

Youth Demand

WORK

NOT

SLAVE

LABOUR

There has never been a government more determined to hammer the conditions of youth than this Thatcher government.

The future of the country lies in the education and the training of young people to provide them with a useful role in society, but the Tories are busy throwing away this future right now.

There are still officially over three million on the dole, but unofficial estimates, now accepted by the Manpower Services

Commission, put the true figure nearer to four million. Tragically, many of these, including long-term unemployed, are young people who have no prospect or opportunity of a genuine career in front of

By
**John
Pickard**

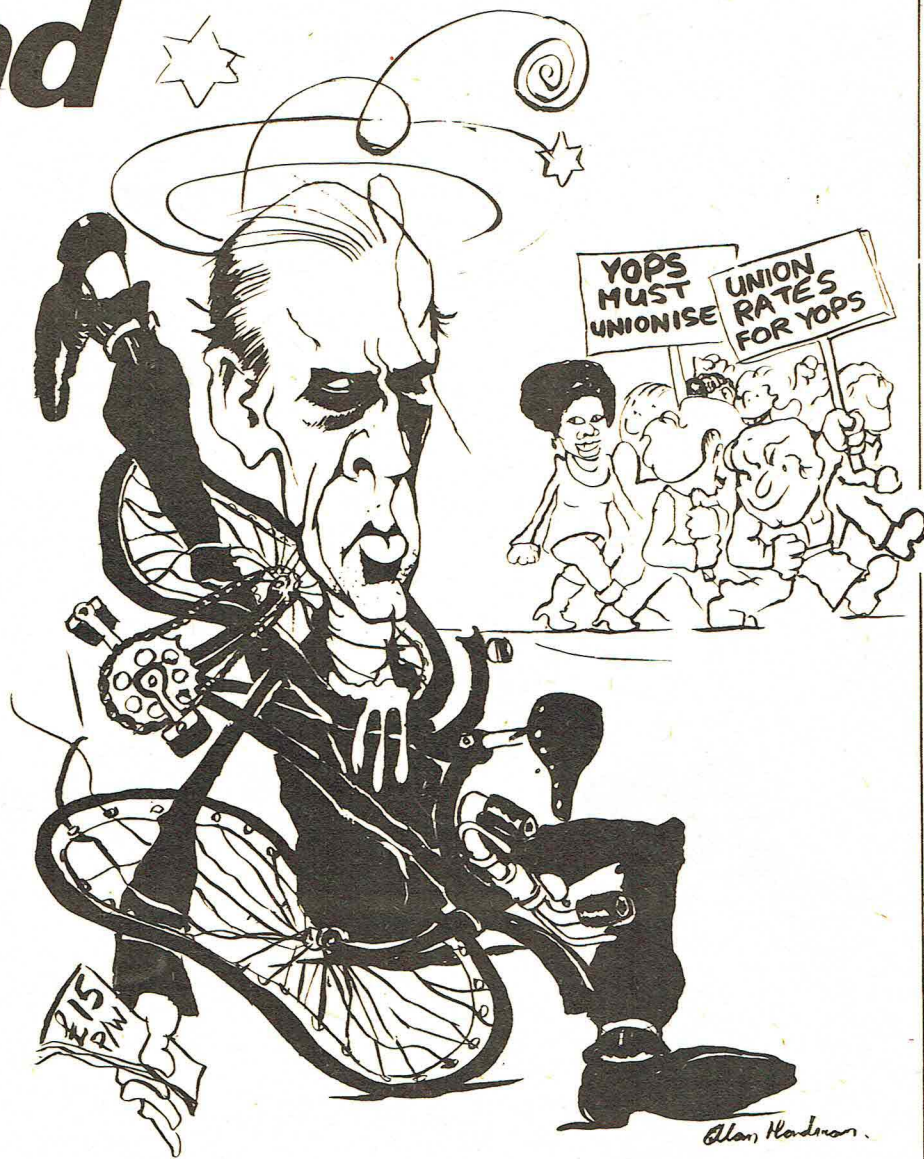
them.

The MSC estimated that the numbers of under 18-year olds on the dole will go as high as 68% in the next few years, and will not fall below 48%.

Rather than aiming at a strategy of real job-training and employment, the Tories' policies are designed only to give a 'facelift' to these disgraceful unemployment figures. Even then, it is debateable whether or not the Tories would even be attempting this cosmetic job if there had not been the riots of unemployed youth last summer.

All kinds of 'time-fillers' are being introduced to try to give the impression that jobs are there. Youth Opportunities, Work Ex-

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IN YER BIKE NORM

Press demands witch-hunt against Militant

After a renewed outburst in the Tory press, Labour's NEC on 24 February decided not to endorse Pat Wall as the Parliamentary candidate for Bradford North, referring the issue instead back to the organisation sub-committee. Another 'Militant' supporter, Terry Fields, was endorsed.

The campaign of the capitalist press last week was clearly aimed at securing a decision by the NEC that would be agreeable to themselves and the Labour Party right-wing. Pat Wall had been singled out

By Roger
Shrives

especially because he was selected against the sitting

Labour MP, right-winger Ben Ford.

Last week, another right-wing Labour MP was deselected. Stan Cohen, MP for East Leeds, was rejected in favour of Derek Fatchett, a local left wing councillor. Despite denials to the contrary, it was widely believed that Cohen had threatened to defect from the party before Christmas, unless Michael Foot took action against the Left, and this action of Cohen's would not have endeared him to the party rank and file.

The Leeds East reselection

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FIGHT BACK WITH LABOUR'S YOUTH

Opportunity Knocks

For cheap labour employers

Over half a million under 18s are unemployed. This number is expected to increase to a staggering total of 777,000 this summer.

This year only one in three school leavers will have any chance of getting a job, and over the next 3 years the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) forecast that the majority of school leavers will be unemployed.

The Thatcher government's reaction to mass youth unemployment has been a huge expansion of the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP). This year 550,000 will take part in the YOP.

The YOP trainees have a number of deep grievances about these schemes. This January they got a pay increase of £1.50 putting them up to a still paltry £25 a week. This was the first pay increase for over 2 years, a miserly 6%. Over the same period, the cost of living increased by 30%

Last year there were 3,000

reported injuries on YOP including 26 loss of limbs and 5 fatalities. The injury rate is twice as high as in industry yet YOP trainees are not covered by the 1975 Industrial Injuries Act.

This is a national scandal, and legislation should be passed in Parliament to remedy this immediately.

The vast majority of YOP trainees are on Work Experience on Employers Premises (WEEP schemes, where training is often non-existent with YOP trainees simply replacing workers and providing free labour for the employer.

Youthaid estimate that for every five YOP trainees taken on, one older worker is replaced. The Tories and employers see youth merely as a pool of cheap labour.

The Federation of Master Builders are proposing that apprentices take a cut in wages of 10%. In the Civil Service the Tories are offering workers under 21 no increase.

Another opportunity the Tories dangle before us is the Young Workers Scheme. If employers take on a young worker and pay a miserable wage of less than

£40 a week they are rewarded by the government for enterprise! They get £15 of this slave wage paid by the government.

But Mr Tebbit's new Youth Training Scheme designed to replace YOP over the next 18 months is the most savage attack yet on youth.

The scheme will come into operation in September 1983, when 300,000 year-long training places will be made available to all unemployed 16 year-olds. Their right to supplementary benefit will be withdrawn and a training allowance of £750 a year [£14.40 a week] will be paid!

The mass YOPs lobby of Parliament organised by the YOP Trainees Union Rights Campaign should be the beginning of a massive fight throughout the whole trade union and labour movement against Tebbit's Youth Training.

The scheme could only operate with union agreements, so any new youth training scheme should be blacked until the following are fulfilled as a minimum.

*Union rates of pay for all trainees.

*Union supervision of training, health & safety and conditions at work.

*5 weeks paid holiday and a 35 hour week.

*A guaranteed job for every trainee.

Alongside the campaign against Tebbit's youth training there should be a fight to get these conditions on existing YOP schemes.

The trade unions, in particular T&GWU, GMWU and NUPE should co-ordinate a national campaign to recruit all YOP workers in the unions. The Labour Party NEC should at the same time fully back up and increase resources to the LPYS to allow them to get on with the job of organising youth politically.

For the struggle to get decent training and real jobs for young workers is a political struggle. The Tories want to boost the bosses' profits by slave labour schemes.

Opportunities galore are presented for the bosses to get youth to work for next to nothing. Opportunity will only knock for us when we've ditched the Tories and brought Labour to power on a socialist programme.

Organising for the 25th

Wigan LPYS have been out every day for three weeks organising for the lobby and as a result about 30 trainees are going down.

By Mick Hogan

(Wigan LPYS)

receives no more pay. In fact he loses £1.20 in bus fares. In a normal week, he pays £6 a week to get to work, out of £25 allowance.

The job involves cleaning cattle sheds and feeding the animals and although MSC promises £40 of protective clothing for such a job so far this has not materialised.

A hundred YOPS workers have said they will join the TGWU. Not one trainee we have found has been against the union. It is easy to see why when you consider the working conditions of young trainee, Wayne Harrison.

He starts work on a farm at seven in the morning and doesn't leave until 5pm. Sometimes the farmer tells him to come in Saturday morning, for which he

Wayne was not even told of what basic rights he has got. This proves that only a union can enforce even the measliest concessions for YOPS trainees!

Glue Sniffing - the deadly alternative

Since 1970 30 young people in Scotland have been killed as a result of glue sniffing.

Last year alone 11 deaths were recorded. One lad as young as 13 died after squirting lighter gas into his mouth. Given the misery of unemployment and poverty which is the nearest the Tories can offer you to a future, and the appalling bad leisure facilities it is little wonder that young people are turning to glue sniffing as some sort of 'escape'.

Leisure facilities in the housing schemes are virtually non-existent. People have to travel at no little expense to town and city centres to enjoy themselves.

There they are charged exorbitant prices for cinemas, discos, etc. For most people regular nights out are just not on.

This situation could be eased by Labour councils at least, providing more outlets for youth by opening school gymnasiums and sports fields at evenings and during holidays, providing more youth clubs,—and more equipment for those already existing.

They could set up unemployed centres and cafes to be run by the unemployed.

In the long term however the labour movement must campaign for nationalisation of the entertainments industry under workers' control and management to provide cinemas, discos, and the like, in every housing scheme, free for all who wish to use them.

And what about workers' control of public transport so we can plan to provide free transport for all who need it?

These measures unfortunately will do little for the youth already addicted to solvent abuse. But it will ensure that in the future young people don't despairingly turn to the tube of 'Bostik'.

By Danny O'Donnell

(Clydebank LPYS)

Glue can kill in the most mysterious ways. I started glue sniffing at the age of 14. I thought it was great dreaming away in a world of my own.

This was the summer holidays and I stopped when I returned to school, but when I started again I did it every night after school and at weekends. I got scared at times when I read of people dying but I still went on till I was skipping school to glue sniff.

I started getting headaches and couldn't eat. I hit my head up against many a wall to stop the pain and the spots all around my face were unbelievable but that didn't stop me until I took a blackout. That made me stop for two days before I went back to school with my glue bag in my hand again.

When I got picked up by the police in the main street and was suspended from school I just about drove my family mad. Then they told me what it did to your brain and insides, rotting them away so I got Mum to keep me in to keep me away from the glue.

I then stopped thinking about it and when I got back to school three weeks later, I felt fitter and happier and even my spots had cleared up.

By Mandy Hughes (Tranent LPYS)



A Yopster at work in Lancashire. Is stacking shelves training for youth?

Photo: MILITANT

FIGHT BACK

By Willie Griffin
(Secretary, YOP Trainees Union rights Campaign)

WITH THE LPYS

The Labour Party Young Socialists are fighting the Tories' horrifying plans. We won't let the Tories destroy our jobs and our future!

We say, fight all redundancies, don't sell our jobs. We won't be able to buy them back in the future!

We call for:

★ The immediate introduction of a 35-hour week, without loss of pay, to create new jobs, a vital step to the

total elimination of unemployment.

★ A minimum wage of £90 a week. Don't let the Tories blackmail us into slashing our living standards.

★ Reversal of all cuts in public spending.

★ A massive programme of public works would give us real jobs building homes, schools, hospitals, etc., unlike YOPS workers in Corby, the ex-steel

town the Tories ruined, who are asked to paint garden gnomes!

★ For a socialist plan of production. The capitalist system cannot guarantee us anything but dole queue poverty. The LPYS call for the nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, banks and insurance companies which control well over 80% of the economy.

Compensation should

be paid only on the basis of proven need, and the industries run under workers' control and management. Trade unions, shop stewards, housewives and small business people could then plan democratically to produce what is needed by society.

Don't let the Tories and the millionaires dictate to us! Join the LPYS and fight for your rights. Fight for socialism!

Department of Stealth and Total Obscurity

When I recently became unemployed, I went along to the dole and Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) to claim my rightful benefits.

At the DHSS I was interviewed by a pleasant young woman. She told me I would receive a non house-holders' allowance until a Visiting Officer could check on my accommodation. I couldn't say I had been dealt with badly, and left quite content.

I live with a couple buying their own house. I have a rent book, my own room, and pay a third of all bills. I also buy, and prepare my own food.

So as you can see, I keep a separate household as if I had my own flat.

When the visiting officer came and he asked me whether I had a rent book, and bought my own food etc. I told him, yes. He thought his manager would not like the idea of me subsidising the landlord's mortgage but he didn't expect any problem in getting my rent. No such luck.

Two days later he sent a letter saying my situation was that of a youth paying board to his parents, and the DHSS could not afford to pay my rent.

At first I was amazed, and laughed at the lunacy of it. But when I calmed down I realised just how serious it was. I appealed against the decision, thinking they did not understand my situation.

My landlord was quite good. As long as I paid my rent I was alright, and if I could not afford to pay, he would give me a fortnight's lodging free.

I then went to Newcastle Unemployed Centre to see if they could give me any further information. They told me I could legally appeal against the decision, and wrote a letter to the DHSS on my behalf. After that I started trying for legal aid off my union (EETPU) and informed my MP of what was going on.

By Neil Waite
(Gateshead West LPYS)

Fearing the worst, I approached a council housing employee to find out where I would stand if evicted. I was informed that if I was evicted due to failure to pay rent, it was quite legal.

Being only 23 years old, and unmarried, the best the council could do was to give me the address of the Salvation Army. I knew a private landlord would not accept me as I was unemployed. So I started asking amongst LPYS members if they had a spare room.

The little money I had saved went in rent when I was classed as a non householder. So now with only £7.82 in the bank and with £11 rent to pay things looked bad.

The DHSS had not answered mine, or the Unemployed Centre's letter, so I decided to phone to tell them I could not pay my rent on £22.50 a week, and that the landlord would evict me. I also explained what my position was with the council and that without an address I was not entitled to benefit.

He replied that the council would have to look after me, and if I rang again to ask for the Tribunal Department, but it would take weeks to get an interview.

I told him I would be evicted, and become nothing less than a tramp, but all I was told was that it was no concern of his and he put the phone down.

Two days later I received a letter saying I could appeal so obviously I did. Two days later another letter arrived asking me to go to the DHSS.

When I arrived it seemed they had had a change of heart and would pay my rent. They then asked me to withdraw the appeal.

My advice to anyone with the same problem is stick at them like a bulldog. Because I'm sure the top people in the department try to sicken and frighten people out of their rightful benefits.



PHOTO: Militant

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland over 1000 YOP trainees and 200 supervisors have joined the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union.

60 trainees joined at the Limestone Youth Training Centre in East Belfast and over 90 trainees at Glenard in Andersonstown, West Belfast. The union organised a football match between the different schemes.

Young workers in Northern Ireland catholic and protestant are more and more seeing the need for common struggle against the Tories and their cheap labour schemes.

LIBERALS CAUSE TOXTETH VIOLENCE

Council. In the Education department the Liberals have refused to allow new staff to be taken on. In the school in question this has meant that there has been a succession of temporary and supply teachers leading to disruption and lack of continuity for the pupils, clearly affecting their education and their discipline.

The catchment area for the school is Myrtle Gardens, an area of the worst housing in Liverpool. Unemployment in the area is over 50%. Consider the awful housing problems, an

unemployment level that makes education seem pointless, and the neglect which must lie squarely at the feet of the Liberal Council itself, and you find the true reasons for the violence.

We demand that Storey retract his statements, particularly the implication of LPYS involvement in the violence, and that he resign his position.

Simon Swinnerton
LPYS National Committee
Statement released 23 Feb

TRAINING? WHAT TRAINING?

Pauline worked on a 'Work Experience on Employers' Premises' (WEEP) at Hackney Hospital.

"I was meant to do nursing—all we did was clean the toilets, vomit bowls and the like, and run errands. We were looked on

as skivvies.

"We had to do 'lates', weekends, nights, all for no extra pay. They even asked me to do Christmas day. I told them no way! It wasn't until I joined the LPYS that I realised that it was illegal for people under 18 to do nights.

"I had to buy new shoes—my ordinary ones weren't suitable. That cost £9—I didn't get my money back, even though they are allowed to pay you up to £40 on YOPS for working clothes.

Civil service workers oppose Tory plans—see page 7

Poole

"Washing up, clearing tables and putting milk in the fridge!"

This was the answer one YOPster gave when asked what she did on her 'Opportunity Programme'. "It's just a rip-off," remarked another.

An LPYS member representing the YOPS Trainees Union Rights Campaign and a GMWU District Officer spoke to a meeting of the Life and Social Skills Course in Poole, on 'Why YOPsters should join a union and get organised.'

One person only had a good word for the 'Youth on Poverty Schemes.' The supervisor of the course, quick to realise the strong feeling said that 'washing up on a YOP scheme is not like washing up at home, a lot of responsibility is on the YOPster for the health of the customers.'

She added they were getting training by putting milk in the fridge! This remark was met with the disgust it deserved. "Why don't you do it then if you think its so good."

By Steve Coward
(Poole LPYS)

BOSSES GLOSS

The Manpower Services Commission have published a lovely glossy book for employers interested in taking on a YOPster—mainly on WEEP (Work Experience on Employers Premises) schemes.

They say "WEEP is intended to give unemployed young people a direct and realistic introduction to working life by offering them a broad based work experience in an employer's establishment".

This lovely word experience has included so far stacking shelves in a supermarket for sixty hours a week, cutting an acre of grass with hand shears and clearing broken bottles out

of a canal.

The MSC document also says "Normal employment opportunities (their misspelling—not mine), recruitment or training must not be put at risk as a result of schemes.

WEEP must not be used as a means of avoiding normal labour costs".

They say that but the MSC reports that over a third of the schemes are being used to replace full time jobs.

It is scandalous that the bosses claim they cannot afford LPYS demands for a job with decent pay for all youth. They seem to be able to afford thirty times their cost on guns and missiles!

Join the fight to pitch the Tories and their mad priorities out on their ears.

By Steve Roach
(Wood Green LPYS)

LPYS Statement

The Labour Party Young Socialists condemn the statements of Mike Storey, Chairman of the Education Committee of Liverpool City Council, in attempting to put the blame for recent violence in the St. Saviour School in Liverpool onto "militant groups" indoctrinating the pupils of that school. While we condemn the violence carried out by sections of the pupils we believe this has arisen directly out of the policies of the Liberal Council.

Over the past two years over 4,000 jobs have disappeared from Liverpool City

IRISH LABOUR -



Photo: D Speirs (Report)

If Labour fights on an independent class basis it would win enormous support. (Above) Ben Carney, President Dublin Trades Unions, addresses last year's May Day Rally outside the Post Office

The result of the Irish General Election has been indecisive. With no clear majority for either of the two capitalist parties Fianna Fail or Fine Gael, political instability will continue.

Despite their overwhelming majority in the Dail (Parliament) the bosses' parties are unable to reach agreement between themselves. Afraid to arouse the power of the working class they try and

No future tied to bosses

By Pat Smith
(Dublin Liberties Branch of the Labour Party)

present themselves as alternatives. Yet both, in effect fought the election on the same programme of cuts in workers' living standards.

For the Labour Party the result has been serious. Because of its coalition with the right-wing Fine Gael, its vote fell by a further 1.1% to 8.8%, continuing the

downward trend of the party's vote since 1969.

The success of independent left wing candidates, and in particular the three seats taken by Official Sinn Fein Workers Party, poses a serious warning to Labour. Unless it now breaks from alliance with Fine Gael it could find its base in the working class seriously eroded.

At its special conference in July Labour only narrowly agreed to coalition. Since then the arguments of those opposed to coalition

has been enormously strengthened by the complete inability of the last government to defend and improve workers' living standards.

Many more party members have been convinced that Labour must go it alone and it is now crucial that a special conference of the party be convened so that the party can commit itself to a bold socialist programme independent of the capitalist parties. Only on this basis can Labour begin to rebuild the support amongst the youth and the working class which it enjoyed in 1969 when it last stood on a left wing programme and got its highest ever vote.

UNIONS OPPOSE WITCH-HUNT

Transport and General Workers Union branch number 7/17/157, in Glasgow, recently passed a motion against the campaign for a witch-hunt:

"We propose that the General Executive Council of the TGWU should reject the call for a return to bans and proscriptions in the Labour Party."



The Clydeside District Committee of the AUEW last week passed a resolution against a witch-hunt of the Militant. The meeting, on 10 February, rejected a call for the expulsion of Militant supporters, rejected Jim Callaghan's call for the disbandment of the LPYS and declared instead that the way forward for the labour movement was a socialist alternative based upon Labour Conference decisions and Clause IV of the constitution.

The following resolution was passed by Leeds University branch of ASTMS on 17 February for Leeds NE CLP and ASTMS Divisional Council:

"This branch calls on the NEC of the Labour Party to endorse the selection of Pat Wall as Prospective Labour Party Parliamentary Candidate for Bradford North Constituency.

"We believe that all prospective parliamentary candidates that have been properly selected by their Con-

stituency Labour Parties, and support the ideals of the Party, should be ratified by the NEC.

"Furthermore we believe that political differences in the party should be discussed and debated openly and honestly and not be suppressed by organisational means. Therefore we oppose both the witch-hunt being directed against supporters of Militant and the left, and any moves that lead to their expulsion from the party."

MARXIST IDEAS WIN SUPPORT

Over 40 turned out in Kirkby to hear their proposed Parliamentary candidate, Terry Fields, speak on what Militant stands for.

Only that day he had been endorsed by Labour's Organisation Committee. The fuss in the press over four Militant supporters in Liverpool being selected as candidates was because we had committed the crime of campaigning for a socialist Labour Party, a mass party. "While we have nothing to

fear from an investigation," he explained, "Why is there no investigation of the CIA/NATO involvement of the right wing who would not go along with party policy?"

In the discussion, an anti-abortionist raised a number of points on abortion, whilst agreeing on many of the ideas of the meeting. It was pointed out that Militant supported LP policy on the right of women to choose when and if they had children, and that we

fought for a society where women could support their families on a £90 minimum wage, with a crash house-building and nursery programme as part of a scheme of public works, to begin to provide a decent society where children could be brought up.

Another comrade pointed out the relevance of the 35-hour week to people like him who were forced to work more than 50 hours a week in a non-union firm, where everyone was too

afraid to speak out because they were desperate for a job.

£45.58 was raised in the collection despite the fact that many of the audience were young people at school or college or were unemployed, and four people applied to join the Labour Party.

By Dave Kerr
(Northwood Branch, Kirkby)

LABOUR GROWS AFTER SDP GO

Towards the end of 1981 13 Labour Party members, including nine local councillors resigned from the Wokingham Constituency Labour Party to join the SDP.

Whilst this created a furore in the Party at the time, the situation since then has been transformed.

Membership is beginning to pick up. At the AGM in February a packed meeting gave overwhelming support to left-wing nominations for the EC and officers' positions. The party is now poised to go out into the community with an enthusiastic recruitment campaign based on Labour's policies as agreed at annual conference.

Whilst the defections to the SDP have already almost been forgotten by most of our members, there are certain lessons which we have learnt from the experience. Most of the defectors considered themselves 'leading local dignitaries' rather than socialists fighting for the working class, and in fact several of the councillors had no real links with the local Labour Party.

In fact several of the leading defectors were refugees from the days when the local party membership was tiny and they were 'big fishes' in a small pool. Those days have gone with the growth in membership and the movement to the left in the party.

Another interesting aspect of the activities of the defectors was that in spite of their continual references to secret meetings and conspiracies on the left it surfaced in the local press that these people had been holding secret meetings from the begin-

ing of 1981. They had also been responsible for leaking GMC agendas and minutes to the press, including confidential information about Labour Party members.

Although Wokingham, like most parts of Berkshire, is a Tory stronghold, within the boundaries of the constituency there are some startling exceptions. Last May at the county council elections Labour won all four seats in Bracknell for the first time ever.

Also Bracknell is the largest town council in the county, is Labour controlled and is carrying out socialist policies. The Bracknell District Labour Party is delivering leaflets to every house in the town answering the smears of the SDP and outlining the record of the Labour Party in the town.

As it becomes clear that the SDP is merely the Tory Party's second eleven, the working class in Wokingham will turn towards the Labour Party. What answer do the SDP have to the mounting level of unemployment in Berkshire?

Why don't SDP councillors oppose increases in council rents in Bracknell? Do Wokingham SDP members support the Tory attack on the rights of trade unionists? These and many other questions will confront the SDP over the coming months as the working class prepares to kick out this Tory government.

We in the Wokingham CLP are confident that given a bold socialist lead at the top, the Labour Party can turn out the Tories in a 1945 style landslide victory and in the process bury the SDP and their Liberal allies.

By Terry Pearce
(Chairman Wokingham CLP, personal capacity)

Strike for cheap fares only a beginning

A large determined meeting of 700 representatives and shop stewards from all London Transport's trade unions met on 17 February and unanimously agreed to fight the Law Lords decision to destroy the cheap fares policy of the Labour controlled GLC.

For the first time, train and bus service are being expanded and working class Londoners could afford to travel around London.

Thanks to the Law Lords fares will increase by at least 150% in the coming year. Bus routes will be cut, stations and depots closed and jobs lost. All this will mean a reduced service for Londoners at a high cost.

For these reasons the meeting unanimously decided to call a day strike to show how determined London Transport workers are

to save cheap fares and to expand services in London.

The day's strike will be followed by a lobby of parliament on the afternoon of 11 March and on 13 March there will be a mass rally at County Hall car park from 3pm onwards.

The campaign will not stop there. It will be followed up by mass leafletting to put our campaign over to workers in London. Also the campaign will be taken up in Labour Parties, Trades Councils, tenants associations and other organisations in order to get the whole of the London labour movement behind our campaign.

By John Reid
(TSSA Westminster Branch, personal capacity)

Inside a Solidarity meeting....

Labour's right-wing, through their organisation 'Solidarity' are determined to go ahead with a witch-hunt and to turn back the clock in the Labour Party.

A London Solidarity meeting was held recently, and although it was an 'invitation-only' meeting, *Militant* managed to get a first-hand report, showing the real aims and objects of this group.

It is clear, first of all, that Solidarity aims to reverse all the democratic gains made in the Labour Party over the last few years. A statement given out at the meeting refers to "updating and modernisation of the Labour Party", including "the composition of the National Executive"—speakers at the meeting called for direct PLP representation on the NEC—and reconsidering mandatory reselection and the new rules for the election of the leadership.

Despite Bishops Stortford, the hard right has not given up its ambition to turn the Labour Party into a mish-mash of individual postal ballots, to make it once again a safe career-structure for themselves.

Solidarity clearly intends to pursue the witch-hunt against *Militant*. The January Solidarity briefing (No. 8 vol 1) declares that "the Militant Tendency can no longer be allowed to parasite on the Party." David Norman from the POEU trade union, a speaker at the Solidarity meeting, said that the Labour Party was a broad church, but that "there is no room for atheists."

But more significantly, Solidarity are clearly aiming to broaden the witch-hunt to include many others on the left. Roy Hattersley thought that the Labour Coordinating Committee and the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy had "hijack-ed the Party" and the Solidarity statement declared it "an immediate objective", for the NEC "to institute a thorough inquiry into the various anti-democratic and destabilising groups that are damaging the party". What is that, if not a demand for more inquiries and more witch-hunts?

Speakers at the Solidarity meeting were deliberately vague over questions of policy, in an attempt to create the impression that they draw support from all wings of the party. But the Solidarity briefing mentioned above, gave a glimpse of what the organisation really stands for.

It describes the policy of "No cuts, no rent or rate increases" as "the politics of Never-Never Land", and goes on, in effect, to advocate that councils implement cuts. "When it comes to rate levels," it says "...the local electorate is reaching the limit of its tolerance." So the answer?—"Labour councils will not be able to pro-

By Militant reporters

tect all services and all the jobs..."

In reality, the strategy of Solidarity is to pursue the failed policies of the past. They declare as their aim the "destruction" of the SDP, but they aim to do it by confiscating the SDP's political programme. Solidarity is clearly regretting the absence of some of the SDP traitors from Labour's ranks.

David Norman (POEU) said that he believed that "John Grant and Tom McNally would be finding their position in the SDP difficult" and that it wouldn't take them too long to see re-admission to the Labour Party. "We should welcome them back", Norman announced.

Throughout the meeting, almost all the main speakers referred to the Solidarity organisation and the need to build to a base of support. At one point Roy Hattersley referred to Solidarity "members—or should we say supporters?"

Peter Shore said that because there was no evidence that leading figures in the left were relaxing their efforts to gain control, "so we have to organise." He went on, to great applause, "We must fight them and fight them to the bitter end."

Denis Healey also referred to Solidarity "members" and the need for an organisation, "make sure your trade union sends delegates to the GMC and knows what the issues are and what sensible line to take on them...Solidarity must spend its second year developing this organisation."

Some of the spokesmen for the Right spend much more of their time attacking their own party left wing than attacking the traitors who joined the SDP. Thus the *Guardian* reported that at a recent Sheffield Solidarity meeting "Hattersley...spent much of his time attacking the Party's hard left...but he paused long enough to deliver a series of broadsides against the SDP and its leaders."

The chairman of the meeting, in summing up, urged those present "to get people to join, or at least identify with Solidarity."

The same references to "organisation" are found throughout the Solidarity bulletin which, incidentally, carries adverts from the POEU and USDAW trade unions. A section headed "Solidarity organises in London" describes concentrating on "identifying supporters and putting them in touch with each other" and refers to the "Labour Solidarity Steering Committee" and "lists of supporters" at the head office in Charles Street, London.

The same bulletin outlines some activities elsewhere around the country. North Wales Solidarity reports on its present

What Labour's Right wants

Photo: Militant



"membership". After its October inaugural meeting, Cheshire Solidarity announced its first "open" meeting in January.

An appeal, finally, states that Solidarity has "wide support among ordinary Party members but only a small organisation. We need your financial help..." Since the Right have bulldozed the NEC into an enquiry into *Militant*, Labour Party members should now demand that there should also be an enquiry into Solidarity, and its backers and connections.

The right wing of the Labour Party always go in disguise. Many of those now prominent in the SDP were involved in the early 1960s in a campaign known as the "Campaign for Democratic Socialism". Later, there was the "Cam-

"Sometimes it's very boring being in the Labour Party at present, attending General Management Committees where routine resolutions are put forward. I appreciate that you don't want to be bored and would prefer going to the theatre, opera, football, strip show (some groans), but you will have to forego these for a time to gain the price of tolerance; have to sit out these terrible meetings right to the end."

Gerald Kaufmann, at private 'Solidarity' meeting, 16 February.

Two leading right-wingers, Denis Healey and John Golding, at 1981 Labour Party Conference. Despite some gains by the right at that Conference, they will be unable to separate Marxism from the labour movement.

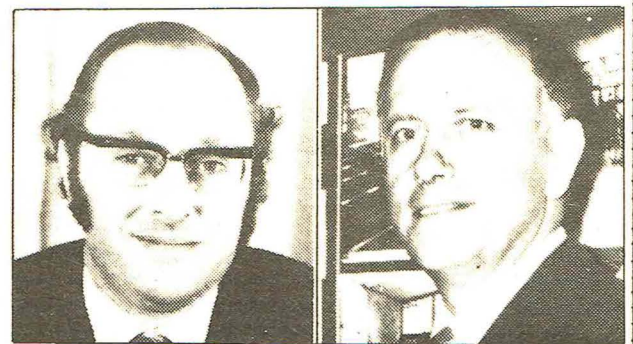
WHAT SDP COUNCIL DOES

If anyone still thinks that the SDP stands for new, vigorous, radical policies, they should see what they are doing in Islington.

This borough has Britain's first ever SDP council, and all its elected Labour MPs have left the Labour Party, two to join the SDP, the other to sit, for the time being, as 'independent Labour'.

One of the first acts of the SDP council has been to end short-life housing, thereby increasing homelessness. They've moved on to cut libraries, community centres, and are planning cuts in sports and leisure facilities.

They then conducted a poll asking people to endorse cuts in an area with 20% unemployment. They specifically asked if workers should be made redundant or should they raise the rates. The 20% cuts they wish to make include: children's playgrounds,



John Grant and Michael O'Halloran, both elected as Labour MPs for Islington, left to join the SDP

pavement and road repairs, refuse collection, street lighting, consumer protection, traffic schemes, planning control, and building regulations.

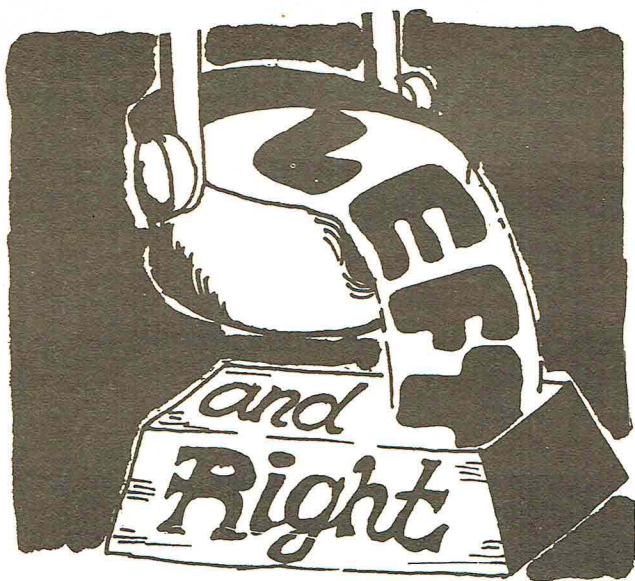
They also want to raise council rents by between £2.50 and £3.00 or more per household. The areas they are attacking will have a direct effect on the living standards of ordinary people in Islington.

Yet these SDP councillors were elected to stand on the Labour Party manifesto, which opposed the cuts. Last month, Mr

Bill Bayliss (a Labour Party defector to the SDP) told a TV reporter, "I'm not and never will be a socialist."

He, his wife and 25 other Islington councillors and three members of Parliament have not resigned their seats to stand for re-election under their true blue colours. In this they are, unintentionally, fulfilling Roy Jenkins' description of 10 March 1973, "Anyone leaving the Labour Party to form a centre party, would only be a ragbag of self-seeking individuals."

By Pat Edlin
(Islington South and Finsbury CLP)



'Sun' backs Tebbit all down the road

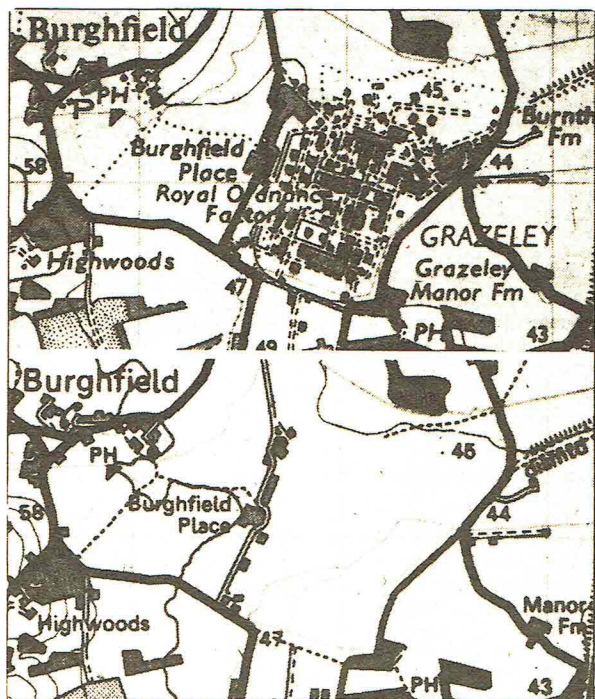
"On your bike Britain! That's the message from Norman Tebbit, our straight talking Employment Secretary. And to-day that's the message from the Sun as well." That was how Britain's possibly most reactionary paper announced its new competition on 17 February.

It was offering ten 'Tebbit cycles' to youngsters who "did not get bogged down in the recession." Perhaps it suggested for "the teenager who is prepared to go miles for a little job." Little is probably right.

Tebbit's father did not find reliable work until employed by a munitions firm just before the Second World War. Perhaps that's the kind of future the Sun wants to see.

But to-day's workers are determined to defend their jobs. And they won't get any help from the Tory press in that struggle. On the same day that the Sun launched its new pro-Tebbit competition, it reported 'Triumph' as "no nonsense bosses launched a dawn raid on a besieged factory yesterday." This was their report of how the bosses at Lawrence Scott, with the aid of 1,000 police broke an eight-month picket of workers, who had been trying to save their jobs.

The nuclear weapons factory that vanished



On 19 February the *New Statesman* republished the two above maps showing how the Ordnance Survey made a whole munitions factory disappear between 1973 (top) and 1980 (below).

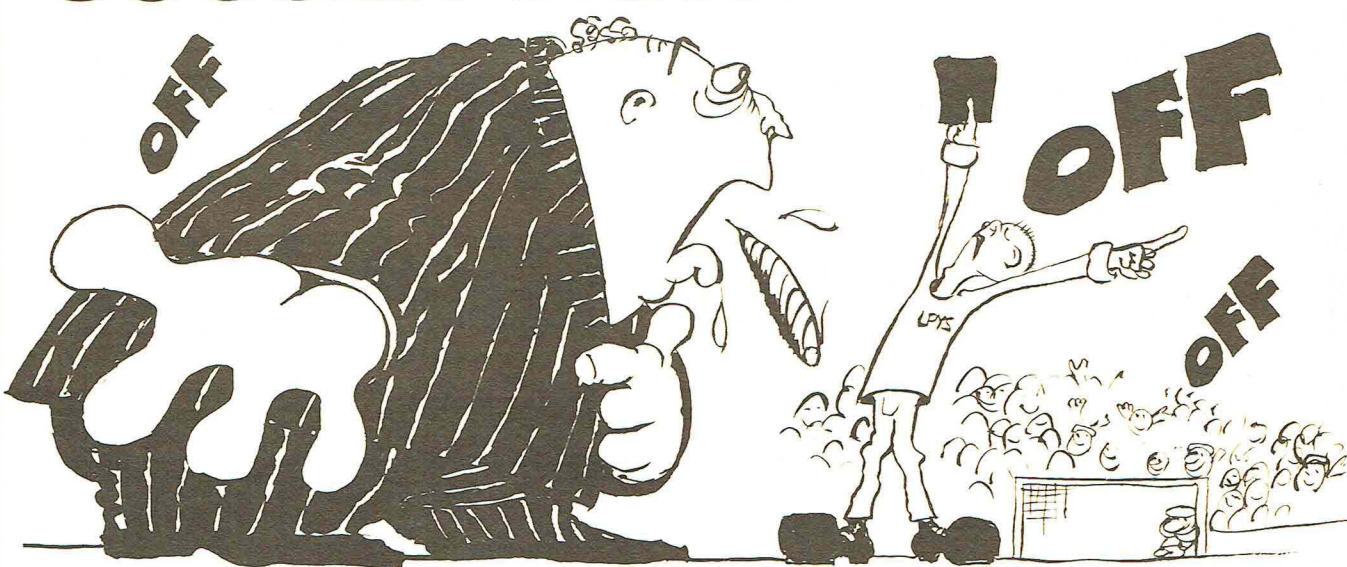
Over the last few years Burghfield, just south of Reading, has grown to become one of the main centres of Britain's nuclear weapons industry. But such is the concern of the government to re-write geography, that their 1980 map has introduced two non-existent (but surely beautiful) streams, and is also pursuing Central TV for having taken film of the 'non-existent' factory.

50 years ago

Whilst Western capitalist leaders hypocritically select Poland as the only country where workers are repressed they conveniently forget what conditions worked faced in the pre-war military dictatorship. At the end of February 1932 35,000 Polish miners were out on strike against a reduction in wages and for a eight-hour day for safety men.

And what was the response of the bosses? They sent in the police to smash up the strike committees to try to crush the workers. There were no protests, sanctions from leaders of any capitalist state.

SOCCER CRISIS -



Give big business the Red Card

By Nigel Waterfield
(Southall LPYS)

The financial crisis now gripping professional football is a direct result of the bosses system.

The league game is being crippled by the economic recession (leading to lower attendances), high interest charges and managements which view clubs as their private toys.

None of the suggestions emerging from this week's 'Solihull summit' of League Chairmen can solve these problems. They simply try to direct most of the blame for football's financial crisis at the players.

Bristol City, with debts of £850,000, told eight of their players that they would either have to cancel their contracts with 2 or 3 years to run, or the club would close. Reluctantly the eight agreed, but as Geoff Merrick, former club captain, said "gross mismanagement has left us redundant and we still feel bitter".

Typical of the way football is increasingly being dominated by bankers and businessmen, is the way Robert Maxwell, ex-Labour MP, and now millionaire chairman of British Printing Corporation, stepped in and gave Oxford United £120,000 in return for the chairmanship of the club.

No account is taken of the ordinary supporters in

the discussion about how to save the game from collapse. They are forced to pay exorbitant prices if decent facilities are wanted. Most terrace supporters have to put up with stinking Victorian toilets and expensive, tasteless catering, and whatever the weather can throw at them.

Whilst no-one could in any way condone hooliganism it is sheer hypocrisy for rich businessmen to treat people like cattle and then complain about 'animal' behaviour. Cocooned in their luxury boxes they know nothing about the conditions faced by ordinary fans.

In the Spurs new stand companies will pay £10,000 a year for executive boxes. For that you can sit in a gold armchair and have the use of a cocktail cabinet, fridge, small kitchen and your own hostess. Each of the 72 boxes has its own phone and colour TV. Yet directors and journalists complain that players are overpaid.

Many of the top international players it is true earn enormous wages, up to £60,000 a year, but the lower division players often earn far less, no more than £100 pw.

It is the bankers and their demands for clubs to be profitable that have strang-

ed the game. The short term liabilities and bank loans of the 92 league clubs are reliably estimated at over £60 million (ie £650,000 per club).

By the end of last season the clubs were paying out £3m in interest charges alone. Derby County owe £1m and are now paying £3,000 every week in interest charges. Poorer clubs like Aldershot estimate that they will lose £300,000 this year. On 23 November Plymouth were only ten minutes away from liquidation.

Profiteers like Raymond Bloye who sold his shareholding in Crystal Palace FC at a net profit of over £300,000 in 1980, should be driven out of football.

The general economic crisis has had a marked effect on professional clubs. Ten years ago Coventry City got an average attendance of 24,505, now it is 14,182; Newcastle United are down from 32,663 to 16,985 and virtually all clubs can tell a similar story.

Some football businessmen see a way out through more commercial sponsorship, higher admission charges, and a revamped structure with football being played only in a few major cities.

Spurs this year will earn £1.1m from commercial activities. Bloye of Crystal Palace went one step further and sold off one end of the ground to the Sainsbury's supermarket

chain.

Yet there is a crying need for more and better sports and leisure facilities to give anyone who wants to, a proper chance to participate, or watch sport.

Capitalism has failed to provide decent leisure facilities, just as it has failed to provide decent jobs. Two years ago the LPYS were mocked by the Tory press when its annual Conference called for a socialist alternative to the present way of running football. But the case for such an alternative has never been stronger.

Professional football clubs should be municipalised, with their facilities integrated with others that should be provided by the local authority. Clubs should be run for the benefit of the players and the public, not the directors and bankers.

There should be democratic management by the local authority, players, ground staff and supporters etc.

If there was a proper planning of the economy then leisure facilities and activities could really take off. Different sports could be encouraged, more amateur leagues arranged. Sport and leisure should be for all want it, not for the rich.

Socialists should take up the issue of sport, explaining that it should provide further justification for the struggle to change society and not, like the circuses of ancient Rome, simply a diversion from that struggle.

NEW THREAT TO UNEMPLOYED

A pilot scheme just introduced by the Department of Employment in certain areas is a new way of attacking the unemployed.

In a document circulated to DOE top brass, the government explains that it hopes to introduce a new voluntary registration of the unemployed in the autumn and is testing the water now.

By Bill Wynn

The initial form, UB461, which everyone fills in will now have the supplementary question: 'Would you take a full time job like your last one or like your usual one, with similar pay, hours, and conditions? Yes or No?' There is clear pressure to answer yes, regardless if your last job was badly paid or had hazardous or unhealthy conditions.

If you answer no, or have been out of work for six months then you are given a second form

This asks what hours, shifts you are prepared to work, whether you will work nights, and (in true Tebbit fashion) if you prepared to take a job in another area.

John Appleton (Secretary of Leeds Out Of Work Centre and Advice Service) has pointed out there is a clear threat to benefit if the answers to these questions are 'negative'. But John also points out that there is another insidious question aimed at single parents.

They are to be asked what detailed arrangements have been made to look

after children during working hours. Often single parents cannot finalise child minders until they know the times of work or have money to pay, but failure to produce names etc could well threaten benefits.

In Leeds, Civil Service trade unionists of the CPSA in the DOE are holding a public meeting and have leafleted the dole queues to inform claimants of their legal rights. As yet no-one is obliged to answer the extra question on the initial form, but a campaign must be mounted by the labour movement to prevent this extra attack on the unemployed from being nationally imposed in the autumn.

Leyland, Chorley, Burnley under threat...

FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE

The spectre of mass unemployment has now turned its devastating glare on the areas of Preston, Chorley, Leyland and Burnley in the north west of England.

Although the North West is an unemployment black spot, these towns had escaped with an unemployment rate still scandalously too high, but below the national average. But with the threatened redundancies at the British Leyland 'Leyland Vehicles' plants in Leyland and Chorley, and the Lucas Aerospace plant in Burnley this will all change.

At the BL plant, 1,855 jobs will go, although stewards fear it will be far more, (see article below) and 1,050 jobs will go at Lucas unless the workers are successful in their bid to save jobs.

The BL redundancies in particular will have a 'knock-on' effect on the

By Gerry Lerner

rest of the area's industries. About 70% of those employed in Leyland are in some kind of manufacturing industry, two thirds of these in vehicle production. Leyland Vehicles is a major employer in Chorley as well. The announcement of the redundancies was followed by the Carrington Viyella group closing its sites in the villages of Torleton (200 jobs gone) and Eccleston (80 jobs lost). Not only will associated industries suffer but all service industries and shops as well.

The redundancies at Leyland Vehicles are all part of BL's 'survival plan'. Each time that Leyland Vehicles has chopped jobs over the past few years, they have been declared to be absolutely essential for the



Manpower Service Commission workers dismantling Leyland South works this month. They are taking the wooden floor beams to renovate the out-building of a stately home. Photo: D Doran

future of the company.

But the key to 'survival' is adequate investment. However, only £70 million has been invested in Leyland Vehicles over the past four years. Compare that with the £30 million a year invested in engine production alone by the Cummins group of USA. And of that £70 million, only £2.5 million was in fact spent on machine tools! What sort of future is the BL management planning, when they refuse point blank to invest in maintaining the manufacturing potential?

Even the 'house' magazine of the industry, 'Truck', recognises that Leyland Vehicles has suffered "decades of neglect and under investment". The magazine further predicts that Leyland

Vehicles would be unable to meet the demand if there was an upturn in the market due to the rundown being carried through by management.

The Tories of course say Leyland must stand on its own two feet, but at the same time they pull away the rug! Due to their policies the bus market—of which Leyland Vehicles is a major contributor—has declined by a colossal 25% in 1981 alone, due mainly to government cut backs.

The 'plans' of BL bosses give an insight into the capitalists' incapability of planning industry for the future—they can only see as far as the next set of short term profits, which they chase at the expense of whole communities.

But compare these with the real plans for the future

put forward across the way by the workers at Lucas in Burnley. Shop stewards there anticipated market trends more than five years ago, and drew up an impressive list of alternative products, covering the areas of energy, technology, medical equipment as well as transport. Their now famous plans for a road/rail vehicle would also provide production work at Leyland Vehicles.

Yet in spite of the alternative plan, Lucas management continued on its path of reducing its manufacturing base.

It is not just Lucas workers who have put forward viable alternatives to the bosses plans of redundancies and closures. Workers throughout BL itself have answered Edwards' 'survival plan' with

real ideas to save the company. Vauxhall Motors last year, reported the *Financial Times* (February 17), spent a mere £139,748 in rewards for suggestions from their workforce. The company said "it is impossible to calculate how much the schemes have saved us over the years but it must run to millions."

Examples such as these just give a glimpse of what would be possible if production was organised for social need, through nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy, and placed under workers control. Only then could the talent, enterprise and initiative latent within millions of workers be realised, and set to use for the benefit of society.

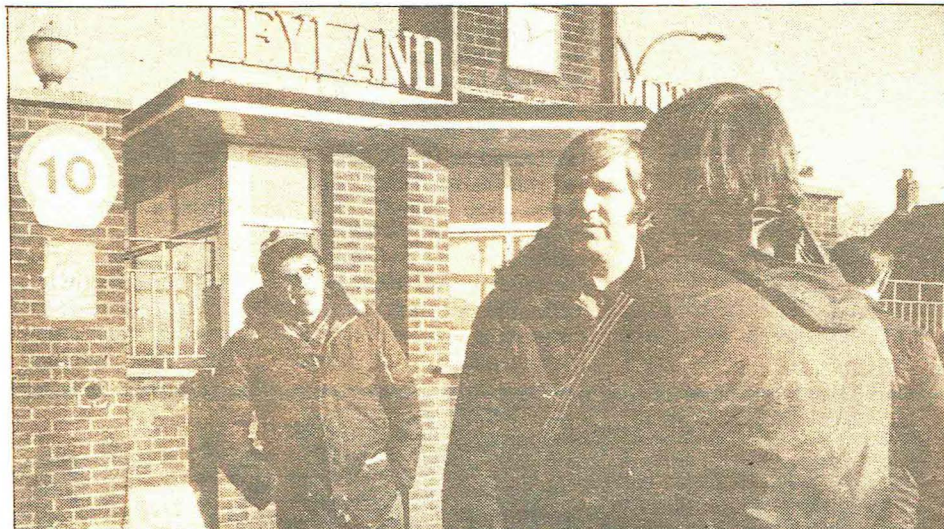
Edwardes' plan for Leyland

Sir Michael Edwardes proposes 1,800 redundancies at Leyland Vehicles in Leyland and Chorley—and gets away with 7,000! This could be the tragic outcome, after the recent decision of the workforce here to end their four-week strike.

On November 21 last year BL announced 4,100 redundancies in Leyland vehicles, the truck and bus subsidiary. This was part of its so-called 'survival plan' for 1982, and included 140 redundancies at the Albion plant in Glasgow, 1,365 at Bathgate, 740 at Guy Motors Wolverhampton, and 1,855 at Leyland in Lancashire.

This was a body blow, not least for the central Lancashire towns of Leyland and Chorley. The response of the workforce was one of bitterness and anger, and on January 21, 8,500 workers voted overwhelmingly to come out on strike.

After four weeks of serious financial hardship



Leyland pickets during this month's lock-out. Photo: Militant

management blackmail and a major company propaganda campaign in the local press, a narrow majority of the workforce voted on February 18 for a return to work. By doing so, they have accepted however reluctantly, the company's plans for 1982—and probably very much more.

The unions have maintained throughout that the redundancies are part of a longer term plan, that is to get rid of engine production at Leyland, hive off the profitable bits and reduce the

Leyland and Chorley sites to an assembly plant, employing no more than a quarter of its present workforce. Whilst the company are strenuously denying this allegation in their propaganda, there is every reason to believe that the unions are correct in this view.

In fact, at a final negotiation meeting on February 15, the company suggested working parties should examine the cost competitiveness of two key products which are supposed to survive the present round

cutbacks—the T111 truck engine Hydrocyclic bus gear box.

Following the return to work the shop stewards at the Leyland and Chorley plants are now left to pick up the pieces. However difficult the task, they have little choice but to attempt to rebuild the morale of their members, to attempt to improve links between the shop floor and the white collar unions, and to build much closer links with other sections of the labour movement in the Leyland and Chorley areas.

Mood to fight at Lucas

I work for Burnley's local public transport company and already we have seen how closures and redundancies have a 'knock-on' effect on service industries such as mine.

With the closure of the Lucas Hapton factory we will have lost the four buses per day that service the factory. This comes after recent service buses that followed the closure of the Hapton Valley Pit and redundancies at Mullard TV

Tube factory.

The Lucas redundancies are just the latest in a long line that have taken place in the town since the Tories came to power. In the last 12 months unemployment in Burnley has doubled, and if the Lucas jobs go it will bring more devastation to the town than it suffered even in the 1930's.

By J P Johnston
(Burnley LPYS)

The domino effect

After weeks of rumour and speculation, morale was understandably low at the Lucas Aerospace plant in Burnley. And when the 1,050 threatened redundancies were announced it was a crushing blow as the workers realised this would leave 35% of their workforce unemployed.

But now this mood has changed. The workers were united after a mass meeting at Turf Moor, the town's

football ground, where the shop stewards told a mass meeting that they would oppose all redundancies. They received massive backing from the workers for this stand—out of 2,500 workers present, only 23 dissented against the proposals!

By Andrew Doe
(Burnley LPYS)

HOMES ON

Tory policy leads to

2½ years of savage cuts in housing subsidies by the Tories are threatening to create a catastrophic slump in Britain's housing stock.

The accelerating rate of decay and deterioration could cast millions of working class families into the Dickensian conditions of the last century.

This impending crisis has been brought about by a virtual collapse of the house-building programme and severe cut-backs in main-

**By Ben Eastop
Peckham CLP**

tenance. Last year saw fewer new housing starts than at any time in the last 50 years and in 5 years time there could be a real shortage of half a million homes. In 1981, 300,000 new homes were needed and only 199,000 were actually completed.

Although the public sector has been hardest hit, for the first time housing stock in all three main tenures is threatened. Council house building has slumped to 35,000 last year, lower than the miserable figure of 56,000 for 1980 but far less than the 250,000 in 1967. Council house starts this year are expected to fall below 30,000.

This is at a time when homelessness is on the increase. In London alone 1,500 people are made homeless every month, and there are a quarter of a million people on council waiting lists.

As the housing stock decays, more and more houses will degenerate into slums and will not be replaced by new ones. Owner-occupiers, especially the elderly and those on low incomes, are finding it increasingly difficult to keep up with maintenance.

In the private rented sector where private landlords are notoriously bad at carrying out maintenance at the best of times, the situation could be much worse.

Even at the present time there are, scandalously, 547,000 dwellings which are unfit for human habitation. In addition, there are 1,035,000 lacking one or more basic amenities, and a further 1,736,000 dwellings

needing major repairs.

This adds up to a total of more than three million dwellings needing immediate attention. Even after decades of 'housing programmes' the condition of housing is worse than ever.

What more proof is needed of the failure of capitalism to provide the most basic of human needs for the population?

However, it is council housing which has suffered the hardest blows from Tory cuts. The future facing 5½ million or so council tenants is frightening.

Local Authority housing is funded both from central government and through rents. Government subsidies have been slashed to an all-time low of £2.97 per week per unit, forcing Local Authorities to increase rents and at the same time reduce the level of 'services' to their tenants.

Many councils have given up doing minor repairs and even some major repairs altogether, causing misery to many elderly tenants and families who cannot carry out repairs themselves. The backlog of 'unfit' homes will continue to grow as maintenance fails to keep up with deterioration.

The projected spending on housing, is for continued decline and by 1983 housing costs could be as little as 4% of total government spending. Defence, on the other hand, is predicted to rise to 12% (see graph).

Many councils, including sadly some Labour councils, admit that there are proposals for further cuts in next year's budget, only staving off a large scale financial crisis to the following year. What will be the situation facing millions of council tenants then?

Nor is the ruination of council housing limited to older pre-war buildings. Many estates built in the 1960s, or even within the last 10 years are in a serious state of disrepair.

During the frantic house-building programme of the 1960s the building giants

picked up millions of pounds in profit from government grants in an attempt to introduce 'systems' building rather than the old methods, with the view to reducing labour

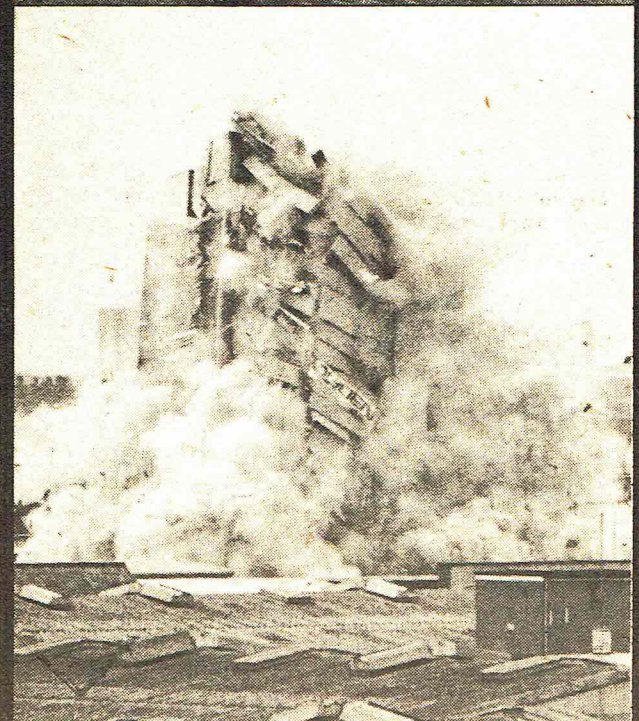
costs on site.

The Labour government on coming to power in 1964 committed itself to building 500,000 houses a year by 1970—a target which it never achieved although it reached 350,000. But even this was only done by the rapid introduction of industrialised system building, which accounted for over half the houses built between 1964 and 1972.

The big companies sought continuous contracts to maintain profits once the systems had been developed, and they exploited Local Authorities by offering 'package deals' for both slum clearance and development.

Many of the systems were poorly tested, and construction techniques were shoddy, leading to multiple problems with dampness, heating and so on. Together with the badly thought-out ideals of architects and planners the results were often expensive disasters—many rapidly deteriorated into 'new' slums in the form of inhuman concrete jungles.

Local Authorities have been paying the costs ever since, both in terms of huge debt charges (in a period of increasing interest rates) and in terms of maintenance and improvements. Thus the legacy inherited from the past



Photos by John Woulfe

One Sunday in November, there was a carnival atmosphere amongst council tenants in Stratford, East London. Two giant tower blocks, Stratford Point and Nowtown Point, were demolished by Newham council. (22 November)

"Two down, 107 to go!" was the view of the tenants. The appalling living conditions in the tower blocks were high-lighted last year by the death of a young mother, who threw herself from the twenty-second floor of a nearby block.

The two blocks had been empty for over two years, during which time the council spent £700,000 on keeping them safe. To have put right the buildings' design faults would have cost £9 million.

Sixteen years ago, these ill-conceived monstrosities cost about £½ million to build. Astronomical interest charges mean that the final cost to the council will be over £5 million.

Newham tenants cheered the explosion, but moneylenders in the City of London need not be downhearted. Newham council will still be paying off the outstanding £3.5 million. Despite the demolition of these uninhabitable flats, the financiers will enjoy their regular rake-off until the year 2024.

Southwark Estate: Human

"This place was just a human dustbin for the GLC," one tenant said, summing up the estate on which he lived.

Gloucester Grove estate was begun only 7 years ago and the final stages were completed only 5 years ago at a total cost of £18m.

The estate was originally put up by the GLC, but was handed over to Southwark Council as part of the Tories' plan to wind down GLC housing. Comprehensive development took place with clearance of old terraced houses. Yet the number of new flats totals less than the number of old houses cleared!

It is clear that the contractors were only intent on finishing the development as quickly as possible to reap high profits. At one stage the quality of concrete was thought to be so bad as to warrant pulling it down and starting all over again.

By a combination of bad design and poor quality building the flats are easy to break into. Next to the front doors on the ground floor is a pram shed; the door can easily be forced

and access gained to the flat by kicking through a sheet of plasterboard!

In other cases, the breeze block walls around the door can be kicked in with a strong boot! Mr Balli who spoke to *Militant* had his flat broken into twice recently—including once over Christmas.

The estate is such a warren of corridors that it is impossible to catch any of the culprits. Muggings are common-place and many people are afraid to go out of their homes. Last October an elderly woman died after being attacked.

Never-the-less Mr Balli

emphasised that the root cause of these crimes lay in the growing impoverishment created by the Tory government. "Social deprivation is so serious," he said "that they look for somewhere to turn...on this estate alone a third of the tenants are in arrears."

"Southwark Council have brought it onto themselves, by following the Tory cuts—it's always the council tenants and the working class that ends up with the butt."

"Now they are proposing another 8% cut. The heating is going up again. The average rent on this

R SLUMS

o housing chaos



together with the present vicious cuts is piling up the conditions for economic disaster.

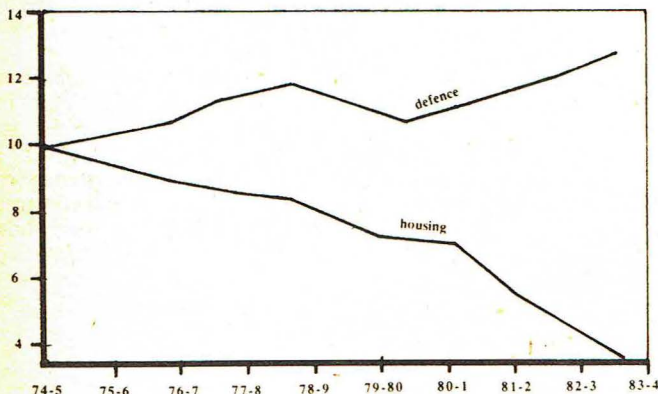
Against this background the Tories' policy of enforcing council house sales is even more criminal. The remaining stocks of decent council housing will be sold off and the rest will be left to rot.

Council house sales reached a record of 80,000 in 1980. Yet it is estimated by Shelter that two thirds of

ing for council tenants fell by over 10% last year.

Much of this has been due to a colossal 48% increase in rents. Rent rebates have failed to keep pace with inflation, rising by only 7½% last time, and still 20-30% of tenants entitled to rebates don't collect them.

High rents are one of the key factors forcing many families into a despairing poverty trap. A recent report indicated that the in-



The percentage of government expenditure has gone up for defence but slumped for housing.

non owner-occupiers are in no position to even consider buying their own house.

While housing conditions for council tenants have deteriorated so attacks on their living standards have also mounted. With unemployment, inflation and cuts in other services the average standard of liv-

idence of rent and fuel arrears has risen dramatically, in some areas by 33% or even 100%.

If tenants are forced into an arrears position—with all the extra burdens of tension, anxiety and conflicts in the home—it is due to the steep rise of the last few years. The director of hous-

ing in Newcastle Upon Tyne commented, "There is no question that all the people involved are indolent or avoiding payments.

"From April, for example, a family man taking home £80 a week will have to put aside £35 a week to pay for rent, rates and heating in one of our new centrally heated homes in Byker."

Already there is a need to mount massive opposition to further rent and rate increases. But to be successful this campaign must be linked to the general campaign against the cuts which is gathering pace in the labour and trade union movement.

The need for a clear and unequivocal stand against all cuts, including rent and rate increases, is becoming rapidly more urgent. Pressure must be mounted to link together all sections of the labour movement to force the Labour leaders into a showdown with the government.

While the Tories remain in office there is no other prospect except increasing misery and despair for millions of working people. Labour councils cannot hope to avoid the disastrous effects of more cuts by tinkering with the budget, or putting up rates.

Instead, they must make a clear stand of confrontation with the government, based on a strategy of building support amongst trade unions, trades councils and tenants groups, and with the full backing of constituency parties.

An irreversible decline in the housing stock can only be stopped by forcing a general election and electing a Labour government committed to a massive new housing programme.

The stranglehold on local authorities by the finance houses must be broken by annulling all outstanding debts and nationalising the banks and insurance companies. Only this measure will ensure that cheap credit is available for a renewed house building programme and the proper upkeep of existing housing stock.

Rents could once again be set at reasonable levels, relieving many low paid council tenants from this enormous burden.

However, such a programme would be short lived while it remained within the confines of a crisis-ridden capitalist system. A socialist housing policy must be part of an overall strategy for the complete transformation of society.

Capitalism wastes resources

The building industry is probably the clearest example of the enormous waste and destruction of resources inherent in capitalism. There are 3 million workers unemployed, including half a million construction workers. Industry is running at well below capacity: a recent study puts the unused capacity at 40% for metal manufacturing, 45% for timber and furniture and 27% for cement, glass and bricks, not counting the closure of many such industries in the last ten years.

In other words, all the materials are there to build many more schools, hospitals or homes. But as long as the building of houses is subject to market forces it is an incontrovertible fact that there will always be a shortage of homes.

What better example is there to show the need for social ownership? To show, in other words, the enormous advantages to be gained by nationalising the industry, the land and financial sector so that building can be organised and planned as a public service.

Under a socialist plan, many of the dreams of architects and town planners, utopian in the past, could be realised for the mass of the working class. State housing would no longer mean third-rate accommodation for those in poverty, but would entail the provision, for the first time ever of decent housing for all.

Jerry-Built New Towns



The Dream. Harlow New Town 1951.

"New Towns set out to show that we in Britain could do something better than the soulless suburbia, ribbon development, single industry towns, and one class housing estates of the '30s...that our obsolete, over-crowded, slum-ridden, and bomb stricken towns could be thinned out and transformed from their Victorian squalor into decent centres of living of which we need no longer be ashamed."

—Lord Silkin, Minister of Town and Country Planning 1945

Thus, New Towns were going to be magnificent examples of Municipal Socialism. But there were many deviations from this view, often because the New towns were used for experimental and untried types of housing.

Siporex housing in Basildon is such a type of experimental pre-fabricated house. The problems, however, started only after they were actually built.

Cracks in walls, subsidence, window frames falling out and so on. In fact the situation deteriorated to such an extent that the Basildon Development Corporation were forced into moving people off the estate whilst substancial 'refurbishment' took place.

Tenants have now been rewarded with a £3 per week rent increase plus of course Santa Howe's recently announced £2.50 increase. Tenants at first were very reasonable. The houses seemed OK, and the increase perhaps justifiable.

But the 'refurbishment' hasn't achieved anything, so the tenants have reacted very angrily to the rent increases.

Laindon Ward Branch of the Labour Party went out to the estate petitioning the 'refurbished' houses, against the rent increase. We received 99% support—and saw many examples of the so-called 'refurbishment'.

One house in the middle of a terrace has been condemned because of subsidence.

One block of houses are to be demolished as they are sliding down a hill towards a car park!

Everybody complained about draughty gaps and cracks around doors and windows.

The following are comments written by the tenants on the petition. "Leaks in bedroom and lounge — underfloor heating not working"... "The house is one big disaster to us. Not worth living in with wife and baby"... "All windows fitted wrongly"... "Water

Mike Waddington Basildon LPYS

coming through lounge windows and dampness"... "Health hazard for my children. Leaking water from kitchen and toilet. Reported 3 months ago. Dampness unbelievable. Heating cost one quarter £267. Children's bedroom window rotten. Condensation more like tap running"... "£125 heating bill"... "No putty in upstairs windows"... "Leaking toilet (bodge up job)"...

All tenants were promised six-monthly checks to the houses yet we didn't find anybody who had actually experienced such an event! "Rotten windows. Water coming through the windows. Mildew everywhere...very bad condensation, my ceiling in the lounge is collapsing"... We have collected pages and pages of such criticism.

The letter notifying tenants of the increase stated that the tenants can of course decide not to pay the increase and terminate their tenancy! But as one young couple with a baby and another due said to me—"Where are we to go? What choice do we have?" None but to fight back.

The Labour Party intends to help in this fight with a full campaign—beginning with a tenants meeting and a resolution to be tabled at the next meeting of Basildon Council by the Labour Group.

Lobbies of the Corporation and Council are planned. Even legal action under the 'unfit for habitation' legislation is planned as a means of pressurising the authorities into action—for the withdrawal of the rent increases, immediate compensation to tenants and rehousing or proper repairs.

Going by the response on the doorstep this campaign will succeed!

Dustbin....

A burnt out rubbish chute in Gloucester Grove

estate is already £42 a week." Southwark Council have stopped doing minor repairs and the maintenance budget is now a paltry £10 per month per dwelling.

The rubbish which is overflowing from the shoots in the stairwells is now so serious that the tenants association is taking the council to court because of the risk to health. In the summer the rubbish is infested with swarms of flies which come into the flats.

The council have recently launched a 'consultation' project for tenants to air their grievances. Originally

the Tenants' Association and Local Authority trade unions were to take part in the steering committee.

Instead the council went ahead without involving these bodies. The Tenants Association was contacted only five weeks ago — long after the steering committee was set up; including such representative bodies as the police, and the Town Hall Clerks department!

What's more the whole project is costing a paltry £10,000. It is perhaps an indication of the poor regard that Council have for their tenants.

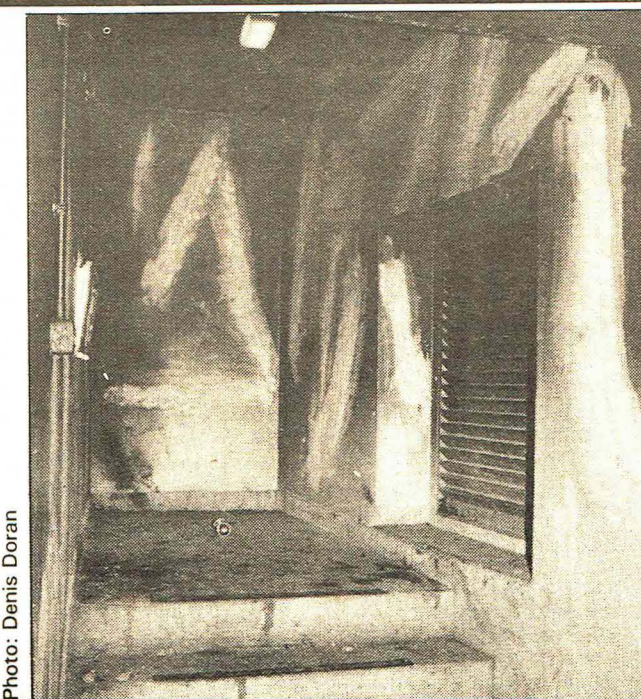


Photo: Denis Doran

POLAND

BOOK
REVIEW

Solidarity's leadership was influenced by the Church and Catholic dissidents.

When I first bought it at the beginning of December last year it was clear that the developments in Poland had already overtaken the subject of this book. Since then there has been the military take-over and the brutal smashing of Solidarity through the violent attacks on its members and the imprisonment of its leaders.

But despite dealing only with the period from the formation of Solidarity up to the time of its first national congress, the book provides a useful and descriptive background to the events of the last eighteen months.

The recent crisis is put into an historical context—outlining the workers' struggles in Poland in 1956, 1968, 1970 and 1976—showing that 1980-81 was not an "experiment" in democracy as the capitalist media would have us believe, but part of a continuing struggle by Polish workers for socialism based on workers' democracy.

"In talks with workers in several different factories", MacShane points out significantly, "I never met one who thought that returning to private ownership would solve any problems."

MacShane shows through his interviews with workers and opposition activists that the tremendous struggles from July-August 1980 were originally the result of the intolerable food price

By Stuart Bates
(Cathcart CLP)

increases coming on top of widespread food shortages.

The book describes how the strike movement spread throughout Gdansk, through the Baltic Coast region and eventually throughout the whole of Poland, inevitably overstepping from industrial onto political demands.

An appendix in the book details the terms of the Gdansk agreement officially recognising Solidarity and granting—on paper—many other concessions to the workers.

These concessions ranged from the right to strike, and the right to form independent unions, to improved conditions of service for factory and health service workers, improved maternity leave, a lower retirement age, and so on.

MacShane also shows the democratic structure of Solidarity which was created in the heat of the struggle. It had a geographical structure as opposed to being based either on trades or on industries. That meant that there was a unity of all workers in an area, irrespective of industry or occupation.

In the city of Gdansk, nurses, teachers, shipyard workers and labourers were all in 'Gdansk Solidarity' and gave their support to that body rather than to any national grouping of their own occupation.

This inevitably added to the political character of the Solidarity movement. Given the fact that the economy,



POLAND'S INDEPENDENT TRADE UNION

By Denis MacShane. Spokesman Books paperback £3.50

industry and public services in any one area were state-owned, it was unavoidable that this 'trade union' should come to make political demands and statements.

"Considerable economic, social and political power rests at the regional level", MacShane wrote, "and as a consequence Solidarity is mirroring the actual power structure that exists in Poland."

Taking over many of the functions of the state trade unions, in most plants there were "joint Solidarity-management committees that looked after housing allocation, as well as the sport and recreation clubs."

MacShane recounts that Solidarity nationally had forced the Polish bureaucracy to relinquish some of its own privileges—the party and state functionaries giving up 118 buildings for use as kindergartens or community centres.

Yet despite the obvious link between industrial and political questions, and the clear political demands that the workers raised, MacShane reports uncritically the fact that the leadership eschewed any open political aspirations. "Solidarity claims no political ambitions...Solidarity has no political programme...etc"

Another appendix in the book pinpoints exactly who are the bureaucracy in Poland—the "Nomenclatura" (ie those in 'nominated' posts subject to higher patronage), although this refers to the higher levels of the state bureaucracy and almost certainly misses out large layers of bureaucratic 'hangers-on'.

**"No new claims
have been put
forward"**

Despite the concessions made by the bureaucracy, it was clear that they were only given grudgingly and would be taken back bit by bit. Nine months after the Gdansk agreement, Solidarity was stressing that "no new claims have been put forward. All the disputes and conflicts have been over persuading the government to honour both the letter and the spirit of the Gdansk agreement."

This was clear with regard to the press. The main Solidarity papers were *TYGODNIK SOLIDARNOSC* (Weekly Solidarity) and *JEDNOSC* (Unity) with circulations of 500,000 and 100,000 respectively, supplemented by a host of daily bulletins, regional and plant news sheets.

But the publication of the Solidarity papers were restricted by the amount of paper and ink that the government would provide and in fact the Solidarity papers were like gold-dust, selling out immediately. They could probably have sold millions of copies.

The government bureaucracy, on the other hand, continued to pump out its own propaganda on the state radio and TV and in the millions of copies of the official press. Despite the Gdansk agreement, the demand for an end to censorship remained, according to the author, "an important and continuing objective for Solidarity."

But despite the useful background material, the book completely lacks any critical analysis of the Solidarity leadership.

A Marxist leadership at the head of Solidarity would have based itself upon a programme and a perspective for the overthrow of the bureaucracy, appealing to workers internationally for support. MacShane shows time and time again how the aspirations of the Solidarity members encroached inevitably upon political demands. But he also repeats time and again the fact that the leaders were "non-political", apparently without seeing any contradiction between their stance and the workers' demands.

A special chapter of the book is devoted to Lech Walesa and the leadership, and it is clear that, despite the personal qualities of some of the leaders, they hadn't a clue where they were going.

"In the many millions of words written about Walesa," MacShane writes, "and in the scores of thousands spoken by him to journalists since August 1980, it is impossible to find a coherent political or trade union theory which either explains his actions or provides definite clues to his future behaviour..." "He is a master of necessary equivocation, deflecting questions about the political role of Solidarity, or fears of a Soviet intervention,

with a skill that would do credit to a diplomat with a lifetime's experience in dodging difficult questions."

Lech Walesa, in not having any real programme or perspective, inevitably drifted, along with most of the rest of the leadership, from one expediency to the next.

It is not the case that we are being wise after the event: throughout the whole of the past eighteen months, *Militant* consistently and repeatedly stated that a free trade union was incompatible with the bureaucracy and that it must either face facts and seek to overthrow the bureaucracy, or it will itself be suppressed.

**"Calming the
urge for swifter
change"**

But there were many in the British labour movement at the time who were enchanted with the apparent success of Solidarity and began to believe that it would survive as a 'reforming' structure. MacShane was apparently among these: he completely discounts the lack of theoretical clarity in Solidarity as being unimportant, or even an asset!

"Walesa's fly-by-the-seat-of-his-pants technique of leadership may not be sufficient for all time," he writes, "but since August 1980 it has most certainly been necessary for the Polish working class."

It is now tragically easy to see where these "techniques", influenced in the main by the church and the catholic dissidents, led the Polish workers.

MacShane further highlights the weakness of the leaders by quoting Kuron, who stated that he had not believed that it was possible to create an independent trade union. It is fortunate that he was in prison at the time of the Gdansk negotiations, Kuron himself remarks.

According to MacShane, "Kuron, as often as not, acted as a moderating force on Solidarity since August 1980", and it is clear from Kuron's programme for reforms—always leaving the Polish bureaucracy intact—that large sections of the intellectual dissidents are in effect opposition bureaucrats, without con-

fidence in the working class and with no programme for ridding Polish workers of the bureaucracy.

The absence of a programme for political revolution inevitably led the leadership of Solidarity into a position where they had to dampen down the strike movement: "In the winter of 1981, Walesa was driven into a state of near exhaustion as he travelled all over Poland, slowing down and calming the urge for swifter change and more action that many groups of workers were expressing."

For more than a year the bureaucracy lost effective control over the country, while Solidarity's leadership refused to mobilise the working class for the establishment of workers' democracy. Paralysed by the deadlock between the working class and the bureaucracy, Poland's economic position went from bad to worse.

But the levers of state power remained in the hands of the bureaucracy, to be used to suppress the workers' movement as soon as conditions made this possible.

The leadership of Solidarity were more and more acting as 'firemen', putting out fires—strikes—wherever they threatened. Sections of workers inevitably became exhausted by the struggle that seemed to go nowhere, with their leaders offering no perspective for a decisive victory. There arose, according to MacShane, a constant plea by Polish workers "for some stability, a bit of peace and quiet, a few months without a major or even a minor crisis."

When a crisis finally did arise in December last year, the Polish military was able, despite a certain amount of active opposition, to crush Solidarity.

MacShane's book, in some senses, is more valuable now, after the military take-over, than it was before. Read it with a critical view and it proves a good source of background material, confirming the analysis put forward by the *Militant*. But the utopian ideas about 'non-political' leaders and 'reforming' the bureaucracy have a strongly ironic ring about them now, after December 13th.

SOLIDARITY: Poland's Independent Trade Union, by Denis MacShane. Spokesman books. Paperback £3.50. Available from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

GREECE, NOTES

GREECE.... 'Our union can't wait any longer'

1981: bank workers demonstrate

In November we published an exclusive extract from a leaflet published by the trade union of the workers of the Greek Electricity Corporation on the day following the historic election victory of the Socialist Party PASOK.

This called for revolutionary change in society to implement the election slogan 'PASOK and the people to power!'

It further announced that the union would henceforth take over the responsibilities of management, in furtherance of the people's electoral mandate, and began by instructing all fellow-workers sacked or transferred in the previous two years of victimisation to report back to work immediately.

This action, along with several other manifestations of the workers' jubilation and new-found confidence, gave the lie to the bland reports of the world capitalist press, which stress only the retreats and "moderation" of the PASOK government and black out every indication of the revolutionary mood sweeping society. Events have shown that the disintegration of the post-junta right-wing "New Democracy" regime has had no less profound an effect on society than did the election of the 1936 Popular Front in Spain or Allende's victory in Chile in 1970.

Since November, the Electricity Corporation Union has published two new leaflets which confirm the growing consciousness of the working class of the need to take greater initiative in pressing its faltering leadership to carry through its programme to the end, to mobilise in action to take control of the workplaces and change its destiny.

We reprint some highlights from these leaflets which we believe speak for themselves, in order to break through the blanket of silence imposed by those same Press barons who so shrilly denounce the censorship in Poland, and draw to the attention of trade unionists in Britain and elsewhere the tremendous social upheavals that have begun to shake Greece.

●●●

"The recent increase in our membership by thousands proves that technicians as well as workers in the Electricity Corporation have understood and are supporting the positions (of the union—Ed)...for a militant, mass, class, politicised trade union movement..."

"Change cannot be

achieved as long as the stooges appointed by the New Democracy Government remain in key positions...The fact that managers who during the dictatorship worked in the personnel office of Papadopoulos (the overthrown dictator—Ed) and other junta ministers are still in leading positions is dynamite in the foundations of the Corporation...

"The period of time that the workers were prepared to wait for the government to act is running out. The boiling discontent and increasing opposition will soon become a militant force which will annihilate the reaction entrenched at the heart of the Corporation...The change will not come through the offices of the managers but through the struggles of the workers..."

7 January 1982

"It is already the end of January and unfortunately all those ready to undermine the change and the unions see with pleasure that their prophecies and schemes are bearing fruit..."

"Our union cannot wait any longer. Once again we raise the flag of battle. From 1 February 1982 our union will enforce the 40-hour week for all our workers. The unacceptable offer by the new management of 41 hours shows contempt for the workers, in the name of 'productivity'."

"We enforce the five-day week on all electricity generating plants. No hiring or firing or allocations of work to our members are to be implemented without prior agreement with our union. We demand an immediate end to all discussions on the special price of electricity for our workers. We will not discuss proposals to give up gains already won. If the question of our wage agreement is not satisfactorily resolved by mid-February, we will call a 24-hour warning strike on 19 February."

"Our union demands the immediate removal from office of all managerial staff connected with the junta, and all those who have fought against the workers and against the interests of our public corporation. Otherwise we will proceed to purge the Corporation ourselves."

25 January 1982

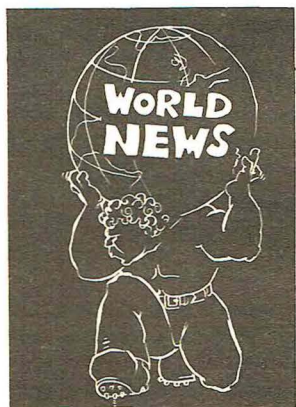


Below is an extract from a leaflet of the Engineers' Union of the Public Electricity Corporation (DEI)

"Brother,

"In conclusion we do not wish to leave unanswered a question that is asked generally and which possibly concerns many of our brothers. Where is the money to be found to deal with the above mentioned just demands of the personnel?"

"In the economy there is one simple basic law: 'When one individual or a social group loses, another gains'. So our undisputed loss has not evaporated.



ZIMBABWE

The net result of the ousting of Nkomo's party from the government after the discovery of their massive secret arms caches is a further consolidation of power in the hands of Mugabe's Zanu party, and increasingly in Mugabe's own hands.

Since coming to power two years ago Mugabe has moved gradually towards eliminating all opposition. He dished out blows to both the left and the right. Strik-

ing railway workers were imprisoned under laws of the old Smith regime. At the same time minimum wages have been forced upon reluctant employers.

But as long as the economy remains in the control of international capital then there will be no long term stable development. Only £20m worth of foreign private investment has gone to Zimbabwe since independence two years ago. With economic problems ahead it seems probable that Mugabe will now be moving even faster to establish a one-party regime which will attempt to curb all opposition.

SWEDEN

Unemployment in Sweden is now at the record figure of 153,000 (3.6% of the work force)—a rise of 45,000 over January 1981.

But a further 139,500 workers are on "emergency" work, "training"

who undertake work for DEI for which they charge grossly inflated rates thanks to their exclusive agreements? And what of the suppliers? We recently discovered, and have taken the matter to court, the fact that the contractors undertaking construction of three power stations had caused DEI and the state to sustain losses of some billions of drachmas...

"It is no accident that the big construction companies are at the top of the list of the most profitable Greek companies.

"There is a great gulf between the wages of the workers and the profits of the companies and industry. This is the rift which must finally be closed by the united efforts of all working people! Only then will the government's proclaimed positions for fair sharing

schemes and other subsidised "employment".

61,000 youth aged between 16 and 24 are among the jobless—an increase of one-third over January 1981, taking youth unemployment to nearly one in ten.

Now the right-wing government is 'easing' job security laws to 'encourage' employers to take on young workers—a blatant attack on the gains of the labour movement, using the sledgehammer of mass unemployment. Such are the conditions in the one-time showpiece of social democracy as the crisis of capitalism bites deeper.

SOUTH AFRICA

The death of Neil Aggett, the South African trade unionist murdered in the police cells, has caused a major response among black workers. His funeral on 13 February turned into the most important political

and traditional wealth, and social justice be achieved; not through raising the wages of the lowest paid workers at the expense of the others.

"On this basis we call upon our federation YENOP/DEI to remain faithful to its tradition of struggle and to open up the right path, the road to united struggle. The only solution to the present difficult situation is a programme of informative and militant meetings in Athens and throughout the country, with strike action if necessary, which will certainly lead to a satisfactory solution to our problems and to substantial pay increases."

4 February 1982

demonstration in Johannesburg for many years.

An estimated 5,000 people (including many whites) marched through the streets behind trade union banners. Significantly, the banner of the banned African National Congress was raised. The police gave way for the marchers and did not try to interfere.

Following on the half-hour national strike two days earlier, which paralysed three of the country's four major harbours and also many factories, organised labour is unmistakably coming forward as the key force against the regime, that can rebuild the ANC as a mass political organisation of the working people.

Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

DHSS threaten abortion rights

Dear Comrades

Yet another threat is being posed to a woman's right to an abortion—this time by the DHSS. In a blatant attempt to restrict abortions, by the back door method, the DHSS have changed the wording on the legal forms which doctors have to fill in stating the reason for an abortion.

Before the change, doctors could give either medical or non-medical grounds for the termination of a pregnancy. But now the section for non-medical grounds has been removed from the form. As 80% of abortions are carried out for non-medical reasons, such as social or financial

problems, this effectively means that most abortions are now illegal!

In fact some doctors have already been threatened with prosecution. It is vital that the labour and trade union movement is made aware of this latest attack on women's rights.

It is already very difficult for working class women to obtain abortions because of cuts in the NHS (very few can afford £100 for a private abortion!) The labour movement must mobilise to defeat this move by the DHSS which will once again condemn thousands of working class women to the misery of unwanted pregnancies or into the hands of back street abortionists.

Yours fraternally
Anne Spiller
Tower Hamlets LPYS

WE MUST GET BACK TO TRUE DEMOCRACY

SIR, I've heard little of the newspaper *Militant* — but what I've heard I'm in complete agreement with.

Why don't we see this paper being distributed outside all our unemployment offices.

Only then can we

put an end to giving our Royals tax free allowances and State industry bosses rises of plus per cent, giving them £50,000 plus a year, when workers are told to accept less and at the same time cope with high gas, electric, and food

rises.

To keep being conned by the Tories; then to also be conned by the SDP is asking for more of what we are getting now — exploitation. The only way to get a fresh system; that will give less to the rich — and more to the needy; and go about getting us back to full

employment is one that comes for the ordinary working class — and that is true socialism.

Militant tendency is the only way — to get back to true democracy instead of this farce we have now.

ERIC HENDLEY,
Priory Road,
Bryn.

Letter published in 'Wigan Observer', 4 February

Aylesbury's B movie de-railed

Dear Comrades

In the dusty frontier town of Aylesbury recently a Reagan style Hollywood B movie was enacted.

The Directors of the movie (BR management) had told the "outlaws" (ASLEF) that the "good guy" (NUR driver) would move supplies at 1340 hours Wednesday. The "outlaws" then formed a picket,

and when the "good guy" arrived instead of a High Noon shoot out the "good guy" had a friendly conversation with the "outlaws" and rode off into the distance on his bike without a shot being fired (followed by the world's press).

This confused the Directors who contacted the leadership of the "good guys" at H.Q. No help was forthcoming however, as the leadership had problems of their own within their ranks.

The rank and file in the outback were restless, demanding things like a de-

cent living wage, better working conditions, no ending of an 8 hour guaranteed day etc.

The leadership sent out agents to quell these disturbances saying that "nasty infiltrators want you to have the same as we have already got. So if you are all good, and accept the medicine we have proscribed (ie flexible rostering etc) the bosses will find the money they require for building and maintaining the present system".

Unfortunately the rank and file saw this as a worsening of the condi-

tions. They decided that the "outlaws" were really defending their interests as well. So a common object was set up so that the "good guys" and the "outlaws" could defend themselves both from the "good guys" leadership and the Directors of the movie. So that further attempts to make B movies would be crushed.

The rank and file of both the "good guys" and the "outlaws" are united that no way are they going to sell themselves for anyone who wants to worsen their conditions and they realised that

a return to the sweat shop labour of the 19th Century will not be tolerated.

For further showings of the movies see the national and local press. Note: these movies are unsuitable for nervous trade union leaderships.

Yours fraternally
David Hardy
Nottingham & District
NUR (personal capacity)

No pay for attending union meeting

Dear Comrades

On the Thursday afternoon of 11 February an official of the union USDAW, arrived to talk to the workforce at Blue Cap Foods, Netherby. When he entered the factory he was approached by a member of the staff who asked him to come and speak to management first.

He must have refused because management (controlled by a certain person called Turner) gave the union man 2 minutes to talk to the workers. This resulted in everybody walking out of the factory in order to have their meeting.

Some 20 minutes later the workers arrived back to resume work. They were then informed that because of their action, they would not receive their pay packets that day. (Thursdays are pay days).

This pretty and spiteful action obviously resulted in some hardships, as people find it hard to make their money last seven days and are usually waiting to buy food and other essentials.

This management acts the way Maggie thinks all employers should act. A fork lift truck driver was sacked as "unsuitable" for refusing to operate the fork lift after a safety officer (or accident preventing) declared it unsafe.

There are many instances of management riding roughshod over the workforce and indeed the turnover of workers in these days of unemployment is amazing. That must surely speak for itself.

Yours fraternally
J Dillon.

Pay MPs workers' wages

Dear Comrades
I do agree with the letter from Vic Archer (*'Militant'*, 12 February). If all MPs give their salary to their CLP and the MP was paid the wage of a skilled worker, the MP would fight for the working class!

Yours fraternally
Patrick Westmore
Vice Chairman
IOW CLP.

What socialism would mean

Dear Comrade Editor

With the development of microtechnology, computers, robotics, etc., mankind has the technology to abolish 90% of all necessary labour. Under capitalism the development of this new technology would lead to millions of workers condemned to the scrapheap of unemployment, with mass poverty and deprivation spreading throughout the working class.

Under socialism, once production was geared to the needs of working people, new technology would open the way for fantastic possibilities for mankind. For the first time ever in society the entire of the population would be given the chance to use their leisure time, use their lives, to fulfill their own interests.

The opportunities would be there, once freed from the bonds of labour, for everyone to enter into education, to become active in society and politics, and run society according to their own needs, the needs of the mass of the people.

As Trotsky said in 1932: "The historical task of our epoch consists of replacing the uncontrolled play of the market by reasonable planning, in disciplining the forces of production, compelling them to work together in harmony and obediently serve the needs

of mankind.

"Only on this new social basis will man be able to stretch his weary limbs and every man and every woman, not only a selected few—become a citizen with full power in the realm of thought".

This is truer today than ever with the opportunities for incredible advancement that lie ahead.

Yours fraternally
Martyn Edwards
Dudley West LPYS

Advanced medical care for all

Dear Comrades

Many readers will have seen the recent television programme about a remarkable nine hour operation to rebuild a 14 year old's heart. Developments of this kind in medical science are a real sign of the way in which pain and suffering for millions could be alleviated and lives saved.

But there is only one snag. This operation wasn't available to NHS patients, but was done by an NHS surgeon, at a cost of £6,000 in a private Harley Street clinic.

More than 3,500 NHS patients are waiting for chest surgery, including open heart surgery. In the South West there is a 6 month waiting list for open heart surgery.

A recent report to the

Regional Health Authority commented: "Some become cardiac cripples and some die while waiting".

Waiting that is while surgeons trained by the NHS spend their time looking after the rich who fly in from all over the world to jump queues. The abolition of private health is not an abstract moral question—it's a matter of life and death for working class people.

Yours fraternally
Kevin Ramage
LPYS National
Committee.

When tax is voluntary

Dear Comrades

One of the myths put out by the capitalist class is that they are having just as tough time of it as the rest of us. But last week I caught a glimpse of just how hard it is for our poor suffering bosses.

Whilst at an interview for a job certain secrets of a certain boss's lifestyle leaked out. The interviewer informed us that his company, Plygrange Ltd. based in Manchester, ran a Formula 2 motor racing team costing £250,000 a year.

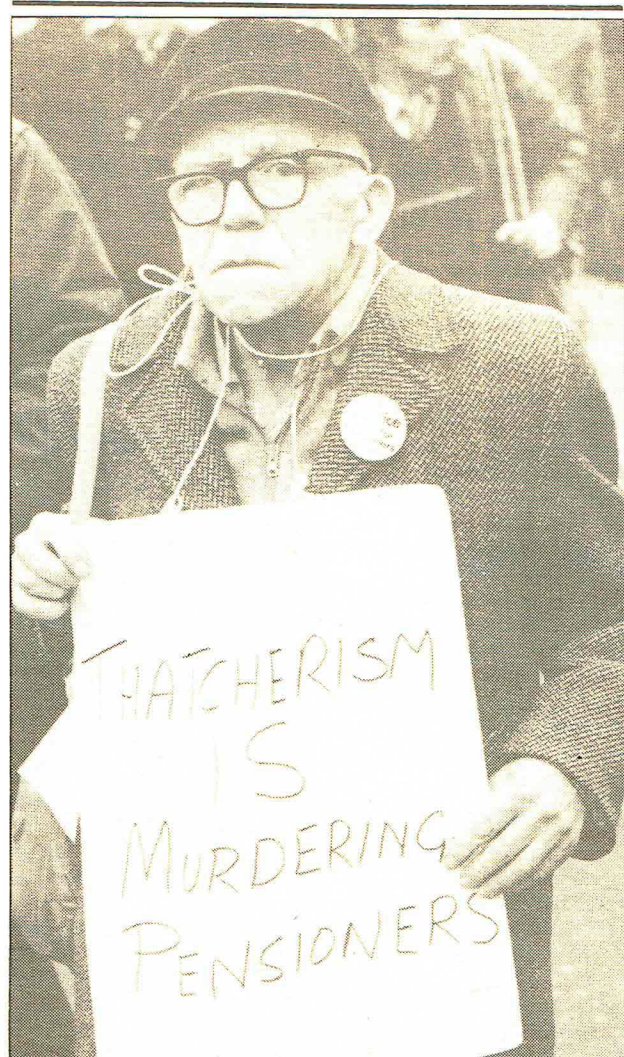
He then said quite casually "well it's really the chairman's hobby, just like a giant Scalextric Kit". The crunch however is that the bosses toy is tax deductible as advertising (he has the company name on the cars).

But this is not the only perk from the government;

he had already received grants for his insulation firm. Whilst workers were stuck paying on PAYE, they claimed for every expense under the sun (like X registered Jaguars). It's just

a different world from over 3 million unemployed and millions more low paid workers.

Yours fraternally
Mick Hogan
Wigan LPYS.



Over 700 pensioners lobbied Parliament last Thursday, Thatcher told a deputation

that there was not enough money for their needs. Photo A Wiard (Report)

ADVERTS FOR SOCIALISM

"It pays to advertise" say the bosses and waste thousands of millions of pounds trying to convince us of the superiority of one brand of soap powder over another which differs mainly in packaging.

Recently 'Militant' has been getting some advertisements too. Some, in the bosses' press, are free—but usually totally misleading. The others our supporters have had to organise themselves to ensure workers get the truth about 'Militant'.

As our readers are aware, this costs money, and they have come to our aid in a handsome manner. Eastern Region LPYS Conference was the occasion for a 'Militant' meeting where the collection raised £219! And a meeting in Cricklewood put West London in front on our chart when a further £200 donation from the first-prize winner in our raffle led to a total collection of £250 (before expenses).

Many thanks too for another large sum this week, a second donation to our funds of £100 from the Staffa Products Shop Stewards' Committee, Leyton, East London, in appreciation of the help 'Militant' supporters gave during their dispute. (See industrial pages).

Sauchie & Fisheross Labour Party (Alloa) sent us £10, and £6.50 was collected at a recent meeting of Liverpool Edge Hill Labour Party. Nearly £60 came from a 'Militant' meeting in Blackwood, Gwent, £80 from a recent Tyneside meeting and £30 each from those in Oxford and Grays Thurrock.

The following letter

By Steve Cawley

speaks for itself and came with £30 for us: "Dear Comrades, I really detest The Daily Express and the Sun and the Daily Mail too, For the lies and the slander they daily construe Makes me wanna puke! Yours fraternally A reader, Bristol."

Other individual donations, for the most part without verse, included those from A Glover (Reading), L Hockey (Wembley), D Morgan (Bangor) and T McEvoy (Middlesex) with subscriptions to 'Militant'. Thanks also to Merseyside NGA supporters, and to Labour Party members who contributed to collections as far apart as Plympton (Devon) and Whittington Moor (Chesterfield), members of Bootle CLP Womens Section, Ardwick supporters including H Johnson and M Hosgood, and a South Herts reader who donated his 'fares' after giving lifts during the transport difficulties in London.

A trade unionist in Royton & Heywood regularly donates his expenses to 'Militant'—thanks this week for the £10, comrade. £20s came from R Crawford (Wanstead & Woodford CLP), B Murray (Frankly LP, Birmingham), tenners from H Bassford (Inverkeithing) and W Coombes (Bristol), whilst fivers included those from R Martin (Clydebank), L Wright (E Kilbride), A Johnson (Coventry), S Duffy, S Cooper, S Collet and M Higgins (all Birmingham),

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 11 April
Eastern	616		2040
East Midlands	739		1470
Hants & Dorset	359		1100
Humberside	119		890
London East	922		2010
London West	587		1150
London South	419		1550
Manchester & Lancs	590		1550
Merseyside	598		1950
Northern	680		2350
Scotland East	229		1290
Scotland West	543		1980
Southern	470		1900
South West	278		965
Wales East	113		970
Wales West	175		1130
West Midlands	395		1980
Yorkshire	758		2290
Others	83		6435
Total received	8673		35,000

Target for April 11th £35,000

This week £1,752

ads

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SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres.
All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY.

"What We Stand For" Meetings

BOOTLE 'What We Stand For'. Bootle Labour Club, Knowsley Road. Speaker: Terry Fields (PPC Kirkdale) 7.30pm Monday 1st March.

PERRY BARR, Birmingham Monday 1 March, 7.30 pm, Co-op Rooms, Walsall Road. Speaker: Jeremy Birch (Selly Oak CLP)

CHORLEY: Hear: Ted Grant (Political Editor, Militant). Commercial Hotel, Water Street, Chorley, Lancs. 8.00pm, Tuesday 2 March

ROTHERHAM. 'Stop the Witch-hunt.' Speaker: Pat Wall (Bradford North Labour Party nominated parliamentary candidate). Sunday 28 February, 7.30pm. WEA Rooms (Above Ratcliffe Printers), Corporation St.

HULL Militant Public Meeting. 'Poland—bureaucratism or workers' democracy'. Speaker: Jeremy Birch 7.30pm Wed. 3rd March. Co-op Hall.

BIRMINGHAM Militant Public Meeting "How to fight cuts". Speakers: Pat Wall (PPC Bradford N, to be endorsed), Simon Heather (IGWU 5/29, West Mids PTE branch, in personal capacity). Wednesday 3 March 7.30pm Cans Lane Church Centre, Cans Lane, Birmingham.

BEXLEY Militant Readers Meeting on Poland. Speaker: Ed Bober. Venue: Erith & Crayford LP rooms, 315 Bexley Road, Erith, Kent. (Opposite the Royal Oak pub.) Thursday 4 March, 7.45pm.

Bridlington holiday flats near Spa conference hall. Vacancies for Easter sleeping from 2 to 6 people clean and comfortable. Mrs Cusworth, phone: 0262 73934.

KARL MARX T-SHIRTS AND SWEATSHIRTS. Sizes and colours for small—32-34; medium—34-36; large—38-40; extra large—42-44. Red motif on white, yellow, sky blue, bottle green, navy, black (+ sweatshirt grey and mid-blue). Cost: T-shirts £3.25, sweatshirts £6.75 (both prices include postage and packing). Plain T-shirts and sweatshirts also available, deduct 25p from price. Send cheques and postal orders to R Harris, 35 Westminster Court, Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 1UR.

WEST WALES weekend school tapes. Rob Sewell, on The Role of the Bolshevik Party 1917 and Trotsky's fight against Stalinism. Jeremy Birch on Bolshevism and Menshevism and Russia under Lenin and Trotsky. £2.30 each or £7.50 per set including postage. Proceeds to Militant fighting fund. SAE for lists of other tapes available to: David Llewelyn Davies, 10 Page Street, Swansea.

MANCHESTER Ardwick Labour Party Young Socialists Meeting: Fight for a future with Labour's youth! Speakers: Bob Litherland MP (SOGAT), Simon Swinnerton (LPYS), John Byrne (AUEW District Committee; Prospective Longsight Councillor) Followed by 'Rock Against Thatcher' Disco. Friday 26 February 7.00 pm. Slade Lane Neighbourhood Centre, Longsight.

MANCHESTER University Militant Supporters Society Monday 1 March: 'Look back at Grunwicks' (film). Monday 8 March: 'The life and times of James Connolly' speaker John Hunt (LPYS) Monday 15 March: 'The Bloody Rise of Capitalism' speaker Mick Brooks All meetings 12.45 pm, Meeting Room 4, University Students Union, Oxford Road.

ST HELENS LPYS Public Meeting "We want a future". Speaker: Laurence Coates (LPYS rep on Labour Party NEC). Green Dragon Pub, Gartons Lane, Sutton, St. Helens. 7.30pm Friday 5 March.

ST HELENS LPYS Public Meeting "Defend Militant! No to witch-hunts!" Speakers: Allan Roberts MP, Derek Hatton (PPC for Wavertree), GMWU Rooms, Tolver St., behind Town Hall, St Helens 7.30pm Friday 26 February.

CROSBY LPYS Public Meeting "We want a future". Speaker: Laurence Coates (LPYS rep on Labour Party NEC). Lansbury House, Crosby Road, South. Thursday 4 March 8.00pm.

Keep up the good work

I was selling 'Militant' at a pit near Coventry last week when the first miner to buy a paper (the headline was 'ASLEF Fight is Our Fight'), said to me, "Tell ASLEF" to keep up the good work."

For a while I wondered why he should make a remark like that, but thinking about it I realise that for this worker, as for many others, the only means of keeping in touch with what is happening in other areas and other industries was to read our paper.

In fact, the only reliable way for workers to communicate with each other is through the pages of the 'Militant'!

More and more workers will come to trust the 'Militant' and see it as their paper. Keep up the good work.

By Pete McNally
(Coventry North East CLP)



Get the truth about Marxism!

Price 20p. From local 'Militant' sellers and from 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. (Add 10p postage and packing. 10 or more copies post free).

Industrial Reports

Rail Board climbdown

After six weeks, the dispute between the British Rail Board (BRB) and ASLEF is over for the time being.

The BRB agreed to pay the 3% pay rise forthwith while ASLEF have undertaken merely to proceed with productivity talks through the existing machinery of negotiation. This marks a considerable climb down by BRB conceding that this pay rise was never dependent on productivity.

ASLEF have always said they were prepared to discuss productivity issues through the normal channels. Our union's members though will be insisting that the ASLEF EC carry on safeguarding the eight hour guaranteed day throughout future negotiations.

The flexi-rostering issue has just been postponed and we must be ready for possible further battles, particularly if BRB attempt to link the question to future pay agreements.

The union, though, has fought off the first stage of the attempt to smash our union, which despite government denials, was a prime aim of the Tories as they pulled the strings behind BRB. They underestimated the mood of ASLEF members.

The resolute stand of the union's leadership reflected our feelings. BRB were forced to concede the 3%. Continued intransigence after the McCarthy report would have shifted public opinion right behind ASLEF, the NUR would probably have joined the strike—which could possibly have escalated even further.

A battle has been won. But the war is not over. ASLEF members must keep up pressure on the leaders for no retreat over the 8 hour guaranteed day.

If further strike action is necessary, we must discuss how to go about getting support and building links with other unions for picketing and blacking actions. We must ensure that the support shown by trade unionists' donations (growing throughout the strike) can be translated into action.

By Stuart Hammond
(Stratford ASLEF)

HEATHROW

"What's a flying blackleg called? Answer: A British Airways pilot!" This was the message on posters and on Heathrow ramp workers cars, at the mass meeting last Tuesday, reflecting the anger at the vicious tactics of the British Airways management.

Over 2,000 ramp workers have been locked out in a major assault on workers standards and conditions.

British Airways management have used accountants, office staff and some



but battle continues

Railworkers opposition to flexi-rostering plans which would destroy the 8-hour day, boiled over outside NUR headquarters on 19 February.

Over 200 workers overwhelmingly guards, attempted to lobby their union headquarters at Euston. First the officials slammed the doors in our faces, so workers formed a picket and called for Sidney Weighell, our General Secretary to talk to us.

When we at last saw Sid Weighell he told us "This agreement is the best we have ever had. It places control of working conditions in the hands of your local

representatives."

"The union runs expensive training courses for LDC reps (Local Departmental Committees). If you cannot get a satisfactory deal out of this agreement you should go on a course...The ASLEF action has jeopardised all your futures, so now jobs will be lost..."

Weighell was heard in polite silence. Representatives with years of experience then began to show how the agreement threatened the social and home life of the workers involved. Weighell's efforts to shout down and sneer at these workers provoked

angry reactions from the members.

Weighell tried then to disclaim responsibility for this agreement. "I only signed it. It was the negotiators who approved it." Shouts of "puppets" from the floor which EC members hotly rejected.

In spite of country-wide action from guards, Weighell claimed that 99% of guards welcomed the loss of the 8-hour day and only those who hadn't read the agreement or were incapable of understanding it were opposing it.

The NUR leadership may have agreed to sell the 8-hour day which we won

Rail drivers' action forced the BRB to concede
PHOTO: D Doran (Militant)

back in 1919, but the last word is far from said.

The EC already faces demands for a recall Annual General Meeting which could reject the agreement itself, and even calls for the dismissal of the General Secretary. One third of branches need to send resolutions to Unity House for the recall Conference to take place. No doubt many branches will be making these demands in the next few weeks.

By Mike Cleverley
(Leyton No. 2 Branch of the NUR)

The feeling of all railway men in Scotland is that the Tribunal ruling is a major victory for ASLEF and represents a climb down for the BRB.

The Scottish District Council of ASLEF on the day that the Tribunal ruling was made public passed a resolution calling on the ASLEF EC not to move from the 8 hour day or sign any agreement that would worsen our working conditions.

Railwaymen believe that the Tribunal tried to come

down in the middle, part for ASLEF, and part for the BRB.

The agreement is already falling apart at the seams with Peter Parker saying that ASLEF have agreed to flexi-rostering and that these talks are just to iron out how it is to be implemented. Ray Buckton, General Secretary of ASLEF, is saying, on the other hand, that they are just talks about flexibility of rostering not its implementation. This is the same situation as we had before the dispute started, except that we have won the 3 per cent.

Although our dispute is

not as yet finally settled, we have decided to donate £100 to the workers sitting in to save their jobs at Plessey in Bathgate, because we must stand united, with all workers in struggle.

We, as a working class, must win, as the old slogan says "workers united shall never be defeated".

By David Chapman
(Glasgow Branch EC)

Guards from stations and depots throughout London met on 22 February to assess progress in their campaign against flexible rostering.

The general feeling was that the strike action on 19 February and the lobby of Unity House had shown BR management the clear opposition to any interference with our eight-hour day.

Friday's action could be used as a platform to contact other LDCs, other depots and more of the members in London and throughout the country.

The meeting agreed to concentrate on mobilising the widest forces in the cam-

aign. It would circulate branches nationally for maximum support for a Special General Meeting, but the campaign could not centre entirely on this limited issue. It is vital to contact guards in other parts of the country where there is undoubtedly huge opposition to BR's proposals, starting with all London terminus stations.

In this way local guards' representatives can be given the confidence and unity to rebuff management in any attempt to impose flexi-rostering locally.

Such a campaign can also help in raising opposition, both through the channels of a SGM, the forthcoming grades conferences and through appeals to 1982 AGM against the EC decision to accept loss of the eight-hour day.

Above all in the course of the campaign, the fight must be on to make the NUR a union which will not only resist management attacks but go on the offensive against the bad conditions still prevalent in the rail industry.

By a London NUR member

PLESSEY:
Support
workers
struggle

The fight to save 300 jobs at the Plessey factory in Bathgate, West Lothian, is entering its most critical stage.

On Friday the 200 workers, mainly women, who are occupying the factory, have been summoned to appear before a judge at the Court of Sessions in Edinburgh.

They are being asked to explain their refusal to vacate the factory in accordance with an "interim interdict" obtained by Plessey to evict them.

A trade union lobby of the court has been called to show the labour movement's full support for their stand in defence of jobs. As well as receiving the court order, all workers in the occupation have been sacked thus losing all right to redundancy money. But far from being intimidated, the workers' resolve has strengthened.

Support has been flooding in from all over Scotland, and last Saturday a meeting of Plessey shop stewards from all over Britain was convened in Northampton to rally the combine behind the Bathgate fight.

Next Saturday, 27 February, will see the biggest show of solidarity so far, when thousands are expected to take part in a march through the town, starting at West Lothian College of Further Education, Marjoribank Street, Bathgate at 10.30.

All sections of the labour movement in Scotland should mobilise to make this a massive display of support.

Financial help is still vital. Please send money and resolutions of support to Mary Murphy, 30 Main Street, Fauldhouse, West Lothian. The Action Committee can be contacted at the Bathgate Burgh Hall or Bathgate 53631 (ask for the Plessey Room).

By Norma Craven

STAFFA DONATION

Workers at Staffa Products in East London occupied their factory for several months last year to fight their US multinational boss's plan to move the factory to Plymouth, losing many jobs in an area of high unemployment.

In gratitude for the enormous support given by workers throughout Britain, and for the regular coverage in 'Militant', the Staff shop stewards' committee have now sent us a second £100 donation to the 'Militant' fighting fund. Many thanks to the committee.

For information on the dispute see in particular the issues of 20 November 1981 and 4 December 1981.

Industrial Reports

EETPU - Defend Democratic Rights

The twenty-five year campaign by Frank Chapple and Co. against the left took another turn last week.

Two leading shop stewards, Danny McCarthy and Chris Hill, had their shop steward and Safety Representatives credentials withdrawn, without any opportunity to answer the charges against them.

The reason given was their alleged conduct at an electricians' union branch meeting (see *Militant* 587). At that meeting it was claimed that the Union's EC were themselves contravening Rule 10, clause 9 of the EETPU rule book by not allowing visiting members to remain in the meeting.

The rule is explicit: "A member may, if it appears from his Contribution Card that he is not more than five weeks in arrears, attend a meeting of a branch other than his own. Such a member may speak on any subject before the meeting, but shall not move or second any motion or vote."

Despite the rule being read out under 'point of order' by Danny McCarthy, this was not accepted by EC Member Hammond, chairing the meeting, who then stormed out. Now, although their credentials have been withdrawn, the allegations against the two stewards have still not been substantiated. Both stewards have subsequently had the full support of their shops.

At a mass meeting of Haden electricians on 15 February 1982, Bro McCarthy was re-elected senior steward unopposed. On receipt of the letter from the full-time official demanding the shop stewards and safety representative credentials be returned a special meeting was convened and Bro Chris Hill was also given a unanimous vote of confidence as the men's site representative.

Inevitably, the management now refuse to recognise them, after being contacted by the union. Union members at Haden are angered that the site organisation the stewards helped to build could be shattered by the action of their own union.

Messages and motions of support to Ken Jones, Sec. Barking and Dagenham NUT, Strike HQ c/o AUEW House, 588 Rainham Rd, South Dagenham, Essex.

One mild-mannered member faces a disciplinary committee for alleged use of "language distressing women and children" at a lobby of the union's May conference.

In the wake of this, a

High Court judge ruled in favour of the executive committee when a North London plumbing lodge member sought an emergency injunction, seeking to stop the closure of his lodge. In fact, the lodge had successfully proposed a resolution to the union's May 1981 conference opposing the closures of branches and lodges.

Nevertheless, so far as the union's legal representative was concerned, "It has never been the understanding of the executive council or the biennial delegate conference that decisions of the BDC (conference) were binding on the executive."

EETPU members must oppose a new witch-hunt within the union. The struggle for democracy within the Labour Party must be extended into the EETPU

Certainly, the EC have still to act on the conference decision to withdraw from the private medical deal it had drawn up for contracting electricians.

Yet the executive are set on pursuing through the union a resolution that was unconvincingly agreed upon at the conference calling for a witch-hunt against the Marxists in the Labour Party and the EETPU.

This resolution has now been specifically placed on the agenda of a meeting of the union's GMC delegates that takes place in London 27 February. It is probable that Chapple may try to set an example for his political allies to follow by dealing a blow against Marxists and the left in general within the EETPU.

The impact of this should not be underestimated. Such a move would have repercussions beyond the EETPU itself and—if the right wing are allowed to get away with it—it would be a blow against the labour movement as a whole.

EETPU members must vigorously oppose a new witch-hunt within the union, where still today after 20 years, Communist Party members are barred from holding office. Moreover, the struggle for democracy within the Labour Party must be extended into the EETPU.

By a shop steward

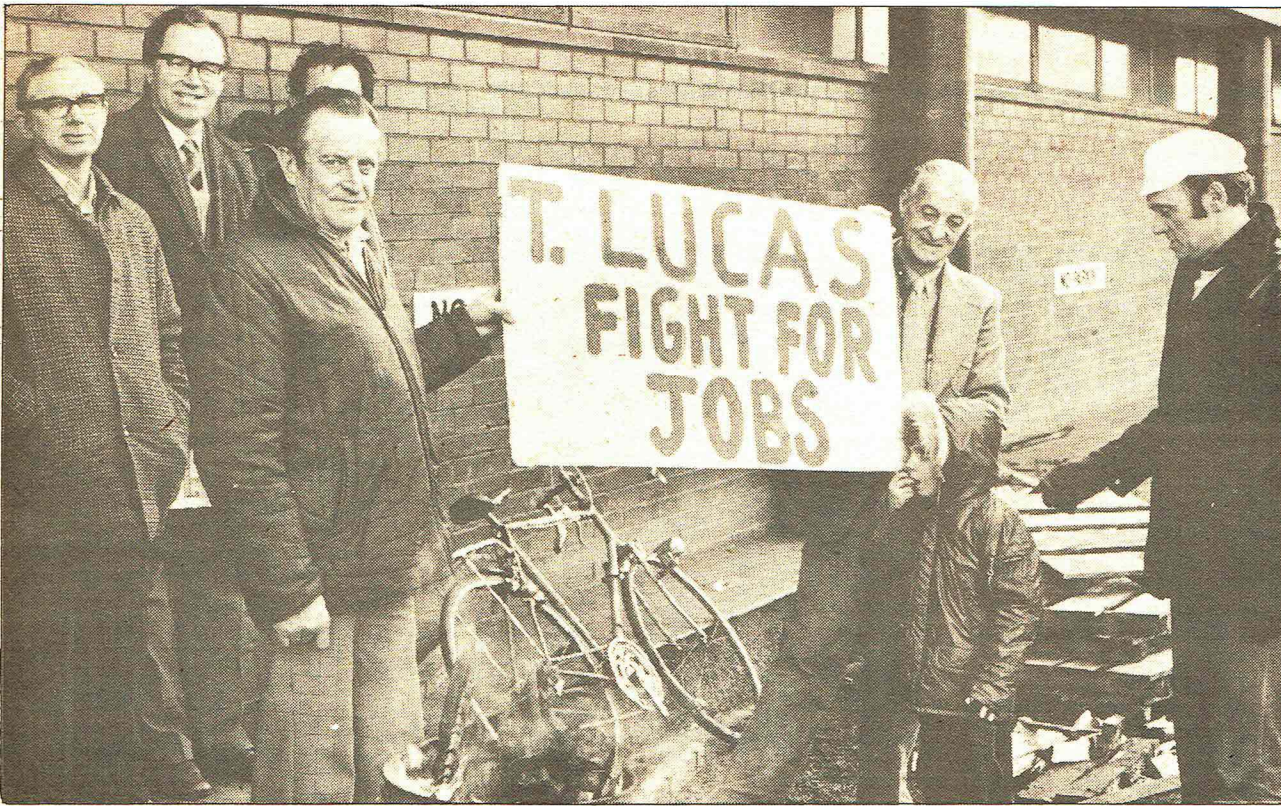


Photo: Militant

During the third week of the T. Lucas workers' fight for jobs, the parent company Dalgety, announced record pre-tax profits of £19.6 million for the 6 months to last December.

This was an increase of £3.4 million on 1980's half-year results. Not a bad result when the bosses are attempting to throw more workers on the dole!

Dalgety's sales reached £620 million, and with interests covering most aspects of food, drink, etc, profits from food processing and distribution rose from £8m to £11m. Mr Donne, chairman of Dalgety, was reported as saying he is optimistic on future

prospects.

Perhaps his management team at T. Lucas have their orders to take on the union to improve even more their profit figures. There is no doubt that the union membership at T. Lucas and the shop stewards are absolutely determined to resist any redundancies or job losses. They understand the need to stop the rot of unemployment.

T. Lucas workers' struggle is being raised throughout Bristol area and is gaining enormous support. This was shown at the first large public rally held on Friday 19 February. 300 people packed into London Hotel, Kingswood to listen to Tony Benn, whose constituency is next door to

Kingswood, Phill Bennet, a shop steward at Laurence Scott, and the convenor of T. Lucas, Colwyn Jones.

Although the strike is now official it was reported that canteen staff, who were sub-contracted workers and members of the T&G, are still not honouring the picket. Likewise, the white-collar staff, some of whom are in the ASTMS, are crossing the picket lines.

However, the rest of the workforce remain totally solid. The cleaners for example, who are sub-contract, are honouring the picket and in fact nothing else moves across the line.

Colwyn Jones, in his speech at the meeting, spoke of how the factory had been built on low

wages, before it was unionised. In fact the two previous convenors to Colwyn ended up on the management side of the fence.

As Colwyn said, Chadwick, the General Manager, has said "it's now a question of taking your turn, you must accept redundancy." However the workers at T. Lucas are in no mood to accept the redundancies, even though a letter was sent out by management, saying that all their jobs were at risk. "Sooner to fight and lose," Colwyn said, "than give up without a fight."

By John Martin
(Kingswood CLP)

Health Workers Claim

This year, for the first time, over one million health service workers throughout the country have a common settlement date (1 April) and have submitted, by and large, similar claims.

Ambulancemen, ancillaries, nurses, clerical staff, technicians and craftsmen, have submitted claims for a 12% rise (in line with inflation), a shorter working week and longer holidays.

But the government remain committed to a mere 4% increase in the wages bill, when they announced their 1982/83 NHS spending plans.

For our lowest paid an-

cillary members this would mean a net rise of less than £2 a week. For part-timers, mainly married women, it would mean less than £1 in take home pay. These members still earn less than the £60 minimum wage we were demanding in the 1978/79 "Winter of Discontent"!

Nurses in hospital accommodation already face the prospect of an 11.7% increase in lodging charges, which coupled with increased meal charges, would more than wipe out that 4% for more than 60,000 members.

Unity of all health service

trade unions and workers is essential. Plans are being laid now for rallies and marches throughout the country which must spell out the need for united action to achieve the full claims.

There should be no settlement until all groups have secured the demands. Meetings must be held in hospitals to discuss the lessons of the last dispute and forms of action to be taken if necessary.

Joint shop stewards' committees must be forged or strengthened, and act as campaign committees to co-ordinate activity on a local

level.

Approaches should be made now to local trades councils and Labour Parties, in order to tap the enormous reservoir of support that health service workers have in the labour movement.

The campaign must begin now to smash the 4%.

By Alistair Tice
(NUPE Branch Chairman, Hull Royal Infirmary)

BARKING: Teachers fight for jobs

Barking and Dagenham's secondary school teachers went on strike for three days last week. This was the first stage in our campaign of strike action against the cuts.

Of the 450 secondary school teachers in the NUT, 400 members attended the strike meeting in Keys Hall, Dagenham, on the 17 February. The meeting showed clearly the anger of teachers in the borough and fifty 'Militants' were sold.

Members have been active all week speaking to

schools not yet in the strike and to Labour Party wards and public meetings. Shopping centres and workplaces all over the borough have been petitioned and thousands of signatures have been collected. These signatures are to be presented to the Education Committee on 23 February.

The Chief Education Officer, Mr Alfred Bish is so determined to keep schools working that school students have been making 5-6 journeys a day to school to attend lessons by non-NUT teachers.

In one school meeting enthusiastic support was given to the idea of a parents' strike and this is now being campaigned for.

Last week, an emergency council meeting at last made some lukewarm moves to

fighting the cuts by planning an appeal to Heseltine. But still this Labour council offer us and the borough's working class children nothing.

By 1 March nearly all the borough's schools will be affected by the strike. The leader of the council, Councillor Butler, admits that very little education will be going on by then.

We are determined to stay out until our demand for no cuts and no job losses is met. Barking and Dagenham's Labour council must fight the cuts, this is what they were elected to do. They cannot implement Tory cuts and destroy the gains made in education by the labour movement in the last 50 years.

The council meets to finalize the rate on 10 Mar-

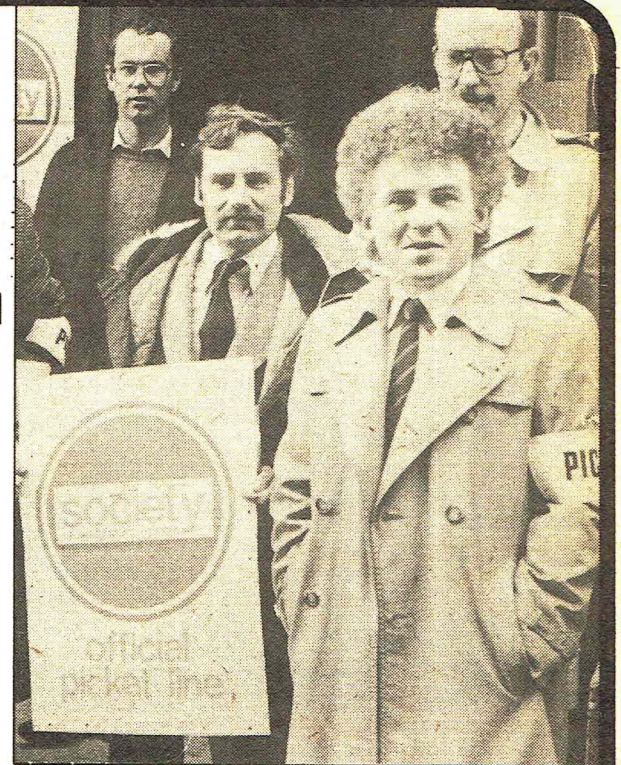
ch. we urge all members of the labour movement in the area to support our lobby outside Barking Town Hall at 6.30. that evening. Barking and Dagenham, like all working class areas desperately needs its public services, they must not be cut.

Messages and motions of support to Ken Jones, Sec. Barking and Dagenham NUT, Strike HQ c/o AUEW House, 588 Rainham Rd, South Dagenham, Essex.

By Colin Ramage and Anne Tanner

(Vice president and past president, Barking NUT personal capacity)

CPSA ELECTIONS... VOTE MACREADIE



The election for Deputy General Secretary of the Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA) starts next Monday, 1 March.

It could not come at a more important time for civil servants and workers in the public services.

The Tory government last week kicked civil service workers in the teeth with a pay "offer" which gives nothing to many thousands of the lowest paid employees.

Civil service jobs are on

By Bill Boyle

the line. The Tories' stated aim was to jettison 100,000 jobs, and they have already cut back by 50,000.

In the Post Office, the splitting of the business, the attack on the Post Office monopoly and growing privatisation jeopardise the livelihood of many workers, unless bold action is taken. The Broad Left in the

CPSA are backing John Macreadie for Deputy General Secretary because the programme on which he is standing gives a real fighting lead in the hard battles which face our union's members.

The programme includes:

- ★ A minimum wage of £90
- ★ Pay claims to be drawn up by members through their delegates to special Pay Conferences
- ★ Opposition to all job cuts, reductions in services, hiving-off and denationalisation
- ★ No agreements on New Technology without a 35-hour week and no loss of jobs
- ★ One democratic union for Civil Servants

★ One democratic union for Posts and Telecommunications workers

★ The closed shop and the defence of trade unions' rights

★ The re-affiliation of our union to the Labour Party and the election of a Labour government to carry out policies in favour of working people

★ Elections of all full-time officials by a membership vote and for the implementation of conference decisions

★ For the pay of CPSA officials to be related more closely to that of CPSA members

By gaining the backing of the CPSA Civil Aviation Authority Executive, John

is the only candidate to get the support of the workers he represents. The executives in the DHSS, Inland Revenue and Environment, which the other candidates represent, are

backing John Macreadie. A bold campaign to ensure John's victory is vital. We have never needed a fighting union for civil and public service workers as much as we do today.

WITCH-HUNT

FROM PAGE ONE

tion and another "exposure" by Lord Underhill were the excuse by the press for their pre-NEC campaign against Militant.

The *Mirror* declared that a defeat for Labour at the next election "may even be probable", of course, adding that, "the Militant Tendency will have to bear much of the

blame." In fact, the biggest handicap to winning the next election is the record of the right-wing.

It was their policies that led to defeats in 1970 and in 1979 and it is their policies that have lost Labour the recent by-elections, when conference policies were never campaigned on. It is precisely because Labour's rank and file are fed up with the failed policies of the Right that the Left, and *Militant* in particular, is gaining a wider echo.

Why else would the *Mirror* be so fearful of people who in their opinion, "couldn't organise a jumble-sale"?

But if the attack on *Militant* in the *Daily Mirror* was bitter, the attack in the *Daily Mail* was laughable. This paper, supporter of Oswald Mosley in the 1930s, spoke of a "grip of iron"... "militant penetration"... "Trotskyite hard-men who dictate which councillor shall survive and which shall be crushed for speaking out"... "ruthlessly efficient revolutionary machine" etc etc. How *Militant* can be a "ruthlessly efficient machine" yet is unable to "organise a jumble sale" we leave the editors to sort out!

All of this would be funny, but for the fact that the press are also prepared to stoop to the most scurrilous accusations, which, if they

were directed at named individuals, would be libellous.

Fight for Labour Party democracy

Thus, the *Birmingham Evening Mail* on 23 February carried as its main front page story a report about a supposed campaign of threatening phone-calls against "moderates" in a CPSA election campaign. One of the candidates is alleged to have received ludicrous threats of physical violence if he stood in the

election.

The *Mail* then goes on: "The callers, believed to be members of the *Militant Tendency*, demanded that they stand down from office." But such disgraceful and completely unfounded allegations will cut no ice whatsoever among ordinary Labour Party and Trade Union members.

This general campaign in the press must be seen as an orchestrated effort to bolster the right-wing of the Labour Party, in their demands for a witch-hunt. Thus, Alan Williams, MP for Swansea West declared, after the Underhill "exposure", "The only solution is to throw the whole group out of the party."

This new attack by the

Right must be firmly rebuffed. Labour Party members must fight any Inquisition in the party, by pressing resolutions and statements supporting party democracy through their trade unions and CLPs.

A campaign of expulsions and witch-hunts would split the Labour Party from top to bottom and would deliver the next election on a plate to the Tories. The main objective of the party must be to ditch this government and defeat in the process their cousins the Liberal/SDP Alliance, but that can only be achieved by a Labour Party that embraces socialist policies and genuine socialist candidates, not by a party that rejects them.

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WORK NOT SLAVE LABOUR

FROM PAGE ONE

perience, Community Services, etc, etc. But young people are not blind. They can see that these are not real jobs: they are a means of keeping young people off the dole register and at the same time giving employers cheap labour.

The Low Pay Unit last week accused the government of using the new 'Young Workers Scheme' as a means of cutting the general wages of young people. The scheme offers a subsidy of £15 a week to any greedy boss who employs a young person at a wage of £40 a week or less, even though this is below the minimum wage set down in many industrial wages boards.

20,000 employers have already flocked to join the scheme and the Low Pay Unit believes that older workers are being replaced by youth as cheap labour. The government is quite callously using the high

levels of unemployment as a big stick with which to hit the youth who do work. That was the argument put forward by the Tories when they offered a zero pay rise to all civil servants under 21 years old—"if you don't like it, we'll get someone else from the dole queue."

Where unemployed youth have been trying to improve their prospects, the Tories are battering them as well. Up to now, it was possible for a youth to study part-time for up to 21 hours without it affecting his/her supplementary benefit.

The Tories have now introduced a new rule that stipulates that the 21 hours must include homework as well as lunch breaks—turning the knife even further for youth. It makes you wonder how miserably stingy this government can get!

Young people studying for higher education are not

much better off. The next few years will see a decline in university places of 20,000 and public expenditure cuts will have a devastating effect on Polytechnics and Tech. Colleges. Grants are falling behind prices. All-in-all, working class youth will have a declining chance of getting through to higher education.

Not that a degree or other qualification is a guarantee of a job! Last year, 30% of newly qualified teachers had no job by the end of the year. 20% of graduates were on the dole.

Non-academic qualifications are even harder to come by. The number of apprenticeships now being offered is 10,000 down on last year. The number of nurses in training is only about 80,000 compared to about 95,000 in 1976, and so the story goes on, in industry after industry.

Whichever way young people turn for a future, they are being hit by the policies of the Tory government.

This is the background to the lobby of Parliament this week, organised by the

Labour Party Young Socialists and the YOPs Trade Union Rights Campaign (see pages 2 and 3). The Labour Party and the Trade Union movement generally have to take up the demands raised in this lobby: for full trade union rates and conditions for all YOPs workers, for proper training and for real jobs for youth. The labour movement must champion the issues of youth, as the only way to offer them any future at all.

But young people also must see their own position in relation to other workers. All workers are being hammered by the Tories: young and old, skilled and unskilled. The youth must be at the forefront of the fight to defend the living standards of working people in general.

That means that they must be in the forefront of the fight to dump the Tory Government altogether, to dump the profit system that they represent, and to fight for a change of society. More than anyone else, it is the youth who must carry the banner of the Socialist transformation of Society.