

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 515
8 August 1980

15p

TORY LIES ON JOBS AND PAY

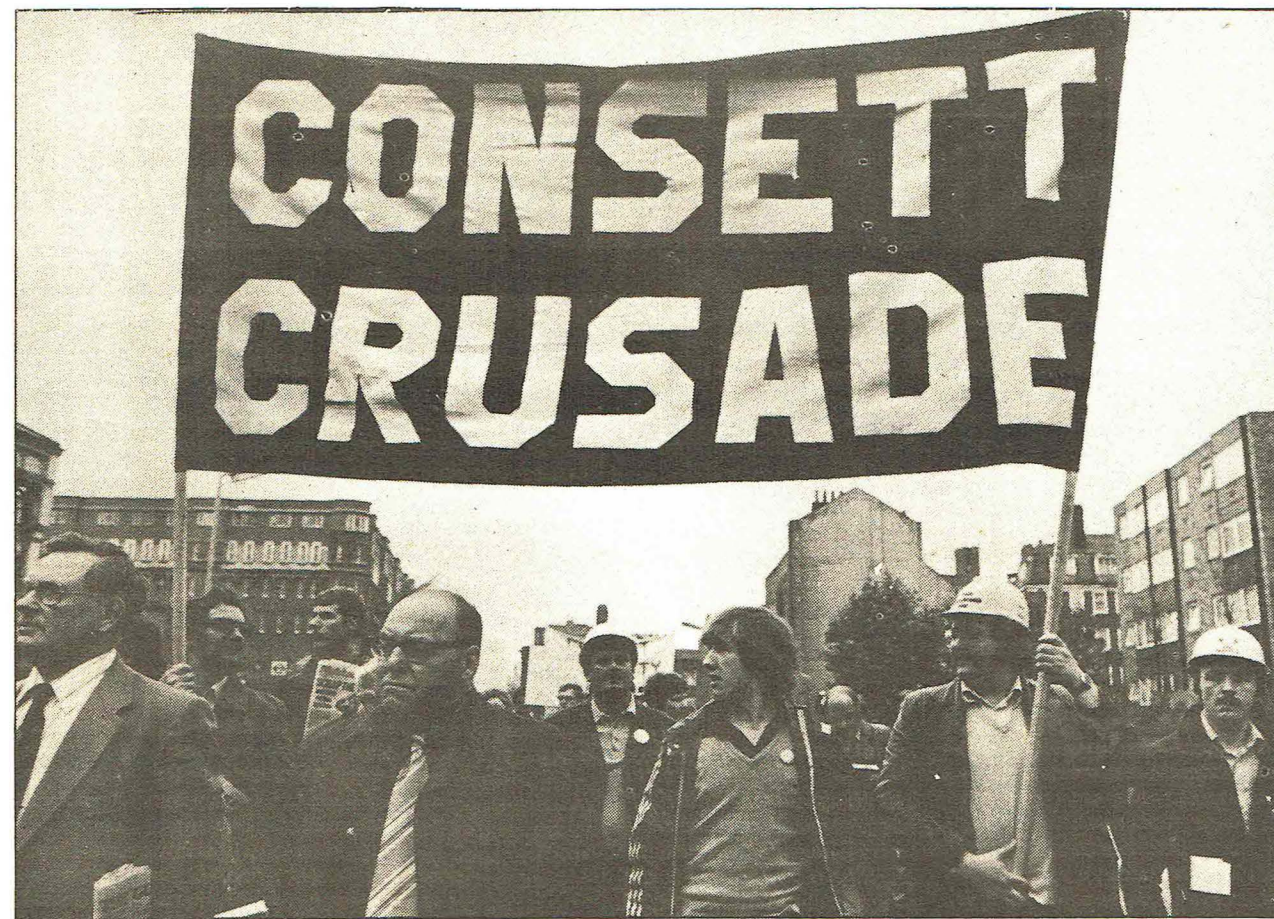
Howe offers cheap labour in Britain

By Bill Mullins
(T&GWU, Rover, Solihull)

The Tories are telling lies about wages to blame unemployment on the workers.

"British workers are pricing themselves out of jobs," Thatcher says. Unemployment will only come down if the unions accept wage rises lower than the rate of inflation. This is blatant deception on the part of the Tories.

If British workers are pricing themselves out of work why was Sir Keith Joseph in the United States a few weeks ago urging American indus-



Consett workers on protest march in London. Thatcher and Co. try to put the blame on us

trialists to come to Britain—because of the low wages?

He also told them, "Strikes and bad industrial relations are virtually unknown in modern British industries like electronics, and in Britain you will find plenty of skilled and adaptable labour."

And it's not only Sir Keith, the "mad Monetarist." Sir Geoffrey

Howe, Thatcher's Chancellor, said the same on his recent visit to Germany.

British wages are low, he told German industrialists. Many companies, he explained, pay little tax on their profits. Four out of five German firms in Britain had not had a strike in two or more years, he said.

Compare this to the vicious anti-union pro-

paganda pumped out by the Tory press in Britain!

Our experience in British Leyland completely refutes the "logic" of the Tories' arguments.

We were told that if BL workers accepted bonus schemes, produced more cars in less time, we would earn more wages. Well we produced more cars—and the result was more lay-offs.

Because we were so

super-productive we have now been told that we will be on short-time [with a subsequent drop in wages] until at least Christmas.

It is the same story for tens of thousands of workers in British industry.

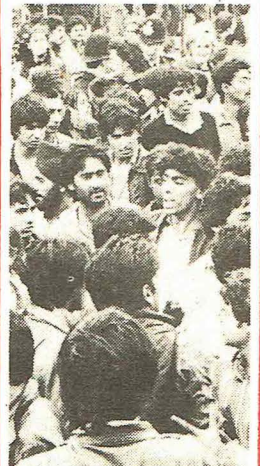
Over 50,000 jobs have been lost in BL nationally since 1976. Yet our

CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE

inside
GANG OF
THREE

Page 2

NEWHAM
ASIAN
DEMO



Page 3

AUEW Page 7

LPYS CAMP
Page 3

STOP PRESS

SRI LANKA

Monday 4 August. Demonstration in Kandy of 3,000. Five hundred arrested. 180 detained but magistrate ordered release on grounds that it was trade union demo against falling living standards, not anti-government. This has stiffened determination of working class, and nurses have joined strike.

On Friday 8 August the strikers plan sit down protest in Colombo and 3 other towns. Expect minimum of 50,000 workers. All opposition parties to sign document in support of general strike.

Messages of support to JTUAC c/o United Federation of Labour, 17 Barrack Lane, Colombo 2, Sri Lanka. Copies to Wesley Muthiah, 19 Hawthorn Lane, London N.13. Protests at Sri Lanka government action to Sri Lankan High Commission, 13 Hyde Park Gardens, London W2.

SEE BACK PAGE

Carrington Benefits from State Hand-Outs

Dependence on government hand-outs is the ultimate evil, according to Thatcher and Co. It turns out, however, that Tory cabinet minister Lord Carrington has recently acquired a sizeable personal stake in a city company which would certainly have gone under without state assistance.

And there are no signs of the government recalling the Bank of England's "lifeboat" of £millions from a number of big City financiers still being kept afloat by this public money.

One of the firms concerned is the First National

By Bob Wade

Finance Corporation. It has come to light recently that shares have been bought through an anonymous



"trustee account" by Lord Carrington. He has 100,000 shares in FNFC worth £24,000.

But then Carrington is "one of the boys." Born into the aristocracy, he inherited 1,200 acres in Buckinghamshire. Before dropping them on joining the cabinet, as he had to according to the rules, Carrington held directorships in Barclays Bank, Hambros Bank, and Rio Tinto Zinc, which has been carrying out mining operations in the "unlawful" South African colony of Namibia.

FNFC is one of the "secondary" banks which collapsed after the property

speculation of the mid-seventies. Like many other parasitic money-lenders, they thought they could make a fast buck through buying up useless empty office blocks or plots of land, regardless of the millions living in unfit housing conditions or the thousands homeless.

Of course, the bottom soon fell out of the racket, with an "over extended" FNFC losing £83 million. So now millions of pounds of public cash is being used to prop up these money grab-

bers, now joined by Thatcher's lieutenant. Not only do we have to put up with the Tories, we have to pay for them as well!

When it comes to government spending, the message of the Tories is clear—let the workers from the manufacturing industries rot on the dole, let the hospitals and schools collapse.

But when it comes to a few City gentlemen in a spot of bother it's a different question. What's a few millions between friends, even if it is public money?

Militant

'Gang of three' Attack Labour Party

There is little new in the 'open letter' to the Labour Party released to the capitalist press last week by David Owen, William Rodgers and Shirley Williams.

Their arguments echo those of the Gaitskellites of twenty years ago. Although they distance themselves from Roy Jenkins, who has already called for a new 'centre party', their main differences are tactical.

The writers are holding a pistol at the head of the Labour Party. If the right wing fail to get their way at this year's Labour Party conference, they will prepare to split.

They spell out their policies in more detail than previous right-wing statements, saying there is "no room for equivocation on the success of the mixed economy." What they offer is near total support for the policies of tinkering with the capitalist system which have been tried and found wanting by past Labour governments.

The 'mixed' economy they worship is overwhelmingly in private hands. Only 20% of the economy is publicly owned, and the sections nationalised have been old, run-down industries which are controlled in the interests of big business. Inevitably, the capitalist class dominate the economy and also the policies of any government which does not tackle their power.

The "gang of three" as they have been called, are trying to turn the clock back to the 1950s. But the real clock reads 1980—a period of grave economic crisis for capitalism. The balmy years of the post-war boom and the illusions of a 'manageable' capitalist economy have been swept aside by this crisis, which has led to unemployment at its highest level since 1936, and to industrial collapse, low wages and slashed services.

If we are to reverse these attacks on our class, the next Labour government will need to fight the class war as fiercely as do the Tories.

The writers claim that left policies "put off" voters. But it was right-wing policies, tried by previous Labour governments, such as the last government's incomes policy and the diluted monetarism of the Healey budgets with their incessant attacks on workers' living standards, which led to their defeat.

The marvellous new idea is to regurgitate these policies as what they call an "acceptable socialist alternative". It would be a repeat of these policies which would cause doubt and hesitation in the minds of Labour voters.

The policies of Labour's NEC have shown that they can attract voters and new Party members. A campaign showing the need for a rounded-out Marxist programme would similarly get an enormous response from

working people.

The right wing use the letter to indulge once more in 'red scare' tactics. However, any attempt to stir up a witch-hunt in the Labour Party will meet with the same rejection as previously, particularly as the policies they label 'extremist' are supported by a vast majority of the Party.

The three writers pour scorn on the ability of Labour's rank and file to determine policy for the Party manifesto which they claim would be "control by a caucus". They have kept noticeably silent about the control of the last manifesto by a caucus—of James Callaghan and his Cabinet associates.

The 'gang' proclaim their belief in representative democracy. Unfortunately their view of the role of Labour MPs allows far too readily enormous influence on their policies and actions by the ruling class.

It is impossible to represent every voter, rich and poor, workers and bosses alike, as the writers claim. The only true representation is that of labour movement representatives chosen by the labour movement, accountable to them and fighting on the policies decided by the movement itself.

Labour Party members who have fought hard for the return of Labour governments which have failed to serve the interests of our class will see the urgent need for democratic control at all levels of the Party.

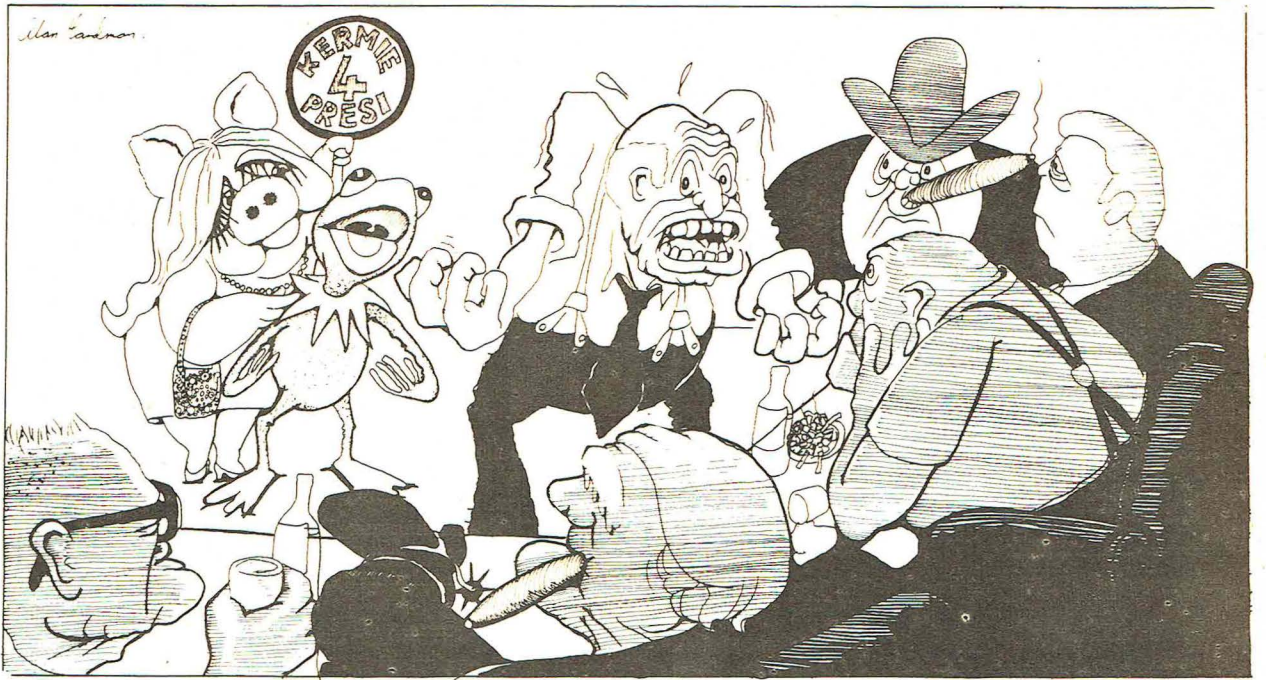
The letter from Owen, Rodgers and Williams is part of a systematic campaign supported by the capitalist press to re-open and influence issues such as the control of the manifesto at this year's conference.

Any success they have would prove short lived. The call of the right wing for a rejection of "doctrinaire nationalisation" will get short shrift from most Labour Party members. In this contemptuous manner, the right wing dismiss Clause IV Part 4 of Labour's constitution, which must be the cornerstone of any socialist party.

Circumstances are forcing Labour Party members in the opposite direction to Owen and Co. The economic crisis, the need to fight the Tory onslaught and the absorption of the lessons of the last Labour government will make rank and file Party members examine and re-examine the policies, programme and representatives of the Party to ensure that they can face up to the tasks.

Whatever may happen at this year's Labour Party conference, events are obliging more and more workers to look towards socialist policies and leadership. The struggle within the Labour Party is only just beginning.

TOP DEMOCRATS SEARCH FOR NEW CANDIDATE...



"OK SO NONE OF US ARE HAPPY ABOUT THE PIG AS FIRST LADY — BUT OUR RESEARCH SHOWS THAT NINE VOTERS OUT OF TEN PREFER THE LITTLE GREEN GUY TO CARTER OR REAGAN".....

NO-ONE MOURNS THE SHAH

The Shah's political death came 18 months before his final end in Cairo last month.

With the Iranian Revolution resulting in his overthrow, his immediate usefulness for international capitalism was removed.

Then he became a barrier to their attempts to work out a profitable relationship with the new regime.

The Shah became a stateless refugee. Appropriately enough the only mourners at his funeral were former President Nixon and ex-King Constantine of Greece.

But for decades he had been built up as a regional strongman to guarantee capitalism's interests in the area. Like the military dictatorship of Brazil and South Korea, the Shah's Iran ruthlessly crushed opposition.

His secret police SAVAK tortured and murdered thousands in an attempt to keep the old order. Effective trade unions were banned and activists rounded up. National minorities, who together comprise 50% of the population, were denied basic rights.

None of this worried the apologists for the regime in

the West. He was put in power by the West in 1941 to replace his pro-fascist father, who had himself come to power in a coup twenty years before.

When he had to leave after the radical nationalist government of Mossadeq nationalised the oil companies the CIA staged a coup to return the Shah with increased powers.

For the next two and a half decades he was lauded as a progressive, by capitalist governments and right-wing Labour Foreign Secretaries such as David Owen. "Human rights" went out of the window if profits were being made.

And as Iran developed, so did the size and strength of the working-class. It was this social force which led to general strikes, demonstrators and finally his overthrow.

The monstrous regime of the mullahs has grown up in the absence of a mass Marxist party fighting for fundamental socialist change. The Shah has gone, but the struggle to establish a real workers democracy in Iran remains.



At his death the Shah's wealth was estimated at sums approaching a staggering £10,000 million. He owned 4 islands in the Seychelles, mansions in America, Mexico and Switzerland, besides mere baubles such as his 12 Rolls Royces. When he crowned himself, his crown contained 3,755 jewels. Documents published since his exile

show he siphoned off £500 million worth of public funds. He, his mother, wife and sister, set up separate charity foundations to channel money abroad.

Even the normally reticent Swiss National Bank admits that his holdings in their country amount to "a few hundred million dollars."

Queen Mother 80 Years of Struggle

Whilst Tory, Labour and Liberal leaders agreed to send a message of congratulations to her on her 80th birthday, Dennis Skinner MP proposed an amendment "to congratulate all those others who had reached their eightieth birthday, having taken account of all the struggles they may have had during their life-times especially during the last fifteen months of this Tory government."

Skinner told Parliament on July 31, of two of his constituents, Mr and Mrs Shuker, one aged 87, the other 88. They are unable to live the last part of their lives together, because of cuts

made by the government and the Tory-controlled Derbyshire County Council.

He spoke of other 80 year old widows, whose husbands had lost their lives in the pits and other industries throughout the years and had to struggle to make ends meet and who did not know what it was to have more than a few pence to scrape together after they had drawn their miserable pension.

What a contrast this is with the Queen Mother. Never had to work or get by on the dole. She's been kept in luxury throughout her life. Now she 'gets by' on her investments, her money from the Civil List and when in town lives at Clarence House.

LEICESTER 'RIOT'

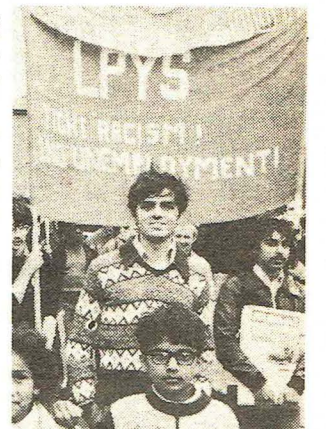
The Highfield area of Leicester had its own mini-Bristol riot last Tuesday week.

The police went to a pub just over the road from the tower block in which I live to check a report that black youths were breaking the law.

Two police just pulled up outside the pub, went up to one black youth and arrested him. The anger of black and Asian youth in Highfields, where nearly all of them are on the dole, just boiled over.

The youth smashed up the police car and overturned it. When nearly a hundred police with dogs and riot shields turned up, they too were forced to retreat.

For half an hour there was looting and petrol bombs thrown. But not one window of a local residence was smashed. All the anger was



Leicester LPYS march against racism, 1978

directed against local businesses which offer them no jobs, and the police who try to keep them down.

By Mark Prendergast
(Leicester South LPYS)

NO PARADISE ON HOLIDAY ISLAND

By Cathy Wilson

(Youth Officer,
IOW Labour Party)

The Isle of Wight is great for holidays, but a combination of the recession, Tory government and both Tory and Liberal local councils is causing devastation for people who live here.

Our wage rates are lower than anywhere else in the south and before the summer season our unemployment was the highest in the 'affluent' south.

Whilst the population increases by 1,000 a year we have the lowest level of council houses anywhere.

Nationally we have the second worst pupil/teacher ratio at primary and second-

ary level and only one nursery school is fully financed by the local authority.

Jobs are vanishing and social services declining rapidly from an already dismal level. Every week new jobs are lost. Two years ago the government announced a training programme when youth unemployment went over 825; it is now over 1,000 and rising.

Small firms are being hardest hit, but even large companies such as Elliot Turbomachinery are laying

off workers. In January they employed 820 people; in February 100 lost their jobs, and now a further 90 are to go. All over the island the picture is the same, even the seasonal jobs are disappearing fast.

And what does this mean for individuals? The result is sometimes tragic.

One 40 year old unemployed father of five ended his life by running in front of the 7.25 pm Ryde to Shanklin train. Debts in rent and hire purchase were the cause of great worry which eventually overwhelmed him. What the newspaper report never revealed was that his wife is totally blind.

Who will take care of all those who are "at risk"? Our services have never been more than the law required. We never have reached minimum DHSS standards in home helps, meals on wheels, places in OAP homes etc. yet 25% of the island population is over 65.

There is a chronic shortage of geriatric hospital beds, one proposal was to use any spare beds in the local psychiatric hospital! Too late, it's just been announced that one of their geriatric wards is to close, through shortage of staff!

The results of neglect are appalling. One lady aged 70 years died within 24 hours of being admitted to hospital. She had waited for 2 weeks in an armchair that was soaked in urine and infested with maggots. This lady weighed more than 20 stone and could not be moved by neighbours, her case was not unknown to the authorities.

Hospitalisation would have required a special bed costing £4-5,000—therefore she was left to rot in her flat. Another elderly lady admitted to hospital weighing just over 3 stone died soon after.

We can't alter this awful situation by appealing to the Tories or Liberals 'better nature'. Their system causes



Joseph lost his marbles at Tories' Isle of Wight fete. Attendance and takings were down too.

this crisis and we will fight it.

The Labour Party is now involved in meetings called by the South East Region of the TUC for the November month of action. The LPYS petition on all-island Conference on Unemployment and redun-

dancies has been accepted by the Trades Council and we hope to arrange the Conference in the autumn.

The Isle of Wight may not make the headlines, but this is our home and we have no choice but to fight.

Great mood at LPYS camp



Jeremy Birch speaking at the Militant Readers' Meeting

"We have only last week seen the figures of 1.9 million unemployed—that's 1.9 million reasons to join in the struggle for socialism."

So Kevin Ramage, national chairman of the YS, opened last week's annual Labour Party Young Socialist summer camp in the beautiful Forest of Dean.

But despite the angry mood of the Young Socialists at the callousness of this Tory government, and the seriousness with which the YS discussed the issues affecting youth today, the YS didn't let the Tories ruin their holiday.

The third to be held, the camp was the best organised yet, with 400 Young Socialists attending. Despite the occasional cloudburst, the sun kept pushing its way through.

Many of the seminars—held on subjects such as Chile, China, Northern Ireland, YS workshops, Propaganda, and Art and Revolu-

tion—were held in the sunshine. This left many comrades with Mediterranean sun tans—and all for just £35!

There were also debates between 'Militant' supporters other sections of the Labour Party, eg. Frank Allau MP on Nuclear Disarmament. However, the YS were disappointed to learn that the right-wing CLV had declined to take up the offer!

But by far the best meeting was the 'Militant' Readers' Meeting, which most of the camp attended. The speaker, Jeremy Birch, explained the Tories' crisis policies. In his home area of Birmingham, he said, 20,000 jobs had been lost in one month alone.

Outlining the need for socialist leadership, he said that with the capitalist system moving further into recession and the right wing of the Tory

party at the helm, the labour movement had no alternative but to fight.

A magnificent £1,046 was collected for the Fighting Fund.

The highlight of the social activities was as usual the two 'club nights,' where the YS relied on its own talents to provide entertainment. There was folk music, comedians (or so they said!) and political songs.

There was even a Christmas Carol sung by one Birmingham comrade, although the words had changed slightly: "On the first investigation into the SPG, they found four crow bars; three metal bars; two Rhino whips, and a special truncheon for emergencies!"

Sport was also high on the agenda with numerous cricket, football and rugby matches, and even an obstacle race that ended up with most people getting buckets of water thrown over them.

Sorry you missed it? Make sure you don't miss out next year!

By Bob Wade

Newham-Asian Anger Grows



In the last month there have been two marches of protest against the murder of Akhtar Ali Baig

"We don't want Presidents and Chairmen who do nothing...we want the leaders to get together and call the youth together, to sort out our problems...we don't want them coming here to give 'airy fairy' speeches..."

This was the reaction of a member of the Newham Youth Movement, after hearing speeches by various Asian community 'leaders' who wanted to represent Asian youth. The speeches came at the end of a march last Saturday against racist attacks in Newham.

A Pakistani youth, Akhtar Ali Baig, was stabbed to death in broad daylight on 17th July in East Ham. He was the victim of a racial murder committed by four 'skinheads.'

Two days after the murder, the Newham Youth Movement (an organisation formed spontaneously by local Asian and West Indian youth) organised a march of about 1,000 people to protest. Twenty-nine arrests were

By Kevin Fernandes

(Hackney North LPYS and PNP Youth)

made by the police on the march.

On 2nd August, another march was organised, to protest against the murder, and the police arrests and harassment. The march of about 3,000, mainly made up of Asian youth, went on a five-mile route around Newham.

Newham has been the scene of numerous racist attacks, in which the attackers have got off lightly. The man who last August killed Kayumarz An-

klesaria on a tube train with a kick to the head was given a conditional discharge in court this year. Police harass those who complain about the attacks.

Again, on the 2nd August march, police arrested ten more people, including a member of Newham South LPYS. Police, some mounted, protected the few fascists who dared to crawl the streets on the day.

Not surprisingly, there is wide support amongst the black youth of the area for the organising of 'self-defence.' They realise that the police will not give them any protection. They want immediate action; 'airy fairy' speeches aren't enough.

But it would be a crime if black youth are left to defend themselves on their own. The whole of the working class must be mobilised to drive out the racist thugs.

As a first step, the local Labour Parties, and the Trades Council, must link with the black workers' organisations, to defend blacks on the streets and at home.

Shop stewards' committees need to ensure safety at work. The Newham Borough Council must carry out an immediate inquiry into police activities in the area.

However, it is necessary to go further than defence against physical attack. The labour movement must organise meetings and rallies to warn against the danger of racialism; to fight against the social evils such as unemployment which are the breeding ground for racialism. The Tories will use every weapon to divide workers along racial lines—in the hope that they can get away with lowering our living standards. The labour movement must make sure they don't succeed.

FREE ENTERPRISE ZONES - BANANA REPUBLICS

The Tory proposal to establish 'Free Enterprise Zones' in the depressed inner city areas of London, Liverpool and Manchester might, on the surface, seem to offer some hope for the workers of these areas. The reality is decidedly different.

The Isle of Dogs, one of the proposed free zones, is in London's docklands. It is part of the East End borough of Tower Hamlets, whose population has fallen by 150,000 in the last fifteen years, with the loss of 30,000 jobs. Unemployment, at 15% is twice the national average.

Now the Tories are out to scrap the Docks Joint National Committee, made up of five London Councils (all Labour-controlled). They want to scrap the present, albeit largely utopian, plans, to clear the way for their own brand of 'free market' profiteering.

The Tories' plan, under which an Urban Development Corporation without any local representation would be set up, and all restrictions on employers removed, is nothing new. Workers have struggled over decades to rid our cities of exploitation, pollution and slums bred by 'free enterprise'.

Now we are to join the sweat-shop paradises of South Korea and Taiwan: except on our Isle, you'll look a long

By Dave Farrar

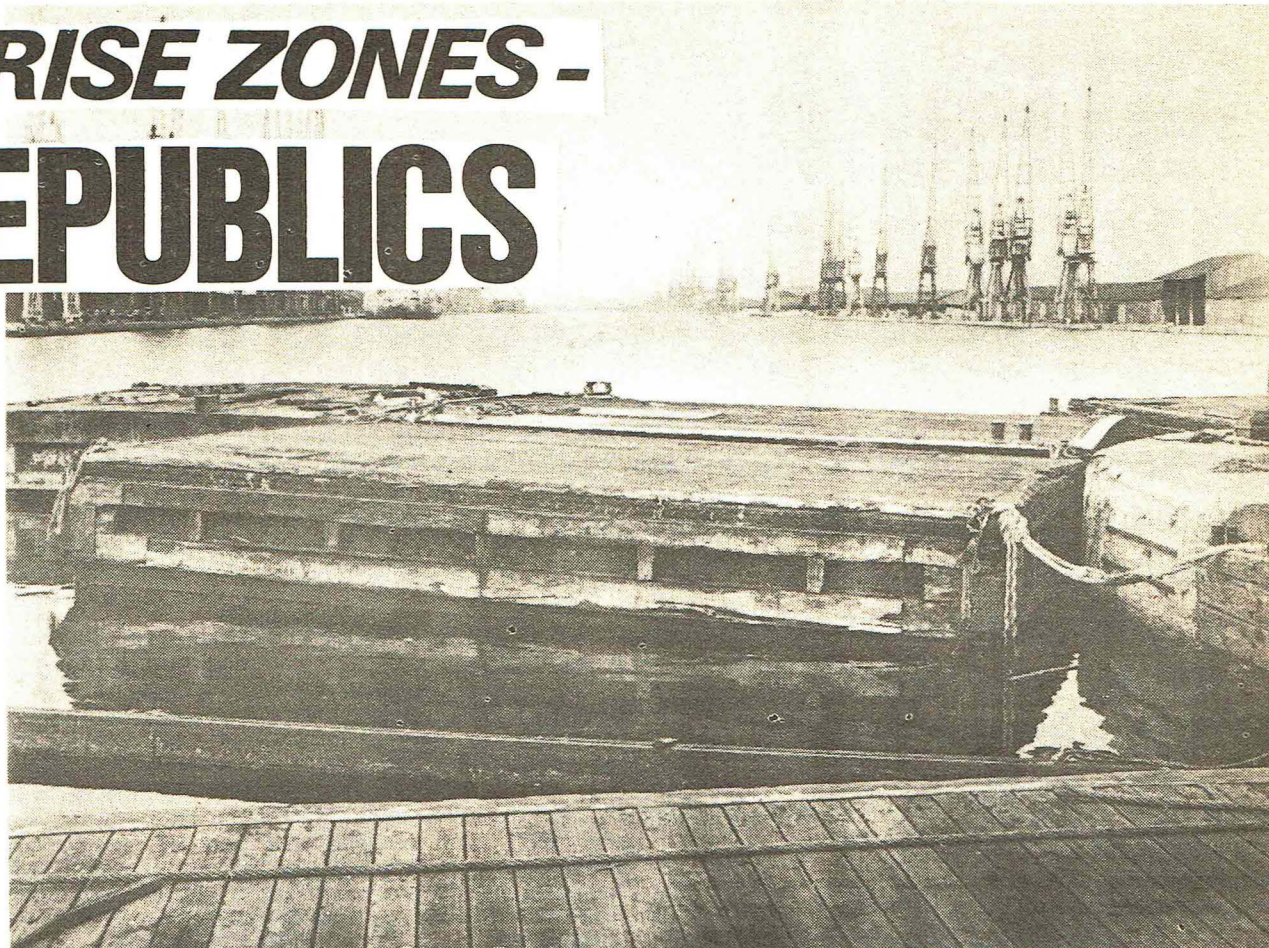
(Millwall Labour Party)

time for palm trees or beaches. Are we to be the new coolies of Western Europe?

London's docklands are the largest waste area in any European capital. The docks themselves are largely derelict; the closure of the Millwall and West India docks and Deptford wharf will cost another 1,200 workers their jobs.

The bosses are looking with greedy eyes to the promise of new factories in dockland, supplied by public grants and bribes. Several firms: Group 4, News International, and Courages, are hoping to move, not to create new jobs but to transfer them from the costly centre of London.

They gleefully contemplate the removal of any check over planning, exemption from health and safety and employ-



WITHOUT THE SUN

ment laws, and from rates and other taxes. These firms will be 'free' to concentrate on introducing new technology, eliminating even more jobs.

London's 'Time Out' magazine (24/4/80) revealed that the Tories have already found a use for at least some of the wasteland blighted by capitalism. For the last six months the Metropolitan Police have been practicing riot drills in Poplar docks.

Vanloads of police, dogs

and horses have for two hours at a time, used flying wedges and riot shields to break up their own picket lines. Policemen wearing casual clothes, acting the part of the pickets, are attacked by colleagues in more traditional uniform. Is it mere coincidence that the Tories' Employment Bill is reaching its final stages and the Isle of Dogs has been nominated as a 'free trade zone'?

To step up their exploitat-

ion of docklands, the Tories have employed City financier Nigel Brookes as chairman of the new Urban Development Corporation. Incidentally, Labour MP Bob Mellish is to serve as his deputy.

Labour Councils control most of the blighted inner cities. We must not be deceived by the chimera of expansion. The labour movement must give a decisive 'no' to the Tory sweat shop plans; no bribes to the bosses to

move into dockland.

The profiteering employers were responsible for draining the docks dry. To provide jobs, decent housing and other facilities, planned under the scrutiny of the local labour movement, we must

take control of the big monopolies that have a stranglehold over the economy. That is the only way that the workers who live and work around the docklands can control their future.

East Kilbride - The shattered dream

By Bob Wylie

(East Kilbride Labour Party)

Redundancy and closures have been a way of life on Clydeside for decades. As British industry declines, steel, locomotive construction and shipbuilding have gone through death agonies.

Thousands of jobs—the best part of 100,000, in fact—have gone in the last decade: masses of angry men streaming from black factories with motionless cranes or smokeless chimneys, leaving work for the last time to return to Glasgow's dank tenements and soulless housing schemes.

These are the images of the past, though. The planners built a new future for workers, away from the Glaswegian slums; new industries in the fresh woods and pastures of the new town.

"Come to East Kilbride, Britain's fastest growing New Town," the development corporation invited. Steel and shipbuilding may be doomed, but a new future was guaranteed in telephones, electric kettles, frying pans, and record decks.

In the late 1960s, 'Jobs boost for Town' seemed to be the permanent headline in the

Advertisement in 'Financial Times'

local press. One company after another fell over themselves to set up shop in East Kilbride, and cream the easy money available in government grants—green field sites with no rent to pay made East Kilbride a consumer durable boom town.

Living standards were high, mostly on two wages, and the town had an air of smug confidence in the future.

On Friday 27th June, they streamed once more from a factory, dismayed and bitter. Circumstances may have changed; the smoke, dirt, and filthy homes may have gone, but the realities remain. BSR, the record deck manufactu-

urers, are closing and 1,700 workers are abandoned to the dole.

The workforce are as angry as they used to be 15 years ago. They have been 'model' workers, with no major strike in 10 years. They co-operated with the company when a thousand redundancies were announced at the parent factory, Macdonald Electrics.

They agreed to short time working for two years—but all to no avail. The company's position seemed hopeless and the closure has been accepted.

The workers were astounded to find that BSR were paying £1 million per week to service bank debts of £25

million.

BSR's closure can be added to a growing list of redundancies, as the quick-rich new industries are caught between the jaws of recession and competition. Standard telephone and Cables, Macdonald Electrics, Sunbeam: all have gone or are getting ready to go.

Since February 1979 3,900 redundancies have been announced. There are 329 jobs on offer at the local job centre for the 3,000 signing on the dole. The headlines have changed to 'Jobs Blow'.

The local Labour MP and the Council, to their credit, have protested vehemently at the most recent closures. The Conservative government have been roundly condemned for throwing workers on the dole.

These closures are not merely the result of vicious Toryism however; they reflect deeper forces than monetary or exchange rate policies. The experience of East Kilbride proves once and for all that there is no way out under capitalism.

Selling 'Militant' at the Sunbeam factory recently, one of the older women workers approached me with money for the paper.

"The game's up here son," she said. "I'm getting made redundant. I'm ready to go to some of your marches."

Yes - You are worse off

By Eileen Short



Gordon Richardson

"Like it or not," said the Governor of the Bank of England recently, "we have got to suffer some decrease in real incomes in the period to come."

Yet figures published by the Central Statistical Office last week showed that workers living standards fell by 1½% in the first quarter of this year, compared to the last quarter of 1979.

The figures on income in the first quarter showed that earnings rose by only 3.7%, well down on the previous quarter. In fact, after tax and other deductions, earnings grew by a mere 1.4% in the first three months, compared to 4.9%, 5.7% and 7.6% in the previous three quarters.

With price rises, living standards have clearly fallen. Despite retailers' efforts to boost sales through a certain amount of price cutting etc, trade in the three months March-May was down by 1% compared to the previous three months.

Food sales have increased (by about 2%, from a previously depressed level) but consumer expenditure on clothing and footwear was 2% down, and 4% down on household goods. The number of new cars bought was down dramatically, by 10%.

If Gordon Richardson, speaking for the bankers, has

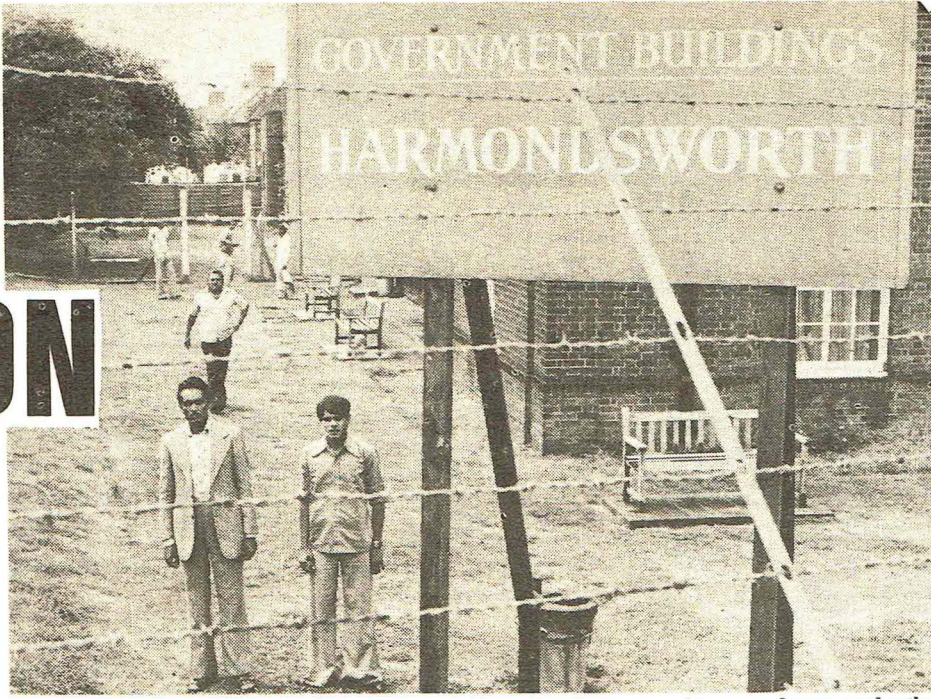
his way, workers' real living standards will be slashed even further. But clearly there is a vicious capitalist circle; falling sales must in turn lead to falling output, and inevitably to further redundancies in manufacturing industry.

Mass unemployment, cuts and lower wages may put more profit in the hands of big business in the short run, but clearly, even from a capitalist point of view, they can provide no way out of the crisis.

NB. Mr Richardson has just been awarded a 56% pay increase—to £1,000 a week. In the last eighteen months his pay has risen by over £18,000.

REPEAL RACIST IMMIGRATION LAWS

Photo: MILITANT



Harmondsworth Detention Centre—used more and more under the Tories

Two vital appeals were heard in the immigration appeals tribunals in Manchester on 30 July from two women fighting racist immigration laws.

One case, that of Nasira Begum, against a deportation order was, happily, successful. The other that of Anwar Ditta to allow her children into the country was unfortunately, not.

Nasira Begum was threatened with deportation after having been deserted by her husband. The court rejected the Home Office claim that Nasira's marriage was not valid.

The Home Office also claimed that it was a marriage of convenience (the Home Office has the last word in deciding such things). The third reason they were claiming was that her marriage had broken down.

Nasira's appeal has been upheld (though the Home Office could themselves appeal again). But the dangers of the immigration laws are enormous.

There is nothing in the

immigration rules to say that divorce or separation or alleged 'marriages of convenience' are grounds for deportation as the immigration authorities claimed. There is a clause though, saying that the satisfaction of the formal requirements of these rules is not 'conclusive' and "can not be used in their favour".

As we reported in Militant (9 May) Anwar Ditta had a 'cast iron' case for her three children, Karen, Imran and Saima to be admitted into Britain. She had marriage certificate, birth certificates for the children, photos etc to disprove the Home Office claim that the children were not hers.

The stress on the children in Pakistan, separated from the parents, and on Anwar herself are inhuman. But they are typical of the hardship which has arisen from the racist immigration laws—and will arise even more given the anti-immigration legislation of the Tory government.

The Tories, through the Home Office, and at the suggestion of the Association of Chief Police Officers, have changed the procedure for delivering the notice of refusal

By Margaret Creear
(Heywood and Royton Labour Party)

to stay from postal to personal delivery by the police.

This notice is now also accompanied by notice of deportation or prosecution within 14 days. The Tories couldn't make it plainer. The obvious aim is to intimidate immigrants and to make it more difficult to organise vital defence campaigns.

The new Immigration Laws have been described as 'racist and sexist' because they deny the right of women to have their husbands or fiancées join them here. But there are other wide ranging changes.

An application to stay after the expiry of a visa will automatically be rejected. Throughout the changes there are references to 'foreigners' being denied 'recourse to public funds'.

Timothy Raison commenting on the case of Nasreen Akhtar, another woman threatened with deportation said "She has got relatives in Pakistan but she prefers to remain in this country living off Supplementary Benefit." Now she is in a hostel for the homeless, having been denied social security for herself and three children.

It isn't just a case of opposing further restrictions. Under the last Labour government, existing rules were applied so strictly that the number of people detained increased rapidly.

For example, the number of people detained at Harmondsworth Detention Centre awaiting decisions on their cases was:

1977—3,767
1978—5,128
1979—first quarter, 1,309
second quarter, 1,363
third quarter, 1,864

Only 15% of the appeals are successful, which is hardly surprising considering the

adjudicator is paid by the Home Office and bound by the same rules as the Immigration Officer who denied entry in the first place.

The tribunal decision on Anwar Ditta is a setback, but the Anwar Ditta defence committee will not give up the fight. The labour movement must give every support to such struggles.

We must also fight to stop the new racist provisions becoming law, and take the battle into the Labour Party to commit the next Labour government to repeal all the racist immigration legislation which gives the ruling class such a dangerous weapon against immigrant workers and the unity of the working class as a whole.

Money is still needed for the Anwar Ditta Defence Committee. Please send to 127 Crawford Street, Rochdale, Lancs.

EXPLOITING THE END

By Steve Davies

Television tributes to recently-dead actors are usually mawkish, embarrassing affairs—you can almost hear the programme controllers hurriedly altering the schedules to fit in a season of his old films.

"B.J.? Yeah I know. Yeah, very sad. Listen we've got fifteen of this guy's films. We can screen 'em the same time as *Dallas*. Think of the ratings..."

For all that, they are usually above using the occasion to score cheap propaganda points. All the more surprising then, that after the tragic death of Peter Sellers, BBC Midday News last Thursday saw fit to show a clip from only one of his films (besides his latest one) in a brief review of his career.

Can it be coincidence that the film they chose as "one of his greatest" was *I'm all right, Jack*—a vicious little caricature of shop stewards?

The 'Sunday Times' TV film guide quite accurately describes the film as a "cynical, malicious comedy..." "...a union-bashing exercise" which "leaves a nasty taste in the mouth." Peter Sellers made many memorable films, but this was not one of them.

NO SICK LEAVE FOR THE CLASS WAR

"We'll soon look like fish" said my fellow patient, "Fish every day this week—it's cheap, you see."

Even in a hospital bed, you can't escape the class struggle. Everything depends on how much they've got to spend on you, which explains our monotonous diet. It explains why none of the radios in our ward work too.

Last week the YCAU organised a demonstration with a speaker from the campaign to save the Nottingham General Hospital. Now I'm in the Hospital, though not without several months' wait. Another patient has waited two years for an operation on his nose which will keep him here one day.

The letter received on Monday told me to phone on the morning I should be admitted to see if there was a bed spare. In fact, now there are several spare. The ward orderlies say that several wards are empty, shut due to cash limits.

By Tony Cross
(East Nottingham CLP)

Having the 'Militant' with you soon gets discussion going. "He's one of those reds" says the ward stirrer to one of the nurses. "You're not one too, are you?" he says when she picks up the paper and starts reading it.

The rest of the morning is a debate on socialism versus capitalism and the reds are quite strong!

This is repeated most days. One breakfast time a Labour Party member gets into an argument as to whether Managing Directors are useful.

His opponent says we wouldn't know where to start if we had to do their jobs. I feel obliged to say that I wouldn't know where to start breaking into a house, but I don't think that makes burglars useful.

"I'll never vote Tory again" says our stirring friend in a more serious mood "I remember when I used to have to take two bob to the doctor every Friday just in case someone in the family

fell ill."

A reminder of those days hangs over our beds, where a plaque from pre-NHS days, commemorates a relation of the rich benefactors who "donated" them—just like park benches!

Mine is "the Ronald Thomas Shipstone bed"—you'd think the local brewers would have sponsored the ward for liver complaints!

How much longer before wards are bought up by private practice (as one Nottingham Hospital already has been) and we have to rely on charity for our health? Well that depends on what we do, doesn't it?

JOINT PLATFORM IS DOOMED

By D.R. Clark
(East Flintshire Labour Party)

The fight to save textile jobs is on. That was the message from a march and rally in Wrexham on 19 July.

Unfortunately, the campaign has started late: 300,000 textile jobs have been lost in the last 10 years. The campaign is also on the wrong footing as it has been declared non-political and a joint platform with the management.

This unfortunately meant that 6 out of the 7 Labour speakers at the rally took care not to criticise the bosses. The organisers even apologised because Sir Anthony Meyer, a reactionary local Tory MP who fully supports Thatcher, couldn't be present!

The employers' representative on the platform, Ian McArthur, Director General of the Textile Confederation described himself as a 'political neutral' and said that there must be higher produc-

tivity but significantly didn't promise higher investment.

He also called for government action, but added, "as long as it doesn't alter the government's economic policies!"

Tom Ellis, Labour MP for Wrexham, followed him and most of his contribution consisted of praise for McArthur. The only speaker who refused to 'play the game' was Roly Bull, AUEW district secretary, who laid the blame on the heads of those really responsible.

He told us how he'd been negotiating with Courtaulds for 20 years and every year the management had told him that the company was in a terrible state!

He warned of plants being picked off individually, giving the example of Courtauld's mill in Preston where the workers were told that if Castle Mill in Flint was closed, their jobs would be secure, so they refused the request for a joint campaign.

Now both mills have been closed. He said how his main job nowadays is negotiating about lay-offs, redundancies and short time working but when he told this to Nicholas Edwards, Tory secretary of state for Wales, he was accused of being gloomy!

Although he didn't mention capitalism by name he

did call for a change in the system which creates poverty and unemployment in the midst of plenty and whilst the applause for the other speakers had been merely polite, the clapping at the end of Roly's speech was loud and prolonged.

The meeting really highlighted the danger of unions entering into joint campaigns with management. The proposals put forward by the T&GWU, in a pamphlet given out at the meeting, only attacked the symptoms and not the cause. The authors seem to believe that import controls and negotiation with management and government to make them see "reason", can solve all the problems of industry.

For instance they talk about persuading companies to invest in the UK despite the fact that earlier in the pamphlet they show how investment abroad is more profitable. This and many other examples in the pamphlet must surely prove that the joint approach with management is doomed.

All textile workers must demand that the unions drop this joint approach to the industry's problems and instead campaign for socialist policies, including nationalisation of the textile industry under workers' control and management. That is the only way to reverse jobs losses and secure the future of the industry.



DONT LET YOUR EFFORTS SLIP

This holiday period is a grim one for many workers; there will be no jobs for them to go back to. At Kent Elastic Sacks, for example, the whole SOGAT Chapel is redundant as from July 18th. One of the last decisions of that body, however, was to make a donation to 'Militant'. For them it has become more urgent than ever that an end is put to sackings, closures and mass unemployment. They look to 'Militant' to step up its campaign for socialist alternatives.

And that's precisely what 'Militant' intends to do with every ounce (or every penny) of its resources. Our thanks and commiserations go to those SOGAT members, but the story mustn't end there.

Every worker whose future is threatened by the Tories and their system—and that means every worker—needs to follow suit and help build 'Militant's' fighting capacity.

We will get no help from those who have made their millions out of your labours. But when Dennis Howell

By Steve Cawley

MP, President of APEX, asked at his union's summer school where 'Militant's' financial support came from he got his answer! A collection there raised £26.81.

The £1,044 raised at 'Militant's' meeting during the Labour Youth camp last week is another vote of confidence expressed in cash terms. Many thanks to everyone who contributed.

Donations like the £20 from Cheltenham LPYS member K Bessant and £17 from 'A Civil Servant' south of the Thames are especially welcome. Andy Price of Cardiff SE Labour Party contributed the fees and expenses he was paid for going on the radio after he was elected conference delegate in Jim Callaghan's constituency.

They have all helped towards our £100,000 target set for the end of the year. But without the Coleford collection, the total this week is extremely disappointing—no more than £345.

We cannot allow our efforts to slip, even over the holiday period. All our bills and staff still have to be paid and we are trying to save up for 'revolutionary' new production equipment.

Because of the reduced size of the 'Militant' this week and next, there is no chart to show the progress of supporters in each area (lucky for some!). But make sure your area is on target when the chart comes back! Send 'Militant' a special holiday bonus!

ads

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

'MILITANT' BROADSHEET

'For a mass democratically controlled, socialist Labour Party'

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

ISSUE 501—our stocks of 'Militant' No 501 are depleted. Sellers with spare copies are requested to return them to the Circulation Dept., 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

'MILITANT' trade union pamphlets

- Militant GMWU Review..... 20p
 - POEU—The way forward..... 30p
 - Socialist policies for UPW 20p
 - UPW: Democracy and socialism 10p
 - A fighting socialist programme for USDAW 20p
 - A fighting programme for firemen..... 20p
 - A Militant programme for NUPE 20p
 - Militant Teacher: Summer 1980 25p
 - The way forward for NALGO 20p
- Add 10p for postage for all pamphlets
From Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

CLASSIFIED

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.

Jeff Price and Cath Ross are pleased to announce the birth of a daughter Suzi on Wednesday 30 July. She's adding her voice to the protests at Tory policies!

WOKINGHAM Constituency Labour Party and Wokingham & Bracknell Trades Council Day School. 'Trade Unions and public expenditure cuts'. Saturday 9th August. 10.30 am 12.30 pm: 'Trade Unions and the Public Expenditure Cuts'. Speaker: Nick Bradley (National Education Officer, NUPE) 1.30-5 pm: 'Trade Unions and the Labour Party'. Speaker: Ray Apps (Brighton Kempton CLP). At LP Rooms, Griffin House (opp. Red Lion pub), High Street, Bracknell, Berks. Further details from Terry Pearce, Bracknell (0344) 21858.

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.



VIEW? COMMENTS? EXPERIENCES? CRITICISM? WRITE ABOUT THEM TO: MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Robbery

Dear Comrades

How many of us are aware that our senior citizens are being robbed of over £30 million? [some sources say £65m]. They are having to wait 54 weeks for their annual pension increase [to be paid on November 27th instead of November 10th].

This increase of 16½% will be eroded by that time since, despite Mr Prior's assurances, the cost of living is estimated to rise at least 23% by then. In any case 16½% of very little is still very little and every price is a cut in pensions.

How despicable can the government get, to take money from pensioners? They should beware the pensioners' vote which increases by 1,500 daily.

Only a truly socialist society, however, will give them the security of a well-deserved and comfortable retirement for which trade unionists must unite with them to fight. They will one day be pensioners them-

ves.

Get your union branch to affiliate to your local branch of the Pensioners and Trade Unions Action Association. They need your help.

Yours fraternally
Mary Thomas
Harlow

Democratic rights

Dear Comrades

I was interested to read the accounts of the arrest of five YS members in Southall whilst selling papers. The same thing happened to me recently in Birkenhead. It seems to be becoming common for the police to attack democratic rights and attempt to restrict the activity of labour movement organisations.

I was charged with 'willfully obstructing' the highway, whilst selling newspapers in Birkenhead Precinct. Along with other 'Militant' supporters, I have been selling newspapers in that area for at least three years without even so much

as passing the time with the 'boys in blue'.

After being arrested and searched I was placed in the cells. I am certain that without other comrades ringing up the police-station and getting our local Labour MP Frank Field to intervene, I would have spent most of Saturday afternoon there.

The local YS and 'Militant' supporters decided to take the issue up with local Labour Parties, trade union organisations and councillors. Birkenhead CLP agreed to help financially with my defence and local councillors supplied me with information and advice in fighting the case.

When the case came up the police had a very different account of the incident from my own. They claimed I was 'abusive' when arrested; in fact I made no reply to the caution. The constable could not remember where exactly I was obstructing and could not recall any complaint made by shoppers of my alleged obstruction.

My solicitor ably cross-examined the policeman, as well as raising wider questions of the right to distribute political literature and carry out political activity. I was found not guilty.

Two main lessons can be learned: Don't plead guilty! Often you are advised to plead guilty and escape with a nominal fine. If you do you are conceding to the police an 'open season' on paper sellers and labour movement activists. Fight the case. It is a principled issue.

Secondly; take the case up in the labour movement, both on a practical and political level. Mobilise support in defence of the rights the movement has fought for in the past.

This type of incident is going to become more common and 'Militant' sellers should be prepared to defend the right to sell papers and carry out political activity vigorously.

Yours fraternally
Kevin Bean
Birkenhead Labour Party

Political education

Dear Comrades

My son recently got into trouble for political agitation in school. You may think that he was perhaps organising for the YS or NUSS or perhaps even distributing leaflets about education cuts. Well, you would be very wrong, as my son is all of seven years old.

He was committing none of the above 'crimes' though his misdeeds included such outrages as singing the Red Flag in class or loudly announcing that he reads 'Militant'. I do not pretend he understands all that he reads, though I am quite sure his political level is quite a bit higher than a lot of right wingers I know, but seriously: letters from children, simple articles on struggles of workers and Alan Hardman's cartoons are among his favourites.

His teacher—who by the way is an excellent one—said to me that she had

banned politics from class, because she was not going to let her classroom be used as a political platform. This I think was a gross over-reaction on her part, but with the present round of extremely vicious education cuts, when the slightest excuse is enough for a teacher to lose his or her job, I could understand her panic.

Still, I will finish on one very relevant note: you cannot start early enough the political education of your children, because the whole system is weighted against you in a thousand ways. What is definitely the sign of the times, proving that life will politicise even seven year olds—a quote from his teacher:

"It is terrible! We never had this before: six and seven year olds are constantly talking politics. I hear Margaret Thatcher's name mentioned, and the whole class immediately breaks out in laughter and jeers!"

Yours fraternally
A Brighton parent

AUEW- Organise for fighting leadership

Shop stewards and activists throughout the AUEW are looking towards the presidential elections to provide a fighting leadership which will wage a serious struggle to defend jobs and fight redundancies.

This fight to save jobs plus demands for £100 linked to inflation for a 35 hour week is the platform of the campaign.

Engineering Workers Rallies have been organised throughout the country to take the issue of a fighting leadership to the rank and file members of the union.

150,000 leaflets arguing for a socialist alternative are being distributed in the run up to the September ballot advertising some 36 rallies. A week of action is being

By Jon Ingham

organised around the week of the postal ballot (15th-21st September) urging all members to vote for the left candidates. 210,000 special leaflets have been produced for this drive to take the campaign to the factory gate.

One of the highlights of the campaign should prove to be the Leeds rally. The Rally is around the theme of "Democracy in the Labour Movement." Speaking alongside Bob Wright will be Tony Benn MP.

The two speakers will share the platform at the Leeds Town Hall on Thursday September 4th. This demonstrates how the issues of engineering are totally linked to a fight against the present Tory government.

In the last 10 years alone 200,000 apprenticeships have been lost from this industry alone, 1 million jobs in manufacturing industry. Workers of the engineering industry have every right to demand a fighting leadership.

Engineering Workers Rallies are already underway and receiving a magnificent response from shopfloor engineering workers. If any readers of this article would like to help in this campaign or require any campaign material, please contact:—

Jon Ingham, Tel. 0532-496129

Badges 15p each plus 10p postage. £1.10 per 10 including postage.

Leaflets advertising your local rallies £4 per 1,000.



Demonstration in S Wales earlier this year

Photo: MILITANT

WOOLWICH

"Vote left—vote Wright" was the clear message from a recent public meeting in Woolwich held to discuss the Tory attacks on trade union rights and the AUEW presidential elections.

By Tim Harris

(Greenwich LPYS)

Bob Wright, the Broad Left candidate for the presidency of Britain's second largest union, pointed out that Heath's Industrial Relations Act was being dusted up by the Tories in an attempt to shackle the unions. The tame leadership of Duffy and Boyd, out for a quiet life, would be prepared to accept many of the provisions of the so-called "Employment" Bill, and hence there was a vital need to remove them and fight for a leadership which was prepared to struggle.

Bob explained in some detail exactly what the Bill would mean to trade unionists, likening Keith Joseph's comments on the unemployed to an auction, with people bidding for the worker prepared to accept least wages.

The audience of 40-50 then listened to Brian Ingham (Industrial Editor of 'Militant') who outlined the catastrophic state of the British and world economy and what this meant for workers, especially young workers. This theme was continued in

contributions from the floor—those present heard that in the last week redundancies had been announced at the local Ford plant (Plumstead), at Delta Engineering, and more seemed likely at Stone Manganese Ltd., three of the biggest factories in the Woolwich area.

It is clear that if the Tory "Gang of Four" can get away with their present round of anti-working class legislation, they will go even further to strip the trade union movement of any powers. Therefore it is absolutely necessary that the Labour Party and unions like the AUEW are armed with a leadership prepared to fight the Tories, defy the Employment Bill and campaign for a minimum wage, 35-hour week and the nationalisation of the monopolies, under workers' control and management—to end the power of the small handful in society who own and control the economy to dictate to workers on the basis of securing their profits.

The meeting expressed its enthusiasm with a £40 collection.



Longbridge workers have had a history of militancy. Above: mass meeting to discuss industrial action, 1977

Photo: D Evans (IFL) (II)

LONGBRIDGE WORKERS BEGIN FIGHTBACK

Disputes at British Leyland are normally front-page news. So it may appear that there is relative peace throughout BL at the moment.

After the sacking of 'trouble-maker' Derek Robinson and the implementation of the company's 92-page document removing any shop floor control over working conditions, the bosses and their media consider that BL workers have been crushed and demoralised. Other employers have taken this as the green light for attempts to foist the same conditions on

By Les Kuriata

their workers.

The impression that BL workers have accepted the new Victorian-style conditions without a word of protest could not be further from the truth. Since the new regime was introduced on 9th April Longbridge, for example, has been crippled by militant action involving many sections of workers.

One of the first things management attempted was the abolition of the 'toggling-up' allowance—pay for twenty minutes a day while protective

clothing is put on and taken off. In the dispute this provoked, pickets turned out en masse in the sections involved.

Management have also taken away the heat allowance, which guaranteed that if summer temperatures in the factory reach very high levels, production workers were allowed two 10 minute breaks to cool down. This led to sections walking off the job to picket the gates for 10 minutes before returning to work.

The latest dispute, involving 700 paint-sprayers, caused thousands of lay-offs at Longbridge. The local media dubbed it a 'tea-break dispute', in an attempt to

denigrate the action and disguise yet another strike over the new conditions.

A management circular was most honest: "the paint sprayers in nos 2, 3, and 4 paint shops are refusing to accept the terms of the new agreement or to accept the provisions relating to relaxation allowance policy."

Despite the gallant action by workers throughout BL, it seems that all these attempts to fight back will eventually be put down by management. This is mainly due to the disgraceful role of the trade union leaders, particularly the AUEW national executive. Moss Evans and the T&GWU executive share responsibility however: their decision to put the brakes on the escalating willingness to fight against the imposition of the 92-page document a couple of months ago, left the BL workers nationally confused and leaderless.

As a result, some in the labour and trade union movement have written off BL workers as a force to be reckoned with. True, feelings of defeat and disillusionment have been rampant within BL in the last six months. But when workers have seen through management's propaganda, the mood has changed overnight to one of militancy, seeing the need to fight.

The key to success lies with the workers and their leaders; their ability to understand, judge and harness the determination to struggle when that determination shows its head, as it inevitably will.

Catercups still on strike

The strike at Catercups is still on! It was thought that the twelve-week old dispute for union recognition and better pay and conditions at the Catercups—Nicholls Ltd factory in Bootle, was at an end on Monday 4th August.

Twenty one of the 28

workers originally involved met T&GWU official Jack Dempsey to discuss management's latest offer, to pay off the workers with amounts ranging between £25 and £800. After the meeting Chris Onions (Bootle LPYS) interviewed Steve Maysaer (T&G shop steward), Steve

Williams and Paul Murphy, who were all opposed to accepting the offer.

Jack Dempsey gave no alternative direction to the workers and after a vote it was agreed by a majority of three to accept management's offer. Only one of the 28 workers is to receive the full £800; most of the rest

will get between £200 and £400.

Not once during all the negotiations were the steward or any of the workers present. It is little wonder that after twelve weeks of struggle, making little headway, the majority of the workers accepted the offer.

But after discussing the issue amongst themselves and with other trade unionists, they've re-affirmed their struggle for the original demands. They have given the bosses till Thursday to reply, and are calling on the T&GWU to black the place.

OUT NOW!
A new 'Militant' pamphlet for all AUEW engineering workers

From World Books
1 Mentmore Terrace
London E8 3PN
Price 30p [+ 10p p&p]

SRI LANKAN GENERAL STRIKE

Trade unionists in Sri Lanka are continuing to hold out in the face of ruthless attempts by the reactionary UNP government to crush their general strike.

The demands of the strike, called by the Joint Trade Union Action Committee, are to protect living standards, eroded by 40% inflation, and in defence of basic trade union rights.

By Brent Kennedy

Vasudeva Nanayakkara speaks at a mass meeting

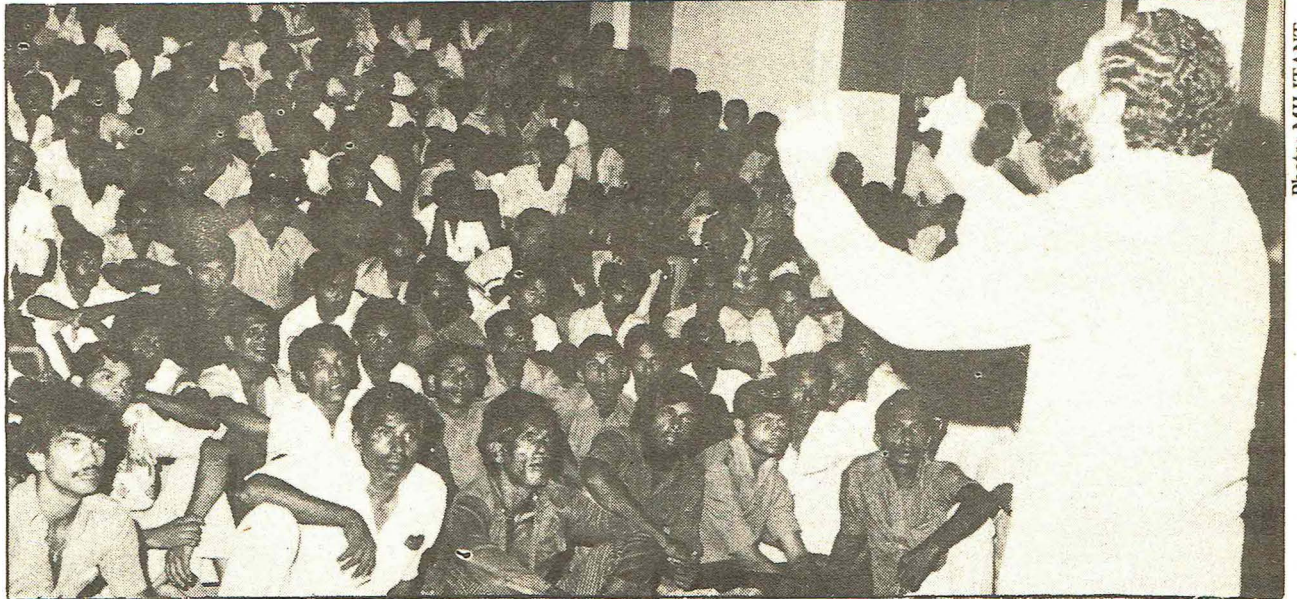


Photo: MILITANT

The strike has become in effect a lock-out by the right-wing government, which is attempting to break the power of organised labour—the only obstacle to the introduction of an authoritarian regime and the complete pauperisation of the working class for the benefit of foreign big business.

The JIUAC has presented a claim for a 300 Rupee rise on existing monthly salaries of 400 Rupees (about £11); a 5 Rupee rise for each point increase in the cost of living index; and no victimisation of workers for carrying out trade union activities.

So far, the UNP has replied solely in the language of press censorship, mass arrests and sackings, seizure of trade union buildings and mobilisation of the armed forces. 400 trade unionists have now been imprisoned, mainly for handing out "illegal" (ie. pro-trade union) leaflets.

150,000 workers have been sacked. The government has declared that these workers may apply for their jobs back, but each case will be examined separately—in other words, they hope that a whole layer of several thousand experienced trade union activists will be black-listed and the workplace organisations

decapitated.

There are signs, however, that the government's brutal stance is weakening. Union funds have been unfrozen, after threats of confiscation were made two weeks ago, and the ban on public meetings has been lifted.

No major clashes involving the armed forces have materialised, indicating that President Jayawardene is still not confident that he can crush the unions by force.

But whilst making these public concessions, the government still hopes to split the union leadership from the ranks. It is even more important, therefore, that the leadership is prepared to take a stronger line and widen the strike.

The United Federation of Labour and the Government Clerical Services Union, led by the Nama Sama Samaja Party, has successfully pressed within the JIUAC for the launching of a campaign of street demonstrations and sit-down protests this week.

Such a campaign is absolutely vital in bringing together members of all the unions involved, raising their morale by a public show of strength which will demonstrate to the bosses' government what it is up against.

Workers Continue Action in Face of Severe Repression

Such demonstrations and street meetings, long overdue, will also be a means of explaining the strikers' demands to other workers and the urban and village poor, something which has been forcibly prevented by censorship and the blatant use of newspapers and government radio to spread pro-government lies about the strike.

The last few days has seen a stalemate, with no new sections coming out. The Communist Party has acted as a brake in not pushing its unions in the health and plantation sectors into joining the strike. The main plantation union, the Ceylon Workers' Congress, is opposing the strike, mouthing the UNP excuse that the unions are linked to political parties.

This is rather ironic as the CWC leader, Thondaman, is a Minister in the UNP government and thereby

shares responsibility for the notorious Essential Services Act which completely removes the right of all public sector workers to withdraw their labour!

The docks have not come out, mainly due to the strike-breaking role of the CMU leader—the so-called 'Trotskyist' Bala Tampoe.

But while no new sections have joined the strike, none have gone back. The majority of the public sector—65% of the economy—are still out, as are most of the big private workplaces. The railway strike alone affects every part of the island.

Meanwhile, solidarity action is being stepped up internationally. Trade unions and labour parties throughout Europe have been contacted by the United Federation of Labour to send protests to the Sri Lanka government at its use of ruthless, undemocratic

repression against the trade union movement.

In Britain, the TGWU has joined several unions nationally whose Executives or General Secretaries have sent messages of support to the JIUAC. The Labour Party has sent a protest to the High Commission.

Make sure your labour movement body sends a telegram of protest immediately—speed is of the utmost importance!

Throughout this strike Jayawardene has raised a fundamental question which flows logically from such a naked confrontation of the classes—who rules society?

He has publicly challenged Vasudeva Nanayakkara (President of the United Federation of Labour and a leader of the mass Marxist party, the NSSP) to state if his forces are willing to rule the country, and whether they

have a programme that can solve mass unemployment.

The answer must be 'Yes!' Under this puppet government of foreign finance capital and multinationals, more unemployment, lower living standards, counter-reforms and further attacks on democratic rights are all that can be expected under the onslaught of world recession. The economy is on the verge of collapse, according to the Commonwealth General Secretary.

Only the working class, leading the urban and rural poor, in a planned, nationalised economy, can take society forward. Only a workers' democracy in Sri Lanka, paving the way for a Socialist Federation of the Indian sub-continent, offers any hope for the exploited masses.

TORY LIES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

wage increases, particularly for take-home pay, have trailed way behind the rate of price increases. In 1978 and again in 1979 we had only 5% increases. Yet the jobs have still gone.

If Thatcher's arguments were true, for instance, Northern Ireland would be experiencing a fabulous boom. Wages are £20 lower than the average for Britain. But they have the highest average unemployment in the UK: 14%.

If you look around the world you can see that the strongest economies, like the United States, West Germany, Scandinavia etc, are not those with the lowest wages. Workers in these countries have a much higher level of wages than here.

Those countries will also be hit by the world capitalist recession. But the bosses there invested more in their factories than the British bosses. West German workers have more capital, more machinery, more equipment at their disposal than we have. So it is no wonder that British industry is losing out to foreign competitors, even in its own home market.

For decades, the capitalists in Britain have failed to invest in the modernisation of production. Now the Tories are helping the bosses to squeeze more out of the workers, they are still not investing in industry. They prefer property speculation, overseas investment, and antiques and jewellery.

The lessons for workers are clear. No amount of 'sacrifice'

of wages and jobs will benefit the workers themselves. The bosses will pocket the extra profits, but will do little or nothing to revive the British economy.

More and more workers, most of whom have been forced to make sacrifices in recent years, have learned from their own bitter experience: the only thing that can protect the living standards of workers and their families is to rely on their own industrial muscle to win sufficient wage increases, reduce the working week, and protect jobs.

But we have also to find a way of getting off the vicious treadmill of wage increases eroded by inflation, and further wage increases eroded by even more inflation. This cannot be done in a system where a handful of bosses own most of industry; where production is determined by profit; where output and sales depend on the anarchy of the capitalist market.

We must fight for better

wages and conditions. But this must always be part of the battle for socialist policies which go to the root of the problem.

The workers who produce the wealth must also plan production. But we can only do this if we own the means of production. This means nationalisation of the big monopolies and banks, but not with lavish compensation to the parasites who now own them. They should be paid a reasonable level of social security!

And we must make sure that nationalised industries are run in the interests of the working class. There will be no room for the old bosses, merchant bankers, and their hangers on.

Industry will be run and planned under democratic workers' control and management. Then, and only then, will we be working to produce wealth for all, and not the parasitic one per cent at the top.

GET Militant

BRITAIN & IRELAND 13 issues... £3.25
 26 issues... £6.50 52 issues...£13.00

EUROPE [by air] REST OF WORLD [by air]
 26 issues... £7.25 26 issues...£10.00
 52 issues...£14.50 52 issues...£20.00

Name
 Address

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