

THE WORKER



Printed and Published by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), 155, Fortess Road, London, N.W.5 No. 16 Sept 5 th 1974 Price 3p

THEY CAN'T AFFORD THIS WORKING CLASS

Building Workers' Wage Claim

Considerably more than the present 'wait and see what happens' attitude will be needed from rank and file building workers, if our present wage claim is to be pressed and won. As wage claims go, this one reaches far enough towards the employers' pockets as to have these wealthy parasites waving their copies of the social contract under the noses of the TUC. UCATT is demanding a craftsman's rate of £1.50 per hour and labourer's rate of £1.40. A cut to 35 hours in the working week is also demanded which would raise a craftsman's basic wage from the present £33.20 (with bonus) to £52.50 per week.

It is easily seen that such a claim represents not one penny more than building workers need by present inflationary standards. Any talk, therefore, from within or without our organisation which sees this figure as one which

allows 'negotiating flexibility', is contemptible.

A minor success for those of us who have long argued against the crippling three-year package-deals in the industry is that this agreement is to last for only twelve months.

It is significant that UCATT had not been to see the employers federation in the first place but was summoned to Congress House to discuss the claim with the TUC executive.

The employers will be preparing now to defeat the claim. Covertly, they will use the social democrats in the union to sell the social contract. Openly, they argue that the building industry is in a bad way, it will be a hard winter for finding employment, the bankruptcy rate amongst small builders will increase, etc. This is largely to create an atmosphere of fear for jobs amongst

building workers who then might settle for less than the full claim. 'Uncertainty about immediate prospects' is the phrase being used by almost every big contractor at the moment. Yet the Government has just published figures showing the big shortage of manpower in the industry and big sums of money continue to be paid out to sub-contractors and lumpers.

It is time now to organise workers for the coming fight. All the tactics of struggle learned from others and used effectively in the thirteen-week selective-strike action of 1972 need to be summoned up again.

Remember that in answer to our claim last time for an increase to £30 for a 35 hour week, the employers initially offered 3p an hour. The strength and organised power of the building workers forced them to concede a record £6 per week. It can and will be done again.

EDITORIAL

We workers, all of us, wherever we are, whatever kinds of job we do, have one choice before us today - class struggle or class compromise. There is no way of avoiding this choice. To put off a decision is to opt for class compromise.

The shaky firm

In this crisis of capitalism the ruling class is demanding that we make sacrifices to keep the system going. We are expected to fund out of our wages the very system that exploits us!

Will we choose to fight for what is ours by right, a decent life for ourselves and our children? Or will we allow ourselves to be cajoled by 'social contracts' or bullied by anti-trade union legislation into forfeiting what has been won, not only by our own efforts, but also by generations of workers who have gone before?

Capitalist Britain today is like the small shaky firm which recently invited its workers to accept a big cut in pay to keep going. They did so. Three weeks later the firm went bankrupt anyway and they were on the street. They should have occupied the place and turned the management onto the street!

What the choice means

To continue all out class struggle at this stage means, for us workers, that we are quite consciously setting our feet on the road of revolutionary change. As militant and organised workers, capitalism cannot afford us - anymore than the world at large can afford capitalism. The ruling class knows this as well as we do - hence all the panic about the 'power of the unions'. Hence those wild schemes on the ragged fringes of the ruling class for organising mass scabs to fight the 1976 General Strike all over again.

In continuing all-out class struggle in an industrial guerrilla war we workers are coming into our own ideologically, as well as defending ourselves materially. Marx has said: 'The working class is revolutionary or it is nothing.' He meant that ideas of class compromise, of gradual change (often for the worse) by parliamentary means, of delegating politics to others, are not the ideas of our class. As long as we labour under them we cannot carry out our historic mission as a class - to emancipate ourselves from wage-slavery altogether and in doing so to help liberate working people everywhere.

Phoney choices

In these days of struggle phoney choices will be put before us to try to distract us. Would we rather have Labour or Tory forcing or wheedling us into class compromise for the sake of capitalism? Would we rather be robbed by private enterprise backed by the state or by state capitalism supporting private enterprise? Would we like to be nominal members of the board of directors of the companies that exploit us? To hell with all that!

We have one choice only - to fight or to crawl. We will fight - for a decent standard of living, which means fighting the system that withholds it, which means fighting the class which that system enriches at our expense, which means fighting the state which backs that class. We will fight and in doing so we will put our working-class stamp on this critical period, out of which will come, after a long hard struggle, our own workers' state, our own socialist system.



A Delegation of Chinese workers visit the Govan Shipyards with Reg Birch, Chairman of the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist).

TEACHERS RETURN TO TURMOIL

September sends Britain's teachers back for another school year. It promises to be a testing time. The Government's cuts in education expenditure mean that economies will be attempted in every aspect of school life: books and equipment, furniture, maintenance and repairs, new building, availability of subjects to study, school activities The cuts will not be made with impunity. As a parting shot last term, Leeds teachers struck in protest at attempted economies.

The biggest economy attempted is in the provision of teachers themselves. In London, teachers initiated the refusal to cover for teacher shortage. The idea has caught on. In September this sanction will be applied nationwide.

The epic struggle for the London Allowance should draw to a conclusion when the Burnham Committee meets again early this term. The National Union of Teachers has systematically demolished every Government obstacle in its pursuit of £350 for all in London. Teachers will savour the sweet taste of victory but it will only be a brief respite from battle.

Crises in Higher Education

Over the past year 44 of Britain's 100-odd universities have gone in to the red. Leeds and Manchester by half a million pounds, and Essex and Strathclyde by nearly as much.

The last Government's White Paper on Public Expenditure and its Mini-Budget of December 1973 reduced educational spending drastically. £461 million promised to universities was reduced to £400 million. The building grant for polytechnics was cut from £40 million to £10 million. These cuts - coupled with rising prices - spell disaster for higher education. The staff-student ratio is worsening; teaching vacancies are being left unfilled and new appointments cancelled.

The Labour Government is maintaining the Tories' policy, advising universities to 'tighten their belts', cut down on staff and reduce student numbers. In a 1972 White Paper it was envisaged that there would be 375,000 university and 180,000 polytechnic students by the late '70s; now it is expected that there will be 325,000 and 140,000 respectively.

At York University a planned Social and Economic Research

Institute and an extension to the computation department have been cancelled. At Southampton an amenities building, a computer centre and a sports pavilion have all been axed.

Because of the capitalists' crisis students will be expected to 'pull their weight' by paying ridiculously high prices for eating in canteens and accommodation. At Hull University the Lawns Halls of Residence have put up the price of a mere single room from £5 to £8 a week. In the traditional halls, where meals are served, students will have to pay £11 a week.

The fact that students have won an increase in grants from £485 to £605 a year does not mean that we can sit back, what we prise out of one capitalist hand is snatched away with another. Students must therefore defend what they have gained and demand higher grants and an end to means tests, discretionary awards and other anomalies, and unite around the only slogan that can rally all students, the only slogan that is precise and not divisive:

FULL, HIGHER GRANTS
- FOR ALL

THE WORKER INTERVIEW

(Report of a site convenor on the Anson Estate, Manchester)

This site is one of the largest in Manchester that is modernising council property. There are about 120 building operatives employed as well as 40 plumbers and about 20 electricians and 20 painters.

Of the 120 building operatives about a hundred are new recruits to a trade union, mostly UCATT and some T&GWU.

A site-stewards committee was established on a principle of consultation with management and the bonus schemes were reorganised. With such organisation at site level all trades are now earning a high bonus. Labourers also have raised their previous £5 minimum to £10 and with targets renegotiated many are earning between £20 and £30.

No lump here

As the job was organised so well at site level, help came from the union straight away and the 100 per cent trade union membership was soon achieved. On certain other sites in the area where lump labour had already been employed and the level of organisation was low, the union officials were flummoxed. The lumpers refused to join the union point blank because they were getting twice as much money as the union rate, which is the biggest stumbling block to union recruitment. This is therefore a crucial issue in the formation of a strong union job.

On the Anson Estate we have had no trouble with the lump as the job was organised straight away and thus given union backing from the start. An attempt was made by Wimpeys to split the job by transferring several joiners, but a meeting of the joiners decided that nobody would go and the problem was consequently solved.

Plumbers strike

The only exception to the high bonus earnings was the plumbers, who are employed by another firm, Haden-Young. Seeing the other trades on a much higher bonus, they took action, but not all out action. They picked their tactics carefully, hitting the employers hard where it hurt most whilst causing the least hurt to themselves, attacking when strong, withdrawing when weak. The first time they struck many members weakened, as they feared a long drawn-out strike. Many had not been on strike before and had mixed feelings about it. The employers made only a small offer and, taking account of their weakness, the plumbers decided to call the strike off. However, a lesson had been



learned, and although a battle had been lost, the war was not. Action was taken again a few weeks later but this time the job had been slowed down and the effect of the action brought the job to an almost immediate halt. However, the Wimpeys' men were not on strike even though no work was being done and also they were still being paid the basic bonus. The strike, therefore, was not only costing Haden-Young money but it was also hitting Wimpeys. Pressure was also brought to bear on Haden-Young from the tenants, whose houses were only half done, and also by the Corporation.

Consequently, Haden-Young agreed to the plumbers' demands but on actual payment they fell down. Again the plumbers struck. This time their bonus was upped so that now they are averaging about £25 compared to their original £9 bonus.

New recruits

Many of the new recruits were formerly on the lump themselves, but now they are all in the union and some have become active members. This has been due to the comparison they have made between the uncertainty, bad conditions etc. of the lump and the security, good conditions and good regular money of a well organised union job. Money is undoubtedly the biggest drawback to union recruitment. However, if the resolutions passed at the National Conference to push for a £1.50 an hour 35 hour week are put into effect, the lump will have been dealt a severe blow. This will only be so, however, if men can organise themselves on site level and push for the better wages and conditions. Many Labour councils have stated that they will not employ lump labour but it is well known that many of their sites are rife with the lump. The only way is for the men themselves to be organised at site level. It is up to us on the sites to organise here and now, as in the case of the Anson Estate.

ON THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT



Liverpool

At the electrical components factory of Wingrove & Rogers, Liverpool, 200 women assemblers have been on strike for 7 weeks over a claim for higher wages and improved conditions. At this family-owned firm, take-home pay is as little as £17.00 for a 40 hour week and conditions are appalling. Having offered the women less than £1.00 per week real increase, the bosses sacked them when their miserable offer was thrown in their faces.

The women are now imposing a solid picket on the factory, supported by Liverpool dockers, who have blacked supplies bound for Wingrove & Rogers.

In an interview with THE WORKER, women on the picket line said that they were dealing with 'gangsters living in the Victorian age'. 'Gangsters' who ask for loyalty to a homely family firm - then sack workers with over 16 years service on the spot! Not gangsters, just bosses.

The employers are using divisive tactics: blaming the redundancy of male workers on the women's strike; attempting to train men from another union to carry out the strikers' work; lying to the Press and blaming 'militants' among the women for the strike.

United in struggle, they have no need of loyalty to any boss.

Ford

The walk-out by foremen and supervisors at the Dagenham plant over the company's failure to sack a worker alleged to have struck a foreman would suggest that they've got their knickers in a twist. What they should walk out about is the inhuman conditions of the production line that drives men to live on their nerves. As long as they try to implement this system and threaten workers they will get no sympathy from us.

Avonmouth Docks

Workers at Avonmouth have been struggling recently on their local issues. Their strength there will undoubtedly be their best defence if the Government carries out its threat to nationalise all the ports, with the 'rationalisation' that it always entails.

When a dirty cargo of blue dye came in, dockers left the dockside demanding a special rate for unloading it. They refused a fixed national rate in favour of flexibility at the local level, each cargo to be considered on its merits. This guarantees to keep the struggle in their own hands; they can match their fight to the situation. However, they agreed to unload it pending local arbitration, in order to prevent it being taken to another port to be unloaded by scab labour!

Fitters and their mates in the engineering section of the T&G won a reduction in the amount of work put out to sub-contract by the Port of Bristol Authority. They refused to refuel or service dock vehicles, bringing everything to a standstill. The next day the BPA was advertising for more fitters: the trade unionists have created more permanent jobs.

A Yen to exploit

Japanese Capitalism is at it again, this time welcomed by the bosses of our aircraft industry. The Japanese are keen to develop a new 1-11, called the BAC 1-11 700. They talked of raising £100 million to develop this new aircraft.

How many more countries are there lining up to climb on the backs of British workers to exploit our traditional skills and craft. . . more evidence that British governments pay heed to the demands of international capital rather than to the needs of the British people.

Royal Dutch Shell

Profits more than doubled in the second quarter and first half of the year, the company reported. They said it was an unexpected rise in profit margins. But what was it? It just goes to show that in increasing the price of oil they stuck plenty on top for themselves, even though they were selling less.

TUC 'Con'ference

The TUC General Council Report to Congress recommends with confidence its document on collective bargaining and the Social Contract. It is the TUC's guarantee to Wilson and the Government that it will try to deliver on wages if Wilson maintains his social policies. What deceit! Workers, irrespective of Conference decisions will see through this sham and carry on battling away as before.

Tories happy with act

No wonder Mr. Prior, Tory spokesman on Employment, is so happy with the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act! It outlaws sympathy strikes and blacking of goods in support of fellow workers at firms who are in dispute. The best thing workers can do is defy it.

Brokers Broke

According to 'The Times' August 21st, 1974 even the bowler hatted workers in the city are having to suffer capitalism's senile disintegration. As a young stockbroker stated, "the difference in my

standard of living is enormous, I bought a house on a £27,000 mortgage two years ago and now I cannot keep up the payments".

This he states is due to a cut in his usual £20,000 a year down to a basic £5,000.

Dealers who work for the stock-brokers on basic salaries of £1,500 to £3,000 are obviously having an even worse time and as one broker said, "you have to re-

member that we have no unions behind us. We are in a risky business".

Those of us that have suffered lay-offs and redundancies due to a throw of a dice by these "respectable gamblers" know the score and only by our struggles can we shut down the Casino once and for all, and as for you workers in the city the time has come to stand up and be counted.

Civil Servants to Resist Dispersal

Over 31,000 government jobs are to be transferred from London to the 'assisted areas', according to a statement by Mr. Edward Short on July 30th. This programme, described grandiosely by Mr. Short as 'the biggest dispersal exercise undertaken in peacetime' is a bitter reminder to all in the civil service that they make up one half of the state machine and are subject to the same discipline as the other half (the Armed Services). Just as soldiers can be dispatched to Northern Ireland, Cyprus or wherever else capitalist interests are in jeopardy so civil servants must expect to be dumped wherever it suits the convenience of the capitalist state. No thought is given to the human situation of the workers concerned; they are pawns to be moved as the game requires.

In commenting on the proposed dispersal and the motives underlying it THE WORKER, a year ago, called on workers involved to 'gird their loins for battle again'. The Society of Civil Servants has now given warning that many of its members will refuse to move. Strike action is threatened. The general secretary of the SCS pointed out that the Labour Government had taken the decision without any consultation with the unions.

It has not escaped civil servants that the dispersal plan, conceived under the Tories, is being put into effect by a Labour Government (with enthusiastic support from the Liberals). When it comes to a straight class issue of how they treat their own workforce, it makes no more difference which party is in power than who happens to be the majority stock holder in a private company. To a government worker all governments are the same: the employer, the enemy.

Vietnam Puts Ford in Place

Just as Nixon flies away into the sunset, trying to pretend that he has not been kicked out of high office for his sordid dishonesty, so President Ford tries to pretend that US imperialism has not been booted out of Indo-China, soundly defeated by the heroic Vietnamese people and their allies in Laos and Cambodia.

In his address to the joint session of Congress Ford said: 'To our allies and friends in Asia, I pledge a continuity in our support for their security, independence and economic development. In Indo-China we are determined to see the observance of the Paris agreement on Vietnam and the cease-fire and negotiated settlement in Laos. We hope to see an early compromise settlement in Cambodia.'

Vietnam's Answer

The Foreign Ministry of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam has issued a statement on the present situation. 'In recent days, the new President, Gerald Ford, has declared his intention of continuing Nixon's policy in Vietnam and has decided to give continuing military and economic aid to the Thieu Administration. That means that the US is still stepping up its military involvement and interference in the internal affairs of South Vietnam, maintaining tens of thousands of military personnel in civilian guise in South Vietnam, pouring arms, munitions and war materials into South Vietnam and using the war-like and fascist Nguyen Van Thieu clique as an instrument to prolong the war. All this is to realise US neo-colonialism in South Vietnam and perpetuate permanently the partition of Vietnam.'

The statement points out how every act of stepping up the war in Vietnam by Kennedy, Johnson or Nixon was 'fueled by the courageous and staunch determination of the Vietnamese people'. Indeed, 'It is the US war of aggression in Vietnam and Indo-China as a whole that is the fundamental and root cause of the all-round crisis in the United States, leading to Nixon's resignation.'

Peace Sabotage

by US Aggression

'The realities in South Vietnam during the past 18 months have proved that the more the US intensifies its military and economic aid to the Nguyen Van Thieu clique, the more the Nguyen Van Thieu clique tries to step up the war, sabotage the negotiations, increase operations of land-grabbing and 'pacification', trample upon the democratic liberties of the people, brutally ill-treat political prisoners and pile up numerous crimes against the South Vietnamese people, thus making the situation in South Vietnam ever more tense. It is clear that such an American policy is aimed at destroying peace and sabotaging the Paris agreement. Such a policy runs counter to the aspirations of peace of the Vietnamese and American peoples and thus has met with strong resistance by the Vietnamese people. This policy is also severely condemned by world public opinion including American opinion. If the Ford Administration continues to follow in the footsteps of Johnson and Nixon and refuses to draw the lessons of defeat from the past, it will certainly suffer a still heavier setback.'

India's Government has gone one better than British Imperialism. The British Raj did at least try to maintain a semblance of independence for its protectorates, but the Indian reactionaries are in the process of outright annexation of many of their neighbours. India has already taken over part of Pakistan through conquest and set up the puppet state of Bangladesh. It continually harasses Nepal and now it has started a policy of annexing the tiny kingdom of Sikkim, situated near Tibet and therefore of great geopolitical value to India in its military calculations.

Imposing 'law and order'

In 1950 Nehru, then Prime Minister of India, forced the Sikkim king to accept the Indo-Sikkim Treaty which gave India control over Sikkim's defence, foreign affairs and commerce and turned Sikkim into an Indian protectorate. In April 1973 Nehru's daughter, Mrs. Gandhi, now Prime Minister of India, used Indian troops first to foment and then to quell supposed 'riots' in Gangtok, Sikkim's main town. Indian proteges provoked riots, ostensibly against the Chogyal or King of Sikkim, but in reality to give the Indian Government an excuse for dispatching troops to maintain 'law and order'. The Indian Political Officer, resident in Sikkim, took over full control of the entire administration of Sikkim, forcing the king to accept various so-called 'reforms' which gave India greater powers than before over Sikkim's internal and external affairs.

Constitutional conquest

Now, since June of this year, the Indian Government has gone even further. A 'Constitution', drafted by Indian experts, was pushed through the Sikkim Assembly. This document has provisions that will reduce Sikkim's very limited independence to almost nothing and make it little better than one more state of the Indian Union. Article 30, for example, permits Sikkim to send representatives to the Indian Parliament while another takes away all power from the king, not to give it to the people, but to a 'Chief executive' to be nominated by India and responsible to that country.

Naturally the people were furious for, much as they may dislike their king, they hate annexation by another power even more. They have been an independent people for centuries. So they demonstrated outside their assembly on June 20th, a demonstration that was broken up by the Indian police, who in their usual way beat people up, injuring some 37 very seriously. The Indian Government sent for the king who once again, to save his skin, has accepted India's demands.

Soviet praise

The Soviet renegades see all this as a 'triumph' for the 'forces of democracy', but they would, since this is a sort of mini-Czechoslovakia. Just as in 1968 Russian tanks rolled into Prague to introduce 'socialism', so today Indian troops are ushering in 'democracy' in Sikkim.

BBC VICTORY

The 80 production assistants whose seven-week strike threatened all BBC Television's light entertainment and drama programmes ended their industrial action on August 1st with a highly satisfactory settlement from the management.

The BBC has had to agree to pay production assistants whose overtime cannot be worked off in compensatory leave within a two month's period, at the rate of £18 per extra day worked.

On the verge of this victory BBC management played one last shabby trick to try to defeat the production assistants. They made their end-of-phase-three offer to the whole staff conditional on the production assistants' going back to work without a settlement of their claim. In this way they hoped to split staff members and averse hostility against the production assistants for holding up the general settlement.

However branch after branch of the Association of Broadcasting Staff backed the Executive's refusal to negotiate with management on these terms and they also agreed to join a BBC-wide walk out of all ABS members if there were any victimisation of those who had been on strike.

Management had to give way and the production assistants won a victory not only for themselves but for BBC workers generally by their demonstration that the guerilla tactics which win battles on the shop floor are also successful in the studio.

Concorde will survive

The fight for Concorde by workers in British Aircraft Corporation and Rolls Royce (1971) Ltd. has ensured the production of 16 aircraft. By no means has this event taken place. Workers in the aerospace industry have been waging defensive battles ever since the industry got off the ground. So when the last civil project and along with it the pride of the workers involved was threatened, they rallied as never before to save their jobs and a viable aerospace industry for this country.

The fight has only just begun since 16 aircraft provide work only into 1975. Already 95 planners and designers have left and the jobs of 60 to 70 fitters at the Weybridge factory have been declared unnecessary - only a fraction of the 24,000 workers employed on the project but a straw in the wind.

'Nationalisation'

Each and every firm in the aerospace industry has been under the duress of government policy, suffering cancellation and lack of investment. It is under these conditions that the Labour Party proposes nationalisation - after ten years of bad faith since 1965 when they adopted the Plowden Report recommending nationalisation and collaborative projects with foreign companies. (Of course the Concorde project has been bedevilled by US

imperialism which jealously sabotages the aerospace industries of its 'allies'.)

This Labour 'nationalisation' not only involves compensation to owners but the demand that there be an 'adequate return on the nation's capital'. The White Paper is an insult to our class, offering us nothing but the opportunity to collaborate with free enterprise or state capitalism to exploit ourselves more fully!

Self-reliant Britain

Against all this a group of aerospace shop stewards met in Bristol on August 18th to discuss workers' control, aware of the idiocy of illusory forms of 'shared power' but unable as yet to see the future of their industry in terms of the working class eventually seizing over-all state power, a context in which British industry generally would flourish in a self-reliant Britain.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Between July and August unemployment in the U.K. rose by over 90,000, bringing the total out of work to just under 700,000.

This under a Labour Government committed since the end of the war to a policy of full employment!

Out of their own mouths

'HOW TO CURB THE UNIONS'

Campbell Adamson:

"How to curb the trade union power - I say, do not confront, but nibble away at the things you can."

Len Murray:

"Some investments are desirable, some undesirable, and we want to have a hand in those decisions through a Public Investment Board with a TUC presence."

"I think Wedgwood Benn is quite right in his belief that the State and the big companies ought to be much closer together. In France and Japan it's a very fruitful relationship. Having a finger in the investment pie doesn't constitute a red spectre, you know..."

"If there are tough decisions, like redundancy, then the worker-directors might go back to their people and say, 'They want 173 redundancies and we've been able to cut that to 150, but this is where we are.'"

Jack Jones:

"I don't see why there shouldn't be workers on the board, though I wouldn't want to interfere with day-to-day management. The more they are really trusted - and I'm not talking about a phoney trust - the more they will respond. It won't be the response of people who will acquiesce in everything, but they will want the business to survive...."

"If management pays more attention to the shop floor, and we get to the core of our basic social problems, then we shan't drift to a Marxist State."

A top merchant banker:

"Workers should undoubtedly be in on major financial planning, production lines, new products, running the business of the business, and they should certainly come in on big capital expenditure programmes - in many cases, they know a lot better than the management what'll work and how work can be saved."



Nationalisation .. the phoney issue

The obvious identity between both parties of capitalism has become a source of embarrassment to both. The identity is not surprising because once it is recognised that both have the same aims, then the means by which they pursue those aims cannot be too different. It therefore behoves both to work overtime to persuade the people that there really is a difference and that the people have a choice and by the exercise of that choice at the polling booth they can bring about necessary social change. But this more and more flies in the face of evidence and actual experience.

With a general election imminent, the main issue on which the main protagonists are about to be labour the electorate is decided. The battleground for this phoney war is, of all things, nationalisation. The first thing to note is that this issue is not raised by the working class. The working class have no keen desire for nationalisation. That claims for more nationalisation come from the TUC and Labour Party conference should deceive nobody. Anyone familiar with mechanics of resolution-passing and to what extent these resolutions are any reflection of real rank-and-file concern will need no convincing of that.

And why should the workers want more nationalisation? That sections of workers facing the alternatives of their jobs going because of bankruptcy or a government-aided rescue operation should choose the latter is no real indication of any real desire for nationalisation or any idea that it has anything to do with socialism. The working class do not lack evidence. The Postal Service, Railways, Gas & Electricity, the Mines and Steel have a long history of nationalisation. Have these areas of the economy any more attraction for the working class than any other area?

London Transport are having the same trouble attracting workers as Fords, and are using the same methods to do so. Whatever ills have befallen workers in the 'private sector' are duplicated in the 'public sector'. In many respects the nationalised industries have been worse. For example, London Transport omit to advertise to would-be recruits that their workers have the least paid holidays compared with the rest of industry. Redundancies have taken place in nationalised industry on at least as high a scale as private industry. Taking all conditions into account, wages, hours, paid holidays, fringe bene-

fits and security of employment, nationalised industries show no better than the rest.

It is little wonder therefore that the workers show no enthusiasm for further nationalisation in terms of employment. The consumer attitude could well be summed up by any passenger on the London Underground. To judge by the present outbreak among the Tory propagandists of Bennitts, a stranger might think that the Tories really regard nationalisation as anathema. This again is not born out by the facts.

Before the election of the last Tory government they made great play about 'lame ducks'. Industry must make itself efficient so as to stand on its own feet without the kind of doles that had been dished out to private industry by the previous Labour government. They said. Then promptly pumped money into the first lame ducks to appear, including Rolls Royce no less, which is now nationalised, by a Tory government. This a Tory government is always as likely to do as any Labour government. For when a part of capitalism needs medicine to help keep the system going and to show that it can be made to carry on, either will administer it.

NALGO takes its place

Six months of industrial action by NALGO workers in London has now come to a victorious end. The determination of the membership has resulted in new scales of London weighting, backdated to April 1st, of £ 381 for inner London and £ 261 for outer London, a massive increase on the meagre £ 50 increase offered in October '73 before the membership decided to take action.

During the past six months NALGO members throughout London have banned overtime, stopped working with agency staff, taken strike action. They have stood up and shouted their demands, and have overthrown incorrect decisions made by the Union's National Executive to call off the action. Workers have realised that the political strength of NALGO lies with them.

The London action has been a lesson for NALGO workers throughout the country. The membership did not go on full strike and so run the risk of defeat and demoralisation. It used guerrilla tactics, bringing branches into action where the membership was strongest, other branches

following quickly behind. During the past six months, 31 out of 32 London branches took part in the struggle, the most advanced pulling key workers out on strike.

Every attempt by the employers to split London from the rest of the country ended in miserable failure. When the employers refused to negotiate on the national pay claim, NALGO members replied with a threat to hold a national overtime ban and a one day strike. The employers subsequently backed down and agreed to negotiate.

The London action has produced a big burst in recruitment and a widespread rallying of the membership. The ban on working with agency staff was taken up at Conference and resulted in a permanent national ban - a great leap forward in consciousness by NALGO workers.

Negotiations are currently taking place on NALGO's 20 per cent national pay claim. The victorious result in London has left the membership in no doubt that they, through unity and guerrilla struggle can win the national pay claim too.

Labour's Plan for Industry

A White Paper, 'The Regeneration of British Industry' has been published by the Labour Government. It lays out the Government's strategy for quelling the anarchy of Britain's industrial life. Like the seductive praying mantis the State will dally with its lover, private enterprise, and then devour him when the mating is done. . . .

In pursuit of the more general objectives for the relationship between government and industry the government propose in this White Paper the creation of two new instruments: a system of Planning Agreements with major firms in key sectors of industry, and a National Enterprise Board

to provide the means for direct public initiatives in particular key sectors of industry. 'How is this plan to be sold? 'The Government believe that this new initiative will contribute to the achievement of greater industrial efficiency, more and better investment, and a higher return on that investment. 'Presumably we are being asked to overlook the Beeching axe wielded on the railways and the collieries that Robens closed down. And for higher returns, will not someone have to work harder? Perhaps, though, there will be some recompense.

'The Government intend that the plans to be covered by an Agreement will be drawn up by management in close consultation with trade union representatives from the firm. 'Does this mean that workers themselves will set themselves production targets and work like hell to see that they are fulfilled? That they will impose on themselves wage restraint so that the firm can have a healthy balance sheet? 'Our plans Mr. White Paper! This working-class leopard will not change its spots. Do not pester us with your ill-concealed deceit. We have our own plans for the regeneration of British Industry and the first task is to consume the State that seeks to make capitalism work.

A 'Watchdog' Plea to Housewives

Neither the £50m food subsidy promised by smiling Jim Callaghan nor the earlier scheme to restrict shopkeepers' profit margins will make the slightest difference to the housewives eternal problem of making ends meet.

We don't need to be told that we are eating less than at any time since 1953 (when there was still rationing); we know it!

Now, in certain places such as Coventry, 'Watchdog Committees' have been set up in which house-

wives are asked to participate by reporting price increases. Roughly speaking, the system is that the shopkeeper has a 'cash profit margin' which he may not exceed and he must have records of this; but as there is at least a six months time gap before he has to show this to the Government - and the housewife has to have the food now this is totally ineffective. Not one reported excess price increase has been prosecuted.

Workers put the Punch in Politics

- That the barometer of Capitalism, the Stock Exchange Index, can fall below 200 one day wiping out £900 million of shares, and four days later gain 12.3 points and raise shares by £1,200 million without the Jackals producing or manufacturing any material or equipment of any usefulness to Society whatsoever . . . - That Harold Wilson can perpetrate the lie that Threshold Agreements are inflationary, when we know the Cost of Living Index itself is a big fraud, and our miserable Threshold pittance is liable to Income Tax anyway . . . - That workers are robbed of the fruits of their labour and that thousands are put out of work at the drop of a top hat as we have just seen in the Court Line disaster . . . - That the Jackals can salt away all their personal profits before they go bankrupt and are never to be seen walking the streets

homeless as do so many of our class . . . - That the guilty men and politicians who aid and abet these Jackals by telling workers to accept a Social Contract are not hauled before the Courts for fraud and deception . . .

It is because the system, Capitalism, protects and defends these Jackals. It is because the law of the land is designed to aid and abet these Jackals. The working class have defeated this Law on Industrial Relations, have smashed the Pay Board just as they destroyed the Prices and Income Board of Aubrey Jones and tossed aside 'In Place of Strife' a la Barbara Castle.

So the working class must now go on the offensive. This is to be the Winter of our Discontent. The AUEW is calling an emer-

gency meeting of its National Committee on November 5th to discuss a Wages and Conditions Claim. It is now up to all workers in the Engineering Industry covered by CSEU agreements to close ranks and start agitating for an advance in our wages and conditions.

The miners, the building workers and the Engineers have all gone on record against any form of class-collaboration, any Social Contract. Let all workers think of their position and where they stand and we will defeat the Jackals and the Sham Politicians to gain new advances for our class. And in the process we shall heighten that political consciousness so necessary for the working class to successfully change this system, this dying Capitalism, to a Socialist State in which we, the workers, have seized State Power.

BELLMAN BOOKSHOP 155 FORTRESS ROAD LONDON NW5

Literature published by the Communist Party of Britain (ML) and works of Marxist-Leninist theory by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung, obtainable from the Bellman Bookshop

THE WORKER,
105, FORTRESS ROAD
LONDON NW5.

'THE WORKER'

£2 per year (including postage)

NAME.....
ADDRESS.....