

# THE WORKER



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## CONFED: "NO PHASE 3"

THE CONFEDERATION of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions has voted overwhelmingly against further pay restraint and for an immediate return to collective bargaining. It has therefore put the seal on the trade union opposition to Phase III of the social contract.

Coming after a number of union conferences which hedged bets in one way or another on this crucial question of union independence and sovereignty, the decision marks a big stride forward in the struggle to bury the social contract.

The motion was moved by the AUEW whose own policy-making National Committee last month set the tone for this key issue. In turn, the Confederation, as the parliament of the Shipbuilding and Engineering Trades, by reiterating the same unqualified opposition, has dealt a heavy blow to frantic attempts which are still being made to shackle the labour movement with yet another year of wages control.

While demonstrating the growing force in rejection of wage restraint, this year's Confederation Meeting has also shown the need which still exists for much greater honesty and

clarity on the question of the social contract. The issue to be faced squarely is not that we have honoured our part of the agreement while the government hasn't honoured theirs, or that a "responsible" return to "free" collective bargaining is now necessary to 'save' a Labour Government from future electoral defeat. Neither is it that legitimate concern about anomalies in differentials is the sole issue to be dealt with. The real issue to be faced now, as before, is that there can be no contract with capitalism; that no surrender of trade unionism's traditional aims of improvement will ever yield any improvement for the economy of its members - still less in the present situation of crisis and decline.

Against the background of record official figures of 1,450,000 unemployed (at least 105,000 of whom are young people, declared redundant

without ever having been employed), this year's Confed has had to grapple with policies to combat redundancy, unemployment and the rapidly shrinking number of apprenticeships open to school leavers. In particular, delegates had to formulate their

opposition to the impending destruction of both shipbuilding and heavy power plant manufacturing - both of which are of vital importance to Britain's industrial future and to the future of regions such as Scotland and the North East.

All these examples illustrate the task facing all engineering workers - namely to challenge, rather than to live with, industrial decline. Thus Confed's decision at this stage to raise once again with the employers the traditional demand for a 35-hour week must not become an adaptation to the contraction which is still taking place in manufacturing output. It must rather be accompanied by a struggle at every level to increase employment - to take members into work and ensure the basic right to employment of all.

## Cap'n art though sleeping down below?

DRAKE surely rose from his hammock to watch the trawlermen in the Thames recently. Fishing grounds right up to the shores of Britain now belong to all Common Market countries and fishermen from all parts of Britain came to Westminster to protest.

On a cool grey day large trawlers with many more little fishing boats sailed up to the Pool of London. When all had gathered, the biggest trawler gave a polite firm signal to the Tower Bridge to open. It was opened, the trawler sailed through and the bridge closed. Ten minutes later another signalled for entrance and again the bridge was opened. Then at ten minutes intervals the other trawlers demanded admittance. The Bridge engineer was obviously not happy and he said one or two things to the captains. There was also the problem of road works on the bridge. Any slowness of response, however, changed the trawlers' deep tones into an angry roar. So the bridge went up and the bridge went down many times.

By now thousands of London workers and many more thousands of tourists recognised that something was afoot and crowded onto the two banks of the river.

Then the little ships raised their wireless masts till they could claim "open the bridge" and did so, one by one. Unlike the low pitched and melancholy roar of the big ships, the little ones had a high pitched tone that was even more wracking. Once again the bridge went up and the bridge went down over and over again, like a dream sequence.

When all were safely through the fishermen put on a display that won the hearts of all spectators. The trawlers sailed majestically up the down-stream and down the up-stream while the little fellows darted in and out like fireflies. One appeared to be sailing sideways from the north bank to the south and back again across the river. When an appearance of complete chaos had been achieved the fishermen who after all sail the most treacherous of seas the North



'No 50 miles. No future,' proclaimed the slogans boldly displayed on trawlers and fishing boats which advanced up to the Thames to Westminster in protest at Common Market encroachment on British fishing grounds (picture by Nick Birch)

Sea, displayed seamanship that could not be bettered. They performed a contre-dance, turning on a bubble, in complete control without a mark to fender or paint.

The river police now became very excited. All the rules of the river had been broken and there were old tubs of pleasure boats crowded with tourists trundling down to Greenwich. The captains looked worried but the passengers were delighted and cheered as the little ships danced around them. Powerful police launches darted in and out (trying to bring discipline to the Thames but not until

the display was over was calm restored.

The spectators, Londoners and tourists, were on the side of the fishermen. There were marines of "the little ships of Dunkerque" even of "The Revenge" and the Armada. The usual enquiries "Is the stern the sharp end?" were dealt with firmly and the request made "ship madam, not boat please."

The point had been made in the most graceful and telling way. "The Common Market is 'crook' for the British" as an Australian said. It is the biggest swindle since the South Sea Bubble, we want none of it.

## Close down Grunwicks! Labour's police picket out!

CLOSE down Grunwick's scab operation! Demand the withdrawal of the Labour Government's mass police picket!

It is clear from the action of the police that the intention of the State - the Government, Home Office and Scotland Yard, is to divert the dispute into one of police versus pickets. For Scotland Yard there was another reason for the diversion. The narrow streets leading to the firm processing plant were an ideal site for the police and the Special Patrol Group to practice their drill in combatting civil unrest. Tactics refined in the streets of Belfast and Derry including the agent provocateur were put into practice. The violence instigated by the police half an hour after the start of the mass picket by the arbitrary arrest of 50 pickets was sustained by the police throughout.

The press and the rest of the media joined in the chorus of diversion calling for blood. And it did not matter whose. Milk bottles were used in response to this hysterical cry on two occasions. The first time it hit a bus with the man responsible recognised by many pickets as a plain clothes policeman. The second occasion gave the press its satisfaction: a member of the Special Patrol Group laid

unconscious and bleeding in the middle of the street.

The basic principle of any struggle, namely to fight where we are strong must not be forgotten. The mass picket so effective in the first week has been turned by the State to its advantage. The terrain lends itself to a well-organised, well-drilled and adequately clothed police force more than to a collection of a few hundred pickets gathered from different part of the country in their shirt sleeves. We must now turn the fight to where we are strong. That means the point of production. A mass picket supported by blacking and industrial action throughout the Trade Union movement will ensure the closure of this anti-union firm.

Those who want a repeat of Saltley, when the coal depot in Birmingham was closed during the 1972 miners' strike, should remember that the success of Saltley was as much due to the strike of the engineers as to the large number on the picket line.

The idea that this is the last act of a long drama, a last ditch stand, is an insult to the determined and brave struggle of the Grunwick strikers over the last ten months. The mass picket is but one battle, the war must go on, but in more than one form. The guerrilla approach is needed.

## Letter: North Sea no saviour

Dear Editor,

With the sale by the government of millions of its shares this week, and the completion of the pipeline across Alaska, British Petroleum focuses the attention of everyone in Britain onto the question of oil in the North Sea and the companies working there. These oil companies, among the biggest, most powerful and reactionary of all international corporations (BP is one of them) are engaged in draining the resources of oil there at such a rate that there will be none left in 15 years time. All this out of a desperate greed for short term profit today, with callous disregard for tomorrow.

We know the notoriously bad conditions of work, the 600 per cent annual turnover of labour, the lack of safety provision, the danger of accident and explosion, the obstacles to union organisation. But we are told that these are unavoidable, and that like sacrifices made in the areas of wages, health, education, etc. if we endure them for a short while, we shall reap the benefits when the oil comes flowing in and industry is rejuvenated. Clearly, since British industry is being laid waste daily, these benefits must be intended for industry elsewhere. No surprise therefore at the claim that Britain will be a net exporter of energy in 1980!

We were told that North Sea Oil would mean jobs for those traditional depressed areas - North East Scotland and North East England. However, the 25,000 or so jobs in oil-related activities (government figures) are not even enough to stay the growing unemployment rate - and the vast majority of them are unskilled. Fine prospect for the unemployed boilermakers, platers, welders and fitters who abound in that region because of the rundown of the shipyards and the coalfields!

Even the revenue from taxation and royalties is virtually handed back to the companies in the form of astonishingly generous tax concessions. And, as if this were not enough, the government is empowered, through the national oil account, to give loans to individual oil companies of not more than £600 million!

Worst of all, North Sea Oil on the lips of social democrats is used as a reason for dividing the British working class into false camps, and we are expected to argue about whether it is English oil or Scottish oil.

Capitalism's strategy for Britain is clearly illustrated here. Set the people against one another that you might better plunder and waste a precious resource for immediate gain. As British workers, our response must be equally clear, the destruction of capitalism will be North Sea Oil's salvation.

From a Gravesend reader.

### Public Meeting

Public meeting at the Rose Inn, Catherine Street, Rochester:

"Not Social Contract-Socialism"

Wednesday July 6th at 8.00 pm.

## Shopworker casualties

TESCO have recently terminated their contract with the Green Shield Stamp Company. They have heavily advertised the fact that they will pass on the £19 million (the cost of Green Shield stamps last year to Tesco) on to their customers. Many staff worked during their bank holiday reducing prices and preparing the stores for opening on June 9th.

The termination of Green Shield stamps and consequently the £19m saved has been more or less spent. Around £1.5m has already been spent on advertising. The remaining £17.5m would have little effect on a turnover in excess of £600m annually. There is little doubt that prices will once again begin to rise unless of course the companies decide to use their profits as a subsidy.

The real casualties of this brief price war between the grocery retailers are the shopworkers, casualties both severe and permanent. Tesco have cut staffing by over 20 per cent, and no extra staff have been taken on despite increases of up to 50 per cent in turnover in nearly every store. Tesco anticipates increased trade after 'settling' of 25 per cent. The settling will inevitably come about when they start to increase their prices. Tesco are not alone in their staff cuts: Fine Fare, Sainsbury and Liptons have all cut back staffing. All are using the same subsidy for short term low prices and long term profits.

The consequences of this cut back in staff are far reaching. The freshness checks and rotation of stock necessary to maintain the high standards of hygiene will be slowly eradicated. Old age pensioners and others less capable of doing their own shopping will no longer receive the advice and assistance shop workers have so willingly given in the past. All because of profit.

Drivers and central warehouse staff have already started to act against these cuts. The warehouse staff have implemented an overtime ban against these cuts. The warehouse staff have implemented an overtime ban and drivers are refusing to handle any loads overweight and badly loaded; however, contract drivers are being used. It is now down to the workers on the shop floor to repel this attack on their working conditions and standard of living.

## Elections are popular in Albania

AMID an atmosphere of rejoicing, the Albanian people recently went to the polls to elect their representatives to the District, City and Village Councils and also to elect Judges and Assistant Judges to the People's Courts. The hundred per cent turnout gave an overwhelming victory to the candidates of the Democratic Front and thus voted firmly for the implementation of policies emerging from the 7th Congress.

That the Albanians treat their elections as great popular festivals is not to imply that such occasions are held lightly. Months of intensive preparations precede them. A determination

to choose the very best candidates typifies the meetings. Only those candidates who command the respect and confidence of the people are nominated and once elected they are subject to recall at any time if they lose the trust of the electorate.

Many factors contribute to the uniqueness of the democratic process in Albania. Albania is the only country in Europe wherein the dictatorship of the proletariat is a reality, fought for, maintained and developed with the active participation of the mass of people. Only when the means of production are under the control of the whole

society can the democratic process take on a truly meaningful role. Thus control of the organs of the state is firmly rooted in the people who elect representatives to the local councils and the People's Assembly. These bodies in turn nominate people to the executive organs of the state. The executive organs are fully accountable to the elected bodies and through them to the mass of people. Under the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist Party, the emphasis has always been to develop and strengthen the degree of participation of the people in all the decision-making processes.



One hundred per cent voting turnout for elections in Albania - not only a day of decision but also a day of celebration. (Picture by Albanian Telegraphic Agency)

## Death for domestic TV

IT SEEMS that when unions wish to black certain TV programmes, recently the FA cup final to South Africa, they are restricted by law. The government, however, has a different type of blacking in mind - the whole of the British television manufacturing industry.

It has come to light recently that despite a government agreement with domestic manufacturers last autumn restricting Japanese TV imports to 10 per cent of the British market, the government has been in secret negotiations with Hitachi, a Japanese corporation, to open a factory in County Durham. This would mean the possible loss of a further 2250 jobs.

Whilst these discussions have been going on Thorn Electric, who manufactured television tubes, were forced to close down due to Japanese competition,

making a further 1500 unemployed in Skelmersdale - already a badly hit area. There is now but one colour television tube manufacturing firm left in the country and with Hitachi building a factory in Finland able to produce 800,000 tubes a year the ensuing trade war would spell death for the whole of our domestic TV manufacturing industry.

In the last two years there have been 40,000 redundancies in the consumer electronics industry and British TV production has dropped from 2.3m in 1973 to 1.3m in 1976.

The government claims the Hitachi venture would benefit the economy. In fact it would create only 250 jobs here assembling the sets, since most of the components would be imported. Equally, nobody would be so naive as to believe that Hitachi,

who by-passed the agreement by using their Singapore subsidiary to flood the market, would invest in Britain for any other reason than the previous assurance of a hefty profit.

For us, in line with government strategy, this means another section of our industry, another skill of our class consigned to the scrap heap.

## Capitalism rules in USSR - official

TRUE to form, western Kremlin-watchers have seen in the new Russian constitution and the removal of Podgorny merely an attempt by Brezhnev to ensure his place in history. In fact it is nothing of the sort. It is something quite different and more sinister. The new constitution represents a further profound attack by revisionism upon the gains of the 1917 revolution. The restoration of capitalism is so strong and complete that it can finally be embodied in the constitution.

The new constitution, which is to replace the 1936 constitution, displays openly that socialism is no longer a factor in the state organisation of the Soviet Union. In discussions leading up to the 1936 constitution Stalin continually emphasised the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat as the basis of the socialist state. The rights and achievements won by the working class at the cost of so much suffering could only be protected by the dictatorship of the working class against bourgeois reaction. The concept of the USSR as 'a state of the whole people', first put forward by Khrushchev, has now been enshrined in the new constitution, totally denying and deflecting any form of class struggle against the entrenched bourgeoisie.

## Sale of the century in North Sea oil

IN ORDER to concentrate the benefits of North Sea Oil into even fewer hands, the State holding in British Petroleum has been reduced from 68 per cent to 51 per cent. Over 68 million shares were offered for sale on 26th June at £8.45p, far below the current market price. The price difference was so blatant that we had to be told 'This is not a City rip-off', yet the scramble to buy the shares proved otherwise. The responsibility for the sale of these valuable national assets was held by a committee of Cabinet ministers, chaired by the Chancellor, Denis Healey, who evidently considered that the future of BP was likely to be far

too profitable to deny the starving capitalists a bigger cut.

The stockbrokers W. Grenwell predicted that BP's not trading profit from the Forties field alone could be £244m this year, and by 1980, together with the Alaskan oilfield beginning production, could top £860m. In fact, though BP's crude oil supplies dropped from 242 million tonnes in 1972 to 177 million in 1976, income from sales (even after tax) increased from £2,300 million over the same period. Not bad going for an industry that was 'unable' to absorb the OPEC price rises and was 'forced' to pass on the increases to the

motorist!

The sale of shares was presented with a great deal of cosmetics, with 'preferential treatment' being given to BP employees and UK occupational pension schemes. Tales were even told of humble Post Office clerks applying to buy shares. Yet the reality was that the big City institutions applied for over 50 per cent of the shares, and another per cent had been specifically earmarked for sale in North America, which together with the applications from Japan and the EEC, left very little to be snatched up by the lucky few ordinary British people.

## Which way for miners?



THE PARADE of the Miners' Gala held at Rotherham on June 18th was a magnificent sight, showing all the discipline, unity and organisation built up by the miners over their many years of struggle.

The same could not be said of the speakers invited by the NUM to address the meeting. Indeed they gave the impression that if they had organised the parade the miners would have marched backwards.

The social contract was attacked by 'comrades' to great applause. They could hardly deny that this was the cause of many of the problems of the

working class, but the only solution to this and all other problems was the tired old formula, the election of a Labour Government pledged to socialist policies.

The miners must face up to the fact that 'solutions' such as this are the cause of the problems and as long as they continue to favour this form of 'leadership' their problems can only continue to worsen. Only when this social democratic thinking is cast aside once and for all, and marxist-leninist thinking is embraced can they start to solve their fundamental problems.

RECENT figures released by the government and local authorities' "Joint manpower watch" depict an ever growing loss of jobs in local government. Comparing December 1975 with December 1976 there were 8142 fewer full time posts in England and Wales. Many more have disappeared in Scotland.

## Weir here to stay

PLANS to close the Weir Maternity Hospital in Balham have been opposed by NUPE members among the ancillary and nursing staff by an occupation of the medical and canteen sections of the buildings, banning entry to members of the Area Health Authority. If this hospital becomes administrative offices, as the Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth AHA plans, then the South London Hospital will be the only specialist maternity hospital left in the south London area.

A one-day strike and lobby of the AHA offices is planned for 6th July, when the decision about the future of the hospital is due to be taken. Effectively to prevent closure, the NUPE members at the hospital must now get the rest of the nursing and medical staff, who are as yet uncommitted, to support their action.

## Doctors on the dole

MEDICAL students are beginning to face up to the dire situation waiting for them after leaving medical school. By 1984 1 in 8 will not be able to find a pre-registration house job. These jobs are hospital appointments necessary before registration as qualified to practise. Being without a pre-registration job means that you will never be able to practise as a doctor in any form anywhere.

The National Union of Students has recently issued a document on this problem, and at the summer general meeting of Guy's Hospital Clubs Union, the item was incorrectly on the agenda as: "Doctors on the dole?" There is no question about it, there will be doctors on the dole. There will be 4100 students leaving medical school in 1984 and only 3000 pre-registration jobs. Five hundred students will have wasted five or six years study. A speaker at the meeting pointed out that this problem cannot be considered in isolation from the rest of the career structure for doctors. Most of those who do find a pre-registration post and qualify will work in a junior post not recognised as part of a training scheme, and left with little hope of advancement. The lack of senior hospital posts has always been chronic. Just as pre-registration posts cannot be considered in isolation from the rest of the career structure, so this cannot be isolated from the NHS as a whole. A government that is cutting back the living standards of all the workers both in wages directly and in educational and health facilities is not going to care about the hardships caused by lack of jobs for doctors or lack of doctors to care for the health of the people.

## Union Conferences 1977 COHSE : NALGO :

DESPITE its heavily qualified support for the social contract, the COHSE conference in Blackpool presented a picture of health service workers as generally progressive and clear-headed. The ambulancemen in particular stood out as an example of determination to maintain standards in the face of cuts, demanding an end to single-manning, national minimum standards for ambulance equipment, proper accident-care training, and the abolition of the hospital car service (by which money is saved and lives put at risk in the hands of unskilled, underpaid volunteers and others).

It was reported that COHSE negotiators on the nurses' and midwives' Whitley Council had now got the staff side to agree to go for a 35 hour week for all nurses. This the conference could not accept because of the strings it had attached to its acceptance of some sort of Phase Three: basically greater flexibility all round, and a call for the government to keep price rises down to the rate of wage rises, a forlorn and naive condition in the light of the past few years. Fear of the fall of the Labour government, and fear of losing out as one of the 'weaker sections' of the working class, caused delegates to accept only an orderly return to free collective bargaining.

On the cuts, the NEC promised it would fully back, if necessary with money, all local actions to stop cuts taking place: but it would hold back on national action against them, with the odd notion that worse cuts were bound to come, and then was the time to oppose them!

It is not yet apparent to COHSE members, it seems, that continued support for Labour, and social democracy in general, entangles them inevitably in accepting not only the social contract, but also the cuts, which are part and parcel of the same bad deal.

## Lead workers use union to improve their safety

WORKERS at Associated Lead Manufacturers in Bootle near Liverpool have in the last 8 months organised for the first time and won recognition for their union, the AUEW. In that time they have already won a great deal.

When interviewed by The Worker, the shop steward told how many people locally, who had worked for Associated Lead, had been forced to retire early because of bad health. One of the changes which had occurred since the workers had fought for better working conditions was evident in the state of the Leeds Liverpool Canal. This was once greyish white in colour, since effluent was obviously leaking into it. Now it is almost clear, and you can see live fish again, not the dead ones which were such a familiar sight last year. The use of their organised strength to improve health and safety standards has paid dividends. In particular since the three-weekly readings of lead levels in the blood began to fall, union membership increased to

NALGO took as its priority this year better communication, with the aim of greater involvement by its 700,000 members.

NALGO will establish a shop steward system of negotiation in all its branches. The union has already been shown a lead by some of its branches where steward systems are already flourishing. In line with this, the union will also investigate the removal of the Whitley system of negotiations, in existence since the beginning of the century. Whitleyism was established to dampen down shop floor activity with a series of consultative committees, arranged in a strict hierarchy, which soon swallowed up any issue from the hands of the rank and file who raised it. Officers failed to render account to the mass, and the mass abdicated their responsibility in favour of their committee representatives. Local negotiation should now undermine this social democratic outlook.

But this membership involvement is of no use if NALGO continues to let the State control it. In accepting the principle of the social contract yet again, delegates refused to recognise the Government's purpose here is to weaken union struggle. In pushing its "Alternative Economic Strategy", NALGO invites more state control.

The national overtime ban showed the different levels of union consciousness among branches. Some had forced the employer to bring the unemployed into work. Others had not even applied it. Conference thus restored flexibility to branches to use such action according to their own strength.

NALGO's increased use of industrial action, its solidarity with Grunwick and the Greenwich steel workers, and its new steward system are moves towards better trade unionism. The new, improved NALGO must be firmly in the hands of its members - not of the state.



## Few illusions among Britain's shipbuilders

JULY 1st sees the installation of the management of British Shipbuilders which is taking control of the now nationalised shipbuilding industry. Unlike previous experiences of nationalisation in other areas, few of the 72,000 who work in the industry can have any illusions about the struggle they now face to save this much reduced sector from even further destruction.

Shipbuilding throughout the capitalist world is in grave crisis as a result of contraction in world trade. Thousands of shipbuilding workers in many countries are being made redundant and yards are being closed down. For Britain's industry, the position is even more serious. Unlike other countries, our capacity, because of lack of investment, has not grown since the 1950's. Its share of the world market has shrunk dramatically, from 25 per cent in 1955 to 3 per cent today. Numbers employed over the same period have shrunk from 130,000 to 72,000. Now, despite EEC plans to keep Japanese ships out, the Commission, the Department of Industry and even some directors of the UK industry itself, have ordered that Britain must cut her excess capacity!

What this means is that, in the long term, what little remains of this once proud industry (itself vital for a manufacturing nation which must carry its goods abroad), will disappear for ever.

Immediately, it will mean not just extinction of industry and skill, but a dramatic increase in unemployment in areas where shipbuilding is located and where unemployment is already well above the national average.

Recent statements by members of the new management in denial of ministerial claims that the industry must accept some contraction, cannot mask what capitalism has in store. Despite a temporary resurgence in orders in the last few months in response to government hand-outs, the capitalist class as a whole has no commitment to a thriving shipbuilding industry. Witness for example the fact that in recent years British shipowners have operated the world's third largest merchant fleet; yet in comparison with other maritime nations the proportion of new tonnage added to that fleet annually which has been built at home is the lowest in the world.

Last year's TUC 'expressed its deep concern' about lack of evidence about 'greater co-operation between UK shipowners and UK yards'. Delegates to the Confed have again resolved that the future of British shipbuilders must be based upon the industry 'as presently structured'.

With clarity on the issues facing them, it falls to those employed in shipbuilding to save it from destruction. July 1st must mark a new resolve in that direction.

# TGWU debates EEC, job loss and Social Contract

THE BIENNIAL Delegate Conference of the TGWU meeting at the end of June considers 52 motions on wages, the overwhelming majority of which call for the return to collective bargaining including the restoration of differentials. The implementation of the Union's policy to pursue a 45 hour week, retirement at 60, a ban on overtime and "moonlighting" and the right of the Union to assert its independence from any TUC social contract policy.

The question will be: can the Conference gain the clarity needed to deal a death-blow to any future TUC collaboration with capitalism, whether Labour or Tory (whats in a name?) The variety of the verbal packaging accompanying the phrase "collective bargaining" - "free!", "normal!", "voluntary", "orderly" - reflects the widespread confusion in this basic issue. The temptation to opt for a "flexible" pay policy

with productivity deals and incentive schemes, will be great, with a national minimum wage and cost-of-living-index-linked wage deals thrown in "to protect the low paid". To protect profits, more like. As though the low paid can't fight too, but must accept their lot, while the highest paid, who gained nothing that was not dearly paid for, should shed tears for them.

Also before the Conference will be the whole related question of unemployment, particularly in the construction industry and among school leavers. Motions include a call for the unity of employed and unemployed within the Union, and for the recruitment of more apprentices into the factories. But the apprenticeships are not to be had. Faced with a ruling class hell-bent on destroying Britain by destroying her youth.

What delegates will have to realise is that human error plays no part in the present crisis.

Rather, it is calculated and political. It is not something we should tolerate in the hope that it will go away. Neither will we persuade our ruling class to love us and give us back our jobs again. Politic requests from unions loyal to the Labour government, for it to reverse its policies will not do. Traditional union demands for more money, the right to work and shorter working week hours must now contain a new ingredient, the consciousness that the working class, using these once defensive weapons, is now on the attack, and is the only force that counts, amid all capitalism's decay, for progress and the future.

Another question confronting the Conference is Britain's membership of the Common Market. About half the motions on this subject call for complete withdrawal from the EEC. Others, not clear enough to refute it altogether, point to loss of sovereignty and call for the freedom of the British government to act independently of the EEC in a national interest while yet remaining a member of it.

Let us at least be clear. Capitalists are capitalists and have no national interests. Marine unemployment, dependence on imports, the murder of our agriculture and fishing, the absence of meat on working class tables while mountains of it pile up elsewhere to keep prices high - these are all the hand-work of capitalism. And our parliament is no less an instrument for the preservation of capitalism than any other.

Out with the contract!  
Out of the EEC!

# Fight Ford's tactics!

FORD'S management have deliberately triggered the current dispute! They are seeking to demoralise Ford workers, put us to starvation point without the stamina and resources to face the major struggle before us - the struggle we will face when the Ford's wages agreement expires in September. By that time they hope we will be so weak and divided that we shall accept whatever we are offered.

## Divide and exploit

The management's tactics are obvious in the current dispute. They have seized this "Improved stock situation" - when the stock of castings from Spain are piled high - to set shift against shift, plant against plant, and so on. Prompted into action by the sit-in at Dagenite batteries, they seek to turn the situation against us.

First by concocting the so-called internal dispute and refusing lay-off pay. They attack the PTA first who are always the first to go, and they are rightly sick to the teeth of the company's deceit. This is the third time since Christmas they have been laid off on a trumped-up dispute!

Second they seek to sow division and confusion among workers. In the Body Plant and the PTA they kept one shift in, although there was no work. Then they announced on television that the dispute was over and the men should report for work. Actually, the dispute was spreading and the pickets were still on! The firm did this to create clashes among the pickets and other workers. They also tried to create division between unions, by inciting the drivers to force through the picket line. The drivers refused. The effect of this picket is so widespread that any handling of material through the river has also stopped and the Body Plant is occupied. Although every plant in Dagenham has come to a standstill and the production workers laid off, the company has been keeping the maintenance men in and getting their lines and machinery repaired. This is another attempt to create division among workers to attack our unions and weaken our resistance!

## Support the PTA's action

The company thinks we are casual labour to be driven in or out of the plant like dumb cattle. This is the third time since Christmas that the PTA workers have been laid off without pay. The workers are not going to tolerate this any more. They are determined to jeopardise production in all plants at Dagenham until they are either guaranteed a 40 hour week's work or paid lay-off money for any dispute in which they are not directly involved. It is quite clear we must reject all attempts to divide us and the whole of Ford's Dagenham shall support them in this just struggle.

# Oxfordshire and London defend their schools

NEARLY 400 members of the National Union of Teachers from 35 Oxford schools began a 10 day strike on June 25th against the local authority's plans to cut education provisions, making 200 teachers redundant.

For three years Oxfordshire teachers have been campaigning to oppose cuts in the Authority's educational expenditure. As each year passed, the education of Oxfordshire's children has been eroded just a little bit more, but the Authority's plans for 1977/78 are of quite a different order. Instead of the usual £500,000, £3½m is to be lopped off, involving the loss of nearly 500 jobs in the county, a huge increase in class size and a 20 per cent cut in capital grant to the schools, and there still remains the likelihood that 200 teachers, full-time and part-time, will be sacked for no other reason than their wish to exercise their skills.

Since September 1976 the Council's plans have met an escalating response from teachers. On September 27th Oxford witnessed the biggest demonstration in its history as two and a half thousand teachers and many other trade unionists struck for half a day and with parents lobbied the County Council. In February teachers began their programme of sanctions by refusing to cover for colleagues absent for more than a day. Then in May, following resolutions carried at Local Association meetings and the firmer commitment to defend educational standards made by the Union at its Annual Easter Conference, all NUT members in the county were balloted on new forms of action to be taken. The response has left no-one in doubt about the resolution of the teachers, for nearly 90 per cent voted to support all three forms of action being proposed. Following nine hours of fruitless talks between the two sides these sanctions have now been brought into operation. From June 13th teachers in the NUT have withdrawn their voluntary super-

vision during the lunch-hour and refused to handle any of the administration connected with the School Meals Service. From June 20th the same teachers have refused to teach 'oversize' classes, ie classes of over 30 in secondary schools, over 32 in primary schools and over 27 in classes containing reception-age children. The only response that this action has elicited from the Council is a declaration of war from the Brigadier who now heads the Education Committee. On 28th June nearly 400 teachers in the City of Oxford, renowned as a centre of educational excellence, began a strike scheduled to last for ten days, a warning shot fired across the bows of the Council that teachers will be ready to resume their struggle and extend it when the new school year commences in September.

Despite the hardship being caused by disruption in the schools teachers are quickly discovering that they are not alone. Some parents are withdrawing their children from school as a protest against the Council; others have been taking their children to County Hall to eat their sandwiches there while schools have been closed during the lunch-hour. Some parents have mobilised to defend nurseries against the threatened closure of nursery schools and classes in the City. Meanwhile other Unions have expressed their support and the Oxfordshire Federation of Trades Councils is mounting a major demonstration of support for the NUT on July 2nd.

## Lavender Hill

A CAMPAIGN involving teachers, pupils, parents and local residents has succeeded in preventing the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) from closing Lavender Hill Girls School in Wandsworth.

The Authority has ear-marked the school for closure for some time. It has failed to make much needed improvements at the school despite demands made



Ford pickets: few are needed because the line is respected.

by the staff for them. This was an attempt to demoralise both staff and pupils.

Recently the ILEA came out into the open. Using the pretext of a falling school pupil roll, the authority announced that there was a question mark over the future viability of the school. It attempted to persuade those parents who had chosen the school for their children to attend in September to opt for other schools in the area. Few did so.

A creditable campaign led by NUT members on the school staff began. Parents took up the fight, children gave excellent support, the local branch of the NUT was involved as well as the branches of other trade unions.

Faced with this mass movement the ILEA relented and withdrew the threat of closure.

Other schools in London will be similarly threatened. Teachers should follow the lead of Lavender Hill. Like their colleagues at Sladebrook High School, Brent, they demand more education, not less. Knowing full well that the authorities are using falling rolls as a smokescreen for imposing further cuts in the education sector, the demand at both schools is that falling rolls offer an opportunity to reduce class size and improve education - fewer pupils should not mean fewer schools.

# Bookshops

- Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, London NW5**
- Brighton Workers Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton**
- Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road St. Philips, Bristol**
- Northern Star Bookshop, 18A Leighton Street, Leeds**

The following new publications are available from the Bellman Bookshop. Prices include postage and packing.

- "Morals and Politics, the Ethics of Revolution" by William Ash, £3.20.
- A series of historical pamphlets on Ireland including "Ireland upon the Dissecting Table" by James Connolly, 70p.
- "The Irish Free State and British Imperialism", 35p.

# Public Meetings

At the Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, London NW5 (Tufnell Park Tube). All meetings to commence at 7.30 pm:

- Friday July 1st - Save our Public Transport
- Friday July 8th - Socialism, not the Labour Party
- Friday July 15th - Revolution, not World War

At the Rose Inn, Catherine Street, Rochester, at 8.00 pm:

- Wednesday July 6th - Not Social Contract-Socialism

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