

JOIN FIGHT TO END LOW PAY

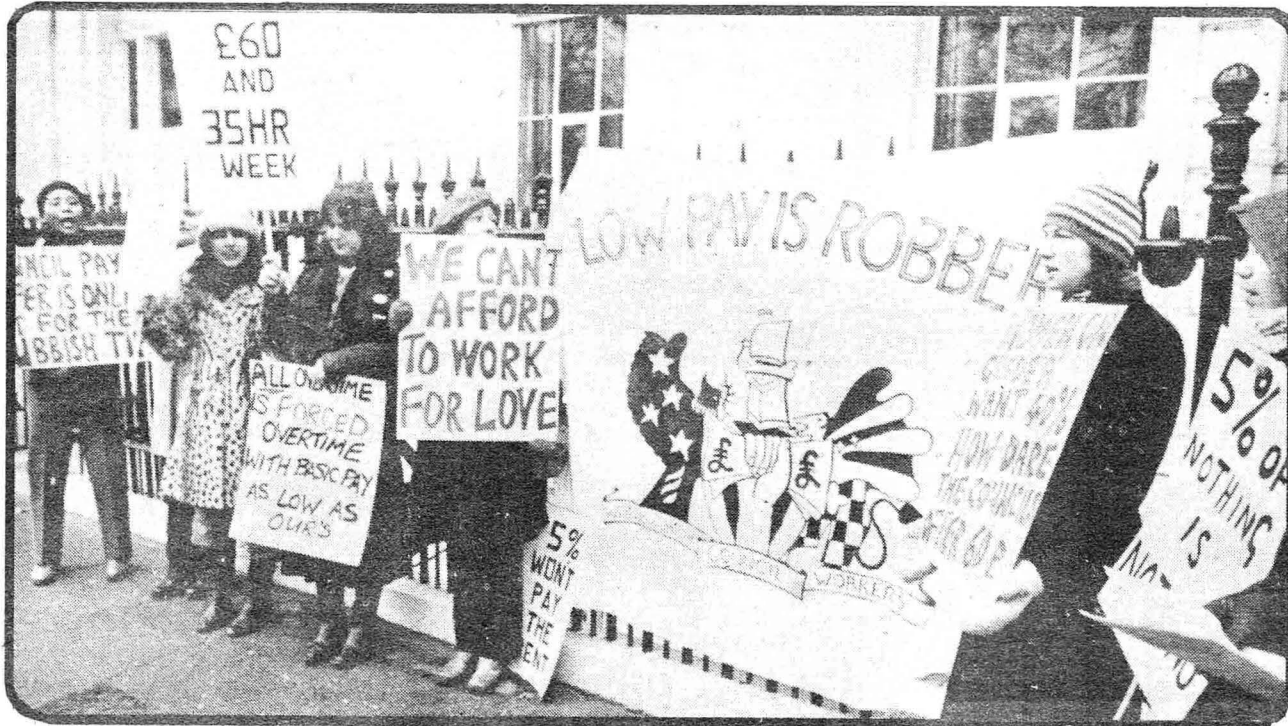


photo: J McKittrick Militant

PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS PREPARING FOR DETERMINED ACTION TO ACHIEVE £60 FOR 35 HOURS

The New Year has seen no let-up in the problems facing workers in Britain.

The difficulties of keeping up with the increased cost of living are still forcing workers to consider strike action.

Low-paid public sector employees now face the prospect of a stern battle to break through the 5% limit. In preparation, NUPE have set up a £1 million strike fund to back up any action

needed after January 22nd to secure their £60 minimum for 35 hour claim. Branches have also been circulated to prepare for strike action if it becomes necessary.

The government is trying to inflict its discredited pay policy on workers in these services, following its failure in the private sector.

These workers need the full support of all in the labour movement. Already the bosses' press

have been dishing the dirt on the hospital unions in local disputes, labelling them as callous, heartless ogres.

Despite the unions' offer of a special disputes procedure to avoid unnecessary hardship in the NHS, this vilification campaign is bound to get worse. Only a clear campaign in the movement can refute these lies.

continued on back page



"Now it is our turn to work for a future which our grandchildren will step into one day... We can do this if we have the good sense to learn from the experience of those who have gone before us and to hold on to all the good that has been handed down to us in trust." From the Queen's Christmas message 1978

RED ALERT

Only a few days left to reach the 1978 fighting fund target. Make sure all money from donations, activities, etc, is rushed to us immediately.

See page 13

IRAN-SHAH'S OVERTHROW JUST THE BEGINNING

Time and time again in the last few weeks over a quarter of Tehran's 4½ million population have taken to the streets demanding the Shah's downfall.

Events in Iran have acquired a revolutionary momentum of their own. Day after day, in defiance of martial law, the demonstrations continue in all Iran's cities and towns. The oil fields remain paralysed by strike act-

By Lynn Walsh

ion. Formerly one of the world's biggest oil exporters, Iran is having to import oil to keep essential services going.

Business activity has been strangled by strikes in the banks, the post office, and other institutions.

The flight of Iran's rich to get out of the country has been hamp-ered by a solid strike of air traffic controllers and civil aviation staff.

The Air Force's attempt to take over has been undermined by the sabotage of their computer information centre at Tabriz, despite tight security precautions. The

computer's programme has been fixed so that whatever inquiries are fed in, the reply is always: "Yankee go home"!

Few expect the Shah to last much longer. At one point he apparently announced his readiness to leave the country on the pretext of a "winter holiday".

He and his family have made lavish provision for their likely exile, with millions deposited in Swiss banks and big estates ready and waiting in the United States and Britain.

But the hardliners in the army leadership and

continued on back-page

LABOUR PARTY... WHAT ROLE FOR THE NEC?

By Eileen Short

The December meeting of Labour's NEC was, from all accounts, the stormiest since the Party's conference in October.

Several crucial issues were discussed: the next election manifesto; circulation of NEC minutes to affiliated organisations together with a voting record of all NEC members; and who should decide the content of the EEC election manifesto.

The meeting apparently divided sharply with left and right clashing on all the main issues and some very heated contributions being made.

Clearly, the underlying issue throughout the meeting was: what should be the role of the NEC? Should it fight for the implementation of conference decisions—or simply accept the policies the cabinet chooses to implement, even when they clearly go against the wishes and decisions of Party conference?

The most important issue before the NEC was the document submitted by the NEC Home Policy sub-committee as the basis for discussing the content of the next election manifesto. The document is undoubtedly one of the most radical draft manifestoes to be considered since the election campaigns of 1945 and February 1974. It pledges the support of the Party to work with the trade unions for the implementation of a 35-hour week. It calls for the public ownership of one of the major construction companies; the introduction of a wealth tax; a long term commitment to "the social ownership of land"; and, in its section on energy policy speaks in favour "of entrusting the commanding heights of the economy to

responsible public ownership".

Many of the decisions of Party conference are included in the draft document. However, as Tony Sauniois (LPYS representative on the NEC) reportedly argued at the meeting: "it should also contain some of the major decisions of the conference which have still been left out. The conference clearly came out in favour of a minimum wage of two-thirds of average earnings, against all forms of incomes policy, and for the nationalisation of the Banks. These also need to be included."

Conference decisions

The pressure from party activists on the 35-hour week ensured it was included in the draft. This pressure will need to continue if it is to stay in the final Manifesto, and if other conference decisions are to be included.

The NEC will be holding a special meeting in January to discuss the whole question, and a final decision will be

taken at a joint meeting of the NEC and Cabinet later in the year.

A recommendation from the Organisation sub-committee that all NEC minutes and a voting record of NEC members should be circulated to affiliated bodies was also considered.

This proposal reflected a determination by the left to ensure the greatest accountability of NEC members to the Party as a whole and that members are kept informed of all decisions of the NEC.

This degree of democracy, however, seemed to be too much for some NEC members. The right wing moved that this issue, together with the question of responsibility of NEC members who are also in the cabinet, be referred to a sub-committee of the NEC and Cabinet. After a very heated discussion this was agreed.

he could impose a ruling that Cabinet members could not hold an NEC seat.

So should the NEC be fighting for the implementation of conference decisions—or simply follow government, even when they are clearly against the wishes of the Party and the policy decided at the conference? Clearly, for the right wing it is the latter. John Golding MP, for instance, claimed that the NEC's "continual criticism" of the government was "demoralising" Labour supporters in the country.

Election Manifesto

In a further attempt to weaken the NEC, the right wing moved that the Parliamentary Labour Party should be involved with the NEC in drawing up the election Manifesto for the elections to the European Parliament in June. Eric Heffer succeeded in getting it agreed that it be "the sole prerogative of the NEC to write the manifesto."

Faced with a more left-wing

Party conference last October, the right wing of the Party are now trying to weaken its elected leadership. They want to ensure that in the election year they will have things their way, particularly as far as the Manifesto is concerned, and that the wishes of the rank and file are ignored.

Activists in every CLP will be demanding that Party policy, decided by the conference, is the basis on which the election must be fought. The splits revealed at this meeting of the NEC undoubtedly indicate the battles that will face us in the coming months.

Callaghan apparently complained at the meeting that he spent all his time trying to unite the party, but sometimes wondered why he bothered. Has Jim Callaghan forgotten, then, that at conference, the Party was united against incomes policy; for a reduction in the working week; and an end to all cuts in public expenditure?

Together with the implementation of Clause 4, part IV, that is the basis of unity within the Party, and the only means by which we can be sure of defeating the Tories at the coming election.

SCHOOL STUDENTS... LPYS SHOWS THE WAY

YCAU

A fight against the dole

School students are on the move! They are no longer prepared to put up with the slum schools and over-crowded classes, the petty rules and the dictatorship of the head-teachers.

A future on the dole queue or in a dead-end unskilled job, have forced more and more of them to see the need for a school students union to fight for their rights and for political answers to their problems.

In the Southgate area alone in the past year there has been a meeting of 800 students in one particular school to protest against the presence of a Young NE member.

There has also been a demonstration of several hundred school students against racism and in another school there was a picket and strike against the suspension of sixth formers who missed the school's sports day.

Thousands of school students will give the LPYS a sympathetic hearing if we go in ready to explain and argue for our ideas.

The LPYS has produced a school students charter which can help show the way to build a mass movement of school students and in the fight for a socialist programme in the schools.

The Charter deals with all the important issues for school students: grants, cor-

By Helena Wray

(Southgate LPYS)

poral punishment, the right to organise, racial discrimination, a guaranteed job etc.

Every YS branch secretary should plan a meeting at the beginning of term around the ideas in the charter. Leaflets, posters advertising the meeting should be prepared now ready to give out at the beginning of term.

We should write to liberal studies teachers asking to speak at current affairs lessons or to debate with the Tories.

One vital issue that must be taken up is the question of grants for sixth formers. This has, scandalously, just been shelved by the Labour government. Thousands of working class school students are denied the right of further education because their parents cannot afford to let them stay on.

Until this vital battle is won 'free education for all' will be a myth.

Today's school students are tomorrow's workers and trade unionists. It is imperative that the LPYS makes a decisive turn towards this important field and ensures that socialist ideas and policies are discussed by every school student.

NATIONAL UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
SCHOOL MEALS SERVICE



NUPE members mobilise against cuts in 1976

From the start of this year, 1½ million public service workers will be taking action for their claim of £60 and a 35-hour week.

COHSE, NUPE, the T&GWU and the GMWU have called for a strike and national lobby of parliament on January 22nd.

The elimination of the need to do overtime in the public sector could create by itself tens of thousands of jobs for unemployed workers.

It is scandalous that workers in the Health Service have to do a virtual six-day

week merely to meet their bills. The average overtime worked by Health Service ancillaries is now 5.7 hours per week. Clearly no way to build a decent health service, by overworking the staff!

It is a disgrace that members of these unions, employed by the government or local authorities should earn wages below the government's own poverty line.

must order that the employers meet the workers claim and must immediately take measures to provide the finance for an immediate reversal of the cuts in public spending.

This new finance could be directed into the different areas under trade union supervision. This is absolutely necessary if the 35-hour week is not to be an excuse to further erode public services.

More cuts

Only massive pressure from the trade union and labour ranks can win a reversal of these attacks. The bosses are lobbying James Callaghan for yet more cuts to restore 'investment opportunities'.

These cuts will come if Labour remains on its recent strategy of maintaining British capitalism. That will mean longer hours, worse services and more on the dole.

Labour's job must be to take over the monopolies and banks and lay the basis for a new society, based not on the needs of profit but on the needs of working people.

- ★ Support the Action Committee claim
- ★ For a 35-hour week with no loss of pay
- ★ For a £70 minimum wage
- ★ End wage restraint
- ★ Nationalise the top 200 monopolies and finance houses under democratic workers' control and management with compensation to the wealthy only on the basis of proven need.

NEW YEARS GREETINGS

SOCIALIST GREETINGS FOR 1979 FROM

Gateshead East and West,
Newcastle North, Newcastle West,
Wallsend, Blyth, Jarrow,
Stockton, Blaydon, Chester-le-Street
and Ashington
Labour Party Young Socialist Branches

Seasonal and fraternal greetings from
EETPU Shop Stewards and
Dagenham Auto Branch Committee
at Ford's
with assurances that the fight towards
the 35-hour week continues

A happy new year from 'Militant' supporters in
NALGO [West Yorkshire Metro Branch]
Support the West Yorkshire Pay Resolution
for the 1979 claim

- (a) £8 plus 8% of all grades, or consolidated salary scales
- (b) A £70 per week minimum wage
- (c) A 35-hour week with no loss of pay
- (d) Minimum leave entitlement:
30 days for grades to special point 30
32 days for grades to special point 31-50
33 days to special point 51 and above

Fraternal greetings
to readers of
'Militant' and all in the
labour movement from

Oldham LPYS

Ruislip-Northwood
LPYS

send New Year
greetings to
'Militant'
Forward to a
Socialist Britain
and a
Socialist World

For the election of all
labour movement
officials
Fraternal greetings from
Newcastle University
Labour Club

Young Socialists,
Winsen,
Federal Republic
of Germany

We send fraternal
greetings to the
socialist movement
in UK;
in international
solidarity we support
your fight
for socialism
and democracy

Keep up the fight
for socialism in 1979!
Fraternal greetings
to the
labour movement
from

Paisley LPYS

VAUXHALL
LPYS

wish all readers a
happy new year,
and look forward
to Labour im-
plementing real
socialist policies
in 1979

Fire Brigades
Union
West Midlands
Brigade
Committee

wishes fellow
trade unionists
a prosperous
and successful
New Year

New Year's greetings
from Liverpool
University
Labour Club—
Forward to a
daily 'Militant'

Clapham Manor
UCATT Branch

sends greetings to the
labour movement
Build a million
homes a year!

Militant supporters in
West Scotland

send fraternal greetings to the
labour movement for
the coming year

Good luck to all low-paid workers
fighting for a decent living wage

Provan LPYS

send socialist
greetings for 1979
to comrades
everywhere.
Forward to a
35-hour week for all!
A £70 minimum
wage now!

May Trodd

CPSA DHSS Section
Executive Committee
(Secretary)

Fraternal greetings
to the comrades at
'Militant' and
its readers
Forward to the
daily paper

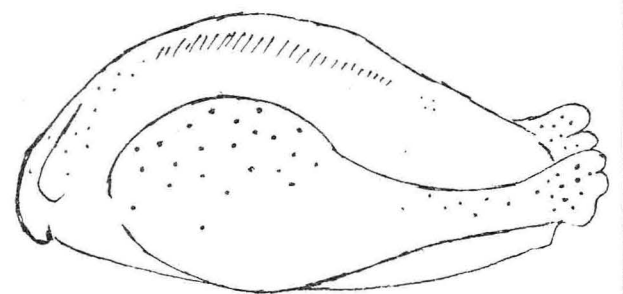
East Kilbride
LPYS

send fraternal
greetings to the
labour movement.
Workers' unity to
fight for a 35-hour
week in 1979

Oldham Militant
Supporters

send socialist greetings to
the labour movement
Forward to socialism
in 1979

STUFF THE TORIES
NATIONALISE PAXO



Fraternal Greetings Wallsend LPYS

Stevenage LPYS

greet its exiles
all over the world.
Fight for a
35-hour week!

Socialist greetings
for 1979 from
Rochdale Labour
Party Young
Socialists

Nottingham
University
Labour Club

For the return of a
Labour government on a
socialist programme

Cow Industrial Polymers
AUEW and G&MWU
Joint Shop Stewards'
Committee

send fraternal greetings
to readers of the 'Militant'
and trade unionists
everywhere
Fight closures and
redundancies nationwide,
Nationalisation of the
rubber industry
Forward to a
35-hour week

NUPE Central
Birmingham Health
District Branch

wish all its members and
readers of 'Militant'
a happy new year
with £60 for 35 hours

Rochdale Militant
supporters send
fraternal greetings
Free nursery places
for all!

Socialist New Year
greetings from
Childwall Branch
Wavertree
Constituency
Labour Party

Merseyside NGA Supporters

send greetings to
fellow trade unionists
fighting for socialism
Forward to one great print union,
to the 35-hour week,
and the nationalisation of the press

Greater
Manchester
Labour Party
Young Socialists
Liaison Committee

The chains will be broken!
Fraternal greetings for '79

NOLS CONFERENCE -

Leaders stifle debate

The Conference of the National Organisation of Labour Students met at Christmas, after a year when there were enormous opportunities for winning students to the ideas of socialism and to the labour movement. Unfortunately, however, this conference again dashed our hopes that NOLS nationally would be able to play the active role it should in the coming year.

All the worst fears of 'Militant' supporters were again confirmed—that the present NOLS leaders want to embroil NOLS in purely student politics and turn its own organisation into a pale imitation of the National Union of Students.

There was less representation from Labour Clubs in small colleges at this Conference than ever before, reflecting the orientation of NOLS towards the big universities. There was less political debate—in some major debates only four speakers from the floor were taken.

Bureaucracy

When it came to elections for the officers and national committee, it was no surprise that 'Clause 4' supporters again took a majority. Over the last few years, the 'Clause 4' leadership has step by step altered the constitution and rules to favour the large university clubs where they claim most support.

Whereas the large paper memberships of these clubs are accepted without scrutiny, other clubs which do not support the present leadership have to fight their way through a formidable bureaucratic obstacle course to get the representation to which they are entitled. In this way the NOLS leadership has for the time being almost guaranteed itself an inbuilt majority which in no way reflects real support among the active membership of NOLS clubs.

The poverty of 'Clause 4' when it comes to socialist policies, and their narrow preoccupation with NUS politics, was clearly shown in the debates at conference.

The education debate came first. Gary Horne, moving the

minority document on Education, examined the problems facing every section of education. He explained that the cuts had decimated education in many areas, and how the expansion in education in the post-war boom had now been halted. He stressed that the crisis in education was fundamentally linked to the crisis in the economy, and that a decent education system, open to the working class, could only be guaranteed on the basis of a socialist planned economy.

The 'Clause 4' group called for 'positive discrimination' in education as a way to expand access to education. But the whole experience of education in the past five years, of fighting for survival because of the cuts, makes their ideas of reforming education in the context of the present system an illusion.

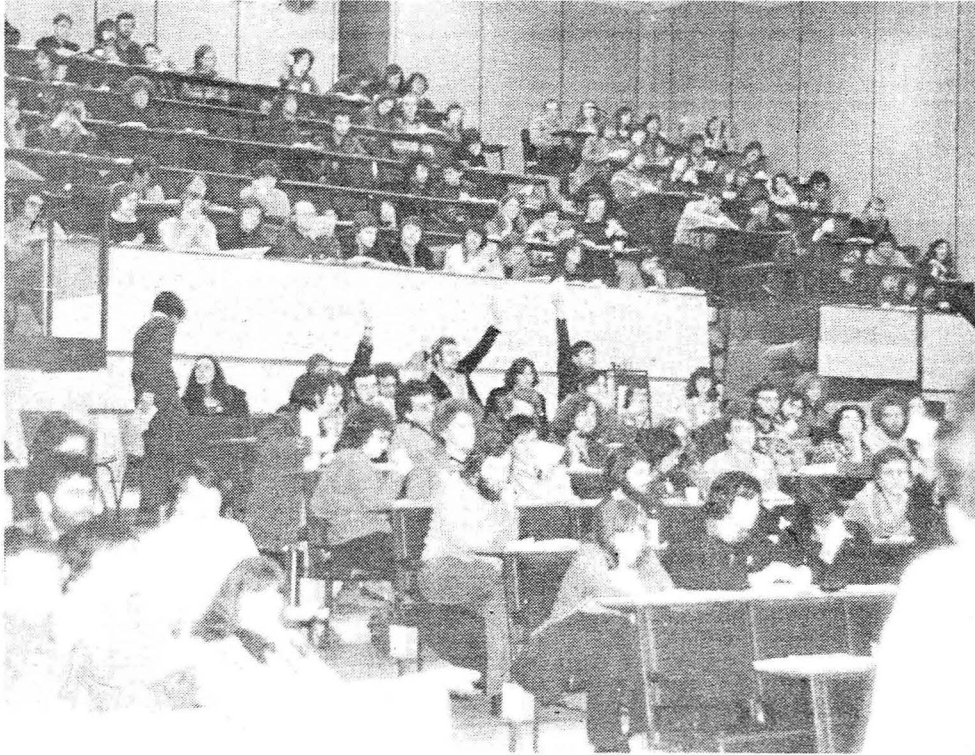
The 'Clause 4' supporters also defended the NUS grants campaign, which they claimed had resulted in more publicity for NUS than in the past. But the organising of 'stunts', and the fact that only 1,500 students attended the national day of action shows what a fiasco this campaign is.

NUS has gained publicity, but much of it probably reflected badly on the students' case, confirming many workers' doubts as to whether students can ever be a serious political force.

NOLS Slate?

The debate on the Middle East also showed the wide political differences in the Conference. Mark Morton, moving the minority document, explained that important developments had taken place in Israel in the past couple of years, with the labour movement being involved in a large number of strikes for better wages. In Egypt as well, the January 1977 riots had shown the potential strength of the working class. He also examined the problems of the Palestinians, and how the PLO had failed to offer a way forward for them.

The 'Clause 4' document, moved by John McColl, was



Delegates at NOLS National Conference

Photo: Richard Colenso

devoid of any class content. It attacked Israel in purely 'anti-Zionist' terms, hardly the way to win over Israeli workers, and gave uncritical support to the PLO. The events in Egypt, Syria and the labour movement in Israel were not mentioned!

One of the most important debates was on NOLS and the 'Broad Left' in NUS. The National Committee resolution, committing NOLS to working as part of the 'Broad Left', was rejected, as was the one from 'Militant' supporters calling for an independent NOLS slate in NUS.

Conference supported proposals to run a partial slate in NUS, as a step towards an independent Labour slate. This reflects the dissatisfaction that exists with the 'Broad Left' within NOLS. But whether the work of the NOLS leadership will effectively change course remains to be seen.

NOLS work in the NUS has hardly been well-organised in the last year. At the December NUS conference only 30 could be attracted to a NOLS public meeting. The ineffectiveness of NOLS in the NUS is the inevitable result of

the present leadership submerging themselves in the 'Broad Left' which is nothing more than a politically compromised and divided NUS election machine.

It is vital, if NOLS is to play any real role either in the student field or in the labour movement, that Labour students campaign as an independent force with clear socialist policies and perspectives.

Vote Labour

Many Labour Party members would have been amazed—and scandalised—at Conference's rejection of the policy (actually accepted last year) to campaign for NUS affiliation to the TUC and the Labour Party, and to demand that the NUS call on students to vote Labour.

Instead a national committee resolution was passed committing NOLS to campaign within NUS to mandate the Executive to call for Vote Labour. But in the past, the NOLS leaders have consistently failed to fight for this in NUS, and have in fact actively opposed resolutions calling

for NUS to call for support for Labour.

If the leaders of NOLS are not prepared to fight energetically to commit the NUS to use its influence in support of Labour, what right have they to stand at the head of a student body affiliated to the Labour Party? What real hope do they have of winning support for socialist policies in NUS—the body to which they attach so much importance—if they are not prepared to call on its leadership to support Labour against the Tories in elections?

Whether they carry out the resolution passed remains to be seen. Labour Clubs should not be held back by this Conference decision, and must continue to fight locally and nationally on this issue.

The decision to close down the NOLS regions in favour of Area Committees from next year will restrict NOLS campaigning activity at a local level. It marks another step away from the Labour Party towards NUS. The NEC should consider these proposals very carefully—as to whether they are to the benefit of the Labour Party as a whole.

The manifest weaknesses of NOLS were reflected in the running of Conference, which did not allow sufficient time for debate. For example, the Conference documents were given out as they were being moved, hardly giving delegates time to read them!

The Accounts and Estimates presented to the Conference by the NOLS Treasurer were overwhelmingly rejected because of alarming discrepancies in the figures. A motion of censure was passed on him, which must raise doubts in many delegates' minds as to how NOLS is being run.

Build NOLS

The NOLS leadership have threatened to exclude (and in the past did exclude) Labour Clubs from the Conference for Literature debts, and yet they cannot even present a proper set of accounts to the Conference!

The new NOLS national committee have an important task—in building NOLS to fulfill the potential it already has. There are probably more opportunities for building NOLS than ever before. The growth in support for 'Militant' amongst students in the past year shows this.

'Militant' supporters should now work towards winning the Regional Conferences of NOLS in January and February, and continuing the work of building Labour Clubs.

The NUPE strike will offer excellent opportunities for integrating the Labour Clubs into the labour movement. Despite being out-voted at this Conference, we can look to the future with confidence.

Mark Morton
(NOLS National Committee)

MORE NEW YEAR GREETINGS

The members of Old Swan

send fraternal greetings to 'Militant' and all their friends—Forward to socialism—for a democratic Labour Party—yes to re-selection of MPs and the leader

Chester LPYS

For a 35-hour week, £70 minimum wage, and socialism in 1979

Edinburgh Calton Pilrig Labour Party

New Year greetings to all our comrades in the labour and trade union movement

Deptford LPYS

send revolutionary New Year greetings to the labour and trade union movement

Uxbridge LPYS

sends New Year greetings to all 'Militant' supporters 'The Long Term Starts Here!'

WAVERTREE CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTY

send fraternal greetings to all Labour Parties and trade unions especially those who supported our resolution against the 5% wage limit. Ensure this policy is in Labour's 1979 Election Manifesto

Littlehampton Labour Party

send fraternal greetings to all comrades regardless of race, creed or colour

Hertford and Ware LPYS

Fraternal new year greetings to 'Militant' supporters and all labour movement

Cardiff North LPYS

Fraternal greetings to the labour movement. Forward to a socialist world

Brighouse Labour Party Young Socialists

sends fraternal greetings for 1979. for workers' unity and socialism!

Sheffield University Labour Club

sends socialist greetings to all comrades in the international labour movement!

LEFT & RIGHT

AID TO THE RICH

CEC, one of the most ruthless employers in the country, have amassed the enormous sum of £600 million in cash reserves idling in the bank. But it seems there's always room for a bit more. They are to build jointly with the US firm Fairchild a micro-processor plant. Their favourite sites at present are the Wirral and Cumbria.

While it is a change to see the arch destroyers of jobs bringing some employment to depressed areas, the reason for their preference was not concern for the welfare of the unemployed. It was that, with regional grants, special regional assistance under section 7 of the Industry Act and selective aid to microprocessor developers, as much as 40% of the cost of the plant could come from government sources.

It would be a shame after all for any of the nice money they have in the banks accruing interest to be taken out for anything as vulgar as productive investment. Like the rest of the British capitalist class, they leave that to the state.

They, of course, keep the profits. [£162.9 millions from April to September 1978.] No question of 40% of the profits going to the government. That would be state interference, would it not?

THE COMPANY HE KEEPS

Activists in the labour movement often complain that many Labour MPs, particularly those of ministerial status, are remote, often attending their own seat constituency meetings very irregularly, and not contacting Parties in the area where they live.

Since Denis Healey moved to Sussex, for example, Brighton Labour Party has not seen hide nor hair of the Chancellor. Hard work perhaps. But it was galling to the members of that party to find Mr Healey coming in to the town at the invitation, not of a local party member or trade unionist but by the Tory Mayor, who was a "great admirer" of Mr Healey.

For pleasant company he also invited Tory MP Julian Amery, a consistent supporter of Ian Smith, and Sir John Reed, the chairman of EMI. The Labour Lord Chancellor, Lord Elwyn Jones, was also asked along [for political balance?]. The event was recorded for posterity by the 'Brighton Argus' [before the strike] with the participants in dinner jackets.

When top Labour politicians feel themselves to be more accountable to the likes of these than to the rank and file of the workers' movement, our demands for democratic control over our MPs and ministers become vital.

MEANS OF ESCAPE

One of the worst signs of the degeneration of the leaders of the bureaucracy in the USSR is the ludicrous aping of the habits of Western capitalists. For example, even sections of the US ruling class recognise now the drawbacks of very large cars. Wasteful of petrol and space, their only function is to indicate the superiority of the car's owner.

Back in the USSR, Leonid Brezhnev has no such qualms. His latest limousine, a Chaika, is 20 feet long and weighs 2.5 tons [probably largely bullet proofing] and does a mere 17 miles to the gallon. Extras include seats in "tasteful velour" which "conform to the body", a stereo radio, transistorised ignition, electric windows and air conditioning.

The real reason for Brezhnev's car may be that it can do 110 mph and can reach 60 miles per hour in 15 seconds. This may be useful for a quick get-away when the Russian workers start to demand that they, not the usurping bureaucrats, should be in political control in the country.

South Wales Mines FIGHT THE CUTBACKS

By Ian Isaacs,
Secretary,
St. Johns Lodge
NUM.
(personal capacity)

Ask any miner to describe the coal mining industry since the war and he could well answer "closures"!

In South Wales 30,000 miners once again face this threat. The 'Economist' in July 1978 gave the bosses reason why "Every manjack in the South Wales pits was subsidised by the NCB to the tune of £1,078 in the twelve months ended March 1978. But everyone in North Notts brought the board £2,533."

Miners should be aware though that overall profit for the NCB for the same period was £20 million with £116 million put aside for the future.

The reported loss for South Wales was £42m. This is the stark picture painted for every miner in the area to see. For face workers in most pits in the area this is backed up with a propaganda exercise of produce more coal or face closure: a warning as to the future intentions of the NCB.

The management ape the attitudes of managers in the private sector by emphasising that the NCB is in business to make profits first and supply vital fuel second.

The board regularly produces a financial break-down of every pit in the area. 30 out of 38 pits are reported to be making losses of between 46p per ton and 31.64p per ton.

In a recent NUM area conference though, one delegate pointed out that the NCB accountants were not averse to turning figures of profit into loss at the boards instructions. Without access to NCB accounts this is difficult to prove but he unearthed one item not reported in the financial statement.

The Board in South Wales gave Everwarm (a local central heating firm) £67,000 and a further £6,000 for a trip

on the Rhine. The trip did not take place but the money had not been refunded. Everwarm were allowed to keep this £6,000 in order to publicise coal!

This is only the tip of the iceberg. The price of private contractors, hired plant, machinery and equipment constitute the most inflated prices in industry.

The cost of stockpiling is enormous, amounting to a third of reported losses, £3 per ton in my own colliery.

3 million tonne is stockpiled in South Wales. 0.75m tonne is imported annually for use in South Wales steel and electricity industries. All this in an area that produces the finest coking coal in the world. Of course it might be necessary to import coal to mix with Welsh coal in steel making processes and for power stations, but the claim of these nationalised concerns is that Welsh coal is too expensive to buy.

At the same time, figures show that the subsidy to the British coal industry fell from 80p per tonne to 42p per tonne from 1977 to 1978, while subsidies in Belgium went up from £6 to £24 per tonne for the same period.

'Superpits'

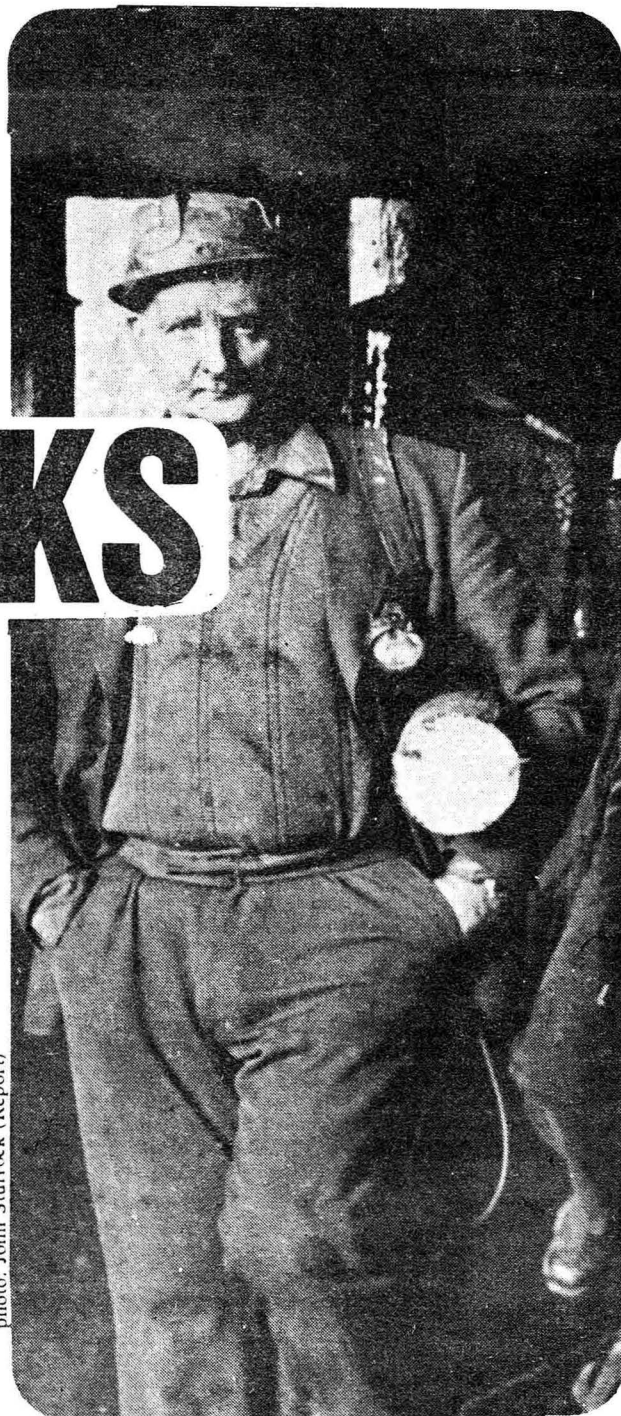
This is without doubt part of a plan to rundown British mines and particularly South Wales pits so only a few 'superpits' producing far lower output but higher profit. Crazy for the energy plans of the country but logical for the mandarins running the NCB.

At the present time six collieries are under review by the Board. The NCB's engineering Department go in first, report on the pit, and then the NUM EC members go in with the Deputies' Union and produce separate reports that are discussed at an Area review meeting.

The fact we can have our own investigation is good as even though many of the figures on output, investment, reported delays etc have to be taken as read, the mis-organisation by management comes to light.

The NCB's report claims there is a "lack of effort" on the part of the men, who are not "educated about the incentive bonus scheme."

The fact is that output will not increase when Stores have been stopped for all but safety items for six months, and when management haven't adopted good mining practice in difficult geological conditions over a period of



South Wales miners face uncertain future

years.

If this isn't good enough they refuse to grant traditional concessions to lift morale at the pit. All this comes out of the price of coal to be produced. It is also a standing joke in St. Johns and South Wales generally that any machinery we get in the pit is either second-hand or twenty years behind the times.

Investment policy is ludicrous. £19m was allocated in South Wales for major improvement projects. While the majority of profitable pits received some of this money, only 8 of the remaining 30 pits received any.

If the pit starts to make a loss, the first money to go is that for machinery and development for more faceroom. We again have to suffer from lack of replacement parts and increased breakdowns.

Recently the board have offered, on a plate, a scheme which would allow up to £1,200 staggered over 18 months for miners prepared to move to other pits in the event of closure. Even in pits that are now close together men will be able to claim the money.

It could well be asked why the board should have, on its own initiative, produced such a package. Obviously it is designed to take the sting out of any fight against closures that may be mobilised by the NUM.

The NUM have reacted by asking for implementation to be backdated to before last September. This doesn't

amount to giving a lead against closures. The NUM should fight redundancies.

Only those pits agreed by the unions to be exhausted should be considered for closure, with full pay for the workers.

The much-vaunted incentive scheme was supposed to transform the industry. Instead it has been used to show up those pits that are uneconomic and aid the NCB plan for closures. The NUM have a policy to fight closures and this should not be abandoned when the heat is on.

Artificial

The psychological whip of the incentive scheme should be countered with a demand for a decent living wage for mineworkers of £135 per week that has been campaigned for for three years now.

As the NUM have no access to the books of the NCB, we are continually confronted with artificial quarterly budgets to justify their policies of closures. We can only counter the perennial argument about costs if we fight for access to the books.

Apart from wages and conditions, we should then take up the demand for workers' control and management in the industry and an integrated fuel policy, not on a profit basis, but on energy needs. Mineworkers will not then be treated like digits on a computer but be able to play a vital role in society.

AFTER THE BAKERY WORKERS STRIKE

"At every level of our union we must study our experience carefully and learn the lessons", says Joe Marino of the Bakers' Union executive.

The six weeks strike of the Bakers', Food and Allied Workers' Union was the most bitter dispute in the turbulent history of our union.

As soon as the strike started it became clear that it was not just about wages and conditions: Ranks and Associated British Foods, the giant monopolies which dominate the industry, were hell-bent on the destruction of our union. Their aim has been thwarted. Our basic organisation remains intact. We made gains in wages, and we have trained and tested new militants in the course of our struggle.

Throughout the strike, the national officials and the executive members searched tirelessly for a way forward. I am sure, too, they would all join me in praising those members who fought tenaciously on the picket line, and indeed all those members who stood fast throughout the strike despite the threats of management, the lies of the press, and the financial hardship that many suffered. These members will make sure that our union continues to go forward, fighting for the interests of its members.

It is estimated that the strike cost the Bakers' Federation (the two big companies) between £10 millions and £20 millions. This is quite apart from the trade which they will have permanently lost as a result of the strike. Such are the lengths these companies were prepared to go to in order to try and smash our union and perpetuate super-exploitation in baking. Never was the callous and cynical nature of the capitalist system more transparent.

Vicious

Our basic wages at the start of the strike were around £42 a week. We called for an increase of around £10 a week which would have still left our wages far behind the national average industrial wage. We can hardly be accused of greed! But we were offered a mere £4.50 increase. And that increase was tied to vicious new working procedures.

The companies demanded compulsory working during bank holidays in an attempt to take back the concession of voluntary work only during bank holidays which we secured as a result of our national action in September 1977. They demanded full mobility of labour so that workers would never know from one day to the next what job they were to do, what time they would finish work, or even the exact pay they would be receiving.

The "offer" also included night work on despatch work. We oppose night work in general and saw this as the

thin end of the wedge for the introduction of night work throughout the industry.

A vague reference to the need to end "excessive" meal breaks again made it clear to our members that they intended a savage attack on working conditions. They wished to intensify still further the grinding pressures of bakery work.

These clauses meant a complete abolition of the working conditions we had secured over long years of trade union activity.

Our Executive saw no alternative but to call a strike in order to try to defend the gains of the past, and at the same time to secure a just settlement on wages.

After six weeks of struggle a new offer from management was put to the members, and this was accepted by a slight majority. The Executive then recommended a return to work.

We will look to the tremendous strengths which were revealed by the strike and build on these strengths. And we will try to eliminate our weaknesses. Our union has shown in action that it is determined to eradicate low pay and appalling working conditions. The fight is not always easy. But we will never abandon the fight.

We managed to secure increases in wages of around £6.00. This is a 14.4% increase which far exceeds the 5% limit laid down by the government.

We removed all mention of night work and retained the right not to work during bank holidays. The final offer of the management now talks about workers having the option of working during these holidays without coercion from either management or the unions.

However, this final offer was conditional on the abolition of the closed shop; and the clauses on "excessive meal breaks" and mobility of labour were left to be implemented at shop floor level after local negotiations.

Clearly, had we felt that the union was in a strong enough position, then the executive would have recommended rejection of these terms and a continuation of the action. But after weighing up the situation we considered that it was not possible at that stage to secure a more favourable settlement. We felt that we had no alternative but to accept, to allow the union to recoup its strength, and then go forward again in the near future.



On the picket line, at Sunblest, Walthamstow

"Could we have gained a better deal?" many members will ask. At every level of our union we must study our experience carefully and learn the lessons.

I will always remember the excellent support we received from other trade union members who gave money, helped on the picket lines, and enforced blacking on our behalf. The examples of this solidarity are too numerous to mention. I hope that one day soon our union will be able to repay in kind all of our fellow workers who stood by us during our battle.

It must be said, however, that vital support from some unions was either slow to materialise or non-existent. As soon as the strike began, the union immediately contacted the TUC and the other trade unions to explain the facts and ask for support.

Yet bread delivery drivers drove through our picket lines in most areas of the country. These workers had their own separate claims pending. Joint action against the common employer was—and still remains—the best way forward.

It seems that the bread delivery drivers may require our support in the near future with plans to turn bakery plants into cash-and-carry establishments now being finalised. It is to the credit of many bakers that they are saying they will still help the drivers if their jobs are threatened in order to teach them what trade unionism is all about.

Another disappointing aspect of the strike was the spectacle of those minority of flour tanker drivers who manoeuvred around their own union instructions not to cross our picket lines by handing over the keys of their vehicles to bakery managers.

Photo: Julian McKittrick/Militant

tion of the press attempting to sow doubts and distortions on behalf of the bosses.

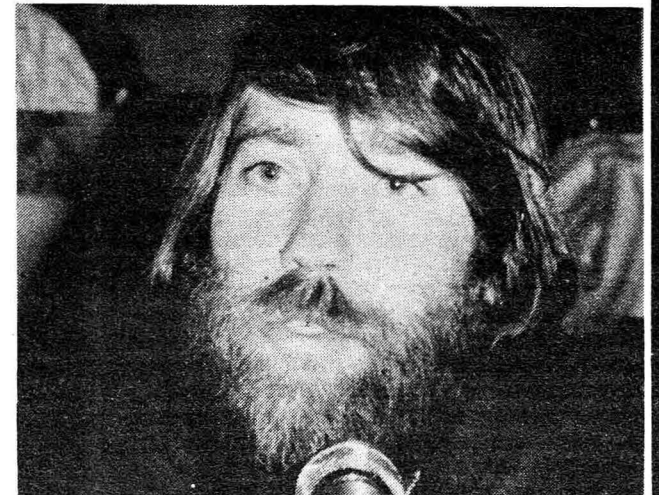
The Manchester area is one of the traditionally more militant regions of the union, yet even here at the beginning of the strike we had to cope with a constant stream of members demanding to know what was going on. When we explained the situation they were satisfied, but a lot of time was wasted which should have been spent on the basic tasks of organising the strike.

In the weaker areas of the union, because of the inexperience of the members, often these basic tasks were left to very late on. In future we must try to ensure that as many preparations as possible are underway before we go into battle, with the union supplying detailed guidance for the members on all aspects of organisation including setting up a strike committee, organising appeals for money and calling for solidarity.

A certain confusion existed at the beginning of the strike. This was stoked up by the lies of the press and the threats of management, and it resulted in a situation where almost from the start of the strike up to 2,000 of our members were back at work and assisting the black-legging activities of management.

In the aftermath of this battle, the management would like our national officials and executive members to draw the conclusion that all-out national strikes in our industry cannot succeed. They would like us to become the tame union which existed previously, where up to 1974 there had been no national strike in baking for 128 years and where, as a result, wages were still only around £27 a week.

They will be disappointed.



Joe Marino

Photo: Julian McKittrick/Militant

We will look to the tremendous strengths which were revealed by the strike and build on these strengths. And we will try to eliminate our weaknesses. Our union has shown in action that it is determined to eradicate low pay and appalling working conditions. The fight is not always easy. But we will never abandon the fight.

For a time it is likely that the open national conflict will be replaced by a war of local attrition. But before long our members will move forward again together nationally.

In Manchester we have begun to rebuild. As the workers came to start their shift they were signed back up into the union. Plant by plant the closed shop is already

being re-established.

But the overall strengths of our area cannot hide certain weaknesses here nor the weaknesses in other areas. Reports of the victimisation of militants have come from different parts of the country. Our union must continue to do whatever it can for these members immediately. At the moment in some factories management may feel they are in a position to interpret the clauses on meal breaks and mobility of labour with a particular viciousness. This will change. The fact that they are supposed to negotiate these terms will be used as a lever by our members as they start their counter-offensive.

Management will find that the tighter they have turned the screw, so the swifter will be the response.

In area where they think we are weakest, it will not be long before they are recoiling under the renewed impetus of trade union activity.

It would be wrong to belittle the seriousness of the situation which faces the union. But it would be worse to exaggerate our difficulties.

We are far from broken. In many ways our former closed shop was only a paper agreement. The new line of militants who have come forward in the strike will build a real closed shop in baking.

Confidence

Some workers who joined the bakeries during the strike have said they were duped into believing the strike was over. They already understand the hypocritical nature of the management and they will join our ranks.

I look to the future with confidence. We have faced the full brunt of police

victimisations and an all-out assault on our union. Other unions will face such attacks as the bosses try vainly to crush the organised power of the unions.

They have not crushed the bakers' union. We will grow in strength. They will not crush the unions as a whole. But we must link up our trade union activity with the political fight to make sure that as soon as possible our organised might is used to crush their system and all the evils it rests upon.

Joe Marino, a member of the national executive of the Bakery, Food and Allied Workers Union, writes in a personal capacity.

The Bosses Income Supplement

One of the more cynical acts of deception inflicted upon the ordinary worker is the idea that his boss, and those in the executive grades are an overworked and underpaid lot.

A CBI spokesman recently stated, with a perfectly straight face, that the average boss worked 53 hours each week, did not get overtime pay, and in addition was paying crippling rates of income tax on top.

This is a lot of bunkum designed to cover up a state of affairs which is really quite scandalous. If the average boss had to clock on and off in the same way as the factory worker, it is doubtful if he could muster 20 hours work each week. But the real deception lies in quoting only the official salary, without mentioning the value of the 'perks' he receives in addition.

Not only do 'perks' inflate the true worth of his income to two, three or four times his basic salary (ie. if he had to pay tax on the monetary value), but the tricks and dodges resorted to amount to nothing less than cheating and swindling.

For example, if he has an expense account, it is not at all unusual for him to put through fake expenses. Indeed, some bosses would have an unofficial fixed annual expense account, quite apart from his genuine expenses. This would consist of entirely fake expenses, involving non-existent train journeys etc.

In addition to this, he would have a company car which he can use privately. Officially this is considered by the Inland Revenue as a 'benefit in kind' and he is taxed accordingly, but in fact he pays much less than he should.

He would claim that he uses the car mainly on company business, and only very rarely for private use, say only 10% of its total use. In reality the reverse may be the truth and he gets away with a big tax free payment. Remember too, that for him petrol, maintenance, tax and insurance would all be virtually free.

As a wage addition, a company can add from between £2,000 to £5,000 a year, depending on the value of the car and how it is used. Petty corruption spreads far beyond the beneficiary. A co-operative garage attendant may give out a fake petrol bill; a small guesthouse proprietor or hotel manager may inflate his bill.

Most meals, mainly lunches but sometimes evening meals as well, can be put on the petty cash slip as a business expense and paid by the company. Some may be true, but the others—what better way to treat your wife or friend to a good meal free of charge? We are talking here of meals, including

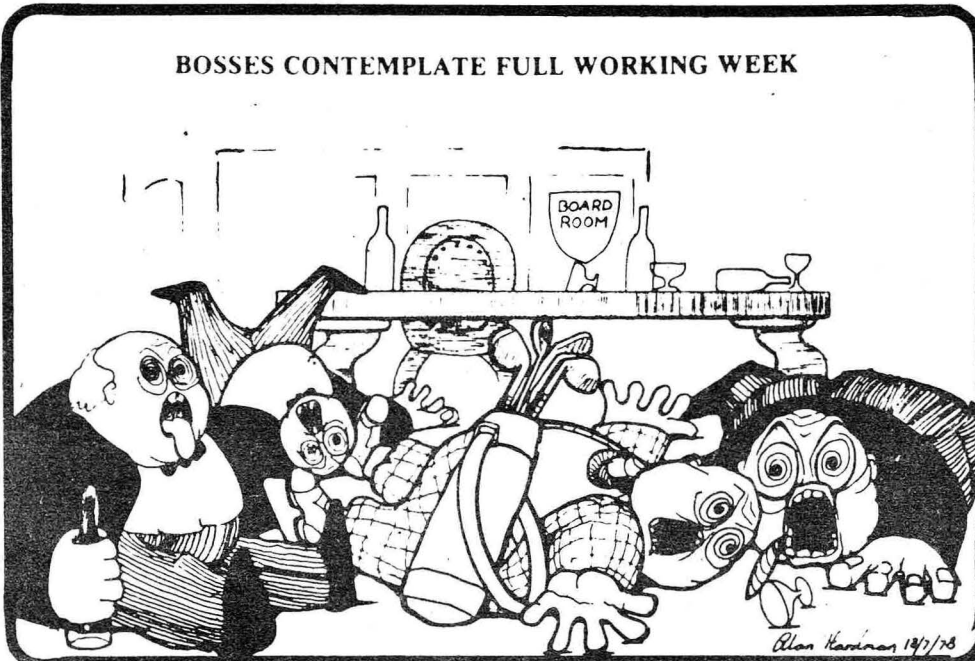
drinks, costing from between £5 to £15 per person. Added up over a year it can amount to a sizeable sum.

The talk about executive illnesses (thrombosis, heart attack, liver disease etc) is not due to worry and stress, but rather to overeating and drinking over a long period.

Leaving aside the more exotic extras such as overseas holidays, having the use of a boat etc., you can in most cases at least double the actual salary quoted.

The truth is that it is only the worker, with tax deducted at source via PAYE and travelling to and from work by public transport, who is paying the proper amounts, depending on opportunity and circumstance.

So what about the 'crippling' taxation they are supposed to be paying? The CBI who admit that the extensive use of 'perks' do not show the business world in a good light, say that if the taxation rates were halved, these practices would disappear.



But can anyone seriously think that they would forego such benefits simply because the taxation levels have been reduced?

In a recent television programme, Joel Barnett, speaking for the government,

admitted there were a lot of undesirable practices going on, and although some loopholes were being closed, it was very difficult to control. A T&GWU shop steward on the

same programme said it was impossible for him to argue in favour of wage restraint, when the employers, and to a lesser extent, middle management, had so many ways of avoiding it for themselves.

In fact the solution to this problem is really very simple. Since Joel Barnett is so concerned, he should be urged to encourage the setting up of a 'perks' committee inside every Company, whereby all workers representatives would have full authority to examine all petty cash slips, petrol bills etc., and with full authority to question everybody concerned.

One of the reasons why the CBI are so opposed to worker participation in management, no matter how ineffective it may be, is that they fear the possibility of probes of this nature.

That such investigations would cause a mass attack of nightmares and heart attacks in the boardrooms there is no doubt. However, a dose of compulsory honesty, in a system not exactly famed for it, would have a salutary effect.

By an ex-director

PENSIONS: IMPLEMENT LABOUR PARTY POLICY!

Nearly half of the eight million pensioners in Britain live in poverty. A single pensioner is expected to struggle by on £19.50 a week and the married couple on £31.20.

Elderly people are subject to disabilities, disease and immobility, but in the winter they can only afford a fire for three or four hours a day.

They have to wait months for hospital treatment and the cuts in social services mean fewer day centres, home helps and meals on wheels.

Thousands of pensioners are housebound, lonely and miserable, forced to spend most of the day in bed in order to keep warm.

All this shameful treatment of those in the final years of their lives because the politicians refuse to lift us out of poverty. Worse still: because the Labour government refuses to implement the pension policy of the Party.

For two years the Labour Party conference and the TUC have carried resolutions that the pension be increased to 33.3% for single pensioners and 50% for a couple of the present average male industrial earnings.

In 1978 this would mean uprating the pension to £27 for a single person and £40 for a married couple. The implementation of this policy would bring relief to the

By Cecil Sharpley

(Chairman, Greater London Pensioners Trade Union Committee and Islington South CLP)

elderly, but it is not the final answer.

Pensioners will be able to live in dignity and do without the humiliation of mean-spirited social security benefits when the policy of our Pensioners' Movement of pensions of £40 and £60 is implemented.

The British Pensioners' & Trade Union Action Committee is slowly, but surely building a militant organisation. Throughout the London area, in Wales, Midlands, in the North East and West and in Scotland there are democratic pensioners' groups.

Militant pensioners are frequently on the streets demonstrating with placards and banners. Many union branches and Trades Councils are affiliated on a national and regional basis.

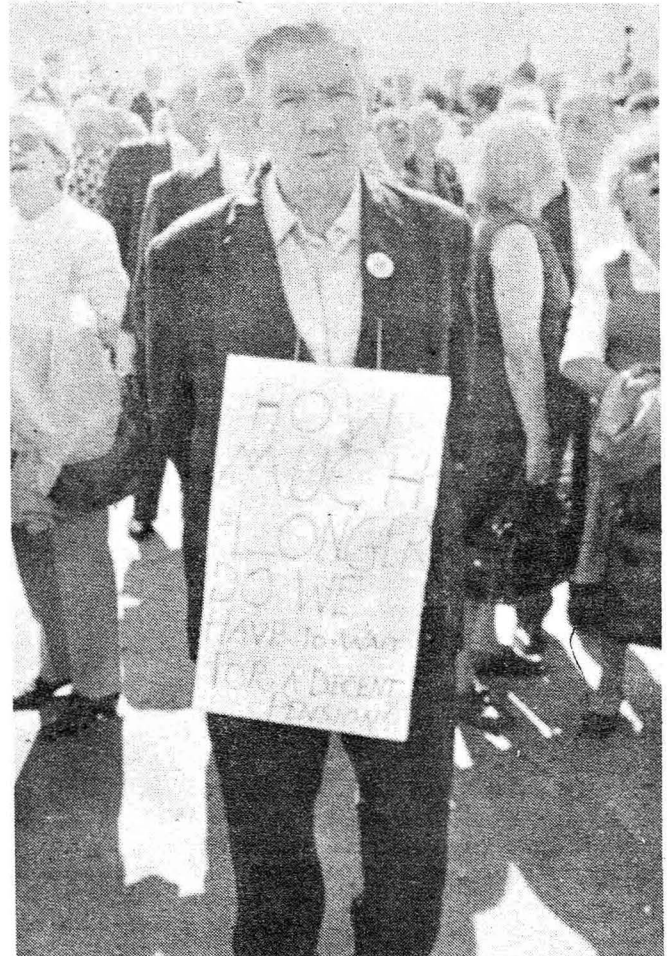
Pensioners are on their own and cannot take action in support of their demands. We need the active support of workers in the trade unions and local Labour parties. When we talk to the government, Ministers always tell us they cannot help until they get the economy right. That cuts

no ice with the pensioner. We have been waiting fifty years for the politicians to get the economy right.

They never do get it right because they refuse to introduce socialist policies. Pensioners are fed up with promises for the future.

Let all workers remember they will be pensioners one day and so the pensioners' struggle is everyone's struggle.

Demand Labour's Election Manifesto includes an undertaking to introduce without delay Labour's policy on increased pensions!



Pensioners rally before TUC Conference photo: J McKittrick (Militant)



LPYS members support pensioners rights



In Britain 1978 saw a re-awakening fresh offensive to restore lost living

1978 opened with the firemen's strike still on, and that strike set the tone for a year notable for the re-awakening of the trade union movement and a fresh offensive to restore lost living standards.

The year, of course, had its usual share of tragedies and farce...

★ tragedies like the final defeat of the Grunwick strikers. For well over a year those workers had fought bravely simply for the right of trade union recognition, something that is supposed to be guaranteed by right. After over a year of picketing, including several mass pickets, the workers were finally defeated by a reactionary employer assisted by the courts, the so-called National Association For Freedom and all the Tory media.

The tragedy lay in the fact that the strike could have been won easily if the TUC leadership had chosen to use but a small fraction of their industrial muscle, for example by cutting off the water, post or electricity to the factory. The Grunwick defeat represents a stain on the banner of the labour movement that will take a long time to fade.

★ for a farce we need look no further than the frantic activities of the Special Branch trying to hold back the flood of news about the infamous "Colonel B". Notwithstanding the serious threat that these secret police potentially pose to the labour movement, they managed to make a public ass of the 'law'.

Special Branch officers attended the NUJ conference at Whitley Bay, for example, to make sure that Colonel B's name was not revealed from the rostrum only to find that there were posters all over the conference lobby bearing Colonel H A Johnstone's name. If they had gone to the beach a bit earlier, they would also have seen his name written in letters twelve feet wide on the sand!

But undoubtedly the general feature that characterised 1978 was the change in the mood and attitude of the many-millioned ranks of the labour movement. With Labour in office sacrifices

were grudgingly accepted by workers in the form of the Social Contract. It was a testimony to the workers' loyalty to their traditional organisations, the Labour Party and the TUC, that despite large cuts in the actual wage and the social wage, 1975, 1976 and 1977 were years of relative industrial calm.

It is now rapidly becoming clear to the millions of trade unionists that the sacrifices have been in vain. As 'Militant' had predicted in 1974, the belt-tightening that has taken place has not made any significant change to the mess of British capitalism.

The historic upward trend of unemployment has not been reversed, and investment and production stagnate. The Treasury's own economic forecast for 1979 points to slow economic growth, a fall in investment in manufacturing and a balance of payments deficit, despite North Sea oil. And this is on the basis that the present pay policy holds wage increases to 7 per cent, i.e. that the workers will accept sacrifices for a fourth consecutive year!

One trade union after another came out against further incomes policy.

But the labour movement has seen enough of sacrifice. In 1978 the membership of the trade unions spoke time and time again against further belt-tightening and the voices calling for decent wage rises have grown ever louder.

Beginning with the annual round of union conferences in Spring one trade union after another came out against further incomes policy so that by the time TUC conference came around it was clear that an overwhelming majority of trade unionists were against the 5 per cent limit proposed by the government.

For many months discontent over wages was bottled up or it found an outlet in many small disputes over differentials, conditions, safety and so on. Apart

from those strikes that could not be ignored, like the firemen's, there existed what almost amounted to a news blackout on strikes, either local or national. The accumulating anger inevitably grew as there were more and more local strikes taking place and then inevitably the dam burst as the Ford workers took on the bosses over the 5 per cent.

The Ford strike changed the mood in industry...and undoubtedly altered the course of the Labour Party conference in October.

In 1977 the Ford workers had accepted an offer above the government's norm of 10 per cent but that had been against the shop steward's recommendation to reject it. But last year, the workers had only to hear the news of Ford's 5 per cent offer and there were spontaneous walkouts all over the country. Not only the national leaders of the unions, but even many shop stewards, had only to rubber-stamp the strike after it started. It was not the Ford strike alone which changed the mood in industry, but it suddenly and dramatically brought it all out into the open—and undoubtedly altered the course of the Labour Party conference in October.

On the question of the working week too, the trade union movement began to take serious steps in 1978. Now almost every individual union, and the TUC representing the trade unions collectively, has as official policy the 35-hour week without loss of pay. With still over one and a half million on the dole and with the threat of technology-induced redundancies the trade union membership is seriously taking up the issue of the shorter working week.

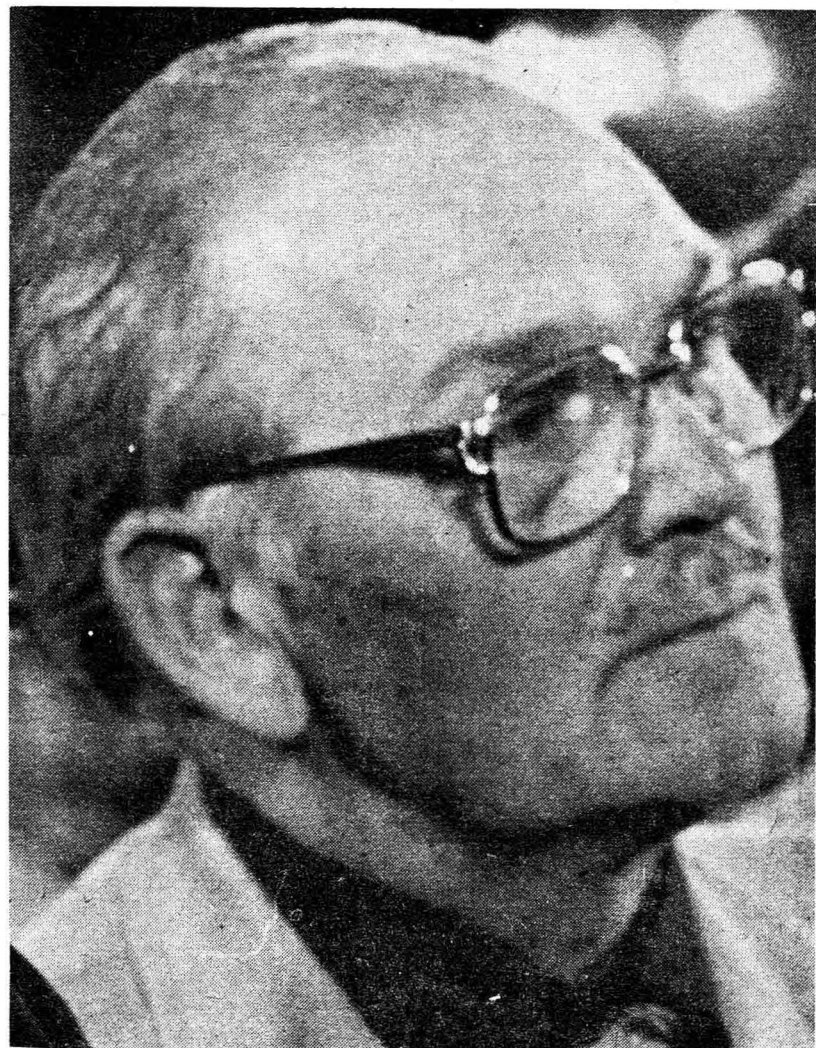
This was most clearly shown when the Post Office Engineering Union fought with the overtime ban for 35 hours in

July, supported enthusiastically by the membership. After that dispute there was bitter disappointment with the final deal reducing hours to 37½ rather than 35.

In November the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment conference on the 35-hour week brought together an aggregate of well over 1,600 delegates from labour and trade union organisations to discuss the whole issue of the shortening of the working week. Without doubt this will become one of the key issues of the coming months and years.

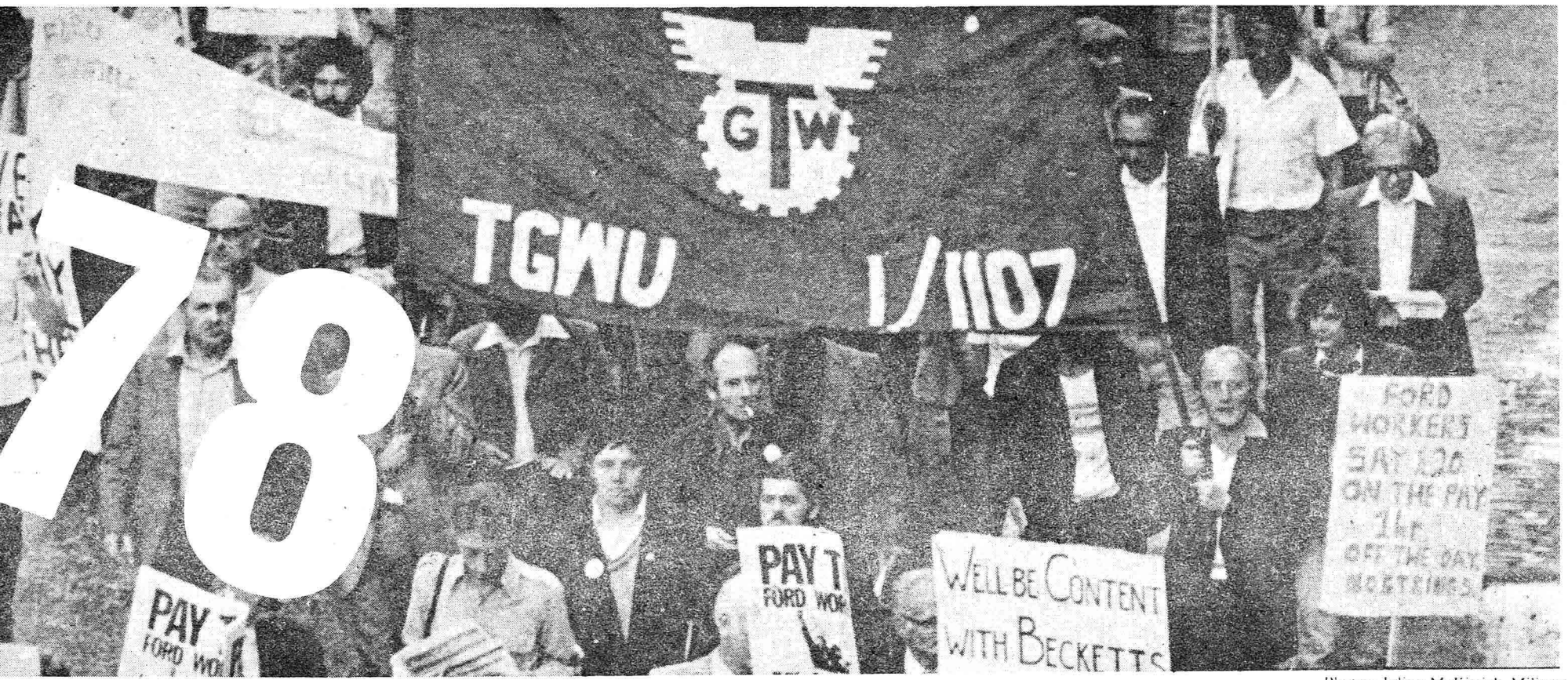
The opportunities for the building of the Labour Party Young Socialists will be tremendous in 1979, if the mood of youth last year is anything to go by.

Labour Party conference 1978: Left, Terry Duffy of the AUEW listening Wavertree, moving the successful resolution against further wage restraint.



The opportunities for the building of the LPYS will be tremendous in 1979, if the mood of youth last year is anything to go by.

Apart from the sudden explosion of schools strikes last March, the mood of young people was amply demonstrated in the massive anti-Nazi carnivals and demonstrations. Despite the publicity given to the "Young National Front" and to the NF generally there is clearly an overwhelming revulsion



Photos: Julian McKittrick Militant

of the trade union movement and a standards

A review of the past year by John Pickard

among young people towards racist ideas.

The task begun by the LPYS of giving a political direction and programme to increasingly conscious youth—like the 80,000 who attended the first carnival—has to be the main work of the new year.

Not that Labour's youth were inactive last year! Just about every LPYS branch in the country played some part in the LPYS 'week of action' organised around the youth broadcast in June. Teams of LPYS members canvassed, leafleted schools, colleges, unemployment exchanges, job centres. There were car cavalcades, discos and socials organised all over the country.

The experience of organising

that week of action, probably the most intensive campaigning that the LPYS has seen for years, will be invaluable as we approach the various elections of this year.

The broadcast was also something of a landmark. It was not an LPYS broadcast as such; it was a "youth broadcast" of the Labour Party.

In the end it only went out in a form that diluted and chopped around the policies of the LPYS. Yet still it was broadcast against the most bitter opposition of the right wing in the Cabinet. Even though the LPYS National Committee did not control the broadcast in its final form, they had enough of an influence to make it one of the best that the

Labour Party had ever put out.

Quite clearly the ideas struck at a nerve as far as the papers of big business were concerned. One speaker had said that: "The boss-class is still out to hammer the poor. The profit system still creates slums and misery for millions." You can imagine the gentlemen in the posh clubs in Mayfair coughing and spluttering in their brandies as these ideas went out to millions of youth!

Predictably, the kept press attacked the broadcast, the 'Sunday Times' calling it a "resonant echo of the 1930s" and the 'Sunday Mirror' ranting against it fully eleven days afterwards: "It must not happen again!" etc., etc.

But from the standpoint of young workers, the broadcast, despite its weakness, must have been a welcome change from seeing a slick politician in an 80-guinea suit telling us all to work harder for less money!

Facts have a way of speaking for themselves. At Transport House, there was a flood of applications from both young and old workers to join the Party after they had seen the broadcast.

In the Labour Party the Annual Conference in October saw a shift to the left.

The Labour Party has set an important precedent, and one that must be kept up. But next time the LPYS National Committee must be given a free hand to produce their own broadcast unfettered by public relations people or Cabinet Ministers.

In the Labour Party itself, it was against many expectations that the Annual Conference in October saw a shift to the left. The press pundits had predicted a massacre of the lefts on the NEC, but they overlooked one small fact—the millions of the Labour Party and trade union ranks!

By the time conference opened, the Ford strike affected the whole political climate.

Neither trade union leaders nor MPs could pretend any longer that the 5 per cent meant anything. No-one could shout down the mood of the Ford workers with enthusiastic appeals to unity. Right-wing delegates were deflated and bewildered, the left encouraged.

Despite what may have been the personal wishes of the trade union leaders at the conference, they were forced to oppose the 5 per cent. Their own members were speaking through the mouths of the Ford workers. The passing of the resolution against incomes policy, moved by a 'Militant' supporter, reflected in the Labour Party what was accepted on the shop floor as a concrete fact.

Just as remarkable was the vote on the issue of the re-selection of MPs: Making allowance for the "mistake" of Hugh Scanlon in failing to cast his union votes as he had been instructed, there was actually a majority of the conference votes in favour of automatic re-selection.

Had automatic re-selection of been introduced it would have been the most important change in the Labour Party constitution since the introduction of Clause 4 in 1918, under the impact of the Russian Revolution. That vote marks a watershed in the changing mood and climate within the Labour Party and in the next few years the re-selection debate will be renewed as members strive to bring their 'representatives' under their democratic control.

The TUC conference, the strikes and the Labour Party conference were the keynotes for 1978. The wind of change is blowing through the labour movement. The loyalty of the rank and file to their organisations is unquestioned, but there is a limit to the loyalty that can be extended to policies that attack their own living standards time and again.

1979 will be a year of storms on both the political and industrial planes.

1979 will be a year of storms on both the political and industrial planes.

Workers in the public sector have been gearing themselves up for some weeks now to go into battle for a decent wage. For the

majority of local authority workers, those on part time, the 5 per cent means less than £1 a week! How can these workers be expected to accept wage restraint?

1978 ended with the Ford strike and the bakers' strike still echoing around; 1979 begins as local authority workers, health workers, farm workers, miners, teachers, civil servants and many others line up for the fight.

There will be at least one general election in 1979, municipal elections, EEC elections, and for Scotland and Wales referenda and Assembly elections. In this atmosphere, the industrial battles will inevitably be catapulted onto the political arena.

As the saying goes, "You can't fool all the people all the time!" and no amount of press distortion and no army of slick politicians will hold back the surge of new ideas and policies coming to the fore within the labour movement. Questioning and challenging the leadership; demanding a socialist Manifesto; debating the past failures—these will be the pastimes of 1979.

In 1979 the 'Militant' will again be playing its key role in winning Labour to the ideas of Marxism.

There may have been setbacks for the left, like the election of Terry Duffy as President of the AUEW, but the days of "Carrons Law" are over. The SU Carburettors strike and the Ford strike showed the scale of the pressures that will be put on Duffy and the other leaders of the movement.

Having taken the step of expanding to 16 pages and expanding the press capabilities last year, the 'Militant' will again be playing its key role in winning labour to the ideas of Marxism. The Labour Party conference saw the ideas of Marxism making probably a greater impact than at any other time in the history of the Labour Party. 1979 will no doubt break the record again.



the incomes policy debate; right, Militant supporter Terry Duffy, delegate from

WEST GERMANY

WHAT HAVE COALITION POLICIES

The present strike of steel workers in West Germany, following the earlier printers strike, signals a new period of conflict in German society and indicates the change that is now taking place within the labour movement. Now that the so-called 'economic miracle' has faded, the social peace which prevailed during the boom is being undermined, and with it the policies of class compromise upheld for so long by the German labour leaders.

The first of two articles, translated from the West German Marxist paper 'Vorán', recounts the post-war history of the Social Democratic Party, showing why its role is now being seriously questioned by an increasing number of workers.

The powerful economic upswing of the post-war period seemed to have made it possible to resolve the antagonism between the classes, enabling the working class to arrive at an everlasting truce with Capital.

A blossoming economy, according to the prophets of that time, would allow more and more reforms in the interests of the workers to be carried out, thus making the class struggle totally superfluous.

In accordance with this way of thinking, the SPD leadership adapted itself increasingly to the capitalist system and its main political representatives the Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union. With this perspective of an ever-prospering capitalism, it was only logical to adapt to the existing conditions, making all sorts of compromises in order to get 'a bit of power', a stake in the system—however nominal that may have been.

Godesberger Programme

The old commitment to a socialist transformation of society was thrown overboard in the 1959 Godesberger Programme in favour of suitably spongy formulations which could be interpreted differently by different people

By Hans-Gerd
Öfínger (Editor
of 'Vorán')

but sounding a warning to all socialists. At this time people referred to the SPD as 'the best CDU that there's ever been'. So it's not so incredible that a former NSDAP (Nazi party) member like Karl Schiller could make his career in the party, rising to the level of Economics and Finance Minister, with the SPD fully behind him.

The adaptation of the SPD leadership to the capitalist system and state was further reflected in the Godesberger Programme. From then onwards participation in government became the be-all and end-all of party strategy.

'Goodwill'

In order to make clear their 'good will' the SPD parliamentary representatives in 1964 supported the re-election of Heinrich Lübke (CDU) as President. The 50s was a period of breath-taking upswing for the capitalist system, of triumphant election victories for the CDU/CSU (even an absolute majority in the Bundestag in 1957), for the SPD only a slight growth, and for the working class a time to take their breath, to regenerate.

But the boom didn't only have the effect of weakening the tradition of Marxism in the labour movement. It also had, in Marxist terms, positive



Jubilant SPD party workers surround Willy Brandt after their 1972 election victory

consequences.

The increasing concentration of capital led to a strengthening of large concerns against small and middle-sized plants. Many middle class businessmen and farmers had to give up their independent existence and join the mass of wage-earners.

Confidence

The working class (blue and white-collar workers) was numerically strengthened, the wounds inflicted by fascism gradually healed and, mainly through the youth it re-won its confidence. This gave to the SPD at the beginning of the 60s, a large number of members and voters. Thus in the regional (Landtag) elections between 1961 and 1963, the SPD achieved 43.3% of the vote whilst the CDU got only 42%.

The growing dissatisfaction with the Adenauer regime also strengthened the SPD. It's true that the crumbling away of support for the CDU was temporarily held back by the 'economic miracle' image of Ludwig Erhard, but the SPD continued to grow without pause.

And the more that the CDU/CSU recognised that their 'golden years' were coming to an end, so increasingly amongst the more far-thinking members of their leadership, the conversation turned to the possibility of a 'grand coalition' government. Herbert Wehner (SPD leading figure) had already had confidential discussions about this with CDU representatives in 1961 and 1962.

Writing in a CDU paper Konrad Adenauer said: "it is only remotely conceivable that we can arrive at a satisfactory level of restraint in wage and welfare policies, without the co-operation of the SPD... This responsibility might be so great that it can only be fulfilled if all, or at least two, of the main parties work together".

And so Adenauer recognised that in order to achieve this it would be necessary to draw the SPD into government because only they had good connections with the unions, thereby being able to hold back the workers with calls for wage restraint. These designs of the ruling class came together with the aspirations of the SPD leaders to 'get a share of the power'.

Thus the grand coalition finally came about on the 1st December 1966. In 1966 for the first time, after a long upswing, the old symptoms of capitalist crisis once again surfaced as the table below shows.

Growth rate of GNP	
1965:	5.2%
1966:	2.9%
1967:	-0.3%
Use of industrial capacity	
1965:	92.8%
1966:	69.6%
Unemployment	
1965:	0.7%
1966:	2.1%

Squabbling

The Erhard government had come to the end of the road, with its appeals to the workers for restraint

being received with increasing scorn and ridicule. The coalition between the CDU and the liberal FDP found itself entangled in internal squabbling.

The emerging economic crisis coincided with the fall of the CDU and FDP government.

In 1966 the CDU/CSU lost many voters and sympathisers, whilst the SPD registered a large influx of support. This becomes clear if one examines the election results.

In Northrhine-Westphalia, June 1966, the SPD got 49.5% of the vote, leaving the CDU way behind with 42.8%. In the 1962 regional (Landtag) elections the results had been: SPD 43.3% and CDU 46.6%. In Hessen

the SPD attained 51% in November 1966 as against 45.7% in 1965. The CDU share of the vote fell from 37.8% at the general election to 26.4% in the 1966 regional election.

These are all clear signs that the SPD gained more and more support whilst the CDU increasingly sank into a morass of political bankruptcy. It was an excellent opportunity for the SPD leadership to have politically destroyed the opposition and to explain the necessity of socialist policies.

The CDU/CSU and FDP coalition was falling apart anyway and the CDU/CSU were looking for a suitable excuse to shunt their election locomotive Ludwig Erhard into a convenient siding. The SPD leadership could have mobilised the shopfloor workers and forced new elections to fight for an absolute majority in parliament.

Instead, for the party leaders, participation in government was the ultimate aim, almost at any price. And so, because the Erhard government was at an end, the CDU/CSU were looking for someone to pull them out of the ditch, they quickly came to an agreement in favour of a grand coalition.

Pact

On 1st December 1966, former Nazi party member Kurt-Georg Kiesinger was elected as Chancellor in the new Grand Coalition; his vice-Chancellor Willy



ACHIEVED?

Brandt. Only six months earlier at the party's Dortmund conference, not a single party leader had even hinted at this government pact. Now the party members were faced with a fait accompli.

Many members were furious. How could their own party leadership support a former Nazi as Chancellor and the reactionary Franz Josef Strauss as Minister of Finance?

How could the SPD calculatedly save the CDU from political oblivion? The leadership of the party had their time cut out in placating the disappointed rank and file. But arguments like Willy Brandt's that everybody must join together in order to "ward off the crisis in the economy and state", didn't hold much water with many members.

The inner-party opposition to the Grand Coalition was even reflected strongly at the 1968 Nuremberg Conference when the NEC received only 173 votes in favour of the decision to enter the government, as compared with 129 against.

But the Grand Coalition was not only a slap in the face for many party members. The mass of workers who had placed their hopes in the SPD for a genuine and clear alternative to the spent and ruinous CDU/CSU were also deceived.

Why should they vote SPD, when Kiesinger would still determine government policies? And therefore in the months following the formation of

the Grand Coalition, there was a loss of support for the party; almost as notable as the 1966 party gains.

In a total of six regional elections, the party lost half a million votes altogether. In Bremen its share of the votes fell from 48.5% in the 1965 general election to 46% at the regional election of 1967.

In Baden-Wurtemberg the party share fell constantly between 1964 and 1968: 1964 regional election 37.3%; 1965 general election 33%; 1968 regional 29%. In the same period the NPD (Neo-Nazis) share shot up from 2.5% in 1965 to 9.8% in 1968 in Baden-Wurtemberg.

It is clear that big business and the CDU/CSU also demanded from the SPD political concessions in return for their government posts. Ludwig Erhard had already, as Chancellor, appealed in vain for restraint to be shown by the workers.

As before, Capital's task lay in restricting wages in relation to profits. Only the SPD could carry through these policies, having at their disposal good relations with the unions and union leaders like Georg Leber and Walter Arend in their parliamentary party.

'Co-operation'

The bosses calculated that they ought to be able to sell to the workers what Erhard had already hawked without success. In 1967 Karl Schiller, as

Economics Minister, strove to establish the system of planned co-operation between industrial and union bosses ('Konzertierte Aktion').

This comprised a round of discussions with the Economics Minister, the representatives of the six employers' organisations, the DGB (TUC) and the IG-Metall, (engineering workers' union), who then met regularly in order to work out economic targets and wage guide-lines. The motto: reorganisation of bosses' profits at the expense of wages and incomes.

And this policy very soon met with success—at least as far as the employers' pockets were concerned. The bosses' paper 'Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung', in an editorial in May 1968, praised the year 1967 as 'The Year of Mopping Up':

"The much lamented grievances over personal living standards, the constant fluctuation, the bloated absenteeism, the laziness and routinism on the shop floor, the worries of the factory managers at retaining all his workers—even if they may not be required at the moment—all these problems rapidly cease when short-time working and unemployment becomes a threatening reality. There's no doubt that the year of the recession has been a year of mopping up in the factories and no responsible employers' leader is disturbed by the breathing space brought on by this cleaning out cure."

Opposite left: Despite the SPD leaders' attempts to placate the right, a CDU election poster attacks them: "All the roads of Marxism lead to Moscow."

Left: "Never Again"—an SPD election poster with a pacifist message

Part II will appear in issue 439 [19 January]

1968 and after: The SPD in power and the consequences for the working class.

Translation by Julian McKittrick

U.S. Health & Safety at Work unions fight cancer hazards

For centuries, cancer has been viewed as a visitation of fate—mysterious, inevitable and inescapable.

In recent decades, however, research has disclosed that for masses of workers, the workplace is not only where they make a living, but the place where they are condemned to death by cancer. This is as true for England as it is for the United States, and all other capitalist states.

By Betty Traun
[New York]

In the United States it was revealed in a newly-released report by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences in September that "occupational exposures" are responsible for at least 20 per cent of the deaths caused by cancer.

But government health officials say that the incidence of job-exposure cancer may be double the 20 per cent figure. That would mean some 150,000 workers slain annually of a yearly total of 387,000 cancer deaths!

At a three-day AFL-CIO conference on Occupation Safety and Health held in Washington DC in September, Joseph A Califano, Jr, Secretary of the Health, Education and Welfare agency, announced the findings of the report to over 1,100 trade union delegates attending the meeting.

Asbestos, the report said, is the worst killer with 8 to 17 million workers exposed to it over the past 35 years. It will kill more than two million shipyard workers and other workers over the next three decades!

Once especially vulnerable group consists of more than a million men and women who worked at naval shipyards during World War Two where asbestos was used as covering for steam pipes on ships. It is estimated that one third to one half of them may die of cancer. The latency period for cancer caused by exposure to asbestos may go to 35 years or more.

Other carcinogens cited in the report included arsenic, benzene, volatile coal tars, coke oven emissions, vinyl chloride, chromium, iron oxides, nickel, and petroleum distillates.

In the workshop sessions of the AFL-CIO conference, rank and file unionists referred repeatedly to the newly-released report and denounced the snail's pace of government enforcement of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) to curb this epidemic.

Arthur N Harding, a paper mill worker from Covington, Virginia and a member of the United Paperworkers Union, confronted a panel of officials from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and stated that his co-workers are exposed to a host of deadly substances,

New attacks have been launched to destroy even the existing inadequate protection of workers' health and safety. Big business is out to destroy the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

The plot to abolish OSHA job protection for three million workers in 'small' enterprises is a subterfuge, an opening wedge to scuttle it altogether and to go back to the 'good old days'.

This year the US government begins an unprecedented effort to track down more than one million current and former asbestos workers. Those who receive social security monthly checks will also receive with that check, information about asbestos-related diseases and specific recommendations for physicians to follow in diagnosing the results of contact with asbestos. A 'hot-line' telephone number has been set up for citizens to call for further information.

But the cancer risk also ranges far away from the workplace; it may extend to individuals residing in the same household as the asbestos worker, as well as among people living within a quarter of a mile or so of asbestos plants or other facilities which have used asbestos-containing materials.

Experts now suspect that asbestos, like lead, may be an omnipresent pollutant, that is, it may be spread everywhere in our unrestrained industrial society. For one affluent Maryland suburb, county roads and the playground of a school were paved with crushed rock containing asbestos.

Charley Ag, a business agent of the Local 20 of the Int'l Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Asbestos Workers, has been working with asbestos in the US Navy's Long Beach shipyard in California since 1960. There were no protective clothes or masks when he began, and today he can't breathe through a mask; eighteen years of working with asbestos have left him with thirty per cent lung damage.

Ag is 38-years old, and he asks, "what am I supposed to do with the rest of my life?" Local 20 to which he belongs estimate that 35% of the Long Beach shipyard workers are affected by lung diseases.

Industry and governmental experts are trying to establish a "permissible" exposure level for asbestos workers. Sheldon Samuels of the Industrial Union Dept., AFL-CIO argues that there is no permissible level and that the workers are being selected for sacrifice. He expects the government alert on asbestos to be the beginning of "massive legal action giving us, for the first time, an indication of the billions of dollars of costs of occupational illness".

Federal Judge, Miles Lord of Minnesota, who handed down important rulings against the dumping of asbestos tailings into Lake Superior—only to be reversed in the higher courts—has called for "a little public hysteria" against asbestos pollution.

"They call these nuisance dusts. But they're no such thing. If you mix carbon dust, chlorine gas, and phosphene together it will kill you".

An OSHA official answered that the government was conducting "an industry-wide study of the paper industry. The government wheels are moving, although very slowly."

The paper worker retorted, "They come in and test us, and write another damned report. Another five-year study. That doesn't help us a bit. We've had promises and promises. They build us up and then they let us down."

Michael J Wright of the United Steel Workers said that back in the 1930s, it wasn't a study that improved things. It was how much pressure could be exerted on the company by the workers saying, "We want the controls now!"

Toxic substances

A member of the panel pointed out that only 400 of the 28,000 substances believed to be toxic are currently regulated under OSHA. He demanded "Why not have the manufacturers prove these chemicals are safe before they even get into the workplace?"

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) has published two volumes of county by county information on the pattern of cancer in the country. The question remained did these patterns conform to where industry is located in those counties?

Now the NCI has produced a new atlas, 'Geographic Patterns of Industry in the US'. A comparison between these two pieces of work proves conclusively that it is the industry and its owners, profit hungry, greedy owners, who are bringing cancer upon the people of this country.

The slaughter indicts them all. The fact that such a crisis has been allowed to exist for so long is also an indictment of the responsible government agencies and even more the Administrations of which they are a part. Where was the Congress—Republicans and Democrats—while the slaughter went on?

The horror is still with us.



LETTERS TO: The Editor, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

LETTERS

Hospital worker witnesses repression

Comrades

The brutality of the prison system in Northern Ireland is becoming better known in the labour movement in Britain. The savagery of the torture in the H-Blocks in Long Kesh is the highest and most blatant point of the whole brutal system.

As a worker in a hospital with a prison wing, I have come into personal contact with small examples of this at lower levels.

A prisoner was moved from Long Kesh to the hospital and underwent an operation. His mother and father travelled over 30 miles to try and see him. In four days they were

not allowed to see him!

The prison authorities also refused to tell them what his illness was, how critical he was or to allow his family doctor to visit him! Naturally enough his parents were very upset.

This sort of treatment is about the best that visitors to prisons in Northern Ireland can expect. What is going on here is practice for 'putting the boot in' to the British working class, and therefore they must make it their business to oppose repression here.

Fraternally
A Northern Ireland hospital worker



WRITE TO MILITANT

Have you any points on, or disagreements with, letters or articles in the 'Militant'? Any experiences which make you angry? Let us know in a letter [preferably a short one]. Letters to arrive by Saturday morning to the address at the top of the page.

Criminal Trespass Act— a new weapon for the bosses

Dear Comrades

We see the Greater London Council last week trying out the new weapon aimed at the workers of this country—the 'Criminal Trespass Law'.

At present it is only being used against a few squatters, and this may have some support from the general public. But this is really not what the CT Law is all about.

It is one of the most oppressive laws yet contrived

by the capitalist law lords, in their war against the working class. For example, offence No 3 "Trespassing with an offensive weapon", would allow the police to intervene in any occupation without a warrant, if in a factory occupation the management claimed that someone had used something as an offensive weapon. In law an offensive weapon can be tools, coins, shoes, bread-knives etc

etc. But what is more shameful about this law is its enactment by a Labour government.

Comrades, it is a matter of urgency that resolutions for the repeal of this anti-social legislation should go to all our GMC and trade union branches.

Fraternally
Bill Cranmer
Newham NE Labour Party

Protect small firms— 'a check against the monopolies'?

Dear Comrades

One subject which has recently become a well-publicised issue in the labour movement is the 35-hour week. *Militant* has been quick to take up the campaign, and has won widespread support for its programme.

The technological revolution which will follow the development of the micro-processors makes this an excellent opportunity to press for a shorter working week and a £70 minimum wage. However, it is worth thinking about the problems which must surely occur if these policies were carried out under the present economic system.

Both 35-hours and £70 will undoubtedly lead to a large increase in the wages bill, and therefore the total costs of production. The capitalists can afford it; most of them. Fords can, and big bakeries can, for example.

But there are thousands of small firms which do not make huge profits, and it is

these which will go to the wall if our demands are met. Small concerns act as the best check against the power of the monopolies. If they go bankrupt, the influence of the 200 large monopolies over the economy will be even greater; a pay rise of 20% could therefore, indirectly, give these large corporations the power to raise prices by 30% or 40%, this will mean that the average worker will suffer a massive cut in his standard of living.

Therefore we must make sure when pressing for these measures to cut unemployment that we also have back-up measures to prevent inflation. First, we must curb the power of the monopolies to raise prices. In the past, the Price Commission has had some success in keeping a check over excessive price increases proposed by large firms, the most recent example being Butlins.

True the powers of the Commission are extremely limited; but if the labour

movement campaigns, as part of its programme, to increase its powers, it could have a valuable role to play in the fight against inflation.

If we make sure that firms cannot pass on the increase in the wages bill to the consumers, increases will have to come from profits. Therefore we have to protect small firms, which are unable to give their workers the same level of wages.

The government could do this simply by extending its current policies, such as the Small Firms Employment Subsidy. This scheme has so far saved about 5,000 jobs. Clearly this is not being used enough, but has tremendous potential for strengthening small concerns against the unhealthy ambitions of the multinational corporations.

Many readers of *Militant* would say that this is just trying to make petty adjustments to the capitalist system. They would argue for the immediate nationalisation of the 200 monopolies which

Labour Party protest on Iran

Dear Comrades

It made me seeth with anger when I read the enclosed correspondence which was a reply to a resolution on Iran passed at a Handsworth GMC meeting.

I don't know whether Ivor Lucas is a Labour Party member, but if he is, he shouldn't be! The whole tone of the letter really shows who the present Labour government's policies are aimed to please—the bosses, nationally and internationally.

I don't believe for one minute that any British government [Tory or Labour] has ever encouraged the Iranian government to "move along the path of liberalisation"—after all, they have worked with the Shah very amicably since he came to power, only caring about oil supplies and armament agreements. It is the Iranian workers and peasants who have

managed to 'encourage' the Shah to [very speedily!] liberalise!

In the same way, it will be the Iranian workers and peasants who will eventually resolve the "conflict" of economic and social progress, by using the wealth and industry of Iran for the good of the people, and not squandering it among a few of the elite.

Finally I think it is the duty of every reader of the 'Militant' to raise the question of Iran in their Labour Party and trade union branches, to ensure the effective blacking of armaments to the Shah, and to show the support of the British working class for the struggle in Iran.

Yours fraternally
Y Barry
Secretary, Handsworth LPYS

Encouraging "liberalisation"?

Extracts from the reply from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to Handsworth CLP: Dear Mr Benny

I have been asked to reply to your letter of 29 October to the Prime Minister and others informing them of the resolution passed at the monthly meeting of the General Management Committee of the Handsworth Constituency Labour Party on 26 October regarding Iran.

The reasons given by the resolution for the support given by the Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary to the Shah are only part of the truth. The economic benefits which this country gains from Iranian oil (14% of our imports) and from the employment and exports derived from our defence sales are certainly factors to be taken into account.

But our relationship with the Iranian government has also enabled us to encourage

them to move along the path of liberalisation leading to elections, and we believe that it is in this direction that the best prospect lies for orderly progress within Iran and the protection of our own interests in an area of great commercial and strategic importance to Britain.

Iran has been trying to achieve in a matter of decades economic and social progress which in this country took centuries. It is small wonder that there has been a conflict between the requirements of modernisation and industrialisation and those of a traditional social structure, and it is far from clear that the opposition to the present régime in Iran would be any more successful in resolving that conflict.

Yours sincerely
I T M Lucas
Middle East Department

dominate the British economy.

However, it must be recognised that these measures cannot be implemented overnight, even with a majority Labour government. It is impossible to force through legislation if public opinion is mobilised against it.

Our first job must be to educate the people of this country to accept socialist ideals, and to refute the misrepresentations of the Tory press. Until this has been achieved, we should look for ways of reforming the present system, hopefully with the same success as the post-war Attlee government.

David Rutt
Ruislip-Northwood I PYS

'No need for leaders'

Dear Editor

Why is that the world communist party is supporting state capitalism in Russia and the same thing in Mao's China? Party and government leaders not only possess total political power, but control the disposal of the entire economic wealth.

There is no need for leaders in a true socialist world which the Socialist Party of Great Britain stands for. It is the only party that stands for true socialism.

None of the left so-called parties stand for socialism, but reforming capitalism. At the February 1974 general

election the following organisations all told the workers to vote for Labour candidates: Communist Party of Great Britain, International Marxist Group, International Socialists (now Socialist Workers Party), Workers Fight, Workers Revolutionary Party.

And another thing: nationalisation is not socialism but state capitalism in Russia and China. Marx advocated the end of wage slavery, which none of the so-called left wing groups say in their party principles.

Yours truly
N Roberts
Bristol

ALL-OUT EFFORT

This week:
£3,824

Many 'Militant' readers will have had a hard time scraping together enough money to enjoy the Christmas period and buy presents for family and friends. But the generosity of some of our supporters is overwhelming.

In the last three weeks 'Militant' has received such gifts as £150 from a West London supporter, £100 from J Pratt of Stoke, £53+ from two readers—M Jelliman (Wavertree) and G McDonald (N London), £50 from a Brighton reader and another £50 from G Booker of Exeter.

Whatever their circumstances, these socialists recognise the vital role of a Marxist paper in the fight to end poverty and oppression throughout the world.

What better 'Christmas Message' than theirs: "Here's the cash to get on with the job!" And that's just what the 'Militant' intends to do!

This week, weather permitting, will see the long-awaited delivery to our print-shop of nearly £40,000 worth of additional equipment for the web-offset press. This heralds the return of the bold, bright red to 'Militant's' pages, and will mean the production of far more elaborate material needed in the labour movement as a whole.

It will also provide the capacity to print a daily paper! But that is the "music of the future"—how far in the future depends on how much you, the readers, are prepared to give of your time, energy and cash.

Build up support for the ideas of Marxism in your workplace, your union branch, shop stewards' committee, Labour Party or LPYS branch. Make a New Year's resolution to get another 10 people to buy the 'Militant' from you every week of 1979, and collect no less than a 'fiver' for the fighting fund every month—starting with January!

As for 1978, are we going to get the full £70,000 we're asking for by this Saturday? As things stand at the moment (up to 30th December), we're £8,243 short! That's more than double what has reached us in the last three weeks of enormous efforts!

But...the big New Year raffle proceeds are still to be included, as well as the profit on the excellent new cartoon book (see advert).

We are also allowing any money raised before midnight on January 6th itself to be included, provided we are informed before midday on Sunday 7th, when the books will be closed.

★ **hopefully**, every last raffle ticket will be sold with the counterfoils and cash reaching us in time for the draw at the London 12th Night "Do" (see advert).

★ **hopefully**, the money for every copy of 'Need Not Profit' that has been sold or ordered will be sent in post haste.

★ **hopefully** every reader in the country will have been asked for a special last minute donation, a 'festive fiver' or something more or something less.

★ **hopefully** every jar of ps and ½ps will have been cleared of its heavy load.

★ **hopefully** every fund-raising activity possible will have been taking place up and down the country in an all-out effort to get the maximum final total for 1978!

If you've just missed the deadline when you read this, don't let that stop you giving a healthy push for

FIGHTING FUND - TARGET £70,000

Area	Target	Proportion of target received	Amount
Eastern	4,400		3,036.85
Hants & IOW	2,100		2,535.42
Humber-side	2,200		1,907.12
Lancashire	1,500		700.23
London: North	7,700		7,088.58
London: South	3,800		3,758.34
Manchester & Dist	2,900		2,005.91
Merseyside & Dist	4,500		3,041.39
Midlands East	4,400		2,958.56
Midlands West	7,400		6,355.06
Northern	4,900		3,951.05
Scotland East	2,500		1,786.33
Scotland West	2,900		1,941.93
South East	2,300		2,699.28
South West	2,300		2,370.65
Thames Valley	1,700		1,604.19
Wales East	2,000		2,078.48
Wales West	2,300		2,587.40
Yorkshire	5,200		3,451.79
Others	3,000		5,898.68
Total	70,000		61,757.24

the launching of the 1979 fighting fund! £85,000 in twelve months is going to need an awful lot of hard work. But, on the evidence of the donations listed below, money for the 'Militant' is there for the asking.

A workers' paper like ours deserves and needs every penny you can spare and every penny you can raise.

The numerous contributions over the past three weeks amounted to £3,824.89. They include:

Over £10 from readers in: Bangor £35.70; Manchester, Brighton and Bahrein £30 each; Lewisham £25; Chorley and Huddersfield £20; Stirling and Twickenham £15; two in Swansea, £10 + £6 tax rebates.

'Tenners' from: G Cowley (Rotherham NUT) Anon (Consett) Two Leics. readers (each) Two Swansea readers (each) Anon (Newcastle) Cllr A Rogers (Caerphilly)

'Fivers' from: J Ritchie (Bargoed LP) V L Jones (Abergele) T Wilkins (Sec, Machen LP) M Hatherly (Eastleigh) T James (Oxford) J and J Creswick (Chester) L Hopkins (Caerphilly, MATSA) J Williams (Swansea) D Hines (Bridlington) G and S Powell (Germany) N Walsh (Birmingham) B Moore (Birmingham) P Churchill (London Hospital) M Herbert (Sheffield, NUPE) J Stevenson (Newton Abbot) B Leggett (Cleethorpes LP) P Spooner (GMWU) G Lewis (Louth) Five Brighton readers (each) N Bond (Gosport) A Gwilt (Battersea) B McKee (Battersea) P Peakin (Greenwich LP) I Simpson (Coventry NUS), M Shaw (Hackney) M Wedderburn (Tower Hamlets) J Bexon (Birmingham, ULC) S Pearson (York)

£2 from: P Chipperfield (Chester-le-Street LPYS) I Barrett (Lanchester Poly) D Powell (Coventry, ASTMS, GEC) H Isaacs (Rochdale) F and B Kidd (Tooting, GMWU) T Reeves (S London) N Hammond (Grimsby, ANL) D Prouse (Newton Abbot) N Boorman (Southend, COHSE) S Fraser (Glasgow) F Perkins (N Notts LP) R Sinclair (Erskine YS) D Williamson (Cowglen CPSA) M Waters (Caerphilly) V Williams (Caerphilly, TSSA) Rev. B Morgan, (Leader, Merthyr District Council Labour Group).

'Oners' from: D Kennard (Dartford, EETPU) B Muller (TGWU Shop Steward) B Rowlands (Caerphilly CLP) R Kinrade (Penrheol LP) D Stem (Birmingham) P Middleton (King's Lynn LP) J Riddells (NUPE) J Hatfield (York) E Carlisle (TASS) W Rowe (NUPE) J Locke (Newham, NUPE) M Krokos (Cardiff YS) Three Bristol CPSA members (each) M Well

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From students: £178.87 NOLS National Conference; York NOLS £15; Lanchester Poly delegates to NUS conference £15.

Miscellaneous: £10 Wallend Branch, Newham NE LP; £10 workers at Clarks (NUFLAT) Bath; Marylebone LP members £2; Hillingdon Discussion Group £11; Bridlington Appeal Sheet £3.26; Lewisham Appeal sheets £25; West Wales supporters £66.90; Southampton 'extras' £18.10.

Fund-raising: £139 W Midlands '500 Club' Draw (plus £100 donated by winner); £72 another Brummy party; £46 from parties in Harlow, Swansea, Stirling and Bradford; £25 from sponsored walks in Sheffield and Scarborough; £5.75 first proceeds of B Ashworth's non-smoking marathon; £100 from Walthamstow; £115 from jumble sales in Huddersfield, York, Birmingham, Liverpool and Cardiff; numerous

'pints for the Militant' in 'The Hawthorn, Hull, after Walthamstow District Bakers' meeting, etc.; £15 'writing pub guide', Newcastle; £19 'typing work', Harlow.

Plus various helpful amounts from sales of such things as chewing gum, a wardrobe, a car(!), furniture and a total of £119.10 from pamphlets etc. produced in the areas for the fighting fund as well as for their educational value.

Many thanks to our readers for every single contribution of 1978—mentioned and unmentioned. Without your sacrifices and efforts we would not have made the enormous improvements in the fighting capacity of the 'Militant'. That's what the Fighting Fund is for!

But you will no doubt agree that a weekly 16-page paper is an inadequate weapon in the hands of the workers faced with an enemy as well armed as the capitalist class, with its kept press and mass media. Hence the message of the Editorial Board to its readers everywhere, is the same as theirs to us—"Keep up the good work and step up the fight for socialism," and that means showing your support for 'Militant's' ideas with yet more cash.

Forward to another £85,000 before 1979 is out!

New year greetings

EASTBOURNE CLP

sends new year greetings to all comrades

Rother Valley LPYS

sends New Year greetings
Introduce the Educational Maintenance Grant now!

Isle of Wight LPYS

Mortgage rates up!
Workers lose—parasites gain!
Fight for nationalisation of the banks under workers' control!

The Institute of Education Labour Club is presenting in aid of 'Militant'

BIG NIGHT OUT



Saturday January 6th Grand Militant Twelfth Night Disco / Club Night

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Non-stop music and entertainment from 8 pm to 1 am
FREE FOOD! LICENSED BAR!

Request spots, competitions, lucky draws [including the American Holiday Militant Raffle]

All for £2
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Send for your tickets today from R Faulkes, 375 Cambridge Heath Road, E2 9RA [cheques and POs to 'Militant'] [The number on your ticket and counterfoil could win you £10, even if by some misfortune you're not present at the draw!]

Just another £1 secures you a seat on the coach picking up in your area and dropping you home after the "Do".

MAKE A DATE

RAILWAYS: Unity is vital to end low pay

British Rail management's intransigent attitude towards railway workers' pay, makes it virtually certain that there will be a national dispute on the railways early in the new year.

The past few years have seen the introduction of the High Speed Train (HST) travelling at up to 125 mph. Freight trains are often anything from 1,000 to 3,000 tons. Faster and heavier trains are planned. Intensive suburban services are increasing.

This has meant increased responsibility and stress on the men; it has taken its toll with nervous and heart-related diseases now a matter of serious concern. **The last few years of wage restraint have seriously eroded the value of our wages. This lies at the heart of the problem.**

It is now a couple of months since the Railway Staff National Tribunal issued its findings. The Tribunal rulings did nothing to answer our claim, or offer any real improvements to railway workers in general.

The offer of 25% bonus per day to drivers involved in duties where speeds exceed 100 mph is divisive. It totally ignores our claim for in-

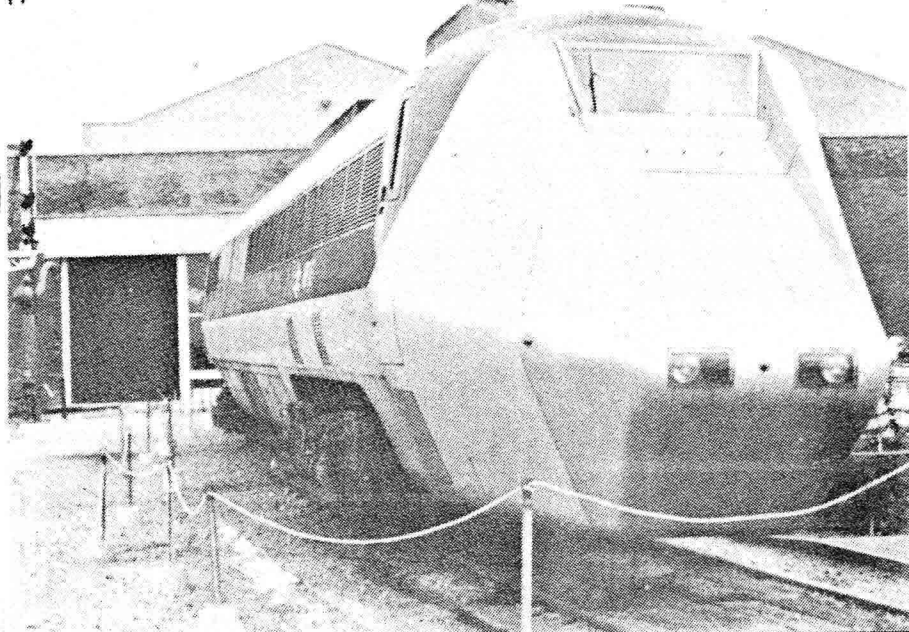
creased basic pay, and amounts to "classification". In addition, the second offer is a slightly improved version of the management's 'Business Performance Scheme'. Such a scheme offers only paltry increases for railway workers (in fact no figure has been agreed), and would open the door to cuts in manning levels. Railwaymen have long, bitter experience of bonus payments and are totally opposed to the idea.

Classification

Unfortunately the NUR and TSSA leaders, totally ignoring their membership's wishes, accepted both awards. The ASLEF Executive Committee also accepted the Business Performance Scheme in principle until next April, again flouting ASLEF policy as decided by the members. However they have firmly rejected the 'classification' offer. The ASLEF Executive Committee, under pressure from Southern Region members, have given the management until January 7th to make a proper offer.

Under pressure, BR were forced to set up a sub-committee, which so far has offered only an even worse

11



The new High Speed Trains—more stress and pressure for railworkers

form of 'classification'. They propose to separate the various types of work; freight, passenger etc, into four grades, with locomen's pay to depend day by day on the work performed. They also want to re-introduce extra payments for length of service.

These proposals must be rejected outright. The classification idea, to their shame, came from the NUR leadership, once again showing

their remoteness from the membership.

Given the present situation, a dispute is inevitable. Already 24-hour strikes are planned for the 10th and 17th January on the South Western section of the Southern Region and a meeting is planned to discuss spreading and stepping up the action. The rest of Southern Region is also planning strikes, and ASLEF representatives on London

Transport are considering giving support.

Members throughout the country should follow this lead. But most important, it is time that the national leadership of ASLEF gave positive direction and mobilised the membership.

United action

The men have always

shown that they are prepared to fight. Now the Executive Committee must do the same.

The rail unions should claim now for an increase in basic pay of at least 25% to restore earnings at least to the 1974 value, as a first step to eradicating low pay. The money is needed now, not in April.

If the leadership of the NUR and TSSA refuse to get involved, then ASLEF members from leadership level down must endeavour to draw them into our forthcoming industrial action. Such attempts would get a ready and willing response, and go a long way towards establishing vital unity.

Given the increasing militancy of workers generally, and in particular the action by low paid public sector workers planned this month, the climate is now favourable. The industrial might of the rail unions is quite capable of winning us a decent pay rise, and giving encouragement to workers everywhere.

By Martin Elvin

(Stratford ASLEF)

working in the union

BY BILL CHARD
[T&GWU]

This series, which has been squeezed out by lack of space in recent weeks, continues with Bill Chard, a T&GWU member in Morley and Batley Labour Party, recalling his early trade union experiences. As he shows, there is much to be learnt, from mistakes as well as successes.

If you want to take up any of the points raised, or discuss any of the issues that you face in your union, write to 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

I had been at the factory about two years and it was approaching pay talks time. A meeting was called to formulate a pay demand.

Instead we were told by our negotiators that the men working our particular shift would go on to a 5-day, 3-shift system and the workers already on this would get an increase of £2. The union men stated that they had seen the company's books and we were lucky not to all be made redundant etc etc.

The people who were to receive the rise thought that under this pressure the best bet was to accept. We on the 7-day system were incensed at the idea of no rise and tried to sway the meeting in favour of rejection. The 5-day workers were in a majority and won the vote.

Some of us present swore we would not be represented by these compromisers whom we blamed for the way they put the deal over, and tore up our union cards.

A couple of weeks later about twenty of us joined the Transport and General Workers Union and elected a militant shop steward.

Two out of three shifts in our department were solid union but the third shift were still in the other union or had torn up their cards.

One day our shop steward approached management and asked for facilities for cooking food at break-times. Although they refused to recognise him as a representative, they agreed to install a cooker in the break-room.

Over a period our steward went back with more requests and complaints. They were used to being able to soft-soap or intimidate other stewards but not so in this case. So one day they accused the steward and another militant of taking too long cooking their bacon sandwiches. The following day they were warned again and then sacked.

Their shift came out on strike. We followed them on afternoons but nights worked on. That night, letters were delivered telling us that if we did not return to work the next day we would be fired.

We stayed out and half a dozen men from other departments joined us. An officer from the T&GWU came and after discussions the two men were offered their jobs back.

We felt the smell of a big victory and said we would only go back if the firm recognised our union as joint negotiators. They refused and we stayed out.

The shift that stayed on working were not only prepared to cross our picket line but actually worked four hours overtime a day, seven days a week, at grossly inflated overtime rates.

The T&GWU executive delayed making the strike official until three weeks later. Actually we heard this piece of news two hours after a majority of the strikers had voted to return to work.

For myself, I could not face returning to the factory beaten, and found another job the same day. Reflecting on the situation I feel we would have gained more by going back when the firm agreed to give the steward his job back and then building a stronger base before attempting to get our union recognised.

Incidentally, our attempts to organise a union was presented in the national press by the writing of completely twisted and unrelated articles and labelling it as 'the bacon butty strike'.

It made me realise when I saw the capitalist newspapers' reports of strikes over really trivial things that it was just they were reported completely out of context, to make a story seem more outrageous and unusual to sell more copies.

STUC Youth Conference 35 hr week to fight unemployment



Young workers on Dundee demonstration against unemployment

Delegates from unions and Trades Councils around Scotland met in Glasgow on December 9/10th to thrash out a programme which will point the way forward to young trade unionists looking for answers to the problems of unemployment and low living standards.

This, the 39th Conference, debated two alternatives. On one hand a composite proposed by the Youth Advisory Committee itself called for free collective bargaining, a 35-hour week, selective import controls and an extension of public ownership. A resolution proposed by East Kilbride Trades Council called for an effective solution to the problems by demanding a £70 minimum wage, work sharing with no loss in pay, a programme of public works coupled with the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy which

economically dominate our everyday lives.

After a heated debate, conference accepted the Youth Committee's programme, which if implemented, would try to plan the 'free enterprise' system.

In other debates, Conference called for increased expenditure on education and apprentice training, abolition of low pay and improved facilities for young people, without fully seeing the need to implement a socialist planned economy to guarantee these services.

Frank White gave a fraternal address from the Labour Party Young Socialists. In an excellent speech he called for socialist policies to be implemented by the Labour government to eradicate the chaos of capitalism, and ensure a Labour victory at the coming general election.

Conference called for the setting up of youth committees in all unions as a means of

involving young workers in trade unions. Hopefully the new Youth Committee will campaign vigorously in the coming year for the formation of such organisations.

It is clear that much has still to be achieved among trade union youth in Scotland, and the Youth Advisory Committee has still to be developed into an effective fighting force, capable of winning young people to trade unionism and socialism. Hopefully, next year, life will be Armed with a bold socialist programme and political leadership, the Scottish TUC Youth Advisory Committee could act as a beacon to all working class youth.

By George Williamson

(USDAW)

NUJ STRIKE-UNION SUPPORT

'AS LONG AS IT TAKES TO WIN'

VITAL

INTOLERABLE CONDITIONS

Chester members of the NUJ have responded 100% to their union's call for strike action. They are picketing the two local papers, 'The Chronicle' and the 'The Cheshire Observer'.

They will stay out as long as it takes to win a £20 pay rise. An exorbitant figure? Not when you consider that journalists at 'The Chronicle' receive only £60 a week and that after four years training! Junior journalists get between £30 and £35 a week!

At the 'Observer', conditions are even worse. They employ juniors to do senior journalist work, but of course only pay them juniors' wages (£30 a week there).

'The Chronicle' last year made £600,000 profit and its owners Thompsons made £9.5 million.

The T&GWU have refused to deliver newsprint or ink and the Post Office workers won't cross the picket either. At the 'Observer' office furniture drivers won't cross and neither will dustmen.

Last week inferior quality copies of both papers appeared thanks to the management stockpiles of paper and ink and the services of scabs from the Institute of Journalists (IOJ). If management thought they could dampen the spirit of NUJ members then they have been sadly mistaken.

The NUJ has over 80 members in Chester. They are all out, along with the overwhelming majority of members in the country, in what is the first big dispute for 70 years. The mood is tremendous; they are quite determined to win.

Simon Swinnerton
(Chester LPYS)



NUJ pickets at the Press Association, London.

photo: J McKittrick/Militant

The fact that the Newspaper Society no longer has the government's sanctions policy to hide behind was welcomed by **Dennis MacShane, president of the NUJ**, at a national strike rally in Nottingham at the end of December.

Joe Ashton MP said that sanctions had been a gesture to placate the IMF. Government contracts with Fords were worth about three hours' production, he said. Provincial journalists pay and conditions would never be tolerated by industrial unions.

Representatives of branches at the Press Association and in Nottingham explained that their members had not always supported union action in the past, but were sticking by trade union principles now.

Twenty seven journalists present from the Nottingham Evening Post have been threatened with dismissal for supporting the strike. The nine members who originally struck were sacked. They have since been joined by another eighteen, now under the same threat.

The paper's management and its managing director, Christopher Pole-Carew, are notoriously anti-trade union. They have previously taken on all the print unions in the firm and are now turning on the NUJ.

The Union said that they didn't wish the Post to be seen as the target of their demonstration. But press unions can't afford to let any management get away with such actions. Hard-faced bosses like these will only climb down if trade unionists are mobilised to make sure they do so.

By Tony Cross
(Nottingham East LPYS)

UNITY IN THE PRINT INDUSTRY

On December 22nd—the Friday before Christmas—the NUJ members on strike at the 'Evening Post' and 'Western Daily Press' organised a mass picket of the prestigious buildings housing Bristol's daily papers. There was an excellent turn-out including a delegation from the Trades Council, and distribution of the pre-Christmas edition was stopped.

Since the strike began a very truncated edition of the Post has been appearing but this should stop altogether as paper runs out. The NUJ have been keeping up a 24-hour picket and all supplies have been turned away.

Despite temperatures near freezing, all the NUJ members

I spoke to—most of them young—were solidly in support of the action and as Dave said, very bitter towards the IOJ and the few non-union journalists working. However all their efforts were of no avail as the NGA had blacked any IOJ copy normally done by NUJ members.

Dave said: "In Bristol for the last two or three years we have been building up inter-union support and we have excellent support from all the unions inside—NGA, SLADE, NATSOPA, SOGAT, AUEW, EETPU. One result of the strike will, I hope, be for us to develop the co-ordination more and build a federated house chapel to cover all the unions." The

need for unity in the print industry has never been more crucial and this is clearly recognised by the NUJ in Bristol.

"The other unions we have been in contact with have also given support—witness the number here today from the Trades Union Council". Undoubtedly in the future this will be a very important question when NUJ members are reporting other disputes.

Dave pointed out that any agro on the picket line had been caused by the police. "Instead of remaining neutral they have been over-zealous in support of management—it is the right of all workers to peacefully picket."

At this point Liz Marleyn (Womans Page editor on the

Western Daily, and Deputy FOC) quoted the abuse she had received. A policeman had said: "I don't talk to burglars or rapists so why should I talk to you?"—an interesting pointer to what some of our merry men in blue think of trade unionists!

Bristol NUJ have called for an enquiry into police behaviour. Perhaps this explains why the police stayed well clear of the mass picket.

David Solomons [FOC NUJ, 'Evening Post' Bristol] and other pickets spoke to **Brian Beckingham [Militant]**

BAKERS : Ready to fight again

On behalf of all loyal BF&AWU members in Ipswich, may I thank the 'Militant' for the terrific coverage you gave to our national strike.

Unfortunately the support was not greatly mirrored by the trade union movement as a whole. At local bakeries of Betabake and Tooks, the fact that T&GWU van drivers crossed our picket lines delivering scab-produced bread, went a long way to demoralising strikers and weakening the effects of the strike. Although delivery drivers at Ipswich mills

agreed to support the local Betabake strikers, this support was withdrawn and they crossed our picket lines and switched support from loyal trade unionists to scabs and blacklegs.

This lack of support from many fellow trade unionists will leave a nasty taste in the mouth. **But I know if any trade union needs the support of shop floor members of BF&AWU just call and we'll be there. Your fight is our fight as ours was yours.**

We have had a victory. How much greater the victory would have been if the scabs

had stayed loyal and the TUC had given the support it should have.

Let me say that local support was given by the Labour Party, the LPYS and Ipswich Trades Council, support that will never be forgotten. We sincerely thank you comrades.

We have learned a lot from the dispute and the BF&AWU will be stronger and more effective because of it. The fight was there and we fought; the battle is won.

The war continues and as the big battalions prepare to fight, the bakers union light

infantry takes combat leave. While skirmishes continue we must re-arm. We have the generals and officers; with better weapons, fully trained troops and loyal allies we shall be ready to fight again.

Bakers are still low paid workers with long working hours and bad conditions. **When will the battle start again? It's already started and the bakers are in their fighting.**

Royston Maddox
(BF&AWU, Betabake Ipswich)

COUNCIL WORKERS SAY 'NO'

On Wednesday, 20th December, a delegation of council workers from the London Borough of Wandsworth went up to the plush offices of the Local Authority National Joint Council, in Belgrave Square, to deliver their answer to the 1.4% increase for grade A workers offered by the employers.

Members of the delegation held a two-hour demonstration inside the offices, and handed in a letter to Brian Rusbridge, the employers' side Secretary, demanding that all the items on the annual shopping list: £60 a week, inflation-indexed; 35-hour week; increased holidays; extra payment to those not on a bonus; better sick pay and improved shift pay,

must be met in full.

The letter pointed out that over the past four years the gap between Local Authority workers' average earnings and national average earnings has tripled from £7 in 1974 to the present £21.

The ordinary members of the three unions involved—T&GWU, NUPE, and G&MWU—know that it will be united action that will improve conditions for the 1.1 million council workers. This message needs to be heeded by union officials, and co-ordinated action taken throughout the country.

By Dennis English
(Wandsworth G&MWU)

LORRY DRIVERS SPREAD

Road Haulage drivers, working anti-social hours often in poor conditions transporting industrial supplies, food and other goods, are being forced to take industrial action to achieve a decent wage.

The drivers, who negotiate pay on a regional basis, are asking for pay increases of around 25%, to guarantee

STRIKE

them a basic minimum wage of about £65 a week, and a reduction in hours. Most regions of the Road Haulage Association (the employers' organisation) so far refused to come anywhere near what is needed, offering only just over 13% on the basic rates.

Rejection

T&GWU spokesmen have

said that a national strike looks "virtually certain". Drivers in Scotland, Newcastle, Leeds, Bradford, Hull, Manchester, Merseyside and Oxford have decided to reject the offer and take strike action. In the T&GWU's biggest region, London and the South East, drivers voted overwhelmingly for strike action from midnight on 2nd January.

In Southampton, most of the major haulage firms have

already been hit. The action has the full backing of the T&GWU 2 49 branch and pickets are out at most of the main depots and lorry parks, and on the docks. They will be attempting to stop all lorries leaving the docks, spreading and consolidating the action nationally.

By Eileen Short

IRAN

continued from page 1



among the Shah's entourage seem to have persuaded him to stay on for the time being.

The ruling class faces the same dilemma as Franco's regime did in Spain.

They are desperate to hold on to the enormous wealth and unfettered power they acquired under the Shah's dictatorship. They are terrified by fear of the revenge that will be exacted by the workers for their years of corruption and torture.

If they try to intensify the repression, however, they will only stimulate the mass movement against them.

They can see no clear way forward. That is why the ruling clique is now split and cannot avoid lurching from paper concessions to more repression.

In the United States the government is also split and left without a clear policy. Driven to the conclusion that the Shah's days are numbered, they can see no viable alternative figures through whom US imperialism can continue to exert its influence in Iran.

In Britain, the government's immediate concern seems to be the future of Iran's order for British-made Chieftain tanks.

The whole labour movement must vigorously demand an immediate end to the

Labour government's shameful support for the Shah and the remnants of his regime. All supplies of arms to Iran must be stopped at once! Trade unionists should enforce blacking of all supplies to Iran's reactionary generals.

Despite the Shah's promises that those responsible for repression and torture will be brought to book, ruthless right-wing elements in the army and the police have stepped up their campaign of terror against the opposition, especially singling out workers' leaders for sadistic beatings and assassinations.

Yet the army has been incapable of quelling the mass upheaval. In spite of martial law and military government since November, it has failed to restore "order" or press the workers back to work.

The army itself is being undermined by events. Reports abound of troops refusing orders or turning on their officers.

The bloody clashes in Mashad last week, for instance, in which at least 100 were killed and several thousand injured, were sparked off by a minor incident in which a soldier, trying to talk a tank crew into joining a demonstration, was cut down by gunfire from another tank.

Tanks then moved forward and crushed crowds of demonstrators, starting two days of bloody carnage.

If the right-wing generals continue to try to crush the movement, the army itself will crumble. In the civil war that would follow, the ruling class are by no means confident that they would come out on top.

Shah's relief

The more intelligent ruling class representatives are therefore trying to find a way out through compromise with the old liberal politicians so long excluded from power by the Shah. In an attempt to grant partial concessions, and to dampen the revolutionary movement on the streets, the Shah and his advisers called on Shahpour Bakhtiar, one of the leaders of the liberal-nationalist "National Front", to form a government.

On the streets, however, this was immediately answered with cries of "Down with Bakhtiar!"—"Bakhtiar—a valet without power!"

The new "prime minister" has been given no real authority over the army and the police. The Shah even withdrew his promise to leave the country, originally, it

seems, a condition of Bakhtiar playing his part.

The workers obviously understand that Bakhtiar is intended as a new facade behind which the old regime, with or without the Shah in attendance, will continue.

Even other National Front leaders have little confidence in Bakhtiar's founding administration. They have refused to join a government under him, denouncing his compromise with the Shah.

Nor has the Ayatolla Komeini backed Bakhtiar, although (perhaps alarmed at the consequences of strike action on such a scale), he has apparently appealed for a return to partial production in the oil fields, a call which has so far been ignored.

The strikes and demonstrations will go on, despite any paper concessions from Bakhtiar. If Bakhtiar promised democratic rights, it is because the enormous movement of the workers leaves him no choice.

The workers and peasants of Iran want more than the downfall of the Shah, which is now virtually a foregone conclusion. They want an end to the whole regime, an end to the grotesque wealth and privilege of the ruling class in a country where millions still live in extreme poverty.

Were there a workers' party in Iran, capable of giving the magnificent revolutionary movement socialist aims and of giving clear guidance to the movement on the streets and in the factories, the Shah's regime would already have been decisively finished.

The army would have been broken by a class appeal to the troops. The workers would not only have toppled the Shah, but taken the axe to the root, clearing out all their exploiters, and begun the tasks of a socialist transformation of society.

This is the only way forward for the Iranian workers and peasants. All the signs are that they are moving in this direction on their own initiative.

But without an organised mass leadership, many obstacles and the danger of reaction remain.

It is the duty of organised workers throughout the world to give every possible assistance to the Iranian people in their struggle against the reaction and for a socialist Iran.

END LOW PAY

continued from page 1

Between January 14th and January 20th in the week preceding NUPE's national lobby of Parliament, Labour Party Young Socialist members will be out campaigning in support of the public sector workers.

Already scores of meetings have been arranged and publicised at which representatives of NUPE and other unions will be able to put their cases.


Following the national lobby organised by the public services unions the LPYS and the Youth Campaign Against Unemploy-

ment will be active in its support.

Some areas are considering organising lobbies of the local councils for action on hours and wages and recruitment of more workers into direct labour schemes.

In Manchester and Wales the YCAU bodies have called for area demonstrations for a minimum wage and 35-hour week.

Given the full support and understanding of the labour movement, these low paid workers can succeed in their claim and put another nail in the coffin of anti-working class, wage-restraint policies.



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MILITANT: Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. Editor: Peter Taaffe, Business Manager: Dave Galashan. Published by Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Tel: 01-986 3828. Printed by Cambridge Heath Press Ltd [TU], Mentmore Works, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.