

# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 683  
20 January 1984

20p

Inside:

Lenin's last struggle  
against Stalinism  
Centre pages

Tea prices — who gains,  
who loses — Page 11

Chesterfield by-election — Page 2



Defend local jobs and services...

# Tories blitz Labour cities

Next Tuesday 24 January, thousands of workers will strike and demonstrate against government attacks on local authority jobs and services.

The protests will focus on the Tory decision to axe the Metropolitan Counties, i.e. the Greater London Council, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, West Midlands, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear by April 1985.

It is typical Tory logic that most devastating action should be taken against those big city areas most racked by unemployment.

Ironically, both the GLC and the Met counties were Tory inventions, but the Tories fear local councils can become a source of opposition to government policies so they are determined to keep them in harness.

The government say abolition will "save" thousands of jobs. This is Toryspeak for sacking workers. If the proposals go through, central government will take control of finance and staffing for many of the services—and the Tories want cuts of at least 30% in Greater London.

## Jobs cut

The proposals are economic nonsense. If the GLC is now disbanded, many smaller services will go to the 32 London boroughs. For instance, waste disposal currently run by the GLC will be split 32 different ways

while overall staffing is cut!

Most of the spending on services will be transferred to "precepting boards" for police, fire and public transport which will not be directly elected or accountable. Other services will be handled by joint committees, maybe as many as 50 Quangos, statutory bodies completely out of electoral control.

## Government

By typical sleight of hand, the government and the press give the impression that local authorities are the last of the big spenders. True, rates have gone up massively since 1979 but this has been because Whitehall under Thatcher, has reduced rate support grants to local councils.

If this grant had been maintained, central government spending would have increased 101% since 1978-79. The penny pinching Tories have managed to cut and cut again but still spend more. Defence expenditure has gone up, and they have

to pay a pittance to the extra millions on the dole. The spending of local government on the other hand would have grown by just 80%. Even the GLC increased its spending less than Thatcher.

## Mass action

Mass action against the cuts is the only way the Tories can be stopped. Every council whether threatened with disbandment or cut-backs should organise a campaign like Liverpool's taking out the issues of jobs and services to the unions, tenants associations and into the local communities.

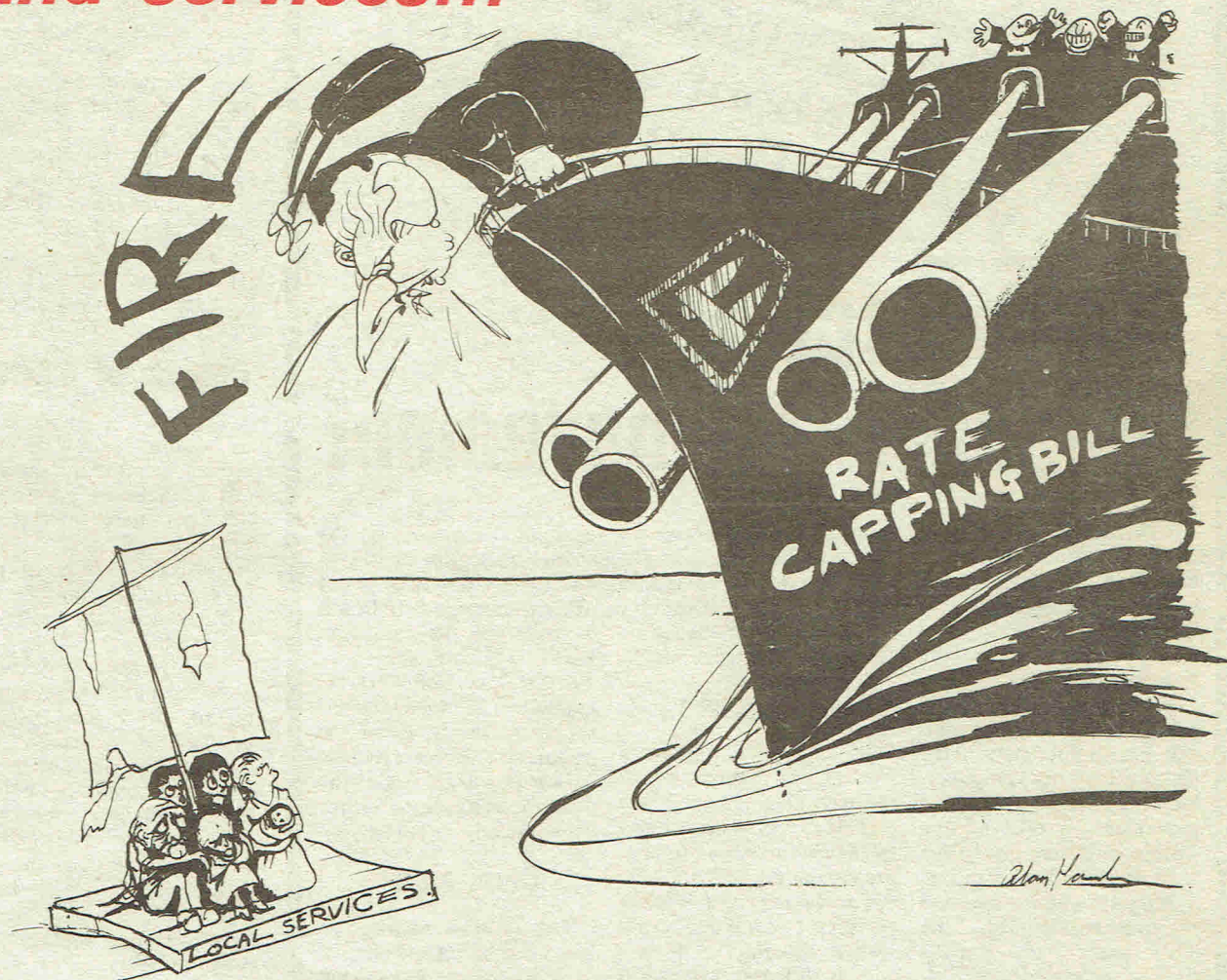
A mass campaign nationally can force the Tories to pay up a realistic figure for grant aid and keep the jobs and services which are so important for working class areas.

## Save the GLC

Page 13

## Tory cuts

Page 16



## Target date 31 JANUARY: BUILD MILITANT

THE TARGET date for the Building Fund will soon be here. By January 31 we must raise £150,000 to begin the process of acquiring new premises. With just under £34,000 already sent in cash and a further £60,000 in promises we are well on the way.

But time is short and every reader must ensure that their pledge is redeemed by the end of January. Every day shows the urgent need for a daily response to the battles facing the working class.

As the Tories plan further attacks on workers, new layers of opposition are found. The eleven Royal Ordnance Factories were closed by strikes this week for the first time in their 400 year history when 18,000 workers walked out for the

day in protest at the Tories' plans to privatise them.

We need to be able to cover all the many disputes and struggles taking place and to put the Marxist case forward on a more frequent basis. You can speed up the day when we see the first copy of a daily *Militant* by helping us obtain better accommodation for our press and staff.

## A Marxist daily

Think how much a daily *Militant* will assist us in our work. Opportunities for putting forward our ideas are going begging for want of a daily Marxist voice. You can help rectify that by sending in a donation to the Building Fund. (Form and more details on page 4. Rush your money off today.

# Armed police raid Irish Militant

SOCIALISTS IN Britain and Ireland will be outraged by the actions of the Irish Gardai (Police) in raiding the offices of the *Militant Irish Monthly*.

Police armed with sub-machine guns burst into the Dublin premises at 12.15 pm last Tuesday, claiming they were searching for an unnamed individual.

A statement issued by

the *Irish Militant* a few hours later described the incident as "a gross act of harassment by the State of left wing members of the Labour Party".

"For the past 12 years", the statement went on, "*Militant Irish Monthly* and its supporters have always made clear our opposition to acts of individual terror. It is our position that activities of this type do not

advance the struggle for socialism one iota. This well-publicised position of *Militant* is well known to all political activists in Ireland, and throughout the labour movement."

Supporters of the paper believe that it is more than a coincidence that the leadership of the Irish Labour Party are at this very time trying to start a witch-hunt against the marxists in the party, in

the same way, but on a bigger scale, than in Britain. A special resolution was to be presented to the leading body of the Party, the Administrative Council, on Thursday, three days after the raid, calling for a special constitutional amendment to pave the way for a purge.

Liability for expulsion would be by "membership of the organisation known as the Militant,

otherwise 'The Militant Tendency', the 'Militant Readers' Group', or association with such group, or support of, or propagation of, or assistance in the publication of *Irish Militant Monthly*, the *Militant* newspaper or any related publication". In other words right wing officers, backed by government ministers, wanted a massive purge.

The Labour leadership have remained in coalition with the right wing Fine Gael party, in a government carrying out increasingly unpopular Thatcherite policies. Trade union and Labour Party members are already in a state of furious opposition to the stance of the Party leaders and the news of this imminent witch-hunt, released last Sunday, caused an immediate outcry in branches, youth sections and trade union meetings.

CONTINUED ON  
BACK PAGE

**Militant**



The Tory press the day after Benn's selection—they will reach new heights of hysteria when the by-election begins.

# Benn election - mobilise the movement

TONY BENN'S selection as Labour candidate in the forthcoming Chesterfield by-election will be welcomed by the overwhelming majority of the rank and file of the Labour Party.

But his return to Parliament will not be easy and will depend ultimately on the character of his campaign; how it mobilises the labour movement to take on the Tories and how it offers workers a viable alternative.

Already, with the selection meeting barely over, the Tory press have worked themselves up into an anti-Benn frenzy. But the greatest danger for Labour would not lie in the press campaign—that is entirely predictable—but in allowing a "low-key" campaign.

## Bermondsey

The press have been at great pains to point out the "private" disappointment of the Labour Party leadership at the outcome of the selection. Labour Party members remembering the behind-the-scenes sniping at Peter Tatchell in Bermondsey and the glee of the right wing over his defeat, will be watching very carefully to see how Neil Kinnock and Roy Hattersley back Tony Benn: anything less than whole-hearted support would be a disgrace.

Given past experience it is not difficult to imagine full-time Labour Party officers, backed up by the right wing in the leadership, urging "moderation", cutting back or refusing altogether to organise public meetings, barring all canvassers except the most politically reliable, carefully vetting press statements, and generally emasculating any real fighting spirit in the party.

If such a campaign were to be organised, it would get the worst of all worlds—neither blunting the vicious edge of the press campaign, nor mobilising local Labour supporters into fighting for a victory.

## Enthusiasm

The Chesterfield campaign will win if there is a bold and enthusiastic campaign around socialist policies. Before the general election, the right wing in the party had said that socialist

campaigns would never win elections, but the magnificent victories in Liverpool Broadgreen and Coventry South East show that to be completely false.

## Broadgreen

In Liverpool, against a vicious anti-Labour press; the party achieved one of the highest swings in the country by the character and tone of the campaign.

Canvassing was not just a glorified opinion poll, but a serious attempt to discuss with doubtful workers about Labour's policy. Factory gate and estate meetings were held where the voters could hear the candidate face-to-face, at the same time recruiting a considerable number of people into the party.

The enthusiasm and energy of the campaign inspired party members and even non-members to turn out and work; between 200 and 250 were working on week-ends and on election day over 500.

Tony Benn himself saw a part of the campaign in a huge election meeting addressed by him and the Labour candidate, Terry Fields, and he could not have failed to have been impressed by the electric mood of the meeting and the campaign.

## Policies

In Chesterfield, the most decisive factor above all will be the political programme put forward by Labour in the next seven or eight weeks. Despite their election victory, based on the mood of workers at only one point in time, (and especially the temporary 'Falklands Factor') the Tories are today profoundly unpopular, and increasingly so.

They have no longer any semblance of an economic strategy and even by their own reckoning, by the end of their second full term in office, almost every economic indicator will be worse than in 1979, when the Tories came in. The Tories are on the defensive over the economy, NHS cuts, unemployment and nuclear weapons.

Labour must campaign on all these questions vigorously and energetically. But the

campaign must carry the special message to workers in Chesterfield—and most other workers in Britain will be watching the campaign with interest—that the Tories' system itself, capitalism, is incapable of satisfying the needs of the population. There is no way forward on the basis of the market economy, either economically or socially.

## Campaign

Labour must campaign on the need for fundamental socialist change, for the nationalisation of the top 200 industrial and financial firms, with compensation only on the basis of proven need, and under workers' control and management. This would be the foundation of a democratic socialist plan of production—the only means of arresting the decline of living standards and the relentless decay of the British economy.

## Victory vital

John Selwyn Gummer, Tory party chairman, adding his pennyworth to the anti-Benn tirades, commented that the selection showed "the real face of the Labour Party". That is actually true, and that is precisely what is worrying the press barons.

Tony Benn is one of those leading figures in the party who most clearly embody the shift to the left among the rank and file in recent years, breaking away from the discredited policies of the right wing and searching for genuine socialist policies. In that respect, he is far more in tune with the active layers of the party than are the present leaders. A victory for Tony Benn in the by-election, therefore, would not only be a gain for Labour but for the left of the party in particular.

## Eager to win

The Labour party grass roots, so delighted that he has been selected, will be just as eager to see Tony Benn win and win well—with a campaign that delivers a wounding blow to the hated Thatcher regime and the Tories' whole outmoded economic system.

# Blacks bear brunt of Tory attacks

By Colin De Freitas

THE GLC's 'Anti-Racist Year' was publically launched on 4 January. Its aim is to combat racism in London.

Blacks in the inner cities are bearing the brunt of the Tory attacks which have resulted in chronic unemployment (e.g. seven out of ten black males in Brixton are out of work), bad housing, and intensified harassment by the police.

Any campaign to undermine racism and to alleviate the terrible conditions blacks face must be welcomed. But how best is this going to be achieved?

## Change of heart?

The GLC's leader Ken Livingstone said, "The main aim of Anti-Racist Year is to change the hearts and minds of Londoners": he took "the pledge" with Adrian Slade (GLC leader of the Liberals) and Rodney Grant (GLC leader of the Tories) to achieve this.

Yet it is the Tory party in government that is responsible for the biggest rise in unemployment since the war, the introduction of the Police Bill to increase police powers, not to mention the discriminating Nationality Act—since the passing of this reactionary law, there has been a 22% increase in deportations, mainly of Asian workers.

## Racism

What has to be understood is that racism cannot be eradicated by abstract notions of changing



Photo: Andy Moore

The parents of Colin Roach join a demonstration outside Stoke Newington police station last week. It is a year since Colin died in mysterious circumstances at the police station in East London.

the "hearts and minds" of people, but only by removing the system which deliberately maintains racism as a means of dividing the workers and diverting attention away from the real causes of the present crisis.

Racism will not be defeated or even undermined by a 'liberal-do-gooder' approach and least of all by 'well meaning Tories' asking people to be nice to blacks.

An effective fight against racism must begin at its roots and ultimately must be linked to the struggle to change

society. The only force in society which can achieve this is the working class, black and white workers organised in the labour and trade union movement.

## The real enemy

This is where such a campaign must be built as part of a generalised campaign, explaining every step of the way, the role of racism and the need for workers' unity to defeat the real enemy—the Tories and their capitalist system.

# Glasgow freezes rents

By Larry Flanagan (Glasgow DLP, personal capacity)

£10 million worth of cuts in the city.

## Further threat

tions and launch a concerted effort to build a campaign against George Younger, Secretary of State for Scotland, and his Tory friends.

## Enforced cuts

Such a campaign is absolutely vital. Earlier this financial year Younger, using the powers available to him by Scottish law, enforced a rate reduction in Glasgow which led to almost

Although rates are not being increased this year the threat of a further attack from Younger is very real. Now, however, a fresh opportunity exists to build a campaign, rooted amongst the working class of Glasgow, and linking with other cities.

Above all it is necessary for the leadership of the party, the Scottish Council and the National Executive to co-ordinate the efforts of individual Labour councils in a united national campaign against the government.

# Liverpool campaign gets rolling

LAST MONDAY saw the first meeting of the Liverpool City Council Campaign Working Party, a body set up by the council to help promote public, trade union and political support for the policies of the council.

## Support

Over seventy local leaders of major trade unions in the private sector, tenants associations, local authority

workers and other local Labour councils attended the inaugural meeting.

## Resources

Chief Officers of each council department were also present to ensure that the resources of their departments are made available to the campaign.

From the floor many trade union leaders pledged their support and would ensure

that the case of the city council was widely circulated and discussed amongst the rank and file.

The Campaign Working Party agreed to set up a series of 18 public meetings throughout the city in early February; the holding of a series of factory gate meetings; and the production of regular briefing notes for circulation throughout the city and elsewhere.

# Victims of sectarianism

**THERE HAS** been an upsurge in sectarian murders in Northern Ireland this winter. This grim toll was added to on December 12 when 18 year old Tony Dawson was gunned down in East Belfast. A policeman, off-duty at the time of the incident, has been charged with his murder.

*Militant* has always argued that socialism in the North and South of Ireland can only be achieved by a united working class. As the interview below shows, the tactics of individual terror used by the sectarian paramilitaries only obstruct this struggle for unity.

After Tony Dawson was shot, he ran into the home of Annie Quinn, where he died in front of Annie and her children. Annie is a mother of seven who lives in the Short Strand, a small Catholic enclave in a major Protestant area.

Her family have already experienced the bitterness of sectarianism. The boyfriend of Annie's daughter was shot because he was a Protestant going out with a Catholic girl. The boyfriend, Marti Legge, was badly wounded in the murder attempt.

Glenn Simpson and Pat Mulholland of the Belfast Labour and Trade Union Group spoke to Annie:

**What has been the response of local people to the murder of Tony Dawson?**

"People here are disgusted. Tony wasn't in-

involved in any organisation and wasn't interested in politics. He didn't smoke or drink, but because he was unemployed he used to stand on the street corner. He'd nowhere else to go. Tony was well respected in the area."

**What do people feel about the police in the light of this murder?**

"Although there are some decent people in the police force, the police have always been hostile to the people here. They seem to think it is a crime for unemployed kids to stand on street corners".

**Had Tony ever been threatened by the police or by the UDR?**

"He had been threatened by the UDR because he had Protestant girlfriends and because he frequented Protestant areas. My sons and many other kids have been threatened by the UDR in this area."

**Has Sinn Fein gained any support since Tony's murder?**

"No. They didn't criticise the shooting of Marti Legge. He was a Protestant, so many people see Sinn Fein as being one sided and sectarian. If only the gunmen could see the havoc they create in working class homes, then they might see how futile their activities are."

"I am disillusioned with patriotism and republicanism. They have achieved nothing but sorrow and pain. Many housewives here have to take tablets to help them live from crisis to crisis. What kind of Ireland is that?"

## Asbestos: Tories pass the buck

FOLLOWING recent publicity on the dangers of asbestos, the government sponsored Health and Safety Commission (a quango), is proposing new limits for asbestos exposure.

Yet the levels are still massively inadequate. A recent article in *Medical News* states: "The figure of one dead worker in 10,000 has been used to set control limits for exposure to radiation—an excess mortality of 0.01 per cent. The asbestos industry has claimed that it would have to shut down if measures to reduce risk to 1 in 1,000 (0.1 per cent excess mortality) were introduced. The acceptable risk is therefore taken as 1 in 100 (1 per cent excess mortality)".

The new proposal is to halve the level, but that will still mean the exposure risk will be one death per 200 workers.

What's more, all the government is doing is shifting responsibility onto local councils. As I told the Tories in Parliament recently:

"What is the point in the House debating asbestos levels and the diseases caused by them as a national priority, if the buck is passed onto local councils, already working on restricted budgets and having suffered cuts in their

funds so that they have to choose between, say, keeping a nursery or school open, keeping meals on wheels cheap or removing asbestos from a school in which children are at risk from asbestosis in the future?"

Later I went on to say that there were not enough health and safety inspectors to properly check premises, whatever the regulations. This drew the following astounding exchange with the Chairman of the Tory Party, John Selwyn-Gummer.

I had told him "...for every example that the Minister can bring of the system working I shall bring him 100 where it is not."

Mr Gummer: "The hon. Gentleman is probably exaggerating with his last word and his last sentence. It is not possible to inspect and overlook for 24 hours a day, or for the number of hours that a particular group is working."

Mr. Allan Rogers: "Why not?"

Mr Gummer: "If the hon. Gentleman thinks that it is possible to have an inspector in every work place for every hour of the day, he is asking for the impossible and for something that is bonkers"

By Dave Nellist MP



PST... WANNA SEE SOME DIRTY CONTRACTS.

## Keeping it in the family

**THE REVELATIONS** about Mark Thatcher's involvement with a £300 million deal in Oman shows that it's not what you know, but who you know. Or rather, who you are related to.

According to a report in the *Observer*, the Prime Minister's son was "working in the interests" of Cementation International Ltd in 1981. In April of the same year, Mrs Thatcher visited Oman—shortly afterwards Cementation was awarded the multi-million

pound contract to build a prestige university there. While the official visit was taking place, Mark Thatcher also flew to Oman on behalf of Cementation.

Mrs Thatcher could hardly be unaware of her son's involvement with the company. His name appeared on a list of official guests to a dinner at No 10 Downing Street for everyone connected with the Oman university project. It is unusual for the Prime Minister's relatives to participate in official govern-

ment dinners.

Of course, this was not a case of corruption. Cementation International Ltd were the only British company tendering for the contract.

### Qualified?

Despite the company's denials it is clear from the *Observer's* report that Mark Thatcher was working in their interests.

So why did Cementation use Mark Thatcher rather than someone more qualified? Since when is a

racing driver an expert on industrial construction? His best known contact with the desert was when he was lost in it.

At the time the *Daily Express* also seemed very enthusiastic about Mrs Thatcher's Oman visit. As she flew off to Oman they described her as "a super-saleswoman" for British industry. Cementation International Ltd is a subsidiary of the Trafalgar House multinational. So was the *Daily Express* at the time. Its a small world, isn't it.

By a Militant Reporter

## Workers take over housing office



Photo: Mark Pinder

WORKERS FROM Hackney council's Direct Labour Organisation, in East London, have occupied an area council office. With full support from the Hackney Federation of Tenants, the DLO workers took over the site on the St. John's council estate on Monday January 16. They are protesting at management's plans to shed 25 DLO jobs, while work is put out to contract.

But they also aim to prove they can run the site more efficiently. Before the occupation, the workers claim, there was too much bureaucracy and only emergency repairs were being carried out, while maintenance was left undone. The DLO workers point out their aims are in accordance with the Labour council's election manifesto.

## 'Invincible' unrest - three charged

THE TRIAL of three Royal Navy personnel from *HMS Invincible* gives credibility to reports in the press last week that there has been widespread unrest aboard the carrier during its Far East 'goodwill' tour.

The three sailors have been flown home, after the *Daily Star* (January 10) carried reports from the crew describing how they were angry at being "treated like skivvies".

The crew, many of whom served during the Falklands War, complained of being used as stewards and waiters for numerous officers' cocktail parties, and having

to repeatedly carry out menial cleaning tasks.

One electrician complained to the *Star* of having to perform 'human guard rail' duty during arrivals at port: "We are skilled men and should not have to do the job that a rope is designed to do."

Another rating complained: "If it were the last century we would have mutinied by now—honest."

Discontent has been further fuelled by the tour not having a fixed schedule. This means that Navy wives cannot fly out to meet their husbands at ports of call.

An ordinary seaman with

nine years service has an annual salary of £5,055, while the captain, Nicholas Hill-Norton, gets £25,100.

### Top brass

The Navy top brass immediately denied the reports, dismissing them out of hand. To quote Captain Hill-Norton: "All my men have happy smiling faces, old chap. They are bright-eyed and bushy tailed. Revolt! That's poppycock." (*Daily Star*, January 10).

But if the Navy chiefs are so confident, why does the *Daily Star* claim it has been banned on the *Invincible*,

while the BBC news was only allowed to interview crew members with the ship's PRO, Commander Nestor, present.

The rest of the Fleet Street press came to the aid of the Navy chiefs in denying the allegations.

However, very few of them have reported how three ratings have now been flown back to Britain to face charges—one has already been imprisoned and the other two face charges of 'contempt'.

By Bob Wade

# Invest in your future

**THE DEADLINE for the Building Fund is fast approaching and the eyes of all our readers will be on the rate of progress so far. We set ourselves the massive target of raising £150,000 by the end of January and the response so far has been fantastic.**

Not only did we raise a record amount for the Fighting fund last year but we are confident that the target will be met and 1984 will be the year that Militant moves into new premises. We have well over £100,000 promised but the job now, as well as obtaining more pledges, is to convert those promises into the real thing—money! So far £33,563 has come into the Fund to redeem pledges made when it was first launched but there is obviously still a long way to go.

The only people we can rely on to help us reach our goal are the workers who support the ideas of the paper and who want to see those ideas reach a wider and wider audience. Unlike some fortunates we cannot expect to receive massive handouts to pay for the purchase and upkeep of new premises.

Take, for example, the Windsor family. Better known as the Royals they manage to eke out an existence from the money we pay in taxes. It must be hard for them. The amount spent on the upkeep of all the royal palaces, trains, planes and boats comes to an incredible £23,152,724.

While the Tories are trying to avoid giving workers any pay rises at all they have just recommended an increase in the Civil List payments of 4% which will take the cost of the Royal Scroungers to £5,017,000 in 1984. Including the Civil List the

By Nick Wrack

total cost of these worthies last year was £27,668,324!

The recommended increase for the Queen is £173,100 taking her personal budget to £3,850,000. Her pay rise is more than the target for the Building Fund. If you make a donation to our Fund you can be sure it will be better spent than Betty's millions. Last year she spent £27,000 on tips—that's a lot of eating out!

Somehow, despite her many residences, she managed to pay only £1,000 in rent and rates. No wonder the rents and rates are rocketing up for the rest of us.

We're not asking to buy Sandringham or Balmoral or even Windsor Castle but we need the cash by the end of January so that we can make an offer and back it up with the necessary finances. It is up to all our readers to ensure that they play their part in building the strength and resources of the paper.

There have been some marvellous sacrifices made by many supporters. Some have worked double shifts, even working Christmas Day, to raise money to send in. School-students have saved up small amounts each week to be able to participate in our campaign.

No-one should want to be left out. If you have not sent us a promise yet don't wait any longer. Fill in the form and send it off today. Send in the money to redeem you pledge and look upon it as an investment. An invest-

ment in the building of a better society for generations to come without the worry of what horror the Tories have lined up for us next.

Chris Worsley a civil servant who promised £1,000, has now sent in the cash. Roy Wenborne, a Post Office engineer has sent in £500 and Rob Crawford and Helen Redwood have sent in £300. If you have already sent in a donation of a promise but are inspired by these examples then don't hesitate to send in some more.

The contributions we have received are too many to list but whether they are large or small they each show a tremendous commitment to the ideas of the Militant. For example, Brychan Davies, an unemployed Young Socialist in the Rhondda has given £50 and Ben Lawrence, also unemployed, from South London has given £40.

Every YS branch should now help the paper that builds the YS. Organise a disco or sponsored event with the proceeds to go to the Building Fund. Trade Union Branches and shop steward's committees should be approached for a donation. Explain how a daily socialist paper will assist them in the fight against the bosses.

Every reader should aim to send their money in as quickly as possible. The sooner we reach the target the sooner we move into more suitable premises. Prepare the way for a daily Militant and mass support for the ideas of Marxism.

**I/We promise/enclose £..... for the Marxist Daily Building Fund. To be sent c/o 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.**

| Area                  | Received     | % of target achieved | Total 7 January |
|-----------------------|--------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Eastern               | 4050         |                      | 5150            |
| East Midlands         | 3546         |                      | 5050            |
| Humberside            | 2086         |                      | 2700            |
| London East           | 4550         |                      | 6350            |
| London West           | 2521         |                      | 3650            |
| London South          | 4862         |                      | 5650            |
| Manchester & Lancs    | 4135         |                      | 6350            |
| Merseyside            | 4832         |                      | 6500            |
| Northern              | 3689         |                      | 6400            |
| Scotland East         | 2841         |                      | 4200            |
| Scotland West         | 3261         |                      | 4900            |
| Southern              | 6030         |                      | 7600            |
| South West            | 2387         |                      | 3550            |
| Wales East            | 1958         |                      | 3450            |
| Wales West            | 2746         |                      | 4200            |
| West Midlands         | 4035         |                      | 5700            |
| Yorkshire             | 5328         |                      | 6600            |
| Others                | 12848        |                      | 12000           |
| <b>Total received</b> | <b>75704</b> |                      | <b>100000</b>   |

(Above) Final chart for the last six months of 1983.

## How cash built the unions

**THE EARLY seizure of NGA funds shows the ruling class recognise the importance of finance to the organisations of the working class. They realise the full potential of an organisation that is financially armed. From the first time workers 'came together' to combine and form unions to defend their rights, money has been a vital part of every campaign.**

The dockers' strike in 1889 raised over £48,736 in strike funds; Australian unions donated £30,000 in

solidarity! The rest of the money came from individuals. The fact that the strike was a success and won 6d (2½p) on the wages might have been a different story if it had not been for the record strike funds.

The forerunner of today's GMWU came about as Marxists helped launched the gas workers' union. And as Yvonne Kapp, Eleanor Marx's biographer makes clear, finance was crucial to its early success.

A meeting was called by Will Thorne of workers employed at the Gas, Light and Coke Co in East Ham.

The purpose of the meeting "was to form a union with a single aim of demanding that working hours should be reduced from twelve to eight. It was received with such acclaim that 800 men joined this nascent union on the spot, tossing their 1/- (5p) entrance fee into a bucket." And 1/- in those days represented a day's pay! Within a fortnight there were 3,000 members and weekly dues were agreed at 2d (1p).

Eleanor Marx was active in other unions, often organising benefits to help raise cash for the strikers and

# ADS

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

**BADGE:** Militant enamel stud badge—£1.00 p&p  
**CALENDAR:** 1984 poster calendar—£1.00 p&p  
Cheques made payable to Militant. Send to 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

**FOR HANDICAPPED READERS**  
Cassette tapes with two issues of Militant (one each side). Available fortnightly. £3.50 per quarter, £13 for year. Write to: 'Militant Tapes', 26 Aston Terrace, Harehills, Leeds 8, or phone (0527) 73795.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Paula Leigh and Peter Tutty on your engagement—from Jean and Tony.

**BIKE FOR sale.** Raleigh RFW 3, small wheeled model. Needs new tyres, hence £25 ONO. Buyer to collect. All proceeds to the Building Fund. Ring Iain, 01-689 4690.

**FOOTBALL programmes** bought—Any quantity. Excellent way of raising money for fighting fund/Building Fund. Contact: M. Ingram, 206 Honeysuckle Rd, Southampton, Hampshire. Or ring (0703) 551420.

**CALLING ALL Marxist athletes.** Have you past the finishing post for your pledge for the Building Fund? No?

Then start training for the Militant Marathon! Join this fund raising event to be held in early spring. Contact Paul Henry, c/o 10 Kensington Road, Chorlton, Manchester.

**SELF CONTAINED** two-bedroomed flat in Acton, West London. Available from mid-January. Close to bus and tube. Low rent—would suit two to four Militant supporters. Phone 01-749 7903 evenings.

**'Militant Turn left for workers unity and socialism'**  
T-shirts—£3.50-white, yellow, navy black.  
Sweatshirts—£6.75—grey, pale-blue, navy, dark green.  
Small 32"-34" chest  
medium 34"-36"  
large 36"-38"  
extra large 40-42"  
All proceeds to Militant Fighting Fund. All cheques and postal orders with size and colour preference to R. Harris, 2 Dukes Brow, Blackburn, Lancs.

**BOLSHEVIK Poster Calendars.** Send 50p (includes p&p) to S. Davies, 2 Keswick Avenue, Roath Park, Cardiff. All proceeds to Fighting fund.

**ROOM to let,** all in, £20 per week. In Tooting Broadway. Contact Box 3, Militant Circulation, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

**ROOM IN shared flat.** £15pw + bills in Forest Gate, London E7. Phone Jane on 01 552 3204.

# Militant

**MEETINGS**  
**HARTLEPOOL:** Marxist discussion groups. Held weekly. Ring Malcolm Fallow, Peterlee 867789.

**THANET:** Militant Readers' Meetings are held on alternative Monday evenings. For further details phone (0843) 291293.

**BLACKBURN:** Wednesday 15 February at 7.30 pm, at King George's Hall. Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant), Terry Fields MP.

**MILITANT STICKERS.** Still available. 200 for £2.30; 500 for £5.60; 1,000 for £11.00. Contact: Militant Circulation, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

**EAST MIDLANDS LPYS conference** starts with a demonstration against the NHS cuts. Assemble at 10.30 am, Saturday 18 January at Market Square, Nottingham. March to Green Youth Centre, Hyson Green, Nottingham for rally with speakers: Dave Nellist MP and Henry Richardson (President Notts. NUM). LPYS conference is at Green Youth Centre, Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 February.

**NATIONAL TOUR OF EL SALVADOREAN TRADE UNIONISTS LONDON MEETING**  
Monday, January 23, 7.30 pm, County Hall, SE1 (Waterloo Tube)  
Speakers:  
Juan Jose Vargas (El Salvador graphical workers' union)  
Anna Christina Avilez (general workers' union)  
ALSO:  
Tony Benn, Arthur Scargill NUM, Ken Cameron FBU, John Willats NGA  
For further information contact:  
El Salvador Solidarity Campaign. Tel: 01-359 2270

**World Socialist Books**

A new booklist now available (free) from World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

**Sri Lanka**  
The tasks today  
New pamphlet from the Nava Sama Samaja Party (UK Branch). Obtainable from World Socialist Books (see address left) Price 75p plus 10p postage

## Sell at the work place

IN LAST week's Militant there were two letters from people who had bought our paper on the street and become regular readers. Despite a wholesalers' and advertisers' blockade our readership continues to increase and this is only through the hard work of

our sellers who unlike nearly all other papers build our sales not through capitalist outlets but going directly to workers themselves.

possible to over-emphasise the need to extend and develop in every possible way the custom of regular contributions by groups of workers for the workers' newspaper". And Pravda, the Bolsheviks' newspaper proved how important this is as it united four-fifths of Russia's workers around its banner.  
Finance is inseparable from working class struggles. It played a significant role in helping set up trade unions and indeed the labour movement—as it still does today. But it is going to play an even more significant role in helping us on the road to socialism.  
Lenin outlined how important it is that workers support the paper that fights for their rights: "It is im-

portant to over-emphasise the need to extend and develop in every possible way the custom of regular contributions by groups of workers for the workers' newspaper". And Pravda, the Bolsheviks' newspaper proved how important this is as it united four-fifths of Russia's workers around its banner.  
Finance is inseparable from working class struggles. It played a significant role in helping set up trade unions and indeed the labour movement—as it still does today. But it is going to play an even more significant role in helping us on the road to socialism.  
Lenin outlined how important it is that workers support the paper that fights for their rights: "It is im-

One of our best sellers is a worker from Drax B power station in Yorkshire who sells 70 papers a week. We are convinced that many more sales can be gained from workplaces but these will require people to sell there.  
As the selection of Tony Benn shows, workers are looking for radical answers to the problems that face them and we believe that if argued for, socialist policies would sweep the board amongst the mass of ordinary people in this country.  
We make no apology for asking for our readers to become sellers of our paper. This is how our support was built up over the last 20 years from being a small 4 page monthly to a 16 page weekly. The Tories are trying to tell us that there is a boom around the corner. Let us answer them by making a boom of sales of Militant!  
If you would like to become a seller of Militant write to 1, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or phone 01-986-3828.

By Kath White

# Housing hell-hole

Photo: Andy Moore



Slums in Whitechapel, East London. Housing conditions for working people have not changed for decades.

ONE OF the crucial problems facing young workers is accommodation. For many the choice is either hard to let councils slums or profiteering private landlords. Others are forced to remain with their parents which can lead to family friction. Thousands more are homeless.

I was one of the 'lucky' ones and got hold of an old, completely unmodernised cottage. My daughter was born in November 1980, my weekly income was social security of £28 after rent, plus the £5.25 child benefit—which you never really get as it is classed as an income and gets taken off your weekly allowance. Fair isn't it?

It was a waste of time claiming one parent allowance because of this reason—they give it you one day and take it off you another.

So with the newborn, survival began. All the hot water that was needed had to be boiled. There was one cold tap in the house. The sink was one of them oblong porcelain types, but fell off the stack of bricks it had been on for the last hundred years.

Well, I got a newish sink except I didn't know how to plumb it in, so all the water had to be caught in a bucket. Still, all the nappies got scrubbed every day by hand along with all clothes—talk about being chained to the kitchen sink.

After 12 months of asking the Social if there was anything else I was entitled to, I found out that because I had a child, I was entitled to some form of running hot water. They offered me an electric kettle if I couldn't be fixed up with anything else. I got a wall heater.

Coal cost £10 a week, that was to keep one room warm which was the front room by day, then my daughter's bedroom at night. Yes, she loved her baths in front of the fire—I did when it was my turn to get into the kitchen bowl—but a bath would have done me just fine.

Going to the toilet meant an expedition across the yard. Some windows had carrier bags instead of glass panes. One door fell in if you leant against it. The roof had several leaks, along with it that familiar sound of the drip. I went to bed in jumper and tracksuit. Mornings in the height of winter with absolutely no heating meant no dawdling about I can tell you!

## Isolation

Then there are the other conditions that you have to live with, like your money going to keep your head above water—trouble is you end up half drowning all the time. There's the worry of carrying all the responsibility for everything.

The isolation and loneliness at night, the silence when there isn't even a radio let alone a stereo, video or TV. You simply can't afford to do anything. When Christmas or birthdays arrive, there's really only one thing you can cut down so you have got some surplus money to buy presents—that's on what you eat.

What can be said is endless but things like this are the reality for millions of people, situations that face people indefinitely. The Tories and their policies offer us nothing. Their aim is to carry on lining the pockets of the rich at the expense of the working class, which takes place in many forms and under many disguises.

## Saturday Girl

IT CAME as no surprise to read Ian Brook's account of youth exploitation at Jeanery (*Militant*, January 6).

I worked for four months at the Wakefield branch as a Saturday assistant and left in disgust at the awful conditions.

On my first day I was told I had to sell £250 worth of clothes. The following week my target was raised to £350. Staff who didn't reach targets were sacked on the spot.

At 17 I was the oldest of all the staff except for the manager.

Statutory breaks were rarely given and full-time staff frequently complained of being made to work late (sometimes until 11pm) with no extra pay.

The shop had a very high staff-turnover. After four months I had been working longer than any other Saturday girl, and the threat of dismissal hung over us all.

As I left the three girls who had been there longest all swore they would leave at the first chance they got. But under this Tory government they will never get that chance. The Tories aim to provide their financial backers with a cheap, unorganised labour force. The first step along this path is youth exploitation in the hope of driving down all workers wages.

It is only by getting exploited workers into the union and labour movement that the Tories can be stopped and those three girls can have the chance they are entitled to.

By Sue Ayton  
(Wakefield LPYS)

## Why I joined the Young Socialists

I AM 26 years old, married, with three children. I left school at 16. In order to enhance my chances of employment I decided to go to an FE college. As I was interested in cooking, I had taken up domestic science lessons in the fifth year at school (this was the first year in which boys were allowed to do so) and developed an interest in preparing food.

### Sacrifices

My parents fully supported my choice feeling that the only alternative was a dead end factory job. They made huge sacrifices in order to put me through the two year course. No state grant was available so my parents had to pay for all my equipment and books; a total cost of £61.60p in 1974. The only grant which was paid by the state was the travel ticket from Sittingbourne to Thanet. This meant that my parents had to feed and clothe me for an extra two years.

I took two City and Guilds exams passing with credit, plus a College Diploma. But on leaving college I ended up working in a pie factory.

Eventually I was accepted for a cook's job in the London Post Office on a salary of £2,200 per year. Out of this I had to pay a weekly ticket of £10, catching the train at 6.15am and returning home at 6.20pm. My train fares rose three times in a year to £13.40 while PO catering grades got no pay rise.

As I was now paying a mortgage and had to support a wife and child, I decided to transfer to Sittingbourne and join the postal side as a postman.

This proved to be better for about a year until we were sold out on a pay deal, leading to a rise of £2.50 pw which was completely wiped out by price rises.

Many postmen looked for other jobs in disgust and I found a job in a printers where I was promised a review of wages in 6 months. This review never materialised. At the time of the annual increase I only received half the main rise, even though I had absorbed another job in to my own work.

### Decent wage

After three years of work in this post I had been given

an overall rise of £8, bringing my wages to £80 in 1981. The workforce in this firm were willing to fight for a decent wage but were greeted with redundancy instead—all after talks of a merger with a larger firm and promises of better orders etc.

### Little chance

I have since been unemployed for two years, except for 12 weeks temporary employment, and have very little chance of a job under the present government or the system it upholds.

### Scrap heap

My socialist education began in earnest in 1979 and I was won to the ideas of Marxism in 1980. I met LPYS members through joining the Labour Party. It is only the ideas of the *Militant* and the LPYS that saved me from despair at that time and I know that they are the only answer to the crises now facing many young people. I learned a trade and still ended up on the scrap heap. What future have my children got under this system?

By Malcolm Young  
(Sittingbourne LP)

Labour Party Young Socialists have been picketing Sainsbury's and Woolworth's stores in Brighton to build support for the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign. Using petitions, they have been urging YTS trainees employed at the stores to join the campaign. Brighton LPYS has already visited local colleges, with the local Tech Students Union reproducing and distributing YTURC material.

East Kilbride LPYS held a debate on the 'Meaning of Christmas', with Stevie Lees for the LPYS and the Rev Keith

Stevens representing the church. Young workers new to the LPYS attended the 30 strong meeting, and told how they were 'ripped off at Christmas'—ten of them later joined the LPYS.

LPYS branches in the East Midlands have called a demonstration against cuts in the NHS for Saturday 28 January. The march will set off from the Old Market Square, Nottingham, at 10.30am. The General Secretary of the Notts Area NUM will be among the speakers.

## Youth campaign

THE Labour Party's Youth Committee has backed LPYS proposals in the fight for better conditions for YTS trainees.

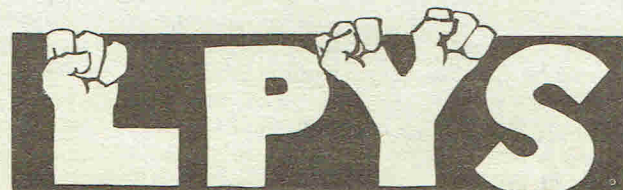
At the Committee on January 10 four main points were agreed:

- To approach the Labour Party's local government committee to discuss the policy for Labour authorities, regarding YTS, in particular the 'topping up' of the £25 a week allowance.
- A Party political broadcast on YTS.

● A meeting with the trade unions involved with YTS to launch a unionisation drive.

● Agreement was also given for the organising of a youth festival in the summer with big name bands.

These steps will play a major role in the fight to win back youth to Labour. These proposals will go before the Party's National Executive Committee on January 25.



Have you recently joined the Labour Party Young Socialists? What made you join? Write to Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

us?

about

what



# GEORGE ORWELL 1984

## Tramping 'Tory anarchist'

IN 1927 Orwell resigned as a policeman in Burma and decided to try a career as a writer. His first published book, *Down and out in Paris and London*, was enough of a success to encourage him to continue.

He later wrote that this book came about because he wanted to assuage his guilt feelings about imperialism: "I felt that I had got to escape not merely from imperialism but from every form of man's domination over man. I wanted to submerge myself, to get right down among the oppressed... At that time failure seemed to me to be the only virtue."

He explained that he did not "know" then that "respectable poverty" was the worst kind; "the disintegration of families, corroding sense of shame, frightful doom of decent working-class men suddenly thrown on the streets (so) when I thought of poverty, my mind turned towards the extreme cases."

Like everything Orwell did, he threw himself into his life as a tramp with great enthusiasm. Indeed when he was robbed of all his money in Paris, he was genuinely down and out for a period.

At this time Orwell did not call himself a socialist; half-mockingly, he called himself, after another great dissenter, Jonathan Swift, a "Tory anarchist." But his social sympathy for the oppressed is clear. What marks Orwell's book out from many writings on poverty is his concentration on the diversity (not to say perversity) of the characters he encounters, and his selective choice of the high and low points he experienced.

"Nearly all the incidents actually happened", Orwell explained, but not necessarily in the order described.

"Down and Out in Paris and London" reviewed by Steve Cawley

In Paris Orwell began earning his living as a kitchen porter. At first he worked from 7am to 9.15pm, with only one hour's break. Apart from the fact the kitchen ceiling was too low to stand up, and the temperature ranged from 110°F upwards, he found it quite good. The tiring bit came when he had to work a 7-day week instead of a six-day one!

### A Grand Duke

His observations were wry and acute: "Yet the patron would stop me as I went down the alley-way past the bar: 'Mais mon cher monsieur' how tired you look! Please do me the favour of accepting this glass of brandy.' He would hand me the

glass of brandy as courteously as though I had been a Russian Grand Duke..."

### Changes

Orwell's analysis explains conditions in terms of how they cannot be changed rather than how they can be changed. But he shows some of the conditions which lay behind the tidal wave of struggle leading to the 1936 Popular Front government which introduced a 40-hour week with no loss of pay, two weeks holiday, improvement in conditions etc.

When Orwell gets to London, he finds the job offer is "in a month's time". So he has to pawn his clothes for rags and a shilling, and begins tramping.

### Religion

The origin of 'tramping' was that the 'casual wards' of the workhouses did not allow anyone to stay more than one night a month in the same place, or to spend more than two nights in any two London 'spikes'. George Orwell samples a range of cheap boarding-houses, learns "at A you are allowed to smoke, but there are bugs in cells; at B the beds are comfortable, but the porter is a bully; at C they let you out early but the tea is undrinkable..."

In England he and fellow tramp Bozo came across organised religion for the penniless, going to France, where for a cup of tea and



Singing hymns in a Salvation Army hostel, 1930's.

a piece of toast the men are made to pray or sing hymns for half-an-hour. Bozo, specialises in pavement cartoons, "but you mustn't put anything in favour of socialism because the police won't stand it." He is also something of an amateur astronomer and enjoys searching for meteorites because he says, the sky is a free show.

What's the solution to the "problem" of tramps? Conversion of the spikes to farming communities is Orwell's idea, and while this has no doubt considerable

merit in the spin-off for healthy living on "whole foods" etc it's not easy to imagine this as a solution for large numbers of homeless families.

Read this book for literature, humour, and a good psychological insight into the effect of destitution, but not for political solutions.

*Down and Out in Paris and London*, available price £1.75 plus 25p postage from World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## Marx-Engels letters

FREDERICK ENGELS, on the death of Karl Marx, is said to have burned many letters sent to him by old "Moor", Karl Marx. However, this unfortunate act of modesty from Engels only dented the mass of correspondence between the two men which will fill 13 volumes 600 pages each of the Marx-Engels Collected works.

Vol 38 is the first (1844-51). Despite the aggravating foot notes and references which make a labour out of the reading, this volume of letters provides a glimpse of the real characters of Marx and Engels.

The letters take the reader from their first meeting in 1844 to their exile in Britain in 1851. They catalogue the sacrifices Marx had to make for the working class movement. Hundreds of letters refer to Engels providing the finance to keep Marx going.

"My wife will go under if things continue like this much longer. The constant worries, the slightest everyday struggle wears her out; and on top of that, there are the infamies of my opponents..." Without Engel's generosity—at the cost of Engels remaining in business which he hated—Marx would not have survived, and "Capital" would not exist.

You read about the various sectarians of the day as well as the work for the refugees of the 1848 revolutions. There is the full text of the famous letter to Annenkov, where Marx "briefly" explains his discovery of the materialist conception of history—which he was to apply to his perspectives for the revolution. Marx knew that "minds are ripe and we must strike while the iron is hot", for his ideas but it was action he looked for. "I believe that, however minor it maybe, public activity is infinitely refreshing for everyone".

The letters show what Engels meant when he stated "nothing human is foreign to me."

By Mike Waddington

"It will have been evident to you that it (a letter) was written under the influence of a glass or two of strong rum-punch which I had unwisely imbibed that evening" (Engels).

### Revolutionaries

Trotsky has written in *My Life* (p 216), "The correspondence between Marx and Engels was for me not a theoretical one, but a psychological revaluation...I found proof on every page that to these two I was bound by a direct psychological affinity...Both of them, could at any time say of themselves that nothing human was strange to them...Marx and Engels were revolutionaries through and through".

## Advice from Radio One

RADIO ONE is not one of the first places you would look to for ideas about solving the problems facing working people, but listening in the other morning, I heard the following exchange:

DJ—We spoke to one unemployed man from Liverpool about his experience. What happened to you when you became unemployed?

Man—I was made redundant after eight years with the firm, so I got some redundancy money. But then I couldn't get any Supplementary Benefits for eight weeks.

DJ—Where did you go for advice?

Man—I went along to the local union branch and they put me in touch with the

Unemployed Workers' Centre, which is run by the unemployed and they gave me all the advice.

DJ—What happened then?

Man—I could sign on for work but not get unemployment benefit as I still had redundancy money.

DJ—What is your advice to anyone else facing losing their job?

Man—if your job is threatened then you have got to fight to keep it, because the redundancy money will not last long.

As someone once said, an ounce of experience is worth a ton of theory.

By Pete McNally  
(Coventry NE CLP)



### Competition for a job

In 'the good old days' when you won a competition you got a prize. Nowadays with the recession biting hard you are offered a temporary job.

If you win the current competition run by the Peter Heering company you: "Win a week's work in Denmark, picking the famous cherries that make Peter Herring liqueur the best known cherry liqueur in the world. An all expenses paid (plus wages) week in Denmark August 1984 for the lucky winner who estimates the number of cherries that need to be used to make one 70cl bottle of Peter Heering".

### Poor old Bill

More on the sad falling career of William Rodgers, late of the Labour Party, ex-MP, now in the SDP. His admission that whilst he was Labour Transport Minister he secretly advised the bosses to set up a strike fund to take on the unions (see *Militant*, 13 January) may not be unrelated to his need for a job.

Since he was rejected by the voters last June, Rodgers has been writing around to various organisations offering himself as a transport consultant. Despite having climbed into office on the backs of the labour movement, his recent revelations will make sure that no boss mistakes the fact that Rodgers' real class allegiances lie with the employers; our Bill is a nice, reliable sort of chap.

### Freedom in schools

Now Sir Keith Joseph, Tory Education Minister, does not believe that school students should be indoctrinated. After all the word has such a nasty sound to it. Far better that they should be taught the values of freedom.

And how does Sir Keith define freedom? He gave his version when he opened a new economics and curriculum unit at London University's Institute of

Education (a unit incidentally funded by the Banking Information Service). Sir Keith explained: "I hope the unit will bear in mind the ultimate simplicities, that there is a link between decentralised ownership and decentralised decision making which is after all, what we mean by free enterprise and capitalism, what I call freedom".

### Queen forgets her Christmas message

Why were the monarchy so concerned to keep the photographers away from Sandringham this year? Normally press coverage is so forelock tucking. But on 31 December the *Daily Mirror* showed Princess Anne's six-year-old boy whirling a dead pheasant around his head with gusto and much delight. If put together with grandfather Prince Philip's idiotic comment that the only people who cared about hunted animals were those who killed them for kicks, it was not exactly the kind of publicity our leading family desired. But how does such censorship link in with the Queen's Christmas message that what lies at fault in the world is basically the failure to communicate?

# Stop the killer cancers

IN THIS final part of a two-part article on cancer RONNIE SOOKDHEO looks at how the chemical companies get round the current legislation and what the response of the labour movement should be.

MANY COMPANIES, notably in asbestos, have already moved onto the offensive by challenging the research evidence to date and substituting their own.

The much publicised cases involving the herbicide 245T, asbestos, lead, and radiation highlights the absurd inadequacy of present legislation. Regulations and procedures, which are really required to test and regulate dangerous processes and products, are subordinated to the narrow commercial interests of the chemical companies.

A company has the right, for instance, to withhold, even from the government, vital scientific and medical information on the grounds that it may be of 'commercial importance'.

This 'let-out' clause, is intended to safeguard profitability. Yet it can always be invoked to avoid revealing information which would be crucial for assessing the risk a substance poses to the health of the workforce or the population at large.

## Chemicals

Chemical companies can also use ambiguous legislation to avoid paying compensation for injuries caused by toxic chemicals. The Factories Act requires companies to notify the Health and Safety Executive about the prevalence of occupational disease amongst their workforce.

Using the criteria demanded from the HSE, companies have so far only classified 18 diseases as attributable to toxic materials and as such liable for compensation. Most diseases not known to be caused by carcinogenic (cancer-causing) substances are simply referred to as ulceration or poisoning.

The term cancer is never used in respect to any of the substances. Asbestosis is not even classed as an occupational disease. Also, if a company manufactures less than one ton of chemical a year, it is under no obligation to perform the necessary screening tests for toxicity before manufacturing the product.

## 245T 'cleared'

On this basis, 245T, used as a defoliant in Vietnam and known to cause genetic deformation, has been given a clean bill of health! Although trade unions have called for it to be banned, 245T is still used as a herbicide in Britain.

Indeed, under the 1976 Health and Safety at Work Act, only new chemicals need to be tested. And it is not mandatory to carry out all the toxicological tests, especially the more long and expensive tests, derived from animal experiments!

# cancers

TO WHAT DO I ATTRIBUTE MY SUCCESS?

HARD WORK.  
RISK.  
SELF SACRIFICE



The same anomalous situation exists regarding the recognition of drugs and chemicals by the internationally agreed system of naming and labelling. This would be an important development as it would facilitate the early recognition of symptoms and prevention.

Chemicals are still openly sold under a variety of trade names, codes and even numbers. This makes them unidentifiable even to scientists and doubly so for a trade union representative seeking information about it.

## Threshold

Even more controversial is the use of the so-called threshold on 'safe' levels of harmful substances in the workplace. These levels have been the target of enormous criticism by the trade unions because they are based on an 'average healthy male, working eight hours a day under sterile conditions'. The unions claim that in addition the levels are not standard internationally, are assessed on very little information, improperly derived and only relate to certain organs in the body.

All available evidence suggests there is no safe level of exposure. Since cancer and other diseases tend to develop very slowly, the effects of a toxic chemical cannot be known until it is too late.

The only way to avoid long term poisoning is for the labour and trade union movement to initiate a campaign. Such a campaign must immediately outlaw asbestos, lead in petrol and 245T.

The campaign must demand the full revelation of all results of all relevant tests, whether from the government or company sources, together with a thorough medical examination of all workers who have worked with hazardous chemicals. Trade unions must insist that comprehensive medical records are kept and made available to the public.

## Essential?

The dangers of toxic substances pose more fundamental questions. The labour movement must challenge the big business myth that these substances are crucial for the continued development of society. They claim for instance that herbicides and pesticides, known to cause genetic deformities, are essential to provide the food we need. But there are potentially many more effective methods that could be used—with much less harmful results to the environment and the consumers—such as the planned rotation of crops, growing on smaller areas and the planned management of insect populations.

## Safety checks

The horrendous effects now emerging about certain chemicals, make it imperative that safety checks be introduced long before chemicals reach the production stage. The trade union movement must be satisfied on safety before production is started. They should also be satisfied that the processes for the manufacture of the chemicals are also safe for

the workers immediately involved and the surrounding community and environment.

## Contradiction

There will always be a fundamental contradiction in capitalist society between the development of science and technology, which demands a rational and rounded out approach, and the application of the results of science by business enterprises. Their primary concern is to maximise their profits. At every stage their operations are conditioned by the anarchy of the market and competition with their rivals.

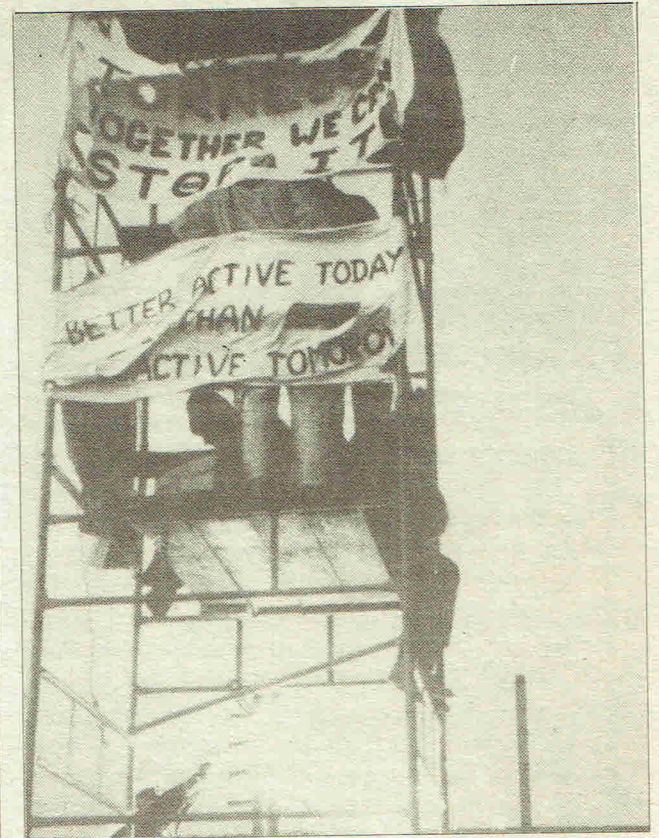
If anyone doubts the attitude of the chemical companies then look at their record in the Third World. There they continue to use drugs which have been banned in the West.

## 3rd World

They have dumped anabolic steroids in countries such as Bangladesh to overcome stunting in children, when "all" that is needed is proper nutrition. In Paraguay and Tunisia they have distributed millions of contraceptives banned in the USA.

Even more horrendous is the use of children in Egypt to test the effect of pesticides. They just assemble the children in fields whilst an aircraft circles overhead spraying them with chemicals. Can anyone seriously doubt how imperative it is that science and technology are taken out of the hands of such capitalist gangsters and run for the benefit of all.

# Thames goes radio-active



The nuclear industry is a danger to all who work or live near its installations. Above, protestors at the Torness nuclear site.

WHAT IS six miles long, made out of concrete and by the Ministry of Defence's own admission dumps radioactive waste into the River Thames? The answer is an underground pipeline which runs from the secret Atomic Weapons Research Establishment (AWRE) at Aldermaston.

It tunnels under two rivers, two main roads, two railway lines and six miles of farmland before finally discharging below the village of Pangbourne near Reading, a hundred yards from where I live. The pipe's outflow is just 25 miles upstream from the first of many reservoirs which serve the nine million population of Greater London.

## Heseltine

This part of the Thames, made famous by Kenneth Graham in his book *Wind in the Willows*, is officially designated an area of outstanding natural beauty and is partly owned by the National Trust. The river around here is visited by thousands of holiday makers every year.

The MOD only admitted that there was such a pipe after the *Reading Chronicle* showed a photo of Royal Navy divers inspecting it. The MOD tried to claim that the waste pumped into the Thames contained only "low levels of radio activity" and that these levels were "trivial and negligible".

This prompted the *Chronicle's* editor to ask Heseltine:

"1. If the discharge is as safe as your Ministry say, why pipe it six miles into the Thames and why the secrecy?"

"2. How long has the pipe been used. How often is it used?"

"3. What measures are taken to monitor the radioactive content of the waste both in the pipe and in the river?"

Heseltine, who ironically lives not far downstream from the outflow, and his ministry try to claim that everything is safe. But expert opinion is not so sure.

Speaking on BBC TV's *South Today*, Dr Jim Garrison, Director of the Radiation and Health Information Service at Cambridge, stated: "Experience in America shows that the community downwind or down stream of a nuclear facility runs about double the risk of getting cancer."

"Any radiation is dangerous. What they mean by low level radiation is how much water they are putting the waste into. That's why they are pumping it into the Thames."

"They imply that by diluting the radiation it becomes less harmful but that is not the case. It is just as harmful if it is in a bucket because it accumulates organic life."

He went on to state that internationally agreed 'safe' levels of radiation were far too high. "The standards are not set by the needs of human safety but dictated by the needs of the industry, in this case the atomic weapons industry". In other words, profit comes before safety.

## Poor record

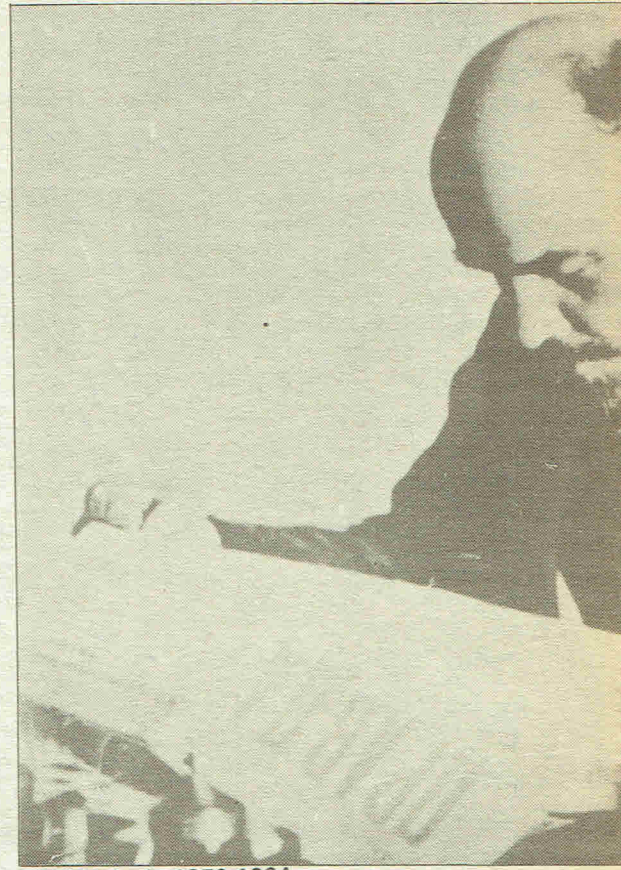
Already in this area the safety record of the atomic industry is not good. The AWRE at Aldermaston has been under investigation by the West Berkshire coroner over the death last August of Norman Davey, a former AWRE scientist who received an overdose of radiation whilst working at the site in 1961.

In another case three years ago, the Royal Ordnance factory at Burghfield, where atomic weapons are made, was found to be the source of a leakage of radio-active material into the River Kennet. Whilst this industry remains and weapons of destruction are made under the dictates of the profit system, no one is safe—whether they work in the industry or get their water supply from our polluted rivers.

By Steve Humby  
(Reading CLP)

# LENIN

## His last against S



Vladimir Lenin 1870-1924

THIS YEAR is the 60th anniversary of Lenin's death. We intend to publish, throughout the year, material dealing with his ideas and practical activity, not as a means of blind worship or as an academic study, but rather so that workers can learn from the historical lessons and in Lenin's words use: "Theory as a guide to action".

Lenin, of course, has now entered into world history as one of the most respected leaders of the working class movement and at the same time his name draws the utmost vilification and hatred from the supporters of capitalism. For the major part of his life, Lenin's theoretical and organisational work was creating a revolutionary party as the indispensable weapon that was needed to carry through the socialist transforma-

tion of society. The party of Lenin, the Bolshevik Party, carried through this task in 1917.

For the first time in world history the majority in society democratically wielded real power. The Russian revolution shook the world and showed that the working class could take state power and that socialism was a real practical possibility.

That is why the Russian revolution acted as a beacon to workers throughout the world, and thus confirmed another fundamental tenet of Lenin's ideas—that of workers' internationalism.

It is for these reasons that the memory of Lenin, and his life's work and what he stood for, still live on in the world working class movement.

**VLADAMIR ILYICH LENIN, one of the greatest revolutionary thinkers in history, brilliant Marxist theoretician, co-organiser and leader with Trotsky of the October Revolution, and founder of the Soviet state, died on 21 January, 1924, sixty years ago this week.**

**By Rob Sewell**

halo for the "consolation" of the oppressed classes and in order to dupe the latter, while at the same time emasculating the content of the revolutionary teaching, blunting its revolutionary edge and vulgarising it."

The monstrous crimes of Stalinism, have their roots not in the spotless banner and tradition of Lenin, but in the political reaction against the October Revolution. It was the isolation of the socialist revolution in a backward peasant country, that led to the emergence of Stalinist reaction. Millions of bureaucrats raised themselves up on the backs of the Russian workers and secured for themselves a privileged position as the self-appointed guardians of the nationalised economy. To maintain this position and all the material privilege that arose from it the bureaucracy politically expropriated the working class and cemented a totalitarian one-party police regime.

This bureaucratic reaction against October didn't occur overnight, but over a protracted period of time. Lenin saw its earliest symptoms and—recognising its dangers—conducted a life and death struggle against it.

In fact it was in the last twelve months of his political life that Lenin fought most bitterly against these reactionary tendencies, particularly their personification: Stalin.

Between 1918 and 1921 the imperialist powers had waged a mighty military campaign against the young Soviet state. By the end of the civil war there occurred a total break down between town and country. Industrial production was less than one-fifth the 1913 level. The railways had been destroyed. Millions—faced with utter starvation—deserted the idle

factories to search for food in the countryside. In 1921 Moscow was reduced to one-half and Petrograd to one-third of their former populations! Peasant uprisings took place in Kronstadt and the Tambov region.

Due to mass illiteracy and the low level of culture the young workers' state was forced to use in administration the human resources and talents that were available: in the main, the old Tsarist officials, administrators and technocrats. These layers—to prevent them deserting to the west—were granted considerable material privileges, which Lenin categorised as "a step backward on the part of our socialist, Soviet state power, which from the very outset proclaimed and pursued the policy of reducing high salaries to the level of the wages of the average worker".

### Defending the workers state

After Soviet power was consolidated throughout Russia these careerists and place-seekers came over to the side of the revolution in droves, joining the state apparatus, the party and the unions. Alarmed by this development, Lenin proposed to protect the revolution against this rampant careerism by the creation in 1919 of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspectors (RABKRIN). Its task was to investigate and root out all forms of bureaucracy, inefficiency and careerism. At its head was placed the hard and ruthless organiser, Joseph Stalin.

In 1921 it became clear that the old methods of 'war communism', necessary under civil war conditions, had to be replaced by a New Economic Policy that would enable the country to recover from the terrible dislocation and devastation of the previous years. The NEP was introduced as a concession to the peasantry, resulting in the re-establishment of the market economy. This measure, while reviving the economy, rapidly produced a differentiation in the

peasantry, with the emergence of the rich Kulak in the country and Nepmen in the towns. With the banning of opposition parties which had gone over to the camp of counter-revolution during the civil war, these were developing alien class pressures reflecting themselves within the Bolshevik Party itself.

It was through Stalin's person that these alien class pressures became manifest as was openly shown in the fight over the maintenance of the state monopoly of foreign trade. The state monopoly over all imports and exports, established in 1918, was a vital component in the economic defence of the young workers' state in preventing the penetration of foreign capital and cheap goods. It became particularly crucial under the NEP with the rapid crystallisation of capitalist tendencies in town and country that accompanied it. With the growth of these alien tendencies enormous pressure was placed on the Bolshevik leadership and government, and led to Stalin and others advocating the undermining and abolition of the monopoly.

In early 1922, Lenin reacted sharply to the danger by demanding on the contrary the further strengthening of the trade monopoly. On 26 May, Lenin suffered from his first serious paralysing stroke that put him out of political action until September of that year. While Lenin was convalescing, the pro-Kulak faction around Stalin succeeded in committing the Central Committee to a policy of undermining the monopoly of foreign trade. Lenin, still suffering from his illness, could only turn to Trotsky to establish a political bloc in its defence. The remainder of the CC, learning of this alliance quickly retreated and reaffirmed the foreign trade monopoly. On 15 October Lenin dictated a note to Trotsky: "It looks as though it has been possible to take the position without a single shot, by a simple manoeuvre. I suggest we should not stop and should continue the offensive..."

The growing bureaucracy in the state and party began to fill out Stalin as a character in its own image. Gradually, Stalin began to use his position as head of the Workers' and Peasants Inspectorate to cynically recruit nonentities and careerists into key positions who owed allegiance to him personally. RABKRIN turned into its opposite and became the instrument that promoted the interests of the bureaucracy and of Stalin himself.

### Bloc with Trotsky

Given the isolation of the revolution in a backward country, Lenin became acutely aware of the dangers of bureaucratic degeneration, and at the Eleventh Party Congress in March/April 1922—the last congress he was able to participate in—he denounced the bureaucratic menace:

"If we take Moscow with its 4,700 Communists in responsible positions, and if we take that huge bureaucratic machine, that gigantic heap, we must ask: who is directing whom? I doubt very much whether it can be truthfully said the Communists are directing that heap. To tell the truth, they are not directing, they are being directed."

As early as December 1920 Trotsky criticised the workings of Stalin's RABKRIN "as a haven for misfits". Lenin, however, initially defended it against criticism but in his last writings his eyes are fully opened to Stalin's "work": In an article entitled "How we should reorganise the Workers' and Peasants Inspectorate" he explains: "With the exception of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, our state apparatus is to a considerable extent a survival of the past and has undergone hardly any serious change. It has only been slightly touched up on the surface, but in all the other respects it is a most typical relic of our old state machine."

In Lenin's last article, "Better, Fewer, But Better", he delivers a merciless attack on RABKRIN; and indirectly Stalin:

Since his death mountains of hack literature have been churned out by reformist and Stalinist scribes to justify or "prove" that the crimes of Stalinism—labour camps, frame ups, lies, murders, police terror—grew out of the democracy of the Lenin period. The reformist academics, unable to answer the ideas of genuine Marxism, will continue on this anniversary to blacken the name of Lenin, repeating the old slanders that his ideas and methods directly prepared the ground for the Stalin dictatorship.

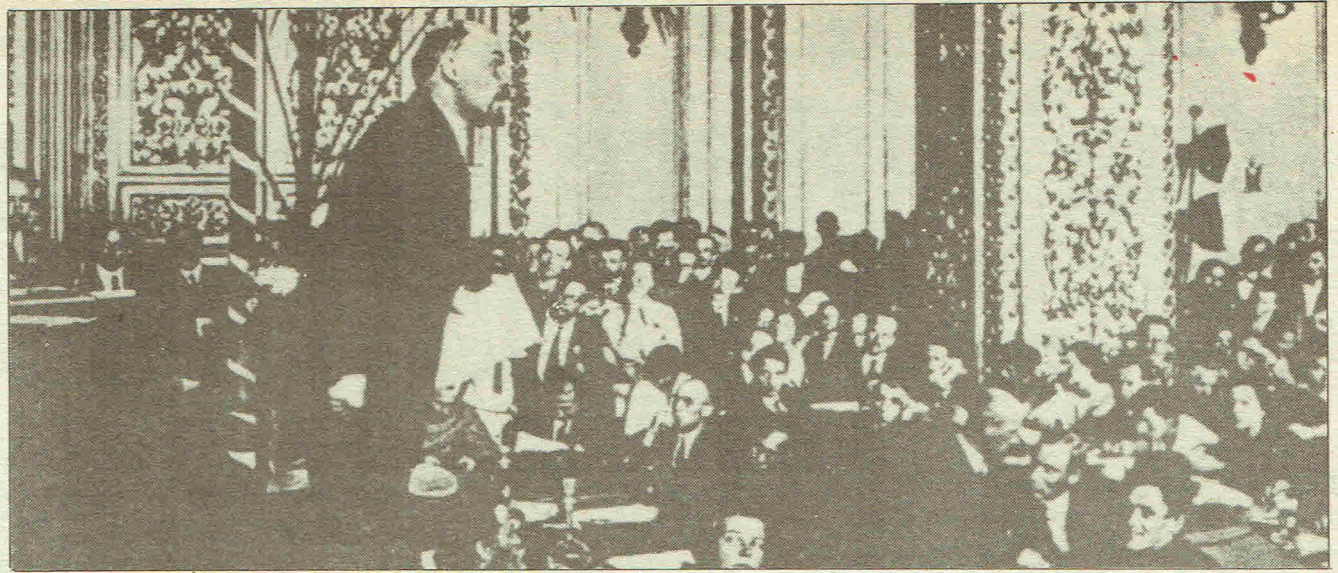
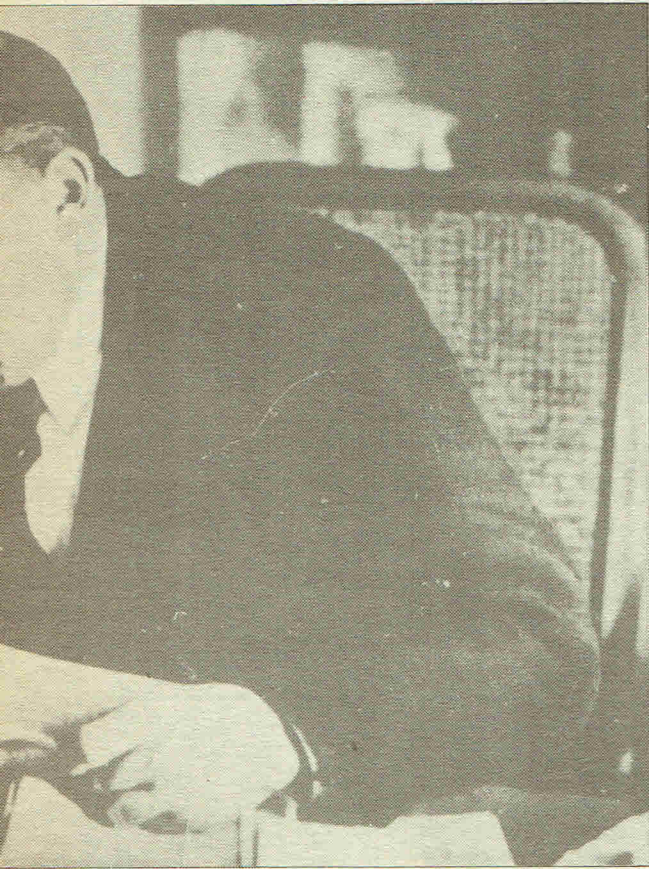
### Bureaucratic reaction

On the other hand, the Stalinists of the Andropov-Jaruzelski type—who have repeatedly trampled underfoot the elementary traditions of Bolshevism and who climbed to power over the corpses of Lenin's comrades-in-arms—will proclaim their "loyalty" at grandiose celebrations. As if replying to these "loyalists" Lenin himself remarked in relation to the treatment of the dead Marx:

"What is now happening to Marx's teachings has in the course of history, happened repeatedly to the teachings of revolutionary thinkers and leaders of oppressed classes struggling for emancipation. During the lifetime of great revolutionaries, the oppressing classes meted out to them constant persecution, received their teachings with the most savage malice, the most furious hatred and the most unscrupulous campaign of lies and slander. After their death, attempts are made to convert them into harmless voices, to canonize them, so to say, and to surround their names with a certain



# Struggle Stalinism



Lenin speaking at the Third Congress of the Third International.



Lenin (Centre) with Trotsky and Kamenev at the Second Party congress.

"Let us say frankly that the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection does not at present enjoy the slightest authority. Everybody knows that no other institutions are worse organised than those of our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, and that under present conditions nothing can be expected from this People's Commissariat..."

And as a barbed comment aimed directly at Stalin: "Let it be said in parenthesis that we have bureaucrats in our party offices as well as in Soviet offices..."

Lenin, realising that Stalin represented the leader and organiser of a bureaucratic clique which he secretly nurtured in the apparatus, opened up a struggle against him. In October 1922, Lenin met Trotsky for a long discussion about his work. During the meeting Lenin proposed that he become his deputy, but centred the discussion around the alarming growth of bureaucratism and the struggle against it. Lenin put the question directly to Trotsky: "You propose then to open fire not only against the state bureaucracy but against the Organisational Bureau of the Central Committee as well?" That signified the very heart of Stalin's apparatus. Trotsky agreed. "Oh, well," Lenin went on, "if that's the case, then I offer you a bloc against bureaucracy in general and against the Organisational Bureau in particular".

## Stalinist chauvinism

The struggle against the embryonic features of Stalinism became increasingly urgent as Stalin's role became clearer, particularly in his handling and attitude over the Georgian affair.

The Russian Revolution gave a tremendous impetus to the struggle for freedom by the colonial peoples. The Bolsheviks had the demand for the right of nations to self-determination placed high on their revolutionary banner as a beacon to all oppressed national minorities and peoples.

In 1921, however, the Red Army

was forced to intervene in Georgia where the government had been conniving with the capitalist powers against the Soviet state. Even then Lenin constantly waged extreme care not to identify the new regime with that of its repressive Tsarist predecessor.

The CC representative, Ordzhonikidze, however, was linked with the Stalin clique in Moscow. Stalin, at this time, was busy preparing his proposals for the unification of the Russian Soviet Socialist Federation with the non-Russian republics. His blunt and inflexible approach resulted in the proposals being firmly rejected by the Georgian Bolshevik Party, but again, despite this, Stalin was adamant in preparing his plans. To gain acceptance he trampled over the elementary principles of internationalism going as far as using the CC authority (without its knowledge) to purge the Georgian opposition.

Ordzhonikidze actually struck a Georgian in a heated argument. Stalin attempted to cover these disgusting actions by evasions and a heap of mis-information, both of which aroused Lenin's suspicions and led him to portray Stalin at first as, "in rather too much of a hurry."

The partial inquiry conducted by Dzerzhinsky into the Georgian affair further raised Lenin's suspicions, who from his sick bed requested his own secretaries to carry out their own separate investigation. As the sordid picture emerged of spiteful Great Russian chauvinism on behalf of Stalin, Dzerzhinsky and Ordzhonikidze Lenin once again turned to Trotsky for assistance:

"It is my earnest request that you should indicate the defence of the Georgian case in the Party CC. This case is now under 'persecution' by Stalin and Dzerzhinsky, and I cannot rely on their impartiality. Quite the contrary. I would feel at ease if you agreed to undertake its defence."

Four days before his final stroke that ended his political life, Lenin dictated a note to the Georgian op-

position: "I am following your case with all my heart. I am indignant over Ordzhonikidze's rudeness and the connivance of Stalin and Dzerzhinsky. I am preparing for you to notes and and a speech."

(6 March 1922)

The growth of bureaucratic reaction and its reflection in the machinations of Stalin led Lenin's secretary Fotieva to explain, "Vladimir Ilyich is preparing a bomb for Stalin and the Congress." On 13 December 1922, Lenin had suffered two serious strokes, paralysing his right hand and leg and confining him to bed.

## Lenin's Testament

Despite the doctors advice, under such difficult conditions, he took up the fight against Stalin's conspiracy. The "line of attack" consisted of a letter to the Twelfth Party Congress scheduled for April 1923, that later became known as 'Lenin's Testament'.

It began with an assessment of the qualifications of the leadership, in particular Stalin and Trotsky, ending with a sharp and serious criticism of the General Secretary, Stalin, dictated on 25 December 1922:

"Comrade Stalin, having become general secretary, has unlimited authority concentrated in his hands, and I am not sure whether he will always be capable of using that authority with sufficient caution. Comrade Trotsky, on the other hand, as his struggle against the CC on the question of the People's Commissar for Communications has already proved, is distinguished not only by outstanding ability. He is personally perhaps the most able man in the present CC, but he has displayed excessive self-assurance and shown excessive preoccupation with the purely administrative side of the work..."

"I shall not give any further appraisals of the personal qualities of other members of the CC. I shall first recall that the October episode with Zinoviev and Kamenev (who voted against the insurrection and

came out against it in the opposition press—RS) was, of course, no accident, but neither can the blame for it be laid upon them personally, any more than the non-Bolshevism can upon Trotsky..."

A postscript was added reflecting a sharp change in attitude on 4 January 1923 when Lenin was fully aware of Stalin's handling of the Georgian affair, and demanded his immediate removal:

"Stalin is too rude and this defect, although quite tolerable in our midst and in dealings among us Communists, becomes intolerable in a general secretary. That is why I suggest that the comrades think about a way of removing Stalin from that post and appointing another man in his stead who in all other respects differs from Comrade Stalin in having only one advantage, namely that of being more tolerant, more loyal, more polite, and more considerate to the Comrades, less capricious, etc..."

The existence of this 'Testament' was only known to Krupskaya and two of Lenin's secretaries, Voldicheva and Fotieva.

After Lenin's death Krupskaya handed the letter to the Secretariat so that it could be read to the Congress and transmitted to the rank and file.

For obvious reasons, the 'Triumvirate' (Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev) opposed this, and decided to read it to the leaders of the provincial delegations—providing nobody took notes. There, after behind-the-scenes manoeuvring, it was agreed to read it to each delegation separately in executive session. In the full session delegates were banned from even mentioning the 'Testament'.

Lenin's last wishes were thus pushed aside and the Testament's existence was later denied. Published by Trotsky as early as 1928, it was denounced as a "Trotskyist forgery" by the Stalinists. Only with the attacks on Stalin, who was used as a scapegoat by the bureaucracy in 1956 by Khrushchev, did the document see the light of day. Stalin's real attitude to Lenin was revealed by his vicious, spiteful

attack on his wife Krupskaya for taking down a dictated letter to Trotsky on the Georgian affair in October 1922. Stalin poured vile abuse on her, threatened her, attempted to intimidate and stop her acting on Lenin's advice. It was not until March 1923 that he actually learned of this abomination and threatened to break off all relations with Stalin:

"You've been so rude as to summon my wife to the telephone and use bad language. Although she had told you that she was prepared to forget this, the fact nevertheless became known through her to Zinoviev and Kamenev. I have no intention of forgetting so easily what has been done against me, and it goes without saying that what has been done against my wife I consider having been done against me as well. I ask you, therefore, to think it over whether you are prepared to withdraw what you have said and make your apologies or whether you prefer that relations between us should be broken off."

## Left Opposition continue the fight

As Lenin lay on his deathbed he made hurried plans for the forthcoming congress to deal a crippling blow to Stalin and the bureaucratic malaise that he represented. On 10 March a few days after his bloc with Trotsky in defence of the Georgian opposition and his decision to politically crush Stalin, Lenin suffered a new stroke which paralysed half his body and deprived him of his speech. Lenin's political life came to an abrupt end, and despite a partial recovery, his health finally gave way and he died on 21 January 1924. The struggle against Stalinist reaction conducted by Lenin then fell on Trotsky's shoulders and that of the Left Opposition—a struggle fought to maintain and defend the genuine ideas and methods of Lenin, the fundamental traditions of Marxism.

**Chile, Denmark, Southern Africa**

# From 'privilege' to poverty

## Interview with Chilean port workers

**THE APPALLING conditions for Chilean workers under the dying Pinochet regime are getting worse, as this interview with three leading representatives of the San Antonio Dockers Union shows.**

The port workers are in a desperate situation. Before 1973 we were one of the privileged layers of the Chilean working class, with an average wage from 50 to 70,000 pesos monthly (£400 - £600).

Union rights and conditions were outstanding, for example all our children received scholarships right through to university. There were additional allowances for housing, health-care, children. We weren't used to hard times.

After 1973 we lost some rights and conquests. Four union leaders were killed but they didn't really go for our sector. Work went on, and plenty of it. The terrible blow came with the Labour Plan of 25 September 1981. All our rights disappeared and gradually jobs vanished too.

For years, the old trade union leadership told us our privileged sector weren't going to be attacked like the copper miners, the petroleum workers and others had.

So when the attack came we were defeated—even though here in San Antonio we put up a fight with a two-month strike—because there was no solidarity from other key sectors who hoped to escape from the

### 22 pesos for 8 hours

crisis. But today all workers in this country are equally hard hit.

The dockworkers' union here had 500 members in 1973, today there are 250 left and many of them haven't got work or don't work here even though they continue as members.

The average wage today is down to a mere 1500 pesos monthly—when there is work.

There are workers (they showed us in the books) who work five eight-hour shifts in the whole month for 517 pesos.

In fact on average we only get two or three shifts a month. Sometimes we have been paid as little as 22 pesos for an eight-hour shift. The unions even have to make up the wage slips and other administrative details which the company should carry out.



Queues for hand-outs of food show the efforts of monetarism and repression in Chile.

All this has been possible because the 1981 Labour Law abolished the previous trade union register and made work available to all who had a licence—which was granted free of charge. In San Antonio 4,000 licences were granted though there isn't enough work for even 300 workers. The consequences for us have been serious.

The licensing system was an attempt to hide unemployment, licensing inexperienced workers led to accidents, with too many workers and very little work the companies paid as little as possible without us being able to say anything; it was all "legal". The companies have even created their own labour pools and don't take us on except from time to time.

They have managed to divide the workers, but at the same time there is more unity amongst the majority. Many bachelors or workers with no children hand over their

share to their mates. Some have looked for work in other sectors such as taxi drivers, so as not to take away the little work there is from those most in need.

One union leader worked for four months in the El Teniente pit in sub-human conditions: 19 hours a day underground for less than 25,000 pesos. After paying taxes and lodgings he was left with 15,000 pesos take-home. He put up with it for four months, because he has three children.

Now they want to put us in the PEM (minimum employment plan or community work scheme) or in the POJH (Work scheme for heads of families) which way 2 and 4,000 pesos respectively. We say to these gentlemen, that they can do this work, we are gaining strength and confidence to win back what is ours. We have to put a stop to signing a one-day contract each time we work.

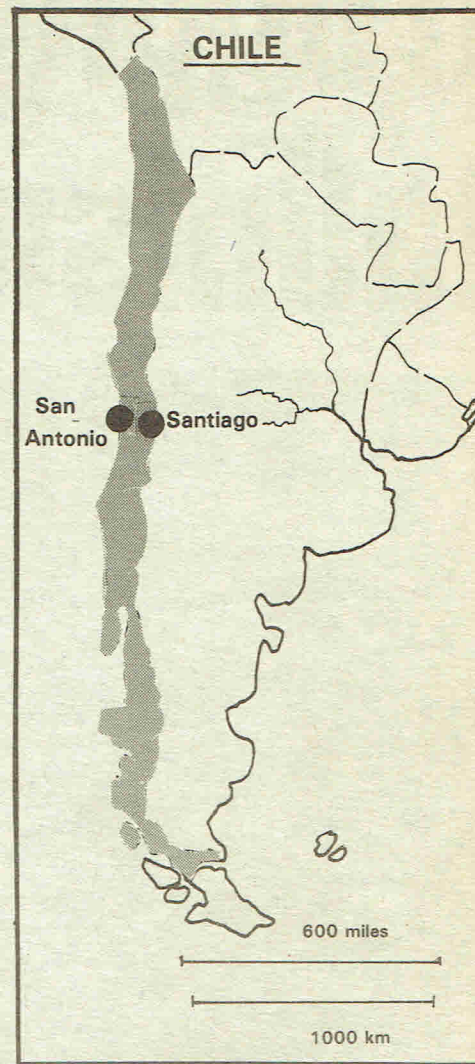
San Antonio is a city of over 100,000, the main port in the country, moving 380,000 tonnes a year but it has an official unemployment level of 35%. The authorities admit to us in negotiations that the real figure is way over 50%. The dramatic words of one worker, "it's easier to count those still working" are literally true. For example, they don't count us as

unemployed even though we sometimes only work once a month.

The situation in other ports is no better. In Valparaiso 18,000 licences were granted although there's not work for 500. Nationwide there are 40,000 licences, in reality so much hidden unemployment. Here in San Antonio there are some pathetic cases. The PEM workers earn 2,000 pesos monthly but have to pay 2,500 pesos a month for two or three room houses. What they give with one hand they take back with the other.

We see with indignity how women and young girls are forced to prostitute themselves from necessity. Theft is common. The youth sniff glue. This is the real situation of the Chilean working class.

Most fruit exports go through this port, a large part of the copper exports, salt, wheat maize and coal. There's most work in the fruit export season, employing approximate-



ly a thousand though they hardly give any work to those of us in the union.

The new EUROSAL project is to install cranes and a container system, cutting the workforce to 30 or 40 and building a container handling and loading 'dry port' in Santiago. There'd be nothing to do for us in San Antonio except watch the lorries go by.

### Privatisation

The project would also mean complete privatisation of all ports. The rich vested interests have made out there would be lots of new jobs, but in fact it would mean mass redundancies, not only here but also in neighbouring ports, Valparaiso, Coquimbo.

Containers provide very little work, what previously was loaded in fifteen ships now goes into one. There would be four or five workers to clean and sweep the bigger ships and not much more. The port would be finished.

For the first time in years we held a union meeting followed by a demonstration on 4 September. 2,000 of us commemorated the killing of four dockworkers' leaders in 1973. On 30 November we will demonstrate against the privatisation of ports and the investment of millions of pesos which will take away even the hope of a job.

## South Africa/Angola Wielding the big stick

**IN AN attempt to dominate its black neighbours South Africa offers both carrot and stick.**

First the stick. In the last month up to 10,000 troops advanced over 120 miles into Angola, bombing, gassing and killing. They claim that they killed over 400 "enemy troops" before making an organised withdrawal.

Their ostensible purpose was to attack bases of the Namibian nationalist movement, SWAPO, before its guerrillas returned to South African-occupied Namibia.

But there was a wider purpose—to put pressure upon the Angolan government. As they

mounted their invasion, UNITA, the South African funded group in Angola, launched an offensive. Some Western journalists, notably *Sunday Times* men in Johannesburg and with UNITA, claimed that this put the "Angola regime in peril".

### Destabilise regime

In reality, Unita stands no chance of toppling the Angolan regime. The purpose of all the recent attacks is to threaten the Angolan regime with destabilisation and force it to come to some kind of deal with South Africa over Namibia.

In his New Year TV message, South African Prime Minister Botha warn-

ed neighbouring countries that they had not faced all the weaponry at South Africa's disposal; "That is why it is in our neighbours' interest to choose the road of co-operation".

Now they are offering Angola, like Mozambique, the carrot of talks. Mozambique has accepted. But it is unlikely that they will agree to a deal totally acceptable to the South African regime.

And whatever arrangements are made, or forced in the capitals of its neighbours the future challenge to apartheid rule will not come from there. It will come from the townships of South Africa itself, from its own black working class.

By Jim Chrystie

## Danish cuts coalition

THE CONSERVATIVE-led coalition in Denmark, which prime minister Poul Schlueter proudly boasted was a "bourgeois coalition" won the general election on 10 January, though without an overall majority, which may mean a further election shortly.

The Conservatives gained 16 seats, mostly at the expense of smaller right wing parties. The working class-based Social Democrats lost two seats but are still the largest single party.

Denmark has the fifth highest per capita income in the world and the Social Democrats, in power for most of the last forty years, introduced a widespread welfare system in the years of post-war economic upswing. Unemployment benefit for example can be nearly as high as the average wage.

But the return of capitalist crisis changed the "consen-

sus" for the welfare state and the coalition, which replaced the last Social Democratic government in 1982, tried to slash public spending. The Conservatives, in their campaign for re-election wanted to cut budget deficits with a 3% spending cut starting with unemployment benefit. (Unemployment has now reached 11%). They also called for charges for the health service.

This slightly watered-down Thatcherite policy won votes at the expense of smaller right wing parties. Denmark seems to have

polarised more into two camps. The smaller left parties retained more or less the same vote. The press also spoke of a more bitter campaign than normal.

The Social Democrats suffered because of memories of the last crisis years of their long period in power under right wing control. They also lost because of their lack of credible policies. They were fighting for tax-financed budget rises to create jobs while not tackling the question of who controls the economy.

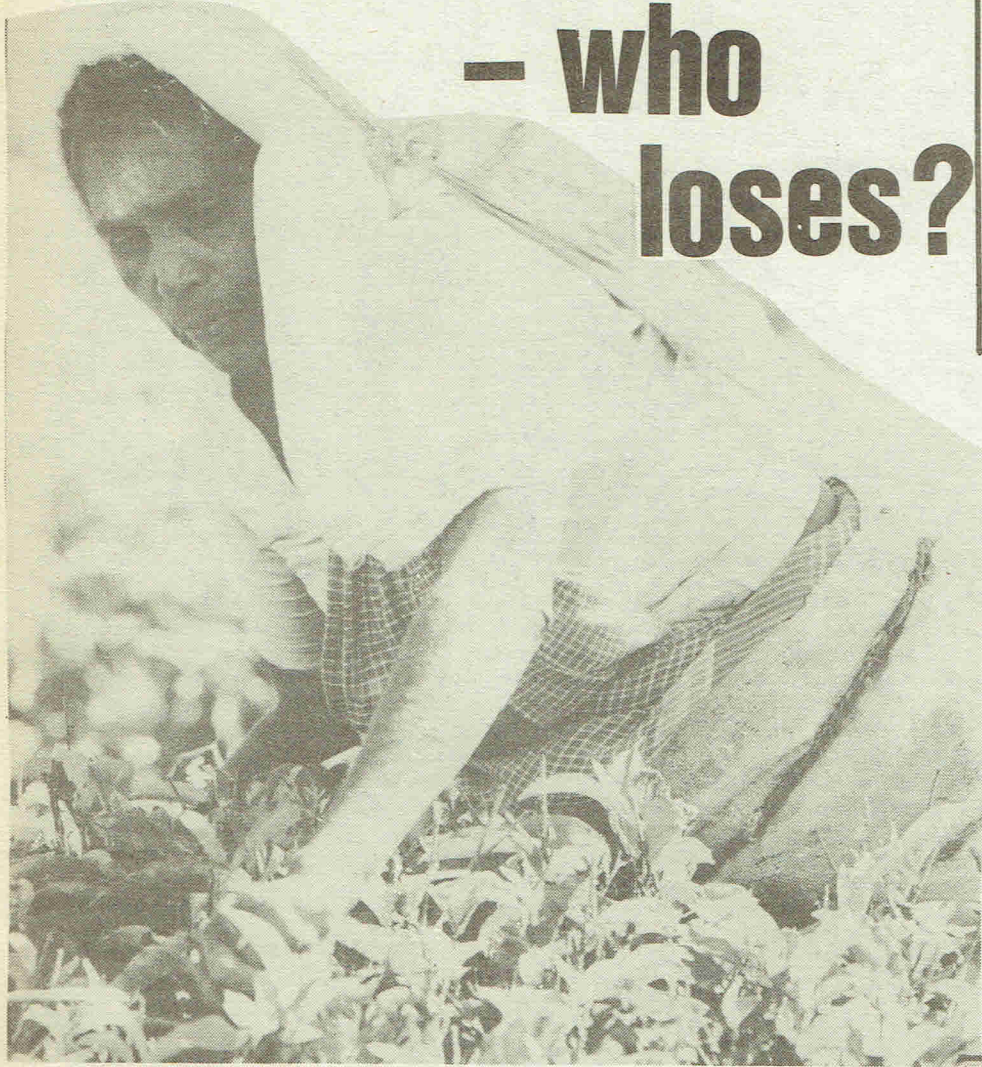
The Social Democrat leader Anker Jorgensen complained that it seemed impossible to find "sensible parties on the right" to cooperate with. But the days of consensus and class collaboration must end.

**SOCIALISTEN**

FOR EN SOCIALDEMOKRATISK REGERING PÅ ET SOCIALISTISK PROGRAM

New Danish Marxist paper Socialisten. Details from Militant 1 Mentmore Terrace, London. E8 3PN

# TEA: Who gains — who loses?



A worker on a Sri Lankan tea plantation. A life of poverty.

Photo: Militant

**MASSIVE PROFITS for tea companies, starvation pay for plantation workers—but high prices for consumers.**

That is the reality of the recent explosion in tea prices. When Mrs Gandhi, India's prime minister announced the stopping of exports of CTC (cut, torn and curled) tea on Christmas Day the directors must have cheered like mad. A reduction in tea exports from India means a massive rise in prices and increased profits.

## Profits up

The Brooke Bond group, Britain's biggest supplier of tea, with 30% of the British market will make millions in all directions. They own tea plantations in Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and India. They are engaged in import and export trading in South East Asia so they will make increased profits on growing.

They have their own tea brokers in London (94.3% shares in SS Smith & Sons) who will rake in their own profit.

Last year Brooke Bond pre-tax profits were up 37%. Their annual report 1982-3 said, "The rising trend in tea prices, together with record crops in East Africa, enabled the tea estate companies to make higher profits." How much more will their profits rise now? Most of last year's prices averaged 150p per kilo, now the price is over 300p per kilo.

Mrs Gandhi un-

doubtedly was looking forward to elections in India next year. Amazingly, the price of a cup of tea in India is 4p compared to 0.7p in Britain—with the embargo on exports to Britain plus a likely quota system with the new crops, prices in India will fall.

The increased demand at home and abroad has led to a shortage. Home demand was in danger of not being met—hence the embargo. Prior to Christmas, the government introduced compulsory registration of all tea dealers holding stocks of more than 1,000 kg (approximately a thousand companies) to try to prevent hoarding.

The major tea manufacturers including Brooke Bond also agreed to reduce profit margins and bring down packaged tea prices by 20%.

They maybe lost a small amount in India but the proposals meant tea prices internationally shot up.

## Tea industry obsolete

The Indian tea industry has been described as "obsolete". The majori-

ty of small producers, who proliferate in the industry (8,000 plantations) have bled the industry dry. Plants are stripped bare well after their normal life, and little new planting takes place.

There is also very little modernisation in the factories and much of the tea produced is substandard. It is not surprising therefore, that India and Sri Lanka have lost a sizeable proportion of the world market. In 1955 they had 70%, but by 1980 this had been reduced to under 58%.

## Gandhi's policy

Gandhi's government hope that by these measures they can stabilise the home market, bring tea prices down and stop inflation soaring. They see this as a potential vote winner—after all they have failed at everything else.

Brooke Bond and the other major producers and sellers aren't complaining—they can only increase their profits in such a period. Last financial year Brooke Bond wanted to show their support for the private enterprise system—they donated £34,000 to the Tories and £3,630 to the Economic League. Their generosity wasn't misplaced, two directors were honoured by the Tories—Lord Fanshawe, formerly Sir Anthony Royle has been made a 'Life Peer' in the dissolution list and the Earl of Limerick a KBE.

**MILITANT SUPPORTER Dave Nellist Labour MP for Coventry South East has consistently espoused the cause of the oppressed Tamil plantation workers in Sri Lanka.**

In a speech in the British House of Commons on 25 July 1983, he condemned the government-encouraged anti-Tamil riots and gave the following outline of conditions on the tea plantations from *New Society*.

"The life of a plantation worker in today's Sri Lanka is described in the article through one family. It can only 'get through' until the twenty-second of each month with a meagre diet of rotis, coconut scrapings, rice and dal.

"The worker may have eggs once a week, and meat perhaps once a month. After the twenty-second, if he is lucky, he and his wife, who earn a little over £5 for 26 days' labour,

and the two children just manage to survive.

"At the end of the month the situation is bad. As rations dwindle to zero, with only cups of tea for an empty stomach and nothing of value for the pawn shop, many of the workers, especially the women, starve.

"It is the women's life of work on the plantations that is the cruellest. They work from the time that they wake until the time that they go to sleep. They go thirsty and make the sacrifices. They are often bullied and beaten into the bargain.

"Their deficiency diseases and physical sufferings are therefore the most serious. More than half of them are said to be clinically malnourished. There are high stillbirth and infant mortality rates—perhaps more than 150 per 1,000 births—but in the last few years no official statistics have been published."

## Letter from India

A FEW months ago the Indian government hosted the Commonwealth Conference with pomp and grandeur and lavish hospitality to the delegates.

With millions in the member countries suffering from hunger, malnutrition, unemployment and illiteracy, their heads of government, in the plush Vigyan Bhavan, enjoyed the choicest food and drink.

"The candle lit banquet hosted by Mrs Gandhi in honour of Presidents and Prime Ministers attending the Commonwealth summit here was considered to be a 'banquet of the decade'. (Statesman, 25th Nov.) This is a telling commentary on the character of capitalism and its rulers.

The pathetic conditions in the member countries of the commonwealth can be traced back to when they were

British Colonies. They now suffer under a truncated form of capitalism, foisted upon the colonies by British rule.

The misery, privation and ruthless exploitation in those countries bear testimony to the after effects of British rule, aggravated by the weak national bourgeoisie, the creation of British capitalism.

The discussions in the Commonwealth Conference remind us that any solution to the pressing socio-economic problems plaguing those countries on the basis of capitalism is a sheer illusion.

Many pious resolutions were adopted and passed in the conference—for disarmament, peace and help to developing nations in their uphill task.

But lofty words apart, what will the proclamation

achieve on the ground? The commonwealth countries, peripheral capitalist states are supposed to implore their Big Brothers in Europe and America to bail them out of evergrowing crisis.

## Domestic crises

But their richer mentors are so worried with their domestic crises that these capitalist big brothers threaten to ride rough shod over them in near future ignoring the SOS of the people of Asia and Africa.

In reality, a real 'Commonwealth' is foreign to the dictionary of capitalism. 'Commonwealth' in the true sense of the term can only emerge, when the world will be relieved of the scourge of capitalism.

By an Indian correspondent

## Kissinger backs Central American dictators

THE UNITED States government are to increase the supplies of arms to El Salvador's right wing regime to fight what they call the "threat from the USSR, Cuba and Nicaragua."

The report on Central America headed by Nixon's old Secretary of State Henry Kissinger also recommends continued support for guerilla groups fighting the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, which the report claims is a "Marxist-Leninist" regime".

The report sees Central America as "vital to US global strategy". It is further warning that US imperialism is prepared to greatly step up military intervention in Central America even to the extent of an invasion of Nicaragua.

## Prevent revolution

Kissinger and his associates recommend economic aid as well to try to keep revolution away from the USA's borders. They admit themselves the dire state of the Central American republics, treated as little more than colonial possessions by the giant American capitalist companies

Guatemala suffers from violence and economic decline, with an almost total absence of sanitation, drinking water and shelter in the rural areas where most people live. Honduras has ex-

treme poverty and high unemployment: which are getting worse. Even comparatively affluent Costa Rica has a seriously weakened economy. On top of this, up to a million Central Americans have been forced to leave their homes through the Central American conflict.

The report even admits that Nicaragua has made gains. Its economic performance says Kissinger is poor, (hardly surprising given America's cutting off of aid and destabilisation programme) but they realise it has made significant progress in combatting illiteracy and disease.

It is this success which most worries the US strategists. Even though the majority of the Nicaraguan economy is still at present in private hands, the effects of the Sandinista revolution have been felt throughout the area, spurring on movements against reactionary governments and further fuelling hatred of the US companies which exploit the region. The presence of the Sandinista government threatens US interests and capitalism as a whole.

Hence, the US support for the "contras" fighting the Nicaragua government, their piling in of arms for the vicious regime in El Salvador and the proposed economic package. The report recommends action, for instance, to overcome some of the debts of the area by

economic assistance, by new credit to the individual countries and to the Central American Common Market.

The new aid, economic and military shows the hypocrisy of the US government. They refuse aid to Nicaragua because it has held no elections but greatly boost the military aid to El Salvador with its government-backed death squads which try to snuff out all opposition.

## Ignore human rights

Some of the more "liberal" members of the commission pushed through a clause linking US aid to the monitoring of human rights but Kissinger himself is adamant that when the vital interests of US imperialism are at stake, such niceties are forgotten. Larry Speakes, the spokesman for Reagan has also said that the president would pay little attention to the recommendation to monitor human rights. El Salvador would get its aid regardless.

The recent military manoeuvres in Honduras, close to the Nicaraguan border, show the military preparedness of the USA. Any hesitation about outright attack on Nicaragua is purely tactical. "Democratic" scruples have nothing to do with it.

By Roger Shriver

# Letters

Write to *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## Just another match...

Dear Comrades,

Recently I went with my mates along with thousands of other Newcastle United supporters to Liverpool to cheer our team in the FA Cup clash.

We arrived in Liverpool and made our way to a nearby pub in which six Liverpool supporters found themselves lost in a sea of black and white. The whole atmosphere was very friendly with both the Liverpool and Newcastle supporters buying each other drinks, wishing each other well and singing their hearts out in friendly competition.

Inside the ground our team got well and truly hammered (and deservedly so) but even if we had lost by 20 goals, our spirits would still not have been dampened. The great majority of us were there simply to enjoy a game of football.

However, I wish the police would get it out of their heads that not every single football supporter is a hooligan.

After the game we all made our way back to the coaches. The police decided

to block off a number of streets and also decided to keep 13-15,000 Newcastle supporters on the road only. Those who strayed onto the pavement (which could not be helped because of the vastness of the crowd) were abruptly pushed and shoved without ceremony onto the road.

Even those who were simply going over to enquire about coaches were treated in a bad way, including old age pensioners. Indeed, some were arrested.

Every football club has its so-called "hooligan element", it's about time the police understand that not all of us are trouble makers and that some of their own actions could lead to trouble.

We payed a lot of money to go to this football match—many of us who are unemployed borrowed, begged and scraped to get the money—the last thing we want is to be treated like animals by the police or indeed for that matter by the national press!

Yours fraternally  
Bob Harker  
Gateshead East CLP

## John Duffy

Dear Comrades,

On 7 January, life-long socialist class fighter John Duffy died, aged 70, of cancer.

I learned a great deal about the history of the labour movement from him. I well remember one of the first things he ever said to me: "You'll never get socialism with 'moderation' or 'moderate' leaders".

How true this is. It became clear to me very quickly. But one of the greatest bug-bears of his life was the failure of Labour leaders and especially left wingers to use television to the full. He insisted that in-

stead of them being on the defensive they should attack the Tories. He told me: "We have the correct ideas and need fear absolutely nothing from telling people about them."

He held no love for the Tories, considering them always to be the enemy. However, what angered him more was the "traitorous" behaviour of the leaders of the labour movement. As recently as December he said to me: "I remember the General Strike of 1926 as a boy. In Clelland (a mining village in Lanarkshire) nothing but nothing moved without the say-so of the local strike committee. Aye no' even the Polis! And yet in the end it was sold out by

## The shape of things to come?



Photo: Nick Oakes (IFL)

The riots during 1981. Top economists predict that if capitalism remains unchecked, the riots will return with greater ferocity.

Dear Editor,

I have just finished watching the BBC programme *Beyond 1984*, the section on the economy graphically illustrated its coming catastrophic decline over the next 10-15 years.

A Dr John Eatwell, Economist, using Cambridge economic statistical information (incidentally the same information is used by big business) explained that output from investment had now slumped to the level of

15 years ago. If it wasn't for North Sea Oil, income tax would now be 43p in the pound and there would be five million unemployed.

He pointed out that Britain had squandered this "windfall" of North Sea Oil and that we had nothing to show for it. He predicted that by 1993, there would be riots on the streets and the Third World Debt System would finally collapse leading to whole nations going bankrupt.

The discussion at the end was appalling, particularly as Len Murray was one of the panel yet basically went along with the rest. They spent most of their time talking about how great it was now the unemployed had all this leisure, they could all go back to the land and raise chickens and grow potatoes and live off solar energy, and paint flowers in their "spare" time. A real TV *Good Life* situation only without the £50,000 house in

the stockbroker belt.

Overall, the only people who seemed at all concerned that the economy is going to collapse were the economists; Len Murray should have been arguing the case for the working people of this country.

Fraternally yours  
Steve Ion  
Garsten Labour Party

## Defend workers' rights

Dear Comrades,

Any fairy tale ideas that the TUC's "statesmanship" stand over the Stockport Messenger dispute would make the Tories rescind their anti-trade union legislation would have been quickly dashed by a leading article in the *Times* recently. Headlined "Price for the Jobs", it states 'A statutory minimum wage whether by wages councils or trade union agreement is a restrictive practice.'

It lays the blame for the crisis of the capitalist system

on the trade unions' defence of hard won rights, won in the late 19th or early 20th century. It says, "debates on the poor at that time led to accusations that the rich were somehow responsible and it was thought necessary to grant reforms to organised workers".

Today, says *The Times*: "The balance has swung in favour of the trade unions and this must end if the freedom of the individual is to be realised".

Reforms were only granted to workers because trade union activists at that time refused to obey Tory laws and got blacklisted by employers, transported, jailed or killed in defending working people against the

bosses. The right wingers of the TUC will realise that any meek and mild approach in those days would have got nowhere and they would not be in the position they hold today.

In this respect today is no different from the 19th century under the present capitalist system. Any anti-working class legislation should be defeated by a call from the TUC to organise and campaign for the return of a socialist Labour government, sweeping aside the present decaying capitalist system.

Yours fraternally  
Dave Hardy  
Nottingham South CLP

## Oil profits running out

Dear Comrades,

Bad news came from the Institute for Fiscal Studies before Christmas which, unless I have missed something, prompted little attention. There has been much talk of the government squandering the revenues from North Sea Oil. Unfortunately there will hardly be any revenue left to squander ten years from now according to this report.

The income to the government from the North Sea is expected to peak in 1986 at £11,500 million. From there it is all downhill. By 1990 it is likely to be £7,000 million, and by the end of the mid '90s a meagre £1,000 million.

To recoup the lost £10,000 million the government would have to put an extra 9p in the pound on the basic rate of tax. But beware—this is an optimistic forecast. If the price of oil falls, which is likely, the disappearance of income will be that much quicker. It's certainly going to be a leaner, not fatter economy.

Yours fraternally  
Chris Hill  
Leeds Central LP

Advertisement

## NO POLICE BILL! NO POLICE STATE!

### NATIONAL MARCH AND RALLY

FROM BROCKWELL PARK (BRIXTON) TO TRAFALGAR SQUARE

SATURDAY 21st JANUARY

ROUTE: BRIXTON, CLAPHAM, STOCKWELL, VAUXHALL, SCOTLAND YARD, WHITEHALL, TRAFALGAR SQUARE

SPEAKERS FROM LABOUR PARTY, NGA, GLC, INDIAN WORKERS' ASSOCIATION (GB), NEWHAM 8, GREENHAM WOMEN, RELATIVES FOR JUSTICE (IRELAND), NATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE POLICE BILL, YOUNG LIBERALS AND COMMUNIST PARTY.

ASSEMBLE BROCKWELL PARK 11.30 AM  
(HERNE HILL BR STATION, BUSES 2 & 68)

Contact London Campaign Against the Police Bill; 50 Rectory Road, N16 7QY (Telephone 01 249 8334)

# Tory attack on London...

**London LPYS:**  
School students/  
students meeting  
January 24  
Grand Committee Rooms,  
House of Commons, 2.30

THOUSANDS OF Greater London Council and Inner London Education Authority workers will be taking strike action and joining a huge demonstration through London on Tuesday 24 January.

Firefighters will be answering emergency calls only. Students and school students are also expected to join the demo.

The government plans to abolish the GLC in 1986, threatening thousands of jobs and decimating services. The Tories plan a 20% cut in the fire service alone, meaning a reduction of 1,400 firefighters.

The Tories' "rate capping" bill will, if implemented, force the ILEA to make cuts in the region of £120m. They also plan to take direct control of ILEA spending and staffing until 1990. The size of the proposed cut would mean 2,500 teaching jobs, 1,500 non-teaching posts and a 75% cut in money available for books and equipment.

## Drastic cuts

London Transport is to be taken from GLC control next year and run by a company directly accountable to the government. LT is receiving £80 million "too much" at present, according to the Tories, therefore drastic cuts are in store.

Widespread privatisation would also be expected and the new company will even be expected to give grants to "cowboy" outfits to compete with LT services.

## Serious test

This onslaught poses a serious test to the entire labour and trade union movement in London. A correct strategy, based on an understanding of the attacks on local government is vital.

The Labour Party/TUC leadership have put the emphasis on pressurising Tory "dissidents" to vote the proposals down when they come up in Parliament.

This final article in our series on trade unions and the law by DAVID BRANDON deals with the early years of this century to the 1st World War. We hope to continue the story at a later date.

By John  
Bulaitis

alliances with these elements is fatal because it undermines the building of the sort of campaign that is really necessary.

We need a campaign based on the labour and trade union movement winning mass support amongst workers, unemployed, tenants, housewives etc. The role of councillors should be to use their positions as a platform to spearhead the building of such a campaign. The fact that such a movement can be built has been demonstrated in Liverpool.

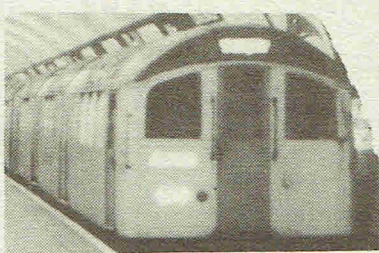
But it can't be built around the defence of the GLC and ILEA as institutions! Nor by fighting rate capping on the grounds that it removes our right to raise your rates. Neither can it be built around fringe or side issues. The task is to take up the basic questions facing working class people and linking them to the defence of the GLC/ILEA and the services they provide.

## Publicity stunts

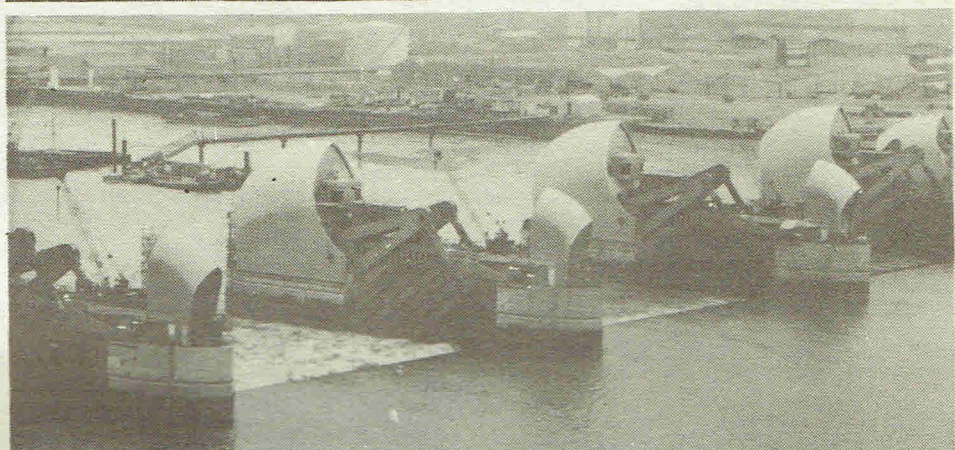
The main emphasis of the GLC leadership's campaign so far has been on publicity, exhibitions, lobbying and the like. Pop concerts and various stunts are planned. A grant has even been given to the Tory GLC opposition so they can organise lobbying of sympathetic Tories.

The "save ILEA" campaign is going along similar lines. The "All-Party" approach has gone so far that the ILEA leadership have asked Labour MP's not to raise the question in the House of Commons in case it appears a party political issue! ILEA is still in dispute with its teachers over redeployment, which undermines necessary unity.

There is also a reluctance to link the ILEA and London Transport campaigns with the campaign to save the "unpopular" GLC, and even a reluctance to involve the London labour movement represented through the London Labour Party Regional Committee in the running of the campaign.



Some of the services provided by the Greater London Council, including the Thames barrier project (below, if you wondered).



*The strike on 24 January is a huge step forward in the London campaign. It must be seen as the beginning of a mass campaign—preparations for future demonstrations and industrial action need to be made.*

The fact that the "Day of Action" is taking place at all shows that GLC/ILEA workers are not prepared to go down without a fight. The initiative for the strike came from the rank and file—particularly the Inner London Teachers Association and was then taken up by other unions.

## No preparation

There has been no active preparation for the strike, however, by regional trade union officials. London Transport workers, a decisive and powerful section, have not been included. Moreover, "January 24"

came as a 'surprise' to many in the GLC/ILEA leadership.

## Mass meetings

January 24 must be an effective protest but it must also signal a change. Many trade unionists in the GLC and ILEA are now openly questioning and criticising the approach so far. Their voices must be heeded. A joint campaign of GLC/ILEA, the unions (including LT unions) and the Labour Party must be launched. Regular shop stewards meetings and mass meetings in work-time must be held to

ensure that GLC/ILEA workers are fully involved at every stage.

The campaign must base itself on the movement of the working class and not the whims of "sympathetic" Tories. Such a fresh approach can make the following words contained in the GLC manifesto a reality:

"Mass opposition to the Tories' policies led by a Labour GLC could become the focal point of a national campaign, including other Labour Councils against the cuts and for an immediate general election and the election of a Labour Government."

## Defend GLC/ILEA demonstration

**24 January, assemble 10.30am, Speakers Corner, Hyde Park. March to South Bank, Rally in Festival Hall, 2pm**  
All Militant supporters in London urged to attend. Assemble 10.30am near Militant/LPYS banners at Speakers Corner.

## Trade unions and the law Bosses tried to break Labour link

IN THE Taff Vale case the courts decided that although a trade union was an "unincorporated body", it fell within the sphere of operations known as "representative action", whereby it could be sued for damages carried out in furtherance of an industrial dispute by its members or officers.

The Taff Vale judgement was based on the civil damage caused to the railway company by the strike itself and by the attempts of the strikers, even completely peacefully, to deter blacklegs from accepting employment. Obviously any effective strike would



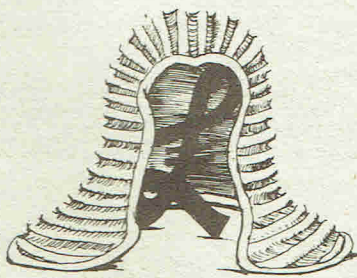
Lord Halsbury a Law Lord who upheld the Osborne judgement.

damage the employer concerned. What actions could

a trade union now legally take in furtherance of a dispute which would not expose it to financially crippling civil damages?

The entire right to strike conceded in 1824 and apparently reaffirmed through the pressure of the trade unions in the legislation of 1871 to 1876 had now at one stroke been overturned.

An enormous campaign was launched by the trade unions to overturn the vindictive Taff Vale judgement. In 1906 the Liberal government passed the Trades Disputes Act, giving trade unions complete protection against actions for damages brought by employers as a consequence of strikes.



The ink was hardly dry on the Trades Disputes Act when the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants found itself at the centre of a new row. In 1908 the secretary of the ASRS, a Liberal Party activist called Osborne, with powerful Liberal and business support successfully brought a High Court action to restrain the union from raising funds to finance the infant Labour Party.

## Political activity

On appeal the Law Lords decided the Trade Union Acts of 1871 and 1876 made

no mention of political activity on the part of the unions and it was therefore open "ultra vires", or beyond the function and powers of the union as conferred by law.

The Labour Party was threatened with the removal of its main source of income. Within weeks injunctions were issued against twenty-two other trade unions forbidding them from raising a political fund to assist the Labour Party.

Agitation and pressure from the labour movement led to the passing of the Trade Union Act of 1913. This Act recognised the right of an individual trade unionist to refuse to pay the political levy. Unions wishing to raise such a levy were obliged to make payments into a distinct political fund and could only do so after a ballot had been held which secured a majority in favour of those who voted.

Only enormous determination and preparedness to mobilise mass action gave the trade unions even the somewhat tenuous legal position they occupied at the outbreak of war in 1914.

Equal determination will be required to defeat and develop the interests and rights of working people and their organisations in the coming period. The working class has never had so much power at its fingertips.

## Confident

Despite mass unemployment around 50% of all those in work are still in unions affiliated to the TUC. That power, combined with the growing influence of Marxist ideas, can make us confident of success in the struggles not only to defend our unions but to create a mass movement for the socialist transformation of society.

# INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

A  
U  
E  
W

## Amalgamation in members' interests?

'ONE UNION for engineering' has long been the aim of activists within the engineering industry. Tom Mann, who in 1920, was the first general secretary of the old Amalgamated Engineering Workers was a strong advocate of such an industrial union.

In 1984, the need has never been greater. Engineering has been decimated by capitalist crisis. From 1969 to 1979 one million jobs were lost from the industry. In the first two years of Thatcher's government, a further million were destroyed. The number of apprentices has dropped to an all-time low.

In the early '70s a great step forward was taken with the establishment of the AUEW, comprising four sections, engineering, foundry, construction and staff—covering 1½ million workers. The impetus to this move was provided by the struggle against the Industrial Relations Act and by a left leadership within the AEU. This amalgamation was hailed as the first step towards one union for engineering.

### Left and right

A blow to this progress was struck when Terry Duffy was elected President of the Engineering Section and the right wing took control of other layers in the union. The democracy that was the pride of members of the AUEW was a threat to the right wing leaders.

Due to disillusionment with the old Broad Left leadership of Scanlon the right had won control of the union but there was no guarantee they would maintain that position. In a cynical manner, without any regard to the interests of the members of the union, Duffy and co have looked towards amalgamation with the EETPU. From their point of view that would have two advantages—the formation of a massive right wing power block to stand against the TGWU and an excuse for the Engineering Section's right wing to adopt the 'democracy' of the EETPU.

From the rank and file's point of view a democratic amalgamation, built at grass roots level would have great advantages to electricians and engineers alike, but the right wing were not interested in them.

Legal wrangles at High Court level and the opposition

By Dave Campbell  
(AUEW (TASS) North  
Staffs No 1 Branch,  
personal capacity)

of TASS have prevented the formation of one engineering union as suggested by the Engineering Section—made up of one executive council, one national conference, one Rules Revision Committee, one final appeals court, a common method of election of officials and four section industrial committees under the control of the EC.

There has been worry in TASS that the rights of TASS members would be completely overridden by the Engineering Section leadership if such a move was allowed. Of course, it is not difficult to see the rights of many Engineering Section members being trampled on by the right wing now. However, in addition to this justified fear has been the intransigent opposition of the TASS leadership to the election of officials.

Nobody who knows the union would argue that the election of officials in the Engineering Section—by postal ballot—is a democratic example to others. For one thing, according to the Labour Research Department, almost 20% of the members are missing from the electoral register. But the acceptance by TASS of the principle of election of officials would cut the ground from under the feet of the right wing and expose their hypocritical posturing on the issue.

### Democracy

The weight of TASS, together with the growing support for the left within the AUEW could ensure that the democracy of the AUEW is extended. Militant supporters would argue for the regular election of full-time officials with the right of recall and that officials' pay is no more than the average skilled wage in the industry.

The undemocratic postal ballot should be replaced by



AUEW members lobby union negotiations with the Engineering Employers Federation last November. They didn't come up with a very 'substantial' rise in NMR.



Hugh Scanlon.

workplace voting thus ensuring the accountability of the union structure to the membership. Of course, such a programme would not have a great attraction for TASS full time officials who are unelected and paid at a level 40% above the pay of the average member.

With the defeat of the one-union proposal however, agreement has been reached between the leaders of the four sections to form a two-section 'union' with each part semi-autonomous.

One part will consist of the old Engineering, Foundry and Construction sections which will be fully amalgamated, while the other will be TASS and the NUSMCH&DE which has recently agreed to merge with TASS. This formula is likely to be adopted by the ECs of all sections at meetings on the 24 January and by the AUEW National Conference on the 25th.

### No explanation

Whilst this loose two-section federation will enable serious amalgamation to take place between the three sections serious doubts exist in the minds of many activists.

No serious attempt has been made by the leadership of any section to explain the wrangling over the amalgamation or the use of the High Court.

Instead of explaining the issues to the membership, the new proposals have been agreed at General Secretary level with no explanation to the rank and file.

The truth of the matter is, below Executive Committee level, the amalgamation has ceased to exist. Even the old co-ordinated committees do not meet any more. The two-part 'union' will be like a married couple who have agreed not to live together. On practically every issue no joint ac-

tion is being proposed. TASS doesn't even have national pay bargaining.

Nevertheless the latest proposals provide an opportunity that must be grasped. At factory level, joint union committees must be established to make the amalgamation more than a high-level talking shop. With rank and file involvement, campaigns around joint claims can build a real amalgamation.

Another matter of concern is the manner in which TASS have carried out amalgamations with the Silversmiths (NUGSAT) and the Sheet-metal Workers (NUSMCH & DE) and are pursuing further amalgamations now with the Pattern Makers (APAC) and the Tobacco Workers.

Meanwhile the AUEW (ES) are seeking amalgamation with APEX and also attempting to recruit office workers in engineering directly to their ranks. Whilst TASS attempt to create a blue collar section and the Engineering Section attempt to build a white collar section the prospect of inter-union poaching is looming.

### Grassroots

Within the new two-part proposals it is proposed that the small unions will have their own practically independent structures with separate branches and districts. Many TASS members will fail to see the point of the amalgamation with NUGSAT and NUSMACH&DE when at factory and branch level there will be almost no contact.

It is possible that TASS's moves simply have the purpose of building a left wing block vote without there being any real interest in building unity at workplace level. The danger in this is that whilst a separate 'left' union is being built the Engineering Section right wing are being given a free hand to manoeuvre and organise against TASS.

Apart from building the AUEW amalgamation at factory level, a further way of cutting across this is to move away from the principle of separate geographically based branches towards industrial branches involving all the union members within the workplace.

The left within the two sections now have a responsibility to explain the repercussions of the amalgamation to the membership and to campaign at grassroots level for the idea of one union in engineering to be made a reality.

## British Airways engineers

ENGINEERING WORKERS at Heathrow stopped work for two hours on Monday.

This action was the first carried out in pursuit of a substantial pay increase and the right to re-negotiate in 1985.

Management have rigidly stood by their derisory offer of a two-year deal which would tie us down to a 4% increase this year and 5% next. This wouldn't leave much cash, after deductions, for next year. We would be signing a blank cheque for management to take advantage of.

A mass meeting last week of all engineering staff overwhelmingly rejected the offer and voted for action to support our claim.

Colin Morshall, the Chief Executive, wrote in a letter to us that any action contemplated by engineering staff would seriously damage the airline, job security and everybody's pay prospects, etc. He said there is no more money available and there was no way to put the amount offered together other than in a two-year deal.

He then threatened us with stopping all engineering staff travel at least until the action ceases and all our threats are withdrawn, and to make the pay increase effective only from the date of acceptance of the offer.

Today's action proves that the workers here are willing to

### Engineering notes

Remember all the stuff about Britain snoozing through a prolonged Christmas holiday compared to the rest of the world? Even the CBI has called for an end to the "Myth of the lazy old British workmen." They reported that in the engineering industry the majority of firms close down at normal finishing time on December 23 and return to work with the start of shifts on January 3. But some, they point out, are closing these days for a full fortnight because of...you guessed it...lack of orders. No doubt the Sun would say...you see...lazy British workmen.

Huddersfield company Carclo Engineering's pretax profits for the six months to the end of 1983 were up slightly. Brown and Tawse, London steel stockholders reported a slight fall in pretax profits for the same period. But both companies reported improved business prospects. Though both are small firms it could signify the beginnings of an upturn for Britain's metal bashers.

August 1983 figures from the government's Business Statistics Office showed an increase in new domestic orders secured by the combined engineering industries to be up 9% on the preceding three months. But new export orders fell by 21.5%, resulting in virtually no change in total new orders. There was a 2% increase in home market sales but a 1.5% fall in export sales.

fight for better wages, and will, if correctly led, win this struggle. As an added twist to today's strike, the supervisory staff also met and decided to support a similar course of action to ours. This will add weight to our efforts.

British Airways engineering workers have sacrificed much during the past few years, but have now said enough is enough. Numbers of staff have been reduced by some 20,000, despite which British Airways has managed to make a huge profit of £77m last year. Now, we want our share of that.

With the fear of privatization hanging above our heads, we have decided to stand up to the Tories and their puppets on the British Airways board. We are ready and willing to fight and win.

by Dave Boyle  
British Airways engineering worker.

## Hindles Gears

HINDLES GEARS AUEW members have been out on strike for about ten months—since 11 March 1982.

The dispute started over a wage claim submitted in February last year for 8½% in two stages. Management responded by trying to impose a wage freeze until March 1984.

The dispute was taken by the union through the normal procedure, during which time the bosses handed redundancy notices to 35 of the workers.

Every member at the mass

meeting on 11 March 1983 voted to strike. The Employers Association advised the employer to dismiss all workers who did not return to work by 11 April 1983.

Hindles already have three out of four non-union factories and is intent on smashing the entire union membership in its employ. Financial help and donations are urgently needed and should be sent to Hindle Gears Strike Fund, AUEW Offices, 2 Claremont, Bradford BD7 1BQ.

**Militant Engineer**, journal of Militant supporters in the engineering industry. Only 30p incl. p&sp. From World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

# INDUSTRIAL REPORTS



Photo: John Smith (IFL)

**MOST OF the 19,000 workers in the Royal Ordnance Factories which produce munitions were out on strike last Monday. They were protesting against government plans to privatise the works in 1985. It is estimated the deal will cost the government £100 m more than it receives from selling ROF shares in the City. The picture shows the picket line at the Partricroft factory, Manchester.**

## Morris, Wigan — Scabs sacked

**IN A blatant attempt to break the strike at textile firm S Morris and Sons in Wigan, management last week advertised for staff in the local press.**

The plan backfired disastrously however. When potential recruits arrived for

interviews at the factory they were successfully turned away by the pickets.

The round-the-clock picket has been highly successful. The only people who have been prepared to cross have been management and a handful of

clerical and supervisory staff.

The company has repaid the blacklegs' loyalty by making six of them redundant. As one of the striking women pointed out "all the crowing they have done over the last few weeks hasn't paid off because they are still being got rid of".

Colleen Catterall, the shop steward who's dismissal sparked off the dispute summed up the mood of the workers "We are even more determined to win now than we started. I would also like to thank the trade union movement for all the support which they have given us which has hardened our resolve." A mass demonstration of support is being held on Friday 20 January outside the factory which is in Great George Street off Wallgate just outside the town centre in Wigan.

The strike is still 100% solid but there is an urgent need for financial assistance. Please send donations to Mrs J Abernethy, 37 Sickmore Avenue, Beachill, Wigan.

By Janice Hull  
Wigan LPYS

## Land Rover anger

**AT THE Solihull mass meeting of Land Rover workers the recommendation of the negotiating committee to accept the revised pay offer was greeted with anger.**

By an overwhelming vote Solihull workers decided that they still were prepared to strike for £12 across the board.

Unfortunately, when all votes were counted, including satellite plants in Birmingham and Cardiff there was a small majority in favour of accepting.

What was amazing at Solihull was that in the face of the national trade union officials the joint negotiating committee and the delegate conference of Rover shop stewards recommending accepting of management's offer, our mass meeting voted the way they did.

By Ian Scofield  
and Peter Carolan  
(Shop Stewards, Solihull)

In some ways the new offer is worse than the original. The first one was for £3.26 per 39 hours (about 3%). This one is £5.60 (about 5%). Yet to get this we have to give up 40 minutes per week rest periods, or as the bosses put it, 11.6 more Land Rovers per week. We are heading back to the 40hr week.

Solihull shop stewards cast a vote of no confidence in the negotiating committee, which will have repercussions for the Solihull delegates on that body. The old bosses have got away with it again, but it was a close thing, once more we have seen the crucial role of leadership demonstrated.

## No truck with Rail Board plan

**THE CORPORATE plan is something that the three rail unions cannot ignore.**

It's a Serpell by the back door. It must be fought, some people say we've got to wait for the right time, but you won't get a better issue than this, the future of the railway industry and of thousands of jobs.

The Minister for Transport has said she has an open mind on the future of the railways. The government was elected on a manifesto which said there would be no large scale but reductions in staff must mean reductions in services.

They want a further reduction of 25,000 jobs by the end of 1988. But when the Railway Board went to the government with their plan, the government turned around and said they want it by the end of '86'. If we compromise they will take a mile.

As for BREL, in the three year period from '80-83 they have shed 9,800 jobs. The Board want another 1,700. The plan reflects the full effects of works closures and rationalisation of facilities. BREL is intended to become more independent—including

an element of competitive tendering.

The selling off of Sealink is to go ahead as previously planned. As for electrification they have said they will finish the electrification from Kings Cross to Edinburgh as long as the unions agree to shut down the line from Bedford Midland to Sheffield and to only have branch lines from the main stations.

These are the sort of people we are up against. Tory MPs are attacking the decision to give drivers a watch costing £6.95 but I don't hear them

saying anything about the 3,976 jobs which are going because of driver only operations.

We must fight the corporate plan. We must organise our selves, bringing in all trade union members to the fight, learning the lessons of 1982, realising what the TUC is, and preparing if necessary to fight it without the TUC. If we don't fight it today there will be nothing left to save.

By a Secondman,  
Kings Cross, ASLEF



Journal of the  
Broad Left for  
railway workers.  
Price 20p. Orders  
or information  
from 2 Binstead  
Gardens, Sheffield  
6 or 54 Battersea  
Rd, Easton,  
Bristol.

## Down on the farm—in Nottingham!

**WORKERS IN Nottingham face another redundancy threat. Pork Farms, manufacturers of 'pork-pies' and other cold-food products is now the major employer in the city area of Nottingham, which in itself shows the decimation of traditional industries.**

Pork Farms have a whole number of plants spread over Nottingham producing various food-stuffs. The company was bought out a few years ago by the multi-national 'Northern Foods'. They have interests in baking, flour milling, breweries and meat, to name but a few. The recently announced turnover of this combine was £1.3 billion, with a trading profit of about £50 million. Pork Farms has made a big contribution to these profits.

The oldest Pork Farms plant is Queens Drive. This plant is probably the best organised and its workers have been to the fore in past struggles over wages and conditions. It was this plant that pressed for the establishment of the T&GWU closed-shop, which was later gained.

With the closed-shop came better wages and conditions. But since Northern Foods took over



there has been a change in company policy. The workers are treated with contempt.

Temporary labour is often used when orders are high. Their raised hopes are shattered as they are later told to go back down the road. Conditions such as working in the summer in an area where there are ovens burning can be unbearable. Inhaling of flower is another major problem, and has been known to cause severe attacks of bronchitis. Management use high unemployment as a constant threat.

But attempts by the management of Queens Drive to introduce new technology solely on their terms will not go down well. Management claim there is overmanning of twenty-six, which could well mean compulsory redundancies. This comes at a time when the plant made just under £200,000

trading profit on Christmas sales alone.

This is the first phase of chopping jobs. It has been noted that the company has other machines ordered. Again, they will argue they have surplus labour and seek cutting jobs. No worker can be sure of a job.

Recent events show that management's attempts to introduce machinery on their terms will blow up in their faces. Pork Farms workers won the biggest pay rise paid by any major employer in Nottingham this year—8.5%.

It's the task now of the union to give a lead. It's not manning levels that should be reduced but the working week.

By Pork Farms  
Militant supporters  
(T&GWU 5/373)

## Miners smash media campaign

**AFTER NATIONAL publicity last weekend claiming that the miners' overtime ban was crumbling, North Staffordshire winders have agreed not to take further action against the NUM.**

This decision follows a successful three day strike at Silverdale colliery in Newcastle-under-Lyme. The miners there struck over the right to walk down the drift rather than travel in cages which had been operated by a winder who had crossed an NUM picket line the previous weekend, thus breaking the overtime ban. After two days of strike action the Silverdale miners appealed to other miners in North Staffordshire for support. If the Silverdale strike had not been settled this

week an all-out strike would be facing the coal board.

Reports from the other pits indicate the miners were waiting for an excuse to walk out. Silverdale strikers visited other pits and were well received. They would have shown full support. In the event Silverdale won their dispute on Friday. Over the weekend the winders' opposition to the ban finally collapsed.

According to Higgins, leader of the 'black-leg miners' their 24-hour strike in opposition to the overtime ban "was a mistake and caused opposition from other miners". They are, however, still calling for a ballot.

Attitudes in North Staffordshire have now hardened so much that a very high vote in

support of the ban will be registered here if such a ballot is held. As if to prove the volatility of this area, on Monday power group members at Holditch Colliery, two miles from Silverdale staged at 24-hour strike over safety work done by four NUM members over the weekend.

The four NUM members have now been suspended from the union for one week by a mass meeting at Holditch. North Staffordshire has warned the NCB that they will not get away with trying to undermine the NUM and the overtime ban.

By Dave Campbell

## Privatisation fighters face BT reprisals

**FAILURE TO take on the Tories at a crucial stage in the privatisation campaign has given Telecom and Post Office management the opportunity to on to the offensive against the union itself.**

Members of the International Branches who took the brunt of the industrial action have been forced back to work on worse conditions than when they came out.

A hundred members have been removed from rota duties and are now under strict management supervision. In some workplaces management grades are doing work traditional to POEU members. Post Office management, no doubt in connivance with BT management, are attempting to split the union still further.

POEU conference in November 1983 rejected proposals to change shift rota staffing patterns which would result in a loss of jobs. Individual branches are now being approached with proposals worse than those rejected by conference. Rumours are rife that management are preparing to take the unions on.

The Post Office no doubt believe the union is not prepared or will be unable to fight back, but they are

wrong. The membership in both businesses will not sit back and allow their jobs and living standards to be slashed.

We must now turn our attention to defending the union. Its strength lies not in its bank balance, which the

NGA dispute has shown can be removed by the stroke of a lawyer's pen, but in its determination to fight to defend its members' interests.

By a POEU member

## Caring, sharing Co-op

**WHEN NON-UNION company Industrial Contract Clearance (ICC) won the cleaning contract at Co-operative Insurance Society in Manchester they kept on ten of the hundred cleaners to show the new employees the ropes.**

ICC pay the workers 24p per hour less than Reckitts the old firm who recognised the union. Hours have been cut from 15 to 12½ per week an £8 pw wage reduction. On top of this ICC have employed fewer cleaners.

The women are determined to win, but so far have had little but hindrance from the full-time USDAW official. After several unsuccessful attempts to contact him, he finally appeared half way through the first week of picketing—not to tell them that USDAW was backing

them but to cross their picket line to get an agreement with ICC and CIS to allow him to recruit the new cleaners.

He later said that the union could not back the women, only the Executive Committee can decide this and the issue was not raised at the Executive Committee until the following Monday. The women lobbied the EC meeting in Manchester, and then got them to agree to discuss it.

The strike can still be won. Pressure should be put on CIS through trade unions with bank accounts with the Co-op and MPs sponsored by the Co-op. CIS must drop the contract with ICC, revert to using only union labour, and the women must be given their jobs back.

By John Leetch  
(Manchester)

Photo: Melanie Friend (Report)



London Transport workers and pensioners unite in a lobby to save LT, its jobs, cheap fares and bus passes.

THE TORIES are not only putting the boot into metropolitan counties, they intend to punish every local Labour council.

The "rate capping" plan to force cuts by stopping councils raising rates has even angered some Tory MPs, forty of whom voted against the government this week. But the real purpose of the bill is again to attack Labour councils.

Forty-two authorities have already been labelled as gross overspenders and threatened with further cuts in rate support.

But Labour MPs have shown that only a third of these authorities had, even on the Tories' figures, increased their spending as much as the government. Seven of them had increases below the national average for councils.

In Liverpool, with some of the worst conditions in Britain, the previous Liberal-Tory city council had the highest council house rents outside London and had got rid of 4,000 jobs. Now a campaigning Labour Party has won control of the council, down comes Patrick Jenkin's axe. Liverpool will get £95 million rate support, a £27.7 million cut, not on the Labour budget but on that of the skinflint Liberal-Tory administration!

### Fightback

All the good work of creating new jobs would be stopped and put into reverse. 5,500 redundancies would be on the cards and that is before rate capping. That is why Liverpool council are organising a labour movement led fightback

## Irish Militant

Continued from front page

"We cannot fail to draw the conclusion," commented the *Militant* "that this act of blatant harassment is linked to the debate now taking place in the Labour Party about the socialist ideas of *Militant*".

But so great has been the outrage of the labour movement over the raid that Spring, party leader and Deputy Prime Minister was forced to call on the Justice Minister for an explanation, and call upon the AC to drop their witch-hunting resolution.

On the telephone to *Militant* in London, the workers at the *Irish Militant* dismissed the flimsy pretences of the police for the raid. "The police knew well who was here. It's no coincidence that about the same time six different individuals arrived at the door—couriers, people with ladders and other things, firms arriving with stuff we didn't order.

"We've had this in the past—people arriving at the doors claiming they'd been sent to paint and decorate the place, fit central heating, and so on."

Labour movement activists must take up this issue through their trade unions and Labour Parties in Britain, especially where their unions have sections of members in the Republic. This Police action sets a dangerous precedent for all workers and labour movement activists.

### Warning

Moreover, it is a warning to socialists in Britain that as is happening daily in the North, and now in the South of Ireland, legislation and a sophisticated police apparatus ostensibly set up to 'fight terrorism' can and will be deployed against socialists going about their legal business.

# Fight - or join the dole queue

THE CLOSURE of Fords foundry at Dagenham, proposed for April 1985, comes as a bitter blow for Ford workers throughout the country. It puts a question mark over their future.

Between 1979 and '82 the manual workforce of Fords in Britain has been cut from 59,000 to 44,000, at least 2,000 of these job losses coming from the foundry. Now, for the first time, compulsory redundancies look unavoidable.

### Complex at risk

Ford Motor Company's decision puts the whole Dagenham complex at stake. If management's plans are successful within a few years Dagenham could become an assembly plant for kit cars from the continent employing only a hundred workers.

Already the engine plant at Dagenham faces closure. It is already running down and has faced heavy job loss. Last year's apprentices in the engine plant have not been given jobs. They are marking time in the training centre. Yet even that looks to be in jeopardy as a result of being moved from Harold Hill to the old maintenance shop in the foundry.

By Colin Adams

(AUEW, Fords Foundry, Dagenham)

In February last year the body group in Dagenham, which once took workers from over-stuffed departments in other Ford factories in the area, announced approximately 4,000 planned redundancies. Already apprentices in the body group are being told there is no job at the end of their training.

But the threat is not just confined to Dagenham. A document leaked to the national press last year spoke of the closure of Halewood in Merseyside with the loss of 10,000 jobs within four years.

The possibility of closure has been rumoured for four or five years and many workers are taking early retirement or voluntary redundancy due to a feeling that the place will inevitably close.

### Devastating

Many skilled workers stand little chance of finding alternative jobs. For younger workers the news is even more devastating. Without finishing their time or lacking experience they face a future on the dole.



FORD STARTED operations in Britain during the early 1930s. They have made formidable profits, especially during the '60s and '70s.

With the decline of British Leyland, Ford have led the British market since 1977. The Sierra Escort and Fiesta (made in Spain) have been consistently amongst the top five sellers. The Cortina has been the top selling car in Britain except for one year since its introduction in the early '60s. On that one occasion it was second to the Ford Escort.

During the 1970s Ford of Britain bailed out the parent company in America with around £980 million in loans but there was little investment in the British operation.

The foundry started operations as it is today during the 1950s (not '30s as the

press have claimed). At that time it was the largest and most modern foundry in Europe.

There has been a deliberate run-down of the foundry with virtually no investment since its opening, leading to the first year of financial loss in 1978.

Since then it has gone rapidly down-hill. In 1982 management proposed a 'New Plan'. This entailed a four-phase stripping of the foundry and total modernisation using outside contractors. They claimed it would become profitable again in 1987.

The 'New Plan' also entailed a cut in the workforce from 3,500 to 1,200 in the space of two years by mid-'84. At present there are 2,000 workers in the foundry.

### Management to blame

The blame for the foundry's decline lies totally with management and closure must be fought. Last year Fords Britain made £192 million profit. £84m of that was profit from the pension fund, which is at least 75%-80% workers' contributions but we get none of it. Ford workers have been kicked in the teeth often enough. Now is the time to fight.

The same day news broke about this closure Ford announced plans to build a \$500 million plant to manufacture cars in Mexico—to exploit cheap labour.

A campaign to stop the foundry closure must be linked to a fight to defend all Ford workers. We face a ruthless multinational boss. Our campaign must be as determined as theirs. A mass campaign to explain the issues and instil confidence in our ability to fight and win must start now.



*Militant Irish Monthly*. Price 20p from local *Militant* sellers. Or order from *Militant Irish Monthly*, 75 Middle Abbey St, Dublin 1. Six issues for £2, twelve issues £4.



**BECOME A**  
**Militant**  
**SUPPORTER!**

Send to Militant,  
 1 Mentmore Terrace,  
 London E8 3PN

Name .....  
 Address .....

## SUBSCRIBE!

| BRITAIN & IRELAND  | EUROPE (by air)    | REST OF WORLD (by air) |
|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| 13 issues...£4.00  | 26 issues...£14.00 | 26 issues...£14.00     |
| 26 issues...£8.00  | 52 issues...£18.00 | 52 issues...£28.00     |
| 52 issues...£16.00 |                    |                        |

Name .....  
 Address .....

Make cheques payable to *Militant*, and return to the Circulation Department, *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

### DONATE...

I would like to donate £ . p each week /month to the fighting fund.

### SELL...

I would like to sell \_\_\_\_\_ papers per week (minimum 5) on a sale or sale or return basis.