

THE WORKER



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DON'T VOTE PREPARE FOR REVOLUTION

General elections have long been irrelevant to the working class. Today a general election is but a big farce. Politicians have never been treated with as much contempt by workers as they are today.

Whatever the outcome of the election, it will mean the intensification of the current attacks on workers' standards of living and hard won rights and liberties. All parties speaking on behalf of monopoly capital are shamelessly demanding that the British workers should bail out the capitalist system in its hour of deep economic and political crisis. They all agree that the task of the next government is to force down wages and salaries of all workers.

As these major spokesmen of capitalism compete with their "solutions" to Britain's problems, those who aspire to their place, the revisionist CPGB and the variety of the Trotskyist organisations - the loyal off-arrings of social democracy - vie with each other to support their godmother, and bring about a return of a Labour government.

There is but one solution for Britain: socialism and workers' power. And this will not be achieved by a cross on a piece of paper. There is but one cause for the working class: revolution.

In this capitalist society it matters not the name of the government. They are all capitalist. For many decades, the working class attempted to end capitalist exploitation through the ballot box. And every time the capitalists tighten their stranglehold on the working class. It is tragic that we, the oldest and wisest working class with a long history of struggle, should still engage in such social democratic frauds. It is ironic that we, the working class who brought down the last government, should put another in its place only to fight it even harder.



DON'T WORRY - HE DOESN'T BITE

Teachers Victory

A resounding victory has been achieved by teachers in their two-year struggle for an increased London Allowance. The claim of £350 has been met for most London teachers and the remainder will receive £287. In addition, teachers on the fringe of London have been awarded for the first time, an allowance of £141.

The total figure trebles the amount now paid in allowances. But the main gains are political and the settlement, to the Government's chagrin, will give a mighty impetus to future struggle.

The teachers have defied a wage freeze and have driven their way through subsequent incomes legislation. The £24 million finally offered represents a 40% increase on the Pay Board's recommendation. The teachers have also learnt how to fight. This success over the Government was

achieved by the abolition of sanctions and short strikes of no more than three days.

Meanwhile, the award of £141 to those outside the traditional Allowance area has set a precedent and all outside London are invited to proceed on their own allowance. It is this proliferation of regional struggle that so terrifies those who wish to see the Union move at the pace of the slowest. They do not want to see allowances extend beyond London and so oppose the agreement.

Others reject the agreement as "divisive". This is not so. A Pay Board's report which prompts the Government to say, "Here is a kitty, now squabble for it amongst yourselves", is indeed divisive. There was no "kitty" in the present case. The division into tiers is merely a recognition of teachers' strength

CONT'D ON PAGE 3

Driving A Ford Through The Social Contract

The Yankee device at Ford of imposing a contract for peace to give management an industrial trouble-free run of exploiting workers has been smashed.

Whilst using the law of the land, Phase III of the Counter-Inflation Act, Fords also imposed their own law of an economic standstill for 12 months. And now, of course, the principle that there should be no new negotiations within a year of a settlement is one of the main provisions of the social contract.

This has been broken through at Dagenham, Liverpool and elsewhere by the demands of skilled men. Workers in many parts of the Ford empire are also in revolt as a result of their worsening conditions through inflation and their realisation that they failed at the last settlement to secure adequate terms and lacked the understanding and courage to refuse a bad bargain.

On September 4th there was a Company statement to the effect that "There can be no doubt about the terms of the Wages and Conditions Agreement. It runs from March 1st, 1974, to February 28th, 1975, and provides for an economic and grading standstill until that date".

But only about two weeks later on September 20th the Company accepted "that the circumstances in which it negotiated its current Agreement were excep-

tional and ... it is willing to enter into immediate negotiations for a new contract".

After only six months the year's armistice is terminated and the war breaks out anew. This is because of what workers have learned from the recent past and their consequent unrest at present. Let them be tenacious in their struggle and politically clear this time before accepting a settlement.

CHINA 25 Years of Workers Power

Public Meeting

Held By The Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist).

Friday Oct. 4th 7.30 pm.

Holborn Assembly Hall, Johns Mews W.C.1.

On the industrial front

The liquidity and cash flow problems of British Industries

While the Chairman of Ferranti's was busy spending a weekend as the guest of the Queen at Balmoral, the company is ready to go bust for lack of cash.

The same company ten years ago was the centre of a political storm and had to pay back £4.25 millions "excess" profits on the Bloodhound missile.

This is a company the Americans would dearly love to acquire. Other vultures are already waiting in the wings: Plessey's, GEC etc. Besides Ferranti's, Rolls Royce, BAC and Hawker Siddeley are making noises with cap in hand for more money from the pockets of the British taxpayer.

The fact that all the money these firms have made in the past (and this applies to the whole of British industry) has been paid out in profit.

When the accountants move in, it spells doom for the workers: get rid of all stock, they say; don't stockpile material; buy as you go, so that a bigger dividend can be paid out.

The net result will be increasing redundancy in the aircraft industry.

Only by changing the system from a capitalist one to the seizure of State Power by the working class can any guarantee of employment be ensured for the workers in the aircraft industry and indeed all for all workers.

Liverpool Dockers

Dockers at Liverpool are on the verge of strike action in pursuance of their pay claim and over the manning of the new grain terminal.

The Mersey Docks and Harbour Board ("now we're bankrupt, now we're not!") are insistent (at the moment) that they "cannot afford" to pay the threshold increase, let alone anything else, and are using this bluff to pressure the dockers into accepting reduced manning levels at the new grain terminal.

The dockers led the way over containerisation in claiming the full benefits of modernisation and increased productivity, and similarly they are insistent that the new grain terminal will not make savings at their expense! Nor will they let phoney pleas of hardship by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board bilk them of their pay rise necessary to heat inflation.

Liverpool Fuel Co.

The dispute mentioned in the last issue is now over. The steward has been re-instated and coal is now flowing again. With only ten men and women in dispute, this shows just what can be achieved by local initiative, no matter what the odds.

Wingrove and Rogers L' Pool

This dispute of 200 women is now entering its fourth month, with no signs of breaking on either side.

Merseyside trades unionists are determined however that there will be no repetition of the defeat that occurred at the firm's Kirby plant several years ago, when the men involved were defeated after a fourteen week sit-in. The Liverpool Trades Council is calling a meeting of shop stewards from all industries to consider what aid can be given to these women.

Already the picket line is swelled daily with workers from local factories on their way to work, and dockers, railwaymen and others are blocking the firm's goods.

But it will not be this support, however useful, which wins this dispute. It will be the courage and determination of these women, which they have already displayed so strongly.

It is certain that the firm wishes to break the union, it is equally certain that the women on the strike, and the workers of Merseyside, will see the firm broken first.



Bakers

Some months ago workers in the Bakers' Union who felt that their union was too conservative in outlook to serve its members' interests were thinking of looking for another union to represent them. They were advised to stay where they were and strengthen their union from within by joint action with their fellow workers.

Now the Bakers' Union has had its liveliest and most militant conference at Birmingham in its 125 years history. The key note of the conference was struck by a resolution to "tell the Government and the employers that if there is no response to our wage claim this year we will respond with industrial action, and we mean it!" This was passed by 206 votes to 36 in spite of objections about introducing politics into the conference.

By comfortable majorities the delegates also voted that negotiators must refer back to branches before signing any settlement, that the union must rejoin the TUC, that women workers should not have to do night work, that workers would get £40 for a 40 hour basic week, four weeks annual holiday and no working on Sunday. They also rejected the idea of nationalisation.

A union is what the members make it.



LTB

At London Transport's Chiswick depot, the main depot for bus spares, a mass meeting of the AUEW workers, who make up some 400 of the 1200 workers at the depot, decided to throw out a bonus scheme and negotiate instead for a £50 flat rate for skilled workers with corresponding increases for other workers. This is an advance on those depots which have accepted the bonus scheme without protest, but unless the claim is backed up by shop floor action it is doubtful if management will bow to the workers demands.

Imperial Metal Industries

1000 AUEW craftsmen at the Witton, Birmingham works of IMI are holding one-day strikes in support of a £15 per week pay rise. They are taking action now although their agreement has another four months to run.

These wise lads obviously have no faith that a Labour government if returned will not seek to introduce another wages freeze.

They have also no intention of being conned into a self-imposed wage freeze in the form of a 'social contract'.

wage rises

A Common Market report said that British industrial wages rose less in 1973 than those of any other country in the EEC.

The British rate was half of that in 1972 and substantially less than the other countries.

We never saw this report splashed across the front pages of the press. All we ever hear about is the greedy workers who cause inflation.

EDITORIAL

What we workers need is an October Revolution not an October election. We must act so as to shorten the time when such a political insult to our intelligence can still be given us with impunity.

An election is irrelevant to our real struggle - an attempt to divert us from real struggle. Just bread and circuses. Very stale bread and inexpressibly dreary circus. But if we allow ourselves to be taken in by it, if we don't realise that a vote for Labour is a vote for the social contract and class capitulation, a vote to cut our own throats; if we perpetuate the social democratic illusions which are capitalism's main stay and which have demoralised us from developing our own revolutionary working class consciousness, then the election will have served the purpose of our class enemy, whichever party forms a government in capitalism's interest.

The Victory Against the Industrial Relations Act

In destroying the Industrial Relations Act as an effective instrument for enforcing wage cuts the working class, led by the engineers, brought down the Tory Government. The victorious battle against the Act was the cause of the February election, although the election was irrelevant to the class struggle which had smashed the Act.

The battle was won in factories and other places of work - not in the House of Commons. It was won by industrial action planned and executed on guerrilla lines by workers themselves - not by voting for others to take up the matter politically on behalf of workers. It was won by extra-Parliamentary means, the worker "outlaws" defying anti-working class law till they made it a dead letter and turned over the Kangaroo Court it had set up. That successful struggle provides the key to the line our class must continue to follow in the battles ahead.

The Interregnum

In the period between the inconclusive election in February and the one just announced in October the ruling class has been devising a subtler scheme for achieving the object of making workers bail out capitalism's foundering ship. By means of the so-called social contract, put forward by the party which is supposed to represent the interests of organised labour, it is hoped to persuade workers to volunteer for the wage cuts the Industrial Relations Act was powerless to prevent them from restating.

The Industrial Relations Act was intended to prohibit unions by law from performing their proper function of improving the wages and conditions of their members. The social contract is intended to get the unions to surrender their proper function without a fight. It can only succeed to the extent that the working class is still imprisoned in the ideology of social democracy - the lie that workers can improve their lot without challenging the system that exploits them.

A Working Class Manifesto

In the period leading up to the election the three major parties have all published manifestos - long-winded, ambiguous documents full of threats of what will happen if workers don't behave and vague promises of what goodies they may expect if they do.

This manifesto of the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) is clear, concise and socialist in content. It was not rushed out opportunistically just before an election but is intended to serve our working class in a protracted war. It is not handed down from on high but crystallises the experience of our class in a revolutionary form and gives back to workers a programme for action they can recognise as their own.

Only our Party, true to the real interests of the working class, denounces the elections in which all other political groupings whatsoever involve themselves and try to involve the working class. As our manifesto "The British Working Class and Its Party" says:

"All political organisations in Britain and all institutions have it in common that they are for the preservation of capitalism in some form or other. From the rightest reactionaries to the leftist reform-

Postgraduates Unite

Postgraduate students on government grants have had a shock. Whereas undergraduate students received £805 of a £620 claim, postgraduates received £885 of a £1025 claim. How can we explain this disparity?

First, there is a severe economic crisis affecting education at the moment; the capitalist class is torn by the contradiction of knowing that they need to invest in education for a skilled workforce, but also knowing that they cannot afford it. They are cutting back wherever they can - not necessarily where it is most rational for them to cut, but where there is least resistance. Earlier in the year, they threatened introducing loans to postgraduates. Now they cut back their grant increase.

And although the postgraduates in some areas have begun to take action over demoralisation and supervision rates, (which only form a small fraction of a small proportion of graduate students' income), the mass of postgraduates have not

yet thrown themselves into struggle to raise the main source of their income, their grant.

Some may feel that somehow they are more really workers than undergraduates. Some may even think that they themselves are not really working except when they are teaching. This is reflected in the tendency in some areas for the postgraduates to opt out of active involvement in NUS and work through ASTMS, considering this to be a more real trade union.

But students are apprentice to a trade; they have to work like anyone else, and they need a strong union to represent all of them. Moreover, the strength of any union is in its membership and their ideology, not in the skill of its local or national negotiators, so changing unions cannot solve any problems. Postgraduates cannot escape the need to take action themselves against their low grant, and must join with the rest of the student body to do so.

EDITORIAL CONT.

ists the common aim is to live with the system and make it work. The only exception is the one Party whose aim is the revolutionary overthrow of capitalist class power and its replacement by the dictatorship of the proletariat for the building of socialism. That is us, the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)."

On the question of the social contract or any other form of class compromise by which the working class binds itself over to keep the peace our programme is equally clear: "Class struggle has always existed since there were classes to struggle. The interests of the classes, and in Britain there are only two - those who sell their labour power and those who exploit the labour of others - are so opposed as to make struggle inevitable."

Social Democracy

On the Labour Party our programme states: "that trade unions, born out of struggle gave birth to the Labour Party which has always denied and betrayed struggle. This Labour Party which was created to defend and advance the workers' interests has never done anything politically but to betray. Its efforts in recent time to put shackles on the trade unions for the self same purpose as the Tories is only one of its manifestations as a party of the establishment, part of the system, an arm of the state. The mass abstentions at the 1970 general election (after an extended period of Labour rule on behalf of capitalism) was a sign that more workers than ever now see, because it is now so clear, the real role of social democracy."

And of one of the 'leftist' groups the Programme says: "The revisionist 'Communist' Party of Great Britain in terms of its own platform as well as its performance in the class struggle and the trade unions differs only from social democracy in appearance and phraseology and even that difference is becoming noticeably narrower. Its pacifist co-existence, 'unity of the left' etc. only add up to the concept of living with capitalism and not destroying it."

Our Party and Class Struggle

From our programme: "We alone do not see class struggles as ends in themselves for if we do, we are no different to the others who seek to live with the system. But while we do not get the struggle for the bits and pieces out of perspective, we cannot ignore it. More than that, we have to be, and be seen to be, part of that struggle..."

"There can be no acceptance of our Party by the working class as a political leadership unless we show the working class from the standpoint of their own experience not only that we are the most advanced section of the working class in the day to day tactical struggle with capitalism but also the necessity to relate all struggles to the central issue of class power. Nobody else will persuade the workers that as necessary as it is to fight the class enemy, the economic gains of all types of struggle are temporary and in the long run illusory. The true gains are political and consist in the ideological clarity that can be won in such struggle."

The Immediate Prospect for our Class

Our Party Programme says: "The Working Class lives in a state of perpetual guerrilla conflict with the employers." So it must be, and not only with the employers but also with the capitalist state which increasingly tries to suppress the working class. The struggle must not only continue but intensify as the crisis of capitalism worsens and as the class consciousness of workers sharpens, the former unable to rule in the old way, the latter developing their revolutionary zeal for their mission of liberating their class from wage slavery.

In this crisis-election the bourgeois parties call for sacrifices and the endurance of hardships. There will be no 'easy pickings' Labour says. They ask us to accept sacrifices for what? To save capitalism. They have to be joking! We call on our class to struggle because we have a world to win. We make no empty promises of what we will bestow on the working class. We tell our class what they can win for themselves, must win for themselves if they and their children are to live in dignity and peace in a prosperous Britain.

DON'T VOTE. STRIKE DOWN CAPITALISM

EQUALITY FIGHT

Sex discrimination will become illegal in employment, training, education, housing, services and credit facilities if the new white paper on sex discrimination becomes law.

We welcome this reform because we know that it was won by our class in struggle. But we know its limitations, because in the end no law is sufficient, and only our own constant vigilance and struggle can protect and improve our living standards.

It was struggle on the shop floor that first brought the issues of equal pay and equal opportunity anywhere near the statute books, when the Ford women sewing machinists struck for equal pay in 1968. The unarguable justice of their case, the militancy of all the Ford workers, men and women, on the claim were a terrifying threat to all employers, and Labour hastily tried to stamp out the flames by promising in 1970 equal pay by 1976. The employers were allowed five and a half years adjustment per-

iod in which to implement the act, and the secretary of state had discretionary powers to ensure that some progress was made by the end of 1973. We are now three quarters of the way through the adjustment period and still 40 per cent of smaller firms employing less than 100 people have taken no steps at all towards equal pay. The Secretary of State State's discretionary powers were not used.

Acts passed at the insistence of our class, when employers and government are no longer able to hold out against them, are victories for our class, like the successful settlement of a wage claim. But as with the settlement of a claim we don't then sit back satisfied, but prepare the ground for the next battle.

The only way we can defend and extend the ground we have won is to keep doing what we did to win it: keep fighting. Paper laws are no substitute for the practice of struggle.

FORDS, SWANSEA

Fords men in Swansea, not content with the Phase III increase offered by the company in March 1974 of £2.60 plus fringe benefits, have begun action in readiness for the next round of talks in 1975.

Following the 3-day week and due to demoralisation in the plant the company's March offer was accepted on the one hand, but on the other the fight for 1975 was begun immediately under the slogan 'Economic freeze on wages, economic freeze on production'.

Previous company attempts to whittle back wage demands with increased productivity were thus thwarted and the men's strength and self-confidence built up for the coming battle.

Since the holidays, management attempts to provoke confrontations have been avoided, but any attempt to suspend or harass workers for refusing to work increased line speeds are solidly met with sit-downs in the factory. The struggle not only to thwart but wear down and harass the company continues, and has progressed in one area to an actual cutting of output targets.

This is use of guerrilla tactics. For maximum effect, the men dictate the intensity of their actions according to area strength, whilst retaining full control and initiative. The enemy will continue to be thwarted.

Nurses Triumph

The conclusions of the Halsbury Committee on payments to health workers were dictated weeks ago by the militant and angry voices of these workers themselves in struggle up and down the country.

The Labour Government will try to steal the credit for it, just as they claim the credit for other working class victories like abolishing the Industrial Relations Act, but the real credit belongs to health workers who had the courage to stand up and defend their interests as workers. They will never again passively subsidise the National Health Service out of their wage packets and this will remain a political gain long after this indifferent rise has vanished in inflation. Of course not all nurses received

the full 30 per cent rise awarded to some by the commission. Furthermore, staff shortages resulting from deliberate government policy over the years of low wages and poor conditions mean that there is no reduction in hours worked and no end to split shifts which are "deprecated" in the report.

Nurses will be on their guard to see that the recommendation of "realistic" accommodation charges does not take away with one hand what has been dried out of another hand.

The Halsbury Report is not the end of the health workers' struggle but it marks a signal victory in what is, for many of them, the first trial of industrial action.

school students

School students in Brent took a significant step in the struggle against part-time education when the pupils of Sladebrook High School walked out of school on Thursday 12th September.

The pupils, several hundred strong, marched to the town hall to demand more teachers and an end to part-time education. They supported the teachers' London Allowance but did not accept the town hall argument that the new increase would solve all their problems.

Sladebrook is only one of four Brent schools particularly hit by the teacher shortage. The others are Aylestone, Coelana and South Kilburn. At Aylestone, with 18 teachers short there are 28 classes without science teachers and 15 exam classes with no teacher. This is typical.

An action committee composed of teachers from the four schools has been formed and possible action to be considered by the schools includes refusal to cover for absences and vacancies, refusal to teach subjects other than those for which the teacher is trained, strikes and demonstrations.

The initial exposure by teachers of teacher shortage has not promoted the authorities or Government to remedy it. They indeed have attempted to formalise part-time schooling. The struggle has been taken by the teachers to a higher level and the pupils' strike has broadened the base.

Cambridge Porters

At the beginning of August porters in Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, started a work to rule to secure an increase in staffing levels and to force the resignation of the manager of portering services.

The inclusion of a demand for the resignation of the portering services manager was a mistake in tactics which enabled management to divert the struggle from the real issue of staffing and wages by sending the manager on leave and announcing an enquiry into his conduct. They then threatened not to hold the enquiry till porters called off their work to rule and agreed to the transfer of two wards which would increase their work load.

At a mass meeting of porters this manoeuvre was exposed and there was a vote to implement an even tougher work to rule on the staffing question. But they failed to show the same clarity when they allowed a compromise to be reached in their name by which the work to rule was dropped and the new wards were to be worked in return for the enquiry and the mere promise of more staff.

TEACHERS

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

and will prove to be a spur to struggle. Higher paid neighbours are always an inducement to demand more, and struggle is contagious. All the strife will be with the employer. We will make him rue the day when he said "3-tiers".

Employers' Protection

The Labour Government is adept at setting upon an ideological weakness in the working class and creating an institution to reinforce it. Labour's Employment Protection Bill will propose that employers should pay their workers a guaranteed rate if they cannot provide suitable work, for instance in the event of lay-offs or short-time working.

When the employer cannot provide work due to strike action or otherwise, it is a meek workforce that accents lay-off pay and goes quietly home. It was a meek working class that accented the Tory Government's 3-day week. Labour's Bill salutes this meekness.

The Bill foresees a capitalist economy in difficulty and other proposals are similarly designed to appease the working class.

Redundant workers would be given time off to seek other work and there should be longer notice of dismissal. If firms go into liquidation the workers will have arrears of wages, holiday pay, unpaid pension contributions and pay in lieu of notice all safeguarded.

They are "generous" but the Bill is clearly an attempt to protect the employer from a potentially revolutionary working class.

Miners

80 miners were killed last year and 553 seriously injured according to the Chief Inspector of Mines and Quarries, making an overall increase of 9.5 per cent over the 1972 figures.

Highlighted in the report is the disturbing feature that accidents are (besides other causes) attributed to inadequate standards of design, installation and maintenance.

The decision of the National Coal Board to introduce a Productivity Scheme under these circumstances shows that it is no different to private enterprise in its exploitation of the working class. It drives men to ever-increasing lengths, with the danger of even more deaths and injuries, simply with the aim of increasing output by another 10 to 15 per cent.

The idea that such a deal can be accepted and given a "trial run" shows how removed from the everyday reality of working down the pit.

One motion on the executive to accept the Board's offer was defeated. Another to reject the offer was also defeated. They then settled for a Special Delegate Conference in two weeks time, but the Conference will be unable to make a decision, because the issue is to go to a ballot in the second week of October.

The miners defeated a Tory Government and forced its successor to concede their demands for a decent wage. Their claim brought a unity of purpose and joined together all the coalfields in the country as one. Scotland, Wales, Yorkshire, Nottingham, Kent. All miners stood together and waged a magnificent struggle with a solidarity that had never been seen before.

But the ruling class have learnt the lesson and introduced their old tactic of divide and rule. Coalfield against coalfield. Pit against pit.

It is up to the miners when they ballot to overwhelmingly reject this scheme in its entirety and pursue a claim for all miners, and thus maintain unity and sense of purpose.

25 YEARS OF WORKERS POWER

On October 1st 1949 Chairman Mao declared that the Chinese people had finally stood up. They had thrown off the chains of feudalism, imperialism and neo-colonialism - they had defeated both the Japanese invaders and the reactionary Kuomintang armies - they had finally achieved their victory under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. The People's Democratic Dictatorship was established.

POLITICS IN COMMAND

But October 1st 1949 was not merely the last day of outright exploitation of the people; it was more importantly the first day of a long and arduous struggle to consolidate and build socialism. And as the cancer of revisionism grew in the world, the Chinese grew to understand the vital importance of keeping that struggle alive, and being vigilant against tendencies to revisionism in China and elsewhere.

In their advance, the principle has been 'politics in command'. The Chinese Communist Party knew that the ultimate force against revisionism has to be the understanding of the people. If the people themselves know the difference between the revolutionary line and the revisionist line, then those reactionaries who in some guise advocate abandoning the advancement of socialism will always be defeated.

STRUGGLE - CRITICISM - TRANSFORMATION

The twenty-five years of socialist construction have produced many amazing results - China's currency is about the most stable in the world, the standard of living of the people has increased beyond all expectations; previously endemic diseases have been wiped out, and illiteracy is dying out with the older generation. But this has not been achieved easily. Behind every advance there lies a history of sharp disagreement, and only after prolonged debate has the correct approach been hammered out and real unity achieved. This process has been occurring at the base, in the factories and on the communes, providing the only insurance policy a revolutionary line can ever have, the support of the mass

INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Thus China's own achievements stand as a real political example to the people all over the world who want revolution. In 1972 when the capitalist world could not continue the farce of recognising Taiwan, and had given up hope of getting the 'two Chinas' policy accepted, the People's Republic was admitted to the United Nations. Since then the countries of the third world, and increasingly the second world, have had a rallying point in the United Nations and a voice on the Security Council. China has repeatedly shown the world what bullying is being done by the USA and USSR, and exposed their manoeuvring at various conferences such as that on the Law of the Sea.

We take this opportunity, on the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, to salute the Chinese people and the Communist Party of China. Longlive! the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat!

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PUBLIC MEETINGS

- Oct 11th "THE STATE AND BOURGEOIS SOCIETY"
7.30 pm, Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, London, N.W.5.
- Oct 18th "THE CUTS IN EDUCATION"
7.30 pm, Bellman Bookshop
- Oct 25th "HEALTH WORKERS: ANOTHER SECTION INTO GUERRILLA ACTION"
7.30 pm, Bellman Bookshop
- Nov 1st "ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION"
Film and speaker
7.30 pm, Bellman Bookshop
- Nov 8th "SOCIAL CONTRACTS OR CLASS STRUGGLE?"
7.30 pm, Bellman Bookshop
- Nov 15th "THE SPECIAL NATURE OF TRADE UNIONISM IN BRITAIN"
Speaker: Reg Birch, Chairman of the CPB(M-L)
7.30 pm, Bellman Bookshop

MEETINGS OUTSIDE LONDON

BRIGHTON

- Oct 4th "DON'T VOTE, ORGANISE TO SMASH CAPITALISM"
8.00 pm, Brighton Workers' Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Rd., Brighton, telephone: 684404

BRISTOL

- Oct 8th "DON'T VOTE FOR CAPITALISM, FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM"
8.00 pm, Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road, Old Market, Bristol.

CAMBRIDGE

- Oct 7th "DON'T VOTE - ORGANISE TO BRING DOWN CAPITALISM"
8.00 pm, Royal Standard pub, Mill Road, Cambridge.

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Mao Tse Tung talking to Yanan peasants during the anti-Japanese War, 1937 - 1945, and, in the background, revolutionary workers of the Paotou iron and steel plant in Inner Mongolia demonstrating today against revisionism.

Civil Servants Fight Lump

The Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA) organised a march to Downing Street in work time on September 18th to oppose the influx of agency staff into government offices. There has been a mushroom growth of these agencies, especially in London in recent years, which the government has actively encouraged by taking on temporary staff at exorbitant rates (nearly double what they have to pay CPSA members) in order to avoid filling permanent posts. The beneficiaries are not the "tempos", who earn little more than permanent staff and get no sick or holiday pay, but the agency middlemen who take a large slice of the fee paid by the employer.

It is no accident that it was the CPSA which alone had the courage to stick by its principles at the TUC in Brighton and vote against the deceitful "social contract/compact", which any worker who will stop and think knows is a suicide compact unilaterally undertaken by the working class. This same union drove a coach and horses through the Tory government's incomes policy in 1973 and won the biggest pay increase the Civil Service has ever had, thus showing that government workers would them-

selves refuse to be bound by government policy adopted in blatant disregard of promises already made.

The background to this struggle is quite interesting.

It is well known that the civil service has grown very rapidly - from less than 50,000 in 1900 to some 511,000 non-industrial civil servants today. Such growth of course is the result of government policy which has been more and more choking the life processes of society in a mesh of bureaucracy. Every government, in order to prove it is different from the last, brings in new laws, new taxes, new departments. These have to be administered and staffed. Consequently more civil servants have to be employed. Meanwhile every opposition party, feeling that it must show it has the taxpayers' interest at heart, slams the government for expanding the Civil Service.

This is where the "tempo" come in. Although they work for the government they don't count as "civil servants". For exactly the same reason overtime has reached alarming proportions in some departments: instead of hiring the additional workers needed, those in posts do the work

for 1½ people. Another device to keep down the official payroll while the work expands is "hiving off" or contracting work out. At the same time that the CPSA was condemning the use of agency staff, another civil service union, the IPCS, passed a conference resolution opposing the increasing use being made of outside contractors to do civil service work.

Nobody in the government claims, of course, that these devices save money; they don't - they are far more expensive than employing more civil servants since the agencies and the contractors take a hefty slice of the taxpayers' money for themselves. But they enable governments to preserve the illusion of the "number of civil servants" being kept down.

They have given the lie once for all to the myth that civil servants are a meek and servile lot who will do what they are told for the "national interest". They know that there is no national interest, only class interests, and that the interest of workers is diametrically opposed to that of the employers and whatever government happens to be in power.

Puny Promises

It is the fashion for politicians today to be "honest" with the people and warn that Britain is in for a tough time ahead. Such is the scepticism of the would-be voter and such is the contempt for meagre blandishments.

But in the spirit of the "social contract" there is still room for those who suffer most. Mrs Castle offers £8 a week benefit for those too handicapped to work, and Mr Foot offers a 4-week paid maternity leave. Both offers are insulting.

It is instructive to turn to Albania where workers make the law. A disabled person, unable to work and in need of care from someone else gets 85% of the average wage. A woman is granted 12 weeks maternity leave on 75% of average pay if she has been working for less than 5 years, and 95% of average pay if she has been employed for more than 5 years. It leaves the Labour 'socialists' looking pretty sick.

Sussex Rent Strike

Sussex University's attempt to break the student rent strike - the students are demanding no rent or canteen price increases - flopped when their threats of legal action failed to intimidate the strikers. The University first of all sent out warning letters, then solicitors letters, only to get the reply of motions of support for the students from a joint meeting of the various campus trade unions and also from some Brighton trade union branches. Very few strikers succumbed and paid their money back to the University.

The rent strike emerges stronger than ever, to be strengthened at the beginning of term by hundreds more strikers.

However, if the mass were not intimidated the revisionist union executive were. When the University announced that the

proposed rent increases were "no longer negotiable", in connivance with the University they agreed to "inform the membership" that the "best package negotiable" was one where those who paid their rents to the University promptly saved 25p per week by only paying a £1.00 increase. A blatant attempt to break the strike with bribes for scabs! This when the union mandate remains clear: No rent increases, no canteen price increase. Afraid of incurring the hostility of the administration in the committee room they have also quietly tried to drop the second demand.

Such manoeuvring away from the mass could be a threat to the national student struggle. But it cannot succeed for it is an obvious recipe for defeat originating from a complete lack of faith in the ability of the mass to fight for themselves.