

THE WORKER



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Our only answer is to make revolution

WE CAN DO IT

Capitalism at the end of 1976 posed the British working class, as the ultimate Christmas Quiz, the problem of its very survival. It is a problem demanding a revolutionary solution. Can we do it?

First, we have to answer the question: Must we do it? Capitalism has answered that question for us in the Healey mini-budget, in the stated policies of the Labour Government, in the declarations of world capitalism about Britain. They all add up to one thing: capitalism cannot afford the British working class as a united force in the world today, and is out to destroy it.

There is no longer any pretence that cutting the wages of workers here is a temporary measure to restore capitalist confidence and therefore, investment in British industry. With over two million out of work and unemployment still rising, with savage cuts in health, education and housing which would leave workers illiterate, unskilled and debilitated, who is to man these imaginary new industries of the future?

There is no future for us under capitalism. Our future has already

been mortgaged to fascism to pay for their capitalist profits in the present - just as natural resources like oil, coal, the fish of the sea and the very produce of the land which belong to us and to generations to come are being gambled away for immediate profit now.

To destroy us and to safeguard their profits - and in the world crisis of capitalism these two things have become inseparable - they intend to cut the ground from under us by destroying the industrial base we built and learned to organise ourselves in. They intend to destroy our nation which, like the English language itself, is the creation of our own working people making things in the same place down the ages. They intend to destroy it by sinking its identity in a European monopoly-capitalist morass and then, having weakened our sense of nationhood, to tear what's left into pieces - all to destroy our British working class unity without which we are nothing and with which we remain a threat to them. They intend to destroy our children, even those

yet unborn, by ripping away the whole fabric of civilised community life which we have constructed through struggle to protect our families from the murderous social Darwinism of exploitative capitalism.

"Others will follow"

We have no alternative. To save our industry, to save our country's natural resources, to save our nation - in short, to save ourselves and our children - we have to destroy them. We have to destroy their power over us. We have to seize that power ourselves and wield it for the benefit of people, thus ending the tyranny of profit for ever. That is revolution.

Can we do it? In the 'Preface to the Critique of Political Economy' Marx says: "Mankind only takes up such problems as

it can solve, because the problem itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution already exist". Every time we launch ourselves in battle to survive we are taking up the problem of revolution, because today, for us, survival itself has become revolutionary. The revolution is not off there somewhere at the end of a very long street where the barricades will eventually be raised. It is here with us now every time we say in terms of action; no more redundancies, not another single cut; Revolution is simply the joining together of all those actions by a united working class aware that its survival and its great mission of liberating mankind from exploitation are now one.

We can do it. It cannot be questioned that our united strength is far and away the preponderant force in Britain. We have to rally it. But will this rallied force bring down on our heads the vicious intervention of world capitalism? As our Chairman, Reg Birch, said in a speech at the end of the year: "Such a dilemma of even worse dimensions

faced the working class and the Bolshevik Party in Russia and their war of intervention failed. The decline of capitalism is a world crisis. If the workers of the world could respond then, do you think workers today would be any different if we began the first revolution in an industrialised country here in Britain?" Let us take as our watchwords for 1977 this quotation from the CPB(ML)'s Fourth Party Congress statement:

"It is apparent that our rulers are unfit to govern, that social distress is the goal of their economic system, that their sole palliative for suffering is greater suffering, that they will certainly destroy us if we stay our hand... The old world has nothing further to offer; its possibilities are totally exhausted, the new world beckons. All the contradictions of the global crisis of capitalism find their focus here in Britain, the place of their birth. We were the first modern proletariat, once again we must lead: the opportunity is ours, if we only seize it others will follow as before."

The struggles of 1976



The women of Trico were victorious in their fight for equal pay; the fight for union recognition goes on at Grunwick; and workers generally throughout 1976 have been involved in the fight against the cuts.

US finds wealth in Britain

British industry is not quite as feeble as visiting US commentators would suggest. At least two-thirds of foreign investment in Britain is from the US. Five years ago US firms exploited nearly 13 per cent of the manufacturing labour force, 9 per cent of the total labour force, who produced one-fifth of our manufactured exports.

In the 1950's Britain was the favourite target for US capital, and in 1959 they had more invested here than in the whole of Europe. (The fact that they have also wanted to dismantle what they controlled is not at issue.) In 1970-71, of employees in US firms in Britain, only 0.02 per cent were Americans. We produced their profits. "Nowhere in the world do US subsidiaries employ such large numbers of people in the technical and professional grade as in Britain (a Financial Times Survey, 1971). 85 per cent of

their investment was in manufacturing, petroleum and distribution. Our skills attracted them here and their investment generally is in the technically advanced sectors. We produce for the benefit of US firms, according to one estimate, 'half of the cars, office machines, sewing machines, earth-moving equipment, domestic boilers, shoemaking machinery, breakfast cereals, cosmetics and toilet preparations, vacuum cleaners, pens and pencils, razor blades, foundation garments, and films . . . nearly half the petrol and drugs sold to the National Health Service.

It is the same in Scotland. There were six US firms in 1946, one hundred and twenty-four in 1969, employing 90,000. 32 per cent of Scots are under US control in mechanical engineering, 23 per cent in electrical engineering and 10 per cent in instrument making.

Dear Editor,

The most ardent Labour Party supporter and social democrat should be convinced by now that wages do not cause inflation.

The TUC and Government officials are now preparing preliminary plans for the size of the next pay round, Phase Three, which is due next August. It will limit pay increases to 3 percent.

The Labour Party which still pretends to be a party of protest and reform is presiding over enormous unemployment which is going to grow worse and ever-growing poverty. It is allowing the export of capital abroad, and using the excuse of enormous borrowing to impose even greater cuts at home. The TUC is abjectly grovelling, and accepting all that the Labour Government deals out.

The working class is guilty of having lost its way and not standing its ground in defence of wages, the right to work, and free collective bargaining. It faces a formidable opposition of employers, the Government and the TUC but we outnumber them all.

In thousands of factories throughout the country workers and stewards are trying to find a way round the wage freeze and running into a brick wall. Until they can say to employers my union does not back the 'Social Contract' and will demand a return to free collective bargaining, the fight will not start.

Therefore it is essential that all union conferences vote to reject any more deals like the Social Contract at their Conferences this year.

Engineer

The Hsiyang County Party Committee, pictured below, represent the three-in-one combination of old, middle-aged and young cadres which was established during the early period of the Cultural Revolution.

The people of Hsiyang County, in Shansi Province, have succeeded in making their district the first Tachai-type county in China, thus implementing Chairman Mao's instruction, "in agriculture learn from Tachai" - a collective farm which became such a splendid example of self-reliance, hard struggle and a good communist style of work that it has given its name to a movement sweeping the whole country.

Aerospace killed off

Fairford air-base, where Concorde has been tested, is due to be closed in February. At its peak 500 workers, mainly skilled, were employed here. These workers are now dispersed as a result of voluntary redundancy and wastage. This represents the loss of concentrated skills which will be hard to reestablish. If no testing will be required, it means a further nail in the coffin of Britain's self-sufficiency, scaling the end of autonomously developed projects.

BAC workers were warned in November of a February jobs review, for a 'drastic cut in overheads' if no new work was forthcoming. Souabbling over whether this is to mean staff or production personnel going is myopic: the likely outcome will be the closure of a whole plant (from Hurn, Stevenage or Filton) as the total of numbers employed falls from nearly 12,000 in May 1976 to a projected 7,000-8,000 next April.

Aerospace Minister Kaufman spoke recently of Concorde as 'Caviare which we cannot afford in these tight times'. His plan for the nationalised industry is to consolidate and concentrate on 'bread and butter' profitable production requiring minimal research and development. This heralds the final destruction of the industry. With the bulk of present contracts being continuation work, the rosy prospect of 'security' that Mr. Kaufman promises amounts to sub-contract work for the US and EEC.

To assert the contrary - the value of our skills and the necessity for the development of advanced technology for social use - the fight must be taken up against every cut and for the right to work. The principal responsibility rests with the employed, and in taking on the fight, they alone can guarantee the security and future of the industry.

IN BRIEF

Of all the foreign comments on Britain's economic situation the sickest comes from the West German mass-circulation paper, Bild Zeitung (owned by an ex-Nazi): "What England's enemies were unable to achieve, inflation has done and proud Albion lies prostrate."

Call for action

At its last meeting the Brighton, Hove and District Trades Council agreed a policy which puts the struggle against unemployment in perspective and offers a concrete way to hit back.

Delegates resolved to oppose all redundancies - including those 'hidden' by the jargon of natural wastage and automatic non-replacement - and affirmed that the fight against unemployment must begin with employed trade unionists.

The resolution called on working members to "initiate action on behalf of unemployed members for the creation of more jobs".

IN BRIEF

In a recent Labour Party Political Broadcast, a Labour MP, speaking of the bad old days, said: "The boss used to be able to sack you because he didn't like your face. It's not like that now." Does he mean that the boss sacks us now because he likes our face?

With all the moves toward devolution and tearing up the map of Britain, there has been no move toward devolving the government of Ulster to a united Irish people, which is where it belongs. Defending British imperialism abroad and destroying British nationhood at home seem like completely incompatible acts unless one remembers that they are both directed against the working class in Britain. It is as little to the interests of a united working class here that there should be overseas bases for training army and police in the suppression of working people as that their own national base for unity here should be fragmented.

The hordes of foreign shoppers descending on Britain this Christmas to load up with goods made by British workers which they cannot afford to buy themselves show what our capitalist masters have in store for Britain - a nation of shop assistants! Along with cheap goods, other steps are being taken to turn what was once the workshop of the world into a tourists' haven. Soon unemployed natives will be expected to dive into the Thames for pennies thrown by the tourists - and without doing anything about the climate first. True blue British will acquire a deeper meaning!

No inflation in China

In New China many people actually don't know the meaning of the word 'inflation'. The value of the 'yuan' - the Chinese unit of currency - is not only stable, but is slightly increasing. According to a new Chinese pamphlet (see details below), 100 yuan at their 1965 value could buy 101.57 yuans' worth of goods and 103.20 yuans' worth of services (rent, electricity, transport fares, etc) in 1973.

The budget of one typical worker's family shows what this means in practice. Chang Paochih is a 36 year old worker in Peking No 2 State Textile Mill. His wife Chang Shu-hua tends a cone-winding machine in the same factory. Their joint income is 154 yuan a month. They have two children, one at primary school and the other in day nursery. The Changs eat breakfast and evening meal at home, and lunch in the factory canteen.

In 1965 their average monthly expenditure came to 99.80 yuan - this included all food both at home and eating out, clothing, rent, fuel bills, fares, recreation and other contingencies. In 1974 the average amount for the same items was 113.25 yuan a month

The slight increases in outlay are solely on food and clothing, due to the birth of the children. The family has saved about 40 yuan a month in the bank, which they have spent on furniture, TV and other household amenities.

The Changs have been able to do this because the prices of all necessities have remained the same since 1965. In fact the price lists painted on boards many years ago in Peking's grocery stores and markets are still unchanged.

The Changs bring their pay-packets home from the factory without having to worry about the devaluation of money cutting into their family's standard of living, and they need not be anxious about tomorrow's food prices, because China's socialist economy is progressing steadily along the right course.

"Why China Has No Inflation", price 8p (not including postage), available from the Bellman Bookshop. The book contains many interesting facts about the way the crisis-free economy of China is managed, as well as explaining how raging inflation was eliminated after Liberation.



Books, pamphlets

Available from

Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, London NW 5

Brighton Workers Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton.

Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road, St. Philips, Bristol

October Books, 48 Temple Court, Liverpool 2.

Northern Star Bookshop, 18A Leighton Street, Leeds.

'THE WORKER' 155 FORTRESS ROAD, LONDON, NW5. £2.50 per year (including postage).

NAME

ADDRESS

Picture, left, by Hsinhua News Agency

A Christmas gift from workers to workers

Devon ambulancemen continued to show their refusal to accept cuts in the health service on any terms in their threat to strike if Christmas services were not maintained at an acceptable level. These men have been an example to us all. This is their second dispute in three months where they have shown that unity is paramount in the fight against the cuts. The four Devon branches of the ambulancemen's union NUPE stood as one in their demands for a rotary shift service over Christmas, their refusal to carry dirty linen in ambulances meant for sick people, the raising of meal allowances for the men when they are unable to return to the stations, the necessity of filling a shift vacancy in Bideford, and their refusal to carry their own lunches on the ambulances, also on the basis that it is unhygienic.

Though the men are united, a feeling of animosity does exist from time to time between men and officers which was pin-pointed in the negotiations between the Devon Health Authority and the men. But men and officers are united over the question of the eradication of volunteers in the service who are recognised as being destructive as they are both unskilled and unreliable, and it is thought that this issue has the potential to close the gap once and for all.

Strike heralds start of fight by the Glasgow busmen against cuts

A one day strike by 7000 transport workers in Glasgow, halting all bus and underground services on November 24th has signalled the start of a fight by unions in Scotland against the latest wave of public spending cuts. The service carries 450,000 passengers each rush hour. The cuts threaten the jobs of over 15,000 staff employed by local authorities here. Glasgow is the centre of the largest region - Strathclyde - which will be worst affected by the cuts. Transport services, which have been whittled away over the last ten years are now to be suddenly cut by over 5 per cent. This would include

the closure of a bus garage - at Partick - with the loss of 300 jobs, a cut which local workers have campaigned against vigorously.

A warning was given to the Strathclyde authorities by railway workers too. A representative of the NUR, also speaking on behalf of ASLEF and the TSSA told councillors, "We will fight these cuts with every means at our disposal." A spokesman of the Glasgow busmen also warned: "Our crews at their mass meeting during yesterday's stoppage agreed to total opposition to the cuts and we will be involved in every type of action in this opposition."

Albania goes to the West End

The exhibition of Albania's achievements in industry, agriculture and in the development of socialist life, which was staged by the New Albania Society in the very centre of London's West End at the end of 1976, attracted considerable attention. A constant stream of people visited the exhibition to find out more about Europe's only socialist country.

Reg Birch, Chairman of the CPB(ML) who was the Party's

delegate to the Seventh Congress of the Party of Labour of Albania said in a speech to that Congress: "Just as in October 1917 and for all the years of the Bolshevik Revolution, the test of class understanding of Marxism was the attitude to the Bolshevik Revolution, now the test is the attitude to Albania. Albania is not alone, nor are the workers of Europe ever without a champion and friend while there is Albania".



Picture by Nick Birch

No celebration at Post Office

So the miners are about to celebrate 30 years of nationalisation! That prompts the question - what has nationalisation done for them? The coal industry is in decline while unworked seams lie idle.

What about fellow workers at that other great nationalised firm - the Post Office. They don't have much to celebrate. In September 1975 Post Office workers knew that 15,000 jobs (maintenance, installation, clerical, etc.) were going to be lost because the Post Office had cut back on its orders for equipment. And just recently, the Post Office suddenly announced that again it has cut back orders drastically. This will probably

mean a loss of a further 20,000 jobs over the next two or three years.

Why the loss of jobs? Because the Post Office is not now going to increase the amount of equipment it has. Contrary to what it said before, the Post Office now claims that the existing equipment can cope with any increase in the use of telephones. It is also changing from a mechanical system to the new TXE2 and TXE4, electronic systems which are less labour intensive.

So what's the solution? Accept more workers on the dole? Retain less efficient equipment? We can see what a limited

choice we have if we insist on remaining within the framework of capitalism!

Strategically, the working class's solution must be to challenge the right of employers to hire and fire workers according to the dictates of capital and profit. Tactically, this may mean seeking to retain the existing type of equipment, or forcing the Post Office to change its mind about orders. Eventually our class must challenge the right of the capitalists to exist at all!

Such tactics and strategy hold true whether the industry is run by private capitalists or by a group of capitalists operating through their mouthpiece - the State.

Capitalism's New Year Greeting to Workers

The last act of British capitalism in 1976 was to chop off immediately one billion pounds worth of public expenditure on food subsidies, new housing and school building, with a further billion and a half pounds to be lopped off social spending by the end of the year.

The result for the working class of these immediate cuts is not only a further rise in enormously inflated food prices, increased homelessness, particularly for young married couples, and hopelessly inadequate facilities for educating our children; it also means even higher unemployment in the building trades which are already severely hit and in government and public service.

As has been frequently pointed out in THE WORKER, high unemployment is not an unfortunate consequence of the crisis of British capitalism: it is the main intention of Government policy in British capitalism's interest. It is intended to weaken working class resistance to a rapidly declining standard of living which is a condition for the maintenance of a high rate of profit. The Secretary for Employment has warned that unemployment could well reach two million by the end of this year which, in real terms, can be taken as more like three million!

What is endemic in the capitalist world, inflation and high unemployment, can only be in the interest of capitalism since capitalist governments throughout that world have the say in how national economies are managed. Only in the socialist countries, like China, Vietnam and Albania, is there no inflation and no unemployment.

And what about prospects for the future? The Labour Government says that the "light at the end of the tunnel" which they thought they saw at the beginning of last year turned out to be a will o' the wisp. Economic hopes have had to be postponed indefinitely. But there will be no postponement of the Government's plans for a third year's wage agreement with organised labour, butted, perhaps, with some vague talk about tax remissions. The only tax remissions are on profits and

the enormous reductions in even the modest amounts corporations pay partially account for the necessity of cutting public expenditure.

Healey's new year greeting is: "The immediate prospect remains a hard one on any hypothesis. Unemployment is likely to continue rising and past depreciation will prevent inflation from falling before the middle of the year." But if workers will only, in terms of Callaghan's new year message, show themselves "patient, understanding and hard working" then, the Chancellor assures us, "all the financial indicators will at last be moving in the right direction."

The cuts imposed by the Labour Government, which mean a lower standard of living and an enormous increase in unemployment for the working people of Britain, have been hailed enthusiastically by the Under Secretary for Monetary Affairs at the US Treasury and by treasury officials of the EEC countries. The eyes of the capitalist world are on Britain because in Britain capitalism has run its longest course, developed all its internal contradictions in the most critical form and faces the supreme test of the ultimate viability of the system.

When Nobel prize-winning economist, Friedman, talks about the collapse of bourgeois democracy in Britain tomorrow, he knows that he is talking about what is going to happen in the US tomorrow. Britain is capitalism's front line and the British working class which, as the first industrial proletariat, had to assume the historical role of finding out how working people could survive under the exploitative system of capitalism, are now, at this time of capitalism's absolute crisis, cast in the role of showing how this vicious, decrepit system can be overthrown and replaced with socialism.

When the Labour Government's spokesmen for capitalism say at the beginning of this new year that "if the work-force will do its part, we shall surely win through to a brighter future", we support their sentiments - but with an entirely different meaning!

Avon teachers to act

A ballot held among the members of Avon Division of the NUT has shown that the great majority of them are prepared to take action against the cuts in education by refusing to cover for absences of staff known in advance, or where a post has been left vacant, and refusing to teach classes of more than 35 children.

This action is soon to be authorised by the national Action Committee and since there are still many classes of over 40 in Avon, and 34 part-time teachers have been given dismissal notices with effect from December 31st, while others have had their working hours reduced, Avon County Council will soon be made to realise in a very concrete way that teachers will not sit quiet as the education service is destroyed.

The union spokesman has stated that whole classes of children will be sent home if that becomes necessary. This has pro-

duced an immediate response from a number of head teachers who have advertised in the local press for supply teachers.

Union members in Avon have also been instructed not to take part in schemes that would ameliorate the effects of any so-called "minor" cuts in educational expenditure. For instance, some parents have been asked to finance swimming lessons which the primary schools are to be deprived of; but the union has rejected this as a means of overcoming the problem, pointing out that it would contravene section 61 of the Education Act, and probably mean that some children would be excluded because of the cost.

Conspiring with the Authority to make such economies, or find alternative sources of income, is not the way to succeed in this struggle. Every single cut must be recognised and resisted forcefully.

Law Bill to curtail liberties

For many years now 'liberal' bourgeois democracy has been going through a process of erosion, the ensuing curtailment of civil liberties being eroded by increasingly corporate legislation, specifically against our class.

The Criminal Law Bill published this week will divert the course of British 'justice' still further in this direction, couched in radical 'reforms' such as that it will no longer be possible to receive a longer sentence for planning an offence than for committing it, and lo and behold! abolishing the charge for planning an act which in itself is not a criminal offence.

The two Shrewsbury building worker pickets who received two and three year sentences for conspiring to breach the 1875 Protection of Property Act would, under this Bill, have faced sentences of three months instead. Reform indeed! Those workers should never have been jailed at all.

The Bill proposes that at least 3000 extra offences will be denied the right of trial by jury. The James Report of last year which laid the ground for this Bill said that it was worried about the cost of trial by jury. It is interesting to note that one of the few James Report proposals which has not been taken up is the right for a person charged with assault on the police to opt for trial by jury.

And whilst all this is happening, all the bourgeois press seems interested in doing with the Bill is to scream that soccer hooligans are to be now fined up to £1000!

from
"ZERI I POPULLIT",
the newspaper of the
Albanian people.
"Greetings for the New
Year, 1977 and best
wishes for further
successes."

WORKER INTERVIEW .. HOTELS WANT UNION

Working conditions in the Hotel and Catering Trades have a long-standing reputation for being medieval. Long and inconvenient shifts, frequent weekend work, low pay and heavy-handed management are their hall-mark. In Oxford hotel workers at the Linton Lodge and Randolph Hotels have started a campaign to put the matter right. Here two of them describe their struggle.

Q. Why have hotel workers in Oxford been flocking to join the TGWU in recent months?

A. Our main concern was to secure a contract with our employers which defined our hours and obligations. Without a contract we have no safeguards against the management's demands. Because there is no defined working week, overtime is rarely paid and the management have been able to impose extra duties at very short notice by threatening the sack for non-compliance. It has not been uncommon for a 60 hour week to be worked for only £25. And where does the 10 per cent service charge go? We have joined the Union in order to get some order into the situation.

Q. Why are you out on strike?

A. It is all really a question of basic Trade Union rights. The manager of the Randolph has refused to recognise the Union organisation in the hotel and has threatened the shop steward. A protest meeting was attended by 20 members, mostly chambermaids, despite threats to those intending to go that they would be dismissed. The management is determined to break the Union organisation. Using the excuse of a drop in mid-week bookings, the Manager called us chambermaids into see him one at a time and demanded that we work at weekends instead of during the week. Five of us who refused to abandon our family life were sacked, and since then twelve more workers have come out on strike. They too have now been sacked, and the strike has been made official by the Union.

Q. How effective is the picket?

A. We have had our successes and been able to turn away some customers and block supplies. Our action will really begin to bite when the message gets through from our Union to black the hotels. To make our picket lines really effective though we urgently need help from other workers in Oxford. The Trades Council has given us its full support and is organising a march between the two hotels on Saturday.

Q. How solid is the strike?

A. Those of us who are out on strike are absolutely determined and united, and morale on the picket line is good. Unfortunately some workers do not understand the issues or are too frightened. For some of them, dismissal will mean eviction, because they live in tied accommodation.

We are determined to win this struggle. Someone must take a stand for all workers in the Hotel industry.

We are conscious that we are not just taking on our own management but the entire hotel industry in Britain. A victory here will just be a beginning. This responsibility we feel increases our determination.

Fleet Street: act now

Fleet Street - the street of a thousand broken dreams - has become another of capitalism's nightmares.

The Press bosses, harried by a workforce with a history of struggle, have found profits harder to make in the past decade. They have woken now, however, to discover a stunning piece of reality - that social democracy offers them a chance they were beginning to think they had lost.

First, there was the advent of new technology - computerised typesetting and electronic page-design. This method has the advantage of eliminating skilled men and replacing them with machines - and machines don't fight like workers. All that was needed was a method to get rid of the workers themselves. Enter the corporatists - the men with slogans as misleading as national newspaper headlines. To 'save' industry we must sacrifice its workers: to live better lives in the future the workers must die now; to cure the country's ills the workers must remain sick.

In July 1975, the TUC decided that the only way to restore Press profitability was to get the unions and managements together to hammer out a policy. The results of this joint committee's work have just been published in an astonishing report called 'Programme for Action' which illustrates two disturbing trends: first, that unions are being drawn into making what were once management decisions and second, that the very existence of capitalism depends on such arrangements succeeding.

The whole tone of the report is anti-working class. It accepts the profitability of the industry as essential, lays heavy emphasis on the negotiation of redundancy to reduce the workforce, and aims to introduce new technology at any cost. None of this would be possible without workers' voluntary co-operation (a 1970's phrase meaning 'suicide'). So the bosses-management and union - have devised a scheme to make sure that any effective protest will be stifled. The disputes procedure outlined in the report seeks to remove from workers the traditional trades union rights to hold meetings and to take industrial action when they see fit. A com-

plex and confusing procedure to arbitrate on disputes will bind union members in an ever-tightening knot. How about this?

"The parties to this Agreement, recognising the extremely harmful effects of any stoppage . . . agree that in the event of any difference arising which cannot immediately be resolved, continuity of the full business operation is to be safeguarded. . . . Consequently, every dispute must go through some faraway filter to emerge as watered-down compromise. Power leaves the shop floor.

There are several other worrying aspects - like the implied agreement for unions and management to maintain secrecy during bargaining, and the specious idea that the problem of lost jobs can be solved by 'retraining'. It is significant that eight of the thirty-two pages in the report are directly concerned with the mechanics of making redundancy palatable. The exercise is about decimating Fleet Street's 23,000 printers and journalists, annihilating Manchester's newspaper industry and ultimately to rundown the nationwide print workforce. Print apprenticeships have been cut. Journalist training has been reduced.

The report is to be put to union members to vote on - by bourgeois ballot, of course - with the warning that failure to support it could lead to 'extremely grave consequences'.

As the unions mount their publicity campaign to get the provisional plans made official, talks continue about the possibility of a merger between the main print unions. All that this seeks to do is to create a climate for industrial contraction, as the skilled craftsmen run for cover. Only the members can reverse this suicidal course towards corporatism, de-industrialisation and de-skilling. Their reaction to this report must be swift and strong. Years of defiant struggle must climax not in resignation, in capitulation, but in revolutionary struggle.

The report does have its positive lesson for the working class: it conclusively proves that capitalism is bankrupt and that it can only be regenerated by laying waste to its industry.

This is the desperate act of a dying beast. Let us put it - and ourselves - out of misery.

NEW YEAR PUBLIC MEETING 1977 ALBANIA'S VIIIth CONGRESS

Come and hear a report on this historic socialist occasion from the CPB(ML)'s delegate to the Congress.
Reg Birch, Chairman of the CPB(ML).

Friday January 21st 7.30 pm
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W. C. 1.



A recent march in Bristol to protest about education cuts (see page 3).

New series of Public Meetings planned for 1977

All meetings are held on Fridays at 7.30 pm at the Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortess Road, London, N.W. 5.

- January 28th Building Socialism in Korea
- February 4th Higher Education - the Struggle for the Future
- February 11th Could Britain Feed Herself?
- February 18th One Working Class - Unity not Devolution
- February 25th No meeting planned
- March 4th Women - One Half of the Working Class
- March 11th Karl Marx
- March 18th Vietnam and Cambodia on the Road to Socialism
- March 25th Health
- April 1st Meeting to be arranged by New Albania Society
- April 8th No meeting planned
- April 15th Science, Research and Technology in Jeopardy
- April 22nd Revolution - Britain's Duty