

# TORIES STRIP PUBLIC ASSETS

inside

**Bosses  
Ruin  
Textile  
Industry**

page 7

**POEU**

page 11

**Southern  
Ireland**

page 6

## Profitable chunks of state firms thrown to private investors

The Tories are handing out a summer bonanza for their big-business backers while workers face ever growing dole queues and slashed living standards.

Sir Keith Joseph and his henchmen have set in motion a massive asset-stripping operation on the nationalised industries.

All the profitable, or potentially profitable chunks will be hacked out and handed over to private interests. At the same time, in ending the state monopoly in a number of key industries, the Tories are out to provide additional strike-breaking opportunities for the bosses.

### Telecomms

Even before last week's announcement, the Tories had already handed over millions of pounds worth of lucrative investment to private enterprise, including shares in British Aerospace; the hotel and cross channel ferry operations of British Rail; and the bulk delivery of mail, previously a Post Office monopoly.

Last week, Sir Keith Joseph announced further handovers to big business interests:

The biggest honeypot opened by Joseph is undoubtedly telecommunications.

By Lynn  
Walsh

While the state corporation, British Telecomms, will retain control of the basic telephone network, the growing and potentially enormous profitable field of ancillary equipment, largely based on new microchip technology, will be opened up to private firms.

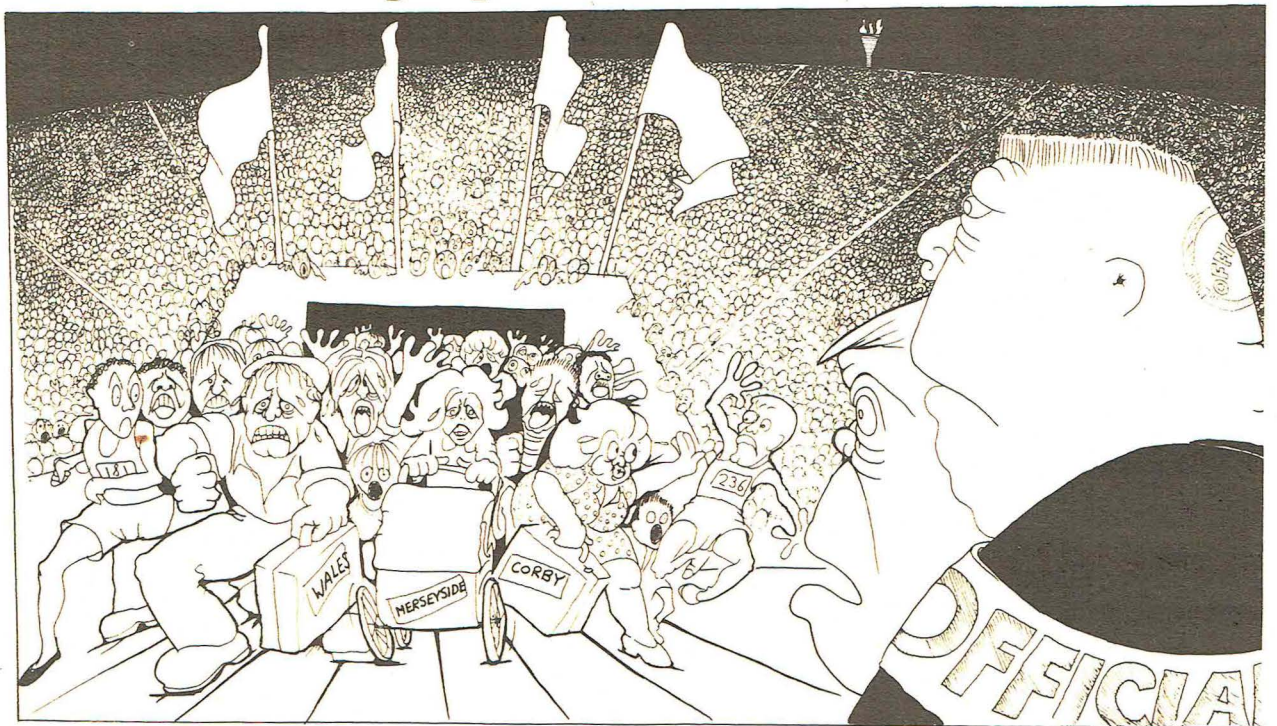
This includes equipment like private business exchanges, data processing and computer links, and satellite communications.

The first section of big business to profit will be the city financiers, international brokers, and big overseas operators, who have plenty of money to lash out on new equipment.

But British Telecomms will still be responsible for providing the investment to maintain and develop the basic system, and this will inevitably mean higher bills, especially for domestic subscribers. A telephone in the home may soon

CONTINUED ON  
PAGE TWO

## Jobless in Olympic Marathon Sensation ...



"The unemployed must be prepared to move to find work"... Mrs Thatcher.

Dear 'Militant'

The reaction in South Wales to the statement made by Thatcher telling young people to 'get mobile', was one of extreme anger and fury. Just who the hell does she think she is? Everyone knows the pointless exercise of moving for jobs that don't exist.

While Len Murray has been begging for talks with the

Tories for 14 months, workers young and old are being convinced that will be of no benefit to them.

Thatcher has thrown down the challenge. It's time to take it up. TUC—get mobile! Organise to bring down the Tories!

Meirion Evans, South Wales NUM

# BAKERY WORKERS STRIKE FOR RECOGNITION

"The support is overwhelming: we just didn't expect it!"

That just about sums up the feeling of strikers at King Henry's bakery, Levenshulme, Manchester, at the second mass picket on Thursday 24 July in the third week of their strike for union recognition.

Once again BFAWU members, other trade unionists, LPYS and LP members joined 30 or so strikers to make up a 100-strong picket. The mood was even more determined and optimistic than ever.

"He's King Henry reborn" is a common comment about Mr Hollins, the managing director. But he was having

By Ken Brownsey

trouble keeping up a kingly bearing.

It must be difficult for the poor man to escort handfuls of scabs in through a crowd of workers whistling the Laurel and Hardy theme tune when he's accustomed to treating many of those workes like dirt in the 'good old days.'

On the other hand, the strikers have cause to smile. Having gone through the difficult 'hump' any strike like this faces earlier in the

week, the strikers have by an open airing of views and discussion emerged stronger and more united than ever. The blacking continues to bite—one bakery supplying King Henry shops has stopped deliveries after a couple of hours picketing outside their premises turned away even non-union drivers.

As the union continues to find out more about the suppliers and outlets of King Henry, so the blacking increases. Customers going to King Henry shops are being leafleted and workers in the area are checking their canteens for King Henry pies. The drains cleaner and chemical supplies turned back, and

except for one or two scab drivers only King Henry vans are crossing.

The strikers explained why they were so determined and confident. Debbie Fitzpatrick said "I've always believed in unions—my Dad's a strong union man. I worked there seven months and joined the union two weeks before the strike. Why? Well, the conditions and wages for one thing, and the sackings—one girl got sacked for speaking her own mind. I thought there would be a strike before. The back-up from other people is encouraging and I think the youth of many of the strikers is

Continued on back page

# Militant

1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## WHY DEFEND NATIONALISED INDUSTRIES?

Determined to carve every last bit of profit out of the nationalised industries, the Tories have embarked on a new round of asset-stripping.

Justified by so-called 'free market economics', this is a blatant class measure to put more booty in the hands of the exploiters whom the Tories represent.

All too well aware of the bureaucracy and mis-management in the nationalised industries, however, some workers may ask: are they in any way socialist? Should they be defended? But despite all their limitations, the nationalised industries must be defended. Fundamentally, nationalisation demonstrates that industry can be run without capitalist ownership—which accounts for the continuous virulent propaganda of the Tory press against the nationalised industries.

Secondly, nationalisation has provided the basis for significant improvement in workers' conditions. While workers in state sector have

frequently been the first to be hit by government pay policies and have suffered massive job losses, there were nevertheless gains in conditions and recognition of union rights. There is no comparison, for example, between present conditions in the mines, whatever the limitations, and the terrible conditions that existed prior to nationalisation.

The development of nationalisation shows the inability of so-called "private enterprise" based on the profit motive, to develop basic industries and essential utilities. The former private owners were not prepared to undertake the vast investment necessary to develop heavy industries [like coal, steel, and the railways] or utilities, [like gas, water, and electricity] which are needed everywhere, not just where they can be run at a profit.

The nationalisation carried out by the 1945-1951 Labour government was actually based on the recommendations of Tory-dominated parliamentary committees of the war-time coalition government. Big business itself reluctantly accepted that they should be taken over, and developed through state investment,

thereby acknowledging that in these areas the private ownership of capital had outlived its progressive, historic role.

Since the 1960s, moreover, big business has been forced to accept the nationalisation of other industries — shipbuilding, the ports, aircraft, and other firms salvaged by the National Enterprise Board—which had been reduced to gross delapidation and bankruptcy by their private owners.

But big business, with the Tories acting as their advocates, have always fought to retain any profitable sectors in private hands. In steel, for instance, the specialised steelmaking and finishing processes have remained a lucrative source of profit for big business.

It is this greedy desire for extra profit that underlines the Tories' new asset-stripping binge—especially in telecommunications, where new technology based on micro-chips, is opening up profitable new fields.

There is certainly monstrous waste and inefficiency in the nationalised industries. But what right have the bosses of backward, mis-managed, inefficient private industry to accuse the state-

owned firms? The big 'losses' of the nationalised industries are mainly the result of monstrous debt charges, impossible "cash limits", and cheap prices for big business. If the state firms are such a write-off, why are private investors so eager to get their hands on the profitable bits?

It is entirely hypocritical for the Tories to denounce the inefficiencies of the nationalised industries as examples of the failure of "socialism". Unfortunately past Labour governments failed to ensure that there would be democratic workers' control and management in the nationalised industries.

Without exception, they have been run by big-business men and financiers together with a few Labour renegades. They have been run by capitalist methods in the interests of big business.

The nationalised "Monopolies", which Joseph regards as such an evil, have been exploited by private monopolies all along.

In the case of telecommunications, equipment contracts have always been dominated by a handful of companies. With steel and coal, the wholesaling and retailing has been domin-

ated by a few big firms.

When private enterprise ruined these industries in the first place, it is completely contradictory to claim that private enterprise can now develop them efficiently. The labour movement must rigorously oppose denationalisation and hiving off. It must be made clear to the parasites now trying to grab the profits that Labour's policy of re-nationalisation, with minimum sation will be vigorously enforced by the next Labour government.

At the same time, the labour movement must campaign for genuine workers' control and management in the nationalised industries.

They should be run by boards composed of one third of the trade unions in the industry; one third of representatives from the TUC; and one third appointed by the government. This would ensure that the industries could be planned and run in the interests of the working class and of society as a whole.

Above all, big business fears that the present nationalised industries will be used as a spring-board by the labour movement to the nationalisation of further

industries. This is precisely how they should be regarded.

Vital sections of British industry—like engineering, machine tools, electronics, and many other vital industries—have become outdated and inefficient, and are being increasingly outstripped, at home and abroad, by overseas rivals. This is now costing the British workers thousands of jobs every week.

The only way to restore these industries and develop them efficiently is through massive re-investment and modernisation. But you cannot plan what you do not own. You cannot plan industries run according to the profit motive and the anarchy of the market.

The only way forward, therefore, is for a programme of socialist nationalisations with minimum compensation on the basis of need, of the 'commanding heights' of the economy—about 200 major firms, together with the banks and finance houses—to be run under democratic workers' control and management as a basis for a genuine socialist plan of production.

## Labour Conference resolutions show way forward

The desire of Labour Party members for bold socialist policies to defeat the Tories are reflected in the resolutions up for debate at this autumn's conference.

Overwhelmingly the resolutions are in favour of extending Party democracy, getting rid of nuclear weapons and of radical economic and social policies to end unemployment, inflation and the attacks on the social services. Whilst Labour's right-wing are hoping to bolster their position by manoeuvres, they have clearly lost the political argument.

The most important issue before this year's Party conference remains the need for Party democracy. When the Party works out its policy, its parliamentary representatives should carry it out.

All of the seven resolutions on election of the Party leader call for change in the system. The other resolutions on re-selection of MPs, the Parliamentary Labour Party, workplace branches, democratic control of local councillors are also mostly in favour of extending democracy.

This battle has not yet been won, and will undoubtedly be the crucial issue for Party activists.

Not surprisingly the subject which has dominated in the minds of many constituency members has been that of nuclear armaments. 144 reso-

By Colin Barber

lutions, nearly a third of the total, are on nuclear weapons.

All of them condemn the Tory government's wasteful increased arms expenditure. Most call for Cruise and all nuclear weapons to be banned from Britain and for there to be no replacement for Polaris.

Trade unions such as SOGAT and ACTAT have called for a firm manifesto commitment for a Labour to close down "all nuclear bases, British or American, on British soil or in British water." Other resolutions demand that a Labour government withdraws from NATO.

There is nothing in these resolutions to comfort William Rodgers, Labour's right-wing defence spokesman. The need for peace is crucial for all workers. But declarations of intent and denunciations of the military chiefs are not enough.

The continued existence of nuclear weapons and vast military expenditure is intertwined with the continuation of the capitalist system. It is therefore essential that this system is replaced by one based on socialist planning, which could produce for need, not destruction. The fight against unemployment, inflation and the attacks on the social services are all linked to the struggle against the capitalists 'defence' pol-

icy.

By October there could well be 2-million unemployed, and the anger of many delegates against the system which produces such human disaster will be felt. The T&GWU's resolution supports the TUC's campaign on this and calls for the immediate goal of the 35-hour week.

A clear programme is spelt out in the resolution of Brighton Kempton CLP. This states in part:

"...the ability of the next Labour Government to achieve full employment, reverse the Tory cuts and make advances in the provision of education, health, welfare and the elimination of poverty will depend on the wealth created by manufacturing industry...there must be a crash programme of re-industrialisation, involving massive investment and new technology. A plan of production must be worked out now with the trade unions, a plan for growth that would end the dole queues and use the skills and expertise of the workforce to the full.

"Conference calls on the National Executive Committee to begin a campaign to explain the real choice facing the people, that the continuation of capitalism can only mean mass unemployment, misery and poverty...while democratic socialism and a plan using new technology in the interest of society instead of the profit of a handful of monopolies would open up un-dreamed up possibilities



The struggle for Party democracy is linked to the fight to get rid of nuclear weapons. The last Labour government ignored commitments to close all nuclear bases in Britain. [Above] Recent Labour Party demonstration

in all fields, health, housing, education, welfare, art, culture and leisure.

"The campaign should mobilise the Labour movement in readiness to support the next Labour Government in introducing an enabling act to end the power of big business, nationalisation and placing under democratic control and

management the 200 major monopolies and financial institutions, compensation to be paid on the basis of proven need."

It is only on this basis that all the past reforms, and present needs and aspirations of the labour movement can be fulfilled.

This year's Party confer-

ence is likely to be stormy, as the right-wing try to gain by manoeuvre what they have lost in argument. But if the Labour Party extends its democratic struggle and arms itself with a clear socialist programme it will be able to combat the Tories and their shadows in the Labour movement.

### TORIES (CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

become an unobtainable luxury for ordinary workers.

The breaking of the telecomms equipment monopoly, moreover, will benefit overseas, particularly giant American manufacturers before British manufacturers—inevitably destroying more jobs in Britain.

Joseph and company are always denouncing the evil of 'monopoly', but no-one has benefited from the Post Office monopoly more than the handful of private monopolies who have dominated the Post Office supplies. As the 'Financial Times' [22 July] points out, they have felt "the soporific effects of a non-competitive market" and "may be unable to compete in many

of the markets which have now theoretically been opened."

The answer is not to open telecomms to the big business sharks, to devour all the profitable portions and let the rest of the system go to the wall, but to take the suppliers into public ownership as well, and run them in a planned manner under democratic workers' control and management.

The breaking of the state monopoly on the generation of electricity will have less immediate effect.

Companies are already allowed to generate electricity for their own use and to sell any excess to private customers or the national grid—provided this is not the main purpose of their business. In 1978, 18% of industrial supplies and 6%

of Britain's total output were privately generated.

The main danger for the labour movement, however, is the strike-breaking opportunity this may provide in the event of a power workers' or miners' strike.

Labour's National Executive has already made it clear that any parts of nationalised industries hived off under the Tories will be re-nationalised without compensation by the next Labour government. The labour movement must make it absolutely clear that the Tories and their big business pals will not get away with this asset-stripping rip-off.

Stop British Rail run-down, page 7.

# TWO MILLION REASONS TO BUILD THE YS

Careers officers in Strathclyde — Scotland's biggest region — could offer only 84 jobs to 23,067 teenagers this month. Only 17 were in the Glasgow area, the industrial heartland of Scotland.

No wonder the Glasgow "Evening Times" labels the city's youth as 'Scotland's no-hopers!'

Scotland's other cities see the same black picture. In Dundee six vacancies for youngsters, 403 for adults. In Edinburgh 116 jobs for youth and in the so-called boom town Aberdeen only 60.

For many thousands of Scottish youth there is no future, no hope. One of the leading members of the SNP has warned of 'civil disturbances' if the government does not take action.

Even the Tory appointed director of the Scottish Development Agency has warned that government policies are leading to an industrial wasteland. The YS in Scotland demand action around Socialist policies.

By  
**William King**  
(Scottish Labour Party  
Young Socialists'  
Regional Committee)

Thatcher prattles about the need for 'mobility'. But where in Britain can we go to get jobs? 8,000 jobs a day disappeared in July. Every hour a company goes bankrupt or into liquidation.

The youth dole queues are growing if anything faster in the South East and Midlands than in the more "traditional" high unemployment areas, 70% up on last year in East Midlands, 63% in East Anglia and 55% in the South East.

And what kind of jobs are being offered anywhere? In Liverpool, the Job Centre found a job as a nude model 'very popular'—for £30 a week!

The "Daily Mirror" highlighted recently a man from Ashington, Northumberland who had tried to come to London for a job twice, but exorbitant prices for housing forced him back. Unfurnished accommoda-



LPYS demonstration against the Tories in February

Photo: MILITANT

tion hardly existed and furnished accommodation suitable for his family started at £80 per week.

Yet the possibility is there to provide plentiful homes at reasonable prices—and jobs for unemployed people throughout Britain. A rational society would offer well paid jobs building the homes, schools and hospitals so desperately needed.

The crazy 'logic' of capitalism prevents this. But the kind of socialist policy, fought for by the LPYS has found tremendous support when we have campaigned in the area.

In the month of August we will be campaigning in Pollok, a Glasgow constituency with one of the highest concentrations of youth unemployment.

In addition to our general demands, we are organising a petition to the Labour controlled Strathclyde Regional Council for the provision of free bus travel for the unemployed and the opening of day centres for the Council for unemployed youth.

Has there ever been a time when LPYS policies were more relevant or more able to get an echo from

young people, at work or on the dole?

We have been fighting for:

- ★ A guaranteed job for all school leavers.
- ★ A 35-hour week with no loss of pay to cut down the dole queues.
- ★ No to cuts. For a massive programme of public works.

The shocked reaction of the bosses and their Tory stooges at these reasonable demands shows the burning need to get rid of their system once and for all.

All LPYS branches should be campaigning in the

next few months to really build the LPYS. Make sure every young worker, and every young unemployed person knows we exist and that we have the policies to lead the fight against youth unemployment.

## TORIES' LIES

In a desperate attempt to cover up the nature of their attacks on the working class, the Tory government resort to total dishonesty and frenzied union-bashing. An example was their recent party political broadcast.

The broadcast opened showing a former Shotton steel worker. According to the programme he was out of a job because of this year's steel strike: 'greedy', 'unreasonable', unions were once again the whipping boy. But the closure of Shotton was announced last year, long before the strike.

High wages, we were told, caused unemployment. But British steelworkers are the lowest paid in Europe. While the bare-faced Tory liars blame unions for pushing up the price of steel and holding back productivity, the EEC commissioner for industry is castigating European steel firms for charging too little and producing too much.

In the face of the worldwide economic recession, British steel is failing to compete due to mis-management and the parasitic private steel firms. The only real solution is to carry out socialist policies of planning and running the industry under democratic workers' control and management, as



Tory chancellor Howe

By Jim Chrystie

part of a nationalised and rationally planned economy.

Capitalism—the system the Tories represent—has consistently failed to re-invest, to modernise and re-equip industry. Now the chickens are coming home to roost—and we are expected to believe that the labour movement causes mass unemployment!

The Tory broadcast, not surprisingly, set out to blame the workers for everything, in a calculated attempt to divide worker from worker; the employed from the unemployed.

Hospital workers, we heard, were responsible for poor hospitals. If they would stop fighting for a living wage, hospitals wouldn't have to close. What a lie! Hospital workers have been to the forefront of the fight to keep health facilities open.

In the broadcast, Tory Chancellor Howe implied that if all government employees forwent a 1% wage increase, there would be a £35 increase for old age pensioners. Does anyone seriously believe that

the government would do this, at a time when they are ruthlessly slashing the NHS and squandering billions on nuclear weaponry?

They do not operate out of sentimentality—but for clear, cold, class reasons. Old age pensioners, the sick, the young—in fact all workers—must be driven to the wall if their system is to be preserved.

When the TUC's Day of Action was announced, businessmen and government ministers claimed it would mean losing scores of new hospitals, schools etc. We are told the day was a flop—another lie—but when can we expect the announcements of expanded social services? Under the Tories, never.

The more 'reasonable' workers are, the more 'moderate' the wage demands, the more the Tories claw back for their profits, and the more vicious their offensive.

Under the social contract (as opposed to Howe's 'incomes policy without putting a figure on it') workers were told to accept lower rises, so more money could be given to the lower-paid. It didn't work out that way, and under capitalism it never will.

## MANCHESTER

'1,896,634 Jobless!' This was the banner headline in the 'Manchester Evening News' when the July unemployment figures came out.

Within hours Manchester Young Socialists responded by holding a picket outside the local Granada TV studios demanding the right to put our views across on local TV.

16 members of various YS branches were there, with placards and a megaphone to publicise our policies,

By Carl Wiper  
(Withington LPYS)

and a press release was issued, calling for day centres for unemployed school leavers, a 35-hour week with no loss of pay and an end to the cuts.

During the ¾-hour demonstration 10 papers—'Socialist Youth' and 'Militant'—were sold to mem-

bers of Granada staff.

We are hoping to appear in a future Granada programme to debate unemployment with the Young Conservatives and Young Liberals; whether we manage this or not, the YS must try to use all available media, including TV, to show young people the socialist answer to the Tories' attacks.

## ONE MORE ON THE DOLE?

By  
**Mike Sheaff**  
(Plymouth LPYS)

During my tea-break I read in the 'Daily Mirror' of one individual who will soon be jobless.

Roy Jenkins is to leave his 'Common Market job and, according to an EEC official, "It may be difficult for him to get another post straight away." Before I was overwhelmed with sympathy, however, I read that he will receive what was described by the same official as "a little pension to help him get along."

How nice. He will be saved the prospect facing two million unemployed and their families surviving on unemployment or supplementary benefit; particularly as the "little pension" amounts to £90,000.

Every penny is needed to maintain the lifestyle to which he's been accustomed over the last three years—with a salary of £60,000 a year house, a

chauffeur-driven limousine and a private air taxi (whatever that is) thrown in.

To while away a few minutes I calculated that on my present pay, aged 24, I'll have to work until I'm 50 just to earn the £90,000 Jenkins will receive as a "pension."

So I faced a clear choice. Either I become president of the European Commission.

Or I continue to fight in the labour movement to ensure that our representatives understand the problems workers face and are not removed from them by luxury wages.

The millstone of careerism has weighed round the move-

ment's neck for too long: people like Jenkins who know nothing of the lives of working people and care nothing for socialism; who are all too ready to abandon those who fought for them.

Our representatives must be democratically accountable to those who select them. They must accept the average wage of a skilled worker, supplemented by necessary expenses.

Then we can ensure that they fight for the unemployed, the low paid, the homeless. Then they would understand why we fight for socialism, which alone can provide desperately needed jobs, houses and services.

Of course, on £60,000 a year, with a £100,000 house, it's easy to forget about that...

## NORTHERN IRELAND:

### Re-tying the knot of history

"Catholic and Protestant workers in Northern Ireland are re-tying the knot of history," Bill Webster of the Derry Labour and Trade Union group told a packed meeting in Newham, East London recently.

The meeting had just heard from Tony Saunois, LPYS representative on the Labour NEC who had been on a visit to Northern Ireland.

Tony's dramatic illustrations of evidence of beatings and torture in the prisons were amply backed up by reports from other sources—the most graphic by far being the minute notes by the prisoners themselves written on cigarette papers.

These were passed round the meeting, bringing home to the audience the need to deal with this repression on a political basis.

Tony laid particular importance on the role of the state, in particular, the British army, and on the need for an alternative to the blind alley of sectarianism.

For the workers, particularly young workers, all the sectarian parties and the paramilitary groups now clearly had no solution, although hundreds had been attracted in the late '60s and early '70s as a result of the failure of the labour movement to give a lead.

Labour's NEC has recently passed a very important resolution on Northern Ireland, initiated by Tony Saunois calling for an investigation by the Northern Ireland Study Group of the Party into the question of repression and prison conditions.

This had been taken up by the capitalist media, Tony told the meeting, who said that the NEC was playing into the hands of the sectarians.

"On the contrary," the meeting was told, "only the failure of the labour and trade union movement to take up the question could drive the youth into sectarianism."

The meeting was left in no doubt that the key to future developments was to wage a struggle for a mass party of labour to offer a way out of the sectarian politics of the past.

For this reason, the NEC move was important—the FIRST time, Bill Webster said, that a British Labour NEC had raised the question of repression in Ireland.

The need for the labour movement to take up the question was underlined by Eileen Webster from Derry, who pointed out that young workers were accepting the policies of the labour movement—one of the largest YS branches was in Ballymena, in Ian Paisley's constituency she said.

The meeting responded by giving over £35 to the fighting fund.

# DORSET-TEST CASE FOR CUTBACKS

Dorset County Council's meeting on 24 July opened with prayers for divine aid to councillors in their difficult task. Their "divine mission"? To axe school meals for

By Andy Rosser (Poole LPYS)

der-12s in the county and make 1,000 staff

redundant.

The Tories honoured an ex-chairman for 14 years' "service to the people of Dorset." The dinner ladies, some with 20 years' real service, were dismissed with far less ceremony, ignoring objections from parents, teachers, school governors, school meals workers and trade unionists.

Already past cuts force many children to leave home at 8 in the morning and not return until 5, travelling miles because smaller village schools have been axed.

The most successful campaign against the decision was that of the LPYS, whose six Dorset branches collected 6,000 signatures in ten days.

The council meeting attracted over 300 angry opponents, school meals workers and trade unionists. Despite several attempts by police to break the cordon round the County Hall, demonstrators refused to move.

Shouts of "one more cut, Maggie's throat" and "Margaret Thatcher's boot boys" followed the Tory councillors as the public gallery filled up.

Most councillors seemed only concerned to collect their expenses and retire to lunch. "It is not our job to featherbed parents whose priorities are wrong. If less was spent on colour TVs and motor cars, school meals would be safer," was the arrogant comment of one Tory councillor.

As the result of the vote was announced, 55-22, there was uproar. Dorset is no longer a prosperous area. 650 school leavers in Poole are chasing 40 vacancies. The labour movement will be preparing to fight back. What is more the Tories will be looking at Dorset as a test case nationally. The struggle is not just for Dorset. Our fight is your fight.

## TOLPUDDLE

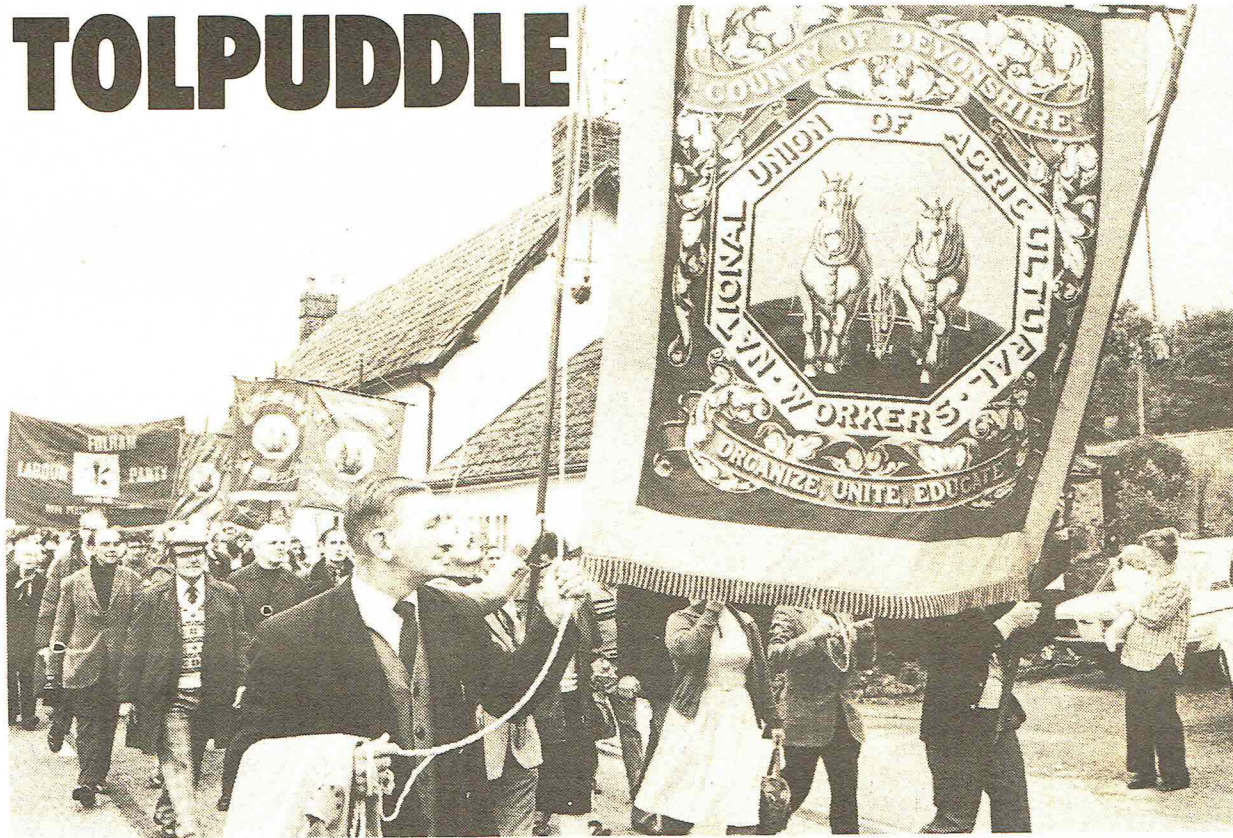


Photo: Laurie Sparham (IFL)

## LARGEST RALLY EVER

By Julie Harris (Poole Labour Party)

The clear polarisation within British society was shown clearly by the turnout of 5,000-6,000 workers at the rally to commemorate the first trade unionists, the Tolpuddle Martyrs. This was the largest ever.

Dorset's ruling class leaders are reclaiming their place of infamy in the labour movement nearly a century and a half after

Tolpuddle by abolishing school dinners. The mood here was shown by the collection of over 2,000 signatures for the LPYS petition against the cuts.

Labour leader Jim Callaghan also signed and during his speech promised to restore the school meals service. Heckling from some quarters started before he began speaking, angering

many Labour Party and trade union members.

Unfortunately Jim Callaghan's speech, while slating Tory policies, failed to put any socialist alternative. His reference to the social contract and his claim that the left were destroying party unity alienated many in the crowd.

Many activists said that they had never seen a cooler

reception for a Labour leader.

Next year will probably see an even bigger Tolpuddle rally as workers get more involved in the fight against the Tories and their system. They will undoubtedly also be expecting more of a lead from the top of our movement.

## Labour Party campaign against unemployment

Labour's NEC has taken an excellent initiative by calling a national demonstration against unemployment. It will probably be held in Liverpool towards the end of November. This is the result of a proposal from Denis Skinner MP.

The decision is a tremendous step forward in the activity of the Labour Party. Clearly, it signifies the pressure for a real fight to be mounted by the labour movement against the Tories from the party membership.

The decision is also a welcome move towards the

building of a mass, campaigning socialist Labour Party effectively to combat the Tories. All CLPs, trade union and LPYS branches should now work to ensure that the march is a massive success.

Last week's meeting also marked a further victory for those supporting moves to democratise the party and make the leadership more accountable. Despite the failure of the Commission of Enquiry to produce any proposals on the three main issues, conference—as a result of the stand taken by the NEC—will have the opportunity to discuss and vote on them.

By 14-11, the executive agreed to table a constitutional amendment to elect the

party leader by an electoral college. This is not to be a separate body (as proposed by some of the right wing) designed to threaten the authority of annual conference, but a voting mechanism at party conference. Votes would be distributed proportionately, giving the trade unions and affiliated organisations 50% MPs and Pro-spective Parliamentary Candidates 25%, and CLPs 25%. Whilst conference itself would be the most democratic method of electing the leader, the NEC's proposal should be supported as a tremendous step forward. Amendments to give the NEC the final say over the contents of the election manifesto and to put the re-selection procedure into effect have also been

tabled for conference.

The NEC, following a motion submitted by Tony Saunois, agreed to send a delegation to the Sri Lankan High Commission to protest against the "general situation" which is developing there against the trade unions.

The NEC meeting was, overall, a victory for Labour's ranks. It is now crucial that trade union delegations and CLP delegates are pressurised to back moves to democratise the party tabled by the executive, and to press for socialist policies to launch an effective campaign against the Tory government.

By a 'Militant' reporter

## Southall

Eighty people attended a Southall LPYS public meeting to see the film 'Divide and Rule' and hear Andy Bevan and Kevin Fernandes [Hackney LPYS].

The speakers stressed that with the incessant attacks on the living standards of workers the Tories would try to use immigrant workers as a scapegoat. This must be combatted by a fight for workers' unity and socialist policies.

The meeting was another successful part of a campaign to set up a new LPYS branch in the area. Regular recruitment activity has also been held including the sale of over 50 papers in the High Street last week.

## Liverpool

### Stop the Tories in their tracks

In a magnificent demonstration against the cuts, 5,000 local authority workers massed outside the town hall in Liverpool on 23 July. There was constant cheering and raised clenched fists when the Labour group on Liverpool council arrived to join the lobby.

The demonstration was called in defiance of the council's proposals—passed by an unholy alliance of Tories and Liberals—for huge cutbacks in local services. The recent announcement of a £2.65 a week rise in rents added to Liverpool workers' anger.

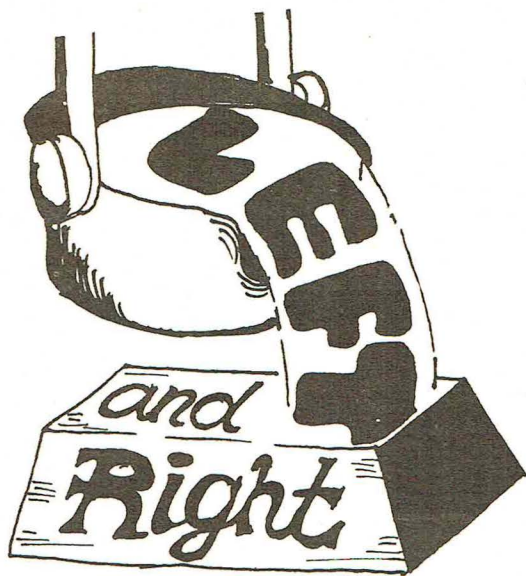
The Labour councillors who are boycotting the working party proposing the cutbacks and rent rises, called the demonstration. With the exception of NALGO, local authority unions called a one-day strike and urged members to join the demo—throughout Liverpool many council depots were shut down.

The Tories' and Liberals' reaction to this mass display of anger and class solidarity? Ranks of mounted police encircling the Town Hall—the first time they have been used in Liverpool on a political demonstration since Heath's visit during the last Tory government.

However, the workers and Labour group feel undeterred in their fight against the cuts, and must now prepare for the next stage in their struggle.

The fight will never be won in the council chamber while the Labour group are in the minority (in the face of both Tories and Liberals).

The links between the Labour group and the local unions must be made even stronger to stop the Tories in their tracks and to ensure the return of a Labour council firmly committed to socialist policies.



■ "Workers will have to work much harder if they are to compete with the Japanese." "Workers here have much more time off work, longer holidays and more time off sick." Quotes from Thatcher? Joseph? The Director of the CBI? No, it's Count Lambsdorff, the West German Economics Minister, and the object of his insults was the German working class.

Strange but don't our bosses say the same about us, saying we're idle good-for-nothings compared to West Germany? Don't they claim that as the reason for British industry lagging behind the rest of Europe.

It's the same the capitalist world over. It's the rich who get the profits, and the workers get the blame. There are almost certainly Japanese capitalist parasites blaming the Japanese working class for their problems and saying their industry would be more efficient if only they would accept starvation wages like those in South Korea. We'll get the lot of them off our backs one day.

■ The complete incompetence of this 'businessmen's government' is often best shown up by the specialist journals written for experts in their fields. For example, the following comes from the July editorial of 'Personal Computer World'. It is bitterly ironic in tone.

"Meanwhile in the Cabinet, Ministers continue to set a good example to financiers by trying to pull out of the project to set INMOS as a general purpose memory and microchip builder.

"Adding to the fun, Plessey imports a Norwegian bit-slice Miproc design as its contribution to British excellence. GEC has the second source option on that revolutionary chip the Intel 8080 [but has yet to build any] and Ferranti struggles [and fails] to convince the Navy that its F100L micro is even as usable as the 8080.

"And who advises the government on these important matters? Why, important people from industry—from such knowledgeable firms as Plessey, GEC and Ferranti."

The editor sarcastically refers to the 8080 chip as 'revolutionary' because it is at least five years old, and completely obsolete. He may or may not be a socialist, but as an enthusiast for microcomputers he views with nothing but contempt the incompetence of our 'super businessmen'.

■ It's bad enough that Thatcher demands that the hundreds of thousands unemployed should take to the life of nomads and traipse around the country [living on fresh air no doubt] looking for the few jobs vacant there are. But the Tories have yet more ridiculous advice to offer. In Hillingdon workers living in council houses are to face an 82 pence a week rent rise. Needless to say, workers there are despairing as to how they will cope with yet another rise in the cost of living—but Tory councillor Chris Clark has some advice for them. They should "get rid of their televisions, their fast cars and their women" ['Hillingdon Mirror' 22 July]. What a different world this reactionary old fool lives in. Workers spend many nights watching the box because they can't afford to go out—at least the TV provides some form of entertainment. Fast cars? Clark must be believing those stories in the 'Sun' about how the British working class go about all day in Rolls Royces. And as for his bigotted, sexist remarks about 'women', he just proves himself to be the idiot that he is. But the rantings of the Tories—at local and national level—cannot just be put down to simple-mindedness. With their capitalist system in crisis, the Tories' 'liberal' mask is off.

# 'THATCHER SEEMED GENUINE...'

"We moved into Bridlington from Malton in 1963 with one child and all we could find was a flooded out one-bedroom basement flat for £3.50.

"We had to dry it out and make do for five years while we were on a council house waiting list. Now I'm prone to colds and 'flu.

Mrs W Brown talks to Bob Young (Scarborough CLP)

"After that we had a dirty, shoddy two-bedroom council house offered which we took because we had three children by then. It took us a long time to clean it up and decorate it but we still needed a larger house. So after two years we had a so-called three-bedroom house offered. But one of the rooms was a tiny L-shaped room to accommodate a tot. We accepted it for the sake of our health, with a promise of a better house.

"Today we are still waiting. Through not getting a suitable house my family has had

to split up. Our problems got so tense with everyone getting on each other's nerves, with all of us in one living room and sharing bedrooms. My two oldest children have left home. It is understandable, because being brother and sister, they needed their own bedrooms and privacy.

"My husband has an excellent work record, but last year he was out of work for two weeks, so for once our rent was in arrears for £9. It was then we had a lovely house offered to us, but when everything was arranged for



Photo: MILITANT

Thatcher, after closing down educational facilities throughout the country, finally finds one to open.

removal, the council went back on their word—because we were in arrears!

"When my husband found another job—permanently on nights—we squared up with our little arrears and still we didn't get that house because they let it go to someone else. Now they are selling off council houses so all hope is gone.

"At the last election I voted Conservative because their council candidate promised me that I would get another house. I even thought Thatcher seemed genuine, but now

I realise what sort of people the Tories really are.

"My third child, Anne, is on a government training scheme—but she's really getting abused and exploited by her employer. She has been quick to understand what life is all about and what a black future she faces.

"She's joined the Labour Party Young Socialists in a determined mood, seeing how the members of our family have been treated. She and the young people today will have to fight for their futures because nothing gets given to us."

# Women suffer the most



Women workers are falling further behind men in terms of pay, it was reported by the Equal Opportunities Commission last week.

After the introduction of the Equal Pay Act, women's earnings as a proportion of men's rose, reaching 75% in 1977. However, this level has since been declining, to 73.9% in 1978 and 73% last year.

The Equal Pay Act was a welcome step forward in at least recognising the struggle for equal pay. But it had many flaws. A woman applying to the Commission under the Act has to prove that there is a man doing the same sort of job as her, and earning more for it. Of course, in many cases the job is only being done by women, so the bosses are able to get away with paying a lower rate.

The fact that women's wages are now falling behind

By Lorna Oliver (Hackney Central Labour Party)

men's demonstrates clearly that working people cannot rely on the capitalist system to grant their rights. The question of women's equality in this capitalist system is a stark example.

The capitalist class's view of working class women is that they are another pool of labour which can be set to work in order that they can extract their profits.

This is not to say the bosses introduced working women to a 'brave new world' of work and affluence. Faced with miserable wage levels, it has

only been through shop floor struggles and labour movement campaigns that 'equal rights' have been gained from the ruling class.

But now with the capitalist system inevitably moving into crisis, women are doubly hit. With manufacturing industry collapsing there are cut backs and closures in the public sector, in which most women are employed.

Last year, unemployment among women rose by 5%—faster than among men. And this is not a true reflection of the situation—married women are not usually entitled to dole and do not bother to sign on.

Equally, the cutbacks in nurseries—which were never at an adequate number even at the height of the boom—and policies of cutting out school meals and so on, are forcing more and more women back into the home.

The Tories are regurgitat-

ing the reactionary illusion that a 'woman's place is in the home,' trying to accuse women of taking the jobs of men and school-leavers. If this was followed through—besides being an obviously blatant attack on a woman's right to work—it would mean lower living standards for working class families with one less wage earner in the house. The Tories and the capitalist class they represent are just trying to throw divisive accusations into the eyes of the working class, trying to point accusing fingers at working women rather than at the inadequacies of their own system.

The labour movement must defend all gains it has clawed out of the capitalist system but it must consciously link this fight to the need for socialism: only then can rights be guaranteed for the working people, both men and women.

# IRISH 'ARMS CRISIS' ROW SYMPTOM OF DEEPER CRISIS

Ireland's reactionary Fianna Fail government has been shaken by massive protests, strikes and demonstrations in recent months. Now, sharp conflicts over the 1970 'Arms Crisis' in the Dail [now in summer recess] may threaten Haughey's government with a parliamentary crisis.

When Charles Haughey was elected leader of Fianna Fail and subsequently took office as Taoiseach [Prime Minister], sections of the British press and media gave the impression that he was in some way weak in his opposition to the Provisional IRA, pointing to his involvement in the "Arms Crisis" of 1970.

Haughey had been sacked from the government and tried in the courts with conspiracy to illegally import arms. He and Blaney, the other Minister sacked and charged with him, were subsequently cleared by the courts.

This issue however, has now re-surfaced. The magazine 'Magill' recently published new material on the events of 1969-71 and attempts were made to have 'Magill's' articles debated in the Dail (parliament).

In spite of the studied refusal of the newspapers, and television and radio to take up the issue—obviously fearing the consequences of weakening the Taoiseach at a time of increased class tension—the issue will simmer on below the surface. 'Magill's' articles included part of a Diary of Peter Berry, who was Secretary of the Department of Justice and a central figure in the whole controversy.

The articles contain interesting information as to how the state apparatus and the capitalist politicians work, and how the para-military organisations are infiltrated and manipulated. They describe how Peter Berry researched and wrote a number of reports on left wing republican groups for circulation only to members of the Department of Justice, senior staff and Ministers for Justice.

The Fianna Fail Minister for Justice in 1969 is recorded as having asked Berry to provide material "to highlight left-wing tendencies of some members of the Labour Party and its camp followers..."

By John Throne

The 1969 election was subsequently dominated by a 'red scare' campaign from Fianna Fail against the Labour Party.

'Magill' also lifted the edge of the curtain slightly on how the law is used. In 1969 a number of men in possession of arms were arrested in Donegal. There was doubt in the police and Justice departments whether to charge them or not. The answer was not sought in the law books but from the Taoiseach. As it happened he stated that the "book was to be thrown at them." But this incident shows how the political interests of the ruling class and their political representatives takes precedence over the law in times of heightened crisis and tension.

Another point of interest is the degree to which the para-military organisations are shown to be infiltrated and manoeuvred. Before the split in the Republican movement in 1969 there were (according to 'Magill') two informers sitting on its top Army Council and passing information to the police. This was the supreme body of the IRA, with a membership in single figures.

In spite of this information, however, the articles failed entirely to explain what actually took place at the time. As is usual with the journalists in the capitalist press, no attempt was made to analyse the social forces at work. For them, the events, including the attempted importation of arms, were just the result of the personal decision or mistakes of the individual politicians involved.

Briefly, the surface facts are that money was provided for the "relief of distress" in the North in 1969 by the Southern government, and an attempt was made to ship guns into Dublin for transfer to the North. This was a response to the attacks on Catholic areas in August 1969 by the RUC (the Northern Ireland police).

Practically all sections of the Catholic population in



Fianna Fail leader and Taoiseach, Charles Haughey



Workers protest at tax system

these ghetto areas sent representatives south to look for guns to defend themselves. Approaches were made to the politicians, and Blaney and Haughey were involved. But when threatened by the leader of the main opposition party, Fine Gael, the then Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, sacked Blaney and Haughey and they were tried in the courts.

To understand the events of that period it is necessary to look at what was happening in society, both North and South.

In the North, an insurrection had taken place in the Bogside and Creggan area of Derry, and a "no-go" area existed, controlled by the people of the area. In Belfast similar developments were taking place, and all over the North young people, especially the Catholic youth, were searching for a way forward against unemployment, poverty, discrimination and the

very system itself.

At that time, left-wing ideas and individuals were influential in the leadership of these movements. Young socialist and Labour Party branches were springing up and the Communist Party and the Republican movement were both involved in the Civil Rights campaign.

In the South, large-scale strike movements for better wages and conditions were taking place. The maintenance men's strike had come close to bringing the economy to a complete shut-down. On the streets of Dublin, 1,000s were marching against slum housing, and the police brought out their batons and their police dogs in an attempt to suppress this movement.

In 1969, the Labour Party in the South got its highest ever vote, and the Youth were looking to Labour. Fifty percent of Dublin youth (according to one opinion

poll) would have voted Labour if they had been allowed to vote.

Against this background the ruling class and their Fianna Fail government went in fear for their whole system. This fear was foremost in their minds when they dealt with the demands for guns from the Catholic areas in the North. In supplying money and guns, they took every opportunity to steer the movement in the North onto what they considered was to be "safer" lines—away from the influence of the left-wingers and the left groups.

They had used the "red scare" in the South in the election. In the North more drastic measures were used.

Haughey was one of those who met with the IRA leaders at the time. The result of these and other meetings was that money was channelled to the North, guns were sent to the North, and training facilities were provided in at least one Army base in the South. Care was taken to ensure that those involved were the most right-wing sections of the Republican leadership and the less political youth who were moving to the Republicans at that time.

In December 1969, the Republican movement split and the Provos were born. Haughey's colleague Blaney was to state in the Dail in 1972 that "he and a lot more with him had set up the Provos."

A memorandum to the Fianna Fail government after its re-election in 1969 shows the thinking of the Southern ruling class at that time. According to Peter Berry it included the following: "In particular it emphasised again that the time had become opportune to drive a wedge between the rural members—the old faithfuls—and the doctrinaire republicans, mainly based in Dublin, who were sedulously propagating the gospel of a Workers' Socialist Republic."

The events surrounding the Arms Trial can only be understood if the contradictions that faced the capitalist system at that time are kept in mind. The crisis of that system in the North led to the explosions there. The crisis in the South had set in motion a movement of the workers and the youth. The Southern ruling class pressed on all sides, put its energies into splitting the movement in the North and helped send it off along the lines of individual terrorism, which for them was much less dangerous than the mass movements which had existed up until then. Above all, they feared the movement would develop on class lines and be increasingly influenced by socialist ideas.

Haughey was a temporary casualty of this period. He was sacrificed in the interests of the Fianna Fail Party and their big-business backers. Once the most immediate danger was passed, Fianna Fail, backed on every occasion by Haughey, had no hesitation in putting the Provo activists in prison and bringing in the most repressive of laws to suppress the very people who they had helped launch in motion in the first place.

Haughey was never slow to move to the methods of repression. When he was first appointed as Minister for Justice in 1961, he declared as his first priority his determination to smash the IRA. He was instrumental in re-activating the Special Criminal Courts and the IRA declared a ceasefire in 1962. Since he became Taoiseach one British commentator described the attitude of the British Army tops to the co-operation forthcoming on border security as "euphoric".

The millionaire Haughey's first priority today, as in the past, is the preservation of the capitalist system and the privileges and wealth of himself and his class. His economic policies are pushing unemployment up to 10% and real incomes are expected to fall by at least 2% this year. His actions in 1970 were dictated by his class interests. His actions as Taoiseach are similarly dictated. While co-operating with the British Army and the RUC he continually raises the question of the border. This is only a device to attempt to take the eyes of the working class away from their falling living standards and to try and give himself the image of a national leader for the future general election.

Haughey and the class he represents remain incapable of uniting the country. They are capable only of leaning against the forces of the British ruling class and the sectarian interests in the North to preserve their outdated system. The events of the Arms Crisis in no way contradict this analysis. Put plainly, they were desperate measures taken by Southern capitalists when they found themselves in a desperate situation.

# Textiles



Townhead Mill, Rochdale; demolition, February, 1980

## Bosses have ruined industry - Let workers take over

Few textile workers can remember bleaker industrial holidays. In the weeks before the holidays, mill closures were being announced at the rate of two a week. Thousands of people have been thrown on the dole.

In Rochdale alone, 5,000 were expected to be out of work by August and over 1,000 more on short-time, with only 141 vacancies. Out of every 1,000 school leavers, 800 have no job.

Whole families have lost their jobs. In Oldham, six members of one family got their cards on the same day. Some older women are finding their income cut from this meagre £46 they earned as full-time textile workers to £23.50 on a widow's pension.

In the last ten years, 400 mills have closed, with workers looking for jobs in other industries or going to other textile firms. Some workers are now being made redundant for the third or fourth time—but this time there's nowhere else to go...

The textile workers have industry is staring workers in the face. Other local industries, often linked to textiles, are also declaring redundancies, or short-time working or facing closure. Many older workers have worked in the industry for decades, since the age of 14, and can't face starting again even if there was an opening.

The textile workers have been given every pathetic excuse in the book for the collapse of the industry. Cheap imports is the most frequent one. But bosses closing down mills which are not in competition with imports haven't been stuck for excuses either. Coats Paton blamed their crisis on

By Tom Stott

(Rochdale Labour Party)

"unseasonable weather and the conspicuous absence of American tourists with sufficient funds to buy fashion merchandise."

These employers have been given every chance to compete. Output per worker has risen by 57% in the last ten years, 26% more than British industry as a whole. Workers have been paid scandalously low wages and have had poor and often dangerous conditions.

But acceptance of low pay "to save jobs" hasn't saved a single mill. And to campaign together with the bosses for import controls will not revive the industry, save jobs, or benefit the workers in any way.

We've seen decades of complacency and inefficiency by British textile bosses when they did have competition from foreign goods. Imagine their attitude if they had a protected market! Prices would shoot up, but the industry would still decline in their hands.

The hypocrisy of the bosses is shown by the recent closure of the Townhead mill in Rochdale. In announcing the closure, Highams said it was due to "a decline brought about by cheap yarn imports." This mill received in two

weeks, seven loads of cheaper Turkish spun yarn, mixed it with British spun yarn, to make "English made shirts" at a bigger profit. The textile union pointed out that Townhead had TES subsidies from the government and every form of protection—and yet they had refused to take advantage of new technology.

The same story could be repeated for many mills now closing. To continue to subsidise private textile firms is to throw good money after bad.

Many of the firms try to give the impression they are small concerns with the interests of their workers at heart. The truth is very different.

Many apparently small firms are owned by major multinationals. The industry is practically controlled by four firms—Carrington-Viyella, Tootals, Coats Paton, and Courtaulds. Courtaulds spent £40m in the 1960s buying up 35% of the Lancashire spinning industry. They set about closing mills, concentrating machinery in a few mills and putting thousands on the dole—12,500 in the last year.

The ATWU recently sent a resolution to the Conference of the International Union of Textile, Tailor and Garment Workers calling for the profits of the multi-nationals to be used to improve the working and living conditions of the workers in the Third World.

Courtaulds controls firms in 37 countries. In Bangladesh workers earn only 3% of the wages of West German workers doing similar work.

But Lancashire textile workers should know better than anyone that capitalism concedes nothing without a struggle. Their own history demonstrates the bitter struggles that had to be waged for a decent living, against child labour and harsh treatment by the bosses. They also set an example of international solidarity in refusing to handle

cotton from the slave-owning Confederate South during the American Civil War.

In the same spirit of internationalism a struggle should now be waged to link workers in the multi-nationals in a struggle against the bosses for better living and working standards and jobs.

The textile workers union conference this year passed a resolution calling for a fight against redundancies. This must be implemented immediately to stop the decimation of the industry. Textile trade unionists must completely break from any idea of joint campaigns with the bosses who try to hide their own mismanagement behind the call for import controls.

The fight against redundancies has to be linked to the demand for the nationalisation of the textile and clothing industry. The textile workers have bought these firms a 100 times over with their labour.

In fact, not just small firms such as Highams, but major multi-nationals are up to their neck in debt to the whole working class, whose taxes have subsidised them to the tune of millions of pounds.

Courtaulds received £38m between 1970 and 1973—over half their net investment on new plant. They paid no tax on £90m profit in 1972 and £113m in 1973.

It's time the working class collected.

The industry should be nationalised (with minimum compensation on the basis of need) under democratic workers' control and management so that it can be re-organised, new products planned and the needs of working class people put as the first priority.

Only in this way can we end the scandal of textile workers on the dole whilst workers search through increasingly popular jumble sales for decent clothes, not to mention the poor of the 'underdeveloped' countries who urgently need good clothing.

# RAILWAYS-UNIONS MUST FIGHT RUN DOWN

You may be surprised to know that in the last financial year British Rail made an operating profit of £70.2 million. But after interest and depreciation due to inflation, that was reduced to a staggering loss of £152 million. Interest alone amounted to £61.8 million.

Enormous investment will be needed to replace the ageing rolling stock and lines. Already, maintenance work on all but passenger lines is at a minimum. But such is the short-sightedness of the Tories that the 'cash limits' they have set—a polite way of saying the "starvation of investment"—will threaten the basic infrastructure of the economy, the roads and railways. The livelihood of thousands of railway workers is also threatened.

Every day the roads are loaded with bigger and bigger lorries. But the system that, given the chance, could carry the freight more economically without waste of fuel, is denied the investment necessary to achieve this.

Many of the BRB subsidiary companies have made profits. But with 'success' has come the threat of 'hiving off.' In the guise of raising money to invest and extend these enterprises, shares are to be offered to private investors. The Tories are paying off their backers with lucrative openings at the expense of the railway industry.

Much has been invested in these industries already—£6 million alone at the Grosvenor Hotel, Victoria; on ships on order for Sealink; now the fruits are to go to the spongers of big business.

Last year alone, £717.3 million was paid out to private enterprise by the Railway for "supplies and services." The leeches have feasted well, but their appetite increases with the eating.

Never since the days of Beeching have railway workers faced such a challenge to their jobs—and we urgently need real fighting unity among the railway unions, to save the 30,000 jobs and to insist on the development of the network.

A portent of things to come is the Board's refusal to accept redundancy plans as being subject to "Negotiation", where agreement is necessary, as opposed to the present "consultation" procedure, where they merely have to "consult" and "inform" the unions. Clearly, they are

By John Baker

NUR Shop Rep. (personal capacity)

preparing ruthlessly to axe thousands more jobs.

On pay, railway workers were heartened to hear their leaders declare, "The days of the cheap railwayman are over." But with a basic of £65.40 after the 20% rise, these words must be ringing in a trackman's ears. In reality, the lot of railwaymen is that they are tied hand and foot to overtime to make ends meet. Many are forced to work 6 and 7-day weeks, and often 12-hour days, to live.

The year ahead for the railways is bleak. Every closure of a steelworks or pit will bring further recession for the railway network. The closure of one pulp mill in Scotland means the loss of £750,000 worth of freight.

No help can be expected from the BRB. Already they are preparing to do the bidding of their masters. In addressing ASLEF's centenary conference, Sir Peter Parker, that well-known railway enthusiast, said: "The domestic industrial scene is downright dismal". Such is the 'optimism' of the ruling class!

To meet the threat of jobs, living standards, and indeed to the railway network and industry, the rail unions must now unite to organise the membership for the tasks that lie ahead.

Unless we are to see the industry dismantled, we must let the Tories and their paymasters know that we will resist to the full the hiving-off of assets and jobs.

We must begin now to campaign for a minimum wage inside the industry of £100 for a 35-hour week. And we must work now to end once and for all the cancer of inter-union rivalry that has served only the railway's Board.

We must support and demand the re-nationalisation of sold assets without compensation. We must stand for a fighting union for all railway workers.

# BATTLE LINES SHARPEN IN GENERAL STRIKE

**The magnificent movement of the Sri Lankan workers is advancing. The General Strike is still solid.**

Despite state repression and intimidation, new sections of workers are joining the greatest wave of opposition to ruthless attacks on their living standards and democratic rights since the reactionary United National Party came to power.

Already the President, Jayawardene ('JR' to his friends) has boasted in parliament that he has sacked 40,000 trade unionists for joining the strike, though the real figure is nearer 100,000. This blatant victimisation is a dire warning of the consequences if the strike is defeated—the potential crushing of free trade unions in Sri Lanka and the destruction of democratic rights.

Jayawardene has announced that he will shortly introduce legislation to ban any strike. This is something which trade unionists in Britain cannot tolerate! As with the defeat of the Chilean workers, this would be a blow to the international labour movement. It is vital, therefore that the British trade unions make their protests heard immediately to the Sri Lankan government.

The sort of society which the UNP want is shown by their immediate suspension of basic democratic rights: press censorship; no right of assembly; seizure of trade union funds; no right to strike; and the sacking of tens of thousands. 150 trade unionists have been arrested, mainly for handing out leaflets, and 12 union offices taken over by the police.

They hope to turn Sri Lanka into a haven for the multi-national corporations to reap super profits as in Singapore. But first they have to provide cheap labour, and that means destroying the unions and dismantling the few welfare provisions that remain unscathed. In the Free Trade Zone union activity has already been banned.

Unfortunately for the ruling class, the mass organisations of the working class remain intact and are becoming increasingly militant. This strike, the main demands of which are a 300 Rupee monthly wage rise and an additional 5 Rupees for each 1% increase in the cost of living, began as a spontaneous protest against victimisation in the factories.

**By Brent Kennedy**

In the course of a few days the strength and anger of the workers has been revealed to Jayawardene sufficiently to make him back down from what would have been a huge provocation—his attempt to seize the premises of the Government Clerical Service Union, now the focal point of the strikers' activity.

Decisive leadership by the GCSU forced the government to back down—for the present. Two hundred militants were posted inside the building to defend it, with up to 10,000 ready to block the streets outside. Undoubtedly, given the mood of the masses, any attempt to take the building by force would simply have provoked wider layers to join the opposition movement.

This week the strike became more effective and better organised. Action Committees, or Solidarity Committees, representing all the striking unions locally, have spread to towns throughout the island. People's Committees in the rural areas are drawing the village poor into the struggle.

## United action

Due to the indecisiveness of a majority on the Joint Trade Union Action Committee, that body refused to unite the activities of all union members under one central organising body. But on the initiative of the Marxist NSSP (Nava Sama Samaja Party), action is now being co-ordinated centrally by the Workers' Representative Committee, drawing together the local committees and providing national leadership. Thousands attend its mass meetings every other day at the GCSU building.

One black spot has been the strike-breaking role of the self-proclaimed 'Trotskyist' leader of the Ceylon Mercantile Union, Bala Tampoe. This 'revolutionary' has turned out to be a conservative union bureaucrat. While the spontaneous movement of the workers has gathered momentum and become increasingly well organised, he has lectured them from the

sidelines about their "lack of preparedness."

Rather than throw in his lot with the rest of the class in its greatest struggle for decades, Tampoe—leading member of a sect grouped internationally around Professor Ernest Mandel and claiming to be the "Fourth International"—has ordered his members not to join the strike, even though some of the rank and file had already come out.

This has had a demoralising effect on some workers in the private sector, with a few small workplaces going back, though apart from the Ceylon Tobacco Co, exhausted by a prolonged strike earlier this year, all the big private factories are still out.

To the shame of Tampoe's comrades, the Joint Trade Union Action Committee, which includes unions supporting the mass Marxist party—the NSSP, the Communist Party and even the liberal SLFP of Mrs Bandaranaike, had to decide to issue a statement to the rank and file of the CMU over Tampoe's head asking for support with action.

Meanwhile, the strike has gained support among wider layers. Sections of the dockers in Colombo have come out, as have some of the CTB busmen.

In the North-East, the main Tamil party, the TULF, has given its backing to the strike. Remembering the bloody pogroms waged by the Sinhala chauvinists of the UNP when it came to power three years ago, the Tamil people understand the threat to their very lives if Jayawardene is allowed to establish an unfettered repressive regime. A solidarity committee is successfully working in Jaffna.

This huge confrontation has clearly posed a question before the whole of Sri Lankan society: who runs that society, a handful of rich businessmen who are prepared to sell the island to western multi-nationals and make it a profiteers' paradise; or the most representative and democratic organisations of the producers of that wealth—the trade unions?

Only the complete destruction of those organisations

with their long tradition of democracy, anti-imperialism and protection of the oppressed, will mark a real victory for the UNP. And only the replacement of the reactionary UNP, and the capitalist system it represents, by a socialist government of the workers' parties, can guarantee a genuine, lasting victory for the unions.

The longer this confrontation continues the clearer the conclusion is seen by the workers. That is why a political perspective is required from the national leadership if this titanic effort of the working class is not to be dissipated. Without a bold socialist answer to the question of power the workers will begin to wonder if their tremendous sacrifice is worthwhile to win a few minor, temporary concessions—and then return to the old exploitation once again.

This naked confrontation of the classes can become the means to raise the socialist consciousness of the workers and their allies, the rural poor and the Tamil people, and prepare them for a struggle

for power to establish a workers' democracy.

For this reason the mass Marxist party, the Nava Sama Samaja Party, is campaigning for a left revolutionary government of the workers' parties.

Limiting this all-out battle to purely trade union demands, local organisation or sending polite pleas to the government will not force the capitalists to concede anything real. Only an escalation of the strike, more determined central leadership and the public presentation of a socialist perspective will maintain the momentum of the workers' action and weaken the resolve of the enemy.

It is in the light of its taking this line of action that the unions supporting the NSSP have clearly emerged as the most militant, decisive and well organised within the JIUAC. It is now the JIUAC's responsibility to give such a revolutionary lead, and for the workers parties to unite in a campaign for a socialist Sri Lanka.



Ever since the Jayawardene government came into power, workers have had to fight hard for their basic rights. [Above] May Day demonstration 1978

## Black workers win wage demands

**In factory after factory, in every major industrial region, South African black workers in recent months have been fighting for the means to wrench themselves out of conditions of desperate poverty.**

In the Western Cape, Natal and Transvaal, refuse workers, meat workers, textile workers, black gold miners, metal sector workers, workers at SASOL and plants have been out on strike.

But the strike action which is likely to have the greatest nation-wide impact occurred in the motor industry in the Port Elizabeth region. 3,500 black workers at Volkswagen downed tools to demand an immediate near 100% increase in minimum wage at the factory to R2 (£1) an hour.

Workers at other plants in Uitenhage came out in immediate support—and raised their own demands. At its peak, 8,500 workers were on



Police attack on strikers

strike—the largest industrial action around wage demands since the Durban strike of 1973.

At the Goodyear Tyre factory workers went further than at VW and boldly demanded R.3 (£1.67) an hour, a wage which would put them level with white building artisans. All these demands go well beyond the reformist trade union leadership's conception of a "cost of living increase."

The South African economy has moved temporarily out of the deep recession of

1976-8, and is going through an upturn based on the inflated price of gold. But as the business magazine, 'Financial Mail', lamented "when the economy is booming, workers want a share of the action." The black South African workers, are beginning to realise and assert their independent class power.

The employers in Uitenhage—Port Elizabeth were forced to concede the strikers' demand of R.2 an hour—a virtually unprecedented increase to result from negotiations between black workers

and employers in South Africa. Such concessions are likely to trigger off similar demands by black workers in other factories around the country.

Against a series of such struggles, the ruling class will have little option but to use increased repression. In Uitenhage, police and army units were called in using guns, sneeze machines and dogs against the strikers.

These strikes have emphasised with ever greater clarity that wage struggles cannot be separated from political demands and political action. Many rank and file workers have moved beyond the timid approach of their leadership.

They need to unite around a fighting programme of wage demands to provide a decent standard of living—linked to a programme for democratic and social rights. In this they will look increasingly to arm themselves with the programme and method of Marxism.





Demonstrators greet Thatcher during her visit to London's East End last month. Photo: MILITANT

# ADMIRAL—A SPORTING SKELETON

Olympic fever, the Wimbledon tennis craze—you'd think sports' manufacturers would be in great shape. In Tory Britain, though, it seems supply and demand aren't enough.

The sportswear firm Admiral shot to fame and prosperity supplying gear to top football clubs, and subsequently cornered the lucrative market in the sportswear shops. It was, in the words of its founder, "a blueprint of all Keith Joseph said he wanted to see."

A combination of a loyal workforce, strike-free record, and aggressive marketing, did indeed make Admiral a model for Joseph's brave new entrepreneurs. The recent collapse of the firm has left them dazed.

Totally bemused by having to call in the receiver,

By  
**Clive Gravell**  
(COHSE,  
Kidderminster)

Admiral's founder said, "I just can't understand it. There seems to be a deliberate policy of allowing more and more firms to go to the wall, and see what comes off the wall." Exactly what 'Militant' has been saying!

Joseph is hoping to pare down the economy to a vigorous base from which to build his nineteenth century-

style capitalism. What is frightening an increasing number of Tory backers is that we may well end up not with a slimmed-down, athletic capitalism, but a rusting asset-stripped skeleton!

One of Thatcher's tame advisers—a professor of economics—was filmed on 'TV Eye', trying to explain Admiral's collapse to a group of its women workers. It was an incredible performance!

People "needed a shock to bring them to their senses," he began. Predictably he tried to blame workers: "pricing yourselves out of jobs."

One of the women quickly explained that only six months ago they had turned down a 15% award in order to give Admiral a chance to solve its cash-flow problems. No an-

swer from our eminent professor!

The women pointed out that they no longer worked for pin money, their wages were a vital part of the family income—many had husbands who were unemployed. The Friedman freak replied that he couldn't solve their personal problems! And so on....

There wasn't a shred of economic sense in anything he said. Thatcher's 'economic advisers', are simply lap-dogs who do little more than provide her with a mirror in which she can see her policies dressed up in the economic fashions of by-gone days.

Comrades, it's forward to socialism or back to barbarism. Thatcher's lot will leave no middle road.



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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## Feel like emigrating...

Dear Comrades,  
In Nottingham, the entire 190-strong workforce of an engineering firm [which makes car jacks] is now on a 4-day week. Its managing director gloomily states "I only hope we can hold on to a 4-day week"—i.e. there's worse to come.  
Of course, it hasn't

always been like this. Throughout this year there hasn't been one redundancy—although there has been a reduction in staff through "natural wastage," thus depriving a few school-leavers of jobs.

But in the future? Managing director: "We've had short-time working before, but never has the position been quite so grim." Make you feel like emigrating?

Don't bother—"The position is the same in Germany, France and Sweden, and has been brought about by reductions in volumes by the whole of the European car producers."

It seems it's about time the whole of the European working-class did something about it!

Fraternally,  
Kevin Slattery,  
West Nottingham LPYS

## Olympic dream

Dear Comrades,  
The television coverage of the Olympics presents us with the unedifying spectacle of the BBC and the Stalinist bureaucracy trying to outdo each other in pettiness. For example, in the opening ceremony the cameras in the stadium did not show teams which were carrying the Olympic flag instead of their national flags.

In retaliation the BBC commentator started sniping at the "elitist, unelected Olympic Committee"—something they never mentioned in previous years.

The fact that the BBC managed to make political capital out of the decision to replace national flags with the Olympic flag—a decision which was intended as a gesture of international goodwill and a blow against the nationalism of the games—indicates the futility of trying to take politics out of sport. The Olympic aim of international understanding is very noble but utopian under prevailing world conditions.  
The hypocrisy of the

American ruling class, their hands still dripping with the blood of Vietnamese women and children, denouncing the Russian invasion of Afghanistan and demonstrating their 'democracy' by using the whole weight of the state machine to prevent athletes competing, is contemptible. The attitude of the British ruling class is yet

another reminder that the empire is dead and gone.

Once again, the Olympic Games, far from prompting the brotherhood of man, have demonstrated exactly how far the politicians of east and west are from achieving that goal.

Fraternally,  
Derek McMillan.

## Inventing Soviet strikes

Dear Comrades,

Thanks for a great paper and keep up the good work. 95% of the paper is great. However sometimes your reports on the socialist countries are on a par with the capitalist gutter press; for example 'Militant' 27/6/80, when you report on a car factory strike in the Soviet Union.

The report originated in the American press and you obviously got the story from that defender of socialism, the 'Financial Times'.

Workers in the socialist countries don't always get a fair deal, but compare those

countries with this disgusting system which ruins people's lives. It doesn't help the cause at all to distort or invent facts on the socialist countries, imperfect as they are.

These countries are our friends against the capitalist class in our own country. In future, report only the strikes that do happen in the Soviet Union and not those that don't. Don't support the couple of hundred dissidents (400 out of a population of 250,000,000 can't really be representative can they!).

Anyway heres a small contribution to your work (£2).

Tim Williams  
Bebington, Merseyside

## Peace—how long will it take?

Dear Militant

I wonder if I might comment on the conclusion of Myrna Shaw's article 'Nuclear Holocaust...' in 'Militant' of 11 July.

"Only an international movement of the working class," she writes, can save us from threatened annihilation. In principle, I entirely agree; but I am wondering what practical and political inferences we are to draw, and what weight is given to the term 'working class'.

How long will it take to build the 'movement' of which Ms Shaw speaks? And will world events allow us the luxury of our preferred time-scale?

World capitalism is in recession. In the US, the more 'liberal' of the two major presidential candidates is trying to reintroduce

draft registration, while at the Republican jamboree his rival's henchmen, and women, sport badges reading: 'Save Oil. Burn an Iranian.'

In Britain, NATO's most abject partner, a viciously reactionary government aided by a zealous press, tries to whip up anti-Soviet hysteria, disseminates dishonest Civil Defence propaganda, and spends £5,000 million on deadly missiles despite savage cuts in almost every other area of public spending. They are trying to prepare us for a war. Globally, meanwhile, arms expenditure is expected to top £250,000,000,000 (250 thousand million pounds) for the first time in 1980.

I do not believe that socialists, against such a background, should have any reservations at all about working together with others—Catholics, liberals, anarchists, Methodists—in the struggle to halt the arms

leavers, for 1½ hours, just to get a form that had to be taken to another office conveniently situated two bus rides away.

The job centre vacancy boards were mainly empty, with just a handful of jobs available for people with specific skills. When my requirements for a temporary job, clerical or manual, in any area, for any wage over £40 a week, (for rent, food, travel etc) were fed in, the expensive computer terminal replied that there were no such jobs available.

When Joseph and Co. ask workers to take a wage cut to secure a job, we all know what he means!

Yours fraternally,  
Peter Mumford,  
Leyton LPYS

race, rid Europe of super-power nuclear arsenals, and free us all from the constant dread of mass death.

A massive peace movement might well lead, should it be successful, to a rapid shift in the balance of power, away from the industrial-bureaucratic elites, towards the people. At the least, its own politics will be radical, democratic, internationalist.

If such a movement is not built, or if it fails (which is entirely possible), it seems increasingly unlikely that there will be a future in which political differences on other questions can be discussed and lived out.

In solidarity  
Martin Ryle  
Joint Secretary,  
Brighton CND  
(personal capacity)

## Countering the NF

Dear Comrades,

Just thought I would write and say what Manchester Labour Party plus the LPYS do on our Saturday mornings.

We go down to Piccadilly and sell a socialist paper to counter the rotten National Front who, we recently found out, were selling their papers there. They have had successes so far; we have only been doing this for two weeks.

On the second week I thought myself there was going to be trouble when the NF started to threaten us, but it was great to see their faces when they saw us selling 'Militant'. I go every week willingly, so I can stop people from being poisoned by the NF.

Yours faithfully,  
Nicola Butcher (aged 12)  
Manchester LPYS (when 15)

# DONATE FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE

"Best way to secure a real future" was the message accompanying £100 from a redundant steelworker in South Wales. And the reception Thatcher got in Wales is a sure indication of the mood building up.

By Steve Cawley

As the weeks, let alone the months or years go by, the Tory 'free market solution' offers the working class nothing but long-term poverty. The message is fast being understood "You'll never again have it so good."

The alternative for our class to follow the best traditions of our past is indicated by over £49 in paper extras and badges sold, with more to come, from the Tolpuddle rally. And Dorchester LPYS are taking a leading role against the intended shut-down of school meals in Dorset Junior Schools. It will also, they say "be a great opportunity to push the paper, sell badges, and ultimately raise money for the fighting fund..."

'Militant' Readers Meetings are attracting sizeable audiences during the summer as evidenced by collections of £40 in Gosport, £28 in Bracknell, £24 in Chester, and with money too from Wakefield and Reading Marxist Discussion groups.

Some of our readers, although not able to match the £100 still make considerable sacrifices to enable us to expand and develop: S Barret (Hitchin sent £25, M McNeil (NUPE, Teesside) £20, P

Chilton (CPSA, Manchester) £15, and G Hessell (NALGO, Wakefield) £12.50. Thanks also for a tenner to J Hazleton (W London), and for fivers to J Hunt (Ilford) and P Mahon (AUEW steward, Cumbernauld) amongst others.

As well as donations from individuals of course, LPYS branches have regular donations for us. Thanks this week to Nottingham West LPYS for their donation. On the streets too, selling 'Militant', extras can be substantial—if comrades have the nous to ask—a supporter who buys the paper in Fitzalan Square, Sheffield, gave us an additional £2.

Lastly, £27 came in from Sweden. Of this, £15 was a TV fee paid for an interview with a member of the Editorial Board, and £12 was from sale of 'Mole' T-shirts, a like sum being donated to the 'Offensiv' funds. So, if a comrade from London can organise this sort of fund raising on holiday, we should be getting in ££££s from Blackpool, Bridlington, Cleethorpes, Clacton, Southend, Brighton, Bournemouth (even), and all stations to Penzance.

If the weather's not that good—send us a donation for a brighter future. Socialist isn't just the best way—it's the only way.

# Build Militant

Area	Received	% of 3rd qtr target achieved	Target 3rd qtr	Target for year
Eastern	2379		3500	5,000
East Midlands	2208		2660	3,800
Hants & IOW	2174		2730	3,900
Humberside	928		1750	2,500
London East	3617		4340	6,200
London West	2075		3290	4,700
London South	3256		3290	4,700
Manchester & Lancs	1779		3570	5,100
Merseyside	2857		4200	6,000
Northern	2977		5110	7,300
Scotland East	1129		2240	3,200
Scotland West	2315		3500	5,000
Southern	2972		4130	5,900
South West	1570		2240	3,200
Wales East	1079		1960	2,800
Wales West	1133		2170	3,100
West Midlands	4355		6300	9,000
Yorkshire	2685		5110	7,300
Others	7838		7910	12,000
<b>Total received</b>	<b>49146</b>		<b>70,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>

TARGET FOR OCTOBER 11th £70,000 FOR YEAR-£100,000

## THIS WEEK £1,021

### ads

CLASSIFIED: 5p per word, minimum ten words  
SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres.

All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY

Trade Unions and the fight against British army repression in Ireland. Speakers: Brian Sullivan (NUPE Convenor, Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, in personal capacity), plus speakers from Workers Action Editorial Board and Labour Committee on Ireland. 7.30 pm Wednesday 6 August, The Metropolitan, Farringdon Rd, near Farringdon Tube

### LPYS PUBLIC MEETINGS: What future for Northern Ireland?

- Speaker: from Belfast Young Socialists
- ★ GLASGOW: Monday 4 August  
Venue: Craigton Labour Party Rooms, 7.30 pm
  - ★ EAST KILBRIDE: Tuesday 5 August  
Venue: Murrey Hall, 7.30 pm
  - ★ PERTH Wednesday 6 August  
Venue: Perth Labour Party Rooms, Barrossa St. 7.30 pm
  - ★ EDINBURGH: Thursday 7 August  
Venue: Craigroyston School, Ferry Rd, Pilton, 7.30 pm
- ALL WELCOME

MANCHESTER 'Militant' Readers' Meeting 'Will there be a third world war? A Marxist analysis'. Speaker: Ken Brownsey, Withington CLP. Sunday 3 August, 7.30pm, 'Star and Garter', Fairfield Street, behind Piccadilly BR Station

Campaign for a fighting AUEW leadership Campaign badges. 15p each or 10 for £1.00 plus 10p p&p. Order from John Ingham, 53 Bayswater Row, Leeds. Cash in advance.

### 'MILITANT' BROADSHEET

'For a mass democratically controlled, socialist Labour Party'

Price only 2p. Order from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

### GREET LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

Get your Labour Party or LPYS branch, trade union or shop stewards' committee to place their greetings to Labour Party Conference in the pages of 'Militant'. Support the paper that fights for socialism.

- Rates for greetings:
- Semi-display: 3 column centimetres...£2  
6 column centimetres...£4
  - Display: one-sixteenth page...£7  
one-eighth page...£14  
one-quarter page...£25

Closing date for copy is Saturday 13 September, but send your greetings as early as possible to: the Circulation Department, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

### 'Militant' Weekend School

Come to the Danville Hotel (on sea-front) in sunny Margate On Saturday/Sunday August 30/31

Saturday 11—1: 'An introduction to Marxist economics'. Ted Grant.  
2.30—5.00. 'The Socialist Way Forward for Labour'. Ray Apps. 8.30...Social at hotel (with food)  
Sunday 10.00—1.00. 'Chile—Lessons of '70-'73 and the Way Forward'. Sunday afternoon...sunbathe on beach.  
Bookings and queries to K Nicholson, 25 Grotto Road, Margate, Kent. Tel. (0843) 291293. Cost: only £7.50 (including bed & breakfast at Danville Hotel). Children: half-price.

### 'Militant' Summer Camp

August Bank Holiday 1980 Horton, Gower, West Glamorgan. Friday August 22-Monday August 25.

Come to the Wales Summer Camp! For the fifth time we are organising our highly successful camp in the beautiful surroundings of Horton in the Gower [10 minutes walk from Port Eynon and Horton beaches]. It will provide not only an excellent introduction to the basics of Marxism, but provide a superb holiday for the family.

First class entertainment is being organised as well as sports and fancy dress for the children. Creche facilities will be available. Snacks will also be provided. Campers will need their own tents etc.

#### POLITICAL EVENTS

- Sat 10am-12.30: Introduction to Marxism.
- Sat 6pm-8.30: Theory and practice of the General Strike.
- Sun 10am-12.30: What is Stalinism?
- Sun 6pm-8.30: The threat of World War.
- Mon 10am-12.30: Marxism and the Labour Party.

#### COST

£8.00 per person [snacks provided].  
£2.50 per child 5-12.  
Free to under 5.

Money to and details from: R. Sewell, 99 Pendery Road, Penlan, Swansea. Tel. Swansea 584542.

### NOW AVAILABLE! Tapes from Militant Marxist Weekend School

#### Introduction to Marxism

The Theory of Marxism: John Pickard; Marxism and Internationalism: John Pickard; Marxist Perspectives for Britain: Bryan Beckingham.

#### Marxism and the Trade Unions

Perspectives for the Trade Unions: Brian Ingham; General Strike: Brian Ingham; Role of a Marxist as a Shop Steward: Bob Faulkes.

#### Marxist Economics

Wage, Labour and Capital: Bryan Beckingham; Will there be a slump?: Rob Jones; The 'Alternative Economic Strategy', a Marxist Analysis: Rob Jones.

#### China: History and Perspectives

The Chinese Revolution 1925-27: Peter Taaffe; the Chinese Revolution 1944-49: Peter Taaffe; China: perspectives for today: Lynn Walsh

#### The Life of Trotsky

The Rise of Bolshevism: Alan Woods; The Russian Revolution and the struggle against Stalinism: Alan Woods; The Nineteen-thirties: Ted Grant

Debate: The Lessons of Chile 1970-73: Lynn Walsh and Mike Gatehouse [Communist Party]

Cost: £1.50 each. Set of three: £4. All 16 tapes: £20  
Cheques payable to 'Militant' (All prices include postage)  
Write to: Marxist Weekend School Tapes,  
1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN  
Allow 14 days for delivery

# POEU PAY SETTLEMENT

## Demand for special conference rejected

Preparations for a battle over pay in the Post Office have been forestalled by union leaders' acceptance of a 23 per cent pay deal for engineers.

The Post Office Engineers' Union executive has accepted an offer which will give increases on basic rates of 20%—18% plus consolidation of 2% productivity bonuses from the 1979 settlement—plus a further 3% as a bonus payment, although only 1% will be consolidated this year.

The Post Office almost certainly felt compelled to boost their offer up to this amount in view of the fighting mood inside the POEU, demonstrated at the union conference in June.

At the conference the National Executive Committee's proposal to claim a total of 27% was rejected in favour of a more realistic, though still modest figure of 37%: 30% on economic grounds with an additional 7% for past and future co-operation in introducing new systems and equipment. This settlement, therefore, flies in the face of a

By our correspondent

clear conference decision and even falls short of the original NEC demand which was to be backed up by industrial action on August 4th if no settlement had been obtained by that date.

No trade unionist is anxious to become involved in industrial action but the POEU membership at conference clearly accepted that this would be necessary and inevitable if the PO took an intransigent attitude in the negotiations. Having given the NEC the authority to involve the membership in industrial action to pursue the claim, POEU members will be asking the NEC why their aims and aspirations, democratically decided at the conference, have yet again been frustrated.

The left wing minority on the present NEC not only voted against this inadequate deal, but also attempted to obtain a decision that would have given the membership the final say in their wage claim.

Both E Purkiss, who is an established NEC member of

many years, and Phil Lloyd, a 'Militant' supporter recently elected to the NEC on a Broad Left slate, demanded that a special conference be convened at which the right wing-dominated NEC could test their contention that the offer was the best obtainable and that it was acceptable to the membership. This demand was defeated on a straight left-right split when put to the vote. With the existing balance of forces on the present NEC it is inevitable that while the left minority can win all the arguments the right wing majority can still win the votes.

The 'Broad Left', established by left wingers inside the union to oppose the weak and ineffective leadership of the right wing, will be spurred on by these latest events to build further on the foundations already laid. Successes gained by the left at the recent conferences are not merely transient but a move towards a more responsive and determined leadership.

Many more POEU members are coming to see the vital need for change. They want a leadership that reflects their genuine aims and aspirations—a leadership that will not bow the knee to the employers at the first opportunity.

may manage to find new jobs, but they will have to travel some distance away.

As one worker who has been made redundant three times before said "The Island is dead, the docks are gone, there is nothing left at all. All they are building around here are houses for the rich."

Another worker had been given £185 severance pay, with an extra £10 for five years' service, he added bitterly. The working class will expect more than this for the decades of labour which created the massive profits of the boom years, when it finally presents its account with the employing class.



POEU members in protest lobby outside the union HQ after settlement of '78 claim—members are learning in action the need for a fighting leadership  
Photo: MILITANT

## Bowater closure - unions must act now

By Richard Venton

(Birkenhead Labour Party)

Bowater newsprint mill faces closure. That is the devastating news presented to the 1,500 Ellesmere Port workers on the eve of their two week holiday.

Two days before workers took a much deserved break from the five-shift system, Bowater executives announced that unless the government takes urgent action they will have to "put into operation closure plans from the end of this month"—in seven days. The timing is callously calculated to diffuse any immediate reaction from the workforce.

The bosses will no doubt still enjoy an extended holiday on their ill-gotten gains without the terrible worries which the workers and their families are now suffering.

Bill Keyes, general secretary of SOGAT, the main union in Bowater Ellesmere Port, immediately responded by saying he "would not rule out a national newspaper strike if this closure goes ahead." That is the scale of action and the level of solidarity needed from all the unions concerned.

At local level, the workers in all four Bowater plants in Ellesmere Port must be drawn together in united action to prevent closure of the paper

whole labour movement. Organised workers everywhere would give their full support, if the issues were explained and the fight energetically conducted.

The employers complain today that the rise in the value of the pound compared to the dollar has caused a cut in real prices. In the '60s the same bosses demanded a high pound. Such is the lunatic anarchy of private enterprise. The 'new' machines in Bowater's fibre plant are bought from America when they are about five years old. Workers are still expected to use one machine over 40 years old.

The company books must be opened for trade union inspection to see where all the profits have gone—they certainly haven't been ploughed into new investment!

Bowater's bosses decry high interest charges, yet in 1978 they handed over £10,000 to the Tory Party who have since raised interest rates to suit the big bankers.

We cannot afford to lose a single job in an area already suffering unemployment and poverty, unequalled since the nineteen-thirties. Workers at Bowaters will have to rely on their own strength, combining with the rest of the labour movement to fight to save these jobs and force a retreat of the company bosses and their friends in government.

## ISLE OF DOGS - ANOTHER BLOW TO JOBS

The Isle of Dogs, in London's East End, saw yet another factory closure and the loss of 30 jobs, last Friday.

This news won't make national headlines, but for the Brown Lennox workers involved it is another chapter in the industrial decline of the East End.

The 172 year-old factory made high precision engineering goods that once made

By Chris Friend  
(Millwall Labour Party)

Britain the 'workshop of the world.' Now, due to lack of orders, remaining work is to be concentrated at its Midland factory.

Most of the workers have lived and worked all their lives on the Island. A few

## DEFENDING DISABLED By Gary Horne (Doncaster Labour Party)

Over 150 UCATT members at the John Carr factory, Doncaster, are on strike following the sacking of a disabled worker.

The dispute began last Thursday when ten yard

gangsters walked out because management sacked a disabled labourer, claiming they had got a machine to do his job. "The dispute is spreading and more people will come out," said senior

UCATT shop steward Barry Ferris.

"As far as our members are concerned, this is an injustice they are striking against as well as the loss of a man's job."

The factory, which employs over 400 UCATT members making building materials, announced £1,753,000 profits for the half-year ending March 31.

Ed Bober spoke to T&GWU shop stewards

## QUAKER'S 'LITTLE HITLER'

450 members of the T&GWU have been on strike at the Quaker Oats factory, Southall, since last Wednesday (23rd).

Eight women workers have been sacked after management accused them of sleeping on the night shift. They were in fact resting during

their official tea-break.

Plant superintendant Matthews, who acts like a little Hitler, workers say, swears he saw them fast asleep before 4.30 am, when the tea-break starts, even though their own foreman said he saw them in the plant clothed for work at 4.25 am.

The workers have other grievances. Management are trying to impose a productivity deal. They say they can't afford to give a decent basic rise.

These sackings are just a part of management's overall strategy of pushing the workforce into submission.

This factory is a closed shop and the T&GWU workforce, with the support of the AUEW and ASTMS members, are determined not to go back until the eight women get their jobs back. The whole labour movement in West London must pledge their support to this strike.

## Adwest defy court attacks

The 26 workers, including the local LPYS secretary, arrested at Adwest Engineering, Reading, last week are now appearing before magistrates. The courts have shown they are out to back up police brutality with brutal fines.

In a blatant attempt to cripple the strike financially, one young lad has already been fined £175 for threatening behaviour.

If anyone is guilty of threatening behaviour it is the police and the courts. Their efforts to undermine the lawful right to picket

and to crush strikers with vicious fines are a mortal threat to the hard won rights of the working class and to labour and trade union activists throughout the country.

All other cases will be coming up in the next fortnight. Cash is desperately needed to pay the fines. Resolutions must be sent by all T&GWU and AUEW branches to press for national recognition and massive support is necessary on August 11th, the next mass picket.

Don't allow the company police and Tory courts to smash the battle for basic trade union rights. Cash and messages of support to D Broderick, Flat 4 Berkeley Avenue, Reading, Berks. (Cheques to J Dhoot)

By Steve Morgan  
(Reading South LPYS and UCW)

# SUPPORT SRI LANKAN WORKERS

**Complete banning of the right to strike and a crippling of free trade unions! That's what the reactionary bosses' government in Sri Lanka wants.**

**By Terry Fields**  
 (Fire Brigades Union executive, personal capacity)

But hundreds of thousands of workers are still out in a magnificent general strike called by the Joint Trade Union Action Committee [see page 8].

British trade unionists will not stand by and let their brothers in Sri Lanka

be ground down and stripped of all democratic trade union rights. Already several trade union general secretaries have sent telegrams of protest to the Sri Lankan government.

The Fire Brigades Union have given moral and financial support to the workers and the Bakers' Union Executive will take up the matter next week. A deputation

from the Labour Party NEC will meet the High Commissioner in London soon.

Meanwhile, dockers, airport workers and Post Office workers are discussing the possibility of blacking Sri Lankan trade. The Merseyside Docks shop stewards' Executive were due to discuss action this week, and Post Office Engineers Union members are to propose cutting communications.

Every trade union branch, Labour Party and Young

Socialists branch should immediately rush protests against the Sri Lankan government's anti-union attempts to: Sri Lanka High Commission, 13 Hyde Park Gardens, London W.2.

Messages of support for the unions should go to JTUAC, c/o United Federation of Labour, 17 Barrack Lane, Colombo 2, Sri Lanka. Please send copies of these messages to Wesley Muthiah, 19 Hawthorn Avenue, London N.13.

Make sure that your

national trade union leadership sends a message too! Black all Sri Lankan goods, finance and services for the duration of the general strike!

The government has frozen the funds of the trade

unions and seized twelve union headquarters. Financial assistance is desperately needed. Please take collections and rush donations to the United Federation of Labour, c/o Wesley Muthiah [address above].

## BAKERS

Continued from page one a good thing. He (Hollins) thought we're a load of idiots when we're not, and we've stood up to him."

Commenting on the LPYS, Debbie said, "I think it's a good thing—I'm thinking of joining when I've got things sorted out."

Sandra Burgher started when the firm first opened and worked up to two years ago then left because of illness. "I fought for a union then, but Hollins always ignored the union. He used to have a committee which he dictated to, not negotiated with. I'm involved because of that and my husband being one of the strikers. The feeling here is "when we win" not "if we win" (as it was at the start).

"The strike's brought out a lot of unity. The young people have stuck it out and the support from the trade unions and Labour Party is overwhelming—we just didn't expect it."

"I want to make sure a union gets in—if not for me for the kids working there," said Eleanor Davies. Eleanor was one of the people Hollins tried to replace with a youngster on "work experience"—in this case Eleanor's own daughter was offered the job! "The strike's been very successful so far—the support's been marvellous, especially the Liverpool dockers. We are a small union and do need support but we won't back down. I have no intention of going in those gates without a union."

Keep the support coming in for these workers! Money and blacking are the vital factors. The response has been good, but more is needed. Money coming in consistently is best of all, so don't be embarrassed about taking up another collection in your trade union, Labour Party or LPYS branch.

Please send all money, messages of support and useful information to: BFA WU District Offices, room 4, George House, 30 Dudley Road, Manchester M16 8DE.

## LPYS-Optimistic mood as summer camp opens



Photo: MILITANT

Sunday's rally was a great start to the week's activities

Once again four hundred Young Socialist and Labour Party members set up camp in the Forest of Dean last Saturday for a week's intense political education and energetic recreation.

The highlight of the week so far has been the Rally on Sunday, when Tony Benn MP and Kevin Ramage, National Chairman of the Young Socialists, outlined the need to use 'Socialist Youth', the LPYS newspaper, to build the YS, an important factor in the fight for socialism.

And the camp had some first-hand experience of the way the capitalist media

### Report from Bob Wade

censors anything to do with the labour movement (unless it's bad news of course).

Tony Benn, in an attack on the media, said: "The BBC in highlighting every report that suggests that working people are responsible for what is happening, and by failing to give equal time to present an alternative analysis, are failing in their obligations under the BBC charter."

"The BBC news bulletins

are being used, whether consciously or unconsciously, to discredit the National Executive, the Young Socialists, and all who are working for full employment, disarmament and peace."

The response of the BBC was to immediately recall their news team who had come down to the camp to film Benn's speech!


The powers that be in BBC obviously considered this frightful comment "far too dangerous for the eyes and ears of the masses of the nation."

There are comrades here both from the North and South of Ireland, and from Belgium, Sweden, Germany, France, Denmark and Port-

ugal. This has given the camp an international flavour.

The international outlook of the YS was shown at the opening rally when National Chairman, Kevin Ramage, moved a resolution condemning the action of the ruling class in Sri Lanka in attempting to smash the trade unions, and giving full support to the comrades in the NSSP and trade unions who are fighting off this attack (report, page 8).

Now the camp is in full swing, with everyone taking a full part in its organisation. We are all looking forward to the rest of the week. As one comrade said, "One day it will be like this every day! Forward to socialism!"



GET  
Militant

<p><b>BRITAIN &amp; IRELAND</b>                  26 issues... £6.50</p> <p><b>EUROPE</b>                  [by air]                  26 issues... £7.25                  52 issues... £14.50</p>	<p><b>13 issues... £3.25</b>                  52 issues... £13.00</p> <p><b>REST OF WORLD</b>                  [by air]                  26 issues... £10.00                  52 issues... £20.00</p>
---	---

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