

Bosses Squabble as Slump Deepens

CBI RAGE AT TORY POLICIES

When the Tories won the General Election in May 1979, jobbers in the Stock Exchange sang Land of Hope and Glory and businessmen celebrated with gallons of champagne.

Even before the election, drunk with the hopes of Thatcher's victory, £1,000 million was added to share prices.

While the working class waited in gloom to see what attacks Thatcher's government would make on jobs, services, living standards and trade union rights, big business radiated confidence at what they could do in a "freer business climate" with booming profits and the working class in check.

All the worst fears of the working class have been fulfilled by the Tories, who must be the most hated government this century.

But now even the backers

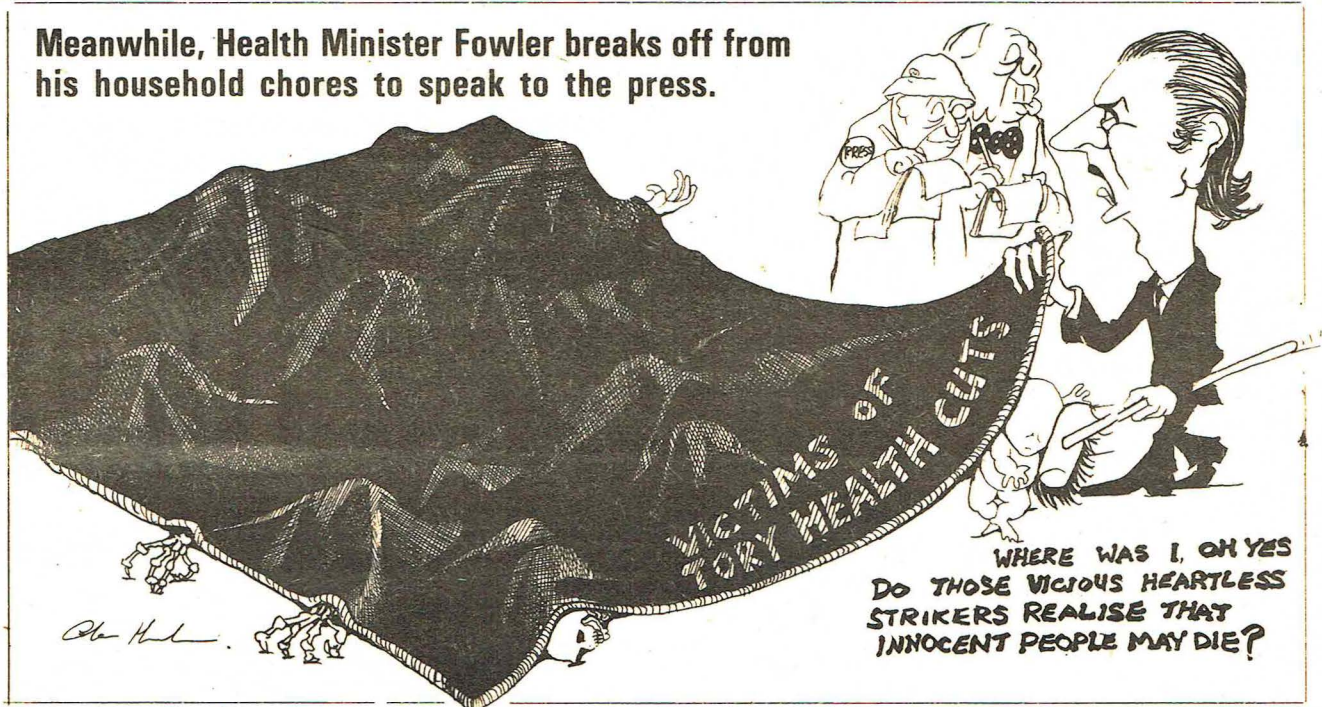
By Roger Shrivs

of Thatcher's policies in the board rooms of industry and commerce are in gloom, the fizz has vanished from their champagne, and their profits are showing little glory and even less hope.

Monetarist policies have hit viciously at workers in industry, with the highest unemployment figures ever. But the bosses are panicking

Continued on back page

Meanwhile, Health Minister Fowler breaks off from his household chores to speak to the press.



SEALINK WORKERS WIN

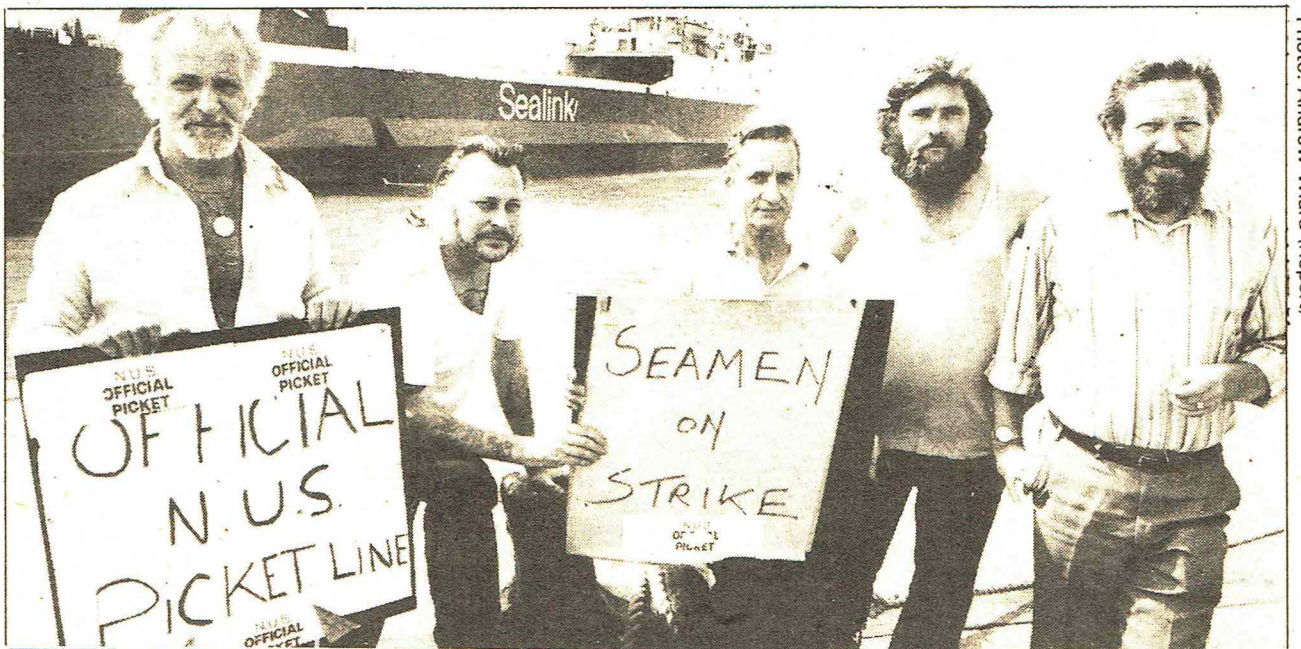


Photo: Andrew Ward (Report)

Strikers at Harwich, 2 August.

Firm nationwide action by Sealink workers has forced management to back down in their threats against jobs, wages and conditions.

The threats, originally made to over 500 members of the National Union of Seamen (NUS) at Harwich were clearly seen by all

Sealink workers nationally as a pistol to their heads.

Management gave the workforce at Harwich Hobson's choice. Either the closure of the Harwich to Hook of Holland service or a cut of 24% in pay and time off which would save £1.2 million.

The solidarity shown forced the arbitration service ACAS to push through a deal of no redundancies, no

wage cuts and no closure of the Harwich route. Although Sealink say they still want savings and they still have 'financial problems', they have specified no target figures or timetables for these savings.

Seamen at Harwich were pleased at the victory, not only were job and wage threats withdrawn but more importantly, the NUS have committed themselves to

react with strike action again if any Sealink workers are threatened with similar attacks.

Union members overwhelmingly accepted the deal, mainly because of this promise. "We have been waiting for big brother to hold our hand, now he has done it!" said Harwich Ports Committee chairman Alan Petre. "Seven months ago we were fighting as a village,

Fight the Tories, not the socialists!
Come to Labour Movement Conference, 11 September.
Details page 3.

Don't stand on the side-lines...Defend Militant!

I am prepared to help in your campaign to defend the paper and stop the witch-hunt.

Please send me details of how I can assist.

Name.....

Address.....

Rush to Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Mellish resigns

The resignation of Bob Mellish, MP for Bermondsey in South London from the Labour Party, has added one more name to the list of right wingers who've stabbed the party in the back.

Most workers in Bermondsey are under no illusion that Mellish is still capable of representing their interests despite a certain amount of respect he has built up especially among older members of the community. The great show of feeling he displayed on his announcement cannot win back the support of workers in London on the basis of out-worn right wing ideas.

Bob Mellish has long since turned his back on the working class. His comfortable life style earned from his parliamentary career has made him lose touch.

Achievements he made in the past for Bermondsey people were possible only in the climate of economic boom. Today the problems of workers are tied up with the need for socialist policies aimed at fundamental change.

This is the real reason for the shift to the left in Bermondsey, not because of plots or conspiracies. Mellish's accusation that Bermondsey CLP is a mafia really is the kettle calling the pot black. The local labour movement, together with the council, had for years been the unchallenged domain of a tight clique.

A long standing member of Bermondsey CLP, who was defeated in the recent borough elections by independents supported by Mellish, said there has been a mafia on the council since 1965:

"They had the party all sewn up...Nobody questioned what was going on.

"In the selection meetings for council candidates you had a choice...as long as it was a previous councillor. Four would turn up at the meeting—two would be selected and the two who didn't went to the next ward."

"Mellish says he only supports 'decent' candidates. What does that make me? I've done so much for him. We used to take our holidays to go out and get him elected. We were the foot soldiers."

In the 60s it was quite common to hear Mellish 'spouting socialism' but today he has consistently opposed party policy. In par-

Statement to Militant by Alex Jarosy, secretary of Riverside Ward in which Labour candidates were defeated by independents supported by Mellish.

"Mr Mellish's claim of loyalty to the Labour Party is totally dishonest. In Riverside he gave public support to 3 candidates standing against the LP in the borough elections, one of whom has been working for the Labour Party for 30 years. It is a very long time since Mr Mellish had anything in common with the people of Bermondsey, or the ideas of socialism."

By Ben Eastop

Statement to Militant by Peter Tatchell:

"Years ago Bob Mellish turned his back on local people by moving out of the constituency. He has made a good living out of the party as an MP. He feels shown up by my commitment to remain in the constituency and to only accept an MP's salary equivalent to a skilled workers wage.

"His career has enabled him to buy a comfortable suburban home, and a country cottage in Sussex, and give his kids the best education. We wish all Bermondsey people were so lucky, and that's why we are fighting for a real socialist Labour government."

particular he has flouted decisions by his own party to oppose the London Dockland Development Corporation set up by the Tories by accepting the invitation by Heseltine in 1980 to become its vice-chairman.

This is a totally undemocratic body, hand picked by the government which has taken away planning powers of democratically elected local authorities, and is in favour of office developments along the river-side and massive speculative developments in the old Surrey Docks. The *Evening Standard* of 18 December 1950 reported Mellish as saying "If I ever become popular with the Tory Party I shall resign from the Commons forthwith"(!)

Mellish is opposed to women's rights on abortion, and Labour's policy on disarmament. But now, more than ever before, working people need clear socialist policies which are the real tradition of the Labour Party, not the clap-trap of middle class careerists to which Mellish has alluded.

ASBESTOS WORKERS INQUIRY NEEDED

Asbestos workers at TBA Industrial Products were not reassured at a mass meeting on Wednesday 28 July by the company's statements on health and safety. One worker said after the meeting "that was a waste of time, we know nothing."

The company have again denied any cover-up on Asbestosis. But workers watching the TV asbestos debate on 27 July or seeing the replies from TBA or Turner and Newall's management will not have been taken in.

The company spokesman says that allegations criticising the industry are made on past information, past conditions, and reports based on information from years ago. Yet, as everyone knows, asbestosis and its related diseases is something that doesn't hit you straight away; it takes years to catch

up on you.

The *Rochdale Observer*, 28 July reported a Coroner's verdict this week on a woman who had worked at TBA from 1952 to 1971. The woman died from pulmonary fibrosis due to asbestosis according to Dr Donald Lyon. The coroner recorded a verdict of death directly attributable to industrial disease.

Since 1974 fourteen verdicts of death from industrial diseases attributable to asbestos have been recorded by the Rochdale coroner.

Company ignore evidence—Government refuses inquiry

In the House of Commons on 30 July, the Employment Under-Secretary David Waddington said that the Simpson Committee recom-

mendation of a 1 fibre per millilitre dust limit would become law shortly. Yet the Simpson Committee in its report said that dust levels should be called control limits instead of hygiene standards; this was because the Committee could not find a limit below which there was no health risk.

The government has turned down requests for an enquiry and unions at TBA are pushing for an internal enquiry. The GMWU has announced that it will be conducting its own inquiry.

This must be broadened out to a whole-sale investigation by the labour movement into all aspects of the production and use of asbestos. No reliance can be placed on business. They will always put profits before safety.

Selling *Militant* at the factory last Friday, one woman worker said "What do we do now?" They are frightened that a ban on asbestos would put them out of work. Alternative jobs could be found for asbestos workers with alternatives to asbestos being

used. Regular medical examinations should take place, with results given to the workers concerned. Shower facilities should be available for all asbestos and glass fibre workers to use at the factory.

But more than this is required. As David Gee, the GMWU National Health and Safety Officer said on TV in reply to a question about jobs or health, if society was organised properly we would not have to face the choice.

TBA claim they have nothing to hide; the onus should be put on them to prove it. Only when industry is under workers control and management can the health and safety of workers be guaranteed.

By Tom Stott

(Former shop steward TVA Industrial Products personal capacity)

ALEC THRAVES RE-INSTATED

"We have admitted our mistakes, now let's have unity in the Party."

Those words from the Chairman of Swansea Labour Association was an admission that yet again the right-wing-dominated Executive Council of Swansea's Labour Association had acted outside of the rules laid down by the Labour Party when they withdrew the credentials of Alec Thraves. The Association has now been instructed by the Regional Officer for Wales, Hubert Morgan to reinstate Alec Thraves.

Another item that was discussed was Alan Williams telling the local *Evening Post* that he wanted the closure of the Young Socialists locally, and nationally. This interview had been merely "noted" by the Executive Committee

By Militant Reporter

The delegate from the Young Socialists at the Association meeting argued that the YS was not in favour of expulsions or withdrawing credentials. But if Alec Thraves had had his credentials withdrawn illegally, for refusing to give assurances that he would give his views on the affairs of the Labour Party, then surely we should at least censure our local MP for attacking the youth section of the Party.

One prominent member, who did not entirely agree with the YS delegate, nevertheless agreed that Alan Williams should be cen-



Right-wing Labour MPs want to close down the LPYS, but it was the youth who were in the forefront of the Cardiff march against the Tories.

sured. A vote was taken but the Executive Committee's recommendation was carried 38 to 22. This shows the double standards of the right-wing.

Alan Williams or any right wing member of the Swansea Labour Association can effectively go to the press and media on any issue and be vindicated by the EC. This meets the night before the

Association, and due to the fact that all delegates on the EC are bound to vote in favour of the EC's decision, they have a majority at the Labour Association the following night.

Like there is one law for the rich and one for the poor, there is one ruling for the right wing, and a totally different one for anyone who disagrees with them.

LPYS SUMMER CAMP

Photo: J Woulfe

Evening entertainment at this year's camp

Over 500 people have been at this week's LPYS camp in the Forest of Dean. Amongst the political topics discussed have been: organising for the LPYS demo in Liverpool on 16 October, and a debate on the Middle East between Steve Morgan (LPYS National Committee) and Roz Spearling (Labour Middle East Council). Unfortunately, despite inviting 25 Labour MPs, and continual phone-calls to the Solidarity organisations's offices, who promised to send a speaker, no right-wing Labour MP was confident enough in his or her ideas to come and debate 'Marxism and the labour movement.'

But as the photo right shows, the camp had a full social life. Films such as 'Life of Brian', discos, bands and a variety of sporting activities have made the camp highly enjoyable.



FIGHT TORIES, NOT SOCIALISTS

Saturday 11th September

LABOUR MOVEMENT CONFERENCE

**WEMBLEY CONFERENCE CENTRE
LONDON NW1. 10.30am start**

The campaign against the witch-hunt in the Labour Party is being taken to every corner of the labour movement.

It has become the biggest internal campaign since the founding of the Labour Party itself. As a result, delegations have flooded in for the conference from all corners of Britain.

Hundreds of delegates have so far come in from trade unions, shop stewards committees, Labour Parties, Trades Councils and other bodies.

Over the last week trade union delegations have come in from FBU in Macclesfield, TGWU 6/9/13 Middleton, NSMM Stevenage, COHSE 257 Leeds, FBU No 9 Region, POEU Manchester South, NGA Oxon and Berks, GMWU Chapelton, EET-PU Bradford; AUEW Keighley, Anderton International Shop Stewards Committee and many others. On top of this there have been scores from Labour Parties, YS branches, etc.

All indications are that with a strenuous drive the Wembley Conference Cen-

tre will be filled to capacity of nearly 3,000. But there is no room for complacency! There are only five full weeks to go and there are thousands of labour movement organisations that can still be contacted; thousands of supporters who can be reached to join the battle against the right-wing's purge.

Not a day must be lost in this period. Even in the "holiday lull", we must approach the factories directly and speak to the shop stewards committees. There is nothing to lose and everything to gain!

This conference will be a rallying point for all those who are opposing the Register, proscriptions and expulsions. The right-wing witch-hunters must be shown the tidal wave of opposition that their actions have created.

Those in the labour and trade union leadership who are prepared to "reluctantly acquiesce" to the purge must feel the pressure from the rank and file: 'fight the Tory enemy, not socialists in the Party!'

Last week, the Merseyside and N Wales

District Council of the NUR passed a resolution opposing "bans, proscriptions, and witch-hunts within the Labour Party" and called upon the NEC to fight to reverse the right-wing decisions of the 1982 AGM.

The TGWU 5/143 branch Telford, also passed last week a resolution against the witch-hunt and recognised "the valuable role played by *Militant* supporters locally and nationally and asserts unequivocally that *Militant* is an asset to the Party not a liability..." The branch enclosed a £10 donation to the Fighting Fund.

Big business, their press and media have all backed the Right's attempt to instigate a witch-hunt. They have the Establishment and all their resources to push their aims. We can rely only on the strength of working people in our movement.

Don't hold back! Give us your support now! Get your trade union or Labour Party organisations to send delegates on Sept 11th. The fight is on and we aim to win.

By Rob Sewell



Sponsors include:

Wavertree CLP; Brighton Kempton CLP; Bradford North CLP; Isle of Wight CLP; Coventry South East CLP; Bradford District LP; Bakery Food and Allied Workers Union Executive; Labour Party Young Socialists National Committee; TGWU Sussex District.

And in personal capacity: Tony Benn, Ray Buckton (ASLEF); Bob Wright (AUEW); Les Huckfield MP (NEC); Joan Maynard MP (Vice-Chair, Labour Party); Joe Richardson MP (NEC); Ernie Roberts MP; Ken Livingstone (GLC leader); Kevin Roddy (CPSA President); Rod Fitch (PPC, Brighton Kempton); Terry Fields (FBU NEC & PPC Kirkdale); Derek Hatton (PPC, Wavertree); Tony Mulhearn (PPC, Toxteth); Dave Nellist (PPC, Coventry South East); Tony Harrison (PPC, Edge Hill); Cathy Wilson (PPC, Isle of Wight).

Speakers will include: Ken Livingstone (Leader of the GLC); Les Huckfield MP; Pat Wall (twice selected PPC for Bradford North); Terry O'Neill (President of the Bakers Union and candidate for LP NEC); Peter Taaffe (Editor of *Militant*); and other leading figures from the labour movement.

Please send credentials for delegates (maximum 5 per organisation) on behalf of (name of organisation)

I enclose a cheque/PO for (£1 for each credential)

My organisation agrees to become a sponsor of the conference (tick if applicable)

We would like a speaker (tick if applicable)

Name

Address

Return to Labour Movement Conference, c/o 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

USDAW has played an extremely valuable role in the constitutional victories for the rank and file within the Labour Party and will no doubt play a similar role in the current battle to prevent the expulsion of *Militant* supporters from the party.

The 1982 Annual Delegate Meeting of USDAW registered in resolution 34 its opposition to the re-introduction of bans and proscriptions, which in its view would destroy the Labour Party.

On the basis of this conference commitment USDAW were approached to sponsor the Labour Movement Conference. William Whatley, the General Secretary replied: "I think we should be quite clear exactly what were the terms of the resolution which was passed at the USDAW 1982 ADM."

"The conference did indeed express its unwillingness for the Labour Party to embark upon a policy of expulsions. It did, however, agree that any ac-

tion taken as a result of the inquiry within the Labour Party should only be carried out after a thorough debate within the labour movement.

"The issues will, therefore, be discussed by our delegation to the 1982 Labour Party conference and a decision will be taken by that delegation as to what action they take at Conference, taking into account the decision of the 1982 ADM..." which clearly leaves the taste of support for the Register.

It is therefore exceptionally important that *Militant* supporters in the union follow the lead of the Eastern Divisional Council of USDAW who unanimously resolved to oppose the Register, to ensure that the practical application of the union's policy is to oppose this deodorised witch-hunt.

The reference in Bill Whatley's letter to a "thorough debate within the movement" is of course to be applauded, but it is somewhat ironic that the editor of the union's journal, *Dawn*, refused a paid advertisement from the *Militant* on the grounds that "I (the editor) have a clear duty to see that it (*Dawn*)

promotes the aims and policies of the union and does not appear to be promoting political interests which are opposed to the union, the TUC or the Labour Party. Nor is it our policy to promote political factions within our union."

This is a somewhat hollow statement considering that an advert for the right wing "Solidarity" organisation (who are certainly opposed to union policy on the 40/30/30 leadership election formula as well as the witch-hunt) appeared in the September '81 issue of *Dawn*!

The editor of the journal also moved a resolution in support of the Register at his union branch meeting which cleverly wriggles around the union policy of no expulsions by saying the Labour Party NEC have tried to avoid expulsions "but that the setting up of the Register is vital in the interests of internal Labour Party democracy..."

We would assume of course that this legitimately held view of the editor did not taint his editorial opinion...

By Mike Waddington

Parties oppose witch-hunt

New resolutions against the witch-hunt keep flooding in. Recent additions include the following union bodies.

TGWU Scotland and the following TGWU branches, 9/988, 10/105, 3/194, 5/908, 5/909, 5/140, 5/440, 1/1347 and 6/567, West Midlands Regional Council of UCATT, London Press EETPU and Birkenhead No 1 EETPU. ASTMS Division 11 (Wales) and Leeds University ASTMS 507, AUEW Derby No 3 and Brighton No 3, NSMM IoW.

SOGAT Bradford, GMWU Sunderland Buses,

GMWU Hackney, NUPE Hastings and NUPE manual Barnsley, NUM Blaenant Lodge, COHSE 257 Leeds, TSSA British Transport No 1, POEU Manchester South, UCW Doncaster, USDAW Co op Sheffield, Kirkby NALGO, CPSA P&T Group Liverpool, and Trades Councils in Brighton and Hastings.

The latest addition to the Labour Parties are Deptford, Rushcliffe, Carmarthen, Stroud, Reading North, Reading South, Poole, Gloucester, Hull East, Chippenham CLP, Gloucester CLP, Stroud CLP, Arundel

CLP, Harrow East, Harrow Central, Dunfermline CLP, Manchester Wythenshawe. Thanet West opposed the register and Goole Labour Party which voted for Denis Healey at the Deputy Leadership elections voted against a witch-hunt, as have Bootle Womens Section and Town Branch Hampstead Labour Party.

Last week we mistakenly included Newcastle District Labour Party amongst those who had passed anti witch-hunt resolutions.

EEPTU

The Electricians union (EETPU)'s political sub-committee has declared that Tower Hamlets Labour Party member Chris Hill cannot represent the union as delegate to his local General Management Committee.

As a result of this action, Chris Hill has consequently been removed from the unions London Political Factory Committee, a post he has been elected to for the last 3 years, since its inception.

The current attack on the political rights of Chris Hill stems from the suspension of the London Contracting branch in January of this year. At that time, though never charged, Chris Hill and Danny McCarthy had their shop stewards' credentials withdrawn due to their alleged misconduct at the inaugural meeting of the branch. Their credentials however were later restored following the threat of strike action from the stewards workplace

membership.

The affairs of the London Contracting branch have since been handed over to the solidly right wing area 10-member Industrial Committee, who are also charged with the responsibility of sanctioning delegates to Trades Councils and Labour Parties.

The continued suspension of London Contracting means that its 11,000 members are disenfranchised from participating in the life of the branch.

The attack on Chris Hill must be viewed as the beginning of what the right wing hope will be a 'pogrom' against *Militant* supporters and others on the left.

The 17-year ban on Communist Party members from holding office within the union shows that Chapple and his cohorts would not be deterred from turning the Union and the Labour Party into an ideological concentration camp.



WHAT WE STAND FOR

The attacks against 'Militant' rarely mention our policies. Find out what the media and right wing are so scared of. Only 30p (post free) from *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

NEC endorses Pat Wall

Dealing a major blow to the witch-hunters in the Labour Party, the party's National Executive Committee (NEC) has finally endorsed Militant supporter Pat Wall as prospective candidate for Bradford North.

The decision on Pat's candidature, after nine months and two selection conferences, was taken by 14 votes to 9.

In another important vote through, the NEC's right-wing succeeded in overturning a decision of the Home Policy Committee, committing the next Labour government to nationalise the big four banks.

Instead a motion from Doug Hoyle MP (ASTMS) which draws back from any firm commitment, was carried. His resolution called for "the reform of the banking system" with a Labour government having reserve powers to take over one or more of the major

By Militant reporters

banks "if they fail to make the necessary changes" (!).

The voting on Doug Hoyle's motion was: FOR; Gwyneth Dunwoody, Michael Foot, John Golding, Denis Healey, Doug Hoyle, Neil Kinnock, Joan Lester, Shirley Summerskill, Sid Tierney (USDAW), Russell Tuck (NUR), and Eric Varley. AGAINST; Tony Benn, Laurence Coates, Eric Heffer, Les Huckfield, Joan Maynard, Jo Richardson, and Dennis Skinner. Judith Hart and more surprisingly Frank Allaun, abstained.

A further dispute arose on the question of invitations to this year's Annual Conference. Two motions were before the NEC. One from right-winger John Golding, called for the breaking of all links with Communist Parties in Eastern Europe following the suppression of

'Solidarity' in Poland.

The other from Eric Heffer argued for the same reasons that no representatives of the ruling parties in Eastern Europe be invited to Conference, but "in the interests of...detente and international understanding" that representatives of these same governments (with the exception of the Jaruzelski regime) should be invited.

LPYS representative, Laurence Coates and Dennis Skinner pushed for an amendment to Golding's resolution that "furthermore we invite no representatives of Big Business, High Commissions or Embassies."

Laurence Coates argued against inviting representatives of either Stalinist regime responsible for suppressing workers in the East or those of capitalist countries, for whom, amazingly, invitations still stand.

The amendment was heavily defeated, receiving only 3 votes, and John Golding's resolution was then carried, supported by Coates, Skinner and Heffer.

— OCTOBER 16th —

LPYS march against new cheap labour scheme

£30 million—that is the amount Mr Geoffrey Holland, director of the Manpower Services Commission, believes will be saved by engineering employers if they participate fully in the Thatcher government's proposed 'Youth Training Scheme.'

He hopes it will be sufficient to have employers 'queueing up at the door' when the scheme starts in proper next year and once the message sinks home it is unlikely that he will be disappointed.

Despite the recent concessions forced on Tebbit, to increase the allowance paid to trainees to £25 and to withdraw the proposal to disqualify youth who fail to take part in the scheme from being eligible to claim supplementary benefit, this so-called 'new training initiative' will still provide employers with an almost unlimited supply of young cheap labour. Undoubtedly many are already licking their lips at the prospect.

Mass youth unemployment has given the Tories and their big business backers the ideal chance to step up the attack on the living standards of all young workers. The bosses have not been slow in taking their cue from YOPs in their attempts to undermine youth wages and conditions.

Tebbit on £530 a week

Norman Tebbit, architect in chief of the cheap labour 'new training initiative' (who incidentally finds few problems in managing on his £530 a week income from being minister for 'unemployment'), has become infamous for such statements as "many young people price themselves out of work."

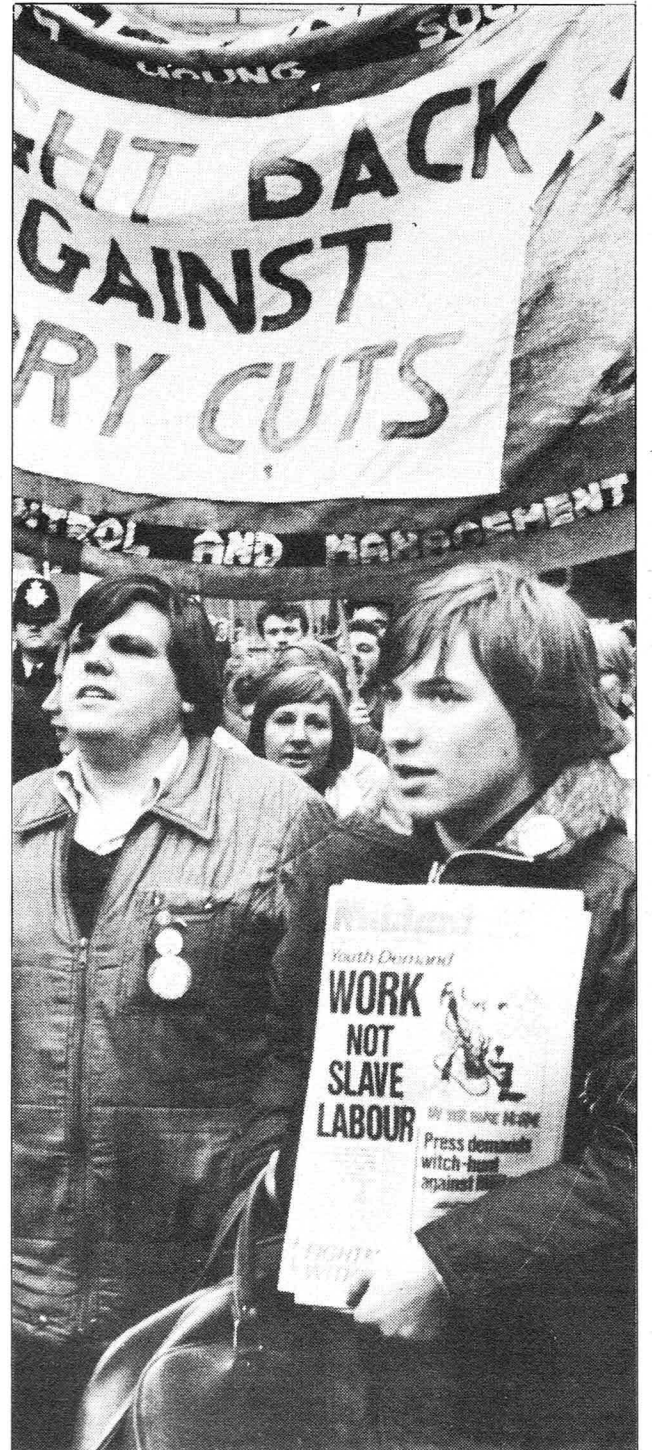
Needless to say this sort of remark has no basis in reality. Indeed a recent Department of Employment Research paper actually observed that "variations in youth unemployment do not appear to have any systematic relationship with changes in the relative earnings of young people."

Figures from the Department of Employment show that whilst the average hourly rate of pay for males aged under 21 had fallen from 55.8% of the adult rate in 1976 to 54.7% in 1981, the January unemployment rate for young males had increased by almost 60%.

Youth wage rates down

Similarly for young females aged under 18, whilst the average hourly rate of pay had fallen from 55.7% of the adult rate in 1976 to 55.4% in 1981, the January unemployment rate for young females had increased this time by over 60%!

However the truth has never been of consequence



LPYS on the march for trade union rights of pay for those on YOP schemes

PROPER WORK FOR YOPS ...

LPYS members in Sheffield organised a very successful day of action on Youth "Opportunities" on July 3rd.

We hired a display caravan in the centre of Sheffield's busy shopping precinct, filled it with information about the YOPS Trainees Union Rights Campaign, posters and displays telling the public about the exploitation youth face on YOP schemes.

Outside we had a stall and petition against Tebbit's new proposals and calling for better conditions pay and rights for YOPsters.

We were overwhelmed by the response. We distributed 2000 leaflets outlining the aims of the campaign and calling for support in a couple of hours and sold many copies of *Socialist Youth* and *Get Organised*.

People flocked to sign our petition, many of them shocked at the treatment of young people who want nothing more than a proper job and training with reasonable pay.

Parents came and told us about their kids on YOPs wanting to know how they could help, kids who were still at school and realised this was what they faced in the future and trade unionists who saw the exploitation going on in their own firms.

We met many YOPsters themselves who willingly filled in questionnaires outlining their experiences on YOPs and we convinced many of them of the need to join a union and unite to fight for a better deal, some of them stayed with us and helped with leafleting.



Some of those on YOP schemes who packed Festival Hall in this year's LPYS rally and lobby of Parliament, for trade union rights for young workers

not work sharing

Kent County Council are really getting into all these government schemes for keeping the dole figures down. So enthusiastic are they, that they've decided to combine a couple to make a...Job Sharing Youth Opportunities Programme!

We also had a couple of people who taught on YOPs schemes invite us to their colleges to speak to YOPsters about unionisation. As well as collecting thousands of names for the petition we raised over £60 in donations for the Campaign fund.

They intend to take on 50 young people to fill 25 YOPs places! You know things are getting bad when there aren't even enough YOP schemes to go round!

**Helen Gasking
USDAW
East Kent General.**

We finished the day with a "Bop against the YOPs" in a local pub! We intend to continue our campaign with a demonstration through the city and a conference in September.

**By Jane Burns
(Sheffield Park LPYS)**

**By Nick Toms
(LPYS National Committee)**



Photo: D Doran

Falklands' Aftermath

Behind the media razamattaz, for HMS Hermes' return, lay the anxieties, concerns and determination of individuals and families

What a difference a war makes

Lord Matthew's Cunard shipping company has profited handsomely from the war. The sinking of their container ship, the Atlantic Conveyor, has been a financial boon for them.

Before the war started, the ship had been laid up in Liverpool for nine months, because it was too expensive to run on the recession-hit Atlantic sea routes. The US navy had expressed an interest in purchasing her, and discussions had begun, with the Americans believed to be offering about £1 million for the ship.

The war changed all that. It was requisitioned by the government, and Cunard were paid £6,000 a day for its use. But when it was sunk, the government forked out a staggering £10.5 million for the antiquated ship.

Its owners had already planned to replace Atlantic Conveyor before the war, because it was built in 1970, at a cost of only £4m, before the '70s rise in oil prices. Last September's company report stated: "The turbine ships in the Atlantic Container fleet (ACL), with their even heavier fuel consumption, have inevitably made ACL a higher-cost operator than the competition, a situation which cannot be allowed to continue."

Five new ships were planned by the company. Atlantic Conveyor's replacement was to be over double in size, and would use diesel engines, rather than the Conveyor's steam turbines,

in order to obtain greater fuel economy.

Cunard planned to have it built by cheap labour in South Korea, where under the dictatorship effective trade unions are banned. But the outcry which ensued after its sinking forced the government to intervene.

Having beat the patriotic drum to whip up hysteria for the war, it was difficult to switch it off afterwards. Southampton dockers threatened to black all Cunard ships unless the new ship was built in Britain.

Thatcher performed a U-turn, and Cunard squeezed them for every penny available. Although the final details have not been made public, it seems that the government have virtually given Cunard over £4 million extra grant to cover 15% of sale price and a credit for 80% of contract price at only 7½% interest.

As Kenneth Brown, editor of the Liverpool-based *Journal of Commerce* commented: "They have lost a ship which they did not want and are getting government aid on a brand-new one."

The whole saga of the Atlantic Conveyor is an apt summary on the Falklands war. To justify the war, Thatcher and the bosses used the smokescreen of the rights of the islanders, and whipped up a patriotic hysteria, but it was really a battle for the power and prestige of British capitalism. Now the war is over, Lord Mathews dismisses talk of patriotism as not 'price-effective'. Profit rules the waves.

By Jim Chrystie

When does patriotism pay?

During the Falklands war, Lord Matthews (whose Trafalgar House Company owns both Cunard and the *Daily Express*) played the patriotic card for all its worth.

A *Daily Express* editorial of 29 May told its readers: "There are those who pooh-pooh the least protestation of patriotism. The people at large are made of sterner stuff. The general manager of Devonport said: 'The whole dockyard has been gripped by a great patriotic fervour. It makes me proud to be British.' It is indeed a good thing to be British, now that we are standing up for ourselves for a change, instead of lying down and being trampled upon, as the appeasers would have us do."

But after the war, when his profits were at stake, Lord Matthews sang a different song. Asked if he shouldn't have the Atlantic Conveyor's replacement built in Britain and be 'patriotic', he replied:

"This is a word that has been used extensively by everyone. From time to time I am reminded of it, but it has never altered what I was trying to achieve and that was the right price." (*Financial Times*, 29 July.)

Now they tell us

After the tape recorder had been switched off, Prince Andrew told reporter Kim Sabido, "After what I've seen out here I feel like joining CND" (*Kim Sabido, City Limits*, 16 July).

Among the other facts now emerging from the newspapers and TV have been: marines spitting at black dockers loading supplies at Freetown, Sierra Leone, as the ships travelled down to the Falklands; the average age of the marines being only 17½ to 18 (though much publicity was given to the youth of the Argentine conscripts); that journalists were not allowed near the Sheffield for four days after it was hit, and that it was deliberately sunk by the British Navy (was it, as some reports suggest, carrying nuclear depth charges?); the lack of publicity given to the return of the severely injured, flying them into Brize Norton two and a half hours after the QE2 arrived back with bands a-playing; the shooting in the back of two Argentine soldiers after they had surrendered.

Pictures from the war could have been relayed back to Britain in half an hour if the Ministry of Defence had not prevented it. They were especially keen to prevent any pictures or accurate idea of the casualties British troops were suffering, not so much to keep the Argentinians in the dark as to stop the growth of a mass peace movement in Britain.

Perhaps worst of all, must be the fresh facts now revealed about the Battle

for Goose Green, where 17 Paras and 120 Argentine soldiers lost their lives. Reporters were told before and after that there was no need to attack Goose Green. It could have been isolated.

But Brigadier Julian Thompson was called to the satellite telephone to talk to a politician; Kim Sabido, of Independent Radio News, told *City Limits* he believed it was Margaret Thatcher. After the telephone conversation Goose Green was attacked in what was described as 'a very rushed affair'.

One recently-returned serviceman has commented: "All the officers were really pally during the war, but afterwards it returned to the old class-ridden snottyness of before."

The parliamentary inquiry has heard reporters give evidence of deliberate censorship. Brian Hanrahan from BBC TV News stated: "There were attempts to use censorship for news management and to selectively back up Ministry of Defence statements." ITN's Michael Nicholson told the MPs that one naval officer had told him: "You bastards are the bottom of the list and that's where you'll remain."

The whole experience of the Falklands shows how the capitalist class responds when its interests are at stake. But, despite the efforts of individual journalists, you cannot expect the Tory press and media to put as much effort into establishing the truth about the Falklands war, as they did in writing lies about ASLEF and other workers in struggle.

By Pat Edlin
(Islington South CLP)

The real cost

"When I heard Thatcher and her generals saying that the losses in the Falklands war were less than expected, I hit the roof. I felt like going up there and seeing Thatcher."

That was the response of one Naval wife to the current stage of Thatcher's 'Inquiry' into the Falklands crisis. Another woman added, "Nuttie Nott said 25% losses were acceptable; that shows how much he cared for the blokes out there."

One woman told me that she felt no consolation that the men who were killed died fighting for their country. Although her husband is uninjured, she felt very angry about the lives which have been lost: "they died for the government and I hope it's on Thatcher's conscience."

Not many of the women have any confidence in the accuracy of the press, though. For example, they now realise that a picture printed in many newspapers, allegedly showing sailors relaxing on *Invincible* on the way out to the Falklands, had actually been taken last August!

The strain is showing on all sides. All the women look forward to having their husbands back, but with apprehension. "We'll concentrate on getting them back on their feet again," was a fairly typical remark.

The Tories could lose a lot of support in this area if the Labour Party put forward a clear alternative—all the Tories have brought is death and anguish.

By Alison Hill
(Gosport CLP)

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon, which has already cost an estimated 16,000 lives, overwhelmingly civilian, is adding dozens more to the list of dead and wounded with each passing day.

West Beirut has been denied electricity, food and medical supplies at various times by the surrounding Israeli forces. Palestinian and Lebanese civilian areas have been subjected to an horrific series of artillery, naval and air bombardments, when at times, according to correspondents, "the shells were falling too fast to count."

All the most sophisticated technology of modern warfare: laser-guided bombs, phosphorus bombs, cluster bombs, and so on, have been used to devastate what was once a thriving city with holiday hotels and crowded beaches. There has been a world-wide wave of revulsion against the Israeli attacks upon the civilian population of Lebanon and in particular the siege of West Beirut.

The Israeli armed forces have shown that it is possible to destroy a city with powerful conventional weapons just as surely as it would be possible with nuclear weapons. Whole apartment blocks have been reduced to rubble, often giving no chance at all to the dozens of civilians sheltering inside in fear for their lives.

Of the half million or so residents still trapped in the city, it was estimated a week ago that over 50,000 were in desperate need of food, water and shelter. The longer the siege continues, the greater will be the distress of those trapped in the city.

The unprecedented ferocity of the Israeli bombing has not only brought about a reaction around the world. American television, for example, is showing large amounts of film of the war, for the first time blacking out the screens, where appropriate, to show the cuts of the nervous Israeli censors. But it has also produced a storm of protest within Israel itself.

In the beginning of the war, there was an overwhelming support for the government in Israel, in so far as it was purported to remove the PLO rockets and artillery from within the range of the northern Israeli villages. Even when it became clear that Begin intended to go all the way to Beirut to destroy the military capability of the PLO militias, there was support in Israel. Few Israeli workers would have much sympathy for the PLO.

But the destruction of Tyre and Sidon and the siege of Beirut have brought such horrifying numbers of civilian casualties and refugees that sections of the Israeli working class are moving to oppose the war. The unprecedented opposition even while the war goes on, has involved even army reservists, including some on active duty.

The Israeli army's most brilliant young commander—he was the commander of the armoured

By John Pickard

brigade which captured Tyre and, at 27, he had been Israel's youngest-ever army colonel—has recently resigned over his disagreement with the aims and the conduct of the war. His action is typical of many protests breaking out among soldiers and civilians alike.

Many Israeli workers can see through the transparent attempts by the Begin government to minimise the civilian casualties in Lebanon, and there have likewise been accusations that the government are deliberately disguising the scale of Israeli war casualties. It is also becoming apparent, from a lengthening of military service and now economic measures, that Israeli workers will carry the domestic burden of the war for a long time into the future.

What the Lebanese and Palestinians pay for in lives, the Israeli workers will have to pay for in dollars. Tank shells cost up to \$600 each, artillery shells up to \$900.

The total financial cost of the war has been put at about \$1,600 million, on an economy already suffering from a 130% rate of inflation and a \$4,000m payments deficit.

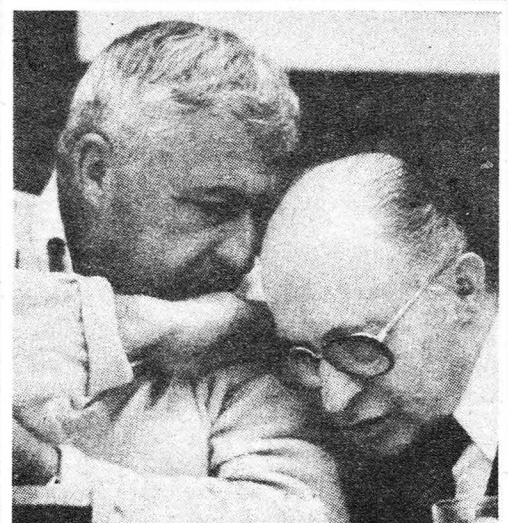
To pay the bill, the government have already announced that \$200m is being cut from public spending. VAT has gone up, it is believed permanently, from 12% to 15%, and there will be a compulsory 'war loan' equivalent to about 6% of take-home pay, deducted from Israeli wage packets. Israeli workers will not be prepared to make endless sacrifices in a cause which seems to them increasingly dubious.

Moreover, despite all the firepower and destruction wielded by Begin, he will not have succeeded in exorcising the issue of the national rights of the Palestinians.

Begin and his Defence Minister Sharon calculated that they could destroy the military base of the PLO in Lebanon. In order to consolidate their success, they also intended to leave behind a Lebanese government of their own making—if necessary forcing the Syrians out of north-east Lebanon, or redrawing the map of the country to produce two *de-facto* states, one Syrian controlled and one Israeli/Maronite controlled.

The longer-term aim of the Israeli ruling class was the removal of PLO influence from the West Bank and Gaza, in order that the Palestinians in these occupied areas could be forced into accepting some diluted form of 'autonomy' which, while giving little to them, would guarantee all

ISRAELI ASSAULT ON LEBANON



Inset: Sharon, Israeli Defence Minister, and Prime Minister Begin. Behind them, the

the necessary economic, military and political rights for the Israeli ruling class.

But of Begin's original war aims, only the first is likely to succeed: the destruction of the PLO militias. A war to defeat the PLO may have been popular in Israel, but there will be much less support for a war to drive out the Syrians and re-shape the political map of Lebanon.

As a result of his inability to create a Lebanese government of his own choosing, Begin is now forced to contemplate the possibility of a relatively long military occupation and, it has been reported, the Israeli forces are preparing themselves for winter in Lebanon. If that is the case, then the opposition within Israel will increase enormously.

But the defeat of the PLO militias will do nothing to dampen the struggles of the Palestinians, especially in the occupied areas, for their own national emancipation. On the contrary, the movements of mass opposition seen on the West Bank four months ago are likely to increase in the future.

Those mass mobilisations of West Bankers, allied to opposition among Arabs and sections of the Jewish workers in Israel, are a far more serious threat to Israeli capitalism than the

activities of the militias in Lebanon, which always represented an armed and active *minority* of the Palestinian masses. The removal of the militias from Lebanon will only accentuate the struggle of the Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza.

The war will also bring in its train a re-appraisal of the role of the Arab governments by the Palestinians. The PLO leadership in the past always followed a policy that carefully avoided the class questions in the Middle East, as if the Arab states, Israel and even the Palestinians themselves were somehow 'classless' entities.

Tragically, the most reactionary Arab leaders were held up as the 'friends' of Palestine, whereas in fact these sheiks, kings and military dictators were no more concerned about the well-being of Palestinian workers and peasants than they were about their own populations. But the PLO leadership eschewed any serious involvement in the class struggle in these Arab states—even in the Gulf and in Lebanon—preferring instead to treat with the rulers on diplomatic terms, as 'guests' in their country.

Apart from its policy of individual terrorism, the wheeling and dealing of the PLO with the reactionary Arab regimes, their

patronage and financial support by reactionary Arab leaders, all had a major part to play in creating what seems an unbridgeable gap between the PLO and Israeli workers—a gap ably exploited by the no less reactionary Begins and Sharons.

The inaction of all the Arab regimes in the face of the Israeli invasion will have been noted with bitterness by many Palestinians. In so far as the Arab regimes would be prepared to put any diplomatic or (in the case of the oil-rich states) economic pressure at all on the imperialist countries, it would be for fear of social revolution, not for love the Palestinian masses.

The rulers of the Gulf states are on a knife edge at the moment, with the Iran-Iraq war always threatening to create revolutionary shock-waves in their own states. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians live and work in the Gulf often in the strategically vital oil sector, and their numbers are greater than the 'native' population in some of the smaller oil-states.

Even despite the fact that the PLO leaders have tried to put a brake on the process, there is always the possibility that the Palestinians in the Gulf could become the powder keg for social revolution. The

French Foreign minister, Cheysson, echoing the interests of all the European capitalist countries, recently commented that "an Iranian victory (in the Gulf) would have incalculable repercussions on the Arab world as a whole."

The anxieties are no less across the River Jordan in the kingdom of Husain, where the majority of the population are Palestinian, closely linked by family and tradition to those on the West Bank. After a tour in Europe by Husain, Genscher, the West German Foreign Minister, commented, "I have never seen King Husain of Jordan so despairing."

Despairing indeed: not of a PLO defeat, but of a revolution in its aftermath. Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan, brother of the King, recently wrote in the Times: "A military campaign was unleashed to destroy the organisation, the PLO, that gave the Palestinians national self-expression."

"But if the present PLO leadership are eliminated they will be succeeded by others, perhaps more extreme, more radical, more desperate, simply because the need will still be there."

The anxieties over the possibilities of social unrest in the Gulf, in Jordan and even in Egypt, transmit themselves into the policies

TV REVIEW- Repression in Philippines

'To Sing our Own Song,' 'Third Eye', BBC 2, 19 July.

This programme by José Diokno, a lawyer from the Philippines, was an excellent exposé of the lunacy and horrors of capitalism.

A country of 7,000 islands, rich in natural resources, the Philippines should be a beautiful place in which to live. Indeed, for a small minority it is. But for the majority of workers and small farmers life has become a living hell, especially since President Marcos introduced martial law in the early 1970s.

Behind the glitter and fairy godmother image of Marcos and his wife (who donated a children's hospital "to the people"—a magnificent building with all the latest equipment, where the children sleep in car-shaped cots!) lies a very different world for most of the 50 million of the Philippines.

80% of under-fives are malnourished and 72% of the population have never seen a doctor. There is 25% unemployment and living conditions are appalling, with some people even living in sewer pipes.

"Why do people tolerate such conditions?"

José Diokno answered his own question: "As soon as the people protest—the army move in. We have a huge army, 300,000 compared with 60,000 some ten years ago. Then President Marcos declared martial law and the army grew. We have no foreign enemies, so the army controls us. Ironic, isn't it? Legitimate social protest has become a crime. Intimidation, often brutal, follows."

Marella, an 8-year-old girl, told how the soldiers had come to her village and shot the women and children. She saw her mother's brains blown out and her small brother's body cut in half.

A small boy told how his father had been tied with ropes and then decapitated. The soldiers then kicked his father's head around like a football.

The futures of the Israeli working class and the Palestinian workers are inseparably bound together, economically, socially, politically, geographically. The self-determination of both Israelis and Palestinians, within their own separate states is a possibility, but only on the basis of a socialist federation of Middle East states. Marxists must seek to build a basis among Israeli and Palestinian workers for the programme of common class struggle and for the socialist transformation of society.

But socialists should understand clearly: if Ronald Reagan is prepared to 'recognise' the PLO, it is no way a move toward the emancipation of the Palestinian masses. On the contrary, it is a move towards the shackling of the Palestinian masses and the derailment of their struggle.

Out of the horrific suffering of the Arab population in Lebanon these past weeks there may at least be the realisation among many Palestinian workers who their friends and enemies really are, leading to the abandonment of the methods of the PLO, the development of mass activity, with the programme and perspective of social change.

Israeli workers also will realise that they have no future in the state of Begin and Zionism. The Israeli ruling class offers them only a Spartan state, a permanently armed camp, with endless economic sacrifices, military service and genocidal wars dressed up as 'police' operations.

If there were absolute guarantees for their own peace and security (something they could not get from the PLO leader-

destruction their policies have wrought in Lebanon

of the main imperialist powers. It may be that after the war in Lebanon there are serious moves by the American government and the EEC countries to recognise the PLO more formally.

But socialists should understand clearly: if Ronald Reagan is prepared to 'recognise' the PLO, it is no way a move toward the emancipation of the Palestinian masses. On the contrary, it is a move towards the shackling of the Palestinian masses and the derailment of their struggle.

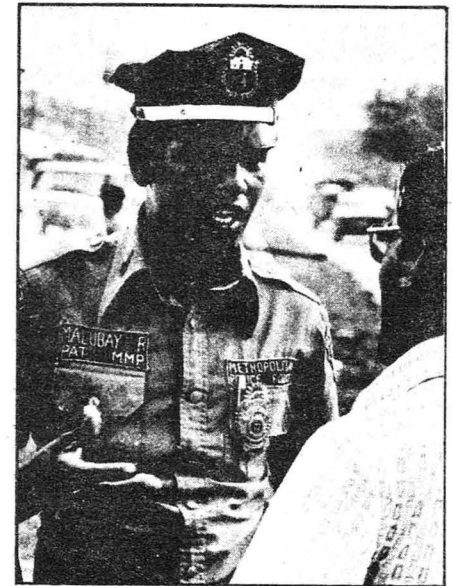
The search for recognition by the USA is a measure of the impasse in which the PLO now finds itself, an impasse predicted over fifteen years ago by Marxists, with the PLO having relied upon terrorism, guerrillaism and the support of the reactionary Arab regimes.

The only Palestinian state that would ever be tolerated by imperialism, Israel or the Arab states, would be one which would be a puppet of Israel or Jordan, or both, either the social nor the national contradictions could be resolved: it would be a West Bank state not very much different from the present West Bank, which is patrolled by Israeli soldiers and ruled by military decree.

The genuine self-determination of the



Above: President Marcos, Philippines' dictator.



Right: USA equips Filipino police. Before 1914, American marines killed over 300,000 Filipino nationalists. Now they arm Marcos.

"How does such a government stay in power?"

Again Diokno answers the question: "Because it is supported by powerful nations, principally the USA, because of my country's strategic location and the profits their multinationals make here."

The USA has invested because of the cheap labour available here and because it has enabled them to site military bases with the most sophisticated communications and weapons in Asia.

But the people are beginning to fight back.

In 1981 scores were killed when they held a protest against high prices.

When fishermen lost their livelihoods—pushed aside to make way for a Japanese fish farm—many were arrested, jailed and tortured for protesting.

José Diokno is one of the privileged, enjoys a comfortable life-style and calls

himself a moderate. But he has been imprisoned and has devoted the last ten years to defending political prisoners and promoting the Free Legal Assistance Group.

At the end of the programme he makes a plea to the people of the developed world to ask their governments not to support repressive governments, such as the Marcos regime.

However, Diokno reflects the determination of the Philippine working people to overthrow the Marcos regime: "Whatever your governments do, whatever our own elites and our own rulers do, and if we have to wade through blood and fire, we will be free, we will develop, we will build our own societies."

By Pauline Wardleworth

CUTS FOR POLISH WORKERS

It is now over half a year since the Polish generals seized power to restore 'discipline' among the working class and revive the economy. Figures just released by the official Polish news agency, PAP, show the results of their efforts so far.

Living costs shot up by 104% during the first six months of 1982, while real wages were cut by 26%. At the same time, total production fell by 7.8%, with sharp drops in food production despite the fact that

food prices have risen by no less than 150%.

If this is 'economic recovery', Polish workers must wonder bitterly if the cure isn't worse than the disease.

It is true that the bureaucracy, with aid from both West and East and with the lull in the workers' struggle continuing, should be able to pull the economy out of its present depths, perhaps back to the levels that preceded the revolutionary struggle of 1980-81.

But the abysmal results so

far, coupled with sporadic explosions of anger amongst the working class show that a modern, planned economy cannot be run effectively by bureaucratic decree from above; and productivity cannot be raised to the maximum by pointing a gun at workers' heads. The built-in strains and inefficiency of the Stalinist system of rule are the root cause of Poland's economic and social problems.

Letters

VIEWERS? COMMENTS? EXPERIENCES?
CRITICISM? WRITE ABOUT THEM TO

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

TUC betrayal

Dear comrades,

On 19th July, locomotive drivers returned to work feeling bitter, angry, and most of all betrayed by the gutless men portraying themselves as leaders of working people.

The inner council of the TUC have showed themselves as traitors of the working class. This capitulation ranks alongside the sell out of the miners, by another NUR leader Jimmy Thomas in 1926. While ASLEF members were giving massive support to their EC in fighting the British Rail Board, the government and media, the trojan horse of the TUC inner council lowered the trap door.

If we cannot receive support from the TUC inner council when threatened with the sack for our right to strike, what chance have we, as working people in allowing the same council to organise support to stop the Tebbit Bill.

The reward for this sell out will come in time for the Duffy's, Weighell's and co. when new words will be added before or after their names.

Many ASLEF members, not of a political nature,

have now experienced at first hand the wrath of the establishment. This battle was lost, not through the working men and women of this industry, but by the traitors of the working class.

Little by little they show, even to the politically unaware their true colours; little by little they dig their own political graves.

Fraternally
Mark Dowd
ASLEF Kirkdale branch
personal capacity.

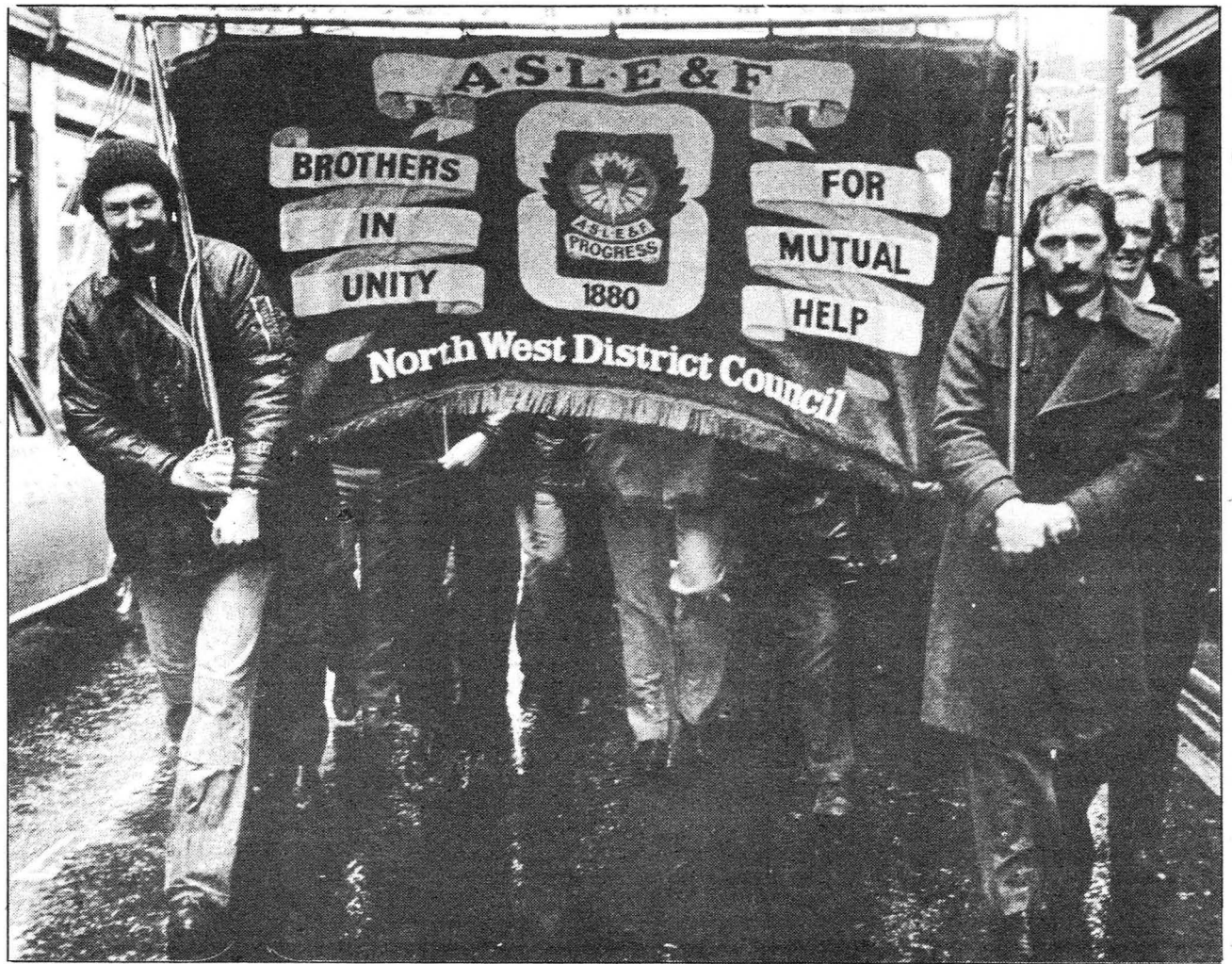
TUC betrayal 2

Dear comrades,

Who the hell do the TUC Finance and General Purposes Committee think they are representing, the Young Conservatives? The day they sold ASLEF members jobs was a very sad day for the trade union movement.

It's about time they got off their "fat bums" and started supporting socialist policy and showing some solidarity against this government instead of propping up Maggie's old boys network. They can't all expect lordships—can they?

Yours fraternally
Thomas Kerr
TGWU 7/200
Govan CLP
PS No to the witch-hunts.



ASLEF members were solidly in support of the strike. Above, marching to Railway Staff Tribunal

Photo: D Doran

Shortlist of one — plug the loopholes

Dear comrades

Over the past couple of years your columns have regularly carried accounts of the "Shortlist of one" manoeuvre, whereby sitting MPs have been allowed to evade a selection conference even though other party members have been validly nominated. The great gain of mandatory reselection has been undermined in this way at Cardiff South East, Heywood & Royton and a whole string of other constituencies.

My own CLP, Paddington, last year submitted a constitutional amendment outlawing "Short lists of one" when more than one candidate was validly nominated. This amendment is supported on this year's Preliminary Agenda by 3 Resolutions demanding that this important issue is at last properly debated.

In order to ensure a debate, however, at least half-a-dozen ordinary amendments are required. I

would appeal to comrades through your columns to consider urging their CLPs to submit one.

In particular I would suggest the following draft for consideration:- Amendment to Resolution No.33 (Chichester CLP). After "Parliament" (line 5) insert extra paragraph as follows: "Conference notes that the 'Shortlist of one' is directly contrary to the National Executive Committee's own guidelines and is also a sure recipe for ill-feeling at constituency level. A local party will always unite more effectively behind a candidate who has been chosen in fair and open competition than one who artificially avoids it by means of a procedural manoeuvre".

Mandatory reselection remains the cornerstone of the accountability which is needed in the Labour Party. The 'Shortlist of one' loophole has got to be plugged without further delay.

Fraternally
Francis Prideaux
Conference delegate,
Paddington CLP,
personal capacity.

panies to take up the offer is British Telecom—which the Tory government is planning to destroy by means of denationalisation. This must be the first known case of a goose bribing a butcher to slaughter it.

Can you imagine the fuss if the nationalised industries used what the Tories like to remind us is "taxpayers' money" to subsidise *Militant* for campaigning in their defence?

Yours fraternally
Tony Cross
Nottingham East CLP.

The goose that paid the butcher

Dear Comrades,

I was staggered to read of one of the Tory Party's new sources of finance. At their conference they will be hiring out space to companies to entertain delegates. This will net the Tories £1,485 per space.

One of the first four com-

A tale of two islands

Dear Militant,

I was interested to read Maureen Boyd's article on poverty in Colombo in issue 610. I spent some time there in 1981 and was absolutely appalled to see the conditions in which people live, if life is the right word to use.

Beggars line the streets in

their hundreds and some of these poor creatures are in the most pathetic condition. Families exist in rotting huts built into the banks of a stinking river that winds its way through this disgusting capital city.

I remember giving one particular legless boy a bottle of lemonade and his eyes lit up as though he had received the crown jewels. Colombo is indeed a horrifying condemnation of capitalism, and yet another traveller told me conditions there were nothing com-

pared to those he had seen in India and Kathmandu.

What a pleasant contrast it was to spend a fortnight in January in Cuba. No beggars, no starvation, and new hospitals and schools sprouting up all over the island. It was a privilege to visit the nearly decorated homes of the agricultural workers and to talk to party and union members in the Havana cigar factories.

The difference of course between the two islands is obvious to all. While the profits of the Cuban

economy are being used to improve social conditions for the islanders, the profits of the Sri Lankan economy are merely lining the pockets of the privileged few.

May the day soon come when the whole filthy capitalist framework finally collapses around the ears of the inhuman scum who cause awful misery.

Yours
Brian Foster
Abersychan, Gwent.

Press attacks

Dear comrades,

Beware of gutter press attacks. The only thing I saw the TV taking pictures of at the recent Tolpuddle Rally was *Militant* sellers, who were numerous there. The rally, the best ever, has not seen the light of day on TV or in the capitalist press.

No 'fairy tale' life for workers

Dear Comrades,

Another royal prince may have been born but life has not changed one bit for the rest of us. An auxiliary nurse I know suffered from depression last year, with great difficulty in sleeping.

She and her husband wanted to start a family, but he had lost his job in a Sheffield engineering factory and so she could not afford to stop working.

Then their luck seemed to turn. He got another job, she became much happier and a few months later became pregnant. However,

It wouldn't surprise me if they used the pictures they took in an attack sometime this autumn. "Tolpuddle taken over by Militants" etc.

The opposition is strengthening us and turning us into a force to be reckoned with, and about time too. My longish life has seen betrayal, ineptitude, cowardice by a long line of Labour leaders.

Yours fraternally
Cllr Fred P Bailey.
Bideford.

not being a "fairy-tale princess" her story does not end there.

Once again her husband was made redundant and so she is returning to work at the end of her maternity leave. The baby she was looking forward to so much will be tucked up in bed by the time she gets home from work.

Charles and Diana may live off the state but have a fairy-tale life. Millions of other families also "live off the state" (but not through choice). They know the bitter truth of life in Tory Britain.

Yours fraternally,
John Dale
Bolsover CLP.

Tories cause suffering

Dear comrades,

How can the government, 'gutter' press and anyone else claim that the NHS workers are putting patients lives' at risk? You only need to see their reaction when the IRA blasted London with bombs. Their immediate reaction at St Mary's Paddington was to

call off the strike and to deal with the terrible casualties.

They do not want to cause suffering to patients, but the government are causing unnecessary suffering to NHS workers, by not giving them a reasonable 12% pay rise, which they undoubtedly need and deserve!

Yours fraternally,
Jim Slater,
Southwick

Delight turns to anger

Dear comrades,

I would like to commend Mrs Ivy Newton on the contents of the letter she wrote to Mr Foot. Like many socialists I was delighted when Foot was elected leader and thought "fool that I was" with Mr Benn and the CLPs behind them we would see a shift in the way the Labour Party had been going or gone.

I was enlightened by the performance of Foot during the Deputy leadership election. While I wish for a

Labour victory at the polls, I must state that Foot is not being led by the right wing, he leads it and it would be foolish of any member or voter of Labour to expect a sudden change in stance by the PLP.

Like Ivy, I wish for real democracy but we must know what the democracy that is used by the right wing of the LP, Tories and SDP means for us. "Don't question us, just accept what we say and do"; that is **their** brand of democracy and that's what we have.

Esther Portlock
Felling
Tyne & Wear.

REGULAR DONATIONS NEEDED

By Steve Cawley

This week's Fighting Fund total of nearly £1,200 shows that we are well into the holiday season, but that despite holidays many of our supporters are making a good effort.

In the next ten weeks, we now need an average of £3,100 per week to reach our October 9th target of £35,000.

Thanks to the Southampton No 1 Branch of the Boilermakers' Union for £25, and for tenners from TGWU Oakengates branch, and GMWU Chapelton Branch. Trade unionists forwarding expenses or commission this week included D Chater (GMWU Gas Shop Steward, Coventry), D Beirne (Leeds), Chester reader, and a Littlehampton supporter.

Collections at meetings in Margate, Pontypridd, Lambeth, Hayes, and Stourbridge raised over £170 whilst smaller amounts came in from discussion groups as far apart as Huyton, Openshaw and Corby.

LPYS Branches to send in money included Chester, Stockton, Newcastle North, whilst a West Midlands delegate to the Labour Womens Conference sent us £25 expenses. Collection sheets round Kirkby and Dulwich (S London) Labour Parties also assisted us.

Individual contributions were topped by Peter Taaffe's £75 fee for a 'Times' article, and by Pat Howard, first-prize winner in our raffle, who donated some of it back, of which £50 has gone to the Humberside target. Thanks to another prize-winner, A Dodds of Renfrew, who donated 1/4 of his prize of books to another Scottish reader, R Patterson (Poltenhall) for a tenner, to T Cummins and D Kerr

(Kirkby) for fivers, and C Edwards and K Jackson (Leicester) who paid £5 for a copy of Militant.

£3 was received from a 'Weldon reader,' and between £1 and £2 from a large number of readers including M Santamara (Windermere), T Surrige (NUM Blyth), and R Rodam (American Rodham (American steelworker). Littlehampton supporters indulged in hedge-cutting for us, whilst cash from Leicester included the contents of 'Sue's piggy bank.'

Two Barnsley supporters, Susan Burrows and Steve Bird, who respectively sold embroidered handkerchiefs and swam 100 lengths in an hour, give a good idea of the range of endeavours possible to aid our funds. One of the popular, if slightly sticky, projects over the last couple of years has been sales of Shipley 'Tories Out' peppermint rock. The comrades tell us that when they collected the latest consignment, the factory workers were enthusiastic about the slogan, and asked 'when are you going to get her out?'

Militant readers would of course like to see the end of this government at the earliest possible opportunity. But what we also want is a Labour government which has policies in the interests of working people, and will therefore be a lot more popular than the governments of Harold Wilson in 1970 and James Callaghan in 1979.

If you agree with many of our readers that Militant has a vital role to play in discussing this programme, send us what you can: preferably a regular donation. We have no big business finance (we don't want it, of course, anyway) and no 'rich uncles,' foreign or home grown.

We rely on the pounds and pennies of the ordinary people, which is why what we say is very often the opposite of the mass media owned by four millionaires. Whose side are YOU on?

This week's total: £1,194.34



ONLY FOUR WEEKS TO SOUTH WALES SUMMER CAMP

As always, the sun will be shining over the Gower Coast on August Bank Holiday when the South Wales Summer Camp meets for its 7th successful year, (Friday 27 to Monday 30 August).

Apart from guaranteeing the weather, campers are also assured of a first class political education plus a variety of social events for the whole family including the traditional sporting contests and "other activities" provided by our infamous entertainments committee. The increasing support for Militant means that apart from our regular campers, there will also be a number of supporters attending their first camp.

Bearing this in mind, the political sessions are ideally suited to give new supporters a basic grounding in the ideas of Marxism. Ted Grant, Militant's political editor, will be speaking at two of the political sessions dealing with 'What is Marxism?' and 'Marxism and the Labour Party.'

A large number of trade unionists who support Militant will have the opportunity to hear Militant's industrial correspondent Brian Ingham speak on "Marxism and the trade unions" Brian will also be explaining in

another session the question which many workers ask when they become politically active, "Is Russia Socialist?". The fifth session will be addressed by Bob Wylie on the "Marxist theory of the state".

These political sessions coupled with the informal discussions of supporters from all over Britain gives campers the ideal opportunity to thrash out political solutions needed to resolve the problems of working people. And with every afternoon "free" and the magnificent Gower beaches on your doorstep, our camp is a really marvellous holiday for the family. With fancy dress competitions, a crèche organised, and a disco every night, there is literally something for everyone.

However, with the increasing numbers attending every year, the organisers have had to limit the camp to around 250 adults in order to maintain the character of the event. If you haven't already booked, do so immediately to save any disappointment. For just £10 per adult, £2.50 for children between the ages of 5 and 12, free for under 5's you are guaranteed an unforgettable Bank Holiday! (See below for details).

This year will be the best ever with increased facilities but still at a very low cost of £10.00. Meals and snacks will be provided at the camp but campers will have to bring their own tents etc.

Send money to South Wales Summer Camp, 181 Hanover Street, Swansea. Cheques payable to 'Swansea Summer Camp'.

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

ads

MILITANT READERS MEETINGS

BURNLEY: 'What Militant Stands For' Thursday 12 August, 7.30 pm. Speaker: Pat Wall, Venue: The AUEW Rooms, 16 Hargreave St., Burnley.

LEYTON: 'Against the Witch-Hunt' Speakers: Harry Cohen (Labour PPC, Leyton), Pete Jarvis. On Tuesday 10 August at 7.45 pm at the Grange, Grange Park Rd., Waltham Forest.

WAKEFIELD "Tories attack the unions" at 7.30pm on 20th August. Speakers Tony Mulhearn (Prospective Labour Party Candidate Liverpool Toxteth), Ken Capstick (Sec. Park Hill NUM and on NUM Area Council), at Wakefield Labour Club, Vicarage St (Below market).

GATESHEAD and surrounding area Marxist Discussion Group. Programme: 8th August: Role of a Marxist paper. 15th: Nationalisation. 22nd: Marxist economics. Anyone interested contact Tom McGuinness, 18 Lumley Gardens, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear. Transport available. Ring Gateshead 783 262. All meetings Sundays at 7.00pm.

'Witch-hunt '82 poster' (reproduction of Alan Hardman's 'football' cartoon). 1 for 20p + 12 1/2p p&p. 5 for £1 + 50p p&p. 10 for £1.50 + £1 p&p. 50 for £11 inc. p&p. From Nicki Westcott, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

GREET LABOUR'S CONFERENCE

Get your Labour Party or YS branch, trade union or shop stewards committee to place their greetings to Labour Party Conference in the pages of Militant. This year more than ever Militant needs your support.

Rates for greetings:
Semi-display: 3 column centimetres £3
6 column centimetres £6
Display: one-sixteenth page £10
one-eighth page £20
quarter page £40

Closing date for copy is 14th September, but send your greetings as early as possible to the Circulation Department, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Classified

"NO WITCH-HUNT BUT SOCIALIST POLICIES"

T-SHIRTS and SWEAT-SHIRTS. Sizes and colours for small—32-34; medium—34-36; large—38-40; extra-large—42-44. Red motif on white, yellow, sky blue, bottle green, navy, black (+sweatshirt grey and mid-blue). Cost: £3.25, sweatshirts £6.75 (both prices include postage and packing). Plain T-shirts and sweatshirts also available, deduct 25p from price. Send cheques and postal order to R Harris, 35 Westminster Court, Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 1UR. All proceeds to Fighting Fund.

Accommodation wanted. Unfurnished flat in London, willing to share required from September 1982. Contact Mark Perkins Oxford: 44644

South Africa—13,000 black goldminers struggle for a living wage! South African Labour Education Project presents: "We Live Like Dogs"—the struggle of black migrant miners on the South African mines. Available for hire from SALEP, 28 Martello St, London E8 3PN. (Tel: 01-241 0434). £12 to LPYS branches/Labour Party Women's Sections. £16 to other labour movement organisations.

Unions fight back! Tower Hamlets LPYS public meeting, August 17th 7.30 Bromley Public Hall, Bow Rd.

Birthday greetings to Peter Linley.

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target Oct 9th.
Eastern	181		2,000
East Midlands	189		1,800
Hants & Dorset	247		1,300
Humberside	124		1,100
London East	211		2,100
London West	133		1,000
London South	504		1,500
Manchester & Lancs	366		2,000
Merseyside	339		2,100
Northern	146		2,500
Scotland East	128		1,300
Scotland West	43		2,300
Southern	173		1,700
South West	67		900
Wales East	97		1,000
Wales West	34		2,000
West Midlands	227		2,000
Yorkshire	306		2,500
Others	275		3,900
Total received	3790		35,000

Defeat the witch-hunt.



Fight back with the official defence badge, 20p each or £13 per 100 or part thereof. £1.50 p&p from Val Pearce, 16 Wagbullock Rise, Bracknell, Berks.

FIGHTING FUND DONATIONS

Cut out and send to 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Enclosed is my donation of £ to back 'Militant's' campaign against the witch-hunt

Name

Address

Industrial Reports



SEALINK: Why our strike was solid

Alan Petre and Brian Neal, chairman and research officer of Harwich Ports Committee spoke to Roger Mackay, Ipswich Labour Party on 2 August, before the settlement.

The Ports Committee members were pleased at the 100% support by Sealink NUS members. They emphasised that their main grievances were about the

BRB's renegeing on previous agreements and contracts concerning wage negotiations and jobs.

If Sealink were to go down the drain as management had threatened, it would affect all NUS members and fellow seafarers in the private sector. Their wages and conditions will follow suit.

Brian Neal wanted BRB to open the books on Sealink's finances. Not so long ago it was claimed that Sealink operations were propping up BR as the only profitable

sector. Now BRB are saying cuts have to be made because it is **not profitable!**

BRB should reveal where £20 million goes when forwarded from Sealink Services to the head shipping office. Is it mis-management? Sealink workers wanted to know what part private sector directors are playing in Sealink's finance.

Harwich workers who have been on strike for some weeks have experienced harassment—on July 23 striking seafarers' wives and children when claiming

benefits from the Harwich DHSS office were evicted by the police.

Harwich Ports Committee have since formed a Claims Committee and are now running an emergency service to Colchester, 20 miles away, which is the nearest office that will make payments.

Brian Neal also noted the case of Sealink management claiming back £400 supposed 'overpayment' to one striking Harwich NUS man.

The seafarers have gained local support from Harwich Labour Party which offered

facilities to strikers and Manningtree Labour Party who have distributed leaflets putting the NUS case, and from Harwich Trades Council.

T&GWU drivers will not cross the picket lines, nor will NUR members. The TUC Liaison Committee say they support the strike.

Contact had been made with Danish and Dutch trade unions with support expected from the Danes, though they were not quite so hopeful with the Dutch unions.

No official support had then been asked from NUS branches in the private sea ferry firms, but Felixstowe NUS Port Committee showed the likely response when they forwarded messages of support.

By one o'clock on Monday, only a dozen lorries, all private scab drivers had crossed picket lines.

See also article on front page

NUR — pioneers of marxist education

Sid Weighell is one of the trade union leaders who has been most vocal in claiming that Marxism is alien to the British Labour movement.

His own union, the NUR, however was one of the two unions which did most to promote Marxist education for whole generations of Labour and trade union activists from 1909 to the 1950's!

During this period up to 20,000 Labour and trade union activists at a time were engaged in Marxist correspondence courses organised by the 'Labour colleges', not to mention thousands more who attended locally organised classes.

The origins of these 'Labour colleges' went back to 1899 when a wealthy American socialist, Walter Vrooman, opened Ruskin College at Oxford to teach, amongst other things, economics and sociology from a working class viewpoint to working class activists. Trade union scholarships alone, however, soon proved inadequate to make the college self-financing, and Ruskin soon became increasingly dependent on benefactors much less sympathetic to socialism than Vrooman.

The authority of the college's socialist Principal, Dennis Hird, was gradually undermined, and moves were begun to absorb Ruskin into Oxford, and to eliminate any 'unworthy class bias.' In 1908 trade union sponsored students organised the Plebs League to fight this degeneration, and to promote genuine independent socialist education based upon the words of Marx, Engels, and early Marxist socialists such as Deitzgen, Kautsky, Labriola, Plekhanov.

Affairs rapidly came to a head in 1909. An attempt was made to remove Hird and to eliminate 'socology' from the curriculum. The students first struck, then withdrew from Ruskin to form their own new Central Labour College.

As one might expect,

many of the old Lib-Lab trade union leaders were wary of this militant venture, but two unions did immediately transfer their scholarships to the new Labour College. These were the South Wales Miners Federation and the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (now the NUR).

In the stormy industrial struggles of 1910 to 1914 many of the most important younger militants, such as Noah Ablett in South Wales and Ebby Edwards in Northumberland, were associated with the Central Labour College and the promotion of local Marxist 'Plebs League' classes. And still the NUR was in the forefront of promoting the College.

In 1914-15 it took the initiative in becoming the first union to make direct grants towards the college, and in persuading the South Wales miners to follow suit. And what sort of education did the Labour College offer? Craik explains the new field opened up after 1918: "new books written by Marxist scholars in Europe many of them of a high standard such as those by Kautsky, Plekhanov, Lenin, Trotsky, Bukharin, Gustav Bang, Pannekoek, Luxemburg and others".

Unfortunately the residential Central Labour College was closed in 1929, the victim of financial difficulties faced by the unions after the defeat of the 1926 General strike, and of short-sightedness and hostility amongst some sections of the TUC leadership. But the NCLC local classes, which were cheaper to fund, continued to expand throughout the 1930s, with the NUR still amongst the most important of the sponsoring unions.

It was only after the Second World War when the anti-socialist Gaitskellite and Deakinite right gained control of the Labour Party and TUC that the Marxist NCLC classes were ended, at the same time as attempts were being made to hound Bevan and the left out of the Labour Party altogether.

In 1925 the TUC General council had promised the



The attacks on NUR members by British Rail will cause a revival of the Marxist tradition of the NUR Photo: Militant

old Central College that it "would undertake to safeguard the theoretical teaching in economic and historical science upon its present Marxist basis". Now that promise was broken. Bill Craik, the former Principal of the college, writing in 1964, noted this degeneration.

"The basic subjects of this independent line of teaching were economic theory, the history of man and his work throughout the ages, the social and political institutions of class ruled society, and the struggles between the classes ... In more recent years this has ceased to be the case."

But Craik also predicted

that there would have to be a revival of Marxism within the Labour movement, because it was "necessary for promoting the political consciousness of the organised workers."

Today we can see this coming about. In increasingly taking up the ideas of Marxism workers are showing that they recognise the value of Marxism to their struggle. And the NUR too will regain its fighting spirit, and rediscover its Marxist heritage.

**By Ian Hunter
(Sacriston Labour Party)**

Merseyside NUR

At its latest meeting, the Merseyside and North Wales District Council passed by 23 votes to 5 a resolution calling on the union NEC "to dismiss the General Secretary by invoking the authority so invested in them in accordance with Rule 3, Clause 5 on the grounds of incompetence and Rule 9 Clause

13, bringing discredit on the Union and its Members by his statements to the press regarding the ASLEF dispute.

The disgraceful conduct of Sidney Weighell, has alienated this Union by the shameful statements which were quoted by the Prime Minister as justification for smashing ASLEF."

Croxteth school occupation

The parents of Croxteth in Liverpool are now into the third week of the occupation of their local comprehensive school and show no signs of weakening.

The Labour controlled Merseyside County Council has now added its support to the fight following a 54 to 0 vote. The Liberal and Tory dominated City Council has however, delayed consideration of Labour's demand that the school's electricity should be reconnected.

Although support is holding up well, everyone recognises that this fight must either grow and

develop or it will simply stagnate and die. The only healthy way the struggle can now develop is by an increasing involvement of Liverpool's labour movement who should see this struggle as a spearhead of the city's fight to save education.

The Labour Party Young Socialists are calling on all union and Labour Party branches to send donations, messages of support and above all delegations for extra pickets.

Contact Cyril D'Arcy, 45 Finch Road, Dovecot, Liverpool 14.

London Transport bus schedules

A conference of London Transport (LT) garage reps voted on 23 July to accept a package of cuts negotiated between the TGWU London Bus Committee and LT.

These cuts are a further part of the chaos created by the Law Lords ruling that the GLC's fares policy was illegal. From September there will be cut in daily duty from 60,760 services currently scheduled to 53,600. This is a defeat for LT workers and all workers in London.

London Transport originally planned these new rosters for the busses in July but postponed their implementation and they have now given a small concession. Undoubtedly the major fear of LT was of a united fight between bus and tube workers.

Ron Slaughter the garage rep at Wandsworth garage voted against the deal. He stressed to Militant that bus and tube workers could have won this fight. "LT have shown all along they cannot fight us together."

"When the tubes refused to operate the rosters, they were put back a month. They were due to be implemented about the same time as the new bus rosters, but then the tubes took action and they deferred new bus rosters to split us up again.

"During the tube strike many tube passengers were just transferring to the busses so we were effectively scabbing. Westbourne Park Garage had an increase of £3,000 per day in takings during the strike. A united fight would have paralysed the capital as we did on the 11 May one day strike. The big traders, the banks would have soon been putting pressure on the government to settle."

Unfortunately the responsibility for the defeat lies on the shoulders of the union leadership who have not been willing to launch an effective united campaign against LT and the Tories. The lead has always come from below, both on the busses and the tubes.

Wandsworth and eight other garages took and held a one day strike on June 28 in support of the tube workers and against the bus cuts. The willingness to fight was there.

"My guys are the same as any other garage" said Ron Slaughter, "and an effective lead and campaign from the top of the union would have forced London Transport to back down."

By John Bulaitas

HEALTH WORKERS

'WE CAN'T STOP HALFWAY'

The strike by CSSD staff at St Thomas Hospital in South London, now in its sixth week has taken a new turn with strikers' determination hardened by recent provocations by the management.

The strike was originally called in this key section of the hospital in order to draw attention to the appalling working conditions (see *Militant* 23 July) and in support of the 12% pay campaign.

However despite its long duration, the demands are no nearer being met. Some supplies, other than basic necessities have found their way into the hospital—and management have made sure that private patients continue to receive a full service on the top floor suite!

Management recently issued an ultimatum restricting the number of stewards on the monitoring committee, controlling the picket line and stipulating which supplies can go in and out. This attempt by management to control the strike has been thrown out the window. The action was stepped up, with all but the most essential supplies being turned away.

Since then, management have resorted to more cynical means of provocation. On 29 July they accused pickets of stopping emergency ambulances. The story went straight to the press, who of course, take all the management's statements as gospel. The results were predictable with papers like the *Express* and *Standard* pointing an accusing finger at union stewards, particularly Jim Gaughan.

But as the pickets themselves asked us, can you imagine stopping a speeding ambulance with the blue light flashing? The driver would not stop anyway in emergency cases.

In addition, management have produced propaganda

But, of course, the real damage has been done. The law as laid down by Mr Spanswick has given the green light to every militant or bloody-minded shop steward and picket in the country, and once again it is the sick who will suffer.

In London yesterday, at St Thomas' Hospital, the pickets denied that they had turned away any real emergencies. One Mr Jim Gaughan stated: "We stopped ambulances and asked about the cases they had on board, but we didn't turn away any emergency cases at all." And what qualifications has Mr Gaughan to take kerbside decisions on medical matters of life and death? Why, he is a member of the Transport and General Workers' Union employed in the hospital's domestic department among the cooks and bottle-washers.

Excerpt from editorial in the *London Standard*, 30 July.

sheets claiming that all kinds of damage has been done by the strike. They are supposed to be administering the National Health Service. Why then don't they produce leaflets explaining the damage done to the NHS by this Tory government?

They have even resorted to harassment and victimisation. Two stewards on strike were escorted off the hospital premises for collecting the picket levy. One has since had his holiday leave cancelled!

Further provocations could lead to an escalation of the strike, possibly by bringing out other departments in the hospital. But as Jim Gaughan explained the strike can only be won with support from other hospitals and by decisive action from the health unions.

As Jim said "if you're going to do something, you might as well do it properly and not just go halfway."

Ben Eastop and Leslie Phillips spoke to Jim Gaughan, TGWU steward, St. Thomas

Nottingham hospitals: End poverty wages in the NHS

The Tory press have claimed that the health workers enjoy wages of £100 or more. Health workers must surely be asking themselves where the press get these figures from.

Pete Collier, a Domestic at Nottingham City Hospital, showed me his wage slip. "I usually take home about £48 a week. I've got a wife and two kids to look after!"

"The Tories and their friends in the media have accused the health workers of causing suffering to patients. This is nonsense—the only people suffering are us!"

It is Thatcher's intransigence that has caused the health workers' strike. She can afford to give the police another 10% pay rise but offers a derisory 6% to the health workers who have already accepted cuts in their living standards over the last

few years.

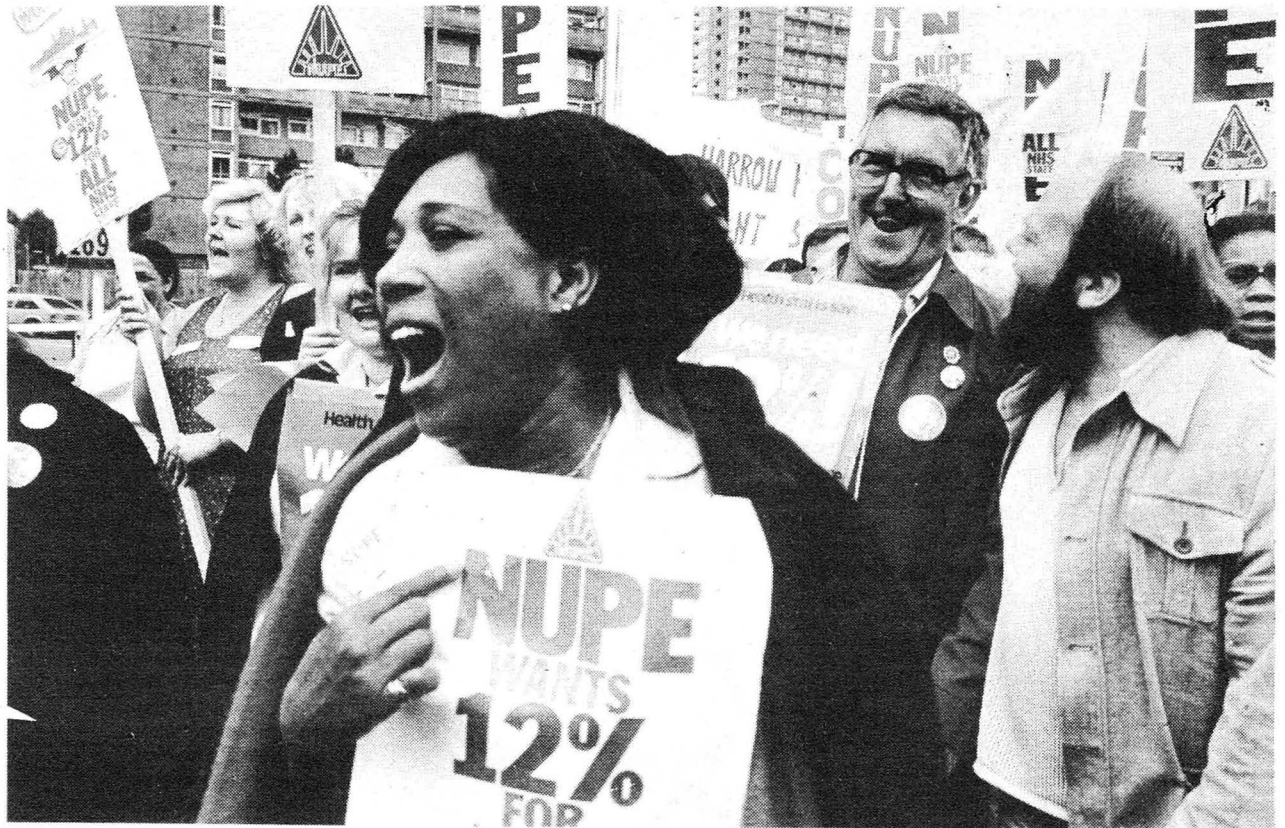
"Mrs Thatcher should come round the hospitals to see what we do. She should swap her wages with ours!"

In Nottingham, the health workers are still very determined to win the full 12% claim. The solidarity on the picket lines and demonstrations has been excellent. "We're now one big union," as one COHSE member put it, "and we ought to stay that way!"

The CPSA, FBU and other unions outside the health service have also shown their solidarity by turning up on the picket lines.

But the enthusiasm and determination shown already cannot last forever. Pressure must be put on the TUC to organise for a 24-hour General Strike to force the Tories to back down.

By Sam Porter



Above: Health workers demonstrate in the Paddington area of London.

Photo: D Doran

ASLEF - Lessons for the future

By Peter Gunn
(ASLEF
Manchester No 1)

The opportunity to defeat the British Rail Board and the Tory government may have gone, but nevertheless all railmen can draw lessons from this strike for the stormy future which lies ahead.

Train drivers will not just bow their heads and accept what management will throw at us.

The McCarthy proposals on flexi rostering remain unworkable. The BRB claim that 71 depots are now working flexi-rostering with only minor problems, but there are 250 depots and many of those so far chosen for the new rosters are the easiest depots for the introduction.

The Southport line where flexi now operates, is a self-contained line so it is less complicated. There are no flexi-lines in Manchester because they know it will be more difficult to introduce.

The present flexi-lines are also being worked with the same number of duties and the same number of men. When the 4,000 redundancies come, some depots will lose work and men while other depots will have more work and the same number of men. The strain and tension will increase.

The drivers' assistants will also be ended for duties over 8 hours, which will increase the threat of accidents because the drivers' assistants give the driver another pair of eyes, which he needs on long duties.

These new rosters have been introduced without any discussion with the local department committees (LDC's are shop stewards committees). The LDC will have the job of making sure that the McCarthy safe-guards are introduced, —if they are the train system will grind to a halt.

We were taken to court before for working to rule—because what management concede on paper in terms of rules they attempt to deny in day-to-day operation in the work place.

What happens will depend on our strength. The introduction of flexi-rostering came about through management breaking the 1956 agreement, so why shouldn't they break any 1982 agreement? We fought to defend not just ourselves but the railways and a decent transport system.

The TUC by opposing our strike and breaking it have committed a sell-out not only of the footplate men but of all workers. We know this strike could have been won.

We heard the news when over 400 drivers were at a mass meeting in Manchester. The meeting broke out in groans. A unanimous vote was carried to condemn the TUC General and Finances Committee for their action. The dismissal notices only seem to scare the TUC leaders. The Bury depot which had been working walked out when the threat came.

We had a placard at Piccadilly saying, "Peter Parker managed to get Bury out when ASLEF failed." While at the start picketing was a bit shaky, when we put out a call we could get a very good response. Take Bury.

When we appealed for a picket so many men went down that they had to be barred from the busmen's canteen because there were so many in there that the busmen, who were prepared to support the strike, couldn't get in for their breakfast.

When I visited the factories to explain the case I got excellent support—the TUC leaders stuck in the

leafy suburbs of the commuter belt may have thought the strike unpopular, but it was clear that we had the sympathy of large sections of workers.

I've learned that we've got to reach all sections of the workers and explain the issues to them. If we had, we might have been in a such a strong position to carry on with the strike despite the TUC leadership

betrayal.

The TUC tore up an opportunity to call a 24-hour general strike and rally all the workers to defeat the Tories. Now we are back at work; stunned and bitter.

But this defeat must give us determination to wage a campaign for a trade union and TUC leadership which is able and prepared to represent their members in struggle.

International Harvesters, Bradford

The Bradford plant of Harvesters is to close in October. 510 workers will walk down the road if the company get their way.

With jobs lost at Rank Wharfedale and Mintex plus redundancies at GEC, and projected losses at Bradford College, this means over 1,800 jobs lost in Bradford's blackest week since the 1930s.

The CBI and Tories say this is due to unions asking for too much. This is a lie. A convenor Tony Cairns put it: "We have been very cooperative with management over the last 2½ years, with short time working and job flexibility to keep Bradford open. It just doesn't work."

At first, workers were told lies; that there was no market for small horsepower tractors. 'No market' when the third world is crying out for tractors!

The union joint negotiating committee proposed an updated version of the tractor. It 'wasn't on.'

How is it then that the same tractor is now being produced in France?

The 'Chicago boys' in charge of Harvesters decided to pull the plug on the Bradford factory, despite it being the most efficient in the international group. To these faceless men Bradford is just a pin in the world map. For us it is where we live and where we want to work.

Such is the haste of these gentlemen that management is proposing to shift machinery already, despite the union negotiations still taking place. Any redundant workers face a grim future. Unemployment will be approaching 20% in Bradford by October.

Any decision taken at Harvesters to fight for jobs will therefore be greeted with massive support from the Bradford labour movement.

By Pete Watson
(Bradford North
Labour Party)

Health Workers ...



NHS workers march in Liverpool Photo: Ian Morris

SOLIDARITY THE ONLY WAY FORWARD

Will the five days of action from August 9—13th be enough to move the government and win the 12%? And if not what action will be needed?

By Wayne Jones

industrial muscle in the same way as other workers to prolong the dispute in the hope of exhausting it.

These will be the fundamental questions in the minds of health workers as they embark on a further bout of selective action.

For over three months health workers have shown they are prepared to struggle to end low pay in the NHS. Driven by economic necessity and fuelled by Tory injustice their solidarity and spirit has been magnificent.

To sustain this fight over such an extended period when it is so difficult for health workers, nurses in particular, to take any action has been a jolt to the Tories and a credit to trade unionism.

The health workers did not want this fight nor did they pick it. The Tories who have, it seems, a bottomless purse to fight wars, increase the armed forces and provide fat salaries to judges and MP's caused the dispute by only offering pennies for those that save lives.

Far from health workers being callous in pursuit of their justifiable demands, they have at all times safeguarded patients' interests.

Yet the Tories have not spared a moment in denigrating health workers, using their millionaire press to spread exaggerated stories to intimidate health workers and turn the widespread public support against them.

They have failed so far. Fowler has meanwhile cynically used the fact that health workers cannot use

It is hypocrisy to blame health workers for damage to the public interest. According to one Consultant Paediatrician at Guys Hospital in London the cuts in hospital budgets brought about by the Tories lead to children dying.

He pointed out that between January and March this year 34 seriously ill babies and children had been turned away from the hospital because of staff shortages caused by Tory cash limits. This example can be repeated throughout the country.

Every effort must and will be made to make the five days of action effective but health workers see the urgency of stepping up the action so that every hospital is all out indefinitely with emergency and accident cover only.

The utmost widespread solidarity action is also necessary to secure victory. And this fight can be won as long as the TUC accepts responsibility to organise this support effectively.

Statements and appeals are not enough. An instruction must go out to all trade union members to take strike action, together with the health workers.

Every report indicates that organised workers are only waiting for the official sanction to be given to get stuck in to the big business protection gang masquerading as the government. A blow would be struck against the

Tebbit Bill before it reached the statute books.

Undoubtedly confidence in TUC leaders to carry out their elementary duty to support workers in struggle has been greatly dented by the ASLEF betrayal but they must be forced to respond by a whirlwind of pressure from below.

Even at this late stage elaborate plans should be laid and activated by health union leaders to visit every pit, factory, office and building site to urge and demand support. Once again the rank and file workers must show the way.

A mass, national demonstration must be organised following the five days with a 24 hour strike on the same day.

Time is running out. Tremendous though it has been the reservoirs of energy and determination of health workers are not inexhaustible.

The trade union movement will not forgive those leaders who failed to give the leadership so urgently needed. But even more than ever it has become clear to many health workers that the the

present struggle is a political one.

The Tories are only interested in preserving a system that maintains the rich at the expense of the poor.

The class nature of capitalism has been starkly revealed to health workers during this dispute. Many lessons will have been learnt but none more than the desperate need to drive the Tories out of office and return a Labour government. But not one like the last one.

One which truly will carry through 'a fundamental and irreversible shift in wealth and resources in favour of working people and their families' to ensure a free and comprehensive health service with good pay and conditions for staff.

All health workers must join the Labour Party and fight alongside *Militant* supporters to achieve this.

- ★ All-out action.
- ★ A 24 hour general strike.
- ★ Drive the Tories out.
- ★ Labour to power on a socialist programme.

SEALINK

Continued from page one

now we're like a nation." Seamen have suffered many attacks in the last year or so; threats to the Newhaven Dieppe line, and to jobs at Holyhead and Weymouth.

A long price war over Channel crossings and reduced holiday taking due to the recession mean that at-

tacks on workers for both Sealink and the private ferry companies could be on the bosses' agenda in the future.

If NUS members continually remind the union leadership of their pledge of nationwide and indeed international action to protect their livelihoods, the bosses plans can be halted.

Without this back up, agreements will be meaningless. As Alan Petre put it "management want to write agreements on sand, to be washed away at the next tide."

BOSSSES

Continued from page one

and divided as Tory policies turn the world recession in to a British slump.

Production in manufacturing industries went down 20% from 1979 to 1981 and has only very slightly recovered since then. Manufacturing output is still only 91% of the figure in the previous recession year of 1975.

You won't see company chairmen begging on the streets of the City of London, but their "sluggish" rate of profits worries them.

The Midland Bank complain they are having to "nurse" 70 endangered manufacturing companies in an "intensive care unit". These firms have debts of £300 million to the bank and employ 70,000 workers whose livelihoods are at risk.

Unlike real nurses, the bank owners get very nicely recompensed for their labours, but the industrial and commercial bosses, the puppetmasters of the Tory Party are angrily jerking their strings trying to force the government into a U-turn.

Top firms in manufacturing and commerce traditionally give money to the Tory Party, but figures for last year show a big drop in donations to the Tories from manufacturing industries.

Engineering companies contributions went down 34%, vehicles down 90%, clothing and footwear down 75%, textiles down 57%—while the main contributions to go up were food, drink and tobacco, up 57% and "miscellaneous services" hotels, catering, investment companies and property interests were up an incredible 350%.

In other words the Tories are more and more getting financed from the candy

floss and casino service industries which have been growing in past decades at the expense of productive manufacturing.

Now the industrialists have severely cut back in finance for the Tories they helped get elected. The Conservative Party still won't be poor, but the spurning by industry shows the divisions within the ruling class.

The CBI, the bosses "union", have demanded a new package of lower investment rates and national insurance surcharges, lower rates for industry (and of course higher rates for us or cuts in services and job losses) plus a package of public spending on capital projects.

They want an "alternative" capitalist policy which, they hope, will overcome what they call the collapse of business confidence, ie profitability, and the collapse of markets in Britain.

But neither the big business policies of 1979 or the new 1982 package can solve our problems. The Department of Employment Gazette now admit what trade unionists have said for years, that official unemployment figures are a gross underestimate.

Between June 1979 and March 1982, while only 1.59 million people registered as unemployed, about 2.35 million jobs were lost. In other words, the D of E admit there are four million unemployed, not three million.

Old Tories, or New Tories can not solve that problem. Join *Militant* in the struggle for socialism. Make sure the leaders of the labour movement stop witch-hunting socialists and start fighting for a real alternative to the Tories and their system.

The bosses are gloomy, frightened and increasingly divided. Join the fight back. Fight for a socialist alternative.

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