

# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 592  
12 March 1982

20p

CPSA  
elections  
— support  
Macreadie



# BUDGET- NOTHING FOR WORKERS

The Tory Budget is a stinging slap in the face for working people.

Many were hoping that after the last three years of unmitigated disaster that for once the Tories would bring some relief into their lives.

Unemployment has been almost trebled by this government. Long-term and youth unemployment have soared. Vicious cuts in education and health have cut the workers' social wage. Rents have rocketed. Wages and benefits have been held back. Where is the relief? —non-existent!

The only part of the Budget that would be welcomed by workers is the fact that income tax thresholds and benefits are being increased in line with inflation.

The income tax cut is worth about £1.50 a week for an average worker. But that has to be set against the fact that workers are already more highly taxed than ever before.

Before the Budget an average worker was paying 27.6% of his wage in tax and NI payments, compared to 25.2% in 1978/79. The rich, of course, have

always been highly favoured by the Tories. Last year an executive on ten times the average wage would have paid only 52% of his wage in taxes com-

pared to 66% three years ago.

Geoffrey Howe seems to think that workers should

CONTINUED ON  
BACK PAGE

By John  
Pickard

Photo: MILITANT



## Defend public transport

Tens of thousands of London Transport workers are on strike on 10 March against threats to jobs and services; the first joint strike of bus and tube workers since 1926.

Two thousand jobs are in jeopardy this year with thousands more threatened later. Passengers face a 25% overall cut in services and an immediate doubling of fares.

The blatantly political overturning of the GLC "Fares Fair" scheme by the Law Lords stopped attempts to reverse constant attacks on public transport over the past few years.

Denning and Co's judgement gave a legal precedent which could threaten not only other policies of local councils but national Labour Party policies such as renationalisation.

Such a wide ranging threat needs determined

and united action, by the labour movement. *Militant* supporters in London Transport are pressing for the following strategy.

1. For all trade unions representing LT workers to demand immediate withdrawal of the threat of job losses and immediate reinstatement of cut services. Failure by LT to comply with this demand should be met with a co-ordinated trade union response of total non-co-operation with new rosters or new fare schedules.

Such a stance makes it clear that the defence of jobs and services is LT workers' first concern—but it would also attract huge public support by rejecting the fare increases. The ASLEF dispute has shown that unilateral management attempts to impose new rosters can be defeated.

2. For the unions, the Greater London Labour Party and the GLC to unite in a campaign—including industrial action—to secure a greatly increased central

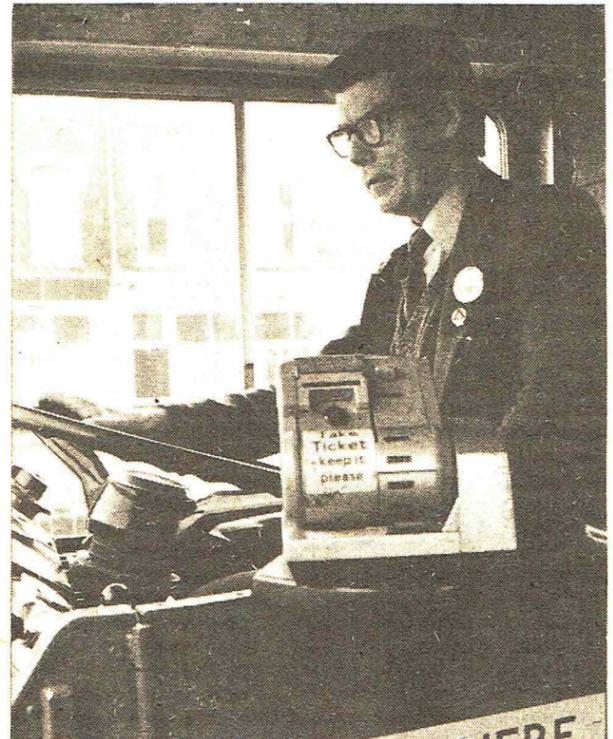
government subsidy for London Transport and other major city transport systems. Specifically we demand that 60% of LT's spending should come from the government.

Such a campaign would put the responsibility for the wreckage of the capital's transportation system where it belongs: on the doorstep of No. 10 Downing Street. It would also answer the problem of ever-increasing domestic rates.

To succeed, such a campaign must be linked up nationally, the Denning ruling does not only affect London but many other PTEs as well.

The rail unions favour a nationally integrated transport system and are asking for higher subsidies. ASLEF rejects new rosters: many NUR grades do as well. The trade union leaders must tie all these threads together into a centralised challenge to the Tory government.

The strike on 10 March is



just a start. Determined action, not just a token stoppage will be essential if the

Tories are to be forced to retreat and increase subsidies to public transport.

# THE PAT WALL CONTROVERSY

## CAPITALISM THE REAL THREAT TO DEMOCRACY

Every time there is a crucial meeting of the Labour Party NEC or one of its sub-committees there is inevitably a massive campaign by the Tory media to strengthen the hand of Labour's right wing.

In releasing only carefully selected portions of Pat Wall's speech, the last thing in the minds of the *Sunday Times* editors was a balanced, objective report. The clear intention was to 'do a job' on Pat, misrepresenting and distorting his views and those of *Militant*, in time to get the organisation subcommittee to reject him.

The same newspaper, we would point out, a few years ago commissioned a report by journalist Richard Fletcher into the connections between the American CIA and some of Labour's right-wingers and when the report was prepared, the paper refused to publish it for fear of damaging what it described as its "friends."

Despite the obvious distortions in the media reporting of Pat's speech, the right wing of the Labour Party have, predictably, demanded action against the Marxist left.

The MP who was beaten by Pat in the Bradford selection conference, Ben Ford, was reported as saying that "consorting" with the SWP "should automatically disqualify him [Pat Wall] from Labour Party membership."

The Labour Party members in Bradford North have already expressed their views on Ben Ford 'consorting' with spokesmen and representatives of some of the most bloody and reac-

### MILITANT EDITORIAL

tionary police states. He is the last person to lecture workers on who should be a member of their own party.

Nevertheless, the general reaction of the Right to this issue is proof once again that they are trying to organise a major witch-hunt. The rank and file must be prepared to withstand this new attempt to split and destroy the Labour party.

As for the meeting itself, few of the newspapers pointed out that Pat was debating AGAINST the 'Socialist Workers Party', not speaking on "their" platform. The policies and methods of this organisation have nothing in common with those of *Militant* and what is more, Pat Wall is not the only Labour Party member to oppose them in debate. Tony Benn, Eric Heffer, and Michael Foot himself, have all appeared on platforms to debate with spokesmen of the SWP.

At the meeting Pat explained that the *Militant* was in favour of a peaceful transformation of society. No supporter of *Militant*

would ever advocate or encourage "bloodshed" or "civil war" as the Press tried to suggest. On the contrary, Pat was explaining that if there was any threat to a peaceful transformation of society, that threat would come from the capitalist class itself.

The main political representatives of capitalism, the Tory Party, are no champions of democracy. The leader of the Tory Party in 1912 actually supported a mutiny of officers based in Ireland who opposed the policies of the majority of Parliament.

In their time, Mussolini, Hitler and Franco were at one time praised and supported by leading figures in the Tory Party.

More recently, Ian Gilmour, supposedly a 'liberal' in that party, wrote that "Conservatives do not worship democracy...For them majority rule is a device...for Conservatives, therefore, democracy is a means to an end and not an end in itself. In Doctor Hayek's words, democracy 'is not an ultimate or absolute value and must be judged by what it will achieve and if that is leading to an end that is undesirable or inconsistent with itself, then there is a theoretical case for ending it.'" (*Inside Right* by Ian Gilmour).

Put into plain language, Ian Gilmour is hinting at a 'coup' of some sort to stop any moves to socialism.

Despite the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the population, there is no doubt whatsoever that the capitalists and big business

would fight both tooth and claw against even a peaceful transformation of society. The threat of violence only exists in so far as it is a threat from the Right and the Tories against the democratic right of the mass of the population to strive to change society in their own interests.

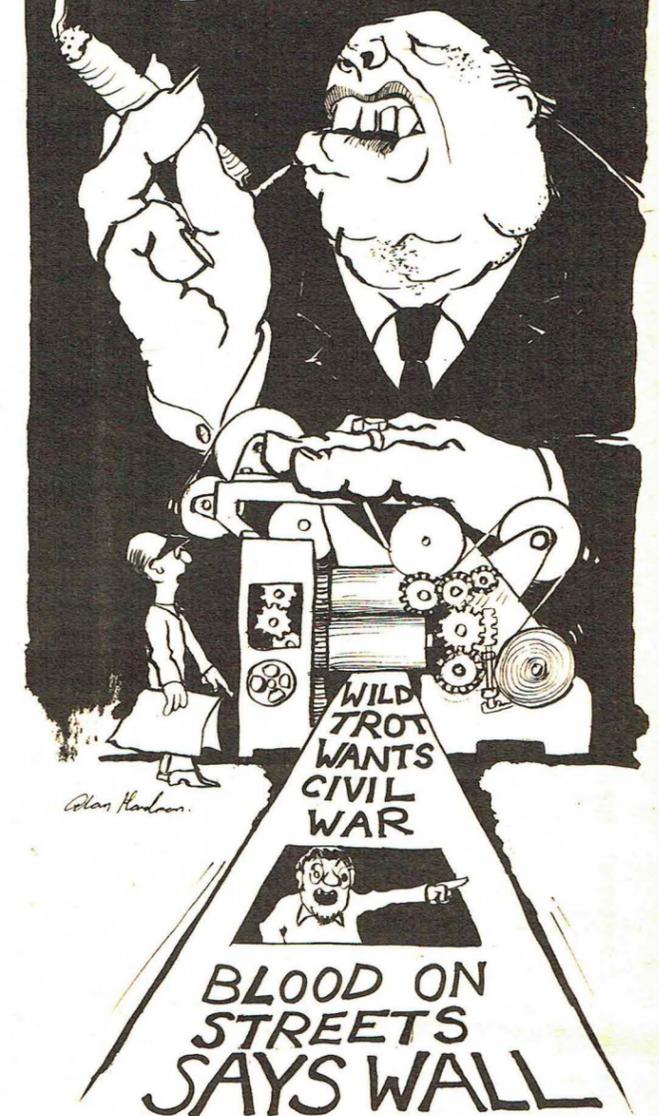
That is why the Tories are attacking the rights of the trade unions. The working class had to struggle with great sacrifice and toil to gain the right to organise, to strike, of free press and free speech, and even the right to vote. "But the price of liberty is eternal vigilance."

It was precisely because the working class in Chile, for example, were not prepared by their leadership for the reaction of the generals that the coup of 1973 was able to take place at a cost of tens of thousands of workers lives.

The new selection conference in Bradford North will give Pat Wall another opportunity to be selected. He has said that he would work for any Labour candidate, if he was beaten himself. Ben Ford on the other hand, has declared his intention to stand against Labour, as an 'Independent', if he is not selected.

The press can rant and rave—and indeed the more 'violent' their attacks on decent hard-working socialists, the more Pat's comments are proved correct—but in the end it will be the members of the Labour Party who will decide who they want as fellow party members and as their candidates.

IN THE PRESENT CRISIS EVERYTHING—INCLUDING TRUTH—MUST BE ECONOMISED



### Dirty press tactics

The press coverage of Pat Wall's speech showed the usual distortions found in the capitalist press' dealings with the labour movement.

But the journalists who harassed Pat Wall's wife, Pauline, at her home touched new depths this weekend. Pauline Wall, in an unsuccessful attempt to prevent press lies, pinned up copies of the National Union of Journalists' 'Code of professional conduct' outside her door.

Her description of the press tactics show that this code, stressing the need for journalists to avoid "distortion, selection and misrepresentation" and to obtain information "only by straightforward means" has been totally violated.

The following questions were put by the press. "What do you feel about being married to a violent man?" "Does he cuff the children?" "Are you disgusted with him?" "Why does your husband advocate violence?" "Why is he calling for blood on the streets?" "How can he share a platform with the RSWP [sic]?"

On Saturday night, one of the Wall's sons, David, was attacked by thugs in Bradford. The press attempted to capitalise on this. A reporter said to

Pauline Wall "Will you agree to this statement 'David is very critical of his father because having just suffered an attack himself, he doesn't want to see any more blood on the streets'."

At no point did they accept Pauline Wall's statement that Pat Wall did not "advocate violence." They seemed more concerned with putting words into the mouth of the person they were supposedly 'interviewing.'

Is this standard Fleet Street practice? If so, what kind of processed 'news' is fed to us daily when they 'interview' people with less political experience and less understanding of press tactics than Pauline Wall?

The press have even approached Pat Wall's employers, asking them what they think of his political opinions and anonymous letters have been sent to them suggesting that Pat be sacked.

After this outrageous personal harassment of Pat Wall and Pauline Wall last week we are awaiting with interest to see if the Roy Hattersleys and the Peter Shores of the Labour Party will loudly and publicly condemn this kind of hounding of Labour Party members.

## What really happened in Bradford

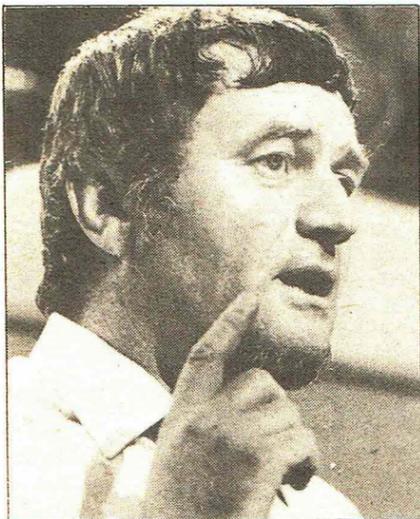
Dear Sir

I am not a member of the Labour Party, but I do read *Militant* regularly, and I was present at the public meeting in Bradford at which Pat Wall debated with Duncan Hallas of the SWP.

Since a *Sunday Times* reporter was also at that meeting, equipped with a tape recorder, I'd have expected any article he wrote, quoting what Pat Wall said, to have been in its proper context. I should have known better.

Firstly, the *Sunday Times* article insinuated that Pat Wall's views about the dismantling of the state were identical to those of the SWP. Untrue. Pat Wall made it absolutely clear that

Photo: MILITANT



Pat Wall

although there was room for agreement between the SWP and himself about the class nature of the state, he differed fundamentally in his political conclusions as to how the state was to be dismantled.

He repeated over and over again his belief (and that of your paper) in a peaceful transition to a socialist Britain through the parliamentary process.

Secondly, both speakers pointed out that the monarchy, the House of Lords, the generals, judges, etc., will have to go. But it would

not take a genius to remind the outraged Tory media that many left-wing Labour MPs have said the same thing.

Anyone remember Tony Benn's speech at the 'Debate of the Decade' meeting in Central Hall, Westminster, in March 1980 when he reminded the hecklers that one of the great failures of the 1974-79 Labour government was to 'reform' (his word) the 'security services', the civil service, etc?

And what could Tony Benn have meant by calling

for the 'reform' of the organs of the state other than to make the police, army, courts, etc., more democratic?

Thirdly, the media portrayal of Pat Wall as being hell-bent on 'civil war' and 'bloodshed' would be funny if it wasn't such a serious allegation and in total contradiction of everything he said. Pat Wall was at pains to point out that, as in Chile, the ruling class will fight tooth and nail to prevent a left-wing Labour government—democratically elected—from implementing socialist policies.

And he added that the only way to prevent—note, prevent—bloodshed was for the government to render the army chiefs, judges, etc., powerless to sabotage the plans.

Don't believe what you read in the Tory press! Pat Wall's comments were ripped clean out of context. The *Sunday Times* article was a bloody disgrace, as anyone who was present at the Bradford meeting would no doubt testify. Enclosed is £1 towards the *Militant* fund.

Yours sincerely  
Peter Else  
(Unemployed)

## Witch-hunt opposed

Last week the highest body of the country's largest trade union between its national conferences set itself firmly against any witch-hunt in the Labour Party. The General Executive Council of the TGWU unanimously supported a motion submitted by its Region 6 opposing the witch-hunt and calling upon the Labour Party to concentrate its energies on fighting the Tories and Social Democrats.

It unanimously supported another motion which defended the right of all Constituency Labour parties to select candidates of their own choice.

Blackpool South CLP overwhelmingly carried two resolutions from an USDAW branch and Clifton ward against a witch-hunt and the demands by certain right-wing MPs to close down LPYS branches. A similar resolution against a witch-hunt was passed by Blackpool North CLP. A week after this GMC a *Militant* readers meeting was held, attended by over 25 people and raised £34 for the fighting fund.

Dalry Shandon branch in Edinburgh has also stated that it is opposed to yet another investigation into *Militant* and other left-wing

tendencies in the Labour Party".

At a recent meeting SE Essex CLP passed the following resolution:

"This CLP deplores the policy of the NEC in failing to ratify the candidature of Peter Tatchell and sees this and the proposals to carry out further investigations into the *Militant* as the beginning of a witch-hunt against the Left in the party as a whole.

Not only Tatchell, but also the latest candidates elected in Sheffield and Leeds had been picked on in the press. Instead of an enquiry, the Left in the party

should unite in defending *Militant*.

Despite some disappointment earlier in the meeting that *Militant* supporter Mike Levene narrowly missed election as the constituency delegate to LP conference, the passing of the above resolution shows growing support for our ideas in South-East Essex.

Reports by Mark French (Canvey Island LP) and Mick Wainwright (Blackpool South CLP)

## Yorkshire Conference

Mrs. Lawton, who chaired this year's Labour Party regional conference in Yorkshire and is retiring from the Executive told delegates that her grandfather was fighting in the ILP in the 1880's.

She was sometimes ashamed that we had got no further than we had, and threatened to come back and haunt us if we didn't get socialism for her grandchildren.

Time and again, the conference adopted radical policies on nuclear disarmament, renationalisation without compensation of assets sold off, abolition of the Youth Opportunities Programme, and its replacement by genuine employment.

The question of Pat Wall, and the right of Bradford North to select their own candidate was not discussed, although the recent de-selection of three Yorkshire MPs meant that many delegates felt strongly that a statement from the Conference should have been made.

Nearly 100 people came to hear Pat Wall, Walter Cunningham, and Terry Fields, prospective parliamentary candidate for Liverpool Kirkdale at the *Militant* Readers Meeting which raised over £200.

By Colin Piper  
COHSE

## LONDON CONFERENCE

Last weekend's London Labour Party Conference overwhelmingly passed a resolution in support of Peter Tatchell as prospective candidate for Bermondsey. Despite an attempt by sections of the so-called left, 'Militant' supporters Nick Bradley, Bob Labi, Eddie McParland and David White were all re-elected to the Regional Executive.

## NEC Organisation Committee decisions

The Organisation sub-committee of Labour's National Executive decided on 8 March to instruct Bradford North Labour Party to begin again its selection procedure for prospective parliamentary candidate.

This was due to alleged "technical irregularities" and followed the Labour Party NEC decision of 24 February not to endorse *Militant* supporter Pat Wall's candidature. A move to investigate Pat Wall's policies was defeated.

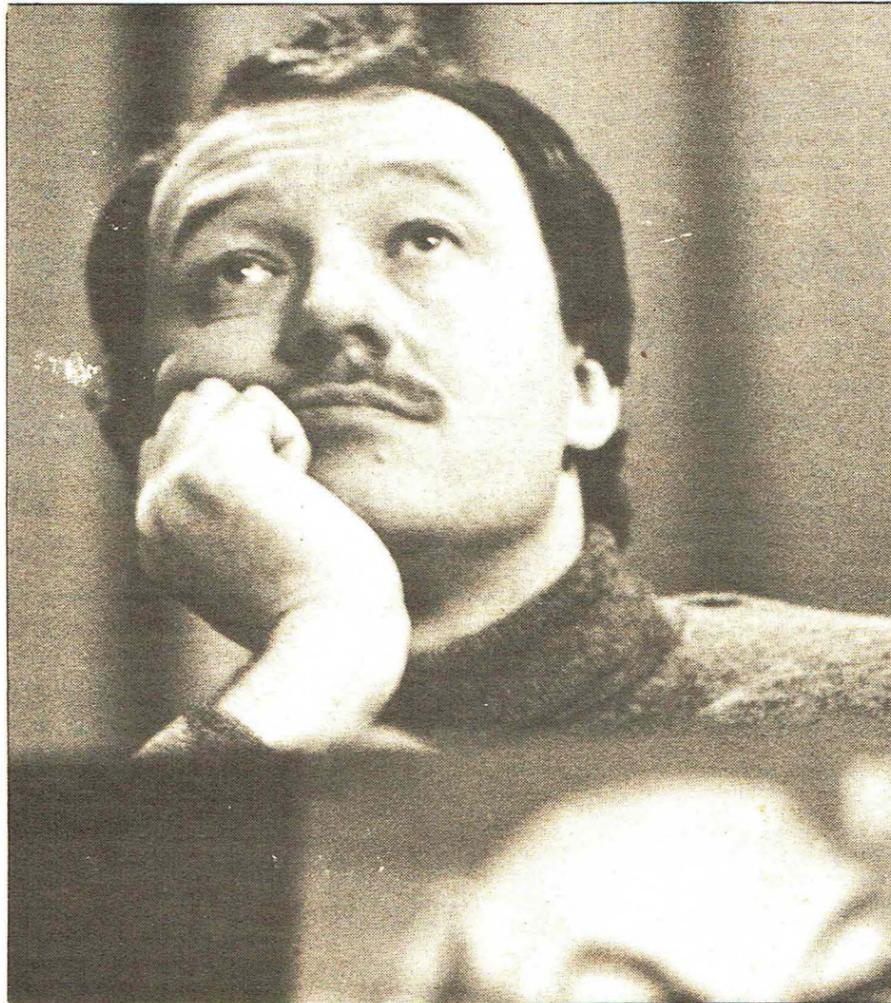
The Party chairman Judith Hart moved that representatives of the NEC should first meet with Pat Wall to give him the chance to explain his remarks. That was opposed by NEC left wingers as threatening the start of a "thought police" in the Party.

Dennis Skinner remarked that Pat Wall's comments were similar to what he had

been saying for many years. The Party treasurer Eric Varley claimed that a "Parliamentary Party made up of Skinners and Walls would not stand a snowball in hell's chance of forming a government."

Is Eric Varley now claiming that Dennis Skinner's views should be subject to investigation?

John Golding moved that there should be no more *Militant* supporters endorsed a candidates until the outcome of the enquiry. David Williams (COHSE) saying that John Golding's resolution was discriminatory, even proposed that no further candidates of any kind should be endorsed until after the inquiry. John Golding's resolution was defeated by 13 votes to 7, so *Militant* supporter Derek Hatton was endorsed as PPC for Liverpool Wavertree.



The Labour GLC has been defeated in its reforms by a combination of the Law Lords and Tories. (Above) GLC leader, Ken Livingstone, at last weekend's London Labour Party Conference

Photo: D Doran

BRADFORD *Militant* Readers Meeting: "Socialism and Parliament". Hear Pat Wall (President Bradford Trades Council) Sunday 21 March 7.30pm Textile Hall, Westgate, Bradford.

# How the Right-Wing policed the Party

Writing in the latest edition of the Labour Party magazine *New Socialist* Ian Mikardo has given a graphic account of what would happen if the right-wing in the party had their way and returned to the domination of the party they had in the 1950s.

Newspapers would be proscribed, expulsions return and party headquarters once again keep exhaustive M15-style dossiers on all prominent remaining, left members in the party.

First in the firing line would be *Militant* supporters, but the Right would swiftly move on to attack all those on the left. To-day right-wing members

of Labour's "Solidarity" organisation claim that the Bevanite left is 'legitimate'. Only Marxists are 'illegitimate'.

That was not their view in the 1950s when they tried to expel Bevan from the party. In his article, Mikardo tells what happened after the left won a majority of six to one in the Constituency party section representation to Labour's National Executive (NEC).

He recalls the NEC meetings: "from 1951 onwards there was never a meeting without some violent attack against the Left... Michael Foot's adjective for them was 'gruesome'."

Prominent in the witch-hunt against the Bevanite left were transport workers leader Arthur Deakin, and party leader Hugh Gaitskell. Mikardo explains how they operated by moving first against a left-Tribune

paper *Socialist Outlook*: "The Deakin-Gaitskell tactic had a clear logic about it. The first step was to deny the left the right of free speech, as a preliminary to drumming them out of the party..."

"In 1954 there was a move to proscribe *Socialist Outlook* (how on earth do you proscribe a newspaper?) as a prelude to proscribing *Tribune*."

"When *Tribune* criticised Arthur Deakin for not supporting striking London dockers, the NEC asked the members of the editorial board—Jennie Lee, Michael Foot, and Bill Mallalieu—how they could reconcile their criticism of Deakin with membership of the party and then solemnly passed a vote of censure on the three of them."

But *Tribune* was considered to be more than just a newspaper; it organised public meetings, called

'Tribune Brains Trusts'. Mikardo recalls that at an NEC meeting, after another brush with the leadership of the steel workers union, "Harry Douglas said that the next logical thing to do was to 'examine' the Tribune brains trusts."

"Edith Summerskill commented that that didn't go far enough: what was needed, she said, was a few expulsions. The logic, as I have said, was clear enough: having forbidden the Bevanites from meeting together, the next step was to gag them."

The right calculated they would have a majority to expel Bevan. Mikardo was in Israel to attend his daughter's wedding. She brought her wedding forward a day, Mikardo came back to London, and the expulsion motion was just lost by 14 votes to 13.

But that did not stop right-wing control over the

party machine. At that time, Mikardo relates: "No applicant for a job in Transport House [*Labour Party Headquarters—JC*] or in regional offices had any chance of being appointed if suspected of being anywhere left of centre."

"A large part of the work of the national agent's department first under Len Williams and then even more under Sara Barker, was devoted to compiling exhaustive M15-style dossiers on all the prominent left members of the party."

"Those dossiers contained clips of our articles and speeches, and McCarthy-like guilt-by-association information on our relations and friends and associates. Some of this material was put together in Transport House, and a lot of it was fed in by regional organisers."

Mikardo does not men-

tion it, but some of those trained in this manner are still in positions of importance in the Labour Party organisation and are responsible for drawing up the information for the enquiry into *Militant*. Their methods of working can be gauged by Mikardo reporting that "Ron Hayward has told me (and others) that on the day he took office as national agent he found a four-drawer filing cabinet full of these dossiers, and burned the lot of them."

If the right wing have their way the days of secret police dossiers, witch-hunts and expulsions will return. You don't have to be a prophet to forecast this—just see what happened before.

By Jim Chrystie

## LPYS Conference 82

**Unemployed—want a job?**

**YOP—want decent rates of pay?**

**At School—want a grant?**

**At work—fed up with Tory attacks on young workers?**

**Then come to the Labour Party Young Socialists Annual Conference this Easter!**

Over 2,000 delegates and visitors will be working out the kind of socialist policies needed to organise the fight of working class youth to kick the Tories and their profit system out!

Among the speakers at the conference and rallies will be Dennis Skinner and Tony Benn. Debates at the conference will centre around the burning issues facing youth, and will include documents on Northern Ireland, and Disarmament.

The magnificent YOPs lobby of parliament, over 3,000 strong, has shown the whole labour movement the crucial work being done by the LPYS. This fund of goodwill must be used.

Make sure that finance is raised to enable every unemployed, YOP and school student to go. Make sure no-one is barred by cost.

Local LPYS branches

should ensure that every trade union office, branch, shop stewards committee and local Labour Party branch is circulated with a letter explaining about the conference.

Alan Sapper, president of the TUC will be speaking, so every trade union organisation should see it is represented at the conference by sponsoring one of its members to attend.

If they can't send someone, a donation will help someone else to go! At the same time, local branches should immediately organise their own fundraising, following the example of Erith and Crayford LPYS who raised £70 by organising a gig, and Sittingbourne, who've got a sponsored walk coming up.

Apart from sending a delegate (whose name should be sent into the address below immediately), branches should be planning for as many of their members as possible to go, and booking transport and accommodation accordingly.

Fancy four days of socialism—excellent political debates, and a disco/band every night? Then come to LPYS Conference at Bridlington April 9-12.

For further details, free leaflets, trade union letters and posters, write to: Andy Bevan, LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

# Four days of socialism

By Kevin Ramage  
(Labour Party Young Socialists National Chairman)



The Militant readers meeting at LPYS conference 1981. This year's conference and this year's readers meeting, should be bigger than ever. PHOTO: Militant.

## YOPS:

## Where we go from here

**Defying intimidation by local Manpower Services Commission (MSC) officials in Leeds, over 60 YOPsters joined a group totalling 90 on the 25 February YTURC lobby of parliament.**

Many YOPsters had been threatened with loss of pay and holiday allowance. In some cases MSC officials had even suggested a 'local' protest instead, so worried were they by the possible effects of the national event on their carefully censored image of YOPS and WEEPS.

The massive turnout con-

firmed their worst fears. Two extra minibuses had to be booked to get surplus YOPsters, LPYS members and young unemployed to London for the day.

In discussions on the coaches, there was unanimous support for YTURC demands: trade union rights, union rates of pay, 5 weeks paid holiday a year and a guaranteed job at the end of training.

Sixteen YOPsters on one coach alone joined the LPYS with more applications in the pipeline.

YOP workers' anger was hardly surprising given their conditions. Linda from Harrogate for example has been unemployed since she left school four years ago. Her only work has been

part time shop work in holiday periods.

She joined the LPYS as did another girl who had three YOP courses since leaving school but not one single job.

Another group of YOPsters told us about a 'fightback' group they had organised on their site which planned to print a broadsheet. They were enthusiastic about the lobby and had organised joint activities including staging their own play with the LPYS in Leeds.

Many links have been forged with shop stewards, union branches and Labour Parties throughout Yorkshire. In Sheffield both NUPE and GMWU have set up youth branches

as a result of the work and NUPE were particularly generous in part-sponsoring three coaches from the Yorkshire area.

Now must begin the task of chasing up names and addresses, unionising all YOPS workers and winning them to the socialist programme of the LPYS.

Locally, we are now working on the idea originally put forward by MSC officials to weaken the national lobby. We are working towards a half-day YOP strike in the Leeds district with a lobby of the council and the local Tory rag, the 'Yorkshire Evening Post' in May or June.

Perhaps by then the MSC won't be so fond of the idea!

Despite their training, government cutbacks in particular mean very few WEEP workers are taken on permanently. There should be guaranteed jobs for trainees. It's a waste of their skills and talent to put them back on the dole after 6 months.

They should also be paid proper trainees rates. At the university that's more than double what the WEEP workers get, yet they do basically the same. I fully support the YOPS Trainees Rights Campaign in this.

By David Jones  
ASTMS

## Town and country—



PHOTO: Militant

## Marxism is spreading.

**Over 50 people attended a public meeting in Rotherham against the witch-hunts in the Labour Party, at which the main speaker was Pat Wall, nominated prospective parliamentary candidate for Bradford North.**

A collection for the 'Militant' fighting fund raised £68.50 before expenses.

In the discussion after Pat Wall spoke, one comrade remarked that the Rotherham area is one of the last bastions of the right wing—with Council leaders seeing themselves as 'managers' of the rate payers' money not as shop stewards for the working class.

Indeed Rotherham Council are proposing to cut £3.5m from the education budget, but a recent Solidarity meeting at which Stan Crowther MP and Peter Hardy MP spoke only attracted 17 people and

many of these were not Solidarity supporters.

One older comrade stated that he remembered the witch hunting of the Labour League of Youth in the 1930s and whilst not supporting all 'Militant's' policies recognised clearly their right to be in the party.

From the old industrial areas of South Yorkshire to the small towns and villages of Hertfordshire, Labour party members and trade unionists want to hear the ideas of 'Militant'. The Labour Party branch in Knebworth and Codicote invited Steve Glennon from nearby Stevenage Labour Party to speak on 'What Militant stands for.'

They unanimously passed a resolution clearly opposing the witch hunt and bought 14 'Militants', 6 'What we stand for pamphlets' and 2 copies of 'Militant Irish Monthly'. Many of those present now want to read 'Militant' every week.

## The role of the unions

In Nottingham University trade unions have complete control over the running and content of WEEP (Work Experience on Employers' Premises) schemes.

When Manpower Services first approached the university, my union ASTMS only agreed to the schemes as long as we could monitor them. After two years we discovered the university were running, unknown to us, a rural youth scheme at the School of Agriculture.

So we arranged a meeting with the University

authorities and insisted they told us of every application to the MSC. We demanded details of every scheme, in particular renewals. Then we could see if they were using WEEP workers to fill full-time posts.

We also demanded proper training to give the worker a broad understanding of work in the different university areas, like my own, photography. We opposed them being brought in to do just one job, eg. a storeman. We insisted on a mini-apprenticeship.

Some of our workers

have complained they never had a comprehensive training themselves so we are trying to do something about that now!

Unions can tightly control these schemes by insisting everyone is drawn up with their agreement, detailing each week where the WEEP worker will be and what he or she will be doing, so the union can check any time.

In the engineering workshops we found WEEP workers were being left to operate machines on their own. Now we ensure they are properly supervised.

HILLHEAD

Deep blue, light blue, or tartan...

# TORIES MUST GO

**The Glasgow Hillhead by-election on 25 March is a chance to make Glasgow's parliamentary representation 100% Labour—if Labour fights on a socialist platform.**

Out of fourteen constituencies in Glasgow, thirteen returned massive Labour majorities even in the 1979 election, and the Tory candidate only clung onto the one Tory seat, Hillhead, by the skin of his teeth.

His majority was 2,000 and he received only 41% of the vote in a previous Tory stronghold.

Hillhead is not typical of Glasgow. Edwardian villas and tree-lined avenues glaringly contrast with the decayed slums and soulless housing schemes of so much of the city.

**By Eddie Phillips**  
(Provan Labour Party)

Only 22% of Hillhead voters are council tenants; compared to over 90% in many other Glasgow constituencies. And while most young people in the city leave school at sixteen, with few qualifications and even fewer prospects; Hillhead has more voters with at least two 'A' levels, than any other constituency in Britain.

But even Hillhead has been unable to escape the savagery of Thatcherism, especially working class parts of the constituency like Scotstoun and Partick, where youth unemployment is over 50%.

The middle class areas have suffered under the Tories as well. Soaring

interest charges and spiralling mortgages have hit owner-occupiers and education cut-backs have affected Glasgow University, one of the city's biggest employers, on the outskirts of the constituency.

The number of unemployed graduates continues to grow and public spending cuts increase the problems of students searching for reasonable short term accommodation.

There are many issues in Hillhead which point up the case for socialism. Labour must hammer home the truth—that these problems cannot be solved by Toryism, whichever variety: that of the true-blue Tory, Malone, the pale blue Tory Jenkins or tartan Tory Leslie. Labour must campaign for a clear socialist alternative.

Any attempt to "out-moderate" the moderates is doomed to failure. The

non-political slogan of 'Stan's the Man' did not stop the SDP bandwagon at Croydon North West. Standing beside Roy Jenkins and declaring that "We are also moderate!" is no way to win the "middle ground" which can be won to socialism.

**Labour must campaign for socialism**

Paradoxically, the first person Jenkins met on his first visit to the constituency declared herself to be a supporter of Tony Benn!

Press charges of extremism must be confronted head-on by putting these questions to the Hillhead electorate: "Is it extremism to campaign for an end to unemployment, a 35 hour

week and a decent wage for every worker?"

"Is it extreme to fight for better housing and social facilities, an end to the arms race?"

Labour must explain that the day-to-day problems can only find a permanent solution through the implementation of fundamental and irreversible socialist policies.

Moreover, Labour should mercilessly expose the record of the carpet-bagger, Jenkins; his cynical use of the labour movement to advance his career, his abandonment when his personal ambition dictated for the new gravy train, the SDP.

Labour's candidate, David Wiseman, must show that the SDP stand for policies which have been tried and tested—and have failed. Their 'radicalism' was exposed when they went through the lobbies of

parliament in droves to support the anti-trade union hatchetman Tebbit.

Shirley Williams, after her Crosby by-election victory, did not thank her supporters for voting for moderation, but appealed deliberately as a radical. "Out with the old, on with the new!", she cried; "The Social Democratic Party is not a political party, it is a crusade."

Labour must fight fire with fire, and build its campaign as a crusade against conservatism, cynicism, careerism and capitalism. There is no room for a quiet campaign in the hope that traditional Labour voters will thereby be convinced that "nothing in the party has changed".

The country has changed with a massive economic crisis threatening us all. The voters must be told the truth—socialism is the answer!

## THE THIN END OF THE WEDGE

**The Labour Party in Thanet West recently passed an emergency resolution fully backing Kent's school meal workers (see Militant 19 February).**

The response from Thanet school meals workers has been one of anger. Some previously non-union members have joined the union to protect themselves from savage wage cuts and threats of dismissal the Tory controlled Kent County Council have made.

"This could be the thin edge of the wedge" said Mr Bolton, GMWU delegate when moved the resolution. "A threat to end the county school dinner service".

A teacher said that the Tories had picked on the dinner service because it was thinking of contracting it out to private firms. The meeting unanimously agreed to support these workers.

Thanet is already run down and unemployment high, especially amongst young people. Recently 60 white collar were sacked by Rovex, the toy manufacturers, and this week the rest of the factory were put on a three day week.

The fight of the school meals ladies for their jobs and wages and the struggle in Kent against redundancies has received a real boost with the activity of the Kent Labour and Trade Union Action Committee (KLTUAC).

Due to pressure from KLTUAC the South East Region TUC is now to hold a conference in May of the whole Kent labour move-

ment.

This will be an opportunity to adopt a fighting programme of action which Militant supporters have been consistently arguing for.

**By Jeff Porter**  
(Thanet West CLP)

**The Kent Labour and Trade Union Action Committee was formed by trade union activists last October to organise a resistance to Kent's growing unemployment.**

The committee's founding resolution decided:

- 1) To mobilise support for any group of workers threatened with redundancy or closure.
- 2) To help co-ordinate the struggle of unions against redundancies, mass unemployment, cuts in Social Services and to demand jobs for those still at school and the thousands of Kent workers already on the dole.

The second meeting in December saw nearly forty delegates from union branches present. Officers and eight area sub-committees were elected.

Branches represented so far cover the following unions: NATSOPA, NUT, Kent area NUM, AUEW, TGWU, EETPU, USDAW, ASTMS and POEU. Additionally a number of constituency Labour Parties and Young Socialist branches are represented as well as the Canterbury Unemployed Workers Group.

For further information on KLTUAC contact the secretary, E Segal, 10 Westbourne Gardens, Folkestone, Kent.



Private "enterprise" for Heseltine. Personal misery for tenants.

PHOTO: Denis Doran (Militant)

## THE 'PRIVATE ENTERPRISE SPIRIT'

**Nearly 200 members of the Federation of Newham Tenants waited for 2 hours to give Secretary of State, Michael Heseltine, a loud, hostile reception as he opened the new 'Parkside' private housing estate in Newham, East London.**

With 6,800 on Newham's housing waiting list, joined by an extra 200 every week, residents are angry that the Tories blatantly put profits before people's needs.

170 houses built by Newham Council for the

private market remain empty and boarded up two years after they were built. People simply cannot afford to buy houses costing £25,000 and over.

As Lilly Hoopes from the Tenants Federation told me, "we are not opposed to people buying their own homes, but we oppose Heseltine, as the sole authority for house planning here, ignoring the needs and wishes of local people."

"What we need are homes for rent. Docklands people must have a say in their own future."

The Tories only aim is to help their friends in the financial institutions to look for profitable investments. 189 acres, two

thirds of Newham's housing land has been hived off to the London Dockland Development Corporation, (LDDC) appointed and funded by central government which builds only for the private sector.

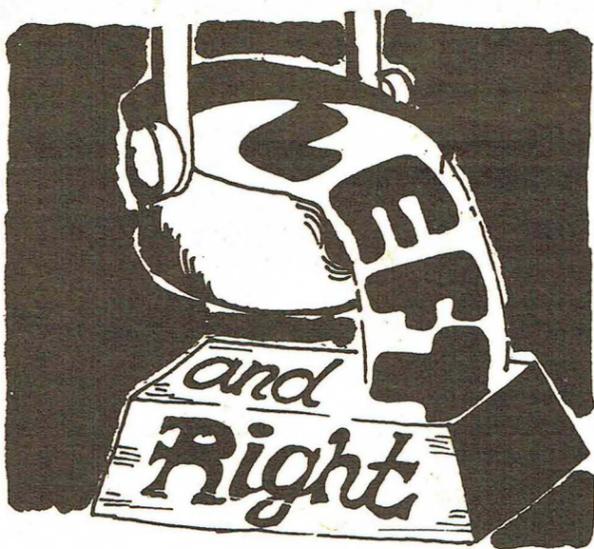
This means 1506 council houses for renting will not be built in the Beckton area. The purpose of the LDDC is said to be to "generate new wealth, housing and employment, recreating in the heart of London a thriving and prosperous region". But grants for renovating council houses have been stopped so houses are rapidly deteriorating.

The LDDC has taken over 623 acres in the

whole of Docklands and is not building one single council house for rent.

The reception itself brought it home just how out of touch the Tories are with reality. Heseltine, a man who owns 3 houses offered the "private enterprise spirit" to the council house tenants by telling them that they would be given first option to buy! Some hope for people living from hand to mouth on money from the dole and low paid jobs.

**By Ed Waugh**



### So difficult to get servants these days

"With three million unemployed you would think I would not have this problem finding a cook. But clearly they would rather be on the dole." This tale of woe came from Lady Mills, playwright wife of actor Sir John Mills. After all she is offering a whole £40 for a full week's work.

Her last cook only lasted six weeks. But as Lady Mills has explained, neither she nor her husband could do the cooking. "I hate cooking," she told the *Daily Mirror*, 16 February, "I prefer writing."

### Trying to cut out Trotsky

The State Publishing House in Moscow, concerned at a "certain revival of Trotskyism" in recent years, has come up with the answer: a booklet of highly-selective and misleading quotes from Lenin entitled "Lenin Versus Trotsky and His Followers."

The Trotskyists, they explain, "reflecting to some extent the views and feelings of certain groups of students, intellectuals and lower-paid employees, try to foist distorted political concepts on them and to incite them to acts of adventurism".

Interestingly enough, the publishers have chosen a famous picture of Lenin speaking from a rostrum for the cover of this publication—famous because it is the one from which Stalin's editors later cut out the figure of Trotsky standing next to Lenin.

Is there maybe a lesson in this somewhere?

### Road to disaster

The effect of government cutbacks will be paid for by an increased risk of road accidents. After one of the worst winters this century thousands of miles of roads are now crumbling into disrepair. The potholes are plain to see, but there is also other damage as frost and ice has allowed water into the sub-structure.

The British Road Federation warned the government in a report last week that unless council's maintenance spending is allowed to rise then many minor roads will fall into complete disrepair and have to be closed. Over the last ten years, whilst road traffic has risen by 14%, road maintenance has been cut by 19% from £820m to £665m.

### Import controls fifty years ago

On 1 March 1932 the National government introduced a new tariff system, similar to the import controls beloved by many in the labour movement today. But import controls on the basis of capitalism are no solution to unemployment or any help to workers.

In 1932 the government's measures meant a rise in prices for the goods workers consumed (luxury items such as diamonds were exempt from such tariffs), and only aroused further protectionist retaliation from British capitalism's rivals. On the day tariffs were introduced fifty years ago, 2,000 workers at N British Rubber Mill in Edinburgh were sacked because of the effect of foreign tariffs.

Under capitalism neither free trade nor protectionism can safeguard workers interests.



According to the bosses there wouldn't be any industrial trouble if it was not for a few Marxist 'wreckers'. Above the workers response in 1971 against Heath's attempt to wreck their union.

## Childish Guide to Industry

Three years ago as a Group Father of Chapel for the National Union of Journalists at an East London newspaper, I was concerned to discover the boss was going around 'exposing' me as a Marxist to the membership.

As it was, the members thought the whole affair rather amusing as they knew perfectly well of my support for *Militant*. Indeed they spent the rest of the day upsetting the boss by walking around the office giving clenched fist salutes!

But what concerned me was the accuracy of the boss's information, even to the point of what day *Militant's* were delivered to my home. I took it up with comrades on the local trades council, and was pointed to the Aims of Industry organisation, a right wing group, set up and lavishly backed by big

Bob Wade (N London NUJ) reviews 'Dealing with the Marxist Threat to Industry'

business.

Their latest pamphlet is truly in this mould. Titled 'Dealing with the Marxist threat to industry', written by Roger Rosewell, it is a handbook for bosses on how to intimidate and undermine the trade unions.

The first section deals with how Marxists apparently operate within industry. Trade unionists will find this laughable, bordering on paranoia! For example, going from the premise that "every pay claim is a battle for Communism", Rosewell tells how shop stewards purposely hire rooms "with low ceilings" for meetings, thus creating conditions "ripe for excitement"!

Also, in best traditions of besit infiltration he claims socialist groups send their members into particular industries (before our unemployed readers start phoning up, no, *Militant* can't fix you up with a job!) However there is one

serious allegation amongst this drivel. Rosewell says, "In the November 1981 General Secretaryship election in the Civil and Public Servants Association...the *Militant* group spent a considerable sum supporting one of the candidates."

This is an utter lie. The money for the election campaign of the Broad Left candidate, John Macreadie, was collected one hundred percent from Broad Left supporters within the CPSA.

But while Rosewell's allegations can be dismissed, his advice for the bosses is a danger for trade unionists. Under the title of "What is to be done"(!) he calls on bosses to 'know your enemy'.

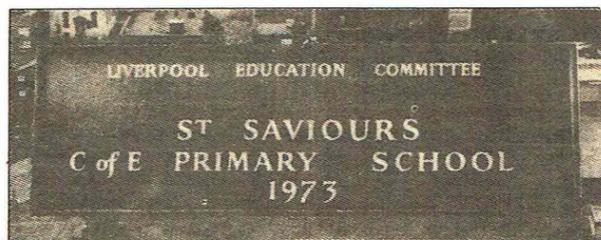
He urges files to be kept on shop stewards, and that they be generally harassed: "Managers have to examine whether time off for trade union duties and activities are legitimate..." and union credentials should be questioned.

And he stresses the importance of working in cahoots with right wing union leaders and officials; "...managers should not believe that their interests are always incompatible" (with 'moderate' union officials). And finally Rosewell says, albeit in a guarded manner, that bosses should be prepared for a 'showdown'—that is, the sacking of a shop steward.

While the pamphlet outlines the reactionary aims of the anti-working class Aims of Industry group, a closer look at Rosewell himself is quite revealing. The press in publicising the pamphlet made great play of the fact that up until 1974 he held a leading position in the Socialist Workers Party.

But more importantly, what the press conveniently forgot to mention was that Rosewell is now an SDP councillor! So much for the SDP's flowery talk of liberty and fair play—this is another indication of how the Social Democrats are plainly anti-trade union and just Tories in disguise.

## Who's to blame for trouble ?



Every wrong target was blamed for the violence at St Saviours primary school in Liverpool.

The Liberals who run the council ludicrously claimed that left-wing leaflets were responsible. Also blamed were women teachers who were reluctant to use corporal punishment.

But most despicable of all was the attempt by the press to blame the children. The children were the victims, not the villains.

But that didn't stop the press describing one nine-year-old child as being "nasty and black". Such was the harassment by the press that parents together with the Liverpool 8 Defence Committee had to arrange for the defence of their children going to school.

But what are the facts? Over the last year six experienced teachers have left St Saviours and the deputy head and school secretary were away ill. The Liberal council's cut-backs on educational expenditure meant there was a chronic shortage of supply staff to cover for such emergencies.

The Tories and Liberals have no answers to the crisis which capitalism has brought to our inner-cities—poverty, unemployment, poor housing, pollution and violence. These conditions produce stress, especially amongst children, and children under stress require stable, happy schools.

But such a school, less than half a mile from St Saviours, is threatened with closure for economic reasons. Parents have said that the warm, safe atmosphere, complete with 'cuddle corners' help the children survive the frightening experiences of the riots and life in Liverpool today.

Children in Liverpool need more money spent on education, not closures. Yet the Liberal Council is now threatening twenty primary schools.

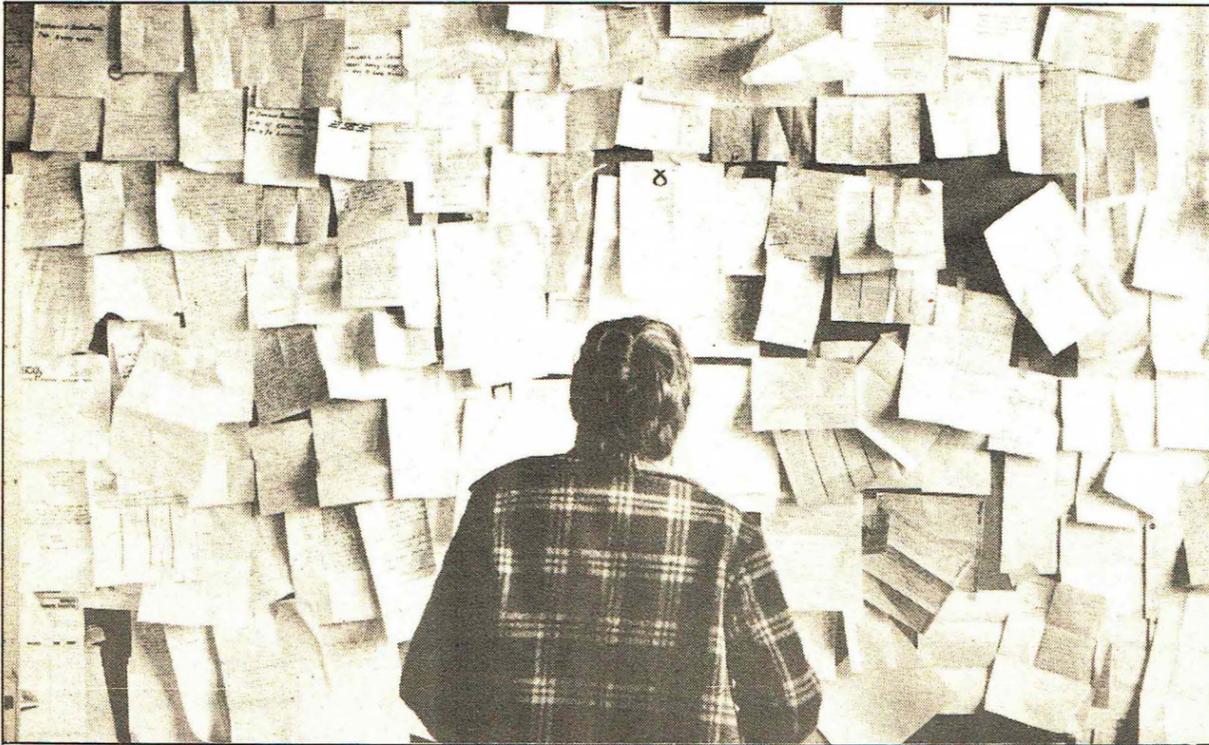
Mike Storey, Liberal Chairman of Education, burnt his fingers before when he tried to close four inner city schools. The

parents of children at these schools fought a magnificent campaign to save their small, but effective, primary schools. Recently, parents in Croxteth (sic) have just won a major victory by saving their comprehensive school from the Liberals' closure plans.

These parents in working class areas so often contemptuously dismissed as "inadequate" have shown they are more than adequate to fight the Liberals when the future of their children is at risk. The labour movement must support the parents in Dove Street and Grant Road and other schools fighting against closure, realising the destruction of basic facilities like schools, produces the raw material for future violence.

By Felicity Dowling (Liverpool NUT)

# SCOTTISH LABOUR



Looking at some of the messages sent in support to Plessey workers

PHOTO: John Smith (IFL)

## Unite against cuts

By Keith Simpson  
(East Edinburgh CLP)

**The fight against cuts in local government services must be made a central issue by the Labour Party in Scotland.**

The Regional elections in May offer the Labour Party an excellent opportunity to obtain a mandate to maintain and improve local services and to refuse to carry out cuts being demanded by the Tory government.

The government is trying to restore the profitability by making Britain the home of cheap labour. They have exploited the re-emergence of mass unemployment to drive down wages. They have cut public services to give tax concessions to the rich.

In Lothian we have experienced a cut in the level

of government Rate Support Grant from 57½% to 44% in two years. This was followed last year by the unprecedented action of the government in withdrawing a further sum of £30 million halfway through a financial year.

The response of Labour councils to such government action has been to cut services and staff or, as in Lothian, by imposing massive rate increases in an attempt to protect services. These actions have been taken in an attempt to buy time and avoid direct confrontation with central government.

Such tactics, however, are a recipe for defeat and demoralisation. The inevitable confrontation with central government cannot be delayed any longer. Scottish Secretary of State, George Younger, will short-

ly move against Scottish local councils again, to demand still further cuts in services and jobs.

The spending of virtually every Scottish Council is now in excess of government 'guidelines'. It is likely, however, that Younger will again attempt to divide us by picking off individual councils one by one—with Lothian again at the top of the list, being £66 million above his guidelines.

The Scottish council of the Labour Party has a major responsibility for co-ordinating the fight against local government cuts. This year's Scottish Conference of the Labour Party must stand in unequivocal opposition to any further cuts.

It must call on all Labour controlled local councils to stand firm against Younger's demands for further cuts. It is not enough,

however, for councils to at first state their opposition to cuts but after, when Younger starts withdrawing money, simply to carry them out.

Fighting words must be transformed into action by a refusal to 'balance the books' by making cuts in accordance with government dictates.

To be successful, such a policy requires the mass mobilisation of the labour and trade union movement. If local councils stand firm against demands for further cuts, there is no way the government could cope with the wholesale disruption of local government services which would be caused by the government withdrawing large sums of money under the powers of the Miscellaneous Provisions Act.

Any attempt to resolve

## Strike against Tories

Exploitation of YOP workers is a dominant theme of resolutions to this weekend's Conference of the Labour Party in Scotland. Amongst the sixteen resolutions submitted on this subject three unions, the Transport and General Workers, General and Municipal Workers and NUPE demand new expanded programmes to offer real jobs to youth.

NUPE also calls for unionisation of YOP trainees and East Kilbride and Provan CLPs both welcome the work being carried out by the YOP Trainees Union Rights Campaign. It would be a major step forward if the major unions backed a composite supporting the YOPTURC and gave their support and resources in the coming year to aid the campaign to unionise YOP trainees.

Significantly, in an area of the country where the right-wing were once

strong, there is a total lack of right-wing resolutions. Activists in the movement in Scotland have clearly learned the lessons of the last Labour government.

This conference, only a few weeks before the Hillhead by-election, (see p.5) should be used as the beginning of a real campaign in Scotland around socialist policies. There is a burning need to link up the fight against redundancies, the fight against the cuts in public services and attacks on trade union rights.

As a first step the new Executive of the Labour Party in Scotland must begin discussions with the Scottish TUC to call a twenty-four hour general strike to initiate a massive campaign of action and propaganda against this hated Tory government.

By Gordon Wilson  
(W Stirling CLP)

## EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS

Three Militant supporters are standing for Constituency Party section of the Scottish Executive Committee. If elected, they will cam-

aign for socialist policies and the extension of Party democracy.

KEITH SIMPSON, East Edinburgh CLP

GORDON WILSON, West Stirlingshire CLP

EDDIE PHILLIPS, Glasgow Provan CLP

this situation by the government taking on special powers to force through cuts in services and jobs in defiance of local councils can be defeated by the co-ordinated action of the labour and trade union movement. A campaign linked to industrial ction

can not only provide the means of defeating government attacks on local authority services, it can also provide the basis for bringing down this Tory government and replacing it with a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

## COVENTRY

### Disappearing jobs

**Even the 304 cards on display at the local Coventry job centre on 2 March were not seriously on offer to local people.**

164 of them were more than twenty miles away and I don't think even Tebbit's father thought of biking it to Saudi Arabia. A further twenty four were part-time, another nine are temporary (including one for a waiter/waitress at someone's banquet) and 54 of the rest were sales reps or self employed mostly

on a commission basis.

That left a grand total of 53 jobs for the 27,813 unemployed in Coventry, and 9,847 in Bedworth and Nuneaton who mostly used to work here. It's a good job we don't all turn up at the same time, otherwise there'd be 711 pairs of hands reaching for every job.

The Manpower Services Commission estimates that 2,84m unemployed will have cost the government £12,447m in lost revenue over the last twelve months.

But in Tory Britain, in the one month of January, there was a job destroyed every three minutes. In Coventry, only one in three of last year's school leavers has got a job.

Management who have

proved their inability to run companies, by threatening redundancies or closures, should have their firms taken over by a Labour government, and the control put in the hands of a new 'management': working people.

Join the Labour Party and the LPYS and fight for:

- \* A guaranteed job for every school leaver.
- \* A thirty-five hour week, as a step towards reducing unemployment.
- \* A £90 national minimum wage, index-linked to inflation.
- \* A planned, socialist economy.
- \* A Labour government committed to socialism.

By Dave Nellist

(Prospective parliamentary candidate, Coventry South East Labour Party)

## Higher rents - worse housing

**There's damp, plaster coming out of the walls and the ceiling is cracked. The two kids have bad chests, pneumonia, skin complaints and regular colds.**

Three-year old Charlie has got a smear, a sort of a blotch on his lung after double pneumonia. He gets asthma now and again and will have this for life.

The chairs and carry-cot were covered in green mould in the boys bedroom.

You can't get into bed at night without the sheets being damp. The bed is the only thing we keep in the bedroom.

I have a letter from the doctor to the Council which says that shleeneltony (a blood deficiency which means your spleen has to be removed at an early age) af-

Gail Duffin (Coventry SE LPYS) spoke to Militant about the conditions on the Stoke Aldermoor Estate.

fects me and my children's ability to resist germs and colds and we should be moved to better housing. But we have got to wait until we have cleared our rent arrears.

With rates, the rent is £24 per week. Heating costs £1 a day just for the gas fire in the living room.

All the houses on the estate are the same and some are worse than this.

An old lady who lives down Whitworth Avenue can only live in one room due to the damp being so bad. The Boxhill contains one house where the wall paper is stuck up with pins due to the damp, and this is supposed to be the baby's room. The secretary of the

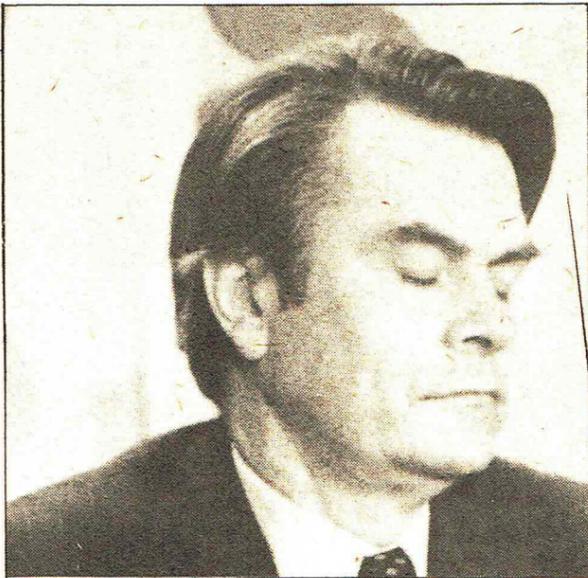
housing action group had double pearl boarding put up in her kitchen and in twelve months it had rotted through.

The tenants are starting to get together. When they put the rent up there will be a rent and rates strike as long as we can stick together in the different parts of Coventry. We have already had a march on the Council and a lobby but they ignored us.

The Council should get us out of the flats and re-house us in better conditions while they do the repairs that are needed for the rent we are paying. People can't afford to pay the high rates and rent because there are so many unemployed who do not receive a decent living wage.

It makes you vomit when you hear about the interest payments to the money-lenders and the massive profits of the Banks which we are paying for.

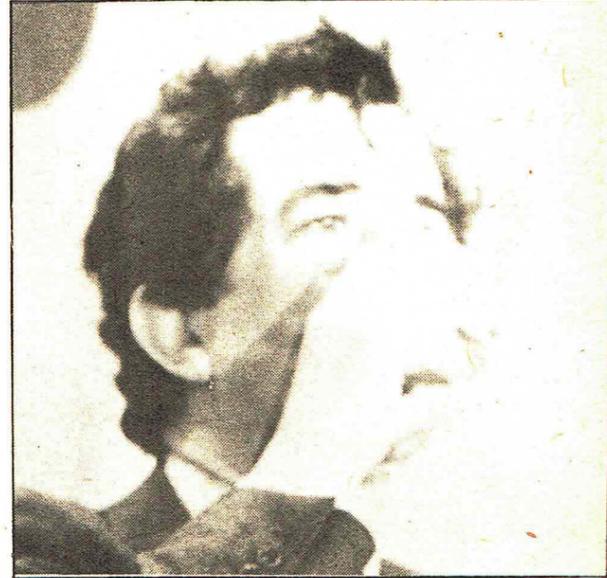
# SOCIAL DEMOCRAT



David Owen indicated that he supported the sacking of lecturers in the pruning of Higher Education.



Roy Jenkins has floated the idea of an incomes policy backed by sanctions against strikers.



Bill Rodgers used to accuse the Left of driving away Labour Party members but his own Stockton CLP had less than 70 members.

## By whatever standard is used to judge, the policies of the Tory government have spelt misery for millions of workers.

There are four million unemployed, including almost a million long term unemployed. Almost two-thirds of school leavers will be unemployed by 1984. According to the European Commission at least one household in seven in Britain lives in extreme poverty.

Six million live below the poverty line. The standards of housing, of health and of education have all been under severe attack by the policies of the Tory government over the last 2½ years.

Moreover, these policies have not only affected the living standards of industrial workers, but also many middle class and professional workers, who in the past would have been amongst the staunchest supporters of the Tory Party.

It is in these conditions, with enormous disillusionment with Thatcher, and also the disappointment with the record of the right wing Labour government of 1974-1979 that the SDP has grown. However, the SDP would never have got off the ground without the encouragement and the support of big business.

Even before the Party had been formed, the capitalists offered the bait of £15 million to the "Gang of Four" if they would stab the labour movement in the back to form a new party. The strategists of capital egged on Owen, Rodgers, Williams and Jenkins because of their terror at the prospect of the return of a Labour government with a crushing majority.

They calculated that against the background of the worst economic crisis in the history of British capitalism there would be a great danger of that happening. With increasing gloom and fear they have noted the shift towards the left in the Labour Party since the defeat at the 1979 general election.

According to *The Times*, on the basis of present trends, the Tories could lose such formerly impregnable seats as Clacton, Chip-

### Feature by Peter Taaffe

penham and Peacehaven in a new election.

In the past the Liberals acted as a safety net for discontented Tory voters who could vent their opposition to a Tory government in mid-term by-elections. But now the Tory voters' living standards have been savaged by the measures of Thatcher, and they are looking for a more radical alternative.

They see the Liberal party as just another "establishment party", and in some senses, the Liberals are to the right even of the Tories. For example, they stand for a permanent incomes policy, i.e. a policy of permanent cuts in living standards.

At a local level, as well, the Liberals have, through their actions, stripped away the thin veneer which they had of being a radical party. In Liverpool, for instance, they have been as vicious as any right-wing Tory council in cutting back on the council labour force which has dropped by 4,000 since 1975.

### The spectre of a massive Labour majority haunts big business

Savage cuts in education, housing, social services and so on, have also been carried out by the Liberals. Not one single council house was built in Liverpool in 1981, and none are expected to be built this year.

The spectre of a Labour government coming to power with a 100 or even 200 majority has therefore haunted the ruling class for 2½ years. The changes within the Labour Party, together with the catastrophic economic and social situation which such a Labour government will

inherit, would mean that the government would come under ferocious pressure from the very first day that it took office.

This would be the case even if it was dominated by the right of the Labour Party like Hattersely, Healey, Shore and so on. Under such conditions the government would be under far greater pressure than the government of 1974-1979 to carry out measures in the interests of the working class.

It would be compelled at least in the first period to respond to pressure, and may go even further in carrying out reforms than some of the right-wing leaders would wish or intend. That would open the door to an even more serious challenge to Big business.

The capitalists have therefore decided to move heaven and earth in order to stop a new Labour government coming to power. The formation of the Social Democratic Party was the result of the cold calculation and determination of the strategists of capitalism to do just that.

It was for this reason that massive financial and media backing was dangled before the eyes of the Gang of Four as an inducement to them to break from the Labour Party. Without the encouragement of the capitalists, the SDP would never have been launched.

The list of tycoons backing the SDP reads almost like a 'Who's Who' of big business.

Amongst them is Lord Sainsbury, President of Sainsbury Food chains (Roy Jenkins' wife just happens to be a top executive with this company). He is joined by John Harvey Jones, chairman-designate of ICI, Clive Lindley of the ICL Group Ltd., Leo Dodd (Scottish Young Businessman of the Year 1981), Michael Shanks of the British Oxygen Company, Edmund Dell, merchant banker, Claude Wilson of Rothchilds, and many other luminaries from the City and the boardrooms of the monopolies. Roy Jenkins himself, of course, is also a director of merchant bankers Morgan Grenfell.

And why has big business so enthusiastically embraced the SDP? Lord Sainsbury bluntly supplied

the answer: "We are quite simply offering a more stable environment for business" (*Sunday Telegraph*, 20.9.81). The "chief executive" of the SDP, Bernard Doyle, was himself at the head of the giant Booker McConnell engineering firm before his appointment.

Little wonder that the SDP has found enthusiastic support and financial contributors from big business. Ian Wrigglesworth, vice-chairman of the SDP and himself on the automotive board of the giant Smiths Industries, claims that one third of the senior managers in his company have already paid subscriptions to the SDP.

*The Observer* (19.11.81) revealed that "SDP fundraising is expected to bring in £1 million this year." The SDP leaders claim that the vast majority of this money comes from "ordinary people".

### "Many top businessmen have begun to contribute to the Social Democratic Party"

It was piously declared in September that "no one by virtue of status, special interest or association will be entitled to buy influence over the party." But this, naturally, is not the way that big business sees it.

*The Observer* remarked, "Many top businessmen have begun to contribute to the Social Democratic Party in a bid to forestall a left-wing backlash at the next general election...there appears to be growing alarm that an anti-business Labour administration will follow disillusionment with Tory policies."

The same article claimed that the SDP can "now claim active supporters on the boards of key companies—Rowntree, Unilever, North-East Industries and GEC amongst them. And the party's industrial fundraisers have been asked by some traditional Tory chairmen to approach particular directors who then become known as SDP sympathisers on the company's board, thus neatly hedging political bets."

It is clear that big business, while not withdrawing support from its traditional party, the Tory Party, are giving a financial life-line to the SDP, as a means of preventing Labour from coming to power.

At the same time the capitalists have thrown all the means for moulding "public opinion" they have at their disposal, the press, radio and TV, into building up the SDP. In the initial period after the party was launched, an incredible unanimity seemed to grip Fleet Street, from the extreme right-wing *Express*, through to the 'Labour' *Daily Mirror*, all the papers wishing the new party well.

Thus the *Daily Express*

(13.6.81) declared in an editorial, "Britain needs a credible alternative to the Tories. Labour is hopeless. We wish a fair wind to Mr Jenkins."

On the "Communications Committee" of the SDP we find the following Fleet Street 'high-flyers': like Roger Carrol, political editor of the *Sun*, noted for his unbiased approach to the recent strike of ASLEF workers. Joining him is Felicity Greene, associate editor of the *Daily Express*, Madeline Dimont, senior feature writer on the *Daily Mirror*, and Anthony Samspon, formerly of the *Observer*.

The so-called "quality" press, the serious organs of big business, are also heavi-

## What are it

Despite their attempts to appear new and 'fresh', there is nothing new about the ideas of the SDP. They have merely regurgitated the ideas that formed the basis of the Labour government from 1974-79: policies which failed to solve the problems faced by workers. If anything, the SDP have moved further to the right from these policies.

### Education

If ever a Liberal/SDP government was formed in Britain it is clear that it would be just as vicious as the present Tory government in its onslaught on educational standards. Shirley Williams, as Education Secretary in 1977/78 approved the closure of 165 state primary schools and 26 secondary schools.

When speaking to a lobby of university lecturers last year, David Owen virtually stated that he was in favour of sacking some of them to make cuts. There is no doubt that the brutal policies carried through by the Tories in education would be repeated with enthusiasm by an SDP Education Minister.

### Trade Union Law

Members of the SDP are also, in effect, to the right of the 'Chingford

Skinhead' himself, Norman Tebbit, in their calls for attacks upon trade union rights. They want a complete curtailment of the trade unions' so-called 'legal immunities' and the complete banning of the closed shop.

No wonder that genuine trade unionists are so thin on the ground in the SDP. The *Financial Times* reporter at the SDP conference, after searching for genuine workers, finally struck gold: "We did discover one genuine proletarian," he wrote, "The driver of a caterpillar tractor who had been a shop steward 'until I was kicked out'."

### Incomes Policy

Further proof that the SDP is a bitter anti-trade union party is seen in its policy for incomes. Roy Jenkins has already floated the idea in the past of an incomes policy backed up with the threat of the withdrawal of social security payments.

Similar ideas, but in a slicker form, have now been put forward by the SDP economic guru professor Meade. He promises a 'voluntary' incomes policy which on closer examination is not so 'voluntary' after all.

It relies in the last resort

# C PARTY...HELPED BY MEDIA AND BIG BUSINESS



Shirley Williams as Education Secretary carried out cuts in education to such a degree that Joan Lester, her junior minister, resigned.

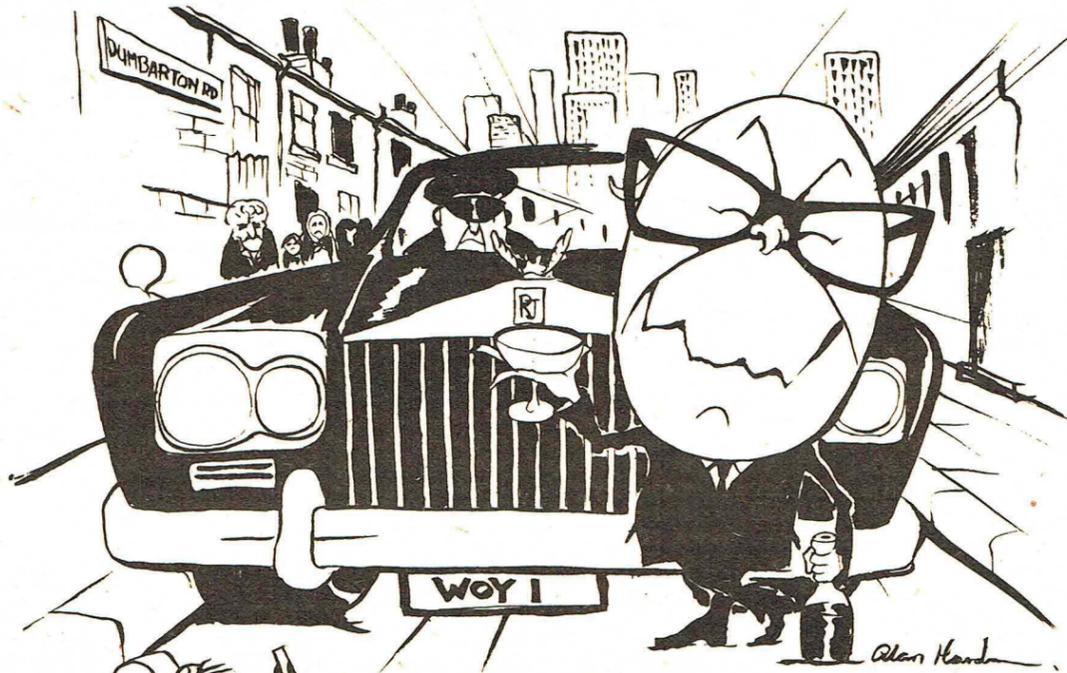
ly represented within the ranks of the SDP. A galaxy of writers from the *Economist* are members, together with Joe Rogaly, political editor of the *Financial Times*.

The SDP ranks are, predictably, also thick with TV company executives. Lord Kennet, Lord Cudlip, Lord Harris, Lord Kilmarnock and Brian Lapping, all from Granada TV, are supporters of the SDP. Frank Coplestone, from Southern TV, Alistair Hetherington and Jim Morgan from the BBC and John Wakefield from *Weekend World*, are all SDP supporters.

The fact that in the last year you could hardly turn on the TV, open a

newspaper or turn on the radio without coming across a mention of Shirley Williams, Roy Jenkins and the SDP, has, of course, nothing to do with the support it receives from 'individuals' in the media!

Even Rupert Murdoch, millionaire owner of *The Times*, complained about the paper's saturation coverage of the SDP. David Wood, political editor of *The Times*, blurted out the truth when he stated, "The SDP, so far, has been the creation of media publicity, and it has been kept going and growing beyond the merits of its present proved national importance or promise."



ONE'S ONLY A COMMON OLD WORKING CHAP AS ANY ONE HERE CAN SEE BUT GIVE ONE A COUPLE OF CASES OF CHABLIS AND GLASGOW BELONGS TO ME (ONE HOPES)

## s polices?

on compulsory arbitration which if not accepted, can lead to punitive measures against the unions. He even suggests that if a union refused to expel recalcitrant strikers, then under certain circumstances the union itself should be liable for damages!

Meade's proposals are no more than a dolled-up formula for cutting workers' wages, using, like the Tories, unemployment as the big stick.

### Economic Policy

John Horam, author of the SDP economic policy document stated at their conference that a programme of 'austerity' was needed. "We should tell the electorate quite frankly" he said, "that any real national increase in the first two or three years of a Social Democratic government will be devoted to increasing real profits and investment of industry and commerce...there can be little room for increase in the living standards of those at work." Sounds very familiar, only it was Geoffrey Howe who said it last time round.

### Local authorities

A dress rehearsal of what

could take place at a national level is given in those councils where the SDP have taken power, undemocratically, by standing as Labour candidates and then defecting when elected. Islington council is now controlled by the SDP.

They have outlined a proposal for closing playgrounds, two children's nurseries, a library, two swimming pools and the local planning and evaluation department. They also aim to cut down the number of caretakers, porters and liaison officers in council flats.

Their aim is to put at least 430 people out of work, in order to save £9m as demanded by the Tory minister Heseltine. They are now planning to sell off 750 council properties.

### Foreign Policy

The foreign policy of the SDP is neither 'socialist' nor even 'democratic'. Lord George Brown, writing in the *Sunday Express* last August gave his support to the monstrous regime in South Africa.

He criticised Lord Carington for his stand "towards South Africa over the problems they face in Angola." These "problems" led to the invasion of Angola and the murder of thousands by South African troops.

Roy Jenkins warned at the inception of the SDP that the new party was like an aeroplane: it could either take off successfully or crash at the end of the runway.

A vigorous campaign by the Labour Party, basing itself on socialist policies would ensure that the crash took place. A socialist campaign would have to be based upon the foundation-stone of clause 4 part 4 of Labour's constitution and would involve the nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies which dominate 80-85% of the economy, with minimum compensation based on proven need.

Such a programme would allow the establishment of a rational plan of production, democratically run by trade unions, housewives, small businessmen, scientists and so on. It would offer the beginning of the end for all the social problems that plague workers in a capitalist society—a real radical 'breaking of the mould.'

But in any case, no matter what temporary success

the SDP achieves, it cannot in the long run change the face of British politics. Similar ventures in other countries have only come to grief.

**The sooner Labour begins to campaign on socialist policies ...the sooner will be the demise of the SDP**

Even the right-wing 'Economist' magazine which demands bluntly that the SDP should "wreck" the Labour Party, commented that throughout the world 'the term 'social democrat' 'is coming to be increasing used, as in Britain, as a label for right-wing breakaways from mainstream socialism.'

It goes on to add that "their experience is discouraging." Indeed the

wreckage of these right-wing breakaways litter the political scene in Europe, Australia and Japan. For example:

**ITALY.** The 'Social Democratic' section split from the Socialist Party after the war and took nearly half the party's votes in the 1948 election. In the last election this party took only 3.8% of the vote against 9.8% for the Socialist Party.

**AUSTRALIA.** The 'Democratic Labour Party' which began life in the late 1940s as the 'Anti-Communist Labour Party,' has today almost disappeared, although it got over 9% of the vote in 1958.

**HOLLAND.** In 1970 the right wing formed DS70 and a year later got 5.3% of the vote, but it has declined since then.

**JAPAN.** The right wing broke away in 1952 and initially succeeded in getting more support than the left wing Socialist Party, but, the right wing party has lost ground and its support has been undermined in comparison to the Japanese

Socialist Party.

These brief successes for 'Social Democratic' Parties in Australia, Japan and Europe took place during the period of the unprecedented, post-war upswing.

The situation of the advanced capitalist world is entirely different today. The onset of economic instability now affects every major capitalist country and this has shattered the basis of those parties which claim to stand in the political 'centre'.

Like their cousins abroad, the SDP will be shattered in the period ahead. The crisis of capitalism will force the ruling class to attempt bigger and bigger cuts in the living standards of workers.

For its own part, the labour movement will seek a more and more determined leadership and policy, and will move to the left, in order to carry through substantial reforms and improvements in workers' living standards. The so-called 'middle-ground' will be swept away, and the SDP with it.

But the sooner the Labour Party begins to campaign on bold socialist policies—explaining the need for a fundamental transformation of society as a means of tackling unemployment, low pay and other social ills—the sooner will be the demise of the SDP.

## ...And future prospects

## FRANCE

**Georges Marchais, re-elected General Secretary of the French Communist Party (PCF), described its recent 24th Congress as having passed "without a single false note."**

It is easy to see what he means. The "very correct" decisions of the Congress included recognition that Russia and Poland were undemocratic and at the same time socialist. The PCF stands for both "social peace" and "the class struggle".

The near perfect harmony of the Congress was due more to the stifling bureaucratic regime inside the PCF than to the real situation in France today.

Outside the Congress, the Socialist-Communist Government was facing a powerful strike wave involving hundreds of thousands of workers. Inflation is rising. Unemployment is getting worse. Support for the workers parties is falling. The programme of the left is under severe pressure.

Since the elections last June swept the PSF-PCF to power, the Government has retreated under pressure from the right. The early reforms of the Government have not tangibly improved the lot of the average worker. The increases in the minimum wage, pensions, and family allowances, have already been wiped out by inflation.

Still 2,630,000 households survive on less than half the average wage. 40% of workers take home less than 3,300 Francs per month (£1=10.7F). The unions estimate the real level of unemployment to be 2,750,000 out of work.

The workers had looked to the 35-hour week to reduce unemployment. But in July 1981 the trade unions signed an agreement postponing the 35-hour week until 1984.

The CGT (Communist-led TUC) did not sign but supported the agreement in practice. There was to be no reduction in the working week at all for a further seven months.

The workers were incensed. The working week of 39 hours was to be made law on 1 February 1982. Throughout September, October and November, strikes and occupations flared up all over France.

The CFDT (Socialist-led TUC), despite having signed the July accord, began an agitation for the 35-hour week. The CGT succeeded in 'holding the line' against the mounting pressure of the membership.

Communist and Socialist ministers competed with each other in fiercely denouncing the strikers. Fiterman (Minister of Transport and "No. 2" in the PCF hierarchy), dismissed these workers as "provocateurs."

Having fallen over itself in the scramble for ministerial portfolios, the PCF has no alternative to the retreat of the PS. The press mocks the Communists for having "put their flag in their pocket."

All of this is very difficult for the Party rank and file to take. How can the Party possibly win back the

### From Marcel Coupeau in Paris

ground it lost to the PS when for the sake of four ministers, with no influence at all on Government policy, the Party is bound and gagged?

As the paper 'Le Matin' expressed it; "To criticise the government is also to criticise the actions of the Communist Ministers who are perfectly integrated in it."

In his closing speech to the Party Congress, Marchais appealed to Communists to go amongst the workers "to banish impatience."

But it was already too late. The CGT leader, Henri Krasuki, who is also on the Politburo of the PCF, had been forced to yield to the pressure of his union. The CGT joined the struggle against the Government.

**"The workers must not expect anything from above"**

A massive rift has thus opened up between the leaders of the Communist unions, and Marchais and the "Four Ministers," who find themselves in a very difficult position—to say the least.

The final straw came when Krasuki and the CGT leadership, in trying to sell the 39 hours to the membership, had the ground cut from under them by the Socialist Minister of Labour Jean Auroux.

In response to the avalanche of strikes which erupted on 1 February (after employers everywhere found some way of swindling the workers of their hour's pay), Auroux affirmed: "an hour of free time also has its price."

This gave the green light to employers to deduct one hour's pay, often not even having properly ceded the hour's time off—after the government was already paying compensation to the bosses for loss of profits!

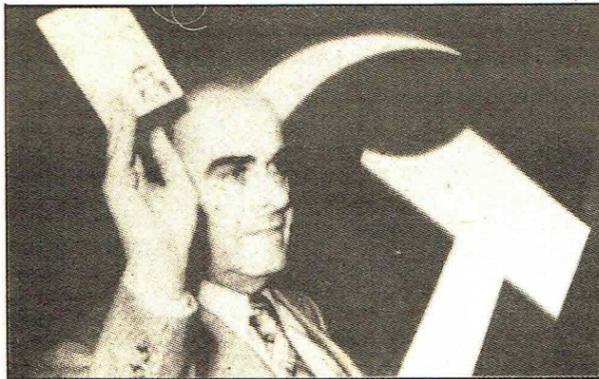
Already, Prime Minister Mauroy had called for "an end to exorbitant privileges" enjoyed by the workers. He declared that the 39-hour week had been introduced as part of "a struggle for work" and "must not become an excuse for idleness"!

Krasuki rebuked Auroux, saying he was sorry the Minister of Labour found himself in the position of "porte-parole [spokesman] of the bosses."

Now, the unions are competing to outflank each other on the left. Krasuki, formerly more hesitant to struggle on the hours issue than the CFDT leader, Edmund Maire, wrote in



# RIFT OPENS IN THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY



**In his closing speech to the CP conference, Party leader Marchais appealed to members to go among workers to "banish impatience".**

the CP daily 'L'Humanité': "Maire...preaches austerity in France"; and whilst he was not astonished at the hostility of the capitalists ("it is in their nature"), he maintained:

"They would not have had the possibility of these reactionary manoeuvres without the compliance of the CFDT, FO, CPTC and

the CGC in July 1981. [FO, CFTC, CGC are smaller trade union federations—Editor].

"The government would do well to draw the lessons from this situation, and to start with that of the old proverb 'to give and to take back is nothing.'

"One hour is a little short to create jobs, but at least

**Having fallen over itself in the scramble for ministerial portfolios, the CP leadership has no alternative to the retreat of the PSF. All this is very difficult for the rank and file to take.**

Seguy had to distance himself from the PCF leadership in order to retain his basis in the union.

Ten years later, the Seguy leadership swore never again to get so embroiled with "party politics" after the PCF withdrew from the "common programme", bringing the Right to power in the elections. Hence Seguy was pushed aside and used as a scapegoat for the loss of PCF support in the recent union elections.

'L'Humanite' gave Seguy the traditional send off for such people—by not mentioning his departure at all!

It was thought that Krasuki would be better able to hold the CGT members in check with Seguy out of the way—but all to no avail.

**The French working class are determined not to let the first left government for nearly a quarter of a century pass without having made some permanent gains out of it.**

**If the CGT maintains an offensive against the government, the CP will be forced to withdraw**

The deception and trickery of the employers over the one hour reduction has served to raise again the idea of a "clean" 35-hour week, straight away, and with no loss of pay.

The main difficulty with the 39 hours has been that the Government was not prepared to rouse the working class to fight for the reforms. Thus, when the "decree" to reduce the working week landed on the bosses' desks, they were able to take the initiative in deciding how it should be done.

The danger now is that unless the trade union leaders come out unequivocally for the 35-hour week, the reform will be too small, and the struggle for its implementation too hard to sustain the movement.

The CGT has only raised the slogan of "39 hours and not a centime less in pay!"

At the same time, the CGT leadership will be under considerable pressure to wage a struggle on jobs, wages and other concessions which go beyond the limits of what the Government is prepared to give, which seems to be very little.

In 'Le Matin' (5.2.82), Prime Minister Mauroy announced that all reforms will be finished at the beginning of 1983. Yet, ludicrously, the Government has already announced a halt to any reforms for the next two years!

Whilst this will do nothing to improve the popularity of the Socialist-Communist Government with the capitalists, it is certain to bring it into collision with the working class.

If the CGT maintains an offensive against the Government, the PCF will be forced to withdraw from the Government. It will have no choice. The only alternative would be continued decline and the loss of the CGT.

let it be one hour."

Attacking the Government on a series of issues, he said: "The workers need to feel an improvement, even limited, but real, in their everyday life.

**"The experience [of this] will have been useful in confirming—with what force!—that they [the workers] must not expect anything from above. Neither from the government, even of the left, nor from negotiations..."**

This split between the PCF leadership and its traditional basis of support is of crucial significance. It raises the question of the future participation of the PCF in the Government itself.

Ironically, the recent CP Congress saw George Seguy, the leader of the CGT, dropped from the Politburo of the PCF, supposedly at his "own expressed wish." This explanation is completely implausible.

Seguy has moved the CGT to a position of greater independence from the PCF since the revolution of 1968, after he was made a scapegoat for the failure of the revolution by Marchais.

In fact, Seguy had been pressed into ending the strikes by Marchais himself.

## BELGIUM

## USSR

With government cuts threatening 10,000 jobs in the state-owned Belgian steel industry, steelworkers have come out on indefinite strike following the collapse of talks on 1 March. A demonstration of 10,000 steelworkers in Liege on 2 March reflected the militancy of trade union activists. The steelworkers' union is calling for support from workers in other sectors and aims to bring down the right-wing government. Their struggle, the 'Financial Times' writes, "threatens to unleash a surge of political unrest and civil disobedience throughout Wallonia" (2 March). This article looks at the background to the deepening crisis in Belgium.



## Belgian workers demand...

# 'WE MUST ESCALATE THE STRUGGLE'

The general strike of 8 February was certainly a success from the point of view of the working class.

In the Walloon (French-speaking) area the strike was solid with, according to the capitalist press, from 80% to 90% of workers on strike.

In the northern Flemish region, the Christian-Democratic union leadership succeeded in convincing their membership to work. Nevertheless, the great majority of socialist trade unionists were on strike and in several big cities successful and militant rallies were organised.

In leading factories, CD union members defied their leadership and joined their socialist fellow workers. In the Walloon area the whole of the Christian-Democratic Union joined the strike, leaders included.

The strike was a warning to the government and a protest against its anti-social austerity budget. It was a means for the workers to flex their industrial muscle.

The Belgian government is a coalition of the Liberals (a right-wing capitalist party) with the Christian-

By Michel Bauwens  
(Brussels Young Socialists)

Democrats, and its programme is like Thatcher's.

The intended measures of the government mean a frontal attack on the workers. Its aim is to make the workers pay for the failures of the capitalist system.

The first measure they want to introduce is to reduce the cost of living wage-adjustment by 3%. On top of that, in factories seeking subsidies, the workers are expected to give up another 5%, and if they refuse, the factories will be closed.

But this is only a minimum—the mine-workers are expected to give up as much as 15% of their wages in one year!

Every state department will have to cut its budget by 3%. This means that hospitals will close, school classes will be cut, and so on. 48,000 workers will not be replaced in the public sector this year.

To push these measures through, the government gave itself sweeping "special powers", meaning that parliament will not be able to stop or amend these measures. Obviously, this government is not only afraid of the unions, but fears its own parliamentary majority!

These harsh attacks reflect the deep crisis of the Belgian economy—huge unemployment (10%), huge deficits in the budget, a balance of payments deficit, etc.

Until now the workers have resisted every serious counter reform. In 1974-5 the workers brought down a right-wing government through a series of weekly general strikes. Then they

put so much pressure on the coalition government formed between the socialist and capitalist parties that only very small budget cuts were possible.

Whenever the socialist leadership tried to carry out the capitalists policies, the workers struck against them too. This is why the ruling class is reverting to a right-wing coalition government which is prepared, in effect, to rule by decree and attack the working class head-on.

But the workers are prepared to fight. Despite the fact that the Walloon union leadership did not organise meetings before or during the strike, the region was completely paralysed.

In the factories, pickets were not needed and in the distribution sector small flying pickets were enough to stop work.

In the few meetings organised by shop stewards, the message was the same: "a one day strike is not enough, we must escalate the struggle!"

Three days later, on 11 February, 8,000 steel workers threatened with mass redundancy marched

to the capital. It was one of the most combative demonstrations ever seen. Not only did they succeed, for the first time ever, in occupying the Common Market Headquarters (singing the Internationale and demanding the dismissal of the government), but they also tried to push through the police cordon to protest in front of parliament.

What makes the Walloon workers more determined than ever is the knowledge that there is a left majority in their own region. The Socialist Party together with the Communists, ecologists and Walloon federalists have a majority in the regional parliament.

As the Marxists in the Socialist Party have warned, however, the workers cannot rely on an alliance with capitalist parties, even those with a "left" phraseology.

Among the Christian-Democratic workers many are demanding a break with the bosses' Social-Christian party and the formation of their own class party.

This would pave the way for a united front of

Socialist and Christian workers' parties, which on the basis of a socialist programme, would be able to challenge the capitalist system.

But national unity of the workers' movement is equally essential. A government of the workers' parties in Wallonia could only succeed with the support and solidarity of the Flemish working class.

This is why the Marxists strive to re-unite the Socialist Party. If a workers' government in Wallonia is not seen as a transitional step towards establishing a workers' government in the whole of Belgium, it is doomed to failure.

At the same time, the struggles of the Walloon workers must be fully supported. The coming to office of a workers' government in the Southern region would awaken the still dormant layers of the Flemish workers to struggle and inspire in them the more radical class consciousness that the majority of Walloon workers have developed.

# Socialism and the Soviet Union

Dear Comrades

After reading *Militant* over a period of time and attending the Leeds meeting one thing is obvious, nothing the Soviet Union can ever do will satisfy the followers of Trotsky.

They regard the Soviet Union as the main obstacle to their theories. We can agree on immediate issues in defence of the working class but the continuous attacks on the Soviet Union holds back a real assessment of the nature of capitalism because it would lead to a recognition that the decisive feature today is the conflict between existing socialism and capitalism.

In the socialist countries, capitalism supports the mixed economy "socialists" like the chief advisor to Solidarity and KOR leader Kuron.

In Latin America they support fascist coups to defend exploitation, they support the racist South Africa in the attempts to turn the

clock back in Angola and Mozambique.

In England capitalism shows us yet another face with abstract concepts of freedom which is intended to make people think they are part of the "democratic process", it enables them to retain state power.

In Leeds Peter Taaffe used the same crude anti-Sovietism as the media, commenting they are an "enslaved" society.

We have three million unemployed, inflation and massive cuts in public expenditure, the Soviet Union has none of these symptoms, yet the implication behind this remark is that we are "free".

What kind of "Marxist" thinking is this, separating the concept of freedom from political and economic reality? Anti-Sovietism distorts the whole ideology of *Militant* in relation to the international struggle for socialism, it is deliberately silent on the fact that the

Soviet Union is identified with nearly every liberation movement with economic and military support.

*Militant* continuously refers to "Stalinism" but the term is general rather than specific when present day issues are considered, and it fails to compare the successes of existing socialism with the historical failures of Trotskyism.

A concept for the defence of socialism is ignored despite the record of capitalism. When the socialist countries defend their gains *Militant* joins the media and calls it "totalitarian". Socialism minus capitalism is not "totalitarian". Capitalism attacking the Soviet Union is the same as capitalism that attacks us, this is the real lesson of history.

Yours fraternally  
H Bradfield  
Leeds

EDITOR REPLIES:

Comrade Bradfield's letter raises important questions which we will take up more fully in a future article on the real nature of Russia and Eastern Europe.

However, we must point out that Comrade Bradfield grossly falsifies *Militant's* position by suggesting that we support capitalism as against the economic advances made in Eastern Europe.

*Militant* is not "anti-Soviet" but defends precisely the genuine "sovietism"—democratic rule by the workers' councils—fought for by the leaders of the Russian Revolution, Lenin and Trotsky.

But we cannot be blind to the bureaucratic dictatorship, led by Stalin, that was subsequently imposed on the Russian masses as a result of the backwardness and devastation of the Russian economy and the isolation of the revolution. Later, the same type of states were established in Eastern Europe.

*Militant* acknowledges and applauds the successes of the planned economies in these countries but we also have to recognise the monstrous bureaucracy, the privilege, misrule and repression. These today are combined with a growing economic crisis, as is shown so clearly in Poland and, more recently, in Romania.

By no stretch of the imagination can the suppression of a 10-million strong trade union movement by a military coup be called a "socialist country defending its gains"!

The programme of Trotsky, far from having

"failed" historically, has been fully confirmed by events and continues to point the way forward to the ending of bureaucratic misrule and to building genuine socialism in these countries. If Comrade Bradfield has any doubts on this score, he should carefully study *Lenin and Trotsky: What They Really Stood For* by Alan Woods and Ted Grant (a reply to Monty Johnstone of the CP—available from World Books).

Comrade Bradfield correctly points out the need to "defend socialism". We believe that the policies put forward by *Militant* in relation to both West and East link the workers' ongoing struggles to a programme for genuine socialist democracy, as opposed to whitewashing the crimes of Stalinism, and so playing into the hands of the Right.



# Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## Babies suffer from bottle milk (1)

Dear Comrades,

The article (19/2/82) on the antics of baby food manufacturers in this country again demonstrates the unscrupulous lengths to which capitalism will go to make profits.

However, at least in this country these tactics are unlikely to cause deaths. In the third world these same multi-national companies have mounted similar or more blatant advertising campaigns and have persuaded large numbers of mothers that "bottle is best". Many of these mothers are illiterate and therefore cannot follow the instructions on the packet. Most are too poor to really

be able to afford these products and so there is a tendency to over-dilute the powder thus unwittingly starving the children, and most are unable to provide the sterile conditions necessary for the use of these products. Consequently, powdered milk has proved over recent years to be a major cause of malnutrition and death of third world babies.

Capitalism not only exploits it also kills. The sooner we nationalise baby food companies under workers control the better—not just for the well-being of babies in this country but, perhaps more importantly, for the survival of babies in the third world.

Yours fraternally  
Kirstie Maclean  
Shipley CLP.

## Babies suffer from bottle milk (2)

Dear Sir,

I am an avid reader's wife, and after reading your article about baby food manufacturers I was strongly moved to write to your paper. Another point is, the manufacturers shouldn't say that bottle is better. Because in the baby's first 2-3 days of life he receives colostrum from the mother before the milk is established. This contains all the mother's anti-bodies, which help give the baby a stronger immunity against infection and diseases and is high in protein. Bottle milk can't give this.

Also, the fat and carbohydrate content is greater in the processed milk so the baby is likely to get fatter, and fat babies aren't always healthy.

Breast is best is my motto, it is the right temperature, right strength and free from bacteria and infections. However, its not only the baby food manufacturers who gain, but also the companies producing the bottles, teats, cleaning brushes, containers and sterilising tablets and fluids which are quite expensive.

Once again it falls on the government cut backs. For the hospitals are too short staffed at present to be able

## No more careerists in the Labour Party

Dear Comrades

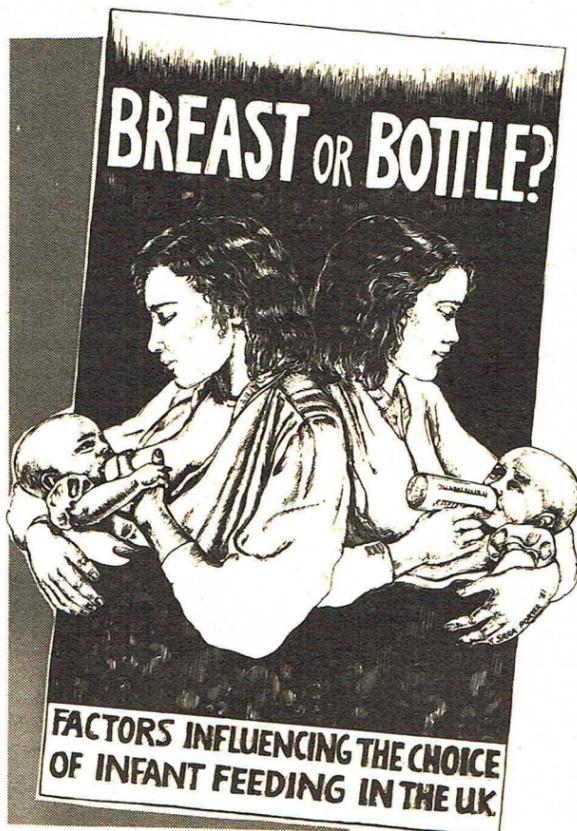
Talk of wage controls and social contracts should convince genuine socialists of the crisis capitalism finds itself in. But it should be the bloated capitalists that take a pay cut in their luxurious lifestyles, through a wealth tax, windfall tax and a clampdown on economic exchange controls.

Another right wing Labour government is not good enough (although perhaps a bad Labour government is better than the Tories or their second XI in the SDP!). *Militant* must make its voice heard,

putting up its supporters for election to local and central government and in the trade unions.

And those traitors that sold us out over the years on a Labour ticket should be continually exposed. Jenkins, Williams and Co carved out their careers, at the expense of the labour movement. We can't stop right wingers leaving the Labour Party to join the SDP, but we can through the process of re-selection stop any more parasites like Jenkins and Co making their careers out of our movement.

Yours fraternally  
Stephen Draper  
Grimsby



The War On Want report, reviewed in 'Militant', 19 February.  
From War On Want,  
467 Caledonian Road, London N.7. Price £1 (plus p&rp)

## Harland & Wolff

Comrades,

After reading an article on the hardship which may face our comrades who work for Harland and Wolff shipyard in Belfast, I would like to bring to the notice of comrades the "golden handshake" which the director Ivor Hoppe received at the end of last year—the staggering sum of £200,000! Harland and Wolff employ 7,000 workers, and now the

management have set up a committee to reduce 'overheads', and the workforce.

After hearing of this golden handshake, why doesn't the committee start at the top, and find out how many more of this company's directors get similar golden handshakes while the workers in the yard are faced with the dole.

Yours fraternally,  
R Douglas  
Shertleston LPYS  
Glasgow

## Democracy and intelligence in action

Dear Comrades,

Whilst attempting to sell the *Militant* in Bournemouth, I was approached by a young man who enthusiastically declared that they were just what he was looking for, and purchased all my sixteen remaining copies of the paper and handed me a fiver! As I was endeavouring to tell him that I didn't think I had change of a fiver, he started tearing up all the copies in front of me, and told me to keep the change as I 'looked in need of it'.

Being in Bournemouth where you can normally be regarded as a Tory until proven innocent, I think it is fair to assume that this young man was of the Tory persuasion. If this assumption is correct he is fairly typical of the Tories, in that he either has more money than sense (usually our money!) or he is willing to pay highly to keep our message from propagation. I am glad to tell comrades that unity is strength and he neglected to do the same to another fellow comrade of mine who had taken a few

copies of the *Militant* to sell to some members of the CND across the road. We were both back with our message immediately.

Our Tory friend had miserably failed to suppress our ideas and in the process unwittingly donated £1.80 to the Militant Fighting Fund, so the last laugh is on him!

Yours fraternally  
Sam Gee  
Bournemouth East LPYS

## A tale of two campaigns

Dear Comrade,

I was pleased to hear that the TUC is being recommended to raise a £1 million to fight the Tories' Employment Bill.

However, my support was shaken when it was announced on the same day that the Football League chairmen are proposing to spend £5 million to 'revamp' the fading image of football!

So much for the TUC 'putting the boot in' against Tebbit's Bill.

Yours comradely  
J E Merrell  
NALGO, Leicester  
Gas Branch

## Why a pensioner is so angry

Dear Editor,

You recently published a photograph of myself at the pensioners lobby of Parliament, and if I look angry I certainly was and am!

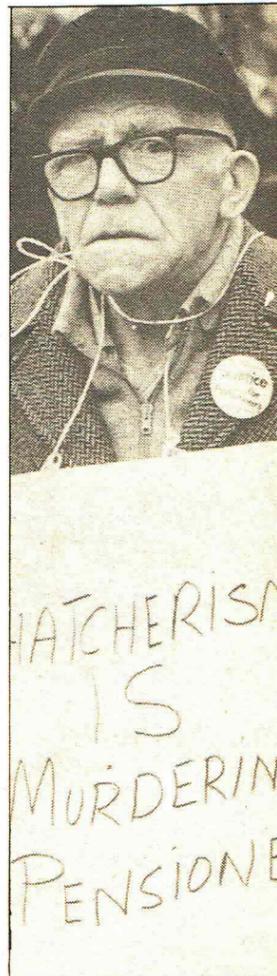
All the benefits of the Welfare State are being swiftly eroded, and whilst the great majority suffer massive cuts in their standard of living, the mean minority enrich themselves, by selling nationally owned assets, to their fraternity at prices way below their true value. Their manipulation of money values robs the poor and defenceless of the right to live and enjoy life.

This winter (one of the coldest I can remember, and I am 75) pensioners were advised not to worry about heating bills, they would be given help to pay them. So when our gas bill arrived, and we found it was 60% more than for the same period last year, we duly informed the DHSS. In their reply we were informed that as we had £300 in the bank we did not qualify for any help in paying this bill.

Neither my wife or myself are insured for a sum big enough to cover eventual burial expenses. Hence the money in the bank saved by scrimping on our daily needs and avoiding social activity.

I dread another winter with a further increase in fuel prices.

I am worried too, about the plight of our young people and understand only too well their frustration and anger at finding themselves surplus to capitalist requirements, and their own requirements for living being ignored, having suffered the same predicament in the 20s and 30s. Then we were too ill nourished to



Jack Rawling on the pensioners' lobby of Parliament.

demonstrate our real anger! Oh, there was the Jarrow march and the unemployed workers union etc. But not the guts to exert and sustain the necessary pressure. It's up to our young people now to get this government on the run and rid us for ever of the rotten capitalist system. Forward to a socialist society.

Yours fraternally  
Jack Rawling  
Newcastle

## Are you fed up with 'Nationwide'?

Dear Militant,

I have written to say that I am sick of BBC television's nightly news programme *Nationwide* and its right-wing Tory viewpoint.

*Nationwide*, February 22, was a prime example of its witch-hunting attitude towards the left-wing of the Labour Party. In its inevitable "goody two shoes" clean cut style, it began to pick at the Labour Party again, opening wounds which have just newly healed. Wounds, may I add, which have been put there by the Tory press and media alike.

The so-called "interview" between Peter Tatchell and Frank Bough was quite unbelievable and totally unacceptable. It was not an interview but an inquisition! Mr Tatchell was asked questions in a roundabout way suggesting all sorts of underlying things. He was then interrupted by Mr Bough at every available or unavailable opportunity and corrected or disagreed with. Whom may I ask is Frank Bough to correct Mr

Tatchell in that "now, now, then" fashion? Who wants to know Mr Bough's viewpoint, especially when we could listen to the opinions of a bright prospective MP, with good and fresh ideas. I for one would have liked to have heard his views uninterrupted.

Well done *Nationwide*! You probably think you are making a great success of turning the public against the Labour Party with your propaganda.

But I'm sorry I'm not that gullible, nor am I happy to see a medium as powerful as television be used in such a warped way. Especially when I and other left wingers help to pay for this with TV license payments. What I'd like to know is, why can't the viewpoint of the left-wing be aired. After all, all we want is to have democracy and to have a fair society. It's not that wicked, is it?

Yours fraternally  
Denise Murphy  
Glasgow Provan CLP

# DIG DEEP FOR MILITANT

A recent TV programme spotlighted the secretive group who cause all the misery and poverty in Britain today—the rich.

They are "hard up", (many are down to just one gardener!), but the top 1% still own three quarters of all ordinary shares and 70% of the land. Three quarters of the wealth in Britain is inherited.

Someone on the programme calculated that it needed at least £30,000 a year before you could accumulate sufficient capital to start living just on interest and dividends.

For some reason *Militant* doesn't get much money from people in this bracket. But we get something a lot more valuable, the commitment and money of some of the genuinely "hard up" in society.

For example a single-parent family from the Isle of Wight sent us 50 pence. A pensioner Mr R Stein (Cardiff) sent us £1, as did Edith, an unemployed supporter from Sunderland. All these individual amounts add up—as proved by T McGuinness from Gateshead who saved £32.99 in a jar!

Thanks also for amounts of about £1 to Mrs T Mackin (Motherwell), K Wyatt (Swinton & Kilnhurst) B Moody (Notts NUM), P Swift (Leicester NUHKW), TGWU members J Sutton (W Bromwich) and J Coolie (S London) R Prasad (AUEW Gloucester), YOPS worker N Mertons (Leicester), P Tomlinson (Stockport) and P Bishop (Bath).

We are pleased to see regular and increasing support from Labour Parties and Trade Union branches. Thanks to TGWU 5/909 Branch (£20), Central Branch, Sunderland North CLP

By Steve Cawley

(£4), NUM Wearmouth Mechanics (£5 donation and £5 from members), Coventry SE CLP (£10), Whitwell Colliery (Notts) readers for 'extras', and trade union officers from Grimsby, Brighton, Blyth and Glasgow for their £88 expenses repaid.

Young Socialist branches in Erith and Gateshead East sent us donations or collections, and there was also a collection from Dartington College Labour Club (Devon). In addition comrades who prepared food, teas and coffees for the LPYS regional conference sent us their 'surplus'. Militant meetings in Rotherham, Bishop Auckland, Birmingham, E London, Ellesmere Port, Coatbridge, Gravesend, Shepton Mallet, Brentwood, and Wakefield netted over £200, and with IOUs still to come.

Thanks to E Jones (Glasgow) for £35, P Rubenstein (Haltemprice CLP) for £30, J Cade (Bradford) £17.50, and E McKelvie (Strathclyde Nalgo) £14, in addition to another supporter in Bradford who donated £75. Comrades from Herts and Hants donated their rail season rebates, N Smith from Hull UCW sent a tenner and fivers came from A Evans (Easington), B Parker (Glasgow), and B McQueen (Tyneside).

Donations of £4 came from the Thompsons and S Parkin (both Bradford), and £2s from N Foley (E London) and from Scottish readers J Laverie, J Gray, J Williamson and E McGeacan. Food in Bristol raised £16.02 and £30 came from Ipswich's jumble sale.

We ask all our readers to dig deep to assist us with the

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 11 April
Eastern	870		2040
East Midlands	913		1470
Hants & Dorset	412		1100
Humberside	252		890
London East	1260		2010
London West	687		1150
London South	593		1550
Manchester & Lancs	725		1550
Merseyside	845		1950
Northern	979		2350
Scotland East	278		1290
Scotland West	761		1980
Southern	672		1900
South West	412		965
Wales East	138		970
Wales West	280		1130
West Midlands	505		1980
Yorkshire	1104		2290
Others	167		6435
<b>Total received</b>	<b>11853</b>		<b>35,000</b>

## Target for April 11th £35,000

£23,000 to get by April 11th. Send your share to Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Paper sales in the Tower Hamlets area of London have doubled in the last 4 months, through sales at the dole every day and at four tube stations each week. We now intend to step up sales even further by estate sales and a door-to-door canvass to build up the LPYS.

We have also started a campaign to get 'Militant' sold in newsagents and bookshops in the area, and so far we have one newsagent, one station kiosk and one bookshop selling the paper.

We are finding it easier to sell the paper with a number of us selling more than 20 a week.

By Dave Fryatt  
(Tower Hamlets LPYS)

As can be seen from the above letter sales of our paper are growing fast, with hundreds being sold on the way to the YOPS lobby and at the lobby itself.

Why not become a seller of 'Militant'? If you are interested fill in the tear-off slip on the back of this week's paper.

By Dave Farrar

# This week £1738

# ads

CLASSIFIED: 5p per word, minimum ten words.  
SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres.  
All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY.

## "What We Stand For" Meetings

TEESSIDE: Speaker: Peter Taaffe. Monday 22 March, 7.30 pm, Room 2, Stockton YMCA

TYNESIDE: Sunday 21 March, 7.30 pm. Speaker: Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant). Venue to be arranged.

PETERBOROUGH: Speaker: Steve Glennon. Wednesday 17 March, 7.30 pm, Neighbourhood House, Cromwell Road, Peterborough.

SUNDERLAND: Speaker: Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant). Wednesday 24 March, 7.30 pm at the Sunderland Transport Club, North Bridge Street, Sunderland. For further details phone Ray Physick, Sunderland 653994.

BARNSELEY. Hear: Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant), Pat Wall (President, Bradford Trades Council), and Mike Smith (South Yorkshire County Councillor). Old Arcadian Hall, Market Street, Barnsley. 7.30 pm, Friday 19 March 1982.

EAST MIDLANDS Labour Party Conference Militant Public Meeting. Hear Pat Wall (President Bradford Trades Council) and David Jones (member regional LP executive). Saturday 13 March, 7.00 pm at Devonian Hotel, top of Pier Approach, Cleethorpes.

CHESTERFIELD Readers Meeting: 'Nuclear Bombs—how to stop the threat'. Speakers: Rob Jones (Sheffield Heeley CLP) and a local CND speaker. Monday 22 March, 7.30 pm, Rooms 3/4, Market Hall, Chesterfield.

HALIFAX Militant Readers Meeting: 'Socialism and Parliament'. Hear Pat Wall (President Bradford Trades Council) on Tuesday 23 March, 7.30 pm, at AUEW Club, St James St., Halifax (near bus station).

SCOTTISH Labour Party Conference Militant Readers Meeting. 'In Defence of Marxism'. Speaker: Pat Wall (President, Bradford Trades Council). Friday 12 March 6.00 pm, Windsor Restaurants, St Johns St (near City Hall).

Stevenage Militant Public Meeting "Kill Tebbit's Bill—bring down the Tories with 24-hour general strike". Speaker Martin Elvin. Stevenage Leisure Centre Committee Room 1. 8pm Tuesday 16 March.

MANCHESTER University Militant Supporters Society

Monday 15 March: 'The Bloody Rise of Capitalism' speaker Mick Brooks. All meetings 12.45 pm, Meeting Room 4, University Students Union, Oxford Road.

Marxist economics meetings in Manchester. March 13th 2pm University Students Union—Introduction to Marxist economics. March 15th 7.30pm Star & Garter, Fairfield St. (behind Piccadilly) Russia: State Capitalist or Workers State.

## ADVERTISE IN OUR MAY DAY AND 600th EDITION

Salute May Day and our 600th edition with a greeting in each issue. Our 600th edition is the week after our May Day edition so why not take out two greetings? We are having a special offer for two ads at a cut price.

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3 column centimetres (max 15 words) £3  
6 column centimetres (max 25 words) £6  
1/16 page (display) £10  
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2 adverts x 3 column centimetres £5  
2 adverts x 6 column centimetres £10  
2 adverts x 1/16 page (display) £16  
2 adverts x 1/8 page (display) £32  
2 adverts x 1/4 page (display) £64

May Day is an important day for workers internationally show your organisation's solidarity with the world working class and place an advert. The 600th edition is another landmark in the history of *Militant* so give us a boost and show your support for our paper.

Closing date Tuesday 20 April. Cheques payable to *Militant*. Send to *Militant* 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or phone 01-986 3828.

## What we stand for

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

## MILITANT REPRINT 'Stalinism and Bolshevism'

by Leon Trotsky  
Available from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Price 20p plus 15p post and package.

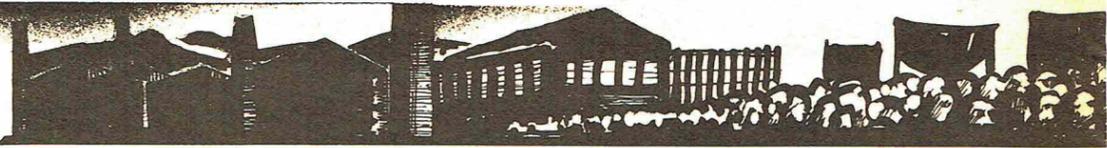
## MILITANT IRISH MONTHLY 100th ISSUE!

Out now Marxist Analysis of Ireland, North and South. Price 15p from your local Militant seller. Or order from Militant Irish Monthly, 75 Middle Abbey St, Dublin 1. Six issues £2 Twelve issues £4.

HILLINGDON LPYS Federation Public Meeting: "Defend Public Transport" Speakers from NUR, ASLEF and GLC Councillor John McDonnell. Tuesday 16 March 7.30pm. Labour Hall Pump Lane Hayes.

TOWER HAMLETS LPYS Public Meeting "Save London Transport" Monday 15 March 7.30pm. Speakers Deirdre Woods (GLC Councillor) and Dave Webb (LPYS), Dame Colletts House, Ben Jonson Road, Stepney E1.

# Industrial Reports



## NUT strike

"Maggie-Out!"; a familiar chant on demonstrations, but some of the protesters in Barking last Wednesday were a little younger than usual. A group of 7 to 12 year olds led a march of almost 1,000 parents and teachers around the Town Hall, protesting against Barking and Dagenham Labour council's plans to axe up to 150 teaching posts in the next year.

The children carried a banner with the message "What the Butler didn't see!" (Joe Butler is the leader of the council)—on the placards was a list of subjects which may be axed if the cuts go through.

The teachers are on strike in the fight against these cuts.

The many parents on the demo were extremely angry with the Labour council. Yet this could be a golden opportunity for a Labour council to join forces with the striking teachers and initiate a campaign amongst all the local authority unions and other councils in a similar dilemma. It's time Labour councils stood firm against the vicious policies of this government instead of carrying out cuts and being the Tories' whipping boys.

Messages of support to Ken Jones, Secretary of Barking and Dagenham NUT, c/o NUT Strike Office, AUEW Hall, 588 Rainham Road South, Dagenham, Essex.

## NALGO fightback

A group meeting of the local government section of NALGO in London overwhelmingly carried a motion backing a fighting stand against cuts, including total and indefinite strike action in defence of jobs and services. This included unity with other local authority trade unions and the levy of all NALGO members in local government to sustain this action.

Unfortunately there are some areas of weakness in this programme, not least its lack of a political strategy for unity with Labour councils or its lack of opposition to rent and rate rises as well as cuts. But there can be no doubt at all that given a fighting lead NALGO members will respond to defend their jobs and services, and the tasks facing activists in NALGO is to put flesh on the skeleton of the programme.

The Group meeting went on to back an emergency resolution from the Islington branch, where Britain's first SDP council have forced members into strike action through closing a children's home. A platform speaker pointed out that over the past year, there had been three major strikes of NALGO members (Liverpool typists, Penwith, Islington); in each instance a SDP/Liberal Alliance council. NALGO members will no doubt take this to heart when they vote on affiliation to the Labour Party in the next few weeks.

## Fords strike

A bitter dispute at Fords Dagenham has been going on since 20 February. 220 electricians are on strike over one man being sacked. He is 47, has worked for Fords for 24 years and has a good disciplinary record. Yet he was accused of clocking other people out.

Under normal conditions two foremen would normally explain to the accused what had been reported. However, he didn't know what had happened until arriving at work the next day. The union reps went through the correct investigation procedures, but management continually broke the agreed course.

The full-time official for their union, the EETPU, having fought for the sacked worker, then recommended the men accept the decision, but 208 voted for continuation of the strike with 9 against at an angry meeting.

EETPU members have had tremendous support from the other electrical contractors on the site.

# MINERS FIGHT THE MISERS!

**A dispute over water payments provoked a 24-hour strike by miners at the Whitwell colliery in North Derbyshire last week.**

The 14th District main gate 'rippers' (face workers) are being refused an increase in water money. Working conditions have never been good, but over the last week they have deteriorated. Management should only be too pleased to get men to work in these conditions in the first place, never mind refusing any extra money the men are asking for!

Water is falling on these men all the time they are trying to work. Conditions underfoot are diabolical—every step needs extra care as water and sludge are ankle deep. The light from the men's lamps reflects in the water dazzling them and adding to the already hazardous conditions.

## HEATHROW

**British Airways management at Heathrow Airport did not bargain for the determined resistance of ramp workers, now entering their fifth week of their lock-out.**

This so-called 'survival plan' of British Airways will initially cost 300 jobs, with more to follow. Management also want new job descriptions which would force workers to do extra duties. However, the ramp workers' determination has inspired other workers on the airport. Aer Lingus cargo are also in dispute over new rosters.

The local T&GWU leadership must prepare a strategy for victory. Through solidarity action, if engineering and maintenance workers come out on strike, and the airport were closed down, ramp workers would rapidly return victorious under their original rosters.

In order to get other workers' support, mass meetings of engineering and maintenance and other workers must be called immediately, addressed by ramp shop stewards. The tactics of management of attempting to break the trade unions at the airport, allowing the way for privatisation of sections of British Airways, could be explained. The myth that workers must accept 'survival plans' such as these or the company goes bust, is just management propaganda, as the miners showed when they resisted pit closures.

By Ian Whyles  
(Whitwell NUM)

The arches which support the roof have to be carried, hard enough in dry conditions, to be set under new, exposed rock. Water not only makes walking difficult, but also makes the rock unpredictable and working more dangerous than normal.

The management's miserly attitude is at a pit that has just spent hundreds of pounds preparing another new, dry district by painting, whitewashing, and generally tidying up for some prestigious inter-pit competition.

Perhaps after the recent acceptance of the pay offer, management think they can start to dictate to the men; there have been two disputes at other local pits, Gresswell and Manton. But I'm proud to say all the members including surface workers have backed the men in the Whitwell dispute.

The mood is determined, as can be perhaps illustrated by our paper sales at the pit. Last week 65 *Militants* were sold, and this week over 50, as well as collecting £4.60 for the fighting fund.

Now we are looking to Arthur Scargill to give a determined, socialist leadership to the NUM and to the TUC leaders as well. Get rid of these Tories and return a Labour government committed to a socialist society.

# Danger on the turkey roll line

**While the strike at Bernard Matthews poultry products in East Anglia is over pay, Victorian conditions at the factory certainly contributed to the struggle.**

This is especially so on the turkey roll production line. Last year, an incredible 500 workers were referred to hospital for treatment. So frequently do workers need to be stitched up that the workers hold collections to treat the nurses at the local hospital.

If you don't cut yourself to bits, you might just get frostbite. The factory temperature never rises above 48°!

By Theresa Mackay  
(NUAAW,  
personal capacity)

And watch your step. The smooth concrete floors are awash with turkey grease and water. Sharp turns are out, every step must be taken with care.

But you can also get stabbed! Not intentionally, but so crowded are conditions on production lines that workers can accidentally stab each other.

These primitive conditions prevail in order that 16 turkeys a minute are killed, plucked, gutted, boned, jointed and rolled; 16 times every minute a worker on the lines tears out entrails, another cuts off the

drumsticks, another the wings, another the breast and so on. The end product, a turkey roll.

For Matthews, this means a fat bank roll. Bernard Matthews pays himself £7,000 a week. Yet the majority of the workforce and their families are eligible for rent rebates, and family incomes supplement.

How do workers stick it out? Between 30 and 40% of the workforce only do so for more than a year. But now the workers, members of the National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers, have said, "enough is enough". No more of forelock touching, heads are high. They are fighting for their dignity.

# Steelworkers - ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

**Thousands of steel workers throughout Scotland have declared that enough is enough!**

For years the workers have watched their conditions deteriorate through the implementation of so-called "productivity schemes". They have witnessed a wiping out of thousands of jobs in areas already devastated by mass unemployment and deprivation. They have suffered short time working and falling living standards. They are now standing up to declare that they are not prepared to accept any further attacks.

Management have now attempted to introduce a

By Jack Harvey  
(T&GWU,  
personal capacity)

pay and productivity scheme without any negotiation or reference to the unions, which could mean the destruction of a further 600 jobs. The workforce at these plants rejected these bulldozer tactics and overwhelmingly backed the shop stewards' recommendation of take immediate strike action.

Tommy Brennan, the Convenor of the massive Ravenscraig plant in Motherwell told *Militant*, "We did not want this strike, it has been thrust

upon us by the actions of management. They have left us with no alternative. It is almost as if they want to see Ravenscraig closed and given the unemployment we already have in Motherwell; management must be condemned for their utterly irresponsible attitude, not only towards this area, but also to the entire steel industry."

Tommy added the machinery already existed to deal with this dispute, but the previous national agreement was being "completely ignored". The tactics of the British Steel Corporation management appear to emulate the recent attempts by British Rail to brow-beat the workforce into accepting the unacceptable.



The dispute goes on at Foyle's bookshop in the West End of London. The picture shows part of the mass picket on Saturday, March 6. The reactionary management at Foyles sacked workers for joining a union. It is a matter of urgency that the union involved, USDAW, now make this strike official.



# Industrial Reports

## 'Battle won, war continues'

### ASLEF

The settlement which ended the recent six week dispute on the railways is a victory for ASLEF and defeat for the British Rail Board and the Tory government.

From the beginning, the BRB provoked the dispute in an effort, with the full support of the Tories, to isolate, defeat and ultimately destroy the train drivers' union ASLEF.

Yet as a consequence, one of the longest and most bitter disputes within the rail industry for many years, resulted in a humiliating setback for the BRB and government. Despite every effort by the bosses, they did not succeed in even denting ASLEF's solid front.

The BRB and the Tories had to depend upon the arbitration body ACAS to get

By David Chapman  
(Glasgow ASLEF)

them off the hook. As usual, ACAS, attempted to come down on both sides. Nevertheless, despite the correct decision of ASLEF not to attend the ACAS enquiry, the report indicates the union's consistent stand in a number of areas and is a further blow for the BRB.

In the view of the enquiry the understanding on pay and the understanding on productivity were separate. As ACAS states, "there is nothing in these agreements which makes the payment of the 3% conditional on the Board's view that

satisfactory progress had been achieved under a particular heading." The evidence of both the NUR and TSSA who attended the enquiry, backed up ASLEF on this point.

ACAS also vindicated ASLEF, when it found that the BRB should have taken their proposals through further stages of the machinery of negotiation. Whilst ACAS refused to apportion the blame, all the conclusions point to the blame landing fairly and squarely on the shoulders of BR management.

However, the proposals for a settlement contain many of the potential traps, typical of such enquiries and commissions. The report called on ASLEF to confirm its commitment to an understanding on productivity. In fact, ASLEF have never stated otherwise. They have constantly reaffirmed their preparedness to discuss any issue, but without prior commitment.

Many ASLEF members will be angered by the enquiry's view that the implementation of the shorter working week should await

the outcome of the dispute on flexible rostering. The shorter working week was originally part of the 1980 pay deal, it was also included in the 1981 understanding on pay and is therefore separate from the flexi-rostering proposals which were part of the understanding on productivity.

A tight time table for dealing with BRB's proposals for flexi-rostering was agreed. It has now passed through the various councils and will go to the Railway Staffs National Tribunal (RSNT), chaired by McCarthy, on Monday, March 15.

Even so, many ASLEF members will not be lulled into a sense of false security. The terms of reference to the RSNT show the BRB is still intent on inflicting variable rostering on train drivers.

There must be no let-up in the pressure by ASLEF leading up to the RSNT. What also came out of the BRB's evidence to ACAS are their plans for the 'easement of conditions' on single manning. This, together with their plans for

one man operation of freight and passenger trains the 'trainman's concept', which will worsen conditions and mean loss of jobs, must also be resisted—not only by ASLEF but the NUR too.

Despite their denials, the government were advising BR behind the scenes. It was their opposition which restrained the BRB from implementing a lock-out, fearful of the consequences of such action. The ruling class were forced to back-off, but will be seeking revenge. As *The Guardian* (22.2.82) stated "The government allowed the BR Chairman, Sir Peter Parker, to lose a battle in order to win his war with the train drivers."

Contrary to press reports at the time, the dispute did seriously affect industry and commerce. Nearly 25% of London commuters stayed at home on workdays. Coal piled up at the pitheads. At Fords, Southampton, plant van assembly would have been halted as space ran out as the strikes had continued. However, in any future

battles the BRB and government will be more desperate to win. Many members realise this. As Mark Fitchett, a driver's assistant at the Stratford depot, commented, "Many of us felt that the union was slow to seek support. We also felt that pickets should have been organised. Next time, there must be no hesitation. All those unions who offered help must be recontacted, and steps taken to ensure a swift victory. Already the Board and the Tories will be working out their tactics for the next time. We must do the same."

In a future article, David takes up the role of the unions in the dispute, and the way forward for the continued struggle.

LOBBY TRIBUNAL ON MARCH 15!

Assemble 9.30am Euston Station, march to the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, WC2, for lobby at 10.30am. Called by ASLEF No.1 District and supported by National Broad Left for Railworkers

## CIVIL SERVICE - Reject technology plans

The decision by civil service trade union leaders to accept a two year interim agreement on new technology has caused widespread anger and discontent among civil service trade unionists.

To their credit the Society of Public and Civil Servants executive has decided not to accept the offer. By a vote of 12 to 11, they decided to leave the decision to their annual conference delegates.

The Council of Civil Service Trade Unions, including the right-wing leaders of CPSA and IRSF, who have accepted this deal, claim that they have an agreement for no compulsory redundancies. The facts, however, show that this claim is threadbare.

This agreement gives nothing to civil service union members. It admits starkly that a number of jobs will be lost as a result of the introduction of new technology.

Management only "believes"—so it claims—that staff could be reabsorbed into other jobs. They say that there "should" be no compulsory redundancies... because of natural wastage!

If workers take other jobs they will have to learn to do

By Brian Ingham

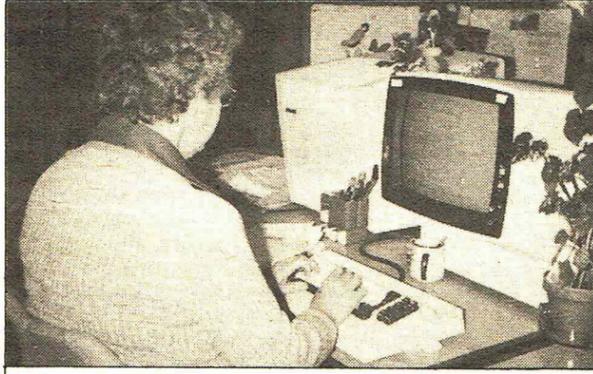
them within six months. After that time if they are found to be unsuitable and no other jobs can be found, they will have to go. With jobs disappearing in the civil service as a result of Thatcher's streamlining, the prospects are grim.

Management also say that it would not monitor individual performance without "seeking" (note—only "seeking") the agreement of the trade union concerned. If they "seek" agreement only to find it lacking, we can only assume that they would decide to go ahead anyway.

But quite apart from the threat to those already working in the civil service, this agreement means further savage cuts in manning levels and therefore less jobs available for the 3 million workers on the dole and the hundreds of thousands of school children who will be seeking work in the next few years.

The right-wing civil service union leaders argue that they cannot do any better in negotiations with this government...and that the agreement only lasts for two years anyway.

But this agreement will mean less jobs for civil servants and the unemployed, it will undermine the efforts of rank and file members to defend jobs, mean worse



A VDU—new technology agreements spell danger!

working conditions and it undermines the campaign for a shorter working week. Management has been given a blank cheque to bring in all the new technology it wants over the next two years and begin training staff in readiness for their next attack.

Jobs have already been lost as a direct result of computerisation in the civil service. But it is not too late to fight back.

Given a campaigning leadership that is prepared to go out to the wider civil service trade union membership and explain the catastrophic impact this technology will have on jobs, and a leadership that is ready to back its members in struggle in the workplaces, then this threat can be repelled.

But despite grasping this deal, the right-wing civil service trade union leaders have no confidence that it will be backed by the ordinary membership. As a result, it seems that CPSA, for example, will consent to the deal without the ordinary members being able to put their point of view.

Inland Revenue Staffs Federation members are to be consulted, but not in the way that IRSF conference demanded—that is, with a full conference in which branches can put their own resolutions. No. It seems that at the special consultative conference on this

question, IRSF members will only be allowed to vote yes or no to the deal, not to formulate their own policy.

On the IRSF executive recently, some right wingers complained that somebody (meaning left EC members) had told the members of the dangers of this agreement and of the confusion on the EC, when no less than three separate votes took place on the agreement, producing three different results—the first against, the second a shambles, and the third a 13 to 12 majority in favour!

The left EC members replied that attacks on the left for telling the members the situation in the union and about the threat to jobs were utterly hypocritical. The capitalist press and management always seemed to find out from their friends on the right all they wanted to know about the affairs of the IRSF. There was only secrecy from the membership! It is precisely to end such indefensible secrecy that activists are demanding full and open publication of EC minutes. They hope to secure this at next year's Rules Revision conference.

In the meantime the active layers of IRSF are hoping for a massive rejection of the dangerous new technology agreements.

CPSA elections

## Right-wing attacks at new low

Of the Newcastle Central Office branch of the CPSA, 821 members have so far voted for John Macreadie, the Broad Left candidate for the post of CPSA deputy general secretary. Only 251 have voted for John Ellis, the main right wing candidate, 138 for Diane Warwick, the present Section Secretary, and a mere 40 for Peter Thomason, the former Section Secretary, and the candidate who failed in his attempt to get Broad Left backing.

Voting continues in this branch, the largest in the country, but the marvellous 2 to 1 overall current running total for John Macreadie shows that his vote is well on target for at least the 3,000 plus vote achieved by the Newcastle branch in the general secretary campaign.

This support for John Macreadie is the best answer to the scurrilous campaign of the right wing who clearly believe that John Macreadie has a real chance of victory. They are panicking. They have sunk to absolutely unprecedented depths in their attempt to undermine John Macreadie's credibility.

On Monday morning Alistair Graham, the general secretary elect, Kate Losinska, the President, John Ellis, the right wing candidate and Charlie Elliot, the right wing presidential candidate, all stood outside the Newcastle office distributing a leaflet attacking John Macreadie and the Newcastle Office branch committee. The leaflet contained not one single constructive argu-

ment on policy. It was merely a diatribe of insults, personal attacks and suggestions that those who supported *Militant* were some how "infiltrating" the CPSA, an attack which is particularly ironic coming from Alistair Graham who has never been a rank and file CPSA member, who joined only for a cosy career and who, it is reported, will be earning a salary well in excess of £20,000 a year.

This band of leafletters were met, however, by over 50 branch members with leaflets supporting John Macreadie. They have been spurred on further by this attack and also by the scandalous suggestion of John Ellis (carried on the *Daily Express* front page) that the government should be 'concerned' about the growing support for *Militant*. Rank and file CPSA members will not tolerate any witch-hunt against officials at national or local level.

The leading right wingers were sent away from Newcastle with the message that instead of attacking CPSA members and good union branches they should organise a pay campaign to defend low paid civil servants. These attacks once again underline the burning need for a fighting left leadership of CPSA. The election of John Macreadie as CPSA deputy general secretary will be a major step forward along this road.

By a Newcastle CPSA member

## Sunderland Shipbuilders - BOSSES ATTACK WORKERS RIGHTS

A strike of 2,500 shipyard workers has broken out at Sunderland Shipbuilders, over the victimisation of five shop stewards.

The stewards were defending their right to a tea break, which was previously accepted (unofficially) by management and workers alike.

By Tony Hulton  
 (ASB Deptford Yard)  
 (in a personal cap)

Three of the shop stewards were given a written warning, one a final warning, and the other a final warning plus five days service suspension!

Management treated their meeting with the union with contempt. First, Welsh, head of Sunderland Shipbuilders, turned up late and throughout the meeting kept interrupting our full time official.

No progress was made, so a mass meeting was held on 3 March lasting over four hours.

The meeting dealt first with another issue involving overtime. After some discussion the decision was taken to ban overtime.

Next came the threats against the five shop stewards. One worker claimed that two stewards were members of the Boilermakers union (ASB) so it was not their concern as it had nothing to do with the outfit - trade or general

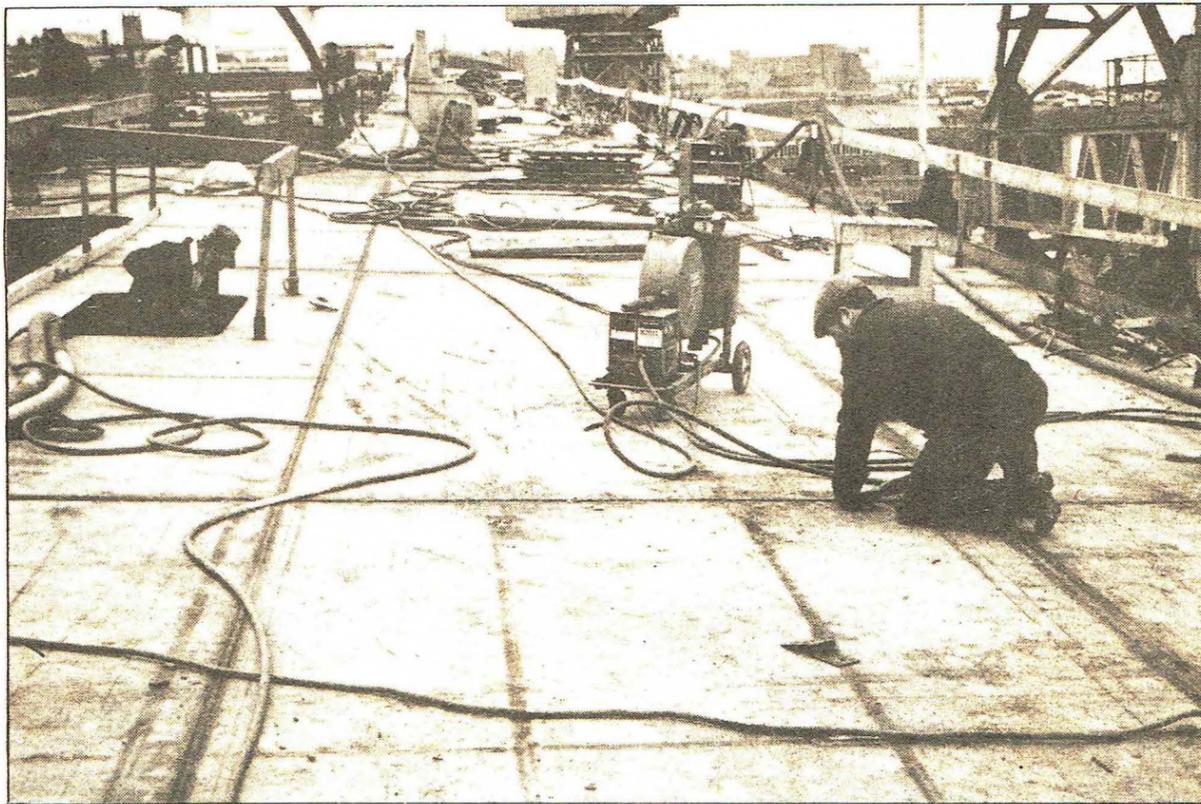
workers.

He was told in no uncertain terms by the ASB shop steward that the case involved everyone, threatening the rights and even the existence of the shop stewards area committee in Sunderland Shipbuilders. Now was the time for some kind of action.

It was also pointed out that shop stewards could not go into negotiations with a dismissal threat over their heads, as they would be constantly in danger of reprimand by management.

The shop stewards committee were told to seek another meeting with Welsh, demanding a withdrawal of the action proposed against them.

An hour and a half later, they returned with news that the final warnings would stand, but the five days suspension was reduced to one day.



All shipyard workers should give their support to the 2,500 workers at Sunderland Shipbuilders, as management try to undermine trade union rights

This was still totally unacceptable, and indefinite strike action to support the shop stewards was overwhelmingly supported by 3,000 men and women, who went home.

The local TV news claim-

ed the strike was in support of shop stewards caught drinking tea when they should have been working. In fact this strike means a lot more.

British Shipbuilders' management have recently

been using Edwardes'-style tactics in an attempt to undermine the power of the union. Victory in this dispute is vital, for all employees of BS.

A defeat at Sunderland would only embolden man-

agement's attempts to clamp down further on the rights of all shipyard workers.

We call on all shipyard workers to give positive backing to the Sunderland strikers.

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## BUDGET FROM PAGE ONE

be grateful for this little bonus of £1.50 or so—but almost exactly the same amount is being taken out of workers' pay packets in higher National Insurance payments. In April, in other words, workers will find no extra money in their pay packets!

The increases given to pensioners, to the unemployed and in Child Benefit are no more than an insult. It is a sick joke to imagine that two pensioners can live on £52.25 a week or that an unemployed couple can live on nearly £12 less than that.

These increases are supposed to compensate for inflation, but they do nothing of the sort. They still do not recover these benefits to their purchasing power of 3 years ago. The Retail Price Index is weighted against the low-paid, in any case, because they spend proportionally more of their meagre income on those items that rise quickest.

The higher duties on petrol, tobacco and alcohol will add even further to the burden of workers. The petrol duty along with the higher road tax will mean an average of £1 a week ex-

tra for the average motorist. These measures alone will increase prices overall by 1-1½%.

Despite all Howe's talk about reducing the rate of inflation, workers are right to be sceptical. Gas prices are going up 25%, electricity by 12%. Fares in London are going up 200% in a year.

No worker will interpret this Budget in any sense as a 'give-away' Budget.

How can the piddling 60p increase in Child Benefit, for example, compensate for the increases in the cost of childrens' clothes, or school meals or bus fares? The Tories live in another world as far as the majority of working people are concerned.

As could be expected, the real benefits in the Budget go to the Tories' pals in big business. The employers' National Insurance Surcharge is being reduced and while households are facing steep rises in gas and electricity tariffs, there are to be special reduced rates for industrial users.

In the last three years the big four banks made massive profits, over £4,600 million in total, yet Howe has declined to introduce any windfall tax on the profits being made by the present high interest rates.

The rich and prosperous

will continue to be able to avoid taxes by recourse to the many tax havens available—Howe has refused to make any changes in regulations on that score.

This economic package does nothing for working people now, but it does even less for their future. It will have at best a marginal effect on employment, and will not stop unemployment rising this year.

Geoffrey Howe optimistically talks about an increase in economic output of 1.5% this year. But that has to set against a drop of over 5% in the last two years, and an even greater decline in manufacturing. Indeed last December, the level of manufacturing was lower than in the first quarter of 1974, when there was a three-day week because of the miners' strike!

It will be no consolation whatsoever for those four million now on the dole, already suffering lower relative living standards than at any time since 1951, to be told that unemployment is still growing...but slower.

It will be no consolation for local authority workers that have been made redundant because of Tory cut-backs, to be told by Howe that they can now do "community work" for a wage

equivalent to unemployment benefit.

Reading this Budget to the Commons, Howe sounded like a man from another planet when he talked about "help for school-leavers to set up their own businesses." In two years nearly two-thirds of all school-leavers will be without a job, yet all the Chancellor can come out with are crass stupidities of this sort!

Workers will correctly draw the conclusion that the Tories are not interested in them: This budget will increase a hundred-fold the anger and bitterness already felt towards this government. But that anger must not be left to fester.

There is a means of fighting back. Workers should join the Labour Party, become active in their unions and begin to fight the Tories in an organised way. The Tories offer nothing, and neither does their system.

This vicious Budget must strengthen the resolve of all workers to put their backs into a serious and determined fight to get rid of the Tories and to bring in a Labour government committed to fundamental change in society in the interests of workers.