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Militant

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THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR AND YOUTH

ISSUE 323
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Centre pages



UP UNEMPLOYMENT PRICES PROFITS DOWN WAGES - INVESTMENT PRODUCTION

NEC
CANDIDATES
SUPPORT
SOCIALIST
PROGRAMME

The central theme of Labour's 1974 Election Manifesto was: "to achieve an irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families."

Yet as delegates gather for the 1976 Party conference what do we find? One and a half million unemployed and ruthless cuts of £4,000 million in public expenditure, with all that this means for the education, health and housing of working people and their families. At the same time the begging bowls of the monopolies are overflowing with the £4,000 million handed to them in subsidies and tax relief. Instead of a shift of wealth in favour of working people the very opposite has taken place.

We are standing for the National Executive Committee as part of the campaign to demand that the Labour government reverses the cuts and implements the Manifesto with a socialist economic programme. We believe that the NEC should be the custodian of conference decisions, and that those decisions should be binding on the Parliamentary Party. To this end there is a need for more rank and file representation on the Executive and for the attendance and voting record of the NEC to be made available to Party members.

The present course adopted by the government, in direct violation of the manifesto, will lead to disaster—disaster for the Party and the millions of working people that look to it to solve their problems. Massive unemployment, falling living standards and collapsing social services are the price the working class are expected to pay in order to prop up the ailing capitalist system.

We are for the implementation of Clause 4 of the Party Constitution, the public ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange, by mobilising the labour movement behind the immediate introduction of an Enabling Act to nationalise the top 200 monopolies, banks and insurance companies with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need, placing them under democratic workers' control and management.

We believe that only if the labour movement mobilises the people behind such measures and draws up a socialist plan of production will it be possible to achieve an irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families.

John Ferguson [Stirlingshire West CLP]
David White [Croyden Central CLP]

The cost of the social contract

The inflation rate up, unemployment up; production and investment down, real wages down. That is the gloomy state of the British economy revealed in the official figures this week.

They tell us that.....

Prices rose by 1.4% last month. If that was repeated over the next twelve months, the inflation rate would be 16.8%, way above the government objective of below 10% by early next year. Over the last twelve months prices have risen by 13.8% and the trend is upwards now.

They tell us that.....

Unemployment, excluding school leavers and seasonal factors, is now 5.5% of the workforce, a postwar record. There are now 1.45 million out of work and the trend is still upwards.

They tell us that.....

Production fell by 1% in the last three months, and over the last year production has crawled up by only 1 to 1½%. That is way below the government's aim of 4% this year and the TUC aim of 6% to reduce unemployment by half by the end of 1977.

They tell us that.....

Investment is continuing to fall at a rate of 5%, reducing the rate to the level of 1959! The strike of capital continues.

Big business and their Tory mouthpieces are demanding more cuts, more profits, more wage restraint, more unemployment before they will invest.

Our Labour government will be asking delegates at this week's Labour Party Conference to accept a social contract which will mean the sharpest fall in the living standards of working people for decades. The last two years have already seen a fall in real incomes for the first time since the war.

The government says a social contract that involves wage restraint and cuts in government expenditure is necessary to provide higher profits for industry so they will invest, raise production and then provide more jobs and wages

But none of their promises are coming true. Unemployment and the miseries of the thirties are returning to millions of families in Britain. What are the solutions of the government? They offer a new job scheme designed to help a handful of the 700,000 unemployed under the age of 25.

It will cost £19 million, less than a fifth of the money the Bank of England (presumably with government knowledge) lent whizz-kid asset-stripper Jim Slater, when his ill-fated enterprise was about to collapse. Meanwhile the cuts in government expenditure lead to the sacking of thousands of workers, particularly in the public sector.

One rule for the rich and one for the rest of us.

By Roger Shrivess
(Delegate from Deptford Labour Party)

20% over the last three months. Taxation on the profits of the big companies will be halved this year. But still they will not invest. And now experts are saying that the world trade boom upon which all hopes are based is beginning to peter out.

It is time these ruinous policies were reversed. The Labour Conference should be the occasion for registering opposition to the Tories and the policies of the Labour government which are guaranteeing more Tory votes.

But it must also be the occasion for hammering out an alternative that can end the dole queues and the price rises, can raise the production and investment figures, and raise the living standards of the people.

A campaign must be mounted not only against the cuts that many public sector unions have started but for a socialist policy to end the crisis. The campaign, hopefully led by the TUC and NEC, should be based around the following programme.

- ★ Reverse the cuts
- ★ No redundancies
- ★ Work or full pay
- ★ For a £50 minimum wage for all, on a 35 hour week
- ★ Retirement at 60 for all
- ★ For a scheme of useful public works for the unemployed, paid at the minimum wage
- ★ Open the books of these corrupt monopolies to trade union inspection
- ★ For an Enabling Act to take over the banks and top 200 firms with minimum compensation under workers' control and management
- ★ For a socialist plan of production drawn up and implemented by the labour movement

Militant Meeting

Labour Party Conference 1976

IMPLEMENT THE MANIFESTO WITH
A SOCIALIST PROGRAMME

Speakers:
Ted Grant (Militant Editorial Board)

Nick Bradley (Labour Party National Executive Committee.) In Personal Capacity.

Chairman:
Bill Mullins (Solihull CLP Delegate)

Tuesday 28th September, 6.30 pm
Claremont Hotel, 270, North Promenade, Blackpool.

Plenty of time for questions and discussion
All Welcome!

Entrance 10p at door or tickets available at the Conference Ticket Stall or from Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London, E8 3PN

Mao Tse Tung

A Bonaparte who abolished capitalism

This is the second part of an obituary on Mao Tse Tung by Bob McKee. Last week he dealt with the period leading up to Mao's accession to power in 1949. This week he deals with the nature of the Chinese state, who runs it and its policies at home and abroad under Mao.

So Mao arrived at the head of a peasant army after the flight of Chiang Kai Shek, the Kuomintang leader who was backed by foreign imperialism. Chiang was defeated in the last analysis because Mao gave land to peasants and because imperialism could not intervene due to revolutionary moods in the armies of imperialism who wanted to go home after the world war and among the mass of workers in the home countries who would not countenance another protracted war.

But Mao did not immediately take over industry. His was not a workers' movement. On the contrary in an eight point declaration before he occupied Peking, the Chinese Communist Party stated "Those who strike or destroy will be punished.....those working in these

organisations (ie. factories) should work peacefully and wait for the takeover".

From the beginning any independent action by the working class was to be suppressed.

Mao saw the regime as resting on an alliance described as a bloc of four classes (national capitalists, peasantry, workers and middle class). This period was one of a "New Democracy" which was to last a hundred years before socialism could be introduced. The capitalists would not be expropriated during this period.

This idea of a democratic stage before the social transformation of society was behind the strategy of the 'Popular Front' adopted by Stalin's Communist Parties.

But the Popular Front in Italy, France and Greece gave an opportunity for weakened capitalism in those countries to reestablish itself and deal a crushing blow to the revolutionary

movements there between 1945-8.

Why was it that the same thing did not happen to Mao? Because in China the civil war had already been fought. State power, ie. in essence armed bodies of men, was now in the hands of the guerrilla armies. The capitalists and merchants survived on the sufferance of the Maoist regime. They were only a shadow of a ruling class.

They were taxed and hamstrung by the government and in many cases handed over their factories and businesses to the state voluntarily. The regime strangled capitalism slowly once it had grasped state power.

Mao had adopted the policy of the Comintern for an alliance with the capitalists in his 'bloc of four classes'. But he had waged a peasant war and had carried out land reform expelling the landlords. The ruling class of China was incapable of defeating him, precisely because imperialism could not come to their aid. The revolutionary wave in Europe by the working class there completely occupied their attention.

Social Revolution

In order to develop the economy Mao, having leant on the peasants and workers to defeat imperialism, then was forced to complete the social revolution by taking over industry and introducing a planned economy.

But a social revolution had not been achieved by the movement of the working class or through a Marxist party based on the working class. It had been achieved by a guerrilla army based on the peasantry and divorced from the towns for 22 years. They were led by petty bourgeois intellectuals like Mao who had been touched by a smattering of Marxism in their early years but had now developed ideas totally alien from the traditions of Marx or Lenin and the Bolsheviks.

Their victory which in 1934 had looked remote had been made possible by the Japanese intervention, the weakness of imperialism after the war and some limited aid from the Soviet Union. But from the beginning Mao's party had no traditions of workers' democracy within it. It was structured in a dictatorial monolithic style in the image of Stalin's regime.

Whereas the Soviet democracy in Russia had degenerated over the years into a one party dictatorship suppressing the working class rather than leading them; from the beginning Mao's regime took the form of a dictatorship by the guerrilla elite but resting on a planned economy. It was what Marxists call a deformed workers' state.

Mao had balanced between the classes, using the peasants and workers against imperialism and a weakened capitalist class, and then leaning on the latter to crush any independent movement from below. He acted in the true manner of a Bonaparte or as the Chinese Emperors of feudal times. Thus the regime could be characterised as proletarian bonapartism from its inception—a state in the image of Moscow under Stalin.

That there was no grain of proletarian outlook in Mao's approach is shown by his open contempt for the role of the masses. He summed up his philosophy in the words "The masses are a blank sheet of paper. On a blank sheet of paper free from any mark, the freshest and most beautiful pictures can be painted". For the Maoist bureaucracy that was their role. They were the sole arbiters of the way forward for the Chinese masses.

There were no forms of workers or peasants councils, no regular Party Congresses (which were only called at infrequent intervals, merely to unanimously endorse the decisions of the top leadership). In this sense the regime of Mao was an extension of Stalinism into



Chiang Kai shek with Mao

forms of the "cult of personality". Table tennis could be played better by reading Mao's thoughts, cotton thread would not break in the machines if you read the thoughts of the "Great Helmsman", the "Sun of Socialism".

But on the basis of a planned economy the Chinese people have been taken out of starvation and destitution. The economy has been industrialised and the working class has grown in size and strength.

For example steel production has zoomed from less than one million tons in 1949 to the level of British production today! You only have to compare the living standards of the Chinese worker and peasant to that of the Indian people (who had a higher standard of living originally) to realise the benefits of ending landlordism and capitalism.

Mao even tried the old Stalinist tactic of trying to force the economy along by instruction. In 1958 he announced the "Great Leap Forward" which was to make China the top industrial nation almost overnight, with everything being turned to industrial production just as Stalin had attempted with his 'five year plan in four years' in 1928. The result was a disaster as agricultural production collapsed.

Grain production fell to the level of 1956 and stayed there for over ten years. The regime was forced to allow private cultivation of 'small plots' which took up nearly a quarter of total production in agriculture with 80% of pig and poultry raised privately.

The British Marxists had predicted that because of the vested interests of each bureaucracy in these deformed workers states, they would degenerate along nationalist lines to preserve their own particular interests, rejecting the internationalism upon which genuine socialism is founded.

That development was openly exposed in the early sixties when Russia withdrew its aid from China, refused them nuclear power, and China began to attack Russian policies denying them the leadership in the Communist Parties.

Cultural Revolution

At this time the bureaucracy began to usurp too much of the surplus created by the limited and backward Chinese economy. This caste resting on too narrow an economic base could not maintain the same privileges as its Russian counterparts. It had to be cut down to size if it was to survive.

So Mao launched what he called the 'cultural revolution' in which the students at college and school were mobilised to attack various bureaucrats. This campaign took on considerable proportions and even led to violent skirmishes between rival groupings and some workers groups who organised against both factions of the bureaucracy. Eventually Mao ended the campaign and restored control through the use of the army under Lin Piao, the Commander in chief. "Revolutionary Committees" were set up in which the party had one third representation, the army one third and the delegates from the peasants communes or factories had one third. Power clearly rested with the bureaucracy.

The growing strength of the army had then to be dealt with, and leaning on the Party bureaucrats under Chou en Lai, Mao then dealt with Lin Piao and the army leaders. Lin Piao supposedly attempted a coup against Mao and died trying to flee to Russia in 1971. The army leaders were reshuffled. By these classic methods of balancing between factions like a Bonaparte, Mao continued to have undisputed almost god-like rule with the bureaucracy and the nation. He acted as an arbiter over Chinese society.

Marxists have always pointed out that foreign policy flows from home policy. The nationalist degeneration of the Chinese Communist Party and its regime is expressed most clearly in its complete lack of internationalism. To further the interests of

Common Market and NATO (to attack Russia). It has recognised the military regime in Chile and maintained flourishing trade with it. It supported the vicious Pakistan regime in its genocidal war against the Bangla Deshi people.

Worst of all it was primarily responsible for the terrible massacre of the Indonesian Communist Party by the military where half a million CP members were slaughtered in a coup made possible by the Chinese leaders instructing the Indonesian CP to rely on the capitalist leader Sukarno, just as Stalin had asked the Chinese CP to do with Chiang Kai Shek in 1927 with the same results.

Workers interests are sacrificed to the diplomatic needs of the Chinese bureaucracy. Mao even honoured President Nixon the bomber of Vietnam and Cambodia, after he was exposed as a cheap crook.

Now he has gone. Some papers like the 'Financial Times' have suggested that China is the most unstable of the "Communist" regimes unlike the Soviet Union where the death of Brezhnev would pass like a ripple. The death of a colourless bureaucrat like Brezhnev compared to a great guerrilla leader like Mao may be less important. But stability in Russia is much more fragile. In Russia is a large and increasingly confident working class which can see the sores of corruption and wealth in the hands of the few. An explosion is in the offering in all the countries of Eastern Europe.

In China while the same divorce between the people and the bureaucracy exists and will require a new revolutionary movement of the workers in China to overthrow it and introduce real workers democracy, the divisions are not so great. Such is the backwardness of the economy that privilege and wealth are not so starkly divided. In this sense the regime is more popular and much more secure than that of Brezhnev.



Now with his good friend Lin Biao in 1966 to celebrate the Russian leader's birthday

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Mao greets his new friend Khrushchev in 1973

Mao was a great military man, and above all a great manipulator and strategist of manoeuvre in politics. He knew when to stay quiet in war and in politics, he knew when to seize his opportunity. That was his strength. But these were not qualities of a leader of the working class, a great Marxist. Genuine socialist democracy means elected delegates subject to recall with a clearly defined maximum wage, and end to a standing army oppressing the people and the right of all working class tendencies to express their views in Workers Councils. A nationalised and planned economy needs the oxygen of democracy to make the body function. The task of establishing that workers democracy still has to be completed in China.

On the world arena and in China, only the working class is the progressive force in society, the civiliser of mankind. It will take a new movement of that class in China to gain for the majority control of the great resources of a nation which has thrown out capitalism and landlordism. China is still under the yoke of a cynical bonapartist clique, who through a peasant based war have controlled the machinery of state and so exercise control over the lives of 800 million people.

The troubles at British Leyland



The Longbridge Works Committee holding a press conference during the recent wave of disputes.

who is to blame?

By Jack Dickens

(Secretary British Leyland Longbridge Works Committee) As told to Nic Boulter

The cause of the dispute goes back an agreement we made. After the Seamen's strike and other strikes, the management tried to lay off groups of workers in the toolroom, but still keep the factory 100% covered by moving workers around. There were several strikes about this and finally in 1967 an agreement was entered into with the company and the Employers Federation (and we can prove this by the written agreement) that they wouldn't lay-off toolroom personnel while there was work to do.

Now, a fortnight back, after the Rectification Department went back to work, it left one group of workers, the toolsetters (not to be confused with the toolmakers) still on strike. We were of the opinion, and we were proved correct, that the toolsetters would return to work.

But the company used the Participation Committee covering all Unit 6 personnel—electricians, millwrights, pipefitters, transport and site services—to inform them that individuals would be laid off. The toolroom representatives happened to be there. They were annoyed that this was going to happen without consultation with them.

We then asked for a meeting with the

management. This was granted. They listened to us for about 15 minutes and then retired. The Negotiations Committee were left in the conference room while they went to higher management. When they came back, they said that the attitude of management was the same—that there could be no negotiations around the 1967 agreement for work-sharing.

After more discussions, we said that if the management say that there isn't enough work to go around but that we think that there was, would they pay us the same amount of money (with the lay-offs)?

Work-sharing

This would keep the wage bill the same for the management, but we would undertake to cover the factory 100% for safety and repairs. This would have involved a shorter working week for everybody, about 4½ days, bearing in mind that the lay-offs related to only 10% of the workforce, but would have prevented lay-offs. This was flatly refused, so we had no alternative but for an immediate withdrawal of labour.

Management had broken the 1967

Agreement. But with the disputes at Longbridge involving the toolsetters and rectification department over and Longbridge working again, we must look to the other side of Birmingham for an explanation to management's action.

There was a dispute of electricians at Lucas, threatening a dry-up of electrical components to all major car plants, including Longbridge. There was also the who-does-what dispute on the new control system at Castle Bromwich threatening a shortage of car bodies.

So it is our impression that management wanted to force this dispute. You see, if the Longbridge workers were to be laid off due to an external dispute, the management would have to pay 80% of wages. But lay-offs due to an internal dispute wouldn't cost them a penny.

Management made no attempt to get us to return to work, in fact the opposite. We returned to an extraordinary meeting of the Joint Shop Stewards. It was about the so-called "peace plan" for Longbridge. It was coincidental with the toolroom dispute.

We had special letters delivered by hand from higher management via the Convenor that the toolroom dispute would be discussed after this meeting.

After the shop stewards meeting broke up, the Negotiating Committee presented themselves to the Convenor.

We took the attitude that we would return to work if the company honoured the 1967 agreement and paid us for the time lost due to the dispute (at this stage, only a day). I know that on the surface it appears that we were asking for us to be paid for the time that we were on strike but we say that we were forced into the action, as the management knew what our reaction would be if they laid off one bloke.

The full-time AUEW Branch Sec., Brian Chambers, was in the plant, and he went to the management. The management said that they couldn't accept our proposal. So then we offered ourselves for informal discussions to find a way out of the impasse. The management refused even informal discussions, and informed us through the District Secretary that they would not talk to us until we were back to work. So that's another example of how the management didn't seem to care much about whether we went back or not.

The management never used the new Participation structure at any time. If you go back to the first meeting the communication was as a result of "participation", and there were set down procedures for reporting back and for paying people and the fact that the management refused to allow the announcement about the layoffs at the Participation meeting to be reported back to the night shift meant they broke their own scheme!

So we were left in a situation where we refused to call all the toolroom stewards together because there was nothing new to report. So the District Secretary had no alternative but to inform the AUEW Executive Council.

When they replied, he called a special meeting of the District Committee to which all the toolroom stewards were summoned, and read out an instruction to return to work and put the dispute into procedure. This we agreed to do. We had no alternative. We are party to the rules of the union.

I myself have been an election agent for the Labour Party in the past and my record in canvassing and supporting the LP in the past is second to none.

I've done everything I can to return a Labour government. But this might change if we continue to find the gains we've made in the past through struggle taken away under a Labour government.

What annoys many of the shop stewards and members is that the Executive Council could take such a decision in a remote office away from the factory floor without knowing what the full implications would be.

British Leyland have announced profits of £44.3 million in the nine months to June 1976 compared to a £76.1 million loss last year. This has been achieved by a reduction of manpower of 30,000, an influx of public aid, and the devaluation of the £ making exports competitive. Production is still 25% below the level of 1973.

The toolroom workers were made more angry when we returned to work because the company had said there wasn't any work for them, but the day we went back everybody was usefully employed. In fact we have all been asked to work the following Saturday on overtime. And now the management are drawing up arrangements for September work, including "urgent" work to be done in areas which they had not intimated before. This is the proof that the management engineered the whole dispute and like it or not, the members fell for it.

It appears that I was picked out by the press as a nasty character, but I think that I have answered them correctly and I'm prepared to debate just who is the "dirty dozen". In our opinion, it was the management who were the dirty dozen: they are the "militants", they are the wreckers. They are the ones who will wreck the industry.

So far as we can see since nationalisation they have just moved the same people around at the top, paid them more money, and it is the same people as before who are destroying the company. We would welcome a government inquiry into the Longbridge and I am sure that the workforce would come out better than the management.

UNION LEADERS BLAME WORKFORCE

Last week in an extraordinary statement, Jack Jones and Huge Scanlon, the leaders of the main two unions in the motor vehicle industry, blamed low production levels on the work force.

This statement was delivered in the bosses' own magazine 'Leyland Mirror' and it read like a lecture from management. They called on every worker to "remain at work and utilise the appropriate disputes procedure whatever difficulties exist or may arise".

Although they mentioned management inefficiency, they complain that "there is no doubt that the biggest single contributor to lost production at present is internal disputes."

This vicious attack on their own

employer-type threat that "if the volume of production is not improved and unnecessary disputes not eliminated the government will see no point in investing more money."

It is bad enough when the employers try to intimidate workers, but it is too much when it comes from their union leaders as well!

In the article by Jack Dickens on this page, the truth about the recent dispute at the Longbridge works in British Leyland is revealed by somebody who is on the shopfloor. We invite our readers to consider who is closer to reality, Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon or long standing Labour member Jack Dickens.

CUTS HIT POLYS HARD

By Tony Cross
(Trent Poly Labour Club)

Big business demands for cuts in higher education have particularly hit the polytechnics. The cuts in intake of trainee teachers will be almost entirely in polys and colleges and are estimated at between 30 and 50%. All have been allotted less places than they estimated necessary. Leeds Poly's 1977 target, for example, was cut from 200 to 185.

Post-graduate courses have been drastically cut. Small courses, such as Sunderland's, have been closed completely and all polys and colleges have been told they must have a 14% "wastage" (ie. failure) rate. Along with this the government has published an early retirement scheme which includes a phrase allowing local authorities to declare lectures redundant "in the interests of the efficient exercise of their functions", which NATFHE, their union, sees as meaning large scale redundancies in some polys and colleges.

Over the past couple of years a spate of mergers of smaller colleges with the polys has served as a disguise for cuts. They have meant promises of redundancies for large numbers of academic staff, immediate and growing reductions in student intake and often sharing already inadequate facilities among more students.

The college I study at was merged with Trent Poly last year and at the time had more students than it was built for. Already courses have been moved there from the city centre site. Now one department is to be moved out to what used to be a girl's grammar school, which had been declared too unsafe to be a school!

Students studying in the city centre have been put in accommodation at our site although it is situated on the city boundaries. Non-academic workers should ask

themselves whether mergers won't mean redundancies for them too.

These institutions enabled the bosses to use some of the talent they had previously been happy to see go to waste, particularly amongst the working class youth. So in 1961, 38% of poly students were from working class backgrounds as compared to 26% of university students. The polys also, of course, functioned with costly extras like extensive student accommodation, research grants and advanced equipment.

Polys have always been dominated by scientific and technical courses, whose sole purpose has been to feed private industry with trained personnel. Private industry is able to poke its nose into courses at any point through awards and competitions that in reality enable it to pick out the "cream" from the start. Poly facilities have always been second best.

My own Poly is centred on the buildings left by Nottingham University when it moved to a bigger and better campus. Another section is housed in a kind of adapted office block. Its library backs onto a filling station which provides an interesting, but not very helpful, background to one's studies.

But now that the bosses have decided to cut down their already meagre investment, training working class students in advanced skills is first out of the window. By 1970 the percentage of working class students in polys actually went down to 36%! What will the percentage be in 1980 if the education cuts continue?

Labour students and the rest of the movement should be against the idea of second fiddle education and for a fully integrated education system open to all. But at present the cuts mean that education at every level is disintegrating for all but a very few. Capitalism has decided it can't afford our education. A socialist plan of production could provide the wealth for an improved education system at all levels, open to all.

TORY TREATMENT

The Tory Bow Group has just published a paper on the National Health Service. It comes up with some really "constructive" ways of trying to reduce costs. Hospitals apparently are a waste of resources and should be cut back on.

But there are some things we should consider not treating at all, like "self-inflicted diseases" such as those produced by smoking, being too fat, or injuries received in car crashes.

The paper sent to the Social Services Secretary says, in school masterly tones, "you will make it clear that it will be no longer possible to treat all diseases".

So if you are dying of cancer, or suffering heart attacks, or have broken a leg after foolishly being run over, remember these Tory words: 'it's your own fault and in order to save money the state is not going to pay. Treat it yourself.'

And the Bow Group is supposed to be on the left of the Tory Party, what's Margaret Thatcher got in mind?

LIKE PRAYING FOR RAIN

Having given his members a lecture backing up the vicious cuts in government spending, John Boyd, General Secretary of the AUEW, writing in his editorial column in the AUEW Engineering Section Journal, went on to express his perplexity at the lack of patriotism and self sacrifice shown by the British ruling class.

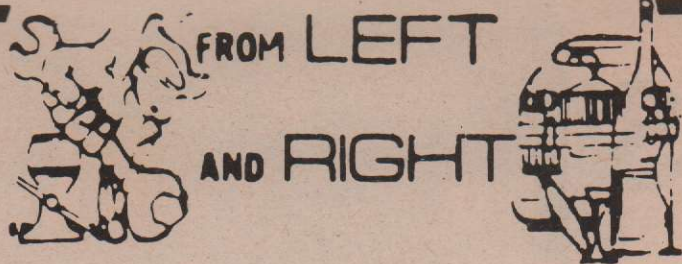
"In our present difficulties", he complained, "I find it difficult to understand the decision of the CBI to cancel their investment drive in manufacturing industry, just because of extra taxation."

"May I remind the CBI leadership of the words of the greatest leader of all: 'For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him shall they ask the more.' Surely this is more loyalty and pro-British feeling amongst their member firms than this selfish attitude of the leadership typifies. Anyway, I believe that self-interest alone will influence manufacturers and exporters to invest, to improve productivity and exports, and thus take advantage of the upturn in world trade which is now unfolding."

Even some left wing Trade Union leaders have recently made appeals of a similar nature. But the nub of the question is in that last sentence from Boyd. The bosses will only invest if they think they will profit from investing. Patriotism and self-sacrifice simply are not and never have been part of the psychological make up of capitalists.

The living standards and the social wage of the working class have been mutilated in an effort to switch resources towards the capitalists, boost their profits and, so the government and some trade union leaders dream, produce a tidal wave of investment. Yet they are then greeted by the ungracious capitalists with an investment strike! Why? Because it is still just not profitable for them to invest.

Recent events involving an Indian guru might lead some people to believe that praying for rain works. But there is no evidence in the history of capitalism which proves that praying for the bosses to invest against their naked self interests ever has worked or ever will work.



TORY RACIALISM

There has been much talk of the activities of the National Party in Blackburn. That is where the split-off from the National Front led by the former Chairman John Kingsley Read is strongest.

They gained two council seats at the last local election. Since then one of their councillors had to resign because apparently he broke the electoral law, although no clear reason has been provided for his resignation.

The big anti-racist rally of Saturday 11th September which involved thousands of labour movement activists from all over the North West was designed to mobilise support for the Labour candidate.

But an interesting sidelight is that it is not just the National

Party that has expressed racist views in the campaign. Although the Tory candidate has been quiet, their Parliamentary candidate, Ian McGraw, spoke up, saying that he "did not believe in a multi-racial society" and added that he expected people who voted National Party last time would vote Tory this time to register an anti-immigrant vote.

It must never be forgotten that within the ranks of the Tories many of the really dangerous forces for reaction reside, and not just in the fringe racist groups.

As it is the last laugh went to the labour movement. As a result of the anti-racist campaign Labour regained the seat they had lost to the National Party previously with a handsome majority.

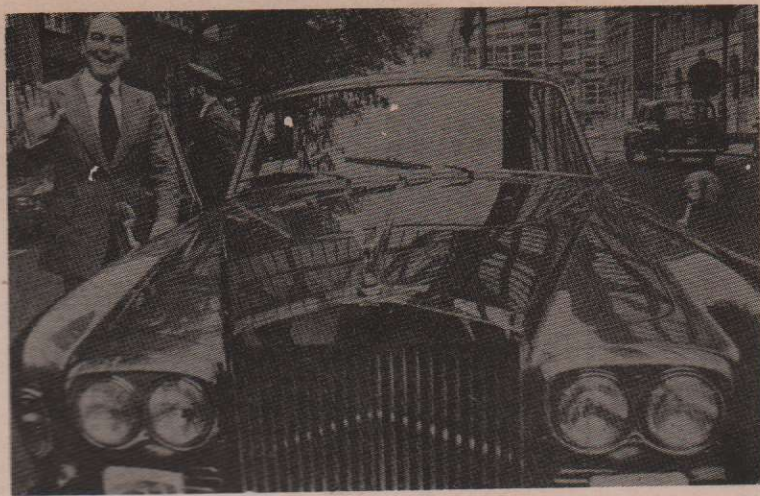
TOP PEOPLE'S GAME

Do you remember the story of Jimmy Goldsmith, the millionaire financier honoured by Harold Wilson, who devised a board game called "Petropolis"? This game involved acquiring oil concessions and operating them for profit etc. Sets at Harrods cost £12,000 each as they were made of gold and silver with tinted hippo-hide or crocodile skin.

Well now the World Wildlife Fund is complaining because of the near extinction of the hippo and crocodile of the completely unnecessary use of their skin by Jimmy Goldsmith.

But our millionaire had the perfect reply. "They should send their complaints to the White House, the Kremlin and the Elysee Palace. They have all bought £12,000 sets!"

ANOTHER RAIL CHIEF ROLLS OFF THE TRACK



When Sir Richard Marsh resigned as head of British Rail he took the opportunity to have a go at nationalised industries and how they are run. This ex-Labour Cabinet Minister was taking up a job as head of the Newspaper Publishers Association, ie. he was to head the "free press".

He said that it would be great to get a job where the only consideration was the "clean and unhindered profit motive". It is not reported whether "our Dick" was still a member of the Labour Party.

But he did say one other thing. "I don't really like trains much anyway". It is nice to know that our rail services, where prices have more than doubled in the last eighteen months, were in such enthusiastic hands.

Railmen and passengers will hardly be cheered by Marsh's successor, Peter Parker either. He had turned down the job previously

because it would have meant a cut in pay from the £65,000 he was receiving from Rockware Glass to a mere £23,000 from "our" railway. Nevertheless he has made the sacrifice this time.

But even though he knows he is entitled to a "gold" pass that gives him unlimited travel on the railways, he still insisted that British Rail should buy at an undisclosed price the gold coloured Rolls Royce he used in his previous job. It seems that BR has another anti-train Chairman.

This is yet another example that until the trade unions have control of the boards of nationalised industries with officials receiving the average wage in the industry, we will not get people prepared and able to solve the problems in the industry.

Parker's first statement was to announce fare rises for next summer. Here we go again.

Catering workers given the crumbs



By Stuart Masters
(Harlow LPYS)

Recently the mass media, particularly the "Daily Mirror" in one of its periodic bouts of "leftism", highlighted the plight of casual workers in the catering industry. They have to queue half the night at employment exchanges in the hope of receiving [if lucky] a day's work at a café or restaurant for the princely sum of 40-50p per hour.

It is well known that the catering industry is one of the principal employers of illegal immigrants, who as they obviously dare not complain are doubtless similarly exploited. What is not so well known is the large degree of exploitation to which regular catering workers are subjected.

The hotel/restaurant at which I have been a dishwasher for the past three months advertises itself thus: "Dine in the tranquil setting of a country house noted for fine food and wine with a friendly, personal service." Sounds nice! However, I will give just two examples of exploitation that comes as part of the "friendly, personal service."

The woman who works both in the kitchen and in the bar from 11 am to 3 pm Monday to Friday receives the same wage as myself, 65p per hour. She has worked there 15 months, during which time menu prices and other charges have risen three times. Her wages, of course, have not! She told me that when she asked for a rise, she was told that 65p is "the rate", and if she got more, then everyone would want more. In other words, no way!

She knows that if she were to leave, unemployment in Harlow being what it is at the present time, and her hours being convenient for mothers with children at school like herself, there would be no shortage of applicants for her job. There was no shortage of applicants for my job either!

One of the junior cook's wages one week come to just over £11. Deductions included about £1.50 "Laundry". This is for working split shifts (10-2.30, 6.30-10) including all evenings and sometimes weekends.

Worse than this though is the mistrust of the staff displayed on occasions. All food no longer required, including pieces of stuff perfectly edible, cakes, gateaux, etc. are to be thrown away. Woe betide anyone caught taking home any unwanted cakes that would otherwise be thrown away. The reason for this is the assumption that were staff allowed to consume leftovers, they might take advantage of this by deliberately ordering more food and cooking more cakes than are required. So much for trust! Whilst of course staff should not touch gateaux, cakes or any food meant for customers, who do after all pay exorbitant prices for it (45p for a small helping of trifle, for example), such an offence hardly warrants the threat of "instantaneous dismissal".

Readers might like to know that the owner of the hotel/restaurant, in conjunction with a partner, also owns a large newsagents chain, a toy shop, a factory in Enfield and a ladies hair-dressing salon. His day is spent driving his Mercedes from establishment to establishment, checking up on employees, presumably to make sure they aren't stealing anything.

Only socialism can end the mass exploitation of workers in the catering industry. Only when catering premises such as these are taken over by the government and run democratically by the catering workers themselves through their unions as a public service will the sharks who run Britain's catering industry be eliminated and exploitation be ended. Then catering workers will be guaranteed a living wage, better working conditions and job security, and the public guaranteed a good service at cheap prices.



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Nationalise the banks

and industry!

By Andrew Glyn
(Oxford Labour Party)



The holy of holies threatened by Labour—the City of London.

The National Executive of the Labour Party is to put a proposal to this Annual Conference of the Labour Party for the takeover of the big four banks, one merchant bank and the biggest seven insurance companies, plus a 'reformed Bank of England'.

This is the most radical measure proposed by the party leadership since the 1945 Labour government. As such every socialist should welcome this measure to take over this important sector of the private monopolies which dominate our economy.

The ruling class and their press have reacted wildly to this decision. "The Times" carried a three column editorial entitled "Not only another folly but also the death of freedom." The banks and insurance companies have announced a campaign to be mounted against the proposal with adverts in the press and on TV!

The theme of the statement presented by the National Executive is the low rate of investment in British industry and the blame is attached to the financial institutions for this situation. The small amount of borrowing by industrial

firms from the banks is contrasted with the position in other countries, and the sums devoted in Britain to property speculation. The statement says that, in the year following the August 1972 request by the Bank of England that banks should restrict their lending to property companies, this type of lending rose by 75% while lending to manufacturing industry went up by 19%.

But simply offering the capitalists loans will not cause them to invest more in productive equipment. If the capitalists cannot see a satisfactory rate of profit to be had from building up productive capacity then they will not

invest, regardless of how much cash is available. In recent years there has been plenty of cash for them to borrow, and it has been available at interest rates which are **negative in real terms**, that is taking account of the fact that they will have to pay the loan back in cash the value of which has been eroded by inflation. Moreover they have automatically received half the money required to finance the investment through the system of tax concessions called 'free depreciation', and more if they invest in the development areas. The CBI has pointed to the real problem holding back the capitalists from investing in its demand that the rate of profit should be multiplied by four times—from around 2½% now.

the cooperation and confidence of private industry; the planning effort would be on an entirely voluntary basis. We recognise that the Government has made some progress on this basis. But we believe that the analysis and strategy set out in the 1973 Programme remains the right one for Britain today."

So what the authors of the new programme never face up to is the fact that with the main levers of economic power in the hands of the capitalist class, the government was **forced** to 'base the emphasis' of its strategy on submitting to the dictates of the CBI, rather than on its own programme.

There is nothing in the new programme, including the plans for nationalising the banks, which alters this situation. It is true that the insurance companies hold large volumes of shares, so that taking over the largest seven would give the Government big shareholdings in many of the monopolies (the Prudential for example holds more than 1% of the shares of 35 of the biggest 50 companies).

But this is nowhere near control and the rest of the shareholders would certainly prevent government 'interference'. The situation is quite different from that in Portugal for example, where nationalisation of the banks gave the government control over much of industry, for in Britain the banks lend to industry rather than owning it. The only way to gain control over the economic system is to nationalise all the major monopolies, **industrial as well as financial**.



It is fear of loss of control by the big monopolies that frightens "The Times". Of course it went on to argue that State control would mean "dictatorship" and "the end of freedom." Considering that we have dictatorship by the CBI of workers' lives and of government policy that rings hollow as an argument.

But the main point was made. If a Labour government came to power pledged to carry out this demand it would threaten the very basis of the rule of capital. It would set a precedent for the labour movement to consider the taking over of the industrial sector as well, especially as it became obvious that control of finance was not enough.

The ruling class will fight to the bitter end against this measure. It will oppose a Labour government with all the weapons at its disposal including ultimately violence to protect this holy of holies, the City of London. That is why the measure must not only be carried by Conference and incorporated into the Manifesto. It must also be combined with a full blooded programme to take over the big monopolies under workers' control and management.

A campaign would have to be waged by the government to mobilise the whole labour movement to combat the lies and trickery of big business and the Tories to carry out this programme. But with full explanation the electorate could be won to support this measure and isolate the opposition, and so achieve this major plank of socialist policy.



The National Executive's idea that investment can be radically stimulated by monetary measures is in fact pre-Keynesian. Keynes himself likened the attempt to do so to trying to push on a piece of elastic. It is more profitable investment opportunities, not state involvement in the banking system which has led to higher investment in Germany, France and Japan. The idea that nationalisation of the banks is any kind of panacea is contradicted by the case of Italy where the state has as great control over finance as in any capitalist country, but which now has an even sicker economy than Britain. The fallacy in the whole scheme is in fact shown by something quoted in the statement itself. It points out that the agency called Finance for Industry has been revitalised with an extra £1,000 million available from the financial institutions, but that so far only £200 million loans have been negotiated. Will the NEC please explain why this is so, if shortage of finance is a major factor holding back investment?

Perhaps the NEC would argue that the pressure to invest will come from other aspects of their programme; from the Planning Agreements between the government and the big firms 'to help the Government meet certain clearly defined objectives' (Labour's Programme 1976); from competition from new publicly owned firms 'in each of the key sectors of industry'; and from the power under a new Industry Act 'to issue, in the national interest, directives to companies'.

But these ideas were in Labour's 1973 programme. Why have they not been carried out? This is all the massive 1976 Programme has to say on this key issue:



"In Labour's Programme 1973 we argued that our new planning strategy must be underpinned by new powers and public enterprise. The Government, we said, must be able to bargain with big companies from a position of strength. In the White Paper "The Regeneration of British Industry", however, the Government based the



Jim Slater addresses his shareholders.

SLATER-WALKER AND THE BANKS

What better reason on its own could there be for nationalising the main institutions of the City of London after the revelations of the Slater-Walker scandal exposed last week?

Here was a company which during the Heath government was upheld as the example for 'go-ahead' business enterprise and how other British companies should operate. It even had as one of its founder owners, whizz kid Peter Walker in Heath's Cabinet. It had made big money by property and speculative deals including the asset stripping of industrial firms. But when the slump of 1974-1975 came, this financial empire was revealed as being built on sand. It had borrowed at a massive scale and when the returns no longer came in, it was in danger of bankruptcy.

And it appears that Slater and his fellow directors had been helping themselves to the company funds in the form of massive loans at zero rates of interest totalling millions of pounds, often using their wives as recipients!

But perhaps the most shocking aspect is the fact that in order to avoid a financial scandal, the Bank of England loaned the company a total of £110 million in 1975. And this was done secretly without the knowledge of Parliament and maybe even the Cabinet. And yet at the same time the government said it could not spare funds for British Leyland or Chrysler when workers jobs were threatened.

The bosses' friends are looked after, while workers are put on the dole. That is the system that operates while the banks are held in private hands and there is no firm control by the trade unions over the Bank of England (which it is also reported to have been involved in currency exchange fiddles which are being investigated by the police).

Support the NEC statement! Open the books to trade union inspection! Take over the banks and insurance companies under workers control and management!

BARCLAYS

So there are two major criticisms of the proposal that socialists would make. First it would not provide "a long-term answer to unemployment and the lack of investment in the economy" that Tony Benn suggested in presenting the document to the press.

Secondly it makes no comment on how much compensation is to be paid to the bloated owners of these banks. It will be paid for out of government bonds, adding to the National Debt and therefore in the end increasing the tax burden on the working class who made these big banks profitable. Surely the demand here should be for compensation only on the basis of proven need i.e. where there is somebody who would really suffer from their loss of shares they should be compensated. But no more for the big owners.

Also no provision is made for the running of the banks by the trade union movement, particularly the bank workers themselves. Unless this is done then it will be possible for the leaders of the bank workers to continue to oppose nationalisation and win support from their members. "The Times" in its long editorial made the same economic points about how control of the banks would not solve our economic problems. But significantly it added "these are not the most important reasons. The real reason for opposing the statement...is that it would involve a crucial transfer of power to the state. It would be an irreversible shift of power." It would end the mixed

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LABOUR'S PRO

cannot be implemented

200 to

By Brent Kennedy

The eyes of millions of workers in Britain will be turned to the Labour Party Conference this week in the hope that a solution to the worst economic crisis for 40 years will be found.

One and a half million suffer the humiliation and hardships of unemployment. It's back to the dreaded 1930's for one in every three school leavers who today face the bitter prospect of mass unemployment, unknown for a generation and supposedly banished forever by the 'mixed economy'.

As the rent racketeers, property sharks and spivs tighten their greedy grip on housing, the number of homeless families suffering the cruel fate of homelessness is four times higher than ten years ago. The landlords grow fatter as the queue for housing lengthens daily.

Vicious cuts in public spending on housing, hospitals, schools and social services, demanded by the well-heeled, pampered gentlemen of the City of London, are making life such a misery for the old, the very young, the sick and the 'have-nots' that Colin Barnett, NW Regional TUC Secretary, described them as "a move to dismantle the Welfare State which the trade unions and the labour movement have fought so hard to create."

Ruthlessly squeezed by the millionaire bosses the living standards of the working class have begun to plunge. For the first time since the war living standards have fallen for two years running. We are 5% worse off now than in 1973.

At least this year workers have had savings to fall back on. From now on they will be unprotected against the economic catastrophe that looms ahead if big business continues to rule.

It is a terrible condemnation of capitalism, and an indication of its irresponsible ruination of the economy, that today 4½ million people—8% of the population—depend on Supplementary Benefits for their existence.

Workers pay

Yet despite the poverty and wretchedness they have already caused by their insatiable appetite for wealth these capitalist gluttons are not satisfied. The high priests of capital demand more sacrifices to the god of profit.

The only answer to the economic crisis their Tory agents offer is more unemployment, more homelessness, more savage cuts, more wage restraint and more super profits. Thus the 'tin woman' Margaret Thatcher declared recently that "One message we need to hammer home is that you can't have more jobs without more investment and you can't have more investment without more profits".

Callously turning a blind eye to the havoc it would wreak among the needy, the Tories demand further cuts in public spending on welfare as a cure for inflation. Their message is clear: make the workers pay!

It is against this sombre background of attacks on living standards and permanent mass unemployment, with the grim prospect of ever more brutal assaults on the one hand, and the record of the Labour government in solving these problems on the other, that "Labour's Programme 1976" will be debated at the Labour Party Conference.

Labour's Programme 1976 proudly echoes the aim of the 1973 document and the 1974 Manifesto: "To bring about a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families." A fundamental shift in power and wealth there certainly has been—but in the opposite direction!

This conference must make an attempt to reverse the Labour government

on to the economic crisis. It must learn the lessons of the abject failure of the last Labour government to carry out its similar programme of reforms—and the consequent disaster it suffered in the 1970 General Election. It must come up with a concrete and specific socialist programme that can pay for the necessary reforms all Labour supporters want and show how to overcome any obstacles big business may place in the path of their implementation.

That, 'Labour's Programme 1976' fails to do. It advances excellent facts and arguments utterly damning to the bankrupt, parasitic capitalist system which stands in the way of social progress and economic growth, but it then draws back in fear from the obvious conclusions and necessary steps.

There are many fine aims in Labour's Programme 1976 which every member of the labour movement would support—the aim to end poverty, abolish privilege, achieve equality—though the document fails to commit the party to achieving these goals in the foreseeable future by advancing a concrete, fighting programme of demands that could rouse the enthusiastic support of the working class.

But even the modest specific proposals it does make are utopian unless the economic crisis can be solved and the resources found to implement them. To that extent the document seems to have been written in a vacuum. It does not want unemployment or cuts but offers no practical alternative. It wants to shift wealth to working people but accepts wages being held below the level of inflation. It is a programme which cannot be implemented in the world we live in, a world of capitalism in crisis.

The programme points out that the Labour government inherited an economic mess from the Heath government. That is undoubtedly true, but this was foreseen when the Manifesto was campaigned on in the February 1974 General Election.

Tony Benn said in 1973: "The crisis we inherit on coming to power must be the reason for implementing socialist change, not the excuse for postponing it."

Precisely by postponing socialist change in the hope of somehow restoring British capitalism to its relative stability and growth of the 1950's and 1960's the Labour leaders are treading the road to disaster blindfolded.



Tony Benn

We have entered a new historical era of short, fitful economic upswings, followed by sharply deepening recessions or slumps, accompanied by the existence of a standing reserve army of labour. The downswing which the British economy is now climbing out of was not a fleeting "typhoon" sweeping past like a lost star as Michael Foot believes: it was the first of a series of ever-deepening world slumps that will shake outworn British capitalism to its foundations in the coming period. The 6% fall in production in the

The much-vaunted new boom is likely to end up next year or the year after the same way as the ill-fated "Barber boom" under the Tories and go bust, giving way to an even more terrible slump in 1978. There is no panacea for British capitalism. The stewardship of society by the coupon-clipping gamblers of the City is bankrupt. Like a soldier stumbling through a minefield they are guiding society—and the Labour government if it works within the capitalist minefield—to disaster.

The document says that "our economic fate is in part governed by forces in the outside world which are beyond our control. But we believe we have the skills and the resources to meet the challenge before us." However, as the document itself says, "A sense of purpose alone is not enough. Precise and positive policies are required for us", and this is exactly what the document lacks. The whole basis of implementing the Programme is founded on the hope of the British economy expanding at a rate of 6% a year until 1980—something never achieved in the post-war history of British capitalism. If this were to happen, Healey's economic strategy certainly would deserve the name 'miracle'!

Investment

But the British economy has been bled so white by the capitalist profiteers that the economy cannot sustain a growth rate of 4% next year because it would exceed industrial capacity and suck in imports, resulting in a massive balance of payments deficit. British industry is so run down by lack of investment that if the present rate of scrapping continues, the country will have less stock than at the time of the war. Between 1962-72, at a time when Germany increased her workforce in the productive sector of the economy by 60-70% and Japan by 155%, Britain cut the productive workforce by 11%.

British capitalism, having refused to reinvest profits to modernise plant and machinery, has not only been driven out of world markets by more efficient competitors but is now being beaten in its own backyard. In 1969 15.5% of textiles sold in Britain were imported, last year it had risen to 24%. The proportion of imported cars sold in Britain rose from 11% to 35.6% (now it is 40%); electrical engineering from 16.7% to 26%; all manufactured goods and semi-manufactured goods from 30.4% to a massive 50.4% and even steel from 8.9% to 20%.

The British monopolies looked greedily towards EEC entry as a rich market for their products. But the effete British capitalism have seen this rebound on them. 69% of these imports now come from the industrialised EEC countries.

Labour's Programme hopes to increase investment in manufacturing industry. But capitalists invest only to make a profit. As profit is the unpaid labour of the working class, that can be done in today's circumstances only at the expense of the workers. The CBI demands that the present rate of profit of 3-4% be restored to the level of 10%.

Although it has taken 10 years to fall from that level, big business demands that it be restored in two years with annual rises of 100% in the mass of profits. That is a declaration of war on the living standards of the working class! Appeals to 'patriotism' and the 'national interest' will fall on deaf ears as they have on all occasions in the past.

The only way a Labour government can increase investment within a decrepit capitalist system is by boosting profits and therefore attacking the workers' living standards. All the

Because of the ruthless squeeze on wages and enormous concessions, massive sums are being piled up in the biggest profits bonanza for years. And yet still the utterly degenerate British 'captains of industry' are refusing to invest. The writing was put on the wall in the 'Times Business News' (4.8.76). After predicting an increase in company income of 85% from 1975-77, the fastest growth ever recorded, it points out "it is normally justifiable, even after taking these risks into account, at least to replace old capital as it wears out—and many UK companies are not even doing this".

"It seems hardly legitimate for a manufacturing company with reasonable investment opportunities to prefer interest receipts as a major and long term source of profits growth (as an example can it really be that GEC needed cash and near cash at March 1976, amounting close to a third of capital employed.)"

"If one looks at it objectively, it seems that a left wing government is doing everything that could be reasonably expected to make the private enterprise system manufacturing company the vehicle for the UK economic growth. Wage costs....are being kept down well below what many companies if left to themselves would be prepared to pay."

The crux of why the Labour government's plans are being thwarted is pinpointed as this criminal indictment of our distinguished "entrepreneurs" continues. "The UK's investment incentives....are now the most favourable in Europe. If boardrooms do not respond to these incentives, or even appear not to respond, the political conclusion will be clear. It will be that business decisions, freely adopted, can no longer be assumed to generate the output for higher exports, for reducing the level of unemployment and more generally for reviving the UK's antiquated manufacturing base."

But need we wait to give our verdict? The answer of the capitalists themselves to this searing charge of criminal neglect of industry and sabotage of the economy was a plea of guilt in the Economist (21.8.76). "Industry may be deciding that it is mad to expand capacity and employ more labour [with all its problems and the impossibility of eventually sacking it without giving high redundancy pay] for a rate of return in profits currently around 3-4% when money put into gilts will effortlessly yield a certain 13-14%."

Why should we manufacture things, these embezzlers plea, when we can make more by leaving our money in the bank? The verdict of the labour movement must be "guilty". The sentence of the Labour government must be "death".

N.E.B.

This reluctance of the capitalists to invest in production is due to the tendency for the rate of profit to fall, explained by Marxists many times, and the senile decay of British capitalism. They prefer illusory paper profits to real wealth—the production of goods and the means of production. This is typified by the obscene example of Slater of Slater Walker who built up a massive financial empire by closing down factories—asset stripping—and financial juggling. It is shameful that £110 million was lent to this gang of wreckers under a Labour government.

Labour's Programme hopes to "double the 1970 rate of manufacturing investment by the mid 1980's". But how can this be achieved under capitalism? The only specific suggestions are government aid and the channelling of funds to industry through the National Enterprise Board.



British industry needs massive investment

million invested in manufacturing each year, and asks for £1,000 million. But the electronics industry alone is now holding out the begging bowl for that sum!

Mixed economy

And if only £3,000 million is currently being invested, where has all the previous assistance to big business gone? What have they done with our money? In 1974-6 the government gave them £5,500 million in tax concessions alone; £1,000 million was given at the end of 1974 by relaxing the price code and last year direct grants to industry totalled £2,600 million. Yet investment in home industry fell by 13.5% in 1975 and is expected to fall a further 6.5% this year. In 1974-75 overseas investments totalled 37% of home investment.

Labour's Programme speaks of an investment strike. That is true. The level of investment and industrial production is lower today than during the 3 day week!

In reality Callaghan put his finger on it when he said "I do not believe one can force the large private sector to invest. Therefore one has to have a choice between a wholly-controlled economy or one which is a mixed economy."

The failure of this government to solve the economic crisis is precisely due to its making the wrong choice. The capitalist free-wheeler's naked role as a drain on the rest of society is exposed when the Programme points out that this "mixed economy of the years since 1950 has been a mix which assists the capitalist system by undertaking the unprofitable infrastructure of the economy and providing a base for successful private profit making."

What does this mean? That all the nationalised industries have been used as a gigantic blood bank for the big business leeches to cling to and greedily suck away on. British capitalism has only survived its own lack of effort by massive blood transfusions of cheap gas, steel, coal, electricity and transport.

What gall for these cossetted old



PROGRAMME 1976

without nationalising p firms



investment to modernise

Labour's Programme demands Planning Agreements with the top 100 firms. "In the White Paper 'The Regeneration of British Industry' however, the government based the emphasis of its strategy upon winning the co-operation and confidence of private industry; the planning effort would be upon an entirely voluntary basis. We recognise that the government has made some progress on this basis. But we believe that the analysis and the strategy set out in our 1973 Programme remains the right one for Britain of today."

If that is so, why hasn't the government been able to draw up planning agreements with one single company? Where is the difference between this and previous attempts which have all failed?

Private industry will not allow socialist planning of its own capital. Capitalists' aim to make profit for themselves at the expense of the workers who produce the wealth. The selfish needs of "private enterprise" have thwarted every attempt by Labour governments to introduce National Plans.

As the Programme shows, "In the past economic planning in the national interest has been frustrated by the inability to control the economic processes in private hands. It is now plainly evident that private and public interests do not always coincide. Only direct control, through ownership, of a substantial and vital sector of growth industries, will allow a Labour government to achieve our essential aims. If we are to achieve a fundamental shift in the balance of power and wealth then we must control directly a significant percentage of manufacturing output and employment."

That is exactly what 'Militant' said when the Labour government came to power in 1964, 1966 and 1974. Translated into practical language this phrase means that while 86% of the economy is in private hands and only 14% controlled by the government the 86% will dictate to the 14%, not the other way round. That has been the bitter experience of each Labour government, including this one which has not only been forced to retreat from its manifesto but has also given in to every major demand of the CBI.

Import Controls?

The arguments supplied by Labour's Programme draws the reader like a magnet to one conclusion only: to implement this programme of reforms the Labour government must nationalise the big monopolies which dominate the economy and draw up a socialist plan of production.

In the face of competition from more efficient producers overseas many members of the labour movement, including those on the left look to import controls as an alternative. The document claims that in industries plagued with "lack of investment, out-dated equipment, poor management and comparative inefficiency" selective import controls would "provide a temporary period of protection to give time for those measures of restructuring and modernisation which alone can give us a new base for export success."

On that criteria there would be no need for 'selection'—that description fits the whole of British capitalism! But the effect would be the opposite—instead of investing and modernising their firms, these parasites would have even less incentive. And how could they be forced to invest?

In reality the capitalists would merely use their protected position to push up prices even further, fuelling the fires of inflation, and eventually reducing the home demand for their

cheaper foreign goods excluded from Britain swell up and push dearer British goods out of overseas markets.

British exports themselves would become the lepers of the world as foreign capitalist governments retaliated. With a stroke of the pen the authors of Labour's Programme swish aside all consideration of retaliation like a cavalier confidently intending to sweep away an army of roundheads with one swing of his sword. They point out that protectionist policies by the last Labour government and by Italy did not provoke international retaliation, but the authors fail to see the difference in the world economic situation today and in the past.

Foreign capitalists will only reluctantly allow protectionism as with Italy if these policies don't hit them too hard, in which case they will be totally ineffective. If the policies are effective they will incur the wrath of international big business and foreign loans would be stopped, capital withdrawn from Britain and tariff barriers erected against British goods. In the last two years production in the advanced capitalist countries fell by 6%. The world of the 70's and 80's will be a battle of the survival of the fittest. If Britain provoked a trade war this sick old man of Europe would be the first to pass on.



Top to bottom: Cabinet Ministers, Michael Foot, James Callaghan and Denis Healey.

By introducing import controls the document seeks to avoid deflationary measures of public spending cuts, higher taxation and further wage restraint to solve the balance of payments deficit. Yet this is precisely what import controls will help produce. Deflation will be necessary to provide room in the economy for the export-producing industries plus firms producing import substitutes.

There will be no way of avoiding the inevitable public cuts and sackings. Trapped between a tidal wave and a fiery volcano the workers may suffer low wages and high prices and unemployment at the same time. Not for nothing did Nye Bevan describe



But is the seat of power in Downing St or the Stock Exchange

But the glaring omission from the section on import controls is the shameful silence as to the possible effects on workers overseas. We are socialist internationalists. We base our policies on the common interests of workers of all countries. The deliberate export of unemployment is beyond defence. Rather than shifting the burden of the crisis onto other workers Labour's Programme should dump it squarely in the lap of the monopolies. International trade war would wreak worse havoc for the workers of all countries, including Britain.

Some on the left of the labour movement around the 'Tribune' paper have also strongly opposed the cuts in public expenditure and on the contrary called for an expansion of social services expenditure to solve unemployment and create growth in the economy. 'Labour's Programme' itself implies an expansion of public expenditure.

'Militant' also stands for a massive expansion of public expenditure on social services. We need a programme of genuine public works using the talents of the unemployed, paid at union rates to create the schools, hospitals, and facilities workers need.

But this expansion of expenditure cannot be sucked out of the air. The resources needed cannot be extracted from the capitalist economy without it collapsing. An expansion of public expenditure without the take-over of finance and industry by the state will lead to spiralling inflation as the government printed paper money to cover costs. Only a planned economy can achieve an expansion of social services and end unemployment.

The strategy of Labour's Programme 1976, of attempting piecemeal reforms within capitalism and making state incursions into private industry through planning agreements, import controls, the NEB and the nationalisation of the banks and some insurance companies, will incur the wrath of the ruling class without materially benefiting the working class. On the document's own admission it is impossible to dictate to the capitalists while they control the commanding heights of the economy.

All these proposals still won't produce that fundamental shift to the workers. While the big industrial monopolies are in private hands all the plans of a Labour government can be torn up or distorted by the ruling class.

control £72 billion or nearly 88% of the assets of the top 100 financial institutions. In addition two thirds of the insurance industry is controlled by the 10 biggest insurance companies. 60% of total manufacturing output is controlled by the 200 biggest monopolies. These are the "commanding heights of the economy" which dictate to the rest of industry and the government itself.

Twice in Labour's Programme 1976 proposals are made to use enabling legislation, a means of the majority passing legislation through Parliament without obstruction from the minority.

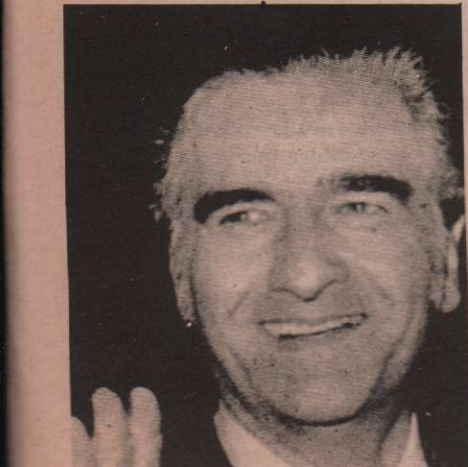
For the Labour government to implement its Manifesto and this Programme it must immediately take the necessary wealth and power by introducing an Enabling Act to nationalise the 200 top monopolies and 35 finance houses under workers' control and management with compensation only on the basis of strictly proven need.

Socialist Plan

On the basis of a socialist planned economy the one and half million unemployed could be given work building the houses, hospitals, schools and factories we need. The benefits could be explained to the workers now and guarantee an enthusiastic return of Labour at the next General Election.

It should be explained that had Britain enjoyed the average European growth rate (4-5%) since the war living standards would be double what they are today. If output had increased by only 5% a year 1970-75, we would have an extra £14 billion more real wealth to finance Labour's much promised reforms. On the basis of a nationalised planned economy all this and more would be possible.

In carrying this out successfully and in drawing up a national plan of production the strength of the labour movement must be mobilised, led by Britain's 11 million trade unionists and drawing in unorganised workers, scientists and technicians, housewives and the middle class. Only with a socialist plan of production and workers' democracy could the fetters of an anarchic and wasteful system of capitalism be finally removed and society allowed to rise to a level of plenty.



Spanish workers shake Suarez government



Young workers flee from the police in a recent demonstration in Barcelona.

By Jorge Martinez

A general strike has broken out in the Basque Provinces of Viscaya and Guizpuzcoa. The massive wave of strikes and demonstrations affecting hundreds of thousands of workers are in protest over the cold-blooded shooting of a young Basque worker during a peaceful demonstration in Fuenterrabia in Guizpuzcoa, near the French border.

The young man, Jesus Maria Zabala Erasun, 22 years old, was shot twice in the chest during a confrontation between armed riot police and demonstrators who were demanding amnesty. Other people were also injured by gunshot wounds at the same time.

Within minutes of the news being known, a widespread reaction of anger and revulsion swept through the province. All the bars of the zone shut down in sympathy. The entire people went into mourning. According to the press, up to 11,000 people attended the funeral after which they staged a demonstration whose silence was broken by chants and cries of groups of young people against the police, who attacked the crowd with rubber bullets and tear gas.

As a result of this police provocation, the crowds stopped the traffic and erected barricades. Since then, the strike wave has spread like rings of water after a stone has been thrown into a pool. Barricades have made their appearance in other parts of the Basque country and there is news of other confrontations with the police, although the press reports are sparse and the television and radio, tame creatures of the regime, are silent.

The effect of the shooting at Fuenterrabia can be gauged by the fact that within a matter of days 18 local councils in Guipuzcoa signed a protest statement about the "brutality of

official repression." The strongly worded protest condemned the police for a "real provocation against our people," solidarised with the families of the dead and wounded and demanded the punishment of those responsible for the crimes.

This is the charged atmosphere which grips Spain even before the predicted movements of the workers begin over wage bargaining in the Autumn. The press talks about a "hot Autumn" and they will not be mistaken. With over a million unemployed (and no dole) and a rate of inflation of 25% (nearly twice that of Britain) the economic plight of the workers has gone from bad to worse.

All the relative gains which had been won in the last period of economic boom have been taken away. Even the wage gains won by some sections in the strike wave of January-March of this year have been wiped out by the constantly rising cost of living. Despite the devaluation of the peseta, the Spanish industry's competitiveness is non-existent.

Nervous

Spain has the largest balance of trade deficit in the OECD. The Spanish capitalists, scared stiff of the future, are sending their millions out of the country. Only the other day, Camilio 16, a liberal magazine, carried an amusing cartoon of a fascist-looking Spanish capitalist loading money on to a van. Parodying the motto of the Three Musketeers, he was quoted as saying: "All for One! And one for Switzerland!"

The capitalists have reason to be nervous. The incident at Fuenterrabia was by no means isolated. Only just over a month earlier, after the shooting of a demonstrator in Madrid, 100,000 workers held a protest strike in the capital city.

In the weeks before the latest outbreak, a powerful movement of the building workers was unfolding in the El Ferrol and Coruna in Galicia and the towns of Leon and Burgos, the last two relative newcomers to the struggle.

But what an inspiring élan these building workers have shown! They have fought with a tenacity and a stubbornness that would be a source of pride to many a more mature section of the class. From the outset they have firmly held out for two demands: first: no arrests or victimisations. Second: we talk only through our representatives elected in "assemblies" as mass meetings are called.

This is a direct challenge to the authority of the fascist vertical "trade union", the Sindicato. In Burgos, the men agreed under pressure to accept a "compromise" that the negotiations would be put through a "mixed commission"—part representatives, part Sindicato officials.

But even then they put a sting in the tail by insisting that there be no agreement signed unless the men had voted for it in an assembly. Shamefaced the boss had to agree to this, and even to "allow" the strike to continue and hold mass meetings without interference.

In Coruna, the arrest of strike leaders led to mass demonstrations of 5,000 workers and clashes with the police. They refused to enter into any negotiations until their leaders were let out—which actually took place a few days later. In the city of Leon, out of 10,000 building workers, 8,000 were on strike and every site shut down. Again, the men refused to negotiate while their leaders were in jail.

Numerous slogans have been painted up on the building sites calling for the release of the prisoners and dissolution

of the repression bodies, a slogan particularly identified with the UGT and Socialist Party, since the CP has never allowed it (in January and February, they encouraged the workers to applaud the police on every suitable occasion!).

The situation in Spain, as we see from these few facts, is reaching boiling point. The slightest spark could set the powder keg alight. The movement which is developing spontaneously "from below" requires conscious political leadership to become generalised, linking up all the different movements into one massive mobilisation to sweep the fascist monarch and his camarilla into the dustbins of history.

Negotiate

Unfortunately those best able to provide this leadership, namely the leaders of the "Communist" party, up till now the majority party of the active workers, has only acted as a brake on the movement. The CP leaders have their eyes firmly fixed on ministerial office tomorrow. As for today, they see the movement of the workers at best as a means of putting pressure on the government in order to secure legalisation. They have fallen over themselves in their haste to "negotiate" with the government. It is, in fact, their main slogan at the present time.

Only last week, Carrillo stated publicly that he would be very pleased to talk to King Juan Carlos (not just Suarez, the Prime Minister, mark you, but Juan Carlos). The CP leaders of the Workers' Commissions held discussions last week with Enrique de la Mata, Minister of Trade Union Relations.

For its part, the government is in no hurry to legalize the CP. Why should it be? If there is no immediate threat, thanks to the "respectable" workers' leaders, why make haste? The behaviour of the "Democratic Opposition" organized in "Democratic Coordination", ostensibly "realistic" and "responsible", has in fact played right into the hands of the Suarez government, and encouraged the most reactionary sections behind it.

Terrified of the movement of the masses, these fascist gangsters are constantly reassured by the diplomatic mincing of the opposition leaders. That to a large extent explains the recent partial swing towards repression on the part of a section of the apparatus.

The fascist vertical "trade union" or Sindicato is rotting on its feet. Completely discredited, no section of the workers takes it seriously any more. The government itself would like to be rid of it. But there is a problem: the thousands of well-paid officials who have made a cushy living in the bloated Sindicato apparatus cry out in plaintive chorus: "What is to be done with us?" The workers, no doubt, would have a good answer. But the government has a better one: Why not create a special Ministry of Sport?

Here, too, the CP leaders have learned nothing and forgotten everything. We can state categorically that the only thing which has so far saved the Sindicato from absolute collapse has been the continued CP policy of participating in the Sindicato elections.

Even now, when the class is turning its back completely on this fascist institution, the CP-controlled Workers' Commissions still have one foot in and the other one out. That they have

cautiously moved to change the earlier position of "taking over" the Sindicato from within to one of establishing a new trade union of their own is entirely due to the pressure of the class. And still they persist in refusing to resign as "erlaces" and "jurados" (minor Sindicato officials) while, as we saw in the building workers' dispute, the automatic tendency of the workers now is to elect their own representatives outside of the Sindicato.

The CP will pay the price for its opportunism. It is not by chance that the Workers' Commissions find themselves in crisis, with a series of splits taking place, as happened the other day in Seville, while the UGT which has always maintained a position of boycott of the Sindicato is growing by leaps and bounds in every part of the country.

The Suarez regime reflects the crisis and impasse not only of the dictatorship, but of Spanish capitalism itself. Inwardly split, buffeted from left and right, the government can count on only the slenderest basis of social support. It would be no exaggeration to say that the Suarez government would not have lasted 24 hours had it not been for the false policies pursued by the leaders of the so-called "Democratic Opposition".

Primitive man worshipped wooden idols manufactured by his own hand. The 'liberal' intellectual 'democrats' and those workers' leaders who have fallen in with them regard with superstitious awe the supposed strength of a government hanging by a thread. The only thing that keeps the thread intact is the temporary and relative inertia of the masses. The workers look to their leaders for a lead. Their leaders look to the 'liberal' allies in "Democratic Coordination" who in turn bow and scrape to Suarez, who can hardly believe his good luck.

Marxism

By a stealthy combination of grudging concessions to the politicians and kicks to the workers, Suarez hopes to save as much of the old dictatorial apparatus as possible, washing down the facade and giving it a lick of "democratic" paint. To avoid all possible misunderstandings, the "liberal" Premier carefully explained his plans to the general staff of the armed forces the other day. Evidently the fascist military went away well contented. Their future was in good hands.

Fortunately, what happens in Spain will not be solely determined by the wheelings and dealings of the leaders of the workers' parties and the liberals. The masses have yet to say their word. In the coming months, the events of Fuenterrabia will be repeated on an even vaster scale. After forty years of nightmarish repression the masses have found their voice and their feet. No act of violence can deter them from their goal.

On the basis of experience, the young generation of workers will learn rapidly. In the ranks of the Socialist and Communist parties are already thousands of class-conscious and steel-hardened workers who will not permit a repetition of the tragedy of 1931-37. These workers will swiftly assimilate the programme of revolutionary Marxism, sweep aside the policies of Popular Front class collaborationism and pave the way for the socialist revolution in Spain.



The caption reads "collective bargaining".

THATCHER'S PRIDE?

Dear Comrades,

I don't feel that the 'Militant' did justice to the item on the Tory Party funds which appeared under the heading 'Thatcher's Pride' in the 'Left and Right' column. You point out that £1,201,935 was donated to the Tory Party and its allies; what you fail to point out is that less than 50% of that figure actually went into the Tory Party funds, £591,788. This compares to the £1.6 million that went to the Tories in 1974 under the Heath leadership. This was a record figure. (These figures were researched by Labour Research).

Although spokesmen offer two excuses, that in 1974 there were two elections and in 1975 there was the EEC referendum, 'Thatcher's Pride' is a little overstatement. Especially when Labour is on a knife edge majority and the Tories keep foaming at the mouth about bringing down the government.

It's obvious the big business backers of the Tories don't share her enthusiasm for an early election. Perhaps this is hardly surprising when as a result of the Labour government's efforts, bumper profits are forecast this year and the labour movement has been lulled (for the moment) into accepting massive cutbacks in their standard of living.

On the other side perhaps Thatcher wouldn't have the same lulling affect with her hammering reds talk and how some poppies must grow taller, than other types of government. Don't you feel that this is closer to the significance of the Tory funds and not Thatcher's Pride!

Yours fraternally
Bob Edwards
Harlow CLP

CRIMINAL TRESPASS

Dear Sir,

I am writing on behalf of the Manchester Campaign Against the Criminal Trespass Law. Our aim is to win as much support as possible, from within and without the labour movement for opposition to the Law Commission's proposed Criminal Trespass Law. Under these proposals there is the aim of establishing under Section 2, five new criminal offences, concerned with "Entering and Remaining on Property", ie. trespass.

As yet the TUC has expressed opposition to two of the proposals. Mr Bernard Dix at last week's Congress criticised the General Council for this, (quite rightly we feel) and called for the TUC to oppose all the Law Commission's proposals. Unfortunately, this particularly nasty piece of potential legislation has had insufficient publicity and therefore very little airing in the labour movement. This can only be to our undoing.

In a time of high unemployment the needs of workers to defend their jobs, needs help not hindrance. This proposed legislation carries all the hallmarks of the opposite. Taken as a whole, these five offences are a serious threat both to trade union action and to direct action in the community. In particular, the Bill would mean that factory occupations would be liable to suffer widespread police intervention, with the occupiers facing arrest.

Urgency in this matter is now of prime importance as the Bill could become law in the next session of Parliament. We cannot but stress the urgency of the situation and call upon all members of the trade union movement to win their unions to oppose this, extremely dangerous Bill.

There are local CACTL's around the country, for addresses and further information contact: CACTL c/o 6 Bowden Street, London SE11. Tel 01-289-3877.

Manchester CACTL: Sec, John Flower, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester. Tel 061-224-2804.

Yours Sincerely

J Brennen

for Manchester CACTL

keep them in the schools



Dear Comrades,

"Not that I am accusing anyone of being in cahoots with the government and of fiddling things in such a way as to force sixth formers to stay on at school for yet another year, thereby alleviating the country's devastating unemployment figures, but this year's crop of A-levels leaves much to be desired."

That is how John Izbicki of the 'Daily Telegraph' [13.9.76], began an article on the "Mystery of the failed A-levels", as he called it. Yes, even the right wing 'Telegraph' is forced to show how education is cynically manipulated to meet the requirements of capitalism. This year's crop of results have been the lowest for years, and the hopes of thousands of young people have been smashed to ruins.

This can only be accounted for by those at the top of our society wishing to keep students in school, out of University and off the dole. To achieve their aim, standards have been raised to allow a lower percentage through "the net" of the exam system. This can only have disastrous effects, and the schools alone will now be stretched to the limit as the cuts take their toll.

In my school alone, the number of pupils returning to resit 'O' levels has doubled, and timetables have had to undergo hasty rearrangement to cope with the situation. The choice of a return to school or £7.70 on the dole is no choice at all, and pupils with little hope of success are being encouraged back to waste a vital year of their lives.

It is clear that this situation will only grow worse unless the Labour government is prepared to take action now. There are no easy solutions to the growing crisis in education. Only a real socialist education policy, backed up by control of the economy can give the youth in Britain a future.

Yours fraternally
J Harrison
NUT

Points about Immigration

Dear Comrades,

I am compelled to answer three points that a worker has raised about immigration and racialism.

The first is "This country cannot afford to allow any more foreigners in". Would this comrade and other members of the working class benefit at all if further immigration was stopped? The answer is plain enough that by arguing over immigration in such a manner he is evading the main issue. Under capitalism, the working class as a whole cannot benefit from this system in which we are living whether immigration continues or not.

The second point is "once Britain becomes a socialist state, it should remain for the British only and not for the other British passport holders to come and jump on the bandwagon....Russia's revolution was for the Russians and China's was for the Chinese and we should be the same." Who said that Russia and China are democratic socialist countries? Obviously this view is nationalist and ignores the ABC of socialism. How could Britain under socialism cut off immigration without the armed force of law? The only practical way to stop the flow of millions into socialist little Britain would be the abolition of capitalism in the world which millions of socialists abroad are aiming for.

Socialism is an international movement

under the banner of Marx's slogan "Workers of the World Unite". The nationalist conflict between Russia and China is due to the narrow nationalist needs of the privileged bureaucracies who rule over the worker's states, whereas genuine workers' democracy is based on socialist internationalism, the identical needs and interests of all workers. If a "Britain for the British" attitude is taken then we are dividing ourselves away from other socialists abroad which will spark off reaction as in the Russia/China case. Socialism is for the working class of the world so how can we justify just concentrating socialism for ourselves only. Only by uniting our socialist beliefs with our comrades abroad can we prepare the way forward to real peace among mankind without any fear of war and bloodshed that capitalism and nationalism provides.

The final point is "Racialism will always exist". Under capitalism, where want and shortages exist this is correct. Under socialism, with full employment, decent wages and housing for all, the material basis for racialism will be wiped out along with capitalism and nationalism.

Yours fraternally
Bob Young
Scarborough CLP

how far the £ goes

Dear Comrade,

Just an indication of how far the £ goes these days. was brought home to me by a building worker. He couldn't afford a holiday away from home this year for the whole family and settled for day trips. His two young sons had a bee in their bonnet about going to the Science Museum.

Taking the wife and boys up by rail on "cheap day" returns and a trip on the Underground cost him £15 in all, much to his anger. It bit a big hole in his holiday pay. To add insult to injury, the following day a

number of relations descended, on him unexpectedly. To feed six adults and six young children on fish and chips for one meal cost him £6.50 at the corner fish and chip shop.

When asked what he thought of the Labour government, he said he always thought the Labour Party was for the working man, "if they want my vote again, they had better start making up quick."

Yours fraternally
Mike Singleton
Hove CLP

your say

Letters to: Editor, MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

SOUTH AFRICAN BLACK & WHITE UNITY

Dear Comrades,

We would like to take this opportunity to praise the article "140 Killed in Soweto Massacre" contained in "Militant" No 310 (25 June).

However, we were puzzled by the last paragraph which read: 'The South African black workers will find a way to split and win over a section of the white ruling class. This could prepare the way for a Socialist South Africa.' Much as this has an appeal and is desirable, as is any instance of working class unity, our feelings were that it seemed a very improbable occurrence given the degree of racial tensions and antagonisms. Moreover we could think of no historical evidence that the black and the same way, as for instance, Protestant and Catholic workers in Ireland have been.

In a later article "Militant" No

313-16 July) it is admitted that '...state repression has prevented non-racial labour organisations from emerging as a hopeful and viable alternative' but still maintains that white workers can be won to a programme of democratic and socialist demands due to fissures in the white skilled trade unions. Unless there is some kind of precedent for workers' unity it is dubious that whites would turn to blacks on whose backs the high standard of living for whites is based to solve their economic problems.

We would be pleased and relieved to learn of any evidence from the paper so as to calm our fears that workers' unity in South Africa is little more than wishful thinking.

Yours fraternally,
Banbury LPYS

EDITORIAL REPLY

A bloody upheaval on racist lines cannot, unfortunately, be altogether ruled out. The time-honoured policies of the South African ruling class, backed by big business in Britain, the United States and elsewhere, have certainly created all the conditions for such a conflict. The enormously privileged position of a section of the whites reinforces all the fanatical prejudices and bigotry deliberately fostered by the ruling class.

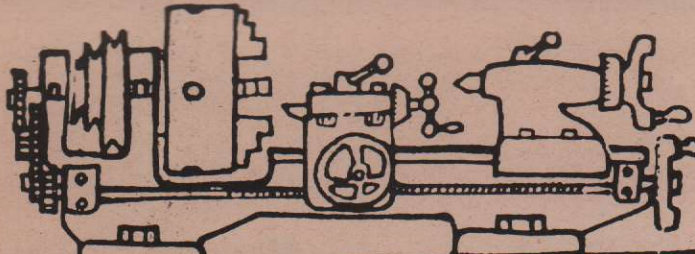
On the other hand, the barbarous super-exploitation of the African workers and migrant workers, intensified by systematic national and racial oppression, has undoubtedly built up a deep, burning hatred among the blacks for their white oppressors. Nevertheless, it would be entirely wrong for Socialists to start out from the inevitability of bloody racial conflict. Given the right leadership, the black working class, which holds the key to the overthrow of Apartheid and the fight for Socialism, could win the support of sections of the white workers, and at least neutralise others.

Following the great French revolution, for example, the "Black Jaco-

bin" leaders of the slave revolt in San Domingo managed to avert a spontaneous racial massacre and win over the mulattos and sections of the white population on the basis of their radical democratic ideas. In South Africa itself, there were mass demonstrations against unemployment in the 1930s involving black and white workers.

More recently, the protests and demonstrations of white students against the Apartheid regime reflect the growing unease of middle class whites at their untenable and indefensible position. But the explosive events being prepared by the present upheaval will shatter the economic and social foundations of the white workers' privileges and prejudices. Under those conditions, white workers, especially young workers, could be won to Marxist policies.

Given the virtual white monopoly of skilled and strategic jobs, it is all the more essential that the African [and Coloured] working class, with whom the revolutionary initiative undoubtedly lies, consciously attempts to split white workers from their big business exploiters.



SHOPFLOOR

No nightwork for anybody

In recent weeks two articles on the question of 'nightshift working' have appeared in the pages of the 'Militant'. The first [issue 315. 30.7.76] entitled 'Working nights—digging a premature grave' was an excellent account of some of the worst aspects of shift working. The second article [issue 318. 20.8.76] was in fact a question. 'Should Women Work Nighshift?' It was posed by Chris Nichols a shop steward at United Biscuits, Grimsby.

When the second article appeared, my first reaction was to sit down there and then and write a reply. However, at the time I was working nightshift myself and was frankly in no fit state to do little else than sign my name on my paycheque, let alone write an article!

In the first place I can partly agree with Chris Nichols insofar as she infers that it is possible to get used to nightshift working and to some extent enjoy it. But this is so only in particular circumstances and is by no means general. Most people find it impossible to reconcile themselves to intermittent nightshift let alone permanent.

But even if people do acclimatise themselves to nightshift, what does this mean? As a matter of fact workers at the present moment have got used to working seven days per week and ten and twelve hours per day in some industries. Similarly in the nineteenth century children got used to working down mine shafts 10 hours per day. All this indicates is the working man is a very resilient animal. What it does not indicate, is what it is doing to his health.

My first experiences of nightshift began 18 years ago, having just reached the age when I was legally entitled to work nights. I was 18 years old on Sunday and started nightshift on the Monday and then followed 3 years of nights and days on a fortnight about basis. In those three years I never did get used to nights and lived a life of misery. Constantly plagued by stomach and bowel disorders, days without sleep because I found it difficult to sleep when everyone else was awake during the day time.

Sleeping during the day is difficult for a thousand and one reasons, not only is the biological clock which regulates our bodily functions designed to induce sleep during the hours of darkness, but the very activities which take place during the day are not conducive to sleep. Many is the day I lay awake cursing the binmen for the noise they made collecting the bins. The postman and the milkman also incurred the most vile curses from my tongue and children playing in the road were found guilty of the most heinous crimes conceivable so far as I was concerned.

By Ted Mooney
(Walton Labour Party)

But this raises another important question. Nightshift working actually isolates the worker from large areas of social activity, as one worker put it when discussing the problems of night working. "You might just as well be on the Moon".

Shift working isolates workers from almost all social life. Cinemas, theatres, clubs and public houses etc, are in great measure debarred to the night workers because generally when they are open he is either working or sleeping. For the trade unionist, and for those workers involved in political activity, then nightworking can be almost devastating, cutting him off from the mainstream of activity and relegating him to a secondary role at best.

The odd individual or group of individuals burdened with peculiar problems might find it expedient, and a temporary solution of their own problems, but by and large night working is one of the most brutal and detested form of exploitation borne of the capitalist system and designed to increase profits to the maximum.

The question posed by comrade Chris Nichols is in fact the wrong one. It is not a question of should women do nightwork? But should human beings do nightwork? A healthy socialist society would in fact not need to utilise night shift working and would from the outset start the immediate process of eliminating it. In the initial stages of a socialist society it might be found necessary—particularly if faced with a hostile capitalist periphery—to continue shift working, but it would be reduced to an absolute minimum. The short answer to comrade Nichols is no, women should not do night work and neither should men.

Finally, I would suggest that if comrade Nichols looks again at her own arguments in favour of women working nights she will perhaps think again. She comes to the conclusion that women should be given 'freedom of choice' but, makes it clear in her article that in fact she had no choice at all about doing night work.

She starts off by saying, "When it became apparent that I would have to find a job to help keep our heads above water....the answer was to work at night." Later on she admits that many night workers are "motivated by money," or in one case, "to get away from her husband". None of the reasons advanced by comrade Nichols in favour of night work can be described as either healthy or positive. She had to find a job to keep her head above water and even though she says she sees almost as much of her children as previously, she doesn't say how much less she sees of her husband.

By David Owens
(Ormskirk Labour Party)

Merseyside busmen are taking industrial action yet again to protect both their jobs and the City's bus service. Although this will mean some inconvenience, the busmen sincerely believe they are acting in the long-term interests of everyone.

The Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive want to slash services for the second time this year—a massive 25% cut to follow the earlier 10% reduction. If they get away with it 140 MPTE, Crosville and Ribble services will disappear or be reduced. These amount to a total of eight million miles per annum.

The MPTE have sunk £40 million into the Underground Rail Loop Line. Only the planners wanted it—just like they wanted high-rise flats and a concrete city centre. Now they're frightened it will be another white elephant, and they are taking drastic steps to avoid this. Their solution is brutally simple—the public are not to be allowed a choice between buses and trains. The buses will be removed, therefore cheaper 'competition' will be stopped. In other words, where necessary the buses will be eliminated.

HUDDERSFIELD HOPKINSONS BREAK SOCIAL CONTRACT

Management at Hopkinsons, Huddersfield refused to pay a £6 a week wage increase to its TASS members even though the Department of Employment says they can do so.

Because a wage agreement negotiated in June 1975 was not paid until December 1975, management say that the increase must be offset against the £6 because twelve months have not elapsed since the last payment. But even the Department of Employment do not agree.

TASS members have applied a go-slow and a refusal to co-operate with non-members (who already have had an increase). Certain skilled groups in the company have gained larger than £6 a week increases by promotions etc.

The TASS demand has been met with blank refusal to negotiate, and the suspension of staff in the computer area for not working 'normally'. Blackleg labour is being used to keep the plant going.

Five TASS members who tried to stop this have been sacked and the Office Committee Chairman has been warned not to talk to 'blacklegs'.

Quite clearly the employers are trying to break the union and are trying to use the terms of the social contract as their justification, even though the government department does not support them on this occasion. If TASS gives way who is next? There must be no backing down.

The results will be many people faced with two journeys instead of one. A bus to rail interchange, and a train to city centre. Then walk [no consideration for aged or infirmed]. It'll be far less convenient, no quicker and far more expensive than the bus journey from the end of the street.

Our service is a service to the people of Liverpool for the benefit of working people, but without a fully integrated transport system in Merseyside and the rest of the country as a whole, run by the public and transport unions the present problems will never be solved.



Nottingham City Transport busmen staged what amounted to a three hour stoppage last week for a meeting so all the men could discuss the cutbacks the new Tory council is trying to get away with.

The Tories are scrapping the park and ride scheme, want to sell off the 18 coaches bought for that purpose, and to close one of the bus depots. They say there will be no redundancies but already recruitment has been stopped since February, and buses are running with 20 drivers short.

Clive Johnson (Chairman City Transport Branch TGWU and Nottingham West CLP) told me that all the unions involved were completely opposed to these attacks, "We are fighting for the retention of service for the passengers, we feel that the people of Nottingham need a decent level of service to and from work."

The Tories are out to reduce the council budget and at the same time

By Jeremy Birch

(North Nottingham Labour Party)

help the private coach firms. Clive explained "we carry the school children to and from the swimming baths, but there are five major baths we have not even tendered for. The local authority said they could not cover those journeys that fell at peak hours. They use the excuse of insufficient vehicles."

"Yet at the same time the Tories want to reduce the fleet. The only people who gain are the private contractors who are now taking on these jobs."

Last week's action is only the start of the busmen's battle to halt these attacks. They are looking for support from the union side of National Joint Industrial Council, and will be demanding real leadership against transport cuts from TGWU national officials.

SEAMEN BACK SPANISH CREW

By Pat Craven
(Blantyre Labour Party)

For the last week, the cargo ship 'Ems Ore' has been laid up in the Clyde. When it berthed, an official of the National Union of Seamen, acting on behalf of the International Transport Federation, discovered that the 30 Spanish seamen on board were being paid about £30 a week, less than half the rate of pay laid down by an international agreement negotiated by the ITF!

Although officially a 'Liberian' vessel, all the officers are Germans, including the master, who was asked to sign the ITF agreement. He refused: "It would be wrong to give Spaniards the same conditions as Germans", exclaimed the Chief Steward, "They have a different way of life from us!"

med the Chief Steward, "They have a different way of life from us!"

The NUS official's first reaction was to sit himself on a bollard and tell the master—"If you cast off, you'll take me with you!" He then contacted the leaders of the dockers and tugboatmen and got their agreement not to touch the vessel unless the master came to terms. Without tugs, the ship cannot move, and so there it lies.

The outcome of this dispute still hangs in the balance, but it is a magnificent example of workers' international solidarity in action, and seamen in Glasgow are urging all 'Militant' readers to keep a watch on ships entering British ports and report to the NUS any examples they hear of the kind of exploitation taking place on the 'Ems Ore'.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS AID ROLLS ROYCE WORKERS

Young Socialists from all over the West of Scotland took part last Saturday in a Day of Action organised by the East Kilbride branch of the Labour Party Young Socialists to raise support and cash for the 500 workers occupying the Rolls Royce factory in Blantyre.

That support should come from Labour's youth is highly appropriate since one of the main aims of the occupation is to save jobs for young workers in an area of high unemployment. They are fighting a management plan to transfer the factory and the workers to the firm's Hillington factory, 13

miles away on the far side of Glasgow.

Financial aid is still pouring in from all over the country. The workers are particularly anxious to correct a report in 'Militant' No 320, which stated that £2 was donated by the Blantyre Old Age Pensioners. In fact it was £20, a really excellent donation. We apologise for this error.

Further donations and messages of support should be sent to: John Simmons, Secretary of the Trade Union Co-ordinating Committee, [Rolls Royce [1971] Ltd], 54 Ayton Park North, East Kilbride, G74 3AX.

RAILMEN REJECT ONE-MAN TRAINS

By Tom Doyle
(Paddington NUR)

A special meeting of the Guards and Shunters Grades Committee of North London National Union of Railwaymen last weekend was called to discuss a document concerning 'one man trains' which threatens to make 5,000 railwaymen redundant.

This document was a memo from a joint working party that the NEC of the union and management had formed to discuss the idea. The NEC had participated without the knowledge of membership since at least

November 1975 and the negotiations were never mentioned at the National Conference of Guards and Shunters earlier this year. Bob Kettle of the NEC said that there was

nothing to worry about as it would take three years for the committee to report and there was no prior commitment on the part of the union.

The meeting was unimpressed by these arguments and carried a resolution rejecting one man operation, calling on the leadership to withdraw from the talks and demanding a recall Guards and Shunters Conference. Further pressure is to be mounted from the London branches.

TRICO

Militant

UNIONS MUST CALL 24 HOUR STRIKE

By Bob Labi

(London Labour Party Executive)

The closure of the two Trico-Folberth factories in West London and Northampton three weeks ago marked an important step forward for the Trico equal pay strikers. After 15 weeks of picketing they finally managed to completely stop production and thereby increased the pressure on the company to settle.

Two weeks ago Trico asked for preliminary talks at which it made an offer of an extra 50p on its previous proposals. This would have increased the women's pay by between £2.50 to £3 a week, compared with the £6.50 needed to give the women workers the same operational rate as the male workers on the day and twilight shifts who do exactly the same work. The offer was turned down by the union negotiators on the spot, an action unanimously endorsed by a mass meeting of strikers held 5 days later.

This strike, now entering its 19th week, is one of national importance. A defeat here would encourage every employer to find ways of avoiding paying equal pay to women.

The AUEW Executive Council has the responsibility to call on all its members, especially in the motor industry, to support these workers by blacking the use of all wiper blades and raising cash for the strike.

Unfortunately the unanimous decision of the Leyland Combine Shop Stewards Committee to black all Trico products has not been carried out. Only one car plant, Rover's Solihull, immediately put a ban on the use of all Trico windscreen wipers. Almost at once the Solihull workers were threatened with being laid off if they continued with the ban and this coupled with the fact that the Rover workers know that only their plant was carrying out the ban, led to a growing feeling on the factory floor against the blacking.

As a result two weeks ago the Rover stewards voted to lift the blacking and to demand an emergency meeting of the Combine Committee to find out why the ban on Trico products was never really implemented.

This has made it all the more important that all AUEW branches and Districts must demand that the AUEW EC acts now to ensure that no Trico wipers or any substitutes are used.

At the same time it is important that the London labour movement rallies around the strikers. Unfortunately a special meeting



Trico workers lobby TUC conference

held two weeks ago of all the AUEW convenors in the Southall AUEW District decided that any call for a 24 hour stoppage and demonstration in support of the Trico workers would not get a response in the factories.

This may be so at present, but a determined drive must be launched in every local factory to explain the two key issues involved in this strike, equal pay and the future of the union inside Trico. Mass meetings of workers should be held inside the factories at which Trico strikers could explain their case and why a token stoppage and mass demonstration would aid their struggle. The TGWU and GMWU, who both have a small number of members on strike at Trico and have large numbers of women in their ranks, should also act to support this strike.

All donations and messages of support should be sent to Trico Strike Fund, c/o AUEW, 1 Woodland Road, Southall, Middx. The September meeting of the Labour Party Young Socialist National Committee passed a motion supporting this strike and is sending collection sheets out to every LPYS branch and we hope that they will be quickly used to raise support for this strike in the labour movement.

This strike can be brought to a victorious conclusion speedily if the full power of the working class is used to back these strikers and break the resistance of the company.

CONFERENCE CENSORSHIP

Reports have reached us that in addition to the 80 or so resolutions ruled out of order or alterations to them demanded by the Conference Arrangements Committee previously reported in this and other Labour papers, amendments of at least 20 CLPs have received the same treatment. This blatant censorship has provoked a new storm of protest.

The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy have, according to reports of their meeting held in London a couple of weeks ago, decided to restrict their campaign to the resolutions dealing with the issue of re-selection of MPs.

However the Walton Constituency Labour Party (Liverpool) have collected together the names of all constituencies affected for whatever reason from the

intention of co-ordinating a protest. They have written to all these Constituencies and invited them to send their Conference delegate to a meeting with their MP Eric Heffer.

They have organised this for the Sunday morning prior to Conference, to avoid clashing with the North West TUC demonstration against unemployment, in Blackpool in the afternoon. This meeting organised by Walton is of vital importance to all delegates and visitors who are also invited to attend. If the Conference Arrangements Committee are allowed to get away with it this time without a battle from the Constituencies then future agendas for Conferences, including perhaps YOUR resolution, may suffer the same fate.

Therefore we urge you to attend this important meeting.

Seamen drop £6 claim

The seamen's Executive have accepted an offer from the shipping employers providing various fringe benefits as an alternative to the £6 that the seamen had argued they were entitled to under the social contract.

The offer agreed to adds £7.20 a week to the £12.30 a week 'fall back pay' given when seamen are not on a ship although under contract. It is equivalent to the guaranteed week received in industry. But the increase is reduced by £3 after two weeks, although the maximum period for the payments is extended to 26 weeks from eighteen.

There will also be extra allowances for food and travel. But 'captive time'

has not been granted. This was payment for seamen kept on board in ports while the boats are discharging cargo. Most workers go home when they finish work but these days seamen are frequently not allowed to leave ship so that ships can leave harbour quickly and save on port charges.

The union asked for extra payments here, but have only got a promise to ask captains to be more "lenient" on allowing crews to leave ship and have been granted days off in lieu when seamen sign off at home ports. A pension scheme has not yet been agreed.

As far as the rank and file seamen will see this offer, it must be seen as a

severe setback. In the final analysis, not one penny has been added to the basic wage or even as a supplement on the basic.

So the pressure of the government and above all the TUC has forced the seamen's leadership to drop their claim without a fight. Yet everywhere seamen were prepared for action and would have received wide support from the labour movement.

Whether the fringe benefits will lead to a flood of similar claims as other sections of the labour movement try to circumvent the social contract will not be clear until the full implications of the agreement are digested.

London Hospitals Day of Action

Health workers in London took part in a Day of Action on Thursday September 23rd to protest against severe cuts in the Health Service proposed by local health authorities.

Originally the strike call was an ASTMS initiative in Hackney. But unions in all hospitals in that area came out ie. NUPE, GMWU, COHSE and NALGO. Activities planned by the branches include token stoppages, leafleting outside hospitals, and the holding of street meetings.

In London's East End, one of the areas most severely feeling the effects of the cuts, the focal point was the Metropolitan Hospital in Hackney, due for closure. Activities will also be concentrated in the vicinity of Queens' Square, and the London Medical branches were picketing and leafleting many hospitals throughout London.

The Day of Action was very timely, as plans are being officially approved for more drastic cuts in health services. At its meeting on September 8th, the City and East London Area Health Authority gave the go ahead to far reaching cuts in the three health Districts of City and Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham.

In the 'Management Teams' reports presented to the meeting it is revealed that cuts made last year to meet reduced budgets were largely successful. For the three Health Districts in the City and Hackney area the new cuts mean massive losses of jobs, 400 aimed at for City and Hackney, over 200 aimed at for Tower Hamlets. Accident and Emergency Units including St Leonard's, the best in the district, are to be closed evenings and weekends. Whole wards are to be closed, others put on to 5 day working only. Hospitals to close include the Metropolitan, the Mothers, Forest Gate, London Jewish. Overtime is to be slashed and the authorities must "accept the consequent deterioration of services". When wards and outpatients clinics close "there will be an increase in length of waiting lists."

The resistance organised by health workers against these cuts must receive the full backing of the labour and trade union movement, for these workers are not only defending their jobs, they are defending the living standards and the social wage of all workers. Our health service stands as a major achievement of the labour movement in its struggles for a better society.

Industrial and other actions conducted in isolation however, merely delay cuts or force them elsewhere, probably onto the weaker organised sections of health workers. So there is an urgent need for united campaign by all the health unions.

CLAREMONT HOTEL

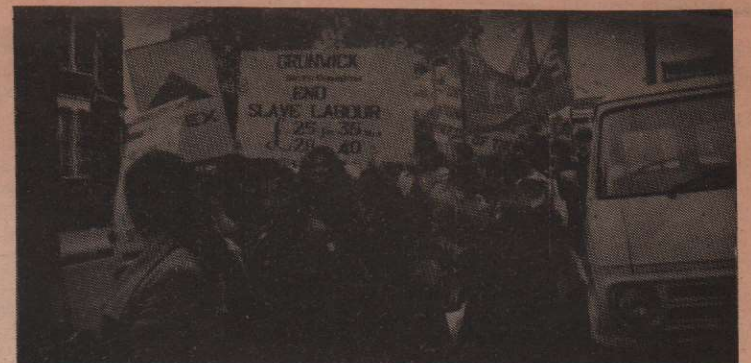
270 North Promenade, Blackpool
at 10.30am Sunday,
26th September

For further information contact
Laura Kirton, Secretary Walton

Already a lobby of Parliament by NUPE and NALGO and a strike of civil servants are planned for November 17th. The other public service unions must be brought into this action to make it a day of massive protest against the policies being pursued by our Labour government. Let this be the start of a massive campaign. The

demand must be put throughout the movement for a reversal of the government's strategy of cuts in public spending, replacing it by one of taking over of the commanding heights of the economy, so that the public services can be planned on the basis of need rather than for the profits of the private sector.

GRUNWICK WORKERS DEFY DESPOTS



APEX, LPYS and Militant banners on the Grunwick strikers recent march

The official APEX strike by film processing workers at Grunwicks, North London, for trade union recognition and no victimisation is now into its 8th week. In spite of four previous successes in smashing trade unionism at the factory, the hard-faced employers are now totally incapable of outlawing the union if the sort of determination shown by these strikers is kept up.

The bosses are becoming increasingly desperate as blacking and solidarity with the strike spreads and production drops.

The strikers are now holding regular socials to raise money and morale. All trade

unionists in the area should go along and support these. Last Friday a London 'Militant' meeting raised £20 and more donations are coming in from unions, Labour Parties and LPYS branches. Messages of support and donations to: The Secretary, Grunwick Strike Committee, Brent Trades Hall, Willesden High Road.

EALING

LPYS Public Meeting

"Grunwicks Strike: the lessons for all workers" Thursday, September 23rd, 8pm.

Dominion Cinema

Southall Green, Southall

By Cathy Sandler

Militant

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