

# THE WORKER



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## IN THE THIRTIES - IN THE SEVENTIES

# UNEMPLOYMENT IS WAR ON WORKERS

IN THE NAME of the entire working class we condemn this Labour Government for its capitalist policy. With unemployment at close to two million this Government, in capitalism's interest, adds to their number day by day. In the very week of the budget the close down was announced of the steel plant at Ebbw Vale, making 1600 workers jobless, Spillers Baking Combine, 8000, Speke Triumph factory, 3000, Massey-Ferguson Coventry, 4800, GEC Liverpool, 600. And so it goes, the endless record of factories closed and skilled workers thrown on the scrap heap. Production remained stagnant the whole of last year and is even lower than at the time of Heath's three-day week. In pursuing a policy of deflation at the expense of hundreds of thousands of jobs this Government is following exactly the same course as the notorious "National" Government before the war. The grim irony is that now it is done by a Government calling itself Labour.

## Triumph workers opt for struggle against British Leyland's sackings plan

AT a mass meeting in Liverpool stadium of Leyland workers from the threatened Speke No. 2 factory on April 15 a unanimous decision was taken to back the shop stewards proposals for resisting closure.

These proposals include support for the principle of the right to work, rejecting any compulsory redundancy; giving senior stewards and local and national officials the opportunity to negotiate with the Company in order that the aspirations of all members be met; providing for the reconvening of the mass meeting not later than May 13 when a specific plan of struggle against the closure of the No. 2 factory will be worked out.

The representatives of the Combined Shop Stewards Ctte who was at the meeting said that 'Little Mo' (Edwardes) was going to find a much tougher proposition than chloride and called for mob-

ilisation of the whole Leyland workforce against closures.

After weeks of rumours at the Speke No. 2 plant about special redundancy payments of from £5000 to £10000, the truth as revealed in letters distributed to individual workers on April 13, turned out to be only one week's pay over

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Part of the huge crowd which gathered in Hyde Park on February 5, 1933, to protest against rising unemployment and the Government's anti-working class policies.

## Further redundancies announced at Thorn's Bradford television factory

THE CLOSURE of its Bradford TV plant, with 2200 redundancies was announced by Thorn Consumer Electronics on 5th April. In the last few years this works, reputed the largest colour plant in Europe has seen its workforce dwindle from over four thousand.

Two years ago, Thorns closed its TV tube factory at Skelmersdale, Lancashire with the loss of 1400 jobs. Workers then pointed out that other closures were bound to follow throughout the Thorn

group, and very soon.

Their assessment has proved only too correct.

The remaining two TV factories at Enfield and Gosport are now being assured that their future is secure, just as Bradford was at the time of the Skelmersdale closure. The same old story - divide and rule.

Following the closure announcement a mass meeting instructed the shop stewards committee to investigate all ways of opposing the closure and pressuring the company

to change its mind.

It is becoming clear that capitalism is systematically destroying Bradford's industrial base. Local industrial news makes sober reading. Since Christmas GEC has announced 300 redundancies: John Rigby Steels Ltd, 190; International Harvesters, 300; Lucas Aerospace, 600 and now Thorns with 2200. These redundancies and closures must be vigorously opposed, otherwise shortly we shall be left with an industrial wasteland.

**THE FIGHT AT SWIFT SCALES SEVEN AGAINST THE STATE**

IN THE rise to power of Hitler, connived at and encouraged by the German and British ruling class and the Vatican, war hysteria began. By 1938 rearmament had got slowly under way and new laws in the event of a state of war in Britain were introduced, among which was the banning of all strikes. Elaborate machinery was established to provide arbitration but, under the pretext of prosecuting war, it was an attempt to break the back of organised trade union workers.

Meantime there was more and more collusion with the Hitler mob by the British Government and constant prodding to turn Britain against the USSR. This is history and these machinations fell short of accomplishment.

Now began in interim the struggle of engineers who with others had suffered severe unemployment and were suddenly in demand. Notwithstanding this, it was they, the engineers, above all others who said that this ruling class would not conduct a war against Hitler fascism and use it, as in 1914, for further imperialist sallies and to make war on the workers here in a different way. For the ruling class both envied and admired Hitler who had destroyed the great labour movement of Germany, enslaved the German worker and set up a Labour Front. Here they hoped to do the same.

iate influx of skilled workers trade union organisation was quickly built into a strong trade union factory, with a strong political direction. At one stage and in prelude an enquiry was conducted on the state of industrial relations, emphasis being given to the series of strikes which had taken place. Clearly, an example was required to be made of the engineers, an example to all.

The enquiry was under the new machinery, a tribunal including the ex-president of the Engineering Employers Federation and the immediate ex-president of the AEU, JR Little, from which it emerged that a strong Communist Party branch had been built, that regular Marxist classes took place of many of the workers other than communists; and great concern was expressed that here was a factory which three years in a row struck on May Day, war or no - the only factory to do so; that clearly here was a factory, though engaged in war production, which openly opposed the conduct of the war. At this time the Daily Worker, then the newspaper of the Communist Party, had reneged, yet still the opposition to Government policy was strong and growing, and likely to be more contagious among engineering workers. Something had to be done. Hence sack the convenor.

Inevitably the process of law was begun, very slow and labor-

that they signified. Bevin, the Minister of Labour, applied Regulation 58AA. Within this was the phrase if "he", the Minister, apprehended a dispute, he could act, whether a dispute took place or not. At the trial six stewards were represented by counsel, the seventh, Reg Birch, electing to defend himself by agreement with the other defendants and factory committee. War regulations provided for a seven-man jury, the judge being Sir Gerald Dodson, Recorder.

All pleaded not guilty, Birch arguing on their behalf non-recognition of the oppressive Act, arguing for the right to organise in defence of wages and working conditions, the right of stewards to function within the factory to carry out their duties, the holding of mass meetings when required. All this the law forbade in what were termed "protected places", namely the factory of course. Though these workers were not criminals, they stood in the Central Criminal Court No. 2 because they opposed the conduct of the war.

The trial lasted two or three days. When Birch spoke of the workers the judge interjected with such comments as "we are all workers". Leaning towards the press bench and the jury box he made sure that they had taken the full weight of such intellectual observations. The trial of course aroused much public interest and during Birch's defence the court was crowded with legal by-standers in their gowns. The Lord Mayor and the like, other judges and Freeman in full regalia looked on, rather like Covent Garden box holders at the opera, all to see this curious little criminal-worker perform.

Birch sought to subpoena Bevin, the Minister of Labour, since if he apprehended a potential dispute or a dispute this was a state of mind and he should present himself to answer in person what it was he thought at the time of instituting proceedings. He did not present himself. Whilst engineering workers could be exhibited the establishment was not going to suffer such ignominy or possible ridicule. The Minister of Labour sent a deputy.

After adjournment the jury returned a verdict of guilty. The sentence was to be three years imprisonment and a £1800 fine on each. In the interim, on the day of sentence, Hitler attacked the USSR - June 22, 1941. At last the Government could extricate itself from its own stupidity, for engineers and trade unionists everywhere were fully alerted: solidarity and support were enormous and a threat to the Government.

The prisoners, the defendants,



Blind-folded Justice with scales on top of the Central Criminal Court, the Old Bailey, where the Smith Scales shop stewards were tried, found justice weighted in favour of capitalism and blind to the needs of the working class.

locked in cells when the court was adjourned during the day but allowed on bail to sleep at home at night, were offered the option of going to prison or behaving, for with the Soviet Union in the war the direction would now change. Their intervention would force a war against Hitler and the Nazis: the workers of Britain would support the USSR as their ally, the great Red Army and the heroic people. This they did and the conduct of the war did change.

The option offered was at first subject to disagreement among the seven, not all of them convinced that the sentence was unjust, the law oppressive and needing to be opposed and smashed. However, ultimately the Birch line was adopted by all. So the USSR, Stalin, the Red Army saved the seven from prison. Birch and the convenor remained unemployed for a time, though skilled engineers were in great demand. That these two skilled workers were unacceptable was most embarrassing. Ultimately, with the direct intervention of the Minister of Labour, Bevin, the president of the AEU, Tanner, and others they were placed in factories with sundry imprecations to behave.

Of course in each case they esteemed their trade union responsibilities aright and promptly began anew organising where they had been separately dispatched. But that is another story.

**BBC - UNION UNITY CALL**

AT THEIR conference in Guildford last week the Association of Broadcasting Staff, representing 26,000 workers or over half of BBC employees, approved overwhelmingly of a vote by its membership on merging with the Association of Cinematograph Television and Allied Technicians.

They also supported a move urging all members to vote in favour of the merger.

By the end of the year there could be one union covering radio, television and the film industry. This follows 15 years of negotiation on how the merger could be brought about.

BROADCASTING of Parliament has begun in an undisguised attempt to breathe life into the ailing body. The effect of the new move of course will be the reverse of that intended. Speeches will now be addressed to the general public rather than to fellow MPs, and the collective which supposedly rules the country will lapse into further and deserved disrepute.

ONE of President Carter's lieutenants has chastised his European NATO partners for their apparent diffidence in accepting the neutron bomb. What was needed, he said, was "a show of interest on their part to back up the President. After all, it is in their good interest, because any war of this kind is going to be fought on their territory." That's precisely why European workers don't want the neutron bomb.

HARINGEY Teachers' Association says that the falling school population provides the opportunity for all classes, including registration classes in secondary schools, to be reduced to a maximum of 25. It states this in a document entitled "Schools provision in Haringey for the next 15 years and the improvement of standards."

THORN, the country's largest TV manufacturer, has announced plans to close two factories at a cost of 2200 jobs. Meanwhile, it has just taken over two American companies together worth more than £6½million.

ONE wonders at the fuss made over current by-elections. When the Government is able to impose its 10 per cent pay guidelines without any reference to Parliament and backs the guidelines by means of semi-legal intimidation, what point is there in either standing for election, or voting in one?

SPILLERS, attempting to sack 8000 bakery workers, may have infringed part of the Employment Protection Act, thus rendering themselves liable to a fine of ... £400.

LATEST figures show that the hospital waiting list in England is 591,000. Mr Ennals proudly claims that the number is falling. This is patently untrue, even though patients are being rushed through treatment as fast as possible. As "The Lancet" says: "Nurses must now face increased pace and pressure of work as length of stay in acute hospitals decreases... The risk is that quality of care is suffering as nurses find themselves rushing from patient to patient, just managing to do the basic tasks."

MICHAEL Pocock, head of the Shell oil group, complains that manufacturing in the UK is being penalised by the "outdated inflexible structure of the trade unions in the engineering trades." We should always listen to the employers' advice on how we should organise - and then do the opposite.



Reg Birch who undertook his own defence at the trial. Picture shows him some years later speaking at Tower Hill in denunciation of the anti-trade union Industrial Relations Act.

At this time the Swift Scales factory in London, like all other light engineering factories, was on subcontract in armaments manufacture making aircraft products. As in all such factories the introduction of skilled workers, engineers rather than scale makers, began the process of organisation. Many skirmishes arose, as the workers taught the employer the true meaning of trade unionism in a factory, culminating in the dismissal of the convenor.

This began a 100 per cent strike, a six week strike which in '39 and '40 was of great historical length and well nigh unprecedented. It was sustained, though clearly against the law, by the great solidarity of engineering workers everywhere, especially in London.

The factory, though not a large one, was singled out to be broken. Because of the immed-

ious. Still the strike held. Special branch police followed workers everywhere, spied on the mass meeting and strike committee meetings. So things continued to the point of charging seven shop stewards, six men and one woman. But the strike held. After a couple of sessions at smaller courts where the penalties would be smaller, the cases were referred to the Central Criminal Court, the Old Bailey, and a show trial began. Clearly the establishment wanted a great public example, a severe sentence superceding lesser sentences in lower courts, no doubt in the hope of intimidating all engineering workers.

The memories of engineers' struggles in the '14-'18 War haunted the ruling class. It could not be allowed to take such form in 1940. The 'National' Government was united against this little band of workers and all

# EDITORIAL

AFTER the budget and after the Labour win at Garscadden, it is looking very much like an autumn election. Healey kept his budget "hand-out" stingy in order to have something left for a "pre-election give away" at the end of summer; and Callaghan, vociferously denying that there is any "declared intention" of introducing another budget this year, is protesting too much. At the same time, he is keeping his protest ambiguous.

As a lead up to an election the TUC has been considering with Government the question of wage restraint, because one of the Government's claims for re-election will be that it "brought inflation down by its pay policy." Healey openly said in presenting his budget that he hoped the tax cuts would keep pay demands in check.

The TUC on the subject of future pay restraint is as ambiguous as Callaghan on a pre-election budget. There could be no "formal agreement" with the unions for a Phase Four to start in August, the TUC said; but at the same time several members of the General Council admitted the Government's right to name a figure - probably a 7 per cent ceiling.

The TUC has merely paid lip service to the Congress resolution of an "orderly return to free collective bargaining". Len Murray, having asked the Government for a massive restoration of public expenditure on health, education and welfare to reduce unemployment, when questioned about Healey's budget which did no such thing, said he thought Healey had "got it about right".

So it's still support Labour at any cost as far as the TUC is concerned, without even the fig leaf of the discredited and rejected social contract to cover its naked obeisance.

We organised workers simply cannot go on voting for capitalism and a General Election offers us no alternative. The Tories are capitalist. Labour is capitalist. The Liberals are capitalist too. The so-called 'national' parties in Scotland and Wales represent local capitalist interests and, like all the others, are anti-working class. The fringe parties represent even more naively a belief that there will never be a change from the capitalist system and therefore all argument has to take place in the parliamentary forum capitalism provides.

For workers to vote in an election where every vote is a vote for capitalism is, in fact, to disenfranchise themselves as workers. A vote is only meaningful if it can be cast for what the voter really wants and needs. What the workers of Britain need desperately at this moment in time is an end to unemployment, a restoration of health, education and the public services and investment of the wealth they have created in Britain's future, that future being the capacity of British workers to use their skill and ingenuity to provide a wholesome life for themselves, their children and their children's children. Is it conceivable that any of the capitalist parties can give us that? If it is, why haven't they done so? We have needed these things long enough. No. It is perfectly obvious we shall have to do these things for ourselves.

What we are really voting for if we vote for any of the capitalist parties is a continuation, in one form or another, of wage fixing by government fiat. Behind all the talk about just a little more belt-tightening before the good times suddenly burst upon us or all the social benefits of a racist immigration policy or the rest of the electioneering gobbledygook is the real issue of getting workers to agree to fasten the shackles of wage control about their ankles so that capitalism can survive a little longer - and agreeing at the same time to dispense with our only defence and strength, our trade unions.

A significant vote by workers isn't a mark on a piece of paper cast every four or five years. It is what we do or don't do daily, mainly at our places of work, which either confirms in power the class and the party and the government which exploit us or, by organising ourselves for resistance, begins to vote capitalism out and socialism in. When it was said that the Russian soldiers streaming back from the front where capitalism had been slaughtering them had not yet voted, Lenin said they had voted with their feet. We vote with our feet when we, in trade union solidarity, walk out of a place of work in pursuance of a just claim. We vote with the seat of our trousers when we occupy a place of work the employers are trying to close down. And most of all we vote with our hearts and minds when we repudiate their phoney elections and parliamentary traps to organise ourselves for the overthrow of the class enemy and the ending of exploitation.

## Nurses demand training

RESPONSIBILITY without knowledge is dangerous in any place of work - in a hospital it can mean death. All over Britain student nurses with a few months' experience are being left in charge of wards. Trained staff on the wards are so over-worked that they have no time to teach students working there. So few clinical teachers are employed at the Schools of Nursing that they are unable to supervise their students.

Students are denied a chance to learn skills whilst thousands of trained staff are unemployed. Many students are leaving nursing, exhausted and frustrated, before completion of their 'training'. Students must demand to

be taught, for it is a demand for more trained staff on the wards and in the Schools of Nursing and, fundamentally, a demand to save our Health Service. Without skilled nurses there can be no Health Service.

Nurses are encouraged by the hospital to join a union so that the union can pay the legal fees when they are sued for negligence. Nurses cannot afford to learn by their mistakes - their mistakes may be corpses. Student nurses must join a union and demand to be taught. The working class fought for the Health Service - it must fight yet harder to save it. Our lives, quite literally, depend on it.

# NUS must see the state as the real enemy

THE FACT that delegates at the NUS Easter conference rightly voted to return the old NUS policy of 'no platform' for racists and fascists in students' unions cannot be seen as the mark of a successful conference. Sadly the heated level of discussion on racialism was not reflected in any other debate.

The hollow, half-hearted debates on the three most important issues facing our national union, grants, education cuts and union autonomy, clearly reflected two things. Firstly, the absence of struggle in the colleges. Secondly, the growing tendency within the student movement to by-pass struggle and direct all energy to opening up more and more channels of negotiation with the State. The 'easy' road of negotiation has always been a slippery one: one where the initiative and united strength of the membership are abandoned. The results of this

were starkly reflected at a divided conference where the motions passed were concerned not with the real needs and interests of students, but those of the state.

The most alarming aspect of conference was the degree of confusion on the crucial issue of student union autonomy. In the face of an unprecedented attack on our right to organise from the DES, conference mirrored the lack of confidence among students and voted for the concept of publicly accountable union funds, thus denying our existence as an independent and valuable part of the Trade Union Movement.

The question for the NUS is a simple one. We either face our responsibility of fighting to save education, and in so doing defend and assert our autonomy, or we make ourselves publicly accountable for our negligence.

Our responsibility is to edu-

cation and its future, the lifeblood of our national union. Without our autonomy we will be unable to fight the cuts. We will be unable to save 39 colleges of education from closure and protect 80,000 teacher training places. The implications of this enormous cutback spell the destruction of education as we know it.

For all its disappointments the most heartening outcome of NUS conference was a clear realisation among many delegates of the tasks facing our union. Many went back to their students' unions more determined to take up the issues locally and build strong campaigns in the colleges. There is a growing feeling that we must vigorously defend the hard won rights of our national union, not just for the sake of being 'autonomous', but in order to fight the cuts. We need our autonomy to save our education.

## COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN (ML)

# MAYDAY MEETINGS

## ONE WORLD ~ TWO CLASSES



### WORKERS THROW OFF YOUR CHAINS!



**LONDON - May 1** Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1 7.30pm

**LIVERPOOL - May 2** AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant 7.30pm

**LEEDS - April 30** Swarthmore Educational Centre, Woodhouse Square, Leeds 3 3.00pm

**BIRMINGHAM - April 29** Dr Johnson House, Bull Street 7.30pm

**BRISTOL - May 1** Swan Hotel, Stokes Croft 7.30pm

## Hull : no maternity hospital closures !

LAST OCTOBER Humberside Area Health Authority announced they were going to close Hull Women's and Townend Maternity Hospitals. NUPE, faced with the loss of 50 jobs has decided to take the offensive. Support has come from trade unions, Hull Trades Council, the Family Practitioner Committee, and Hull City Council.

The loss of Townend (in West Hull) and the transfer of all maternity care to Hedon Road (in East Hull) would mean longer travelling distances for pregnant women. With the decline in public transport, this may mean a 4-hour round trip.

Even more important, loss of Townend will mean a loss of personal care and contact that smaller hospitals can give. Doctors and midwives say that the closure will result in an irre-

trievable loss of skill if they cannot practise in a specialist unit. Hedon Road unfortunately represents the new-style maternity care: 'rush them in, rush them out'. All beds at Hedon Road are already full and are themselves to be reduced.

Hull Health District calls for 'greater utilisation of staff and facilities' and emphasis on 'community care'. In reality this means shorter stays in hospital and worse staff/patient ratios. The standard of patient care will decline: complications will be more likely, requiring readmission as emergencies. 'Community care' means the care of the sick will be shouldered by individuals in the home, unaided, unhelped and untrained.

NUPE's response was not to sit round a table and work out redeployment safeguards. It was

to call a mass meeting, set up a campaign committee, involve other trade unionists and call on the support of the local community.

The Area Health Authority have already backtracked, in awe at the campaign's popularity. They have found money from 'somewhere' and say they will keep the Women's Hospital open 5 days a week. They may even be regretting they thought of closure, since the campaign is provoking positive criticisms of the present service - the Family Practitioners say: "We should be increasing the number of obstetric beds, not cutting down."

One thing is certain. If all our unions adopted the stand of Hull NUPE there would be no doubt of our victory in that war.

# The rundown of steel production shows the depth of Capitalism's crisis

"We've agreed to everything the management has demanded," Ted Smith of the Shelton Steel works told the press. "We are nearer international manning standards than any other plant in the country, we've agreed to cut back on shift-working, reduce overtime, the lot."

The workers at Shelton, Stoke, have reason to be bitter. In 1967 3400 men worked there. Over the years the figure was whittled down to under half. The last 500 redundancies were agreed to when a new electric arc furnace was promised as part of the BSC's development strategy.

And this is but one of the projects to be axed as a result of the newly announced Government programme for steel, laughingly entitled, "BSC: The Road to Viability". Other projects to be scrapped are the major works at Port Talbot, Hunterston, and Ravenscraig. Debts accumulated through massive interest charges (mainly

to foreign banks) are to be guaranteed by taxpayers' money. The grand 'modernisation and expansion' programme announced in 1973, and entered into at huge cost, is to be quietly scuppered half way through. But the closures which were part of this strategy are to continue at a faster rate.

The new White Paper tells us that "Our common objective is an efficient, competitive and profitable British Steel industry in the 1980's, able to take advantage of the expected upturn in world economic activity."

That is the reason, perhaps, why half the research and development workers in Britain's major research centre in Hoyle Street, Sheffield, have been sacked, along with a quarter of those working in product technology research.

In fact, all the capitalist countries have in the past decade, been seeking the same objective. One after another,

they have closed old works to build new high technology 'basic oxygen' and 'electric arc' furnaces in the hope that they would gain the competitive edge and increase their profits. Because they are capitalist countries their ultimate aim has not been the product itself, the real wealth, but only its shadow - the money. The result has been crisis. Dumping and trade wars have developed. Sackings have proceeded apace. Even Japan can only operate at two thirds of its capacity.

The answer of the British Government? To treat British Steel with more of the poison that is killing it. 'Competitiveness', 'Profitability' and 'financial' (not industrial) 'viability'. So far the response from steel workers has been too mute. Capitalism cannot and will not save itself.

Only the working class can do it, by taking the industry as their own.

## North Kent residents fight cement co.'s plan to turn Green Belt into gaping hole

A HOLE as big as Hyde Park and deep enough to swallow St Paul's - that is what the giant cement company APCM want to make out of 380 acres of Green Belt, including farms, a historic woods, and Darenth Park mental hospital, into chalk quarry. The people of North Kent are sick of it, and 400 from the estate most affected marched in protest to make their voice heard at the public inquiry.

Already too much of the once beautiful and fertile landscape of North Kent and Essex looks like the far side of the moon, as new quarries have been dug, then abandoned, with no attempt at restoration. When the company's chief executive, claiming a superb

record, was asked about the large quantities of coal dumped in one quarry, and a 25-year delay in beginning restoration, he could only claim ignorance. "I am sorry to hear that." "It is to be regretted." And yet APCM bases its demands for the new quarry on a promise to landscape others in the year 2000. Already, the Dartford district has 1700 acres of derelict or despoiled land.

Of course, Britain needs cement for new building. That is not at issue. What the company is openly stating is that without the new quarry, it would not be able to export to Europe, Nigeria and Venezuela. Only under capitalism could such an absurdity exist as shipping millions of tons of

cement half way round the world. Is South America built on blanchmange?

And APCM, which under "Portland Cement", "Blue Circle" and many other names just as sweet, holds the cement monopoly in this country, is holding out the blackmail threat of closing the Northfleet works and sacking thousands if it does not have its way. For while it can take cement across the Thames from existing quarries, at least 15 years' worth of supplies have just been abandoned. The profit lies in always digging up new land, slicing off the top soil, quarrying shallow and quick, to abandon the rest and bequeath a wasteland to the future.

## CATERING WORKERS EXPOSE MYTH BEHIND THE PLUSH FACADES

AS ESSENTIAL industry is run down by capitalists greedy for richer pickings abroad, so tourism is coming to take its place, and is now the third largest industry in the country. And to the consternation of American tourists, picket lines are popping up all over the place and it is "limited menu" and "continental breakfast only" as hotel and catering workers stop work to gain recognition for their unions.

Last year it was Trust Houses Forte and EMI. This

year even the elite Savoy Group of hotels are taking in action for this most basic of workers' rights. And the Garners Steak House staff now enter the 12th week of their disciplined and courageous strike.

Behind the traditional elegance and discretion of Claridges, the Connaught and the Berkeley it is nothing like the rosy picture presented to the press of workers on £7000 a year. In fact waiters, chambermaids and kitchen staff receive a mere £36 a week basic pay.

Tippling is unpredictable and divisive, part of the bribery and corruption beloved by management everywhere. In many establishments even cheaper labour is obtained by conning immigrant workers.

Catering skills are frequently the result of long training including university courses, but as the sacked Garners restaurant managers and the sacked trainee chef at Claridges know to their cost, skills count for nothing where profits come first.

"TR7" they currently produce.

At the mass meeting in the stadium on April 15 the Liverpool Trades Council recommended a one day stoppage on May 9 in protest at unemployment on Merseyside, and this was supported by the workers of the No. 2 factory.

## Contd. from p1 : Triumph workers fight

and above the normal entitlement. So much for dreams of opening chip shops or buying taxis on the capital provided by the employer. The more fool they for ever supposing that capitalism would do the working class any favours - even in the way it gets rid of

workers jobs.

The senior shop stewards and executive members of the AUEW, TGWU and the EETPU met in York on April 12 to try to negotiate alternative work; but they failed in their attempt to get the "Allegro" or the "Range Rover" to replace the

## READERS LETTERS

Dear Editor,

When I went to a civil liberties lobby of Parliament protesting against the ban on marches (my local trade union branch had passed a resolution against it) I didn't know what to expect. Certainly not the meeting's Chairman, an MP no less, saying that with so many policemen around, even they couldn't do what they wanted. And with all the hustle I had had difficulty in finding my way, and attached myself to a group of sober-looking men complaining, on their way to the committee room, about the security. "Civil liberties?" I asked. "No, we're agriculture".

Lobbying MPs were members of the NUS, the SE region of the TUC, protestors against seal culling and others. The ban, they said, affects all political activity and seems intended as such. Once made, it can be renewed at will. The MP from Lewisham also gave many interesting details about police activity, and seemed to wonder whether the troubles there hadn't been a welcome occasion for the police to try out their riot gear, their "toys".

According to an NCCL document there has been a long history of attempts at restricting a right which has, interestingly, no status in British law, the right to pub-

lic demonstration. Notable among these was the "socialism" of the Labour Party after the war, with a protracted campaign culminating in the attempt to ban the 1950 May Day march.

But the transference of so much power, so openly, into police hands, showed a new approach. Merlyn Rees in Hansard (27.2.78) seems quite clear: "The essential point is that the decision must be taken by the Commissioner of Police... The decision should be taken by policemen. I applaud the decision of the Commissioner last weekend and I agreed to it."

It is encouraging that so many people from all walks of life are protesting, but in the absence of a more concerted effort, how long will our marches and May Day survive?

Yours fraternally,  
A London teacher.

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Dear Editor,

The Cambridge 'economists' who found, at great expense, that nearly five million people will be unemployed by 1990, unless there is a radical change in economic policies, could have discovered that and much else besides for just 5p - the price of a copy of THE WORKER.

Yours fraternally,  
A Bradford worker.

## UNIONS AND FASCISTS

THE National Union of Railwaysmen is planning to fine or expel members who are active in the National Front. This is not only because the racist propaganda of the Front is against the interests of the NUR membership by "seeking to divide workers on the grounds of race, colour or creed" but also because the Front is notoriously anti-union and in their attacks on communists and leftists have invited assaults on named officials of the NUR.

The right of unions to decide themselves on questions of who shall and who shall not be members is one jealously guarded and they will ignore Callaghan's statement on this

subject, that he would deplore circumstances in which an employee's job might be at risk because he had been expelled from a union for his "political views".

The General and Municipal Workers' Union will consider at its annual congress whether also to call for the expulsion of members who belong to the National Front. Various resolutions proposing expulsion point out that membership of the National Front is incompatible with membership of the GMWU and call for "stepping up the fight to ensure that no member of the National Front holds a union card and no racist represents the members in any capacity."



## Bookshops



Marxist-Leninist literature can be obtained from:

**Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortess Road, London NW 5**  
**Northern Star Bookshop, 18A Leighton Street, Leeds**  
**Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road, St. Philips, Bristol**  
**Brighton Workers Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton**  
**Liverpool bookstall** Every Saturday at Paddies Market  
Great Homer Street, Liverpool

## Public Meeting

Wednesday,  
April 26th, 7.30 pm -  
'To Hell with Wage Restraint'  
Brighton Workers Bookshop,  
37 Gloucester Road, Brighton

## 'The Worker'

155 FORTRESS ROAD, LONDON NW5  
6 months £2.50 (including postage)  
1 year £5.00 (including postage)

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