

# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

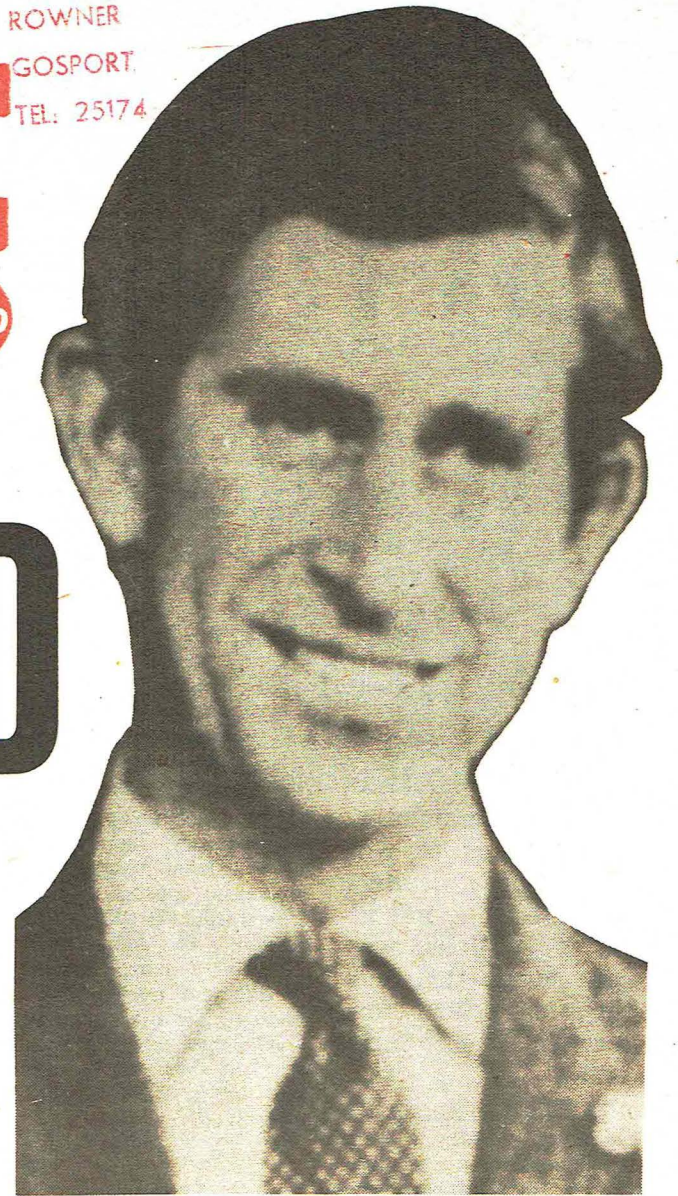
ISSUE 572  
9 October 1981

20p

CONTACT: NIGEL BOND  
12 AUSTRERBERRY WAY  
ROWNER  
GOSPORT  
TEL: 25174

## Tory pay policy - RICH PAMPERED

Photo: Militant



A 50% increase for this parasite. Yet workers like those at Staffa, East London (left) are fighting for survival.

# WORKERS HAMMERED

## STAFFA: WORKERS FIGHT DIRTY TACTICS

If you want to see hypocrisy in action, you need look no further than East London.

Bosses at Staffa Engineering in Leyton announced the move of the firm to Plymouth on 5 June, along with crocodile tears at the jobs that would be lost. But they had quite callously been planning the move since April!

In fact in April they brought in the Hay manage-

ment consultants, paying them between £8,000 and £10,000 to work out how to announce the transfer.

The Hay group provided plans on how to deal with every aspect of the problems Staffa would face, and model press statements. They even included scripts, giving set answers to expected questions and actions from the unions!

They took up every aspect except one—occupation! On 30 September, the Staffa workers took posses-

sion of the factory, including the Hay group's scripts and plans for the bosses. The Staffa bosses' payment of £8,000 to the Hay group came to nothing!

The workers, members of the AUEW, were later joined by ASTMS members. The next Monday (5 October) a solicitor approached the gates asking for the convenor, who was not

CONTINUED ON  
BACK PAGE

What sort of society are we living in? In the London districts of Harlesden, Brixton and Shepherds Bush, an astonishing 40%—48% of young jobless people have not signed on the unemployment register.

This is reported by the government's own August 'Employment Gazette'.

Some of the young people told researchers that they didn't like the humiliation of registering and claiming. Some couldn't stand the rude treatment from officials. Others thought there was no point anyway, because of the derisive amount of cash they could claim.

Officially, there are 269,500 jobless school leavers. Unofficially (but confirmed by the D of E)

there are a lot more.

There is one unregistered unemployed person who has just received a bit of publicity again. You know, the one with big cars. He can't stand officials prying into his affairs either—especially the taxmen.

Once upon a time, to avoid any bother, he used to...  
CONTINUED ON  
BACK PAGE

By Lynn Walsh

## Give us a Gold Rush

The three-quarter year target date for Militant's fighting fund arrives this weekend (10 October). We ask all Militant's readers and supporters to make it the biggest gold rush since the days of the Klondyke!

Over £2000 has already been received in the last 3 days but there's only Thursday and Friday to post in the money you've collected. Phone before lunch time on Sunday 11 October to give us details of last minute collections.

The bosses and the Tories want us to "tighten our belts" to give them bigger profits and give us a life of unemployment or low pay. If you have to tighten your belts tighten them for 'Militant' and a socialist future. See page 13 for how well your area is doing.

# Militant

## NO TURN TO RIGHT

The Labour Party Conference was not a rout for the left as the Tory media has tried to make out.

Tony Benn narrowly failed to win the Deputy leadership election, but as far as policies was concerned, this was the most radical conference for many years.

The right managed to unseat five left wingers from the National Executive Committee. However, both the elections and the policy decisions revealed an even deeper polarisation between the ranks of the Labour Party, on the one hand, and the right-wing dominated parliamentary party and a handful of right-wing general secretaries on the other.

Tony Benn's vote in the Deputy leadership contest was, in reality, a triumph. Over 80% of the CLPs supported him. In the trade unions, the most active and politicised sections were for his candidature.

But the capitalist press and television campaigned remorselessly against Tony Benn and his policies. This undoubtedly had an effect on sections of trade unionists, especially given the limitations of left-wing campaign in many unions.

### Healey's majority undermined

Healey scraped in with the smallest of majorities, 0.85%. Already, his slender majority has been undermined by the further desertions of three Labour MPs: Ginsberg (Dewsbury) and Bob Mitchell (Southampton Test) who have defected to the SDP, and Tom McNally (Stockport) who will probably go to the SDP.

Two or three more defections from the Parliamentary Labour Party and Healey's majority has gone.

Clearly, many more right-wing MPs would have deserted the Labour Party if Tony Benn and not Healey, had won the deputy leadership election. Several lobby correspondents have commented that, if there had not been a recorded ballot, a number of right-wing MPs would have voted for Benn — to provide themselves with a pretext for deserting the party.

With Healey in the deputy leadership they are hanging on. But they are already grumbling about the policies endorsed at

Brighton: rejection of incomes policy; support for the "Socialist Alternative" economic policy; withdrawal from the EEC; commitment to fight local government cuts; support for unilateral nuclear disarmament; and other policies which completely go against the right-wing policies pursued by previous Labour governments.

### Witch-hunts will not succeed

The NEC elections were undoubtedly a set-back for the party. After several years of defeats, a number of right-wing union general secretaries, led by Terry Duffy, Bill Sirs, Weighell, Grantham and others managed to oust Norman Atkinson as Treasurer, replacing him with the right-winger Varley, and to knock off four other left-wing NEC members.

However, this action was taken by the general secretaries. In many cases, delegates within their delegations, more in touch with the mood of the rank and file, were opposed to these decisions.

With their partial victory, right wingers like Duffy and Bassnett now think that they can begin to return the party to the conditions it was in under right-wing domination.

But do they believe that their members are prepared to return to the disastrous policies of the last Labour government? Conference's clear rejection of incomes restraint should have made it clear that this is not possible. Nor will their members support moves to reimpose the undemocratic party regime of the Gaitskell era.

The industrial battles against the bosses and the Thatcher government now looming up will ensure the further radicalisation of the rank and file of the trade unions. Far from leading to return to the right, this will mean stronger demands for radical policies and the further democratisation of both the Labour Party and the trade unions.

While Brighton marked the strengthening of support for left-wing policies, however, it also revealed a deep split within the "Tribune" left.

There was enormous anger amongst CLP delegates and party activists at the Tribune MPs like Neil



Conference delegates (above) applaud Tony Benn; Denis Healey (below) speaks at a "Solidarity" meeting while Peter Shore looks on. Photos by Julian McKittrick

Kinnoek, Joan Lestor, and a dozen or so others who abstained in the second ballot of the Deputy leadership elections — thus allowing Healey to win.

The Tribune rally (Report, page ) brought unprecedented hostility to platform speakers like Kinnoek.

It is ironic that in the past, some of these Tribunites have accused 'Militant' of being "sectarian". But we have always supported them and other lefts against the right, regardless of our criticisms of their policies.

If Benn had come third in the first ballot, we, like the rest of Tony Benn's supporters, would have supported Silkin in the second round. Yet many of the Tribunites who supported Silkin in the first round abstained in the second — which in reality meant support for Healey.

Why have they thrown this life-line to Healey and the right?

Their policies, as Peter Shore made clear in his conference speech from the rostrum, are no different from those of the Social Democrats. In essentials, they cling to the policies of the 1974-79 Labour government.

They remain within the

ranks of the Parliamentary Labour Party to attempt to block the implementation of radical, left policies under the next Labour government.

This is now understood by the majority of the active party members and the trade unionists. They will not easily forgive the Tribunites who let Healey back.

On the other hand, support in the party for Tony Benn and the policies he has campaigned for has been enormously strengthened as a result of this year's conference.

Adoption of those policies marks a big step forward for the Labour Party. However, they do not represent a rounded-out socialist programme.

The reforms proposed under the "Socialist Alternative" would mean enormous gains for the working class. But they could only be implemented and made permanent through the socialist transformation of society, achieved through the mass mobilisation of the working class.

The support for 'Militant' supporters speaking in Conference debates, as well as the extremely successful 'Militant' meeting on Tuesday evening, shows that there is stronger sup-

port than ever for our Marxist policies. Increasingly, workers, through their own experience of the crisis, have come to the conclusion that Marxist policies are the only way forward for the labour movement.

Emboldened by their success in the Deputy leadership and NEC elections, however, some of Labour's right wing have indicated that they are preparing a witch-hunt against the left, and against the 'Militant' in particular.

Interviewed on television after the conference, Callaghan said that he wanted the 'Militant' out of the party. Roy Hattersley, while publicly appealing for the return to the Labour Party, has also publicly stated that he wants 'Militant' supporters expelled from the Labour Party.

Sid Weighell and other right-wing trade union leaders have also indicated that they intend to whip up a witch-hunt within the Party and the trade unions.

Neither 'Militant' nor the left within the labour movement will be intimidated by these threats.

If the right attempt to move against the 'Militant' or other left-wing activists, attempting new disciplinary action in the Gaitskellite

tradition, they will face a tide of protest and opposition.

Marxism has deep roots within the movement. If its support has grown in the recent period, it is not because of "conspiracies" or "plots", but because of a profound swing to the left amongst both activists and the wider layers of workers because of the crisis in British society and the Tories' reactionary policies.

Some of the right wing who opposed the democratic reforms in the party and the adoption of left-wing policies are now making appeals for "unity against the Tories".

This has gained a certain response because there is a powerful urge towards unity to fight the Tories. But Conference made it clear that Labour's ranks are not prepared to accept unity at any price—they want unity on the policies adopted by Conference.

They will not allow the slogan of "unity" to be used to stifle democracy within the Party or the unions.

The task is to step up the mass, campaigning activity to bring down the Tory government and to fight to return a Labour government—on bold socialist policies.



## FASCIST ATTACK

A public meeting of Rotherham Labour Party Young Socialists, called to discuss the recent Labour Party Conference, was violently broken up by about 16 members of the National Front, who burst into the meeting and attacked several YS members.

The meeting room was badly damaged with chairs and desks being thrown around the room and used as weapons.

The National Front had held a small march of about two dozen in Rotherham earlier in the day, when they had been guarded by about 500 police.

LPYS members are now going back onto the estates of Rotherham to organise a stewarded meeting and show the workers of Rotherham what the NF are, a bunch of thugs with no solutions to the problems facing ordinary working people.

# DISSENT IN TORY 1st XI

The revolt against the government's economic policy is now spreading deep within the Tory Party. Last month's rise in interest rates was the final straw, signalling as it did the collapse of the Budget's 'cheaper money' strategy followed since March.

Next week's Tory Party Conference will meet with the threat of rebellion much in the air.

This week, Edward Heath declared open warfare on Thatcher. He raised the prospect of electoral disaster unless there was a shift in policy.

Otherwise, he warned, the voters will think that Thatcher's policies were "too high a price to pay". Heath and ousted Cabinet Minister Gilmour are now virtually undertaking a speaking tour to whip up support against the government.

In reality, they have nothing radically different to offer. They would wish to attack workers' living standards in a different, more gradual manner whilst giving more assistance to industry.

But the revolt is not confined to leading 'wets' such as Heath and Gilmour.

Stockbroker Hugh Dykes, Tory MP for Harrow East, predicted on 3 October that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Geoffrey Howe, was heading either for defeat or resignation or "the sharpest, most involuntary U-turn in history..."

Despite her recent reshuffle, Thatcher still faces opposition within her government. The booklet "Changing Gear: What the government should do next" published this week has as

By Jim Christie

its editor William Waldegrave, who became a Junior Minister after writing his contribution.

The pamphlet rejects Thatcher's favourite saying that "There Is No Alternative" (TINA) and states that the government has virtually "become the pressure group for a particular economic theory...In stark electoral terms, we are only elected when half our supporters come from the working class".

Not even the most loyal Thatcherite can now see the end of the recession which Howe predicted in mid-summer. Even the Chairman of the Tory backbench Finance Committee, William Clarke MP, has admitted that "There will be many supporters who regret the increase in interest rates."

This month's forecast from City stockbroking firm, Phillips and Drew, warns, that: "With the latest rise in interest rates there is now a significant risk of renewed recession in the UK. The economy is far more fragile than the government seems to realise, and it must make no new cuts in the public spending review if it wants the upturn to materialise."

Their forecast is for unemployment to go on rising next year, and for any pick-up to be "doubtful and slow." Inflation stopped falling in August and most City forecasters expect it to be at least between 9%

## HOW INTEREST RISE HIT FIRMS

COMPANY	Owed to banks (£m)	What a 2% rise costs (£m)
Allied-Lyons	237.6	4.75
ACC	54.8	1.10
Blackwood Hodge	46.3	0.92
Thomas Borthwick	72.2	1.44
Bowater	143.0	2.86
Burmah Oil	194.5	3.89
BL	426.8	8.53
BOC International	304.7	6.09
BPC	32.7	0.65
Charrington Viyella	46.8	0.94
Chloride	96.8	1.94
Courtaulds	130.0	2.60
Grand Metropolitan	402.5	8.05
GKN	249.4	4.99
Imperial Group	319.3	6.38
ICL	144.9	2.89
Rothmans International	105.8	2.16
Weir Group	30.9	0.61
Thomas Tilling	257.5	5.15
Tozer Kemsley & Millboure	143.2	2.86

and 10% next year.

Thatcher's response to the economic stagnation is to cut, cut and cut again. She hopes to get this policy through her Cabinet this autumn. But the revolt of the wets may prevent this. Waldegrave's pamphlet which is clearly a stalking horse for Heath, Gilmour, Prior, calls for between £4,000m to £5,000m to be injected in capital spending over the next two years and for £2,000m to be cut from the national insurance contributions paid by industry.

If the government continues on its present course opposition from industrial barons could grow. CBI President, Pennock, has warned that the latest rises of 2% in interest rates has added a further £500m to industry's costs and will lead to further investment cutbacks and price rises.

Even the textile monopoly, Courtaulds, is feeling the pinch. They already owe the banks almost £130m. The latest 2% rise has added £2.6m in interest charges, but their pre-tax profits last

year only totalled £5.5m.

But what helps concentrate the minds of Tory MPs is not only the strangling of much of British industry; it is that they may lose their seats in any forthcoming election. The Tory vote of 7½% at Warrington must be a nightmare to them.

Up to ninety Tory MPs are apparently threatening to abstain if Thatcher tries to cut back on allowances to pensioners.

They desperately want to give a more 'humane' appearance to essentially the same policies. They are scared that Thatcher is taking them to electoral disaster.

Little of this will surface at the Tory party Conference, though. There will be nothing democratic about the proceedings at Blackpool. Resolutions for debate are chosen by the leadership for their lack of controversy. Speakers are carefully vetted for their skill in sycophancy.

But behind the scenes there will be the sharpening of knives.

# SDP Set up safety net

The 'smoked salmon' express has now left Perth.

By Bob Wade

The first conference has been held and the audience were, "Middle class, middle aged credit card holders so far," according to one barrister delegate quoted in the 'Daily Mail'.

Opening the conference, Roy Jenkins (dubbed by 'The Times' as 'leader of the Claret Tendency') said the SDP had "touched a cord with the British people which had brought them to public meetings up and down the country on a scale not seen for a generation in British politics."

He must have been in Brussels when the Labour Party held its mass demonstrations in Liverpool, Glasgow, Cardiff and Birmingham, or when there has been massive turnouts of thousands to hear Tony Benn speak.

But the antics of the SDP leadership show how far divorced they are from the real life world of ordinary 'British people'.

The gravy train itself, which is zipping the SDP around the country, is first class only and costs £113 a ticket (not to mention meals at up to £6 a go). Besides the 80 journalists and 60 foreign diplomats on board, there are actually some SDP members.

But all are party officials, and seeing that the SDP's chief executive is on about £20,000 a year, and his four senior executives are on £15,000, the officials are the only ones who can afford it!

On the conferences themselves, it seems to be a competition as to who can say 'breaking the moulds', 'practical policies' and even 'pricking bloated bladders' (sounds painful), the most. Trying to derive any policies out of the mindless rhetoric is like trying to retrieve a spoon that has fallen into a

jar of treacle.

One demand that has come out so far is the 'enlightened' call to break the closed shop. A conference discussion document from Labour renegade John Horam, calls for a "voluntary" incomes policy, "encouragement of the market economy" and "reducing the obstacles to employment (caused) by trade union practises."

In a half-page review of this document, 'The Times' (October 5) took the document's proposals to their logical conclusion and proclaimed: 'Why the SDP should abolish the right to strike!'

Already the new party is squabbling amongst itself. It seems they all want to be leader: as the 'Financial Times' sarcastically commented, "Why has the SDP got two leaders? Because it can't have four!"

Despite the almost farcical appearance of the SDP, however, it has been created for a purpose. The bosses (who are generously backing it with cash) are worried that the Tory vote could massively decline at the next general election (a fear confirmed by their 7.5% rout in Warrington). So already the media is pulling out all stops to generate the illusion that the SDP and its Liberal allies are something new, different and exciting.

It has been created to act as a safety net to catch the middle-class voters and disillusioned workers who voted Tory in 1979, but who would otherwise swing back behind Labour, possibly giving Labour a landslide victory.

While the SDP was in Scotland it should have taken the opportunity to rename itself the SNP—the Safety Net Party!



It's not all gloom on the 'wages' front. One person negotiated a rise to over £8,000 a week last week. Prince Charles. He is now refusing to pay more than 25% in taxes on the profits he makes from his Duchy of Cornwall holdings. Prince Charles, landlord, owns over 130,000 acres including Oval Cricket ground and 850 London tenancies, including that of ex-prime minister Jim Callaghan.

Charles Windsor pays no income tax whatsoever. In addition to being a landlord, Charles has undisclosed but extensive shareholdings, which require three stockbroking firms to look after them. The justification for his extra £250,000 a year is poverty. "In these times, everyone has to make ends meet," pleaded a Buckingham Palace spokesman.

Yet Charles has at least five homes. In addition to a suite of rooms at Windsor Castle and Buckingham Palace (both maintained at public expense) he has a house on the Scilly Isles, Chevening country house set amongst '3,000 lovely Kentish acres', and his new estate at Highgrove House.

But the cost of living is always going up. Why, even at present it costs Charles £17,000 a year just to keep his six polo ponies.

He will probably explain the problems in detail to the youth of Liverpool when he visits Toxteth on 14 October. And he will also have a ready answer to anyone who thinks that this society has its values all wrong. He could just repeat what he told Papua New Guinea islanders in 1975: "Everyone must obey the state authorities, for no authority exists without God's permission and the existing authorities have been put there by God."

Living to work or working to live? Consider the case of Mr Matthew Diba, a signal superintendent in Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

This is his daily timetable. Up to 2am to get the 3am train. Work 7am till 4.30pm. Catch the 6.05pm train home, arriving back at 9.30pm sees his children if they're still awake, and in bed by 10pm. Travelling time over seven hours. 'Its a difficult life. We're tired all the time,' he stated, but there are no jobs in his home town.

Other workers dash home in the evening, eat supper, then immediately return to the train, which stands in the station all night. And if it's crowded, sleep in the luggage racks. What a basis for family life in what the government proclaims is Christian South Africa.

Carpetbaggers of the world unite. The SDP is calling you. If your constituency party looks unlikely to reselect you, now's the time to climb on board.

Latest in the right-wing queue is Tom McNally, Labour MP for Stockport South. McNally only became MP there two years ago after a long search for a constituency fit to be represented by him.

Assisted by key Labour Party officials and the hiring of transport for his supporters he won the selection meeting.

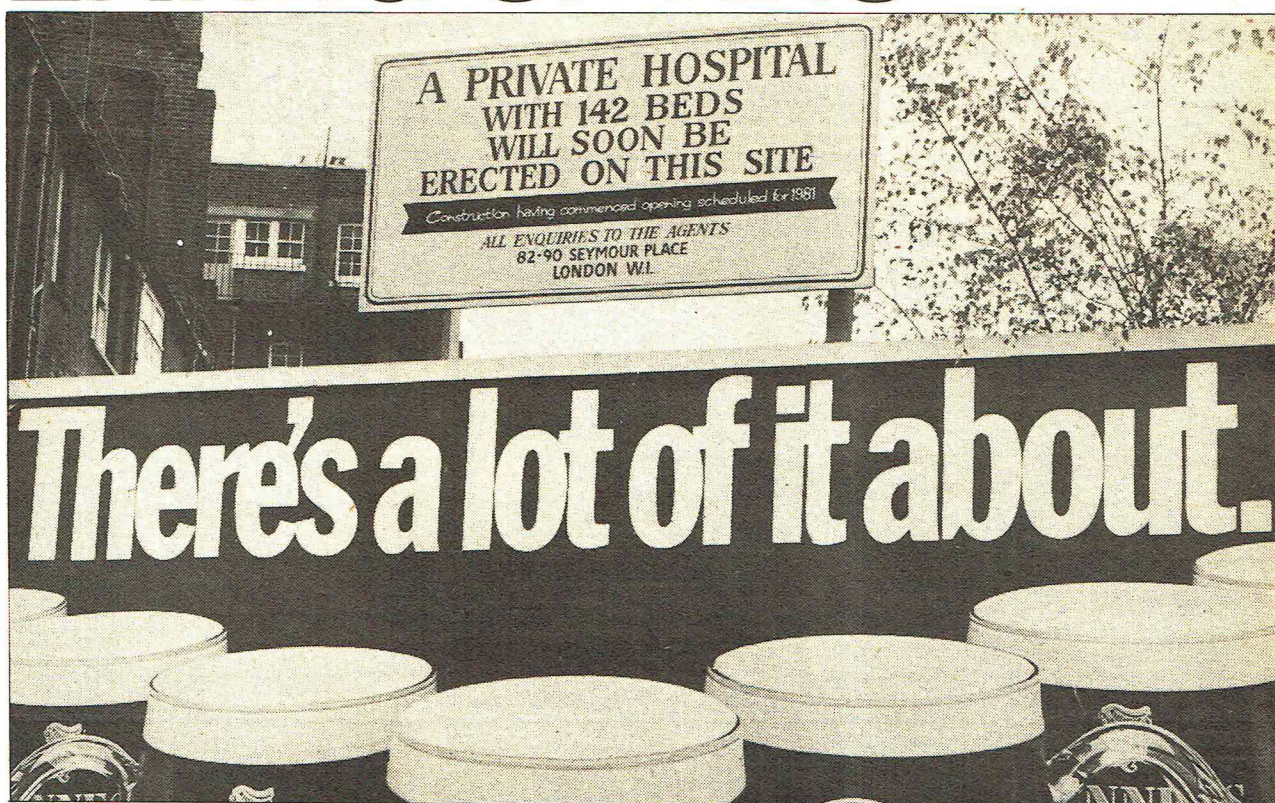
But his right-wing views have never been supported by the majority of active Labour party members in Stockport South. He is quitting now, he says, because the national party is going too far left. He cannot support unilateral disarmament and withdrawal from the EEC.

In reality, it is also because the Labour Party no longer offers him a safe career. Only two and a half years ago, McNally was Jim Callaghan's main political adviser. Before that he had been the Labour Party's International Secretary, where he had worked with the ARIEL Foundation, a mysterious organisation closely linked to the Foreign Office.

From 1965-66 he was a Vice-President of the National Union of Students. That was the period when—it was later revealed—the NUS was affiliated to a CIA-funded organisation. Of course, McNally knew nothing about these links.

McNally's departure is an indication of the way that the Labour party is changing.

# EATING UP NHS



Where can you get a menu of:

1. Assorted fruit juices, egg mayonaise, lentil soup.
2. Fillet of sole veronique, braised steak Bordelaise, grilled lamb cutlets garni.
3. Baked potatoes, Byron, sliced beans, cauliflower a la creme, rice, side salad.
4. Apple fritters and cream, ice cream, fresh fruit, cheese and biscuits.

The Ritz hotel? No, this luscious meal will be served to all the rich parasites receiving treatment at the new private Alexandra hospital in Manchester.

This hospital had a public open day recently to convince the Manchester public that private medicine is best. Wythenshaw YS decided that it too should go along as uninvited guests.

We distributed leaflets on the NHS and formed a 'picket line' with banners and placards. One of the doctors came out of the

By John  
Humphries

hospital to argue with us.

He claimed that this new hospital was creating jobs in the area. The YS argued that jobs weren't being created but were being taken from the NHS hospitals.

He said he had worked for the NHS for ten years and felt he was entitled to offer his skills to private medicine. The YS pointed out that his skills should be used for the benefit of everyone and not upon the privileged few who could afford to pay for his talents. One YS member reminded him that his training was paid for by our money.

The official price list shows how privileged the parasites who can afford treatment here are: Intensive Care Unit: £130 per 24 hours, physiotherapy, inpatient and out-patients: £5 per 15 minutes. The theatre charges were beyond the reach of even the dreams of any workers.

They charged £40 for the first 15 minutes and £20 for every subsequent quarter of an hour. There is also a recovery charge of £20 (if appropriate).

The YS distributed about 200 leaflets and sold a number of 'Militants'. A large amount of people were in agreement with our picket. One comrade gave us the thumbs up from his

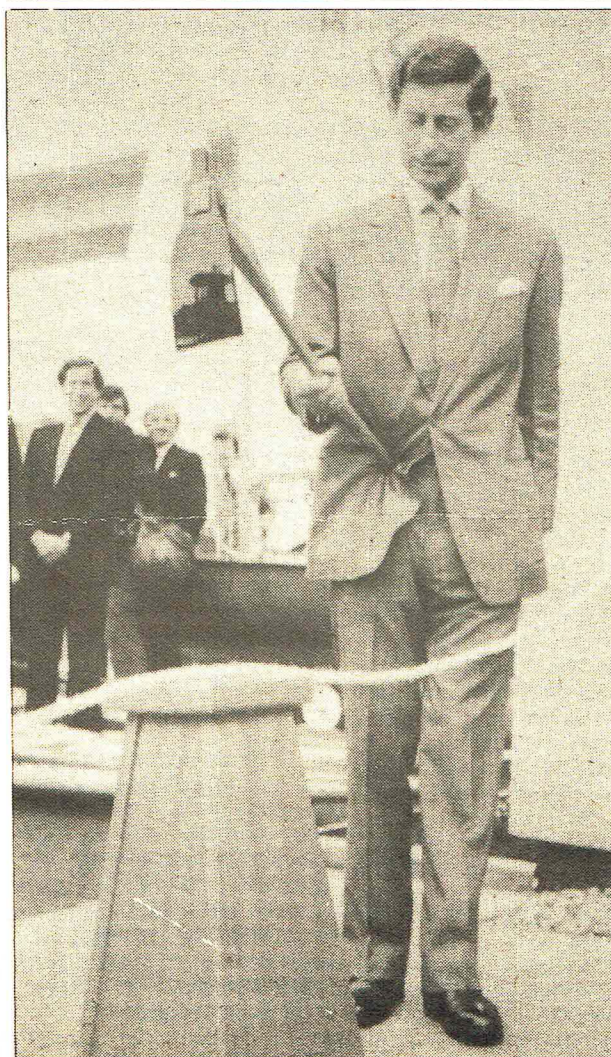
car and congratulated us on our picket.

We brought a halt to the traffic approaching the hospital as we discussed our socialist alternative to private medicine. Later in the day the police turned up in order to move us on, or so we thought.

But it took just a few minutes discussion with these 'workers in uniform' to persuade them to support our views. One policeman informed us that, he was once a member of the Labour Party but police are not allowed to be members of political parties.

The police also said how appalled they were by the prices this hospital was charging. As they were leaving one of the police turned back and said he agreed with what we were doing.

All in all it was an excellent picket as it showed these parasites that the YS is not going to give them a free rein to poach the NHS so that the idle rich may have '5-star hotel' hospital treatment while the rest of us are treated in run down Victorian hospitals.



Chopping out wast and privilege

## Five to one against monarchy

"Royalty means loyalty" proclaimed Tory Councillor Ron Gould to the tumultuous applause of five women, who had come into the debate with Councillor Gould.

Unfortunately few else in the debate on Royalty, organised by the local radio, Radio City seemed to agree with him. Held about one mile from the heart of burnt-out Toxteth, there was far greater support for Labour Councillor, Derek Hatton who pointed out the vast reserve powers which still rest in this unelected undemocratic post.

The £15m they cost is not even compensated for by the tourist trade. Revenue from UK tourism has fallen whilst American and Italian tourism has risen, yet neither of them have monarchies.

One member of the audience thought there was more interest in the 'wedding of the year' in Coronation Street than in the other affair in St Pauls. 'Ken and Deidre Barlow for King and Queen', he proclaimed to much applause and laughter.

This of course was far too much 'lese majeste' for the deep thinking monarchists in the audience. "Royalty Loyalty" they chanted, sounding for all the world like the pigs in Orwell's Animal Farm.

At the end, a vote of five to one was taken in favour of abolishing the monarchy. Afterwards a number of names were taken of people wanting to join the Labour Party and over twenty Militants were sold.

Report by  
Bob Hughes  
Ron Burke  
(Toxteth CLP)

# LABOUR STUDENTS- NO ALLIANCE WITH THE SDP!

Photo: Militant

**“The pupil most likely to win a university place is an 18-year-old middle-class girl living in the South East,” according to the Universities Central Council on Admissions report.**

**Fewer than 5% of last year's university entrants came from families of unskilled or semi-skilled manual workers.**

These figures reflect the problems of working class youth in getting to university which have been heightened by the vicious attacks on education by the Tories. And also why the elitist Social Democrats are hoping to attract support from students.

The SDP, also known as the ‘Claret and Credit Card’ brigade was set up in a fanfare of publicity to be the capitalists’ second eleven. They had to come in when Tory voters, and middle class voters in particular, had bowled out the Tory first team.

Amongst students the Tories have lost any basis of support. Continuous reductions in the real level of the grant and massive increases in hall fees have turned

**By Clive Heemskerck and Peter Mumford**  
(Militant supporters, NOLS National Cttee.)

many students away from the Tories, including many who voted Conservative in 1979.

Previously these students would have looked with sympathy towards the Labour Party. But if NOLS, as the student section of the Labour Party, fails to defend socialist ideas, the new ‘radical’ Social Democrats will attract support.

Already the SDP has made gains amongst students. In this year's elections to the Student Union Executive at the London School of Economics the SDP defeated the Labour executive on a high poll. In August eight leading Tory students, including three former chairmen of the Federation of Conservative Students, left the Tories to



SDP leaders Jenkins and Owen have only capitalist answers to youth unemployment. NOLS must not ally with them

join the SDP.

In the National Union of Students the SDP has found a ready-made home in the ‘Left Alliance’: an amalgam of Liberals, Communist Party members and now, SDP supporters. Indeed Sue Slipman and Penny Cooper, the former President and Treasurer of NUS, have left the Communist Party and joined the SDP,

announcing their ‘their own policies haven't changed’.

If the SDP and the Left Alliance are not met head-on by Labour students, explaining that only through-going socialist measures can solve the problems of students, then undoubtedly they will pick up support.

At the Easter NUS Conference, NOLS stood for NUS President against the

Left Alliance candidate, Dave Aaronovitch. This was due to the pressure of Militant supporters in NOLS who have always argued that Labour students must stand independently and, in particular, expose the reactionary nature of the Liberals.

Aaronovitch, a Communist Party member, was

re-elected only on the basis of the Tories switching their votes to him.

But the present leadership of NOLS now want to accommodate the Left Alliance. At the last meeting of the NOLS NC they proposed issuing a joint leaflet with the Left Alliance on youth unemployment.

The Liberals have already shown their attitude to the despair of unemployed youth. This summer in Liverpool, the Liberal council leader called for the army to be sent in against the youth of Toxteth!

This policy of closer links with Liberals and the Left Alliance was defended as an attempt to ‘isolate the SDP members inside the Left Alliance’! In reality, it is similar to the near-disastrous approach adopted by the Labour candidate in the Warrington by-election, who trying to ‘out-moderate the moderates’, nearly secured a victory for the SDP!

Labour Clubs should call on NOLS to launch a campaign against the SDP explaining that their policies are the tried and failed solutions of capitalist politicians and that only a Labour leadership of NUS, linked to the labour movement and fighting on socialist policies can solve the problems students face.

## Police arrest ‘helps’ sales

**Street sales in Chester doubled recently, thanks to the local police.**

They arrested two LPYS members and charged them with flyposting. The local trades council protested, stating that this was “a deliberate political prosecution”, and that “if the posters had been advertising a Tory garden fete or a new taxi firm, no action would have been taken.”

Simon Swinnerton and another LPYS member had been arrested for carrying Militant posters and paste. Despite the fact that the town centre is almost covered with fly-posters, these two socialists are the only ones singled out for prosecution. They were fined £10 each. But after publicity in the local press, paper sales doubled the week after.

In Tyneside the LPYS did not need the “assistance” of the forces of law and order to inadvertently increase paper sales. Finding “time on their hands during the day” (i.e. unemployment) five comrades canvassed a local housing estate in Wallsend. The response was excellent: three names were taken and ten papers sold.

Then it was down to the shipyards at 12 o'clock to catch the workers as they left for dinner. For the next hour they discussed with

young workers, selling eight papers outside and giving a new LPYS member who is an apprentice six more to sell inside. All in all a very worthwhile morning.

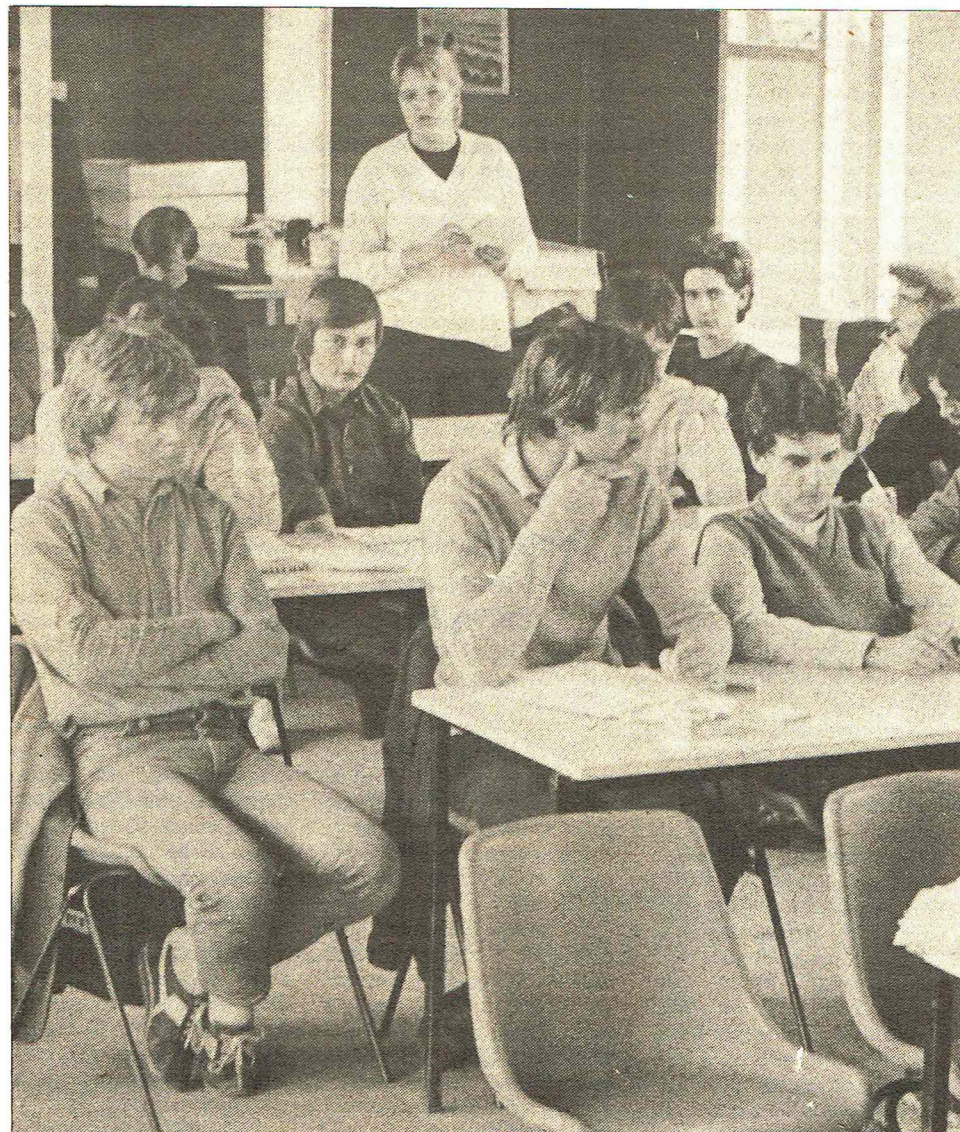
**Reports:  
D R Clark  
and Dave Harris**

## TORY TALK

**“Come and knock Maggie's block off!” This was the cry from the Brent Labour Party Young Socialists stall at the “Brent Show” in Roundwood Park on Sunday 13 September.**

The stall had been there for the full show, and a group of us from Paddington LPYS went down there to lend a hand on the Sunday. Brent South LPYS had set up a side show where people could pay 10p to throw 3 tennis balls at a picture of Thatcher. Even though there was no prize offered, there was a tremendous response to the stall.

Several people also signed to join the LPYS and about 35 Militants were sold, and over 15 copies of the LPYS paper “Socialist



LPYS Weekend School, recently held in Tyneside

Photo: Dave Harris

Youth”.

Later on in the day, a couple of us decided to go and visit the Conservative Party stall nearby. Before they realised who we were, we were handed a couple of leaflets, one warning us of the “Red Threat”, and the other saying that Labour supported rioting and that the Tories themselves stood for: “Law and order so that men, women and children

can walk the streets in peace!”

I pointed out that under the present government, an increasing amount of people were getting a chance to walk the streets. After discussing this point with one of them for a couple of minutes, he asked me how long I'd been in the Labour Party.

When I replied 2 months, he said “come back when

you have been in for two years and then I'll be willing to talk to you”. This small point showed me how much they really value this “democracy and freedom of speech” they keep telling us about.

**Jeremy Barnett**  
(Paddington LPYS)

## YAP against YOPs

**A group of YOP workers in Lothian have formed YAP (Youth Against Poverty), but not as a talking shop. They called a strike on 2 October primarily as a protest against the low level of wages. Unionisation of all YOP schemes in Lothian is the immediate goal.**

One aspect of the campaign which has held things back has been the lack of a comprehensive list of YOP schemes. But now we've learnt that local authority Regional Councils cannot be refused such information from the careers service, it looks like we'll get that list this week.

The LPYS have been assisting YAP on their campaign by visiting various YOP schemes and putting forward the case for strike action. There is a great awareness that YOP workers must get organised to fight for better conditions.

We intend to set up a branch of YOP/Trade Union Rights Campaign to co-ordinate the unionisation of YOPS and to act as a forum for the particular difficulties they encounter. To assist our preparation for the 21 November Conference we are appealing for recognition from the trade unions. We have arranged to speak at a NUPE branch and have also approached NALGO, USDAW and the T&G.W.U.

**By Michael Harkness**

## AMERICA

# Workers in a fighting mood

The anti-Reagan demonstration by a quarter of a million trade unionists in Washington on 19 September, the determined struggle of the air traffic controllers against vicious government reaction and the latest cuts announced by Reagan on 25 September—all this graphically illustrates the deepening class divide in the US.

Gone is the 'friendly' hand of American capitalism that offered large sections of workers living standards never seen before. The Reagan Administration has embarked on a ruthless drive to restore profitability with ferocious attacks on jobs, wages and social security.

In addition to his earlier cuts of £18,000 million, Reagan has now demanded that federal spending must be slashed by a further £6,000 million next year.

'Harsh measures', Reagan threatens, are needed to achieve his goal of balancing the US budget by 1984. Most federal programmes must be slashed by 12%; 75,000 public sector jobs must be axed; welfare must be cut back still further.

Additional cuts of at least £40,000 million are called for in 1982-84.

Reagan claims that this massive devastation is necessary 'in the short term' to make possible a return to the 'good old times' by 1984. For the workers, the poor, the unemployed, the sick and the old, who will bear the brunt of the 'sacrifices', this must sound like a cruel joke.

## Crisis will revive traditions of struggle

For the American working class, especially in the public sector, the coming period will be one of increasing struggles. The head-on collision between the air traffic controllers' union and the Reagan Administration is only a small foretaste of battles to come. More and more the

### From a correspondent in Seattle

American working class will be forced to rediscover the lessons of past experience.

Reagan's 'good old days', when free enterprise rode unchecked, was a time of long hours and poverty wages for labour. Up to the 1930s the vast majority of workers were unorganised. With the American Federation of Labor organising only the skilled craft workers, the unskilled workers in the giant industrial monopolies were trampled upon.

This situation was changed forever with the creation of the new industrial unions of the Confederation of Industrial Organisations or the tide of the 1934 boom (In the 1950s the AFL and CIO amalgamated into the AFL-CIO.)

New weapons were improvised during this period—the sit-down strike, flying pickets, and democratically-elected locals (branches) to provide fighting leadership.

The struggles of the 1930s won the right to bargain collectively and to strike, the 40-hour week and increased wages. Faced with armed thugs and the state forces of the most powerful capitalist country, the heroic struggles of the American workers matched those of the working class anywhere in the world.

It is these traditions that the crisis of capitalism, reflected in the vicious anti-labour policies of Reagan, will revive. Reagan's use of the police and the prisons against the air traffic controllers shows an attempt to return to the old methods. The public employees will have to win—again—the right to strike.

In every sector, organised labour will be faced with huge struggles to protect and extend its gains from

the past.

As ever, the miners have been in the forefront of the struggle. In March, Reagan's announcement of cutbacks in black lung disease benefits for miners was answered by an immediate two-day pit strike and a march of 8,000 miners on Washington DC.

The speed and solidarity of this response shocked the Reagan Administration into reconsidering their decision. The miners were in a fighting mood for the forthcoming national strike that was due to start when their three year contract ended on 27 March.

After the display of militancy in the historic 111-day pit strike in 1977, the mine owners hoped to turn back the clock on the miners' union, the United Mineworkers of America. Their ideas were published in a 22-page 'Grey Book' which was distributed to all miners. They wanted to reimpose a 7-day around the clock production schedule, the break-up of the industry-wide pension plan and reduction in union control of safety.

### Miners show labour how to fight

The *Coalfield Defender*, an independent UMW paper in West Virginia, showed the miners' anger at President Sam Church's attempt to sell a contract on 30 March:

"UMWA members are outraged at Sam Church and the Bargaining Council for trying to sell them a 'scab coal, union busting' contract. The proposed contract was overwhelmingly rejected because it would have made it easier for the coal companies to mine coal—non-union!"

A further ten-week solid strike showed that the miners were far from demoralised. Support was received from members of other unions as the miners showed American labour how to fight. Despite the gangsters employed by the bosses, they won a new, improved contract. The bosses had failed to break or weaken the UMW.

After the victory, the anger of the rank and file

was centred on the failure of Sam Church and his pen pushers to unionise any scab mines. William Pruitt, a local organiser, tells how the refusal of the official district organiser to give him union cards stopped him from unionising 5,000 miners in three local mines:

"He told me to keep my nose out of it, if I didn't want to get it broke and that if I ever came back to the Charleston office he would personally kick me out."

In the forthcoming election "Sagt Church and his suckies" will feel the anger and disgust of the pit men who know who their friends are in the heat of the battle.

The recent period has also seen some setbacks for labour. The union bureaucracy have sold the workers' living standards to the bosses. The United Auto Workers face a three-year pay freeze from 1979, to 'save' Chrysler. To 'prove' that the interests of workers and owners are identical, Doug Frazer, UAW President, was made a Director of Chrysler.

The anger of the workers is now being shown with many Local Presidents who supported the wage concessions being booted out. The present trade union bureaucracy reflect the period of capitalist boom when union leaders could live like lords and win some crumbs for the workers by collaboration with the owners.

Now, in a period of crisis, the bureaucracy act as the policemen of the bosses, promising industrial peace and a steady stream of profits, while ditching unwanted workers.

A fall in living standards of 8% between 1973 and 1979 was negotiated by these leaders. It is the present crisis that is exposing them for what they are and is reflected in growing rank-and-file movements in all the major unions. Following the failure of Ed Sadlowski's challenge to the official leadership of the mighty United Steel Workers Union in 1977, a fresh challenge was made in May 1981. A loose-knit group of reformists, representing six districts and 400,000 out of 1.3 million members, stood for leadership offices. Although they won two positions, the campaign failed due to bad organisation and the failure to run a candidate for President. A new campaign on a clear

programme could be successful in the future.

Rank and file anger at the policies of class collaboration of its leadership is also reflected in the pressure for a Labor Party in America. Tony Mazzacchi, an official of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW) and a strong candidate for President of that union, is the leading advocate for a Labor Party.

He has made active campaigns across the country and attracted large audiences. He talks of big rank and file pressure, support from local Presidents for a Labor Party, and the need for local candidates to be run in elections.

The major battles for unionisation are being fought in the Southern States. A lack of commitment by the AFL-CIO in the past to recruit blacks, plus local prejudice and fear of reprisals has meant that unionisation in parts of the South is as low as 8%.

### "The pressure is there, it's starting to have an effect."

The recent victory, after a two year campaign, by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Union to unionise the giant J P Stevens textiles factories, has shown the road ahead. New fresh workers have been won to the struggle.

The unanimous support by the ACTU for an independent Party of Labor at the Union Convention in June shows the growing awakening of the advanced layers of workers for a political voice of their own.

The march of 25,000 workers from all major rail unions in Washington DC on 28 April shows the mood of the active sections. The march protested the loss of 70,000 jobs due to Reagan's announcement of the phasing out of all subsidies to public transport.

In the next two years public railways are due to be axed in the whole country except the North East. At the rally there were calls for strikes, nationalisations, and solidarity calls with the struggles of the miners. The large number of Polish 'Solidarity' badges showed the international outlook of the workers.

A local branch chairman,

Vince Benson, expressed the rank-and-file opinion:

"I never believed you'd get a Labor Party until you had this kind of pressure from the rank and file. But this demonstration is a sign the pressure is there and it's starting to have an effect."

The AFL-CIO leadership may hope that the 19 September demonstration will have let off some steam and allow their cosy relationship with the Democratic Party to continue. However, Reagan's policies might create an uncontrollable wave of action by the labour movement. It is under this strong pressure that a Labor Party may be born in the next period.

It is very likely that the Democratic Party will go through a period of sharp changes. At present they are chasing after Reagan's coat-tails where they believe public opinion lies. To try and win the next election, however, they will need to regroup around the 'liberal' Kennedy. But the crisis of capitalism will shipwreck all the reformist policies of the multi-millionaire Kennedy and deal a sharp blow to any remaining illusions among the workers.

This will be the time when the call for a Labor Party will have huge support. It can then be built on a mass scale by the unions. Radical policies, such as the nationalisation of the hated oil companies and top monopolies, will be immensely popular.

The creation of a Labor Party will be the spark for the rebirth of the US labour movement. The 60% of American workers who agree with the principle of trade unionism, but detest the present leadership, will join the 25% now organised and transform the movement.

The youth, and the black youth in particular, seething with anger and frustration, can be drawn in their millions behind a Labor Party posing the perspective of genuine socialist change. The vast mass of the population, suffering the consequences of capitalism in decline, would support an independent lead by the labour movement, representing not the corrupt officials but the fighting spirit of the rank and file.

Polarised on class lines, the socialist transformation of American society and with it the collapse of world imperialism will be placed on the agenda.



New York in the 1930s: CIO organiser addresses dockers (it was compulsory to show the US flag at public meetings).

# LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 81

Four pages of conference reports by Lynn Walsh and Roger Shrides. Conference photographs by J. McKittrick

## You can't control what you don't own

After Tony Benn's reply to the economic debate (Monday afternoon) conference debated Composite 13.

Like Composite 41, which was passed overwhelmingly, this called for "the next Labour government to implement a socialist planned economic strategy based on Clause IV part IV of the Labour Party constitution."

But it also called explicitly for "immediate action to take into public control the banks, insurance companies, building societies, the major monopolies, and all private finance companies, with compensation based on proven need; and "to renationalise, without compensation, all sections of public industry hived off under the present government."

Moving this, **Bob Middleton** (Ex-officio, Aberdeen South) emphasised the failure of past Labour governments to control the

economy because they failed to control the financial institutions. "Whole industries are being wiped out," he said, "yet at the same time, banks and other institutions are making record profits."

In the debate, **Pat Wall** (Shipley CLP) refuted the idea that workers are to blame for the crisis, as the Tory press always makes out. The British capitalists have persistently failed to invest. The financial institutions were taking part in an investment strike against British industry. British workers had to work with only £7,500 worth of capital at their disposal, compared to £30,000 in Japan and £20,000 in West Germany.

A number of speakers, however, strongly opposed the motion.

**John Edmonds** (General and Municipal Workers) was clearly completely against the policies outlined in the motion, but gave as a reason for opposition the need to defend the gas

showrooms from denationalisation now. The resolution, in his view, had nothing to do with the problems facing gas workers.

The proposal was also opposed by **Muriel Turner** (ASTMS) who said her union was the biggest among workers in financial institutions, and they strongly opposed nationalisation. ASTMS, she claimed, had never been consulted about such policies.

**Charley Turner** (NUR) opposed the composite on the grounds that it made no allowance for unions' pension funds. Under the Trustees Investment Act, he said, managers of pension funds were obliged to make the best possible investments.

Replying for the National Executive, **Dame Judith Hart** asked for the resolution to be remitted. The international nature of finance and the views of some trade unions made it impossible to take hurried solutions, she said. However, the NEC would undertake to study the question and produce a considered report on nationalisation of the finance institutions in time for next year's conference.



## CONFERENCE SAYS - **DEFEAT HESELTINE!**

Against the recommendation of the NEC, Conference passed an emergency resolution moved by **Ted Knight** (Norwood CLP), seconded by **Lambeth Central CLP**.

The resolution drew attention to the drastic consequences of Heseltine's proposed legislation, which would force Labour councils to place the whole of rate increases on domestic rate payers.

Together with further cuts in government grants and subsidies, this would mean the slashing of services.

The motion called for "a major campaign to defeat the proposed legislation", but "should this fail, Conference believes that Labour councillors must refuse to make the cuts that will be needed to balance the books."

It called, therefore, on the NEC "to co-ordinate the struggle of Labour councillors making this stand, and calls on the trade

unions...to use their strength to defend Labour councillors in this fight."

Speaking in the debate, **Gerald Kaufman** (Opposition Spokesman on the Environment) argued that Labour's opposition to Heseltine's measures must remain within the law.

Arguing for the motion, **Ted Knight** asked: "Are we going to step outside of Heseltine's law? Well, comrades, that may be the case. Is it wrong to step outside Heseltine's law, if that law means that working class people suffer and people die as a result? There is a point when the labour movement will decide that Heseltine's law and Thatcher's law is too high a price to pay."

If the major Labour councils in the cities came together with the backing of the trade unions, they could defeat the Tories' cuts strategy. "We must say to Labour councillors you cannot be mere administrators of Tory policy," said **Ted Knight**.

Supporting the NEC's statement on the cuts, also passed by conference, **Gerald Kaufman** pledged that a future Labour

government would repeal Heseltine's legislation.

The next Labour government, said the statement, will remove all threat of surcharges, personal bankruptcy and disqualification for Labour councillors carrying out their election commitments. It would remove the sanctions "for all actions other than gross financial negligence, corruption, or acts clearly in conflict with statute law." Under Labour's legislation, "any penalties imposed against councillors in the meantime, for actions not of these kinds, will be retrospectively cancelled..."

Replying for the NEC, **Joan Maynard MP** said that the "Clay Cross sell-out", when Clay Cross councillors opposing rent increases under the Tories' Housing Finance Act, were let down by the rest of the movement, was still boomeranging around the party. Labour councillors, said Joan, must feel confident that if they oppose spending cuts, they would get the full backing of the movement.



Pat Wall speaks on composite 13.

## LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 81

# Labour Backs Democratic Control of Police

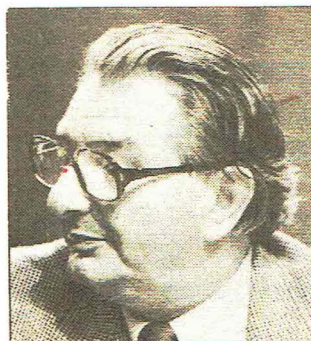
A wide-ranging debate on the police and ethnic minorities, coming in the wake of this summer's riots, was one of the highlights of conference.

On the ethnic minorities resolution, conference passed demands for an urgent programme of government investment to provide new jobs and training and improve social conditions. **Martin Tempia** (Croydon Central CLP) related growing racist attacks in areas like Croydon to the fact that even in this comparatively affluent area 50 school leavers chased one job. He called for enforcement of race relations laws and the end of racial discrimination in jobs and policing.

The successful resolution on the police was concerned about the recent growth and proposed further expansion of police powers. It called for an end to the Special Patrol Group, opposed surrogate 'Sus' laws, demanded greater protection for those in custody and an independent procedure of investigation of complaints against the police. It also called for greater powers for police committees over policy, appointment of senior officers, training, discipline and police-community relations.

Delegates stressed that this was not an "anti-police" resolution, but the police could not be the only part of society not subject to democratic control, as the mover **Mike Petrou** (Streatham LP) said.

**Phil Baker** (Moss Side) spoke of the complete breakdown of trust in the police, who were seen as agents of oppression and suppression. Chief constables like Anderton in



Eric Heffer

Manchester spoke of society being taken over by "subversives". More power had to be given to local police committees.

**Militant** supporter **Tony Mulhearn** (Prospective parliamentary candidate for Liverpool Toxteth) showed how the grim social realities of life in the inner-cities was the cause of this summer's riots. A generation was in revolt. Half the youth and 35% of the adult population were jobless. The Liberals who controlled the local authority had made the situation worse by chopping 4,000 jobs in direct labour and destroying the housing programme.

In his visits, Tony had heard black and white, young and old, say that unemployment and police brutality were the causes. If the youngsters had been at work they would have taken their grievances through the trade unions. The labour movement must fight for them. The next Labour government must inject massive sums into the inner-cities to stop unemployment and to democratically con-

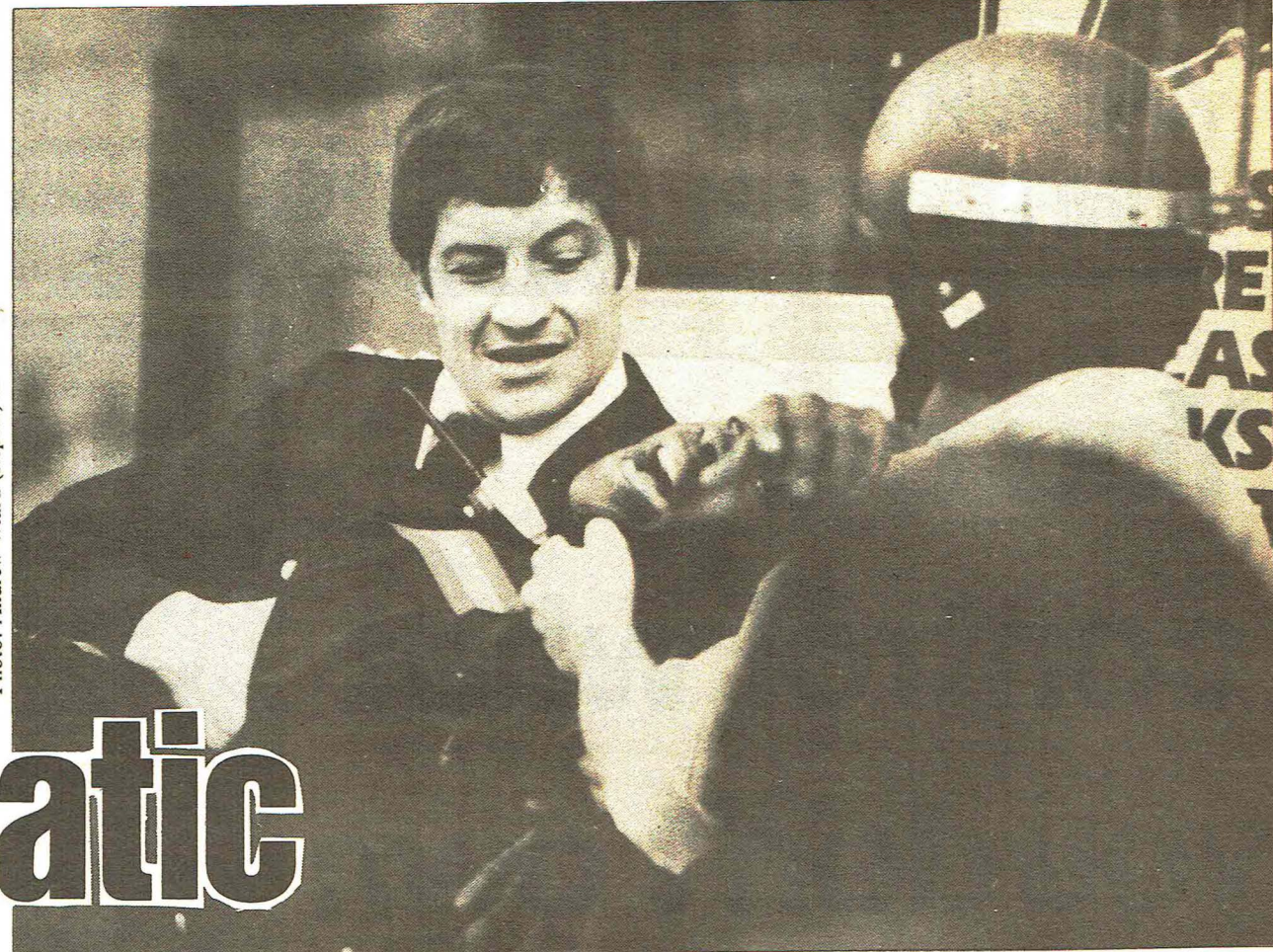


Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report) II

Photo above: Police in action in Brixton this year.

trol the police.

A black worker, **Duncan Braithwaite** (NUR) went to the nub of the question when he clearly showed that recognition for black and Asian workers, and full accountability of the police, meant a struggle for socialism.

**Charman Kalyar**, an Asian worker (Northampton South CLP) pointed out how the police pay rises had been used to prepare the way for action against the working class in industrial disputes. The Tories needed police to oppress people, socialists needed them to help people.

**Militant's** demand for trade union rights for police officers was clearly shown to be feasible by a contribution from Lancaster Labour Party delegate **John Scott**, a retired police officer who spoke in support of the proposal.

The police were not "Dixons of Dock Green" he said. There was much racial prejudice and violence. But many police supported demands for an independent procedure. He wanted a force which was anti-fascist, where membership of secret brotherhoods was banned, "a police force we can be proud of."

In summing up **Eric Heffer** stressed the political nature of the debate. "The police need to be protected. But they do not need plastic bullets, CS gas and the Special Patrol Group. You can't solve social problems by throwing gas and bullets at people."

He called for support for the resolutions on police and inner cities. It was the government which had caused the problems through exacerbating the problems of jobs, housing, and education in the inner cities. We should go out and campaign on the basis of these resolutions.

## NATIONALITY BILL

There was unanimous support from Conference for the NEC statement proposing new, non-racist citizenship laws.

Conference also passed two resolutions, **Composites 44 and 45**, calling for Labour to continue the campaign against the Tories' new Nationality Act, described as "a racist weapon," and insisting that the next Labour government should allow migrant workers threatened with extradition under the 1971 Act to stay in Britain.

The statement proposed citizenship for anyone born here as a right; ending the three tiers of citizenship in the Tories' new Act; allowing East African Asians and refugees in India full citizenship; ending the sex discrimination in immigration laws; providing a right of appeal against a Minister's decision on immigration; and drastically reducing the fees for naturalisation.

Welcoming the statement, **Patricia Hewitt** (Ex-officio Leicester East) said that Labour has the right policies: "the only question is whether we have the political will to carry them out." In cities like Leicester, she said, there was profound scepticism about the willingness of the Labour Party to do in government what it promises in opposition.

**Merle Amory**, a black delegate (Brent CLP) said that the Labour Party's record on race has been



Hattersley: Repeal Tory legislation

"disgraceful". The Labour Party, she said, could not take the electoral support of the black community for granted. It must prove that it has "our interests at heart."

**Roy Hattersley** (MP Sparkbrook) supported the NEC statement and the resolutions. There should be a unanimous message for Conference: Labour would repeal the Nationality Act.

We needed an entirely new Labour citizenship bill, he said. Decisions affecting the future of individuals and their families should not be taken by the Home Secretary "in secret without any right of appeal, and without it being necessary to give any reason why a man or woman should be excluded from this country."

Ever since Thatcher had made her remarks about "Britain being swamped by

people of an alien culture," said **Jo Richardson** replying to the debate, "the Tories have been launching an unprecedented attack on the black community."

The immigration rules introduced this year are "an affront to black people". It is not only immigrants who are affected, but all black visitors are harassed by immigration officers, and increasingly by the police and other officials. "Every black face that appears on our shores is viewed with suspicion," she said.

With hospitals demanding to see passports before treating patients, as an example, there is "widespread and institutionalised racism."

Labour's new Nationality Bill, said **Jo Richardson**, "will say to the ethnic minorities, you are home already and this is where you will remain!"

## Prisons

Conference called on the next Labour government to greatly reduce the prison population from the position where 45,500 prisoners are found in 120 prisons. As **Alison Hill** (Gosport CLP) said, the prison population was one of the highest in

Europe, while the vast majority of crimes were petty thefts.

She pointed out that the crimes of the bosses were made legal by their system. How long should the Tories be locked three to a cell for what they have done in the past two years? Now there were fears of prison riots due to the terrible conditions and the low pay of prison officers.

**Colin Saunders** (Bedford CLP) who had been in the prison service for 15 years backed up these comments with experiences of being hit over the head with a chair by a prisoner who was mentally ill, not a criminal. Many down and outs were fined for drunkenness, then imprisoned because they could not pay the fines, costing £150 a week for non-payment of a £20 fine.



# LPYS - THE FACE OF LABOUR'S FUTURE



Tony Saunois, Kevin Ramage and Laurence Coates at the LPYS meeting

**The Labour Party Young Socialists have always survived on a shoestring budget.**

They have nonetheless consistently taken a lead in socialist campaigning. For instance, nearly a million leaflets were produced and distributed for the 29 November demonstration last year.

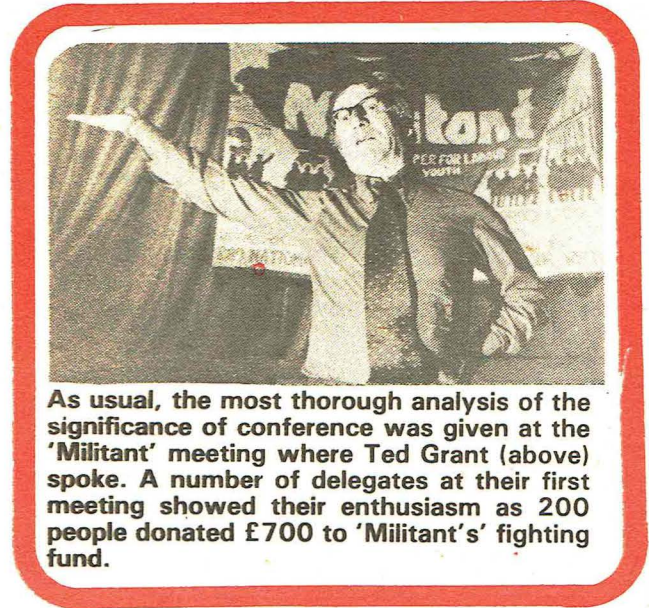
Yet a few years ago the Young Tories started a paper, ludicrously misnamed 'Democrat', financed by six anonymous businessmen which is no longer in existence. The LPYS show the advantages of determination and belief in the need for socialism.

These points made by

Kevin Ramage, National Chairman, at the LPYS meeting summed up the enthusiastic mood.

Laurence Coates (new NEC representative of the LPYS) highlighted the work done to organise YOPS workers for union rights and rates of pay. As Laurence pointed out, Tony Benn had said that modest demands have to be linked to radical change these days when one employer desperate for profits used a YOPS trainee on £23.50 as assistant manager in his bakery.

Bernard Dix of NUPE was warmly welcomed by the audience as a consistent



As usual, the most thorough analysis of the significance of conference was given at the 'Militant' meeting where Ted Grant (above) spoke. A number of delegates at their first meeting showed their enthusiasm as 200 people donated £700 to 'Militant's' fighting fund.

supporter of the LPYS in struggles for finance. He pointed out how the original YOPS scheme, a sticking plaster over the

gaping wounds of capitalism, had become accepted as permanent, despite hostility of workers to full-time jobs being done by YOPsters, while all around, services were being cut.

We had to be sure to not tackle these problems piecemeal. We must not only recruit workers to the unions but go further and look to the complete transformation of society. Tony Saunois (the retiring LPYS rep on the NEC) sketched the dreadful condition of British capitalism which had led to the loss of 20% of the engineering workforce last year. Capitalism had no escape route; it was up to the labour movement to show the socialist way out of the crisis.

Speakers from the floor backed up Tony's analysis with indications of what crisis meant. Dave Green the AUEW convenor at Staffa Products detailed their struggle against redundancies (see page 1). An older AUEW convenor, Malcolm Freeman from Ever Ready, near Consett, stressed the importance of getting socialist ideas into union and Labour Party branches.

Ken Aiken from Ballymena YS in Northern Ireland showed the resoluteness of the YS which has organised young workers and unemployed from both protestant and catholic backgrounds into a united struggle against capitalism. YOPS workers in NI were expected to plane pieces of wood until they disappeared and continuously screw and unscrew nuts and bolts—excellent training for what capitalism offered the working class—nothing.

The transformation of the LPYS over the past decade into a fighting socialist organisation is a foretaste of the future evolution of the Labour Party as a whole—a party which will not let occasional reversals stop the search for a socialist alternative.



Photo left: Neil Kinnock and Joan Lester at conference

secretaries believe that if King Canute had had a few more card votes he could have stopped the tide coming in." There had been a number of Labour gains in the past period, such as Michael Foot's election to the leadership and the defections of the "gang of four". But there were others still to come.

Tony Benn stressed that the deputy-leadership campaign had hammered home that "non-political trade unionism" was a dead end. There had been huge fringe meetings at the union conferences. Trade unionism, feminism and the black movement had to become political, class issues.

Tony Benn called for a campaigning party, fighting side by side with workers like those in Lee Jeans and Lawrence Scott. He also warned that "Tribune" could not remain just a parliamentary group, but that if there were not more Dennis Skinners, Joan Maynards, Jo Richardsons in parliament, the youth would turn to rioting as a "solution".

The standing ovation given Tony Benn showed that the timid concern for the thoughts of the media exhibited at the meeting by Neil Kinnock and "Tribune" editor Richard Clements had been challenged by the more full-blooded approach of Tony Benn and his supporters.

In the continuing debates to forge a real socialist policy for Labour, the clear ideas of Marxism, which are already heavily influencing many left wingers associated with "Tribune" will come into their own.

The setbacks in the deputy leadership issue and in the NEC elections have not demoralised the rank and file of the Party.

On the contrary, they have made many more determined to forge a socialist path for the Labour Party.

This was clearly seen at the rally organised by "Tribune". As the chairperson Jo Richardson pointed out, such rallies have taken place annually since 1952, during the dark days of the 1950s of intolerance of left wing opposition.

She was applauded for demanding that the new, more right-wing NEC should not return to the days of proscriptions and bans. "The party has socialist policies—we shouldn't hide them. France has shown that we can win" on a radical programme, she said to further applause.

The reception received by the speakers, however, varied remarkably.

## Tribune Rally Left seeks Socialist Answers

Speakers from the French Socialist Party and from PASOK the Greek Socialist Party were well received. Party leader Michael Foot, who in the middle of a conciliatory speech promised no return to the days of proscribed lists, was also widely applauded.

But the presence of Michael Foot on the platform, showed the uneasy coalition of the Tribune group. In the deputy leadership contest, he had objected to the election and called for Healey to be returned unopposed (although on the ballot he abstained).

Sharing the platform was Neil Kinnock, one of the Tribune MPs who supported Silkin in the first round and abstained in the

second, giving victory to Healey. Another speaker was Tony Benn!

Neil Kinnock made the financial appeal, while the audience grew increasingly restless during a long series of jokes. Angry party members demanded "apologise!" and requests for money were answered with offers of "thirty pieces of silver"

Margaret Beckett, one of the defeated NEC members, pointed out that the right had been campaigning for years to overturn the NEC. Talk about people being put off by the 'hard left' like Benn was nonsense. No left was 'soft' enough for right-wingers like Duffy and Grantham.

Michael Foot had said we have to choose. Why hadn't someone said that to the 37 Labour MPs who had abstained after their vote for Silkin?"

The reception received by Tony Benn showed the mood of the rally. He pointed out that since the election of Thatcher's "iron government" in 1979, the policies which were unfortunately associated with the last Labour government, pro-EEC, pro-nuclear weapons, pro-wage restraint, had been superseded in the Labour Party by policies of the Alternative Economic Strategy.

The reversals of the week were not permanent, he said "We won the arguments. Some union general

# LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 81

## Disablement

Delegates were shocked into silent attention when Bridget Shaw (Torbay CLP) described her recent experiences. In February she was "diagnosed" (Bridget suffers from multiple sclerosis). This "changed me from an AB (able-bodied person) to a DP (disabled person)."

Bridget said that she was still capable of supporting herself, and especially wanted to as she was a single parent with three young children. But she was told "be realistic", and last year had only 40 days' work as a supply teacher.

"The only answer," said Bridget, who is a long-standing 'Militant' sup-

porter, "is going to come with a real change in attitude which will come with a change in society—a real socialist society in which people give according to our ability...And I've got a lot to give yet."

There was prolonged applause as Bridget made her way back to her seat.

Conference passed Composite 20, which opposed the vicious cuts in services to the disabled, called on all local authorities to fulfill their obligations under various legislation, and urged the trade unions to campaign for better social, educational and medical facilities for the handicapped of all ages.



Bridget Shaw speaking in the disablement debate.

## Common Market

Conference reaffirmed its opposition to the Common Market. It defeated a plea from right wing union leader Bill Sirs (ISTC) for a referendum before a Labour government pulled out of the EEC. Alan Sapper (ACTT) accused the supporters of the referendum of being defeated pro-marketeters "hanging on to the coat tails of multinational domination". Gay Johnstone (PPC Cleveland and Whitby) pointed out that referenda were more used by dictatorships than in democracies. In the last referendum, money poured into the coffers of the pro-marketeters from big business.

Delegates mainly feared

the EEC because they saw it as a barrier to carrying out Labour's policies and not through wishing to be isolationists. Eric Heffer said: "We are not Little Englanders, we are genuine internationalists. The problem is not just the Common Market, but we live under capitalism and it is that which has to be defeated."

Eric Heffer said that Labour would face the electorate with a real choice. "Vote Labour and take us out or vote Tory, Liberal or SDP and keep us in."

The NEC statement backing withdrawal was passed by 6,213,000 to 782,000.

## Rural areas

One indication that the conference was not the outright victory for the right it was made out to be by the media was the heat generated in what is usually a low-key debate on rural areas.

Brian Wilson (Inverness Labour Party) moved a resolution demanding the "land for the people". He pointed out that huge tracts of land were owned, particularly in Scotland, by "socially irresponsible elements" such as the feudal Earls and Dukes. His resolution called for a limit to the amount of land any individual or organisation held, and for nationalisation of land which is under-used, with community control.

Would there be massive demonstrations in rural areas in defence of the right of people like the Duke of Buccleuch, he asked. Although the resolution was narrowly defeated, the warmth of the response shows it will probably come back next year.

Stan Natrass, a 'Militant' supporter (Arundel CLP) showed how Labour had won their only council seat between Portsmouth and Brighton in recent elections, "under the nose of the Duke of Norfolk in a constituency with the second highest Tory majority in the country—on the basis of socialist policies."

# RIGHT WING DEFEAT MANIFESTO REFORM

The most dramatic aspect of the organisation debate was the cynical overturning, within half an hour, of a decision on principle that the NEC should control the election manifesto.

There was also the re-introduction of the "three-year rule" for constitutional amendments.

But some of the rule changes introduced include a number of far-reaching positive features. Most important was the decision to go ahead with plans for work-place branches of the Labour Party, a move which could have an enormous impact in spreading socialist ideas to every factory, office, depot and shop.

Some right-wing members of the party who have screamed loudest about the left "threatening democracy" showed their real attitude to involvement of working class supporters.

Lord Underhill, notorious for his witch-hunting reports against 'Militant' and the left, opposed workplace branches. He wanted party members for spreading propaganda at elections, but he opposed involving trade unionists through their workplace because such branches would be taken over, he argued, by "unrepresentative cliques".

He seemed to mean *Militant* supporters. However, Underhill was answered by *Militant* supporter Cathy Wilson (Isle of Wight CLP) who said, "we don't just want election fodder. We want active members. What better place to learn what the Tories and capitalism mean than in the workplace where you suffer from them all the time?"

Terry O'Neill (Bakers Union) answered Underhill's cynical insinuation that no one would attend meetings outside work time except "dedicated extremists" by pointing out that meetings could and should be held at times to suit the membership, as his union was attempting to do. The proposal was carried by 4,659,000 to 2,346,000.

An amendment to have the chairpersons of the LP National Women's Council and the LPYS as "ex-officio delegates to conference" was passed with a huge majority. A resolution to allow Women's Sections, Women's Councils and LPYS branches to be formed without the prior consent of the constituency parties was also passed. In future, a GMC which opposes such branches must justify itself to the NEC.

Bryan Stanley (POEU)

## Disarmament

Conference called for an "unambiguous commitment to unilateral disarmament" and the removal of Cruise missiles and nuclear bases to be included in the election manifesto.

Larry Smith (Transport and General Workers Union) said that without peace all other resolutions were meaningless. "We cannot afford to wait for multilateral solutions. SALT II has stalled. While nuclear weapons are here in Britain we are a target."

Larry Smith argued for a transference of the present massive arms spending into vital civil programmes. We needed "new factories, buildings, roads and investment in capital goods, schools and hospitals. Resources should also be diverted into retraining and redeploying workers from the arms industries."

Delegate after delegate showed the abomination for the arms race and the threat of nuclear war. They were also hostile to the "cold war", pro-NATO positions of Labour's right wing.

Eddie Newman (Manchester, Blackley CLP) was

cheered when he pointed out the NATO connections of right wingers like Healey. Moving the resolution on withdrawal from NATO, Eddie Newman said that the US government and international capitalism determines the policy of NATO, membership of which exposed British people to dangers of attack.

There was widespread opposition to speakers like Paul Gallagher (EETPU) and Sir John Boyd (AUEW) who argued in favour of NATO and counterposed "multilateralism" to the resolutions.

Joan Lestor summing up for the NEC, asked for the resolution calling for the immediate total unilateral withdrawal from NATO and removal of all foreign military bases to be remitted. When the movers refused, the motion was defeated on a card vote by 5,206,000 to 1,619,000.

On the other hand, the TGWU resolution was passed. As Joan Lestor pointed out, "There is no defence against nuclear war. Nations are talking about a (limited) nuclear war and surviving. The deterrent argument has gone out of the window."

The motion was accepted by 4,596,000 to 2,315,000.

opposed the rule changes, saying it was taking away rights for GMCs of parties. But Andy Allenby, an LPYS member (Havant and Waterloo CLP) stressed the vital role played by the LP Young Socialists in the fight for socialism, despite being starved of cash. The amendment would stop YS branches and Women's Sections with members eager to work for the party being prevented just for political reasons.

Most delegates were angry when the debate on the party manifesto saw a last minute victory for the party's right wing.

Danny Morgan (Sunderland South) moved the motion for the general election manifesto to be given final approval by the Labour Party NEC. He spoke as a delegate from a town with 23% unemployment. "People are asking when it would end. It will end when a Labour government puts an end to it, but a government where policies decided by conference are the basis of the manifesto."

It is conference which decides policy, Danny said. "The NEC must consult the Parliamentary party but NEC must have the final say. Our trust in the PLP has meant trust in Shirley Williams, George Brown, Reg Prentice. Where are they now? We will trust the PLP when they respect and carry out decisions of conference."

"We want a manifesto based on socialist principles which will be carried out despite the efforts of the City of London, the IMF and the media. If we go back on our promises we are liable to throw away the best chance of a Labour government since 1945. We had to give real hope to millions of workers."

## NHS

Against the original advice of the NEC, conference passed a resolution calling for expanding the National Health Service, abolishing prescription charges and all private medicine, and demanding that the drugs and medical supply industry be taken into public ownership.

John Ashton (Southampton Test CLP) pointed out how Tory policy was encouraging "carpetbaggers from America to build private hospitals and take vital staff from the NHS. Private medicine is a cancer."

Consultants were allowed to do private work, but could miners do private digging at lunch time? Meanwhile the advertising industry gained from the drugs companies enough money to give each doctor his own pharmacist four months a year.

## Union rights

Conference was committed to repealing all Tory anti-trade union legislation, especially the 1980 Employment Act, and also passed to the NEC demands to safeguard more strongly the

Other speakers echoed these points. Charlie Kelly (UCATT), one of the 'deselected' NEC Trade Union Section members, called to mind the veto by James Callaghan of a clear conference decision to abolish the House of Lords. He called for NEC to control our election appeal not the whims of the leaders.

Despite appeals from Giles Radice MP and Bryan Stanley (POEU) for unity on the basis of the status quo, and despite Michael Foot's plea for "partnership", the conference voted by 3,609,000 to 3,400,000 for the principle of NEC control of the manifesto.

Delegates rejected Michael Foot's claims that the party was ignoring the real enemy outside, the Tories. Conference wanted to ensure that future Labour governments ensured that the Tories and their system never came to power again.

But the delight of delegates at a further step in party democracy was short-lived. After Michael Foot's second appeal to the conference, the detailed constitutional amendment necessary to implement the change was defeated. Reportedly the shopworkers' union, USDAW, changed its vote.

Michael Foot conceded that the PLP had to accept that conference favoured the principle of NEC control and would discuss it with the parliamentary party. But there is no doubt that disappointed delegates will want to raise this vital issue again as soon as possible.

Another resolution calling for the incorporation of the "virtually autonomous" PLP into the Labour Party was remitted to the new NEC.

Stevie Stevenson a rank and file delegate from the EETPU (the leaders of which have encouraged private medical schemes) called for a massive campaign against private medicine and the rich-take-all society.

Bernard Dix, a defeated NEC member, spoke of the NHS being under attack since 1951. Whenever the economy gets in trouble, the NHS is turned on and off like a tap.

The Tories wanted 25% of health care privatised and public and private health so scrambled that a Labour government would find it hard to change. "If Dr Gerard Vaughan (the Health Minister) did to patients as a doctor what he's doing as a minister he would be struck off the bloody register."

Although they had had reservations about a few specific points in the resolution, Bernard Dix advised, in view of the new NEC, that conference should make up its own mind!

right to join a union. Ken Cameron (Fire Brigades Union) warned that Tebbit, the new 'employment' minister, could try new attacks on workers' rights following on the 1980 Act and the moves against the already limited rights of strikers to social security. The resolution from the FBU was passed overwhelmingly.

# SOUTH AFRICA

## EDITOR'S NOTE

We recently published a letter ('Militant' 556, 12 June) from comrade Ian Wallis of Manchester questioning 'Militant's' call for the building of working-class unity in Northern Ireland as a vital part of the struggle for a united socialist Ireland.

The letter concluded: "Basically the Catholic workers must get the same rights and privileges as the Protestant workers, and only then will it be possible for the workers to unite against the ultimate enemy which is capitalism."

"It seems to me that 'Militant's' N Ireland position is similar to saying to the 'blacks' in South Africa: "Don't fight the 'whites' but join with the white workers and fight capitalism instead." The whites don't want to join with the blacks, as with the Catholics and Protestants, they are the privileged class, they have the power which they will not give up easily."

But how, in a period of capitalist crisis when the position of all workers is under attack, can Catholic workers improve their position independently of their Protestant fellow trade unionists—and that without challenging the capitalist system?

What is the nature of the deep and bitter divisions between white and black workers in South Africa, and is there any perspective of overcoming these? How should socialists view the armed activities of the gunmen in Northern Ireland and the guerrillas in South Africa?

In this reply from a reader in Southern Africa, some of the important questions raised by Comrade Wallis are taken up.

# WHAT BASIS FOR WORKERS UNITY?



**My apologies for the delay in my reply to the letter of Ian Wallis. The mail takes time to reach this part of the world.**

Indeed, the situations of Northern Ireland and South Africa need careful study for the labour movement to understand the machinations of the bosses everywhere.

The partitioning of Ireland was an attempt by British imperialism to head off the possibility of a social revolution in Ireland. The union state protected the interests of British imperialism with sectarian discrimination against the Catholics.

The extent to which the ruling class succeeds in subjecting the workers depends very largely on the disunity of labour. But this can only be temporary. As the capitalist crisis deepens, the ruling class sinks its claws into the living standards of the privileged sections of the working class as well.

For the 'privileged'

workers, in a period of capitalist decline, there is no possibility of securing their future outside of the rest of the working class.

Support for the ruling class among sections of workers depends on the propagation of lies and promises they will never fulfill.

repressive capitalist state.

Skilled labour was imported from Europe and granted privileges to win their support. With no other social base, the capitalist state had to rest on the white middle class and white workers.

Economic growth in the

**"The present splits in the white population can come to nothing unless the black working class presents a socialist alternative"**

**The duty of Marxists is to point out this truth in order to strip the capitalists of their support. The labour movement must be cleansed of religious sectarianism in N Ireland—in the same way as racism needs to be uprooted in South Africa.**

In South Africa, capitalism was delivered by wars of conquest. The hostility between the conquered and the conquerors called for an extremely

1960s demanded that the ruling class open skilled jobs to both black and white. The employment of blacks as cheap skilled workers means, in the final analysis, a threat to the wages and privileges of the white workers.

*Inqaba* (Journal of Marxists in the ANC) has pointed out that attacks on the white workers' privileges by the ruling class will not bring them to the side of the

revolution in the first instance. They will swing to the far right first in an attempt to defend their privileges. This constitutes a serious obstacle in the way of working class unity. The black working class, however, must prepare for its next swing.

Capitalism cannot guarantee jobs for all and is incapable of rooting out racism.

Because of the pressure of big business and the failure of the government to intervene in their favour when they go on strike, the white workers now tend to see the NP correctly as a party of the big capitalists—the Oppenheims. This signals the splits along class lines to come.

As a matter of fact, incidents of fraternisation between black and white workers are not altogether unknown in SA. On May Day 1931, for example, black and white unemployed in Johannesburg marched in the same demonstration and demanded food. Another example is Solly Sachs' Garment Workers' Union of black and white (mainly Afrikaner) women workers.

The failure of this sort of fraternisation to become a tendency in the working class as a whole is due to the lack of a revolutionary lead by the SA Communist Party which, in the 1930s, was in a unique position to build on these foundations. The present splits in the white population can come to nothing unless the black working class, on the basis of class interests, present a socialist alternative. This alone can destroy the foundations on which the present divisions are built.

It is for this reason that Marxism cannot support the guerrillaist policies of the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC) and the SACP. This method of struggle does not develop the class consciousness of the workers in South Africa. It creates a basis for racial unity of the whites, not class unity of the workers.

Because of bombing incidents, state repression is more and more perfected and police repression becomes more open and vicious against the entire oppressed masses.

Above all, in the words of Trotsky, armed action by individuals "belittles the role of the masses in their own consciousness and reconciles them to their powerlessness." Only mass armed insurrection in a revolutionary crisis can establish the democratic rule of the working class in South Africa.

A guerrilla band cannot substitute itself for a mass insurrection nor wield power on behalf of the working class. As Engels wrote: "Since Blanqui (a 19th century revolutionist who believed the revolution should be led by small, secret groups of armed conspirators—*Editor*) regards every revolution as a *coup de main* of a small minority, it automatically follows that its success must inevitably be followed by the establishment of a dictatorship, not, it should be well noted, of the entire revolutionary class, the proletariat, but of a small number of those who accomplished the insurrection and who themselves are at first organised under the dictatorship of one or several persons."

Comradely yours  
Siyu Tyali  
Southern Africa

# Bankers topple Belgian government

By George Collins

**With parliamentary elections due on 8 November, Belgium is in its deepest political crisis for many years.**

On 21 September the six-month old coalition government of big business and Labour parties led by the 'Social Christian' Eyskens—Belgium's 30th government in 37 years—collapsed.

The causes lie in Belgium's mounting economic problems and a hardening attitude on the

part of the bankers and financiers who, in the words of the *Financial Times*, "play a vital part in running the country" (23 September).

The Belgian economy is likely to show a fall of 0.5% in the Gross National Product this year. Coal, steel, textiles and engineering are in a state of crisis. Exports have fallen and investment is down.

The Belgian working class have been made to pay with massive job losses. Unemployment stands at 10% nationally, and up to 30% in some areas.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (involving the advanced capitalist states), wages in Belgium are 15% too high. All business leaders, the *Financial Times* writes, "agree on the need to cut the country's comfortable living standards and tame public spending."

It was the bankers' refusal to lend money to the government for 'rescuing' the steel industry that brought the crisis to a head. The bankers demanded mass redundancies as a condition for making the loan.

The *Parti Socialiste* (French speaking section of the Socialist Party) ministers rejected these terms, leading to the government's fall.

Under pressure of the economic crisis, tensions have been aggravated between the French- and Flemish-speaking sections of the population. Nationalist politicians in both halves of the country have seized on regionalism in an effort to divert the workers' attention from the real causes of their problems.

With a wrong approach to the national question, the leaders of the Socialist Par-

ty have split the party in two and confine themselves to seeking 'solutions'—and often regional 'solutions' at that—on a capitalist basis. In the 1978 elections their combined share of the vote had slumped to 25%.

With no clear alternative presented by the workers' parties, an abstention rate of up to 30% is expected on 9 November. National divisions are likely to be whipped up, and serious efforts are expected to split the Belgian state into French- and Flemish-speaking parts—a retrograde course that can solve nothing.

It is a reflection of the decay of capitalism that Belgium, one of the most prosperous capitalist countries, is today faced with economic decline and the threat of national disintegration. Only the struggle for socialist policies by the ranks of the Belgian labour movement can unite the working class and provide the basis for a socialist government that will end the power of the bankers and big business.



# Letters

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

**MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN**

## 5 million tax dodges?

Dear Comrades

'The Sun' newspaper recently carried a full page article accusing workers of being responsible for the Inland Revenue losing approximately £5,000 million in tax evasion each year. The 'Sun' gave examples of people doing second jobs (e.g. as waiters, electricians) and not paying tax. A quick calculation shows the fallacy of this argument.

If we assume (generously) that on average each tax payer earns an extra £60 a week this represents about £20 a week in lost tax and national insurance, or £1,000 a year approximately. 5,000 million divided by 1,000 gives us a figure of 5 million workers avoiding tax on second jobs each year! Clearly this is ludicrous. The reality of the situation that the 'Sun' avoided mentioning is that most tax evasion is by big business.

For instance, the magazine 'Private Eye' has chronicled this year, calling for the IR's investigation into the Rossminster Group of tax consultants (linked to Tory MP Tom Benyon) whose schemes are alleged to have cost (illegally) the IR £100 million in lost tax. The 'Sun's' omission of this sort of information clearly shows that despite its occasional demands and patronising comments about working class people, it is clearly anti-working class in its outlook.

Incidentally, if Tory philosophy were consistent, the 'Sun' should congratulate all 5 million moon-lighters for their hard work, dedication to free enterprise and refusal to have their human rights denied by avoiding paying taxes when they don't want to pay them.

Yours fraternally  
Ian Pollock  
Hampstead LPYS

## Workers join the Labour Party

Dear Comrades

With the attention given to the "celebrities" and renegades who are joining the SDP by the kept capitalist press, an attempt to redress the balance is overdue.

In the last two days six people in my workplace have approached me about wishing to join the Labour party. All of them are convinced of the need for change and have said that they understand there can be no turning back to the policies of the last Labour government. They all believe that only by pursuing socialist policies can there be any future for the working class of Britain.

Of course small examples like this never receive a report in the national press but it reinforces the willingness of party members to campaign for the return of a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

Fraternally  
Tam Williams  
Paisley CLP

## How prejudice works

Dear Comrades

One of the worst features of capitalism is the narrow-minded prejudice which it shows towards anything considered different or unusual. I have a mate who cannot get a job because of the way he dresses. He came second in a job interview to a more conventional person and lost a chance of gaining employment simply because he had an earring in his left ear which he had forgotten to take out.

The very fact that people are circumscribed by the middle class attitudes of dress in certain jobs which require the employee to serve people with food, record players or whatever, shows how more important forms of discrimination could work, such as racial discrimination.

I think it is fair to assume

that my mate was not employed for two reasons. The first one was that his earring, just turned the interviewer off because of that man's prejudices. The second reason is that the interviewer was afraid that my friend's appearance might frighten off potential customers with an identical mental block.

It is for the same two reasons that job discrimination against blacks has come into being. Employers, so they are taught by the capitalist system, see minorities that look different from the majority as 'disruptive elements'. People are afraid of 'disruptive elements' because they do not want their livelihood affected. There is no room for tolerance when it is feared that this could lead to financial disaster.

Furthermore, in this environment it is easy for some evil men to direct people's fears about their

livelihood against the racial minorities. The complete falseness of this is shown in the common paradox where a worker professing racist views has some valued black mates with whom he gets on excellently. This is an example of the unnatural twisting of people by capitalism.

Eventually the system attains that typical two-way nature and becomes a vicious circle, so that not only does the fear of losing your livelihood result in prejudice, but also the imposition of conventional rules and regulations causes a restricted view of life and other people, which results in fear. And all this results in people's outlooks becoming circumscribed. Therefore, to activate the political part of people's minds so they mentally break out of the system of capitalist prejudice is of primary importance for us.

Yours fraternally  
Jonathan Timbers  
Kidderminster LPYS

Miners lobby their leadership earlier this year, calling for import controls amongst their demands.

## Mining subsidies (1)

Dear Comrades

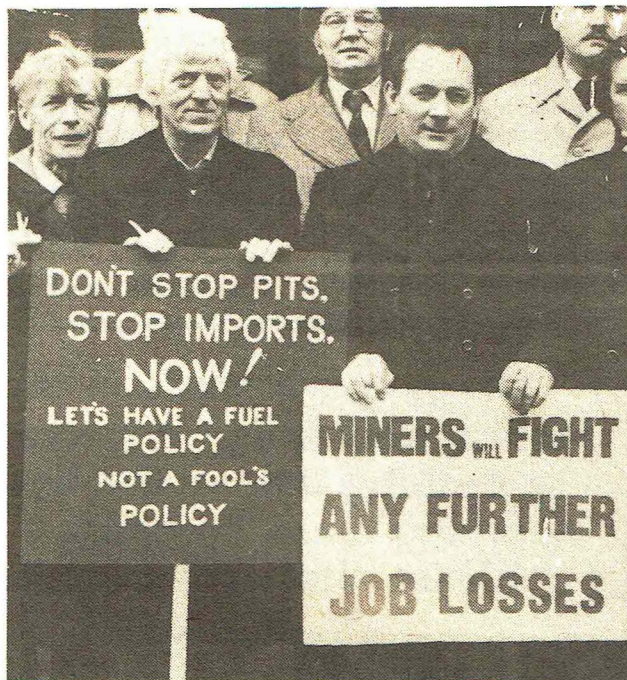
In response to Stephen Foster's letter drawing a comparison between import controls and increased subsidies with regard to mining ('Militant' 570), I would disagree with his conclusion that "the demand for increased (British) coal subsidies is just as dangerous for (foreign) workers as the demand for import controls."

The point on import controls is accepted as valid, but to argue that to put British workers on subsidies equivalent to that of our brothers and sisters overseas would be taken as an attack on foreign jobs is inaccurate. Obviously the capitalist class would attempt to divide the unity of international workers by using these arguments, but these lies would have to be dispelled by workers and socialists when raised.

What has to be stressed is that capitalism can no longer guarantee jobs for mine workers both at home and abroad. The scales may favour some countries more than others at varying times, but the inescapable fact remains that there will always be unemployment among miners while capitalism remains with us. The only way to guarantee jobs for all miners is under workers'-controlled planned economies.

At the moment the state of the pits and the closures which entail job losses in Britain can, seemingly justifiably, be explained away by their more subsidised competitors. If on an equal level of subsidisation, and the still further deterioration of the pits continues, the workers can see at whose door the blame really lies—capitalism and the profit system of the bosses.

Yours fraternally  
John Dolan  
Brent South LPYS



## Mining subsidies (2)

Dear Comrades

Comrade Stephen Foster raises some important points in his letter (issue 570) when questioning whether the demand for increased coal subsidies is just as dangerous for workers as the demand for import controls.

Comrade Foster agrees with the socialist argument against import controls, the most important being that it exports unemployment and thus undermines the international solidarity of working people.

It is clear that should import controls be implemented it would be seen by miners abroad as a direct attack on their livelihood and job prospects. However, subsidies would not have such a direct impact because miners would see nothing "unfair" in UK coal being subsidised to a similar level than that of their own coal.

While we acknowledge that subsidies under capitalism is a disguised form of import controls (one reason why the reaction from miners would be different) it is the duty of socialists, when confronted with a Tory government determined to run our na-

tionised industries in a strict profit and loss basis, to ensure that we protect these industries by adequate financing and insisting on state assistance at least to the extent of Britain's capitalist counterparts.

Otherwise the Tories would deliberately run down our nationalised industries by arguing that they cannot compete, are unprofitable and thus put thousands of more jobs at risk.

We must also clearly differentiate between the granting of subsidies for our nationalised industries for specific circumstances and our position to subsidising private enterprise.

In the latter case we would oppose the state giving handouts to the bosses and demand instead the nationalisation of these industries run under democratic workers' control and management with compensation given on the basis of proven need.

In that way we ensure we defend our present nationalised industries through adequate financing and also prevent the propping up of this rotten capitalist system by stopping even more state handouts to big business.

Comradely  
Alec Thraves  
Swansea AUEW



The crowd cheer Tony Benn at the rally following the recent Labour demonstration in Birmingham. Photo: Militant

## Birmingham Demo

Dear Comrades

I attended the recent demonstration against unemployment in Birmingham. The people of the West Midlands, who have suffered so much at the hands of the Tories responded to the march with considerable enthusiasm. Indeed along the route of the march we enjoyed one of the most productive paper sales I have experienced.

Unfortunately a lot of the good that came out of the march was marred by what occurred at the following rally. I am referring to the barracking that prevented Denis Healey from speaking. I am by no stretch of the imagination a supporter of Healey but I feel we let

ourselves down. Michael Foot was right when he said it was playing into the hands of the Tories. Anyone who doubts that has only to look at the reaction of the media. I am not so naive as to think we could expect a fair deal from the media, but the incident gave them excuse to completely gloss over what the demonstration was all about.

I am not opposed to heckling but there is heckling and heckling. How much better if Mr Healey's speech had been met with silence. Then nobody, not even the Daily Mirror, could have accused us of preventing free speech and it would also have been obvious where our support lies. We must not let our hearts rule our heads.

Yours fraternally  
David R Bryant

## Decent homes for all!

Dear Militant

The fight of the Labour left wing for worthwhile economic policies and an accountable leadership in the next Labour government, goes hand-in-hand for the future generations of the poorer working classes coping in general poverty. The tower blocks, the 'bad' housing and the past building programmes by profiteering planners, is not good enough in the future. The unemployed and the homeless have a right to a decent dwelling in this country; not to jerry-built slums!

Who were responsible for the modern slums of the last Labour governments now going into ruin in 1981? Who wants to live in these high rise wrecks built at a time of momentous advances in new technology?

Let's build homes fit to live in for everyone including single persons like myself. Students and single persons cannot become

bedsitters just because of the concept that all council houses have to be given to those with families. Single persons should not have to settle for lodgings, the YMCA and bug-ridden bedsitters just because they are not married or don't have any children.

Why should single persons have to live in the slums that nobody else wants, with high rents and no chance of a decent council flat? Labour governments give council housing to unmarried mothers and families on the dole, but single persons are supposed to make do with £30 per week bedsitters.

I live at home and have no job. Like the 3,000,000 others, I'm no work-shy layabout, but because I'm unemployed and unmarried I have no chance of a council flat.

I 'manage' on £19.20 a week. And the general election is still two years away. God help the poor bloody infantry till then!

Yours fraternally  
Stephen Draper  
Grimsby

Build

MILITANT

ads

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 10 Oct	Target for year
Eastern	3990		4970	7100
East Midlands	3023		3850	5500
Hants & Dorset	2285		3640	5200
Humberside	1465		2450	3500
London East	4181		5320	7600
London West	2361		3360	4800
London South	3485		3850	5500
Manchester & Lancs	2429		4060	5800
Merseyside	2937		4620	6600
Northern	3665		6020	8600
Scotland East	1729		3080	4400
Scotland West	3140		5250	7500
Southern	4435		4970	7100
South West	1820		2450	3500
Wales East	1155		1820	2600
Wales West	2101		3220	4600
West Midlands	4089		6020	8600
Yorkshire	4187		6300	9000
Others	11324		8750	12500
<b>Total received</b>	<b>63,801</b>		<b>84,000</b>	<b>120,000</b>

TARGET FOR YEAR-£120,000

# HALFWAY THERE - BUT ONLY 3 MONTHS LEFT

Donations reaching 'Militant' this week show that the 'Left' is not demoralised or 'licking its wounds'. On the contrary, the letters we receive illustrate that workers and unemployed youth are determined to build the paper that seriously fights for a socialist programme.

A CPSA Branch Chairman from Sussex has written: "I would like to express my thanks to all the comrades at Mentmore Terrace, and 'Militant' comrades all over Great Britain, who through their hard work became the only people to really express the true plight of the vast majority of low paid clerical workers...to this end I enclose a cheque for £15 which I know will be put to good use."

Other letters are shorter but equally to the point: "Dear Sir, I enclose a PO for £10 a contribution to 'Militant'. Yours sincerely, F Wilson (Retired miner), Houghton-le-Sprint."

"Dear Colleague, Please find enclosed cheque for £5 re your appeal. Best wishes, yours fraternally, F H Newbold, UCATT Branch BC 143." Many thanks for responding to our appeal.

Young Socialists in the Northern Region collected £94 at a weekend school, and other donations of £20 and £15 came from Newcastle Central and West LPYS. £10 was donated by Wakefield LPYS, Yardley LPYS £15 and £32 from Stirling University Labour Club. Does your LPYS branch support 'Militant'?

By Steve  
Cawley

Individual donations this week included C Jones (Gwent) £16, R Hartill (Bristol) £13, S and J Ford £12, tenners from K Mackie (Edinburgh), V Bodimead (Herts) and M Hutson (Agent, Wokingham CLP). Two donations in memory of John Wobey (see last week's issue) have already arrived from J Thompson (Bradford) and 'SR' (London). Comrades who donated a fiver included S Goodwin (Suffolk) and C Neilson (Stirlingshire) and London readers Helen and Frank of the Britannia were

among the very many who gave us £1 this week.

Sheffield comrades organised a 'Master-mind' competition, where the answers to the questions were 'sold' by the quiz-master in aid of our funds! The latest '50' raffle in Leeds was won by S Appleton (No 28) and also from Yorkshire the Barnsley 'Militant' barbecue netted £29. Almost £12 came from the Ellesmere Port Bolshevik barbecue as well!

Of course the biggest amount this week, indicating the appreciation of the role 'Militant' plays, was the £1,050 from Labour Party conference delegates and visitors. Of this, £978 has been given to us in actual money and the remainder in IOUs which we

THIS  
WEEK:  
£2825

expect to be redeemed very shortly.

We can't mention everyone, but thanks to just a few contributors: G Birmingham (PPC St Helens), S Nattrass (Littlehampton, German TV fee), R Brown (Leith), R Balfe (S London), two members of GMWU delegation, J P Brown (Middleton), B Parry (Liverpool Exchange), F Prideaux (NUPE), F Allaun, A McMahon (Govan), A King (Kemptown), J Campbell (POEU), the seven UCATT delegates who donated £18, Brighton supporters who prepared lunches (£41).

Two delegates from Fife, two POEU delegates who put in £20 each, members of the Boilermakers delegation, J Cox (Blyth), T Fields (Fire Brigades Union), N Redman (Chesterfield), and J Mooney, T Hood, P Rowe, and H Bennett (all Merseyside). To everyone else who made up the £533 cash put in at the 'Militant' meeting, and to those whose signatures on our appeal sheet adequately cloak their anonymity, please don't take offence at not being mentioned.

Others, including a number of full-time officials of the more "moderate" unions, never seem to get their names mentioned (you appreciate our position, brothers and sisters, and we appreciate yours).

Our appeal this week must be for as much as possible of the remaining £20,000 towards our three-quarter year appeal target of £84,000. Post your donation straight away and make sure you ring us before midday this Sunday to tell us what's in the post; if you want it included in next week's total.

Trotsky on the  
Communist Manifesto  
To-day

Leon Trotsky on  
'The Communist  
Manifesto today'

Available price 15p  
plus 15p postage and packing from  
World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace,  
London E8 3PN

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

## MILITANT READERS' MEETINGS

BLYTH

Wed 21 October—'The 1931 National government—lessons for today'.

Wed 4 November—'Southern Ireland and the way forward for Labour'.

Wed 18 November—'Trade Unions and the fight against the Tory government'.

Venue: Miners Arms, Plessey Road (Upstairs), Blyth. Time: 7.30 pm. For further details contact: Peter D Marsden, 148 Disraeli Street, Blyth. All welcome.

LLANELLI Militant Readers' Meeting at Labour Club, Murray Street, Llanelli, on Wednesday 14 October, 7.30 pm. 'Why you should join the LP'. Speaker. Alec Thraves (AUEW). Plenty of time for discussion.

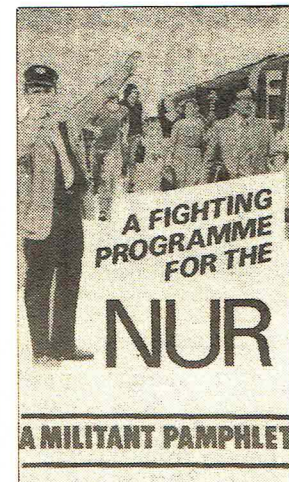
The Labour Party Social Committee. Political talk and debate on the future Labour government's economic policies. Speakers: Jack Straw (MP, Blackburn); Bob Sheldon (MP, Tameside); Cllr. David Boyle (Droylsden). Droylsden Labour Club, Wednesday 14 October, at 8.00 pm. Tickets 20p or pay at door. Tel: 370 2480—301 4623.

## SCOTTISH LPYS WEEKEND SCHOOL

\* Debate: Solidarity vs. LPYS

\* Film: 'The War Game'  
\* Lecture: 'The Life and Times of James Connolly': speaker Benny Adams (Northern Ireland Young Socialists)

\* Plus Disco  
\* Plus five-a-side football  
Date: Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 October. Venue: Dounans Centre, Aberfoyle. For further details contact: Francis 041-771 8961 or Jackie East Kilbride 23371



'A fighting programme for the NUR'  
Price 25p [+ 10p postage] from  
World Books,  
1 Mentmore Terrace  
London E8 3PN

OUT NOW!

NEW  
AUTUMN  
BOOKLIST!

FOR SALE: 1964 Bedford ambulance converted caravanette. Fully fitted/fridge/sink/cooker etc. MOT/taxed. £450. Contact Bob Faulkes (01) 249 3322.

## SECOND STAFFORDSHIRE RALLY

Saturday 17 October, 1 pm-5 pm Speakers: Ted Grant on Britain, Jeremy Birch on Poland.

At United Reformed Church, Eastgate Street, Stafford. Stalls, food, etc. Social in evening.

## New Militant Trade Union Pamphlet.

on 'Banking and Insurance Workers—the way forward'. Price 20p (plus 15p p&p). Bulk orders available from Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

NALGO to join the Labour Party? Rally, TUC, 23 Gt Russell St., WC1, Thursday 8 October, 7.30 pm. Gerald Kaufman MP, Alf Dubs MP, Peter Morgan. Entry with LP or NALGO membership card.

EASTBOURNE CLP. We are in the process of selecting our Parliamentary candidate. Nominations close October 22nd.

Applications please to: The Secretary, Eastbourne CLP, 155 Northbourne Road, Eastbourne, E. Sussex.

## HASTINGS CLP

We are in the process of selecting our Parliamentary candidate.

Applications please to: The Secretary, Hastings CLP, 25 Wellington Sq., Hastings E. Sussex

OUT NOW!

Import controls or socialist planning? New 'Militant' pamphlet. Price 25p (+ 15p p&p) from Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

## MILITANT PAMPHLET

'The Marxist Theory of the State'  
By Ted Grant

Price 70p  
(including postage)  
from World Books  
1 Mentmore Terrace  
London E8 3PN

WORLD BOOKS

A book service for the labour movement. For a full comprehensive booklist write to World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

# Industrial Reports

## STRUGGLES In Brief

A union has announced a plan which will attempt to save Belfast-Liverpool P&O ferries, threatened with closure. In a bid to save 350 jobs, the white collar union ASTMS say they are to 'put pressure' on the company. They will use MPs including Doug Hoyle, president of ASTMS, and are mounting a public campaign with petitions and leaflets. The 160 year old service is due to close next Monday. Tory environment minister David Mitchell has already rejected one plan which called for the government to take the ferry service over.

★

'Organise to affiliate'. That was the slogan of a meeting held on Wednesday in Glasgow, called jointly by the Campaign for NALGO Affiliation to the Labour Party and 'FLAG', the 'Fight for Labour Affiliation Group'. Besides speakers from CNALP and FLAG, also speaking was Alex Kitson, this year's Labour Party chairman. As the leaflet advertising the meeting points out, "Over the next few months an important debate takes place within NALGO on the question of affiliation to the Labour Party. It is vitally important that all the members hear the arguments in favour. In the present atmosphere of cuts, wage cuts and increasing unemployment, propaganda pointing out the urgent need for NALGO to fight for its policies within the political wing of the labour movement is vital."

★

A 'South East London March for Jobs' is being held this Saturday called by the Greater London Association of Trades Councils. The march will set off from three starting points converging on Kennington Park for a major rally and concert. Speakers include Ken Livingstone, leader of the GLC.

★

The October issue of Labour Research, produced by the Labour Research Department, has carried out a survey of unemployed workers' centres and unemployed workers' organisations. It states that over 70 unemployed centres have now been set up throughout the country, mainly on the initiative of local trade unionists.

★

London health workers marched through London on Saturday as part of a 'day of action' to keep the St Mary's hospital open, in Harrow Road, London. A rally, including a debate on the hospital's future, followed the march, and entertainments were also laid on. The hospital has been threatened with closure, with its first 120 beds being lost this month.

## LIVERPOOL WORKERS HIT BACK

### Occupied TYPISTS FIGHT GOES ON

#### Workers are now occupying the Commonwealth Curtains factory in Kirkby.

The sit-in by 88 members of the GMWU began on September 23, the day after the 130 strong workforce were told that 55 of their number were being made redundant without redundancy pay or even their holiday pay entitlement!

This brutal action of the company climaxes a process which began in January this year, with the appointment of a Mr. Willy Hummel, a South African, as managing director.

The workforce were assured there would be no redundancies and no short time working. Under his dynamic leadership a boom was on the way!

The factory was on a three-day week in March and there were 54 redundancies in May. Among the 55 named in September were many who had been with the company for years.

Conditions were disgusting. Mr. Hummel conducted meetings with union reps by firstly banging on the table and informing them they were there to listen not to ask questions. He let it be known that he expected the workforce to say "good morning sir", and three men incurred his displeasure for failing to do so. They were suspended for

not reporting to his office at 5.05pm although work finishes at 5pm.

Union dues previously deducted at source have not been paid for six months, neither has the workers contributions to the 'penny in the pound' scheme been paid. Nor had the company paid any tax.

The workers were told after Mr. Hummel's arrival that they were being paid between 33 and 45% too much and they would have to increase productivity by this amount.

Supervisors were told to ignore agreements, workers have been told not to talk, women wanting to book holidays were told to get a letter from their husbands employer, confirming that he was taking his holiday at that time!

A writ has been served on the GMWU convenor, Mrs. Josie Hart, as well as on officials of the two unions, APEX and the GMWU. The APEX members have since pulled out on the advice of their union official.

The workers are extremely angry and bitter at the way that they have been treated and are determined to do all in their power to save their jobs.

Donations and messages of support to Josie Hart, 39 Pine Close, Huyton.

By Jim McGinley  
(Ormskirk LPYS)

## AUEW appeal court - BACK LAWRENCE SCOTT

The AUEW's final appeal court should support Lawrence Scott workers in their fight against compulsory redundancies.

The final appeal court, the highest body in the union, made up of 11 delegates who must be working at the tools of their trade, will be presented with an emergency resolution from the North Manchester District Committee of the union.

The workers at the Manchester factory are now in the 26th week of their dispute. They, along with members of the District Committee, senior shop stewards and convenors of the AUEW, will be lobbying the court in an attempt to reassert the standing of our union's rule which the executive have trampled under foot.

The central issue at stake is the role of the union's District Committees. According to rules, District

Committees must ratify the terms of any dispute settlement reached in their area which they have been party to. In the Lawrence Scott dispute a settlement was reached which included the real possibility of compulsory redundancy, which the workers rejected and the District Committee also rejected.

In cases of disputes, the National Committee of the

The long-standing typists' dispute in Liverpool started in May this year. The 400 typists and machine operators have now been on strike for 14 weeks, on £20 a week strike pay from their union NALGO.

The scene is now set, however, for the defeat of the Liberal/Tory administration led by Sir Trevor Jones. Buildings

have been regularly picketed and the city's services have been torn apart, with the chief executive being pressed by other senior officers to plead with Jones to negotiate.

It would appear that Liberals care little for the authority services and choose to stifle any reference to the crisis situation in the local press. This despicable neglect of the city and the 19th century approach to industrial relations is about to backfire in Jones' face.

Ballots of other NALGO

workers were convincingly won by 2 to 1 and the workers who handle rent payments and special wages payments are now on strike.

Further ballots in other areas are to follow, and action will be taken against any blacklegs. In addition NALGO's national leadership has at last recognised the hardship suffered by the typists and has approved a payment of 55% of their gross salary whilst the action continues.

By Barry Caldwell  
(Liverpool NALGO)

## COUNCIL WORKERS STRIKE

750 Parks and Gardens manual workers are on strike, in protest at the city council's decisions to hand over £4 million worth of gardening work to private contractors.

The men, all members of the General and Municipal Workers Union, walked out last week. They have asked the council to give them a fair share of this £4 million. They are asking for a direct works landscaping unit, to

be set up in order to create extra permanent jobs for Liverpool's unemployed, and to eliminate the threat to future permanent employment by private contractors.

Cemetery workers met last Friday to consider the dispute, and have decided to give full support to their colleagues in the parks. The cemetery workers have decided if the city council did not resolve the dispute at its

meeting held on Wednesday, then cemetery workers will join the strike from next Monday.

A mass meeting of the striking workers was held this week, where the men overwhelmingly voted to carry on their fight against privatisation in defence of jobs and services. If the council does not agree to the union's recommendations then the dispute will be escalated.

## STOP LABOUR DOING TORIES' DIRTY WORK

Pressure against the implementation of Tory cuts by Coventry's Labour council is mounting. (see Militant 570)

The council meeting on September 29th, where charges for services for the old and the young were agreed, was lobbied by over 300 council workers and Labour Party members.

Mainly in response to the infamous 'cuts or rate rises' referendum held by the Labour council in August, the T&GWU public service manual workers' shop stewards have adopted a policy of outright opposition to any threat of forced redundancy or wage cut by the city council.

A resolution committing the entire membership, from dustcarts, parks and social services through to the crematorium, to industrial action if necessary, was put to a mass meeting on Thursday September 24.

At that meeting, which took place in the Apollo theatre, speaker after speaker, (home helps, day nursery teachers, dustmen

etc) pointed out the day to day miseries caused by working people by the effects of the Tories cash limits and the local Labour councils' compliance with them. When the vote was taken, out of 1,500 only 7 were against.

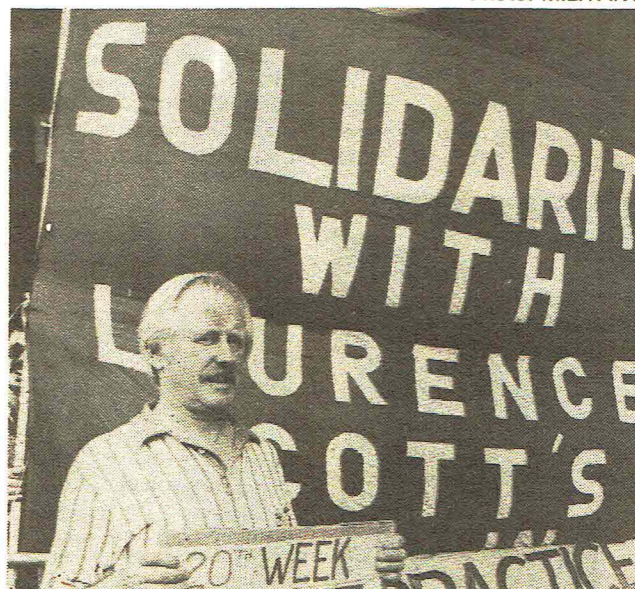
NUPE in Coventry, (where their membership works in the schools) adopted a similar stance on October 1st, as NALGO had done the day previously.

All three meetings were leafleted by members of the Coventry South East Labour Party and over 4,000 leaflets opposing the cuts and calling on council workers to join the Labour Party were distributed. Several T&G stewards have already responded.

It is necessary now that the TUC Conference directive to co-ordinate trade union defiance over the public expenditure cuts, is taken up by all trade unions.

By Dave Nellist  
(Coventry SE  
Labour party chairman)

Photo: MILITANT



Lawrence Scott workers lobby this year's TUC for support

# 'Why we're fighting to save Robb Caledon'

By Ewan Duncan  
(EETPU, Robb  
Caledon)

**The Robb Caledon struggle is one of the most important industrial battles against the Thatcher government.**

**The outcome is of immense significance to the industry. That is why it is vital that the history of the dispute and the reasons for occupying the yard are known as widely as possible.**

In the background is the crisis of the British shipbuilding industry. It once built half the ships in the world, but which now ranks a poor eleventh! Last year, British shipyards received orders for a mere 500,000 tons of shipping, way behind not only Japan, with 13.1 million tons on order but even South Korea (2.5 million), Spain (2.2m), and Brazil (1.8m). Even crisis-ridden Poland had an order of 1.5 million!

Output of the British yards in 1980 was the lowest since 1933. The usual excuse of management that it is just a problem of the worldwide recession is contradicted by the fact that world output of ships was still growing, from 25 million tons in 1978, to 34.6 million last year.

Like other old traditional heavy industries, shipbuilding was nationalised by a Labour government, after the former private owners had starved it of investment to the point of total collapse. These tycoons, having made millions of pounds of profit over the decades received far more in compensation than they could ever have made in profits in the future!

The new state bureaucracy put in to run British Shipbuilders were left with an industrial cripple, ruined by years of neglect. And, like their counterparts in British Steel, British Leyland, British Rail and the Coal Board, they began as the private owners had finished, by blaming the workers and seeking to solve the industry's problems at their expense.

The outcome was the Corporate Plan published on 16 August 1979. 6,000 jobs were to disappear and five yards to close—including Robb Caledon.

'The Caledon' has been building ships for over 100 years. Despite under-invest-

ment by the old owners, it was famous for highly complex and specialised vessels requiring skills built up through several generations of workers.

In 1968, it merged with

The Caledon workers could not accept this formula which was accepted by the conference, and maintained their sanctions. They received the support of the Yarrow workers on the Clyde, who overthrew their shop-stewards' recommendation to lift the sanctions. By October BS had been forced to grant the Caledon a "reprieve"; it was to be retained "with the potential for the construction of



A scene at the Robb Caledon Shipyard.

Robb's yard in Leith to become Robb Caledon and in 1977 it was nationalised to become part of British Shipbuilders.

Immediately the closure was announced, the trade unions nationally imposed a ban on overtime, sea trials and launches, and pledged themselves to fight to save the yard. This quickly brought about some concessions but not enough to satisfy the workers. At a Conference of Shipbuilding Delegates in Blackpool on 4 September 1979, it was reported that BS had agreed not to impose any compulsory redundancies, not to get rid of the yard but to keep it on a "care and maintenance" basis and to set up a working party to "examine the possible introduction of shiprepair and offshore oil related work."

merchant ships."

The sanctions were lifted, and a "Joint Study Group" set up to look for work, and to investigate working practices.

On the latter, a BS Industrial Relations Director spent six weeks examining the working practices and concluded that he "could find nothing in the existing local practices which could possibly account for the low performance of the Dundee yard. On the contrary it appeared to representatives of BS that the...working practices were well in advance of the rest of the industry."

This confirmed the view the workers had consistently maintained that it was bad management and lack of investment to modernise the yard which were the problem. Even so, the workers

were able to increase their productivity by a further 25%! Despite this, the Joint Study Group failed to find any new work. It was disbanded and replaced by a Task Force, which was no more successful, despite contact with over 200 companies.

It became clear to the workforce that BS were not seriously looking for orders which could keep the yard open and indeed had never intended to depart from the original Corporate Plan.

This was confirmed when BS stopped pretending and declared the final closure of the yard on 18 September 1981. BS blamed "the low productivity of the yard, its poor industrial relations, late delivery and, finally, the locking in of ships."

The "low productivity" has already been nailed. The workers have now also proved that management were giving them misleading figures for the losses being incurred by the yard. £11,275,000 is claimed to have been lost in 1978/9, but this was the loss of the 'Robb Caledon Group', which included the Leith Yard, a yard in Burntisland which is now closed, and a marine engineering factory in Edinburgh.

The loss at the Caledon yard alone in that year was only £1,900,000, one of the smallest losses of any yard.

The "late delivery" argument is more an indictment of the management themselves. A statement issued by the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, refers to "an abysmal record of bad management which we can honestly say is the worst we have ever encountered."

To blame the closure on "the locking in of ships" is just comical, since it was the sanctions which the workers took in August 1979 which prevented the yard from closing two years earlier.

So we are left with "poor industrial relations", which gets nearer the truth. The Caledon has been singled out because of the militancy of its workforce. Their struggle for survival is a lesson for all shipyard workers, and that is why this fight is so vital for the whole industry.

Recognising this, the Shipbuilding Negotiating Committee have given their full backing to the occupation of the yard, with a national overtime ban and token one-day stoppages.

Another very important

reason for the solidity and determination of the Caledon workers has been the policy of the shop stewards' combined committee of referring every major decision to a mass meeting. This ensured that at every stage in the fight the workers were well informed and felt themselves to be a party to the

decisions. This is a policy which has been continued into the occupation.

The battle is now being waged in earnest. It will not be easy, but with the support of the rest of the trade union movement in shipbuilding and in Dundee itself, it can be won.



Workers discuss tactics in the occupied shipyard. All major decisions of the stewards' combined committee are put to a mass meeting. Photo: Militant

## R&R Sonics

Steve Roach  
(Wood Green YS  
and EETPU)

**Whilst the Tory press viciously attacks the unions and the closed shop, a dispute is in progress in North London that really exposes their hypocrisy.**

The boss of R&R Sonics has sacked 6 people for joining a union, the EETPU, while insisting on his belief of freedom in democracy.

His idea of freedom includes calling his workers monkeys, and incompetent imbeciles, accusing a picket of having a criminal record in front of a policewoman (untrue), kicking down placards and attacking the picketline.

The trainees at the factory get £35 a week after tax and no training whatsoever. When these workers asked me about the most effective way of improving their conditions I arranged a meeting with a leading member of the EETPU Broad Left.

This was highly successful and out of the ten employees, 7 joined the union. Union officials then requested the boss to meet him to discuss the recognition agreement. When the boss denied there were any union members in his factory, the shop steward had to ask him what proof he wanted.

The next day he was sacked, and when the rest of the

workers requested reinstatement they too were sacked.

An official picket was immediately set up. The boss came straight down and started shouting at the workers, saying that they were too stupid to think for themselves and that they are in the hands of a shop steward who 'is a full time Communist'. He did say that he could prove it—but he wouldn't just yet!

The union officer turned up and made the picket official and went to see the boss. He said that he would have a union but he wouldn't actually reinstate the strikers. Of course he could have had a union a week before, but then he had a workforce that might just join it.

Since the picket was made official the boss has been down to tear down our placards and shout at us; quite a side show! This harassment has now given way to more subtle methods. He has actually rang up one of the striker's mothers to tell her that her son is being 'controlled by hard liners'!

One night he lost control altogether and physically attacked the picket line, stopping us from talking to a scab on his way in. At the most there are 4 scabs still working along with the 2 bosses.

There are only 6 of us and we need as much support as we can get. Please send donations and messages of support to R&R Sonics strike fund, 44 Woodside Road, London N22, if you can get down onto the picket line, the address is Wakefield Street, Edmon- ton N18.



Shipyards workers picket the Swan Hunter yard in the Tyne last week, during the one-day stoppage in support of the Robb Caledon workers. Photo: Denis Doran

## STAFFA (CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

available. The solicitor then pushed a writ under the gates and another was fixed to the gates themselves.

He said it was 'on no one in particular'. 309 workers were named, including some on the sick. They even took care to include 'any employee not named'!

A court hearing granted an injunction against the workers on Wednesday 7 October, and the workers are preparing to fight.

ASTMS members have been told by their union to leave the factory and are picketing outside. AUEW members are still in occupation.

Plymouth, as an "enterprise zone" can offer £4 million government grants to re-equip and "re-adjust work methods".

The Greater London Council informed shop stewards they could match this 'penny for penny', but management after promising to meet workers to discuss this now refuse point blank. The obvious aim is to break the strength of the unions.

The firm has been owned by an American multinational Brown and Sharpe since 1979. Then they promised "Brown and Sharpe intends to safeguard the interests of all employees of Chamberlain (The old owners) and their job security, conditions of employment and pensions rights will not be affected".

Workers fulfilled management requests for greater productivity last year, and even accepted redundancies.

The dispute is essential to workers everywhere. The company which is profitable are deliberately attempting to break the union.

Messages of support and donations should be sent urgently to Staffa Shop Stewards Committee, c/o Mr. C Newson, 39 Somers Road, Walthamstow, London E17 6RV.

By Alan Watson

# The Bosses won't break us

British Shipbuilders bosses have been trying to break the solidarity action of shipyard workers nationally to save Robb Caledon yard in Dundee. They are failing.

After the national work to rule and one day strike action began in support of Caledon workers occupying their yard against closure, the BS bosses announced further redundancies in other yards.

The worst hit was the Tyne Shiprepair yards where 670 workers were laid off. But this has not broken the Tyne workers' action.

At a mass meeting last week, workers there voted to

By Alex Allan  
 (EETPU, Robb Caledon)

continue their overtime ban, and their one-day strike on Monday was solid. It was also agreed to levy the Shiprepair workers still with jobs £5 a week.

At Robb Caledon itself the fight goes on. Not only is it an important struggle for

the industry's workers as a whole (see page 15) but for the town of Dundee itself.

There are 15,659 out of work in the city (18% of the workforce) with only 286 registered vacancies. The city's other traditional industry, jute, has almost disappeared and the modern light engineering factories which opened in the fifties and sixties have been laying workers off by the thousands.

Caledon is a symbol of resistance to the de-industrialisation and impoverishment of Dundee. The yard was the biggest source of apprentice training in North East Scotland. Closure

would deal a savage blow to all those school-leavers hoping for skilled work.

Although a large number of workers took BS's offer of voluntary redundancy, there has not been the collapse of the struggle seen in some other places. Where else can you go in Dundee?

There has been even less response to BS's offer of a transfer to other yards. The nearest, in Leith is 60 miles away, meaning either a 120-mile round trip every day or uprooting the family with guarantees of neither a house nor of a permanent job.

Two apprentices who volunteered to move to South-

ampton, were laid off as soon as they had finished their training!

One of them had won a special prize at the Tech as best apprentice of his year, yet he was dismissed for "not reaching the required standard."

This is a battle which must be won. A major defeat can be inflicted not only on British Shipbuilders, but on the Tory government which stands behind them and has been management's inspiration.

Send messages of support to the Shop Stewards Combined Committee, Robb Caledon shipyard, Stanner-gate, Dundee.

## Tory pay policy

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

ed to pay half his income to the taxman—absolutely voluntarily.

He's a fine, public-spirited fellow!

The cost of living, however, is going up all the time. (Government statistics say prices have risen by 11.5% in the last year. If he was worried about tax he'd also have noticed that the government's tax and price index has gone up even more by 14.9%.)

But it's not just costs. Now he has got an unemployed wife to keep, too. (To keep up appearances, she voluntarily gave up her job as a nursery teacher once she got married.)

That's why Prince Charles is now volunteering only a quarter of his £550,445 income to the tax people.

Charles, of course, as he

reigns over the lucrative Duchy of Cornwall, is doing well. His recent rise amounted to a 50% increase!

Everyone can't have that! The prime minister, in her wisdom, has recently shuffled the monetarist pack, and brought Mr "Four Per Cent Norm" to the forefront.

Mr Norman Tebbit, the day after his elevation to the Minister of Unemployment, announced that workers in the public sector could only expect to get a 4% increase in the next pay rounds.

The National Union of Public Employees has put in a claim of between 11% and 12% for workers in the public sector, a very modest claim, less than inflation. But this is simply not on, according to the Tories.

Not to be outdone, the BL management has offered a generous 3.8%

"take-it-or-leave-it" to the BL workers who produce the cars.

The 20% claimed by BL trade unions is just not on according to Michael Edwards.

This is the sort of country we live in.

It's a country owned and run—and being ruined—by capitalist profit-hunters. It's run by a (tiny) class of people who have lost the capacity and the will to produce real wealth in factories.

### Tories' crazy principle

As far as these parasites are concerned, the workers who labour in factories to produce the wealth can go to hell. They can take wage cuts, or they can rot in the dole queues.

And the government is in the hands of crazed Tories who can see nothing wrong with this. On the contrary, their policies are based on a crude principle; pamper

rich parasites, hammer the workers.

The public-sector workers who will be challenging the 4% limit this winter and the BL unions, who are planning strike action from 1 November, will be in the forefront of a new wave of struggles against the Tories and the rotting system they defend.

These sections of workers must have the full support of the whole labour movement. They will be in the front line of the battle to defend all workers' living standards and basic trade union rights.

It is vital that the public sector workers and BL workers win the coming battle. But there can be no real solutions under the Tories and within the present system.

The industrial campaign must be linked to a mass campaign to get the Tories out! We need a new Labour government to implement bold socialist policies. We need it urgently!

# Subscribe Now!

BRITAIN & IRELAND  
 26 issues... £8.00  
 EUROPE (by air)  
 26 issues... £9.00  
 52 issues...£18.00

13 issues... £4.00  
 52 issues...£16.00  
 REST OF WORLD (by air)  
 26 issues...£14.00  
 52 issues...£28.00

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

Make cheques payable to MILITANT and return to the Circulation Department, MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Bulk orders available, sale or return.