revolutionary spirit of socialism could not easily be crushed! The generation which had gained its own hard practical experience in the 1890's produced leaders for the future battles. Among those who survived this period of danger and struggle were Lenin and the other editors of *Iskra*: Plekhanov, Martov, Zasulich, Axelrod and Potresov.

Lenin himself was exiled for five years. Like the others, he was forced to continue his political work in various countries of western Europe.

Iskra had to be printed abroad—first Germany, then London, finally Geneva—and smuggled into Russia. Work in exile posed many practical difficulties and some succumbed to the emigré atmosphere which tended to turn class fighters into sterile academics (a bit like Ruskin College!).

On the positive side, was the close contact the Iskraists were able to develop with the workers' parties of Europe. In most European countries the workers had already won from the bosses elementary democratic rights like the

right to strike, the right to organise and a free press as well as the vote.

Powerful mass workers' parties, trade unions and labour newspapers were built both as a cause and a consequence of these gains. In those days practically all the parties of the Socialist International, with the exception of the nascent British Labour Party, regarded themselves as Marxist.

The European workers had come to Marxist conclusions. *Iskra* passed on this experience, this Marxist theory to the politically less developed working class of Russia.

Practically all the material *Iskra* received from Russia was published in its columns. Lenin made repeated appeals for more articles by the workers themselves to make *Iskra* an authentic workers' paper. The editors avidly read the letters sent from Russia in code and written in invisible ink.

Iskra completely defeated the anti-Marxist trends in the workers' movement. The most important of these were the “Economists”, the gist of whose ideas was that, “economic (i.e. trade union) struggle is for the workers, politics is for the liberals”. In practice this meant leaving the workers under the political influence of middle class radicals.

ANDY BEADLE examines the contribution made by *Iskra* ('The Spark') in the development of the Russian socialist movement. Photomontage above includes masthead of first edition of *Iskra*.

Such had been the policy of the British trade unions in supporting the Liberals at the end of the last century before the workers had learnt the need for their own Labour Party. Despite their verbal radicalism, the economists gave the workers no perspective of overthrowing Tsarism but confined them to eternal trade union struggle in illegal conditions!

allies in the fight for democracy.

In reality, capitalism felt safer on the side of feudal reaction than with a revolutionary working class they could not control. The Mensheviks' persistence in their mistaken analysis was to gradually drive them away from socialism and towards class collaboration.

In 1903 the editorial board

“FROM A SPARK A FLAME WILL FLARE UP” ON ISKRA MASTHEAD

Iskra and the numerous local leaflets it inspired, won the hearts and minds of the politically thinking workers to socialist ideas. Its reports of workers' struggles in Russia and abroad were the only spark in the darkness of Tsarist repression. It gave hope and inspiration that the time would not be long before the people would rise in revolt and gain their liberty in a workers' and peasants' Russia.

Printed on cheap paper, a single-sheet monthly—with no photos, of course—copies of *Iskra* were passed around the factories until they were in tatters and unreadable. Illiterate workers would gather round to hear the articles being read out. Within a year *Iskra* became a fortnightly—a remarkable achievement under the conditions of the time.

Such was the victory of *Iskra* over “Economism” that these same middle class intellectuals crept into the Marxist movement themselves. They developed into a tendency which from the 1903 RSDLP Congress became known as “Menshevism”.

Of course the courage of some of these people, in fighting the Tsarist tyranny, is beyond doubt. But they regarded the capitalists as

of *Iskra* fell into the hands of the Mensheviks. The “Bolsheviks”, who represented a majority of the Iskraists, especially among the workers, continued to build upon the foundations laid by the old *Iskra* in other publications—later on in *Pravda*.

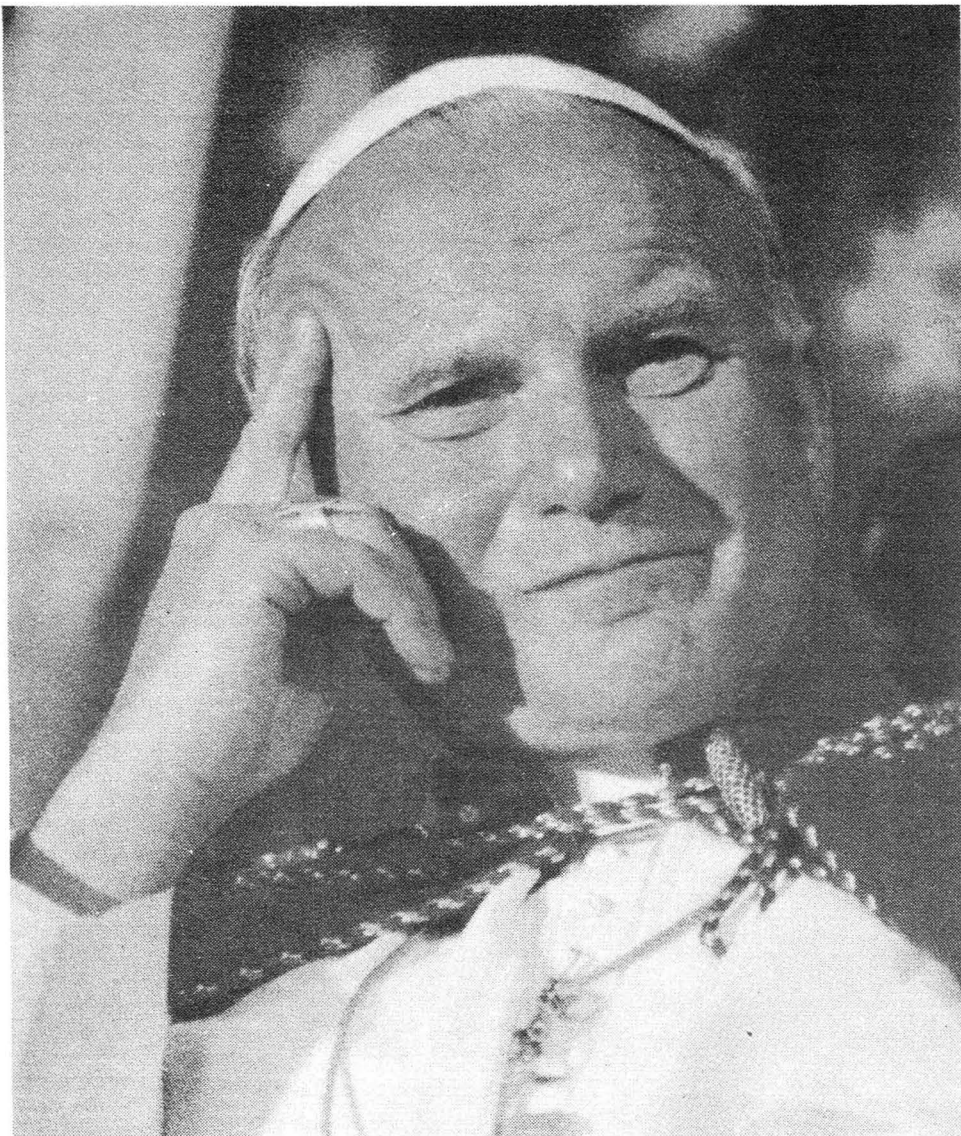
Iskra is Russian for “The Spark”. A modest name, but on its masthead was the quotation, “from a spark a flame will flare up”. *Iskra* lit the flame of Bolshevism among the Russian workers which was to lead to the greatest revolutionary conflagration in history. Under conditions which made organisation so difficult, the workers' press naturally took on a particular importance.

Of course today the world is a very different place from 1900. The working class is incomparably larger and more organised both in Britain and internationally. Democratic rights have been won. The only thing which remains unchanged is the brutal, grasping capitalist class and their profit system.

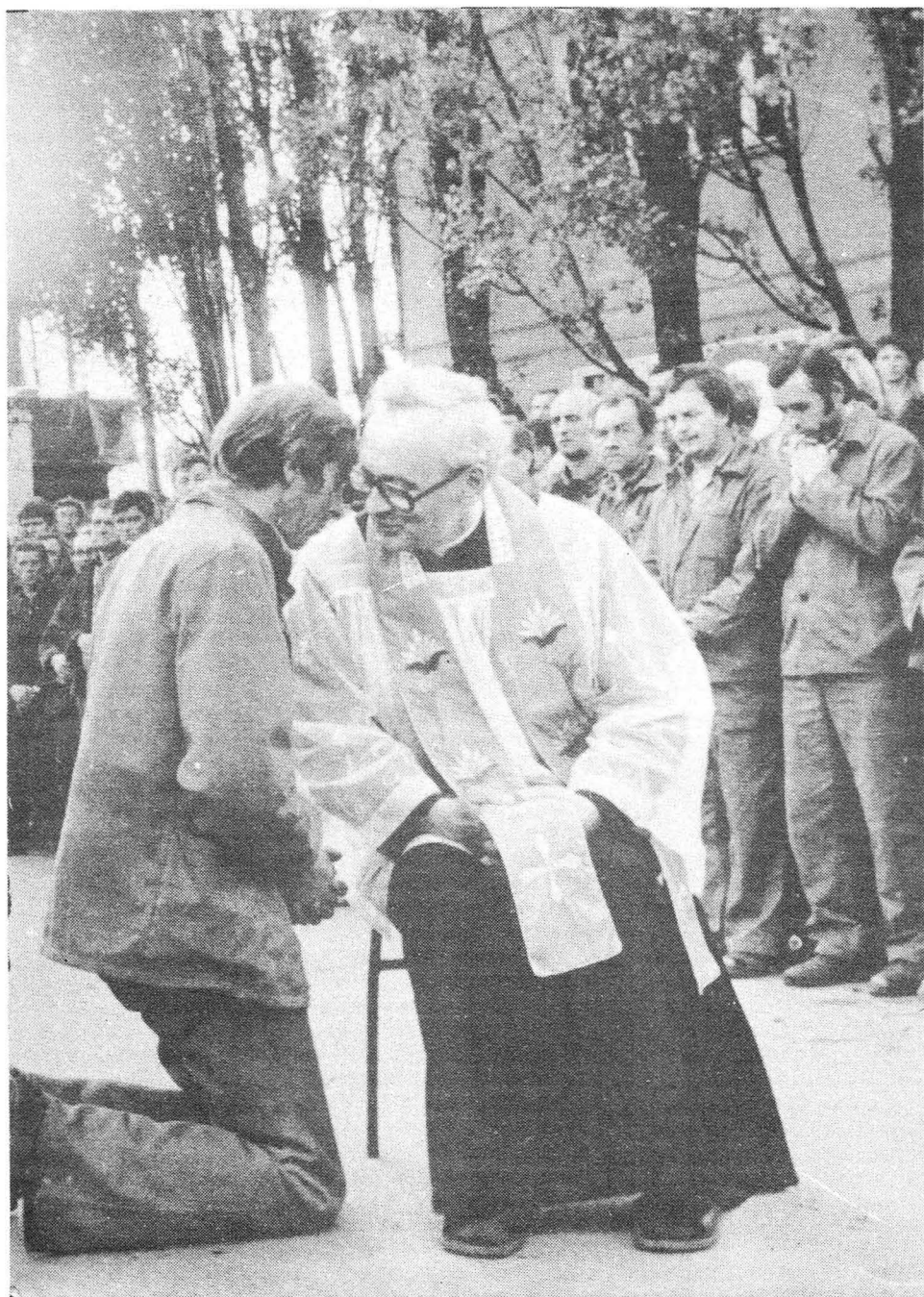
Today there is a crying need for a mass campaigning socialist paper with a clear perspective and a firm faith in the workers. With the fighting spirit of *Iskra* we will build such a paper.

POLAND:

Pope's visit



Above: Pope John Paul II.
Below: a priest hearing confession, among a group of industrial workers during the Solidarity period.



The Pope's visit to Poland will have changed nothing fundamental as far as the mass of the population and the position of the bureaucracy are concerned.

The declaration of martial law and the abolition of Solidarity in 1981 dealt a crushing blow to the workers' movement. Although in the longer term the Polish regime will face renewed opposition from the workers, the simmering discontent below the surface cannot hide the fact that the December coup was a serious defeat, putting its stamp on Polish developments for a number of years.

The very fact that the regime allowed the Pope to visit Poland is an indication of their confidence in their hold on society.

The visit was ostensibly linked to the 600th anniversary of 'Our Lady of Jasna Gora', but all the political questions were uppermost in the minds of workers, Polish bureaucrats and Western commentators. The workers, showing their Solidarity banners and 'victory' signs had plenty of words of solace and encouragement, but little else.

John Paul called, on more than one occasion, for a "dialogue" in Poland, but that is an inequitable appeal. Calling for Jaruselski to engage in a dialogue with Walsea means calling for a dialogue between the jailer and the prisoner, between the ruler and the oppressed.

The Polish regime arranged an itinerary for the Pope which kept him well away from the Northern city ports, the home of Solidarity, but nevertheless, as the *Sunday Times* correspondent wrote, "With Solidarity effectively crushed, its leaders disbanded, faceless and hiding, the government has little to fear from an organisation that once threatened to topple it." (19 June)

For itself, the Polish regime will be hoping that the visit will have gone a long way to 'legitimise' it, to facilitate its financial and economic deals with the West. This aspect has, in reality, been the main concern of British and Western capitalists.

The capitalists, despite their hypocritical support for 'trade union rights' in Poland, welcomed the restoration of 'stability' and the repression of Solidarity. They realise that, contrary to their own propaganda and that of the Stalinists, the Polish workers have no intention of restoring capitalism.

Programme to overthrow bureaucracy

The workers' movement of 1980-81 pointed instinctively towards workers' democracy. The reforms that workers demanded inevitably came up against the dead hand of the bureaucracy on the levers of the economy.

By George Collins

Had the leadership of Solidarity, instead of equivocating, put forward a clear programme for the overthrow of the bureaucracy and the establishment of genuine workers' democracy, that would have found a nation-wide response.

The Polish working class demonstrated over and over again their enormous economic and political power, which, correctly led, could have pushed the bureaucracy to one side. At times, during 1980, the regime seemed suspended in mid-air, without any stable points of support in society, and it would only have needed a clear programme for the workers to be able to topple it.

Sense of national identity

The prospect of such a political revolution is a nightmare for the rulers of East and West alike. Despite their fundamental opposition to each other and their mutual competition for spheres of influence, each will, in the final analysis, support the other in keeping the working class under control.

More immediately, the capitalists and the Stalinist regimes have built up economic ties which have made them, to a limited but significant degree, dependent on each other. The Polish regime in particular has become heavily indebted to the West, to the tune of \$28 billion, which it is totally unable to repay. Nevertheless, stable bureaucratic rule in Poland gives the western bankers the best prospect of getting at least some of their interest paid.

As a gesture of opposition to martial law, some Western governments have declared economic sanctions against Poland. While these have added to the pressures on Polish workers, the capitalists will clearly not press matters to the point of endangering the regime's survival.

The question posed in the capitalist press—"what effect did the Pope's visit have on Poland?"—thus reflects concern, not with the establishment of workers' democracy in Poland but, ironically, for the survival of the Stalinist dictatorship. To answer this question from a Marxist point of view and look at the prospects for Poland, it is necessary to understand the unique role the Catholic Church has played in Polish history.

The Polish people have a long tradition of struggle for

national liberation from Russian and German domination (supported, in their time, by Marx and Engels). In this struggle the Catholic Church was looked to by the masses as a 'Polish' church in contrast to the Russian Orthodox and German Protestant churches associated with the foreign oppressor, and helped to strengthen their sense of national identity.

The influence of the Catholic Church was consolidated after World War II when it survived as the only national institution independent of the Stalinist bureaucracy. In the absence of a Marxist working-class party it came to represent a general current of opposition to the regime. The churches, not unlike the mosques in the Shah's Iran, became the place where working people met and focussed their social activities.

The Church leaders, on the other hand, at no stage challenged the regime but, as in the West and throughout their history, adapted themselves to the ruling system. To the extent that they voiced the workers' discontent, they did so in the form of prayer and abstract ideals of reform, deflecting the workers from class action.

Nevertheless, the regime in its heyday was intolerant of even this meek 'opposition' for fear of the potential mass struggle bottled up behind it. The friction between the regime and the clergy, in turn, added to the church's prestige in the eyes of working people.

The church's precarious

Calling for Jaruselski in a dialogue means calling between the pris

balancing act between the regime and the masses was rudely disturbed by the explosions of 1980-81. Society was rapidly polarised between the bureaucracy and the mass of working people, initially without independent organisation but with a traditional orientation towards the church.

Unlike in previous crises, no section of the bureaucracy itself was able to divert the workers' movement. However, the leadership of Solidarity as it emerged, made no attempt to raise the workers' consciousness of their own power but, instead, reinforced all the illusions of the Catholic 'dissidents' and 'advisers' like Kuron and the KOR—in reality the left wing of the bureaucracy.

In the course of the huge struggles that created Solidarity, these dissidents and the Church leaders were forced to show something of their true position. Out of

Visit changes nothing

their hazy calls for 'justice' there now crystallised the appeal for 'caution' as the workers moved into action.

At decisive moments they openly came out as strike-breakers, like the Bishop of Gdansk who declared in 1980 that prolonged work stoppages were "contrary to the good of society".

With the signing of the Gdansk agreement which led to the formation of Solidarity the Catholic intellectuals and Kuron persuaded Walesa and other workers' leaders—to the anger of the rank and file—to accept the "leading role" of the 'Communist' Party and the regime's continuing subservience to the Russian bureaucracy. At every stage the church's message—preached from the pulpit or whispered into Walesa's ear—was one of compromise with the regime and bargaining for concessions while leaving the bureaucracy in control of society.

At the same time the church leaders ensured that they benefited from the concessions enforced by the working class. A much-publicised 'reform', for instance, was the broadcasting of mass on state radio, which bolstered the church's influence.

This cautious policy—which, tragically, was taken over lock, stock and barrel by the majority of Solidarity's leaders grouped around Walesa—was false from beginning to end. It failed to grasp that, while limited compromise might be possible between bureaucrats and bishops, any stable compromise between the bureau-

only the perspective of a purely 'national' movement and, moreover, one that did not seriously challenge the fundamental basis of the regime, could hold out no hope of defeating such an invasion.

Internationalist approach essential

Had there been a workers' movement and a leadership which had gone on to attack the whole basis of the rule of the bureaucracy, raising the twin banners of workers' democracy and internationalism, then the Russian bureaucracy would have been impotent, for fear of political revolution at home.

Far from being 'idealistic', an internationalist approach is a practical necessity for the success of the workers' struggle, as was proved in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and—Poland in 1980-81. It is the 'practical' advocates of national, purely anti-Russian struggle who have shown themselves at every turn to be hopelessly out of touch with reality.

The Russian and Polish bureaucracies prepared conscientiously for more than a year to crush the Polish workers' movement. But they could not have succeeded so easily without the help of the Catholic hierarchy and the 'dissidents' in holding the workers' struggle back, until, despite the heroic militancy of millions of shop-floor workers, the momentum of the movement had begun to weaken.

The majority of Solidarity's leadership, however, have learned nothing from these events and are calling pathetically even from underground for a return to the brief period when Solidarity was 'legal'—i.e., when the regime was paralysed by the workers' movement and unable to suppress it. Now they want Jaruselski to 'recognise' Solidarity out of the goodness of his heart!

They fail to understand the basic incompatibility of the bureaucracy and any free, independent movement of workers. To ask the bureaucracy to recognise Solidarity is tantamount to asking it to sign its own death warrant—just after its last reprieve!

The Catholic hierarchy, on the other hand, have been well rewarded for their services to the bureaucracy and are encouraging these illusions. Now they are serving the regime not only as an unofficial 'Ministry of Labour' but also as 'Ministry of Foreign Affairs', mediating with Western governments as the bureaucracy desperately angles for an end to sanctions and for further aid in propping up the sagging economy.

As an additional reward, a new law will soon be passed to regulate church-state relations and entrench the position of the church leaders.



Lech Walesa and Polish Cardinal Glemp.

But despite martial law and the temporary defeat of the working class, the clock cannot be turned back to the 1970s, let alone the '50s or '60s. Today the regime can no longer play a relatively progressive role in developing the economy and raising workers' living standards.

Economic crisis unresolved

They have become mere parasites on the planned economy, without authority in the eyes of the masses, depending for their very survival on the temporary inertia of the workers and the absence of a clear revolutionary alternative.

The regime's bankruptcy is summed up by its own official figures showing the decline in national income:

| | |
|-------|----------------|
| 1979: | -2% |
| 1980: | -4% |
| 1981: | -12% |
| 1982: | -4% (estimate) |



Jaruselski.

Jaruselski's economic 'decentralisation' and 'reforms' have largely been empty gestures that could make no fundamental change to the crisis in production. Even with armed soldiers as factory supervisors, the shortages of raw materials and spare parts, and shrinking export markets in the West, combined with the workers' lack of motivation, make it im-

possible to reach targets.

The crisis is ultimately the result of bureaucratic strangulation and mismanagement. It is impossible for officials in privileged positions, out of touch with the realities of the workplace or the market, to efficiently run—let alone develop—a complex modern economy. Shortages and imbalances, combined with corruption, are the inevitable result.

For the working class this has meant a worsening nightmare. It is a damning indictment of Stalinism that in 1982, 35 years after the overthrow of capitalism, 2.7 million Poles (8% of the population) cannot afford to buy basic food or clothing; and another 31% could only cope by buying the cheapest products. Only 2% thought their income covered all their needs. (Result of official survey of 56,000 families by the Polish Central Statistical Office, late 1982.)

Splits in ruling party

The entire social crisis is reflected in the crisis of the regime. The 'Communist' Party of the bureaucracy has partly disintegrated over the past three years, reflecting the split between the lower and higher ranks of the bureaucracy which, as Trotsky explained, is a feature of developments towards political revolution.

The top leadership is also split between the hardline Stalinists ("dogmatists") and waverers ("revisionists"). But neither can come forward with a programme for solving the crisis.

The position of the church leaders has also been irrevocably affected by events. Their role has been understood by some active workers. Although, in defeat, backwardness and inertia will tend to rise to the surface, the actions of the clergy will be viewed more critically, from a higher level of understanding, when a

new period of struggle opens up.

The elevation of the church leaders into the circles of the regime has also pulled them further away from the ranks of the lower clergy. Under martial law, for instance, many priests have allowed their churches to be used for clandestine Solidarity meetings against the express advice of their bishops.

The upper layers of the church identifying with the regime and the lower layers identifying with the workers' struggle will be increasingly torn apart in a period of new revolutionary upheaval. It will be these events, combined with a clear Marxist explanation and programme, that are most likely to free the mass of Polish workers from the conservative influence of the bishops.

The remnants of Solidarity's leadership, unfortunately, have not understood the need to prepare for decisive struggle by the working class in the next years to defeat the bureaucracy, to win the support of the Russian workers and to take power.

With gross illusions in the powers of their 'friend abroad', the Pope, they decided on the eve of his visit to tone down their policies even further. Renouncing their efforts to 'pressurise' the regime through demonstrations, they decided to concentrate instead on building closer links with the church and with "disgruntled" sections of the bureaucracy itself.

They have abandoned, in other words, any orientation towards mass struggle in favour of 'reform' from above. This will leave them incapable of leading the next revolutionary movement of the workers, which the pressures of the crisis will inevitably bring about, and which will far overflow the narrow channels of 'dialogue' with the regime which Solidarity's leaders are hoping to establish.

Against this background, what did the papal visit signify? An air of expectancy was generated among the masses as to the changes which John Paul's intervention and sympathy could lead to. The huge rallies undoubtedly reminded the workers of their own potential strength and of the regime's isolation.

But the memory of 1980-81 is not the same as the reality. "The Poles may still pray for a miracle," wrote the *Sunday Times* correspondent, "but too much has changed for one to be likely—a fact that even the underground acknowledge. 'I think there will be no direct tangible effects,' Zbigniew Bujak, one of the leaders of the underground said recently, '...The battle we are fighting will take too long. It will be measured by years, not weeks or months'."

In the aftermath of John Paul's visit, as life returns to grim 'normality', disillusionment with his ability to work wonders will spread and the emptiness and banality of his pious phrases will begin to sink in.

The regime hopes that "western statesmen and bankers (will) follow, as it were, in the pontiff's footsteps," as the *Economist* puts it (11 June). In Poland itself, his visit will reinforce the prestige of the Catholic leaders, although, as the *Economist* points out, he will need to walk a careful tightrope in order not to "disturb the limited *modus vivendi* reached between General Jaruzelski and Cardinal Glemp."

The coming period should be used to debate and clarify all questions of programme and policy in preparation for future trials of strength with the regime. The experiences of 1980-81 have confirmed that only a Marxist leadership, drawing consciously on the lessons of the workers' struggle internationally, could show a successful way forward.

If such a leadership is not created, the Polish working class may well have to suffer further defeats before an opportunity to settle accounts with their Stalinist oppressors will once again arise.

In the long run the Jaruzelski regime will be unable to prevent the rise of new opposition movements. As in the past, these will also demand reforms and improvements in the workers' daily lives and will come up against the waste, incompetence and mismanagement of the regime so that they will be forced to view their demands in a clearly political light.

Although it is well in control at the moment, the martial law regime in Poland will be unable to stop forever the march of the workers towards political revolution and the establishment of a workers' democracy, something that would be an electrifying example to the working class in both East and West in the world-wide fight for socialism.

Jaruselski to engage with Walesa for a dialogue earlier and the latter

cracy and the mass of the working class was ruled out.

The dissident intellectuals aspire, at most, to serve as a loyal 'official opposition' to the Stalinist regime. The workers' demands for an end to bureaucratic abuse and privilege, for democratic rights and even for decent living standards, on the other hand, are incompatible with the existence of the Stalinist regime.

Workers' democracy would sweep the bureaucracy aside. There was no way the workers' struggle could be halted halfway by the bishops' appeal for 'national reconciliation'. The existence of a free and genuine trade union was in the final analysis wholly incompatible with the existence of a totalitarian bureaucracy.

The Polish bureaucracy and the Catholic intellectuals both played on the possibility of a Russian intervention in the event of the situation getting 'out of hand'. Solidarity's leadership, with

USA

CHILE

In the shadow of the dole queue

FOR MONTHS, Americans have been hearing news of economic recovery but this recovery has barely trickled down to the workers.

All economic indicators seem to read profits ahead for big business. But for the workers and youth throughout the country, all you can see are depressed conditions for the jobless and the agonizing, endless search for work.

In Pittsburgh, a city devastated by the closing of steel plants, five thousand stand in line to apply for 170 temporary maintenance jobs, with wages at the bare minimum. In Cleveland, Ohio a thousand jobs are advertised for temporary maintenance in the city's parks and 10,300 apply.

Though the unemployment figure has dropped by 0.6% to the official rate of 10.2% there are still millions more uncounted. The Labor Department only calculates job seekers in unemployment statistics. A more accurate figure from the Conference Board, a non-government research organisation, showed **24% of all wage earners had been unemployed at least once during the last year**, while the duration of unemployment is longer than any since the Great Depression. Economists now speak of an ineradicable minimum of 9-10% unemployment.

The majority of jobless no longer receive benefits, do not qualify for welfare programs, and receive no health care coverage. David Stockman, director of the Office of Management and Budget, announced the other day that a federal scheme to provide health care to the jobless is "totally unacceptable" to the Reagan administration.

Reagan has also passed legislation denying extensions on federal assistance for welfare and unemployment benefits, leaving jobless workers and their families nothing except the streets to pitch their tents on, and scraps from garbage bins for their dinners.

The youth of America will be hit the hardest. The once prospering industries of steel, auto, rubber, textiles, etc. will not hire the sons and daughters of generations of workers. The government expects most job opportunities in the coming years will be in service sectors.

For the college educated there will be computers, aeronautic engineering and economics. However, fewer Americans can afford to send their children to college, and recent statistics show a decline in job opportunities for those with degrees. For the school leaver and the 'poorly educated' the Labor Department predicts opportunities only in the fast food industry and as a correction officer and jailer. **The government of the richest country in the world offers its children a life selling McDonalds or guarding a jail!**



"Jobs gone for good"— US car bosses

THE REAL power holders continue to decide the fate of American workers. Last month a conference of executives representing all major US corporations announced that despite the economic recovery there will be no significant decline in unemployment. They will not recall their workers.

These corporations, employing the majority of the country's industrial workers have only been operating at 70% capacity since recession began in 1981. Their new formula for recovery is not to rehire workers but rather through automation and speed up. EG Jefferson, chairman of Du Pont Chemicals, stated their capacity for producing synthetic fibres is about double what it was in 1973. "But the manpower to operate it is up only 4 to 5% because of mechanisation and robotics." 7% of the company's world wide workforce has been laid off during the recession. Jefferson said "In a booming economy, just a few would

be rehired."

For the big three auto firms (GM, Ford, Chrysler) there is consensus that most jobs lost in the recession are permanently gone. However \$100 billion will be invested in automation within the next ten years and 25,000 robots are expected to displace 9% of all unskilled jobs (50,000 workers).

Robots will also take 16% of new-hire replacement jobs. In addition researchers predict by the 1990s computer-aided equipment will do up to 150,000 other jobs that humans now perform. Once again big business tries to break the flow of labour, this time through automation, but they will not succeed.

In the '30s and the '40s, labour campaigned for the 35-hour work week. In the 1980s labour will again fight for a 25-hour week and full employment. It is the sweat and toil of the workers that created this new technology; they will not be cast aside.

America has the capacity to employ all its workers, to train the unskilled and teach new skills. Those who doubt that labour will rise to demand their due know nothing of the lessons of history and the might of the American working class. Today we find many hopeless and isolated workers, but they will not stay down for long.

You need only stop and listen to the rumblings in hundreds of trade union locals throughout the country, or count the unemployment leagues beginning to emerge and the union drives starting in the South and among the traditionally unorganized in the white collar and low wage jobs.

In the months ahead the world will watch with amazement the campaigns for the 1984 presidential election. Millions of dollars will be thrown away in empty promises. The Democrats

will call for a 'New Deal', but it will be yet another rotten deal. They are already calling for recovery programmes which will not only hire below the minimum wage, but will barely make a dent in the unemployment statistics.

As for the Republicans, Reagan has yet to announce publicly his candidacy. However, the *Wall Street Journal* reported, Reagan strategists are hoping to postpone any public appearances or campaigns to industrial areas until late this year when the economy is stronger. "They fear embarrassing protests by the unemployed."

The working class must create its own party, not the Tweedledum and Tweedledee of capitalist parties.

By Marcy Barnett
(District 65, UAW,
AFL-CIO,
personal capacity)

TOP: Unemployed workers in Detroit.
BELOW: The people who create the dole queues on the stock markets and commodity exchanges.



CHILE-Workers' protests threaten generals' rule

A SERIES of nationwide protests have rocked the Chilean dictatorship. The military regime now stands isolated even from its former supporters in the middle classes.

Despite years of brutal repression and the murder of tens of thousands of trade unionists and left wing militants, the Chilean working class, its confidence returning, has shown that it can still fight and defy the generals.

In the face of a military show of strength copper workers struck last week to demand the release of Rodolfo Seguel, leader of the 22,000 strong Confederation of Copper Workers, who was arrested for organising a national day of protest against the regime on Tuesday 14 June. Workers in one area of Chile even jumped the gun and started their protest a day early.

Protests are not limited to workers. During the 11 May protest 70% of school children were kept at home, shop sales slumped by a similar amount and industry was affected by slowdowns and stoppages. Middle class housewives in prosperous districts supported the protests by banging on pots and pans—a gesture last used by the same class in opposition to the left-wing Popular Unity government of Allende, before the bloody military coup of ten years ago. Motorists blew their horns in sympathy.

This loss of support among Chile's com-

mercial and professional classes further highlights the narrow base on which the generals' dictatorship now rests.

The military have responded by intensifying repression. Security squads of men dressed in civilian clothes have attacked demonstrators while the police look on. Several demonstrators have been shot and killed by police.

In the wake of the May protests, a massive military operation took place in several of the capital Santiago's working class districts. Thousands of men and boys were taken at gun point into football fields for questioning and security checks—scenes reminiscent of the aftermath of the 1973 coup, where football stadia were killing grounds.

But the situation now is very different. The Chilean economy is in deep crisis. The country's gross domestic product fell by a disastrous 14.1% in 1982, inflation is above the 20% mark, and around a third of Chilean workers are unemployed.

The crisis has taken its toll of small businesses, forcing these sections to look for a way out. 1,500 small and medium sized companies have had their electricity cut off for non-payment of bills. No matter how brutally the military reacts the regime cannot last for long without a social base. The regime's isolation, and the growing confidence and courage of the workers will inevitably lead to more serious challenges to the regime in the near future.

NORTHERN IRELAND

SOUTH AFRICA

SINN FEIN

A sectarian blind alley

By a Belfast correspondent

THE ELECTION in Northern Ireland was a clear cut victory for Toryism, with 15 of the 17 seats going to Unionist candidates. The SDLP, also a Tory party, got one seat while Sinn Fein, on the basis of a sectarian appeal, also got one.

Yet Northern Ireland is one area where the voice of socialism should have been loudly heard; it is the most poverty-stricken region represented at Westminster, suffering severely from four years of Thatcherism. There are twice as many people out of work as are employed in manufacturing industry.

Northern Ireland did not return seventeen socialists because, before and during the campaign, the official labour movement did not provide an alternative; for the first Westminster election since its formation in 1924 the old Northern Ireland Labour Party did not even fight. Only in East Belfast was there a genuine Labour alternative—put up by the Labour and Trade Union Group (see page 5).

So, despite the anti-Thatcher, anti-Tory and also anti-sectarian mood of the working class the poll became a sectarian head count. In the Catholic areas the election was a contest between Sinn Fein and the SDLP, which is now seen as a pro-establishment, middle-class party with little appeal to the working class and youth.

Against it, Sinn Fein appeared as anti-establishment, anti-Thatcher and anti-repression. On this basis, and above all because of the absence of any class alternative, it was partially able to tap the anti-Tory mood of workers and youth.

Sinn Fein also won support in rural areas previously supporting traditional right-wing Nationalist candidates. The blatantly sectarian Irish Independence Party disappeared



1981. The funeral of Bobby Sands. The hunger strikes led to the growth of Sinn Fein but SF cannot solve the problems of repression or any other question facing working people.

Photo: Militant

in a divisive, sectarian manner. Gerry Adams' main election leaflet, under a heading, "The effects of British and Loyalist rule", spoke of unemployment, housing and education but referred only to "Nationalist unemployment", and "housing in the nationalist areas".

All this in a constituency which includes the slums of huge Protestant areas like the Shankill Road, now with its own dole office, and which faces the closure of state schools due to Tory cuts!

Sinn Fein propaganda is now more distinctly nationalistic and sectarian than it was even at the Assembly elections. Within the Catholic community Sinn Fein and SDLP seem embarked on a race to "out-nationalist" each other. Those workers who voted and campaigned for Sinn Fein hoping to deal a blow at British Tory rule and to develop a movement for socialism will eventually be disappointed.

Even their votes bear this out, with 100,000 votes but only one seat. Even if they win the majority of Catholic votes (not an immediate prospect), they can only hope to win one or two other seats. A strategy based on sectarian head-counting means at least 11 of 17 Northern Ireland seats will remain in safe Tory Unionist hands. **Sectarianism means permanent Tory rule.**

The real majority in Northern Ireland is the working class. There can never be a successful struggle for socialism unless based on a united movement of Catholic and Protestant workers. Outside of the fight for socialism in Ireland and Britain the problems of the border, repression and British rule can never be resolved.

In Protestant areas the real reasons for the vote are not clearly seen or it is interpreted as a vote for the IRA, providing political ammunition for the Paisleys and Powells. Although the vote was mainly an angry response to Tory rule, the Provisional IRA a primarily military organisation, will see it as vindicating their campaign.

Before the election their newspaper, *Republican News* (12.5.83) said, "But one thing is clear. At the end of the day Britain will only listen to the pressure of armed force." And again, "and that is why it is republican dogma that the armed struggle will continue and must continue until the guerrilla war achieves its end."

This message was presented not only in newspaper articles but in the louder language of a stepped up bombing campaign during the election and since. This campaign can never succeed. No capitalist state can be overthrown by these methods; in fact such military activity can only bring further repression and misery on the heads of the Catholic community and further divide the working class.

As the dead-end methods of the Provisionals and the sectarian policies of Sinn Fein become clear, the present divisions and contradictions within this movement will become sharper on the question of a turn to politics, splits between North and South, urban and rural support, on the question of abstentionism and other issues. Success has acted like a bandage in hiding these divisions,

but this cannot last forever.

Sinn Fein's success should neither be overstated nor taken lightly by those struggling to create a genuine non-sectarian political movement. These votes plus the election result overall, must be used to remind trade union leaders of their responsibility to provide the working class with an alternative.

If a class movement can be developed all

the contradictions and short-comings of Sinn Fein can be exposed. But if union leaders persist in refusing to build a socialist voice for their movement in the form of a Labour Party, or if they are not forced to do so by the union rank and file, sectarianism will continue.

A mighty class opposition to Toryism must be built in Northern Ireland over the next years.

Black workers show their strength

THE AGREEMENT concluded on 17 June between South Africa's Chamber of Mines and the National Union of Mineworkers is the first the Chamber has negotiated with a union representing African migrants, the overwhelming majority of the workforce.

South Africa produces 70% of world gold which provides half the country's foreign exchange. The importance of gold to the economy coupled with the rising strength of the black workers' movement explains this development.

Ruthless repression, the militarised single-person hotel system, and recruitment of migrant labour from the impoverished Bantustans and surrounding territories has made the more than 45,000 black miners among the most oppressed and exploited workers in the country.

Throughout the post-war boom the chamber granted huge concessions to white miners (today numbering 28,000) whose average wage was in 1970 22 times that of blacks—and who were allowed a monopoly over skilled jobs (even where the actual skilled work was being done by blacks). As a result of rising working costs in the 1970s, the mining bosses have put pressure on this job monopoly, seeking

to use cheaper black skilled labour; the white-black wage differential has been eroded but remains 6 to 1, far higher than in manufacturing industry.

The Chamber held out against the rising black workers' movement far longer than other employers. Only in December, after strikes, did it issue guidelines to management to allow union organisers access to compounds.

The National Union of Mineworkers, formed last August, has grown rapidly—to a current estimate of 25,000 with a target of 50,000 by the end of the year. Despite the Chamber's guidelines, it is being subjected to harassment at individual mines and intimidation by the police.

1500 miners at its first conference in December rejected involvement in the state-regulated system of industrial bargaining, and mine job reservation for whites. In June the NUM leadership raised black miners' hopes when it put in a claim for a 30% wage increase across the board, for the ending of job reservation, and expanded fringe benefits including paternity leave for black migrants.

Despite the enormous muscle at its disposal, however, the leadership, within days, accepted an offer of a mere 13% increase and a "promise" from the

Chamber to "work for the end of" job reservation. This settlement is hardly more than the 12% given last year even without a union: indeed Anglo American (where most of the present NUM members are) gave 16% last year. The increases do not even compensate for price increases, currently running at 14% per annum on official figures.

But there is no way forward for black miners on wages or politically, except by building this young union into a fighting mass organisation, speaking for all mineworkers, present in every shaft and stope and every hostel.

Miners, and other workers, internationally, can make a vital contribution to strengthening the forces which can achieve national and social liberation in South Africa by developing concrete links with the NUM, and providing whatever assistance is needed to develop it as a mass fighting organisation against ruthless and determined bosses.

The NUM can be contacted c/o Council of Unions of South Africa, 2nd Floor, Estromin House, 47a Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, SA.



Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein MP for West Belfast

and its vote crumbled into Sinn Fein. Overall, Tory Secretary of State Jim Prior commented after the Assembly election, Sinn Fein's vote "was mainly a way in which people in Catholic areas could lift two fingers to the British government."

However, this success was uneven. Almost 55,000, well over half, of the Sinn Fein vote came in three of the 14 constituencies in which they stood, two in rural areas. In other majority Catholic areas of Derry, Armagh and South Down they finished a poor second to the SDLP in terms of the Catholic vote.

But no matter what the success in this or future elections, Sinn Fein represents a dead end for the workers and youth, appealing solely and deliberately to the Catholic community. In Fermanagh/South Tyrone, Owen Carron's slogan was, "Save this nationalist seat", appealing for Catholic votes as the nationalist candidate most likely to win.

Overall, Sinn Fein campaigned not as a socialist party, but as "the voice of principled leadership." They even presented class issues

READ *Inqaba ya basabenzi*, journal of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress. Soon out No 10—Focus on Zimbabwe—perspectives, problems, factory reports. Also interviews with South African miners. Subscription rates: Britain and Europe £3.20. Postal subscriptions from: BM Box 1719, London WC1N 3XX.



Photo: Militant

Mike Thomas, former Labour MP and defeated SDP MP kindly advertises *Militant*.

SDP Shock

Dear Editor

I was reading my local paper when I had a shock. There was a picture of the SDP candidate for North Luton holding a copy of *Militant*.

Previous to this I had heard on the news that SDP youth chairman Keith Toussaint who also lives in Luton had rejoined the Tories.

Can it be true I thought, has the SDP candidate really seen the "moderation" of *Militant* and upset Mr Toussaint?

I then decided to read the article. Alas it was not true.

Shock! Horror! Surprise! Mr Stephens was saying that

"They (*Militant* supporters) were trying to get people to vote Labour.!"

Robin Harris
Luton

'Come off it, squire'

Dear Comrades

We watched the Alliance election broadcast on 31 May—various "stars" saying what a good thing the Alliance was and that all right thinking voters, like themselves, should vote for it. What an insult to intelligence, we said, and we were glad that the Labour Party seemed to have given up this kind of propaganda this election.

Imagine our surprise on opening the *Militant* the next day to be confronted on

page 3 (appropriately?) with a feature devoted to the fact that different "stars" would be voting and working for Labour in the election.

By publishing their names with the bare fact that they will be voting Labour, you are saying to your working class readers, "Here are people (often fictitious) you admire and may identify with: they are voting Labour and therefore you should too."

You seem to be encouraging a new version of working class deference not that far removed from the attitude of, "I vote Tory because the squire votes Tory and he's better than me."

Yours fraternally
Bob and Catherine Rice
Fife

Talking to a Tory

Dear Comrades

"I'm voting Conservative because Mrs Thatcher was strong during the Falklands war," said a young female first-time voter on the doorstep.

Instead of saying thank you and walking away I asked her if she could think of anything that Thatcher and the Tories had done for her or her friends. On thinking about it she had to say, "No".

We had a brief chat about what Tory policies really meant to working class people and what socialists were fighting for and she had to admit she would now think twice about voting for Thatcher.

She bought a copy of the *Militant* and I said I would call again to ask if she would join the LPYS.

This so-called Tory support amongst some young people can be broken down by explaining socialist policies which, unfortunately, the Labour leaders have failed to do.

Fraternally
Linda Clarke
Newham South CLP

Bar to optimism

Dear *Militant*

When I first left full-time education I was quite optimistic about finding a job, but ten months later, still on the dole, my views have changed.

Being isolated and starting to feel the strain of unemployment, I got myself a job as a barmaid in a tren-

dy new wine bar, thinking that I would be financially better off.

We were told that as customers were paying high prices, they expected 'extra special' service. Our wages of £1.59 an hour, however, weren't very special.

Bar staff could be, and frequently were, sacked on the spot, while others could be called into work at an hour's notice to fill in for people who were sick.

It didn't take me long to realise that I was no better off than I had been when I was on the dole, especially when they cut my hours back to four nights a week. As they had taken on so many staff at once, their office couldn't cope, and I paid large amounts of tax which I shouldn't have.

One week I was only paid for three nights when I had actually worked four, bringing my total take-home pay

No surrender!

Dear Comrades

Sitting in Kilmarnock Labour Club in the early hours of Friday morning after the election was to me a memorable experience. As party members and helpers gathered from the polling stations throughout the constituency to await the count, there was an initial air of optimism.

As it became apparent that Labour was failing to capture key seats necessary to oust Thatcher, a cloud of despondency very quickly descended.

This trough reached its lowest on hearing of Tony Benn's defeat. There were comrades to be seen with tears streaming from their

eyes. In sharp contrast, the reaction to the news that Callaghan had retained his seat was, at the same time a mixture of pleasure in Labour retaining the seat and a bitterness towards that particular winner. As the night wore on the mood again changed. Willie McKelvey arrived, successful, from the count. The MP pointed out that with youth like the LPYS there was a hope and future for the party.

After singing the Red Flag and the Internationale the ever changing atmosphere culminated in hope and determination being born anew.

Yours fraternally
Ian Cuthbert
Kilmarnock

Tory armoury

Dear *Militant*

Airforce planes, bombs and military equipment accompanied Thatcher when she spoke at Leicester Town Hall Square.

It was either propaganda to remind us of the Falklands war, or a very heavily armed guard! While we were giving her a good send-off, suddenly two heavies grabbed a youth and dragged him across the road and pushed him up against the wall. One had a Vote Conservative sticker on his arm.

The youth's mate,

Patrick, has weight training with one of these heavies and identified him as a police sergeant. A solicitor also witnessed this arbitrary arrest, and the political bias of one of the plain-clothed policemen, and gave his name and address as a witness.

Patrick, who is black, had only met the youth, who is white, that day, but pursued the matter. He intends to protest at this arrest, despite further harassment he might get from the sergeant, because, "Black, white or Indian", arbitrary police harassment must be resisted.

Yours fraternally
P Mason
Leicester West LPYS

Sight Defect Party

Dear Comrades

After the article in *Militant* 652 on the funding by big business of the Tory Party and Liberal/SDP Alliance, comrades may be interested to learn that the *Militant* has recently received a donation from an SDP supporter.

Whilst selling the paper in Coventry during the election campaign, an old lady came

up and said that although she would be voting for the Alliance she would give something for the fighting fund.

She rooted around in her handbag and put a small coin in my tin. Thinking it was a 5p piece, I thought, "big deal!"

Looking in the tin afterwards I found that it was a £1 coin!

Perhaps the SDP stands for Sight Defect Party!

Yours fraternally
Simon Lawler
Nottingham North CLP

Reading between the lines

Dear Sir

Re the article 'Tories will not shackle the unions' by Wayne Jones, he reports an electrician at Leyland Vehicles as saying that when voting for union officials the trouble is that all you get is a list of names on a ballot paper.

He goes on to mention the misleading mudslinging of the gutter press—mudslinging gutter press, yes, I agree, but misleading never.

I've always found the gutter press to be an infallible guide to the worthiness of union leaders and MPs.

The more the *Sun* and similar papers attack a person, the more I'm convinced that is the person to best represent the working class interests. Conversely anyone praised is to be treated with suspicion and definitely not to be trusted.

Yours etc.
C Broadley
Mansfield

Question

Dear Comrades

Having just read the article in *Militant* 652 entitled, 'Tories will not shackle the unions', I think it is necessary to clarify some of the points made concerning the issue of secret ballots.

Militant has always stood for the democratic methods of the labour movement, but sees the introduction of secret, postal ballots as potentially undemocratic, as voters can be swayed by the pressure of management misinformation, and the kept press of the millionaires.

Only by full and fraternal discussion can voters hear all sides of the argument.

One question: does *Militant* support non-postal, but secret, ballots taken after discussion at branch/mass meetings?

Fraternally
Kevin Slattery
Nottingham North CLP

Strange fruit

Dear *Militant*

If Mrs Thatcher intends to put forward extreme policies she should remember that though she is in power with a majority of 144 seats, about 4 million more people voted against her!

If people are pushed too far violence erupts in the streets.

Is this why she is so keen to strengthen the police and bring back hanging?

Yours fraternally
Joan Mayers
Burnley

Eighty but not equal

Dear Comrades

Your article on Labour's Manifesto—"How can it be done?" is like a breath of fresh air. It is the first piece of sense I have yet read about this election.

I have continually pointed out, on "where is the money coming from?", that the first step is to stop the wealthy scarping abroad with their wealth, "democracy" or no "democracy".

As a "common-law" widow, my present income is £31.54 weekly, my own contributory pension. As a "common-law" wife I was

denied social security help in payment for teeth and spectacles, but on the death of my man last November, I had not been his wife, so am not entitled to a widow's pension. So I can't win.

My man willed to me all he possessed, so I have the house, but his £4,000 legacy has disqualified me from receiving a Supplementary Pension.

I am 80 years old, but I may live another ten years. Some weeks ago you printed a very good article on "equal pay" for women. Some more articles on "sex equality" would be welcome.

Yours in the struggle
Kathleen Jones
Shrewsbury

Fighting fascism

Dear *Militant*

History does not support Peter Whiteley's view (*Militant* 651) of how to fight fascism. Nor do we have to go back as far as the 'thirties to show this.

The National Front reached its zenith in the later part of the 'seventies.

It declined primarily because of the mass mobilisation of black and white youth in opposition to its presence. The Anti-Nazi League demonstrations were important. More important were the counter-demonstrations at Lewisham, Ladywood, Digbeth and Brick Lane. It was here that the fascists were denied the freedom of the street that allows growth.

These confrontations also convinced the ruling class that the playing of a racist card would lead to a radicalisation of black workers and serious public disorder.

Support for the NF was therefore withdrawn. This lesson has been internalised by youth in the inner cities and reaction to the National Front is now a virtually spontaneous event. It is not enough to leave this job to local councils or the state.

Fraternally
Dave McHale
Handsworth

Can't evict ideas

Dear Comrades

Canvassing for Pat Wall, I came to one house with Ben Ford posters up, and on the election card the house was marked down as a Labour vote.

I knocked at the door and said, "Do you know that Ford is not the Labour Party candidate?" The voter went on to tell me he was a Pat Wall supporter, of the man and his ideas.

His landlord, however, had made him put the posters up, or he would put him and his family out.

The same landlord had another ten houses in Bradford.

Yours faithfully
Martin J Foot
West Hull

STOP SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WORK

'Lady at Lord John's' - historic success

THE RECENT dispute at Lady at Lord John has brought sexual harassment to the attention of the labour movement and holds many lessons on this issue.

By Lesley Holt

The dispute at the shop in Liverpool, where Audrey White was sacked after protesting about sexual harassment of staff, ended in victory.

Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual attention, normally in the workplace and usually by men in a superior position. It can range from verbal comments to unwelcome physical attention, from pinching to rape.

It creates a hostile, intimidating atmosphere for women workers, which can in some cases undermine health and confidence and even force women to leave their jobs. Cases have emerged where women have actually had nervous breakdowns as a result of sexual harassment, as well as losing their jobs.

Sexual harassment is associated with poor working conditions and it is one of the hardest to combat because it appears to involve personal relationships. In fact, it's nothing to do with a man trying to establish a relationship, but an attempt to assert his authority. It is a product of society's attitude that women are only a temporary workforce and that women's real role in society is only in relation to men and that men can treat women as goods and chattels in the home and at work, an attitude that goes back as long as private property has existed, from slavery to capitalism.

The Lady at Lord John dispute helped a lot of men both in the unions and outside to realise that sexual harassment is a class matter and can't be fought by individual women. Giving a boss a slap in the face for being abusive doesn't solve the issue if your job's at stake. This is the case of Lady at Lord John where the man harassing the staff was the area manager.

The picket outside the shop in the resulting dispute brought men and women together on a trade union and class issue. The picket actively involved men trade unionists and the petition also received the support of many men. There were some quite amusing incidents such as one bloke whose wife went into the shop while he stood outside refus-

ing to cross the picket line. The job of the picket was fairly unusual, in the amount of explanation required. The petition was used successfully to gain solidarity from many women who weren't particularly trade union minded. In fact, many were brought over to trade unionism as a result, because they could see it wasn't a dispute just on wages, but it shows that the trade unions are the only organisations that can defend you from personal abuse.

The Lady at Lord John dispute has now inspired other workers in the area to become unionised and approaches have been made to the union.

Trade union action in a case such as this is vital. Individual women or indeed any trade union member cannot and should not be left to fight alone. We can't have illusions in the law or in management. This is the weakness of a recent pamphlet produced by the National Council for Civil Liberties on this issue. Although the NCCL have played a good role in highlighting sexual harassment at work, their suggestions offer no real solution. They suggest things such as individual retaliation. But most women would either be too embarrassed



'Lady at Lord John' in Liverpool

Photo: Thomas Carroll

usually comes from management. Goodwill from management can also be withdrawn at any time, unless backed by strong trade union organisation and strong action.

Tribunals as a means of sorting cases out are usually ineffective. As in many cases, e.g. equal pay

want to know, but she had no right to go to a tribunal. Even if you can go to a tribunal, it means putting up with harassment for twelve months. Even where cases are won often it only results in compensation and not re-employment.

Neither can we have any illusions in the law. The police removed Audrey from the shop when she was dismissed, and the company tried to use the law to stop trade union action. This shows that we can have no faith in legislation alone, unless backed up by trade union action.

The pickets were served with an injunction, accusing them of molesting and conspiring to do damage under Prior's Act. But because of the public pressure that had built up over the court action, the right to picket was actually endorsed.

The only further weapon management could have used would have been the Tebbit law, to prevent further action. But then the repercussions would have been to take on the whole trade union movement. Support, such as a £100 donation from the Merseyside dockers, was already forthcoming.

Despite all these obstacles the complete victory of the dispute, with the re-employment of Audrey with back pay, and even a discount for union members, was won. It was won by Audrey being in the union and secondly by the stand of the members of the branch.

This dispute has not only been an education to the pickets and to the trade union movement, but also to the four million unorganised shop and office workers. The trade unions have a vital role to play in defending women's rights, at least in the workplace.

Women at work who are faced with low pay, abusive treatment or discrimination in promotion can only be defended by the trade union movement.

**Militant pamphlet
"Women fight
for socialism"
25p (plus 15p p&p)
from Militant
1 Mentmore Terrace
London E8 3PN**

"I had, with this same boss, my first experience of sexual harassment. I was about eighteen and had been with the company for only six months. A customer rang up to say that he urgently required a small sample of some material which we sold, for a test. If the test proved okay he would put in a big order. As the company was not far away, I promised that I would get the sample to him somehow. Unfortunately, it so happened that the only person in the office with a car was the Managing Director, and after some persuasion he said he would take the sample down. To my surprise, he asked me to go with him and give the sample to the person concerned myself.

"My boss had had a drink and no sooner had we driven around the corner that he put his hand on my knee. I froze in my seat and pushed his hand away, after which he asked me if I would like him to make love to me. I said 'No thank you.' I was desperately trying to change the subject until we reached the firm. The return journey was made in silence. It seems almost laughable now, but at the time was very frightening.

Extracted from *Destined to be a secretary* by Ruth Campbell, Militant 644.

or would not be prepared to put their jobs at risk.

Other suggestions from the NCCL include agreements where management actually police sexual harassment. They rely on the goodwill of management. But in many cases sexual harassment ac-

or unfair dismissal, they rarely result in a woman getting her job back and in general they're weighted against trade unionists anyway.

In the case of Audrey, the victimised worker at Lady at Lord John, not only didn't the management

'Trade union action the only defence'

THIS PAMPHLET raises important questions for trade unionists. The problems of defining where sexual behaviour stops and sexual harassment starts and legal rights and remedies are introduced.

Trade unionists should be aware of their existing legal rights. At the moment they look particularly weak in the case of sexual harassment. The few cases which have been heard have been on 'unfair dismissal' grounds.

"The women involved either claimed they were forced to leave their jobs

because of sexual harassment or that refusal to comply with sexual demands was the reason for their dismissal." (p16) No cases have been taken under the Sex Discrimination Act.

There are two sections of this act which may be suitable. Section 1(1)(a) states that it is unlawful to treat a person less favourably on grounds of sex. This could be used in claims of sexual harassment outside the workplace. Section 6(2)(b) is relevant to the workplace. It declares 'detrimental treatment' by

an employer on the grounds of sex unlawful.

It is not yet clear, however, whether the courts will define sexual harassment as discrimination on the basis of sex alone. If they don't, some claims will clearly fail.

Another important point made by the authors is that under section 41 of the Sex Discrimination Act an employer is liable for any discriminatory act done by employees in the course of their employment unless 'reasonably practical steps' have been taken to prevent

discrimination.

The authors point out that in their experience of tribunals, taking legal action on sexual discrimination or equal pay grounds is very difficult, and advise legal action as a last resort.

NALGO is the only union so far to take up this issue. Their leaflet points out, "We cannot hope for long-term success with our policies on equal opportunities in recruitment, promotion and training if women are seen simply as sex objects. Nor can we forget that the stress women experience as a result

of sexual harassment is a very real health and safety issue."

Sexual harassment, indeed sexism, should not be considered merely 'trendy' issues. As the report above shows, only the labour movement is genuinely interested in, and capable of, defending and extending the rights and dignity of the mass of society.

Only by fighting every assault, affront and insult this system throws at any section of the working class will we prove in practice that this is so.



The National Council for Civil Liberties' pamphlet referred to by Lesley Holt (above) is *Sexual Harassment at Work* by Ann Sedley and Melissa Benn. Price 95p. Available from NCCL, 21 Tabard St, London SE1 4LA

Industrial Reports

AIRE VALLEY YARNS

'Not animals - but workers fighting for our rights'

Over 500 people attended a protest march and rally at Aire Valley Yarns last Saturday, 18 June, to protest about the dismissal of 21 Asian workers for trying to join a trade union.

Peter Booth, full-time official of the Transport and General Workers Union, Dyers and Bleachers section, said that these workers were only fighting for the right to belong to a union and that action such as these on behalf of unscrupulous employers never came to the notice of public. He appealed for support for the 24-hour picket and demanded support from the entire labour and trade union movement.

The shop steward who had been sacked for refusing to take his members out of the union, Liaquat Ali, spoke about the sweat-shop conditions in Aire Valley.

There had been fear of making any complaint and the fear of starting a union, because workers twice before had been sacked for starting a union, but eventually the conditions in Aire Valley forced the men to start a union.

There were no guards on the machines. Workers had to stop spindles by hand. These barbaric conditions resulted in many injuries and in fact these conditions were worse than the conditions in factories in Pakistan where some of the workers had previously worked. Workers also, were forced to do a seven-day week or be sacked. The standard flat rate pay was only £1.02 an hour.

On Sunday 13 March Liaquat Ali had given out union cards. On Monday Mr Bedford, the managing director, said that if he didn't stop he would sack him. Liaquat was told that he had the hour to collect the union cards from his workmates.

Every one of his workmates refused, saying that the union was the only right the working class had. The manager responded by saying "it's my mill, my plant, I'll run it how I want." Management refused to see a full-time trade union official.

Bedford then went on to sack Liaquat Ali, immediately overturning a week's notice that he had given an hour before. When trying to retrieve his possessions Liaquat was offered £200 to leave the premises immediately but refused. Again, Bedford

said, "I don't have to give reasons for sacking you. I'm the boss. I have the money and the power," and then threatened to call the police.

When workers turned up for work the next day they were locked out. When they asked the management through the office window the management merely sneered back. "no dogs allowed".

"We are not animals", said Liaquat Ali. "We must show that we have the power. If we don't stand up and fight for our rights then we'll have slave labour in Britain. White and black get together and fight to beat Tebbit's law.

"We're here to work—not to strike. But fight for a future or our future generation will ask, 'why did you leave this mess for us'. Our fathers and grandfathers fought for a union. Support us today. We will support you tomorrow."

The full-time official then read out messages of support from Rodney Bickerstaffe of NUPE and from local Labour Parties and trade unions.

Pat Wall, introduced to the meeting as the "MP in waiting" for Bradford North received a tremendous round of applause when he said that, "this struggle is not only about the workers at Aire Valley on £1.02 an hour, but also about the thousands of low-paid workers, mainly women and Asians, and about institutionalised racism inside our society."

He stressed that the trade union movement had not done enough and that we must support the picket every week, with unions taking weeks for their particular union to turn out in support.

He called for mass mobilisation by the TUC to cut off all the supplies and services to this factory and said that as in the case of Grunwicks if gas, electricity, water and telephones were cut-off then the strike would be over in 48-hours. The alternative to such action was all the hours on the picket line, the misery that brought about the poverty of the workers.

The rally ended with a call that we must force our leaders to mobilise. Pat stressed that over the last six years the working class had been hammered, but that we shouldn't be despondent, that we can still win, if we show a quarter as much grit as the twenty-one strikers who have now been out for fourteen weeks.

By Keith Narey

STOP CLOSURES

RENOLDS -sold off to pay interest charges

THE CLOSURE of the Dudley Hill plant of Renold (Croft's) in Bradford was announced four days after the general election—so much for the Tories' promise of "a brighter future for Bradford".

The announcement of this closure, with the loss of 650 jobs at Bradford alone follows four years of run-down and redundancy with a consequent collapse in the morale of the workforce.

A frequently heard comment from workers being, "I used to enjoy coming to work here, but now I can hardly be bothered to drag myself out of bed to get here".

This closure has been dictated by the banks in order to sell off assets to pay the interest charges, which have meant the difference between profit and loss for the company over the last few years.

This blinkered and short-sighted asset stripping will not solve the company's problems, whilst creating misery for the workforce by adding them to the 3,000 unemployed engineers, chasing just six jobs in Bradford.

Local management have asked for a smooth phased run-down of the workforce and transfer of plant and machinery to other Renold factories in Cardiff and Rochdale. In other words the workers are being asked to assist in their own execution!

Renolds Convenor dies

The decision to close Renolds has claimed its first fatality. Tragically Francis Ramacle, the union convenor, died this week aged 62. His daughter Irene told the local *Bradford Evening Telegraph*, "My father cared about other people and he was very worried about the young men at Renolds who were going to lose their jobs. We think that is what killed him."

The Secretary of the Combine Committee, John Brown, commented: "Francis could

A rumoured £10,000,000 has been set aside for redundancy. This would mean big payments for the top management, but £2,000 to £3,000 for most workers. Savings of more than £2.00 per worker from supplementary benefits, so this sum would rapidly be swallowed up.

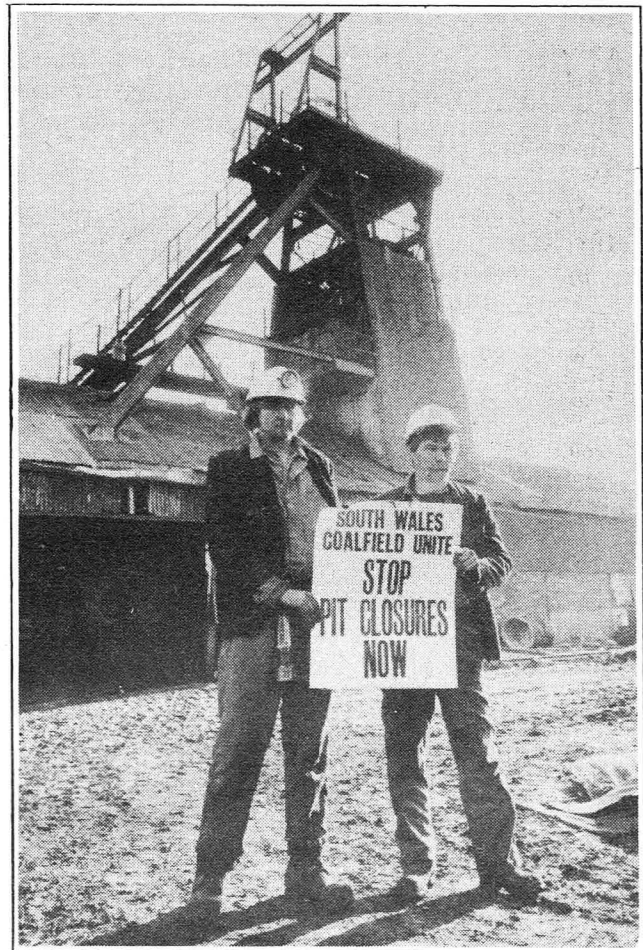
Only alternative is to fight

There are no jobs in Bradford or elsewhere, only the dole queue. The skills of these workers would be wasted. Young people would have no chance to learn those skills. Our kids would have no jobs in the future. The only alternative is to fight.

The entire Renold Combine Committee must oppose these closures. Jobs lost in Bradford today will be followed by closures in Cardiff, Manchester, Rochdale and Liverpool tomorrow. Now is the time for all Renold workers to unite. Blue collar, white collar and technical to fight for a future and turn the tide of mass unemployment.

By Pete Bussy
(Deputy Convenor,
Renold (Croft's), Dudley
Hill, personal capacity)

not have isolated himself from the pressure caused by this closure. He was a tremendous worker and he cared deeply for his colleagues. It is typical of him that he once worked a three-day week so that another man could keep his job." After this tragic death the best tribute the workforce at Renolds could pay to their former leader is to fight for what he believed in and defend their jobs.



Brynlliw miners fight threatened closures in 1981

BRYNLLIW - fifteen years of workable reserves

ON 14 JUNE, after a two and a half hour meeting, the area director of South Wales, Phil Weeks, stated he was recommending that Brynlliw colliery be closed as soon as possible.

At the first meeting of the review procedure, held in March it had been accepted by all present that a joint investigation team be set up involving all the unions at the pit, and that they would report to a further review meeting. The investigation team went into the pit, met each union separately, visited all parts of the mine, looked into the costs and planning that had taken place at the pit, and concluded their report with 15 recommendations.

After discussing the contents of the report the lodges at pit level agreed to accept the report and attempt to implement those recommendations which could be done locally. In the recalled meeting, early in May, another two hours was spent going through the investigation team's report. Finally the area director stated that he wished to have further

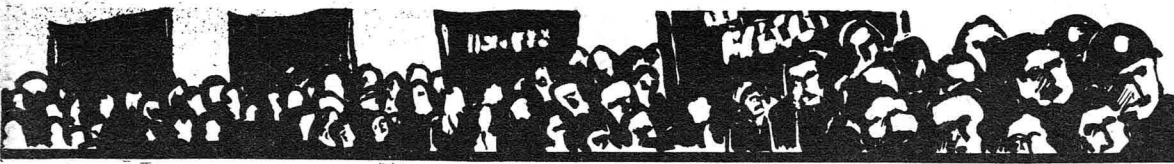
time to study the report.

In the interceding period the election was called so the final meeting was arranged for the 14 June. Many men are angry at the treatment they have now received; they can see it has been a purely political decision.

At Brynlliw there is fifteen years' work without major investment. If Brynlliw is allowed to close it will be the first pit since the late 'sixties to close in South Wales where there are workable reserves. Brynlliw colliery is no Victorian hole in the ground and the closure must be resisted.

The tactics of the NCB have been plain to see for a number of years. Reduce capacity by merger and then cut back the number of faces in production. They stop investment and recruitment. These tactics are now being seen to be used in other areas. Depending upon the outcome of the national appeal, miners will, sooner or later have to get up off the floor and fight.

By Merion Evans
(NUM, Brynlliw Colliery)



Industrial Reports

Showdown ahead for Railworkers

THE AGENDA for the union of the railworkers, NUR, reflects both the harsh lessons of the past couple of years and our union's subsequent shift to the left.

By sabotaging our own strike on its first day and then playing a major role in undermining the ASLEF strike, the old leadership helped to deny the trade union movement opportunities to inflict defeat upon the Tories. Meanwhile those same leaders were attempting to use the NUR as a vehicle for a witch-hunt against *Militant* supporters and other loyal Labour Party activists.

It is therefore a welcome step forward to see that one of the very first items on the

agenda is a resolution from Paddington No 1 which issues a clear call for Labour Party unity, condemning "arbitrary victimisation and expulsion" as "divisive... and a criminal diversion from the struggle against the Tories and their allies."

This is further amended by Tyne and Wear, Metro, Liverpool No 5 and Nottingham No 2 Branches to include a clear demand for the reinstatement to Labour Party membership of the five expelled members of the *Militant* Editorial Board. The newly elected General Secretary of the NUR, Jimmy Knapp, has already publicly opposed witch-hunts.

At the same time NUR members and railworkers in general must prepare themselves for further battles to defend jobs, working conditions, living standards and

the very existence of the industry and railway communities.

A massive onslaught on jobs is in the offing. The Serpell report will probably not be introduced all at once; that would arouse too much opposition. We have to prepare now for the battles ahead.

Prepare now for future battles

Mass meetings should be arranged throughout the country, with leading speakers from all the main rail unions. We must fully develop the Triple Alliance between the rail, mine and steel workers. The amendment from Tinsley to the Glasgow resolution shows the way forward.

It calls for: "A national

delegate conference organised jointly by the Triple Alliance unions at which the founding policy document can be reviewed... The launching of a campaign to ensure the building of links between the Triple Alliance unions at local level in preparation for joint propaganda work and supportive action."

It is vital that this is not only carried at conference, but acted upon seriously. Massive attacks have taken place against all three industries but still this body has not been invoked nationally or developed locally.

One of the greatest threats to jobs is the Board's proposals on productivity, in particular One Man Operation and Driver Only Operation; these are aimed at destroying twelve thousand guards' jobs and as a result

reducing safety standards.

Too many concessions have already been made on these issues. It is now essential that resolution No 73 from Paddington No 1 is carried and used now as the basis for calling a halt to the further spread of Driver Only Operations.

The issue of workshop closures is also coming to a head. Once again the membership have shown their willingness to struggle. The demonstration on this issue in May was far larger than many had expected. The closure date for Temple Mills is August this year, with others to follow quickly. It is essential that resolution 131 from Brighton Joint Branch, calling upon the NEC to oppose "closures of any main or Regional workshops" is fully supported.

Finally the present offer on pay, worth less than 4%

over the whole year, is the lowest to any group in the public sector this round. The statements of our trade union leaders over the past months about restoring our earnings must be acted upon. With the new spirit of unity between NUR and ASLEF prospects are better than for years.

Railworkers want to see a modernised, expanding industry with the benefits coming back to the staff. The crunch is coming. This AGM must prepare the membership for a fight to defeat the Tories and the Board and already open the way to return a Labour government as soon as possible.

By Bob Russell
(Willesdon No 1 Branch,
NUR)

POEU - first move towards privatisation halted

THE TORIES and British Telecom management have wasted no time since the election. This week they began their moves towards privatisation, and met the resistance of the workforce.

On Monday they tried to begin the installation of Project Mercury. If introduced this private communication system would have a disastrous impact upon the public system.

Project Mercury aims to link up private firms on its own separate network. Concentrated in the City and key business areas, it would skim the cream off British Telecom's profits.

But this network of private firms would not be viable unless it was linked up nationally and internationally. Project Mercury is not prepared to establish its own national network—it would not be profitable—so they plan to connect it into the public system.

In other words this bunch of parasites just want to prey upon the public service for their own private profit. The Consortium behind Project Mercury consists of Cable and Wireless (sold off by the Tories to private owners), BP,

Barclays Merchant Bank, and is headed by Michael Edwardes, former butcher of British Leyland.

This week British Telecom ordered two workers, one at Mercury headquarters, the other at BP, to begin connecting Mercury to the national network. They refused as union policy is clear. We will not connect Mercury. It is a clear threat to our livelihoods and the national public service.

The management's action this week was an attempt to test the water. When the men refused to connect Mercury they were sent home.

This is now make or break time. We can win this fight. Project Mercury is in deep trouble. Unless they get orders, they could go bust. Already Barclays have refused them more money.

It is now vital that the union leadership mobilises the members behind our brothers resisting the attempt to impose Mercury. The Tories and their management have begun this fight; it is one they must lose.

By Colin O'Callaghan
(POEU)

NALGO lefts start to organise

DESPITE the defeat of the Labour Party in the general election, the annual conference of NALGO held the week after showed a marked awareness of NALGO members' determination to fight to defend their jobs, living standards and the public services generally.

Conference also voted not to come to the Isle of Man in future until the Manx Parliament had repealed its out-dated repressive legisla-

tion against homosexuals.

At a well-attended *Militant* Readers' Meeting Lynn Walsh from the *Militant* Editorial Board spoke on which way forward for Labour; over the whole week nearly £900 was raised for the *Militant* fighting fund.

The most significant development of the week took place on the Monday evening when approximately 250 attended a meeting that decided to move

towards the establishment of a national broad-left. Several comrades have been advocating this for over twelve months, but have encountered fierce opposition from the Communist Party, thereby sowing confusion in the minds of the rank and file.

But the re-election of a Tory government has brought home to many activists the urgency of the situation, and they have seen

the broad left as a positive way forward to encourage isolated lefts, co-ordinate campaigns against cuts and privatisation, and most important to give a political lead to the left and to the whole union.

By Roger Bannister
(Branch chairman,
Knowsley)



Over 100 people attended a meeting on 21 June to keep the South London Hospital for Women open. Speaking (above) is Christine Waller, a patient. The health authority meets to decide the hospital's future on 30 June. Photo: D Doran

CPSA strikers win first round

ON 13 June Toxteth and Belle Vale DHSS strikers voted to return to work.

We believe that we have succeeded in saving a number of jobs which were under threat.

We have got management to talk about keeping a substantial number of posts. This is in advance of the

August publication of the Joint Complementing Review, which is an inquiry by both unions and management into the way staffing levels are worked out.

If the JCR now does not deliver a satisfactory result, then wide action will have to be taken, as outlined in a motion at DHSS section conference in May.

Liverpool branch has been overwhelmed by the support it has received from other branches around the country

and other unions including NALGO, MPs, PPCs, welfare rights organisations and unemployed centres.

Unfortunately the same support was not forthcoming from our own local national disputes committee who constantly refused to back the dispute. Consequently it was left to Liverpool branch to organise its own funds.

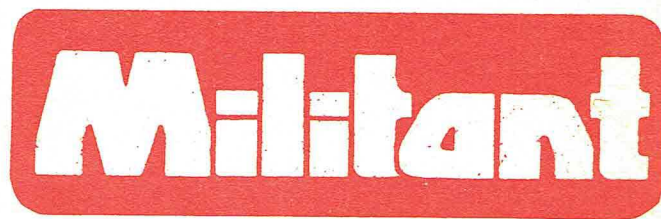
Liverpool Branch would like to thank everyone who has given us support during this dispute. But we have to

stress that finance is still a major priority. In order to pay members 50% strike pay we need £14,000.

Please send all donations as quickly as possible to Tony Clarke, Liverpool Branch Secretary, Canning Place, Liverpool L1 8HF.

By Mary Jennings and
Caryn Matthews
(CPSA, Liverpool,
personal capacity)

UNITED BISCUITS - Turn back the tide of redundancies



YET ANOTHER devastating blow has been dealt to Merseyside workers with the announcement by United Biscuits of the run down of their Crawford's factory in Liverpool.

Workers were outraged to read in the newspapers that their jobs were going. So much for their "caring company" image UB had tried to cultivate.

"A bolt out of the blue", is how one workers described it. The work-force, mainly women workers, were in tears as news spread around the factory. "Some people feel suicidal", commented one steward.

Since 1976, 100,000 manufacturing jobs have been lost in the Merseyside area. "We'll be a ghost town soon", was one remark. Walk around the United Biscuits factory and it is a monument to the industrial decay. Within a stone's throw the industrial hopes of Meccano, Paton & Calvert and Wingrove & Rogers can be seen shattered. At the nearby Plessey factory you see massive job losses. "Ten years ago at 4.30 you couldn't move on Edge Lane. Now there's hardly anyone around", is how one woman worker summed it up.

Terry Fields, Labour MP for Broadgreen, was at the factory as soon as he heard of the closures. This Friday,



Lyons Maid's factory in Liverpool was yet another of the recent Merseyside closures. Sir Hector Laing is a director of both United Biscuits and Lyons Maid Photo: Militant

with Bob Parry MP, he spoke to a shop steward's meeting. David Alton, Liberal MP, was at the factory on closure day posing for the cameras. He hasn't been seen since. Apparently, he believes he can convince the managing director to keep the factory open, just like he convinced the directors of Meccano and Wingrove and Rogers.

United Biscuits workers are particularly bitter that the closure was timed after the general election. "I voted for Thatcher, I thought I was safe", was only one comment. The managing director of UB is, of course, Hector Laing, Thatcher's business adviser.

The blame for closure lies firmly on the shoulders of management. Workers gave examples of the bread-line

for Vandenberg, which was installed at a cost of £3 million, being scrapped when they found people could not afford the bread, while another £2 million was lost when biscuits were sent to Saudi Arabia in Marks and Spencers wrappers.

United Biscuits have also come up with the ingenious idea that people dieting is the reason for the closure of UB. Obviously, it couldn't be that people can't afford biscuits because the press keep telling us how affluent everyone is!

Workers are clearly not to blame. They've tried every way to keep the factory open in the last two years. All over-time was stopped. Changes in shifts went through and 1000 workers volunteered for redundancy. It is the industrial vam-

pires who are sucking the life blood of Merseyside. Determined action is needed by the trade unions, and a national lead must be given. Pressure must be exerted on the UB management to keep Edge Lane open.

It is clear from the past that gentle persuasion will not work, industrial action is the only language the bosses understand. Trade union leaders must be as ruthless and determined to save their members' jobs as Sir Hector Laing is to protect his profits.

Merseyside has seen a tide of closures over the last few years; one victory could throw back this tide. The determination is there on the shop floor to make Crawford's that first victory.

By Richard Knights

COALITE

Continued from page 1

profits.

But then it shouldn't be surprising that Coalite were prepared to make a fast buck out of the Argentinians given their treatment of the Falklanders. Coalite own 47% of the islands and employ half the population, not to mention owning

houses, shops and property.

Indeed not only did Coalite sell off their wool stocks, they even sold the wool stocks owned by independent farmers that were stored in Coalite's warehouses. They paid the farmers for the wool, but the farmers were never asked whether they wanted their stocks sold to the occupying forces.

Now Coalite are ex-

ploiting the British Army, whose bloody recapture of the islands—not made any easier by Coalite's wool that lined the Argentinian trenches thus bolstering the Argentinians' defences—means Coalite can carry on their profit making in the Falklands. Coalite are charging troops billeted in their property £1.50 a night. The *Sunday Times* (June 19) reported one

small cottage which had up to 16 soldiers crammed in it, making a monthly rental income of £650.

Coalite's profit making hasn't ended there. They have reprocessed the wool and resold it as 'war damaged'. They have also put in a compensation claim to the Ministry of Defence for £2 million.

For the capitalist class, war can be a profitable business.

UNION POWER

Continued from page 1

metropolitan counterparts, most of which are Labour controlled.

This is an attempt to remove these left-wing councils which have been a thorn in the side of the Tories outside Parliament, and have the potential to become focal points of the opposition to the government. London Transport, too faces the threat of the axe.

Measures to privatise British Telecom, postponed by the general election, will be re-introduced. The privatisation of sections of British Airways and the National Bus Company will follow. Further privatisations, to help the Tories' big business friends make a killing are also likely.

All these measures, together with further waves of closures which the Tories have promised in the coal and other industries, amount to an out and out attack on workers and their industrial organisations.

Anticipating the opposition that will greet their plans, the Tories went out of their way in the speech to promise further support for "law and order". They plan to reintroduce the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill, giving sweeping new powers to the police, and ominously a new Act to replace the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

These measures, ostensibly introduced to combat crime and terrorism, will un-

doubtedly be used against sections of the labour movement moving into action to defend their rights.

With their huge House of Commons majority, the Tories will have no difficulty getting these measures on the statute book. But they will face ferocious opposition at every turn when they try and impose them in the real world outside Parliament.

David Basnett, one of the leaders of the TUC said last week that: "We must take steps as individual unions and the TUC to defend our organisation, our rights and our finances against this legalistic attack." These words must be transformed into action.

Despite the wave of redundancies that still sweeps the country, the unions retain 53% of workers in membership, representing over 10 million workers, plus their families. The Tories are bound on a collision course with the most powerful labour movement Britain has ever known.

The unions must start now to prepare a campaign to ensure that the Tory plans blow up in their faces. As a start shop floor meetings must be organised immediately, throughout the country, to explain the implications of the Tory plans, and discuss a plan of action.

If the campaign is conducted correctly the Tories will founder on the same rocks of workers' power that sank Ted Heath's ill-fated attempts in the early 'seventies.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

- ★ The immediate introduction of a 35-hour week without loss of pay as a step towards the elimination of unemployment.
- ★ Reversal of all Tory cuts and a massive programme of public works on housing, education, the health service, public transport and other services.
- ★ A minimum wage of £100 a week, including for pensioners, the sick and disabled.
- ★ Opposition to anti-trade union and other legislation that restricts workers' democratic rights.
- ★ Opposition to all forms of discrimination against women, black and Asian workers and minority groups in society.
- ★ Massive cuts in arms spending, now running at £15bn a year.
- ★ Unilateral nuclear disarmament.

- ★ An end to the devastation of basic industries like coal, rail and steel.
- ★ Workers' control and management in the nationalised industries, run by boards to be made up of one third of each of representatives from: the unions in the industry; the TUC, representing all workers; the government.
- ★ Opposition to dictatorship of the national press by a handful of rich press barons. Printing facilities should be nationalised and access given to political parties except fascists on the basis of their electoral support.
- ★ Nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, including the banks and insurance companies which control 80-85 per cent of the economy. This should be done through an Enabling Bill, with compensation based only on proven need.
- ★ A socialist plan of production, in which the enormous resources of the country are democratically planned for the benefit of the whole population.
- ★ Opposition to the capitalist Common Market. For a United Socialist States of Europe, as a step forward to a World Socialist Federation.

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