

# THE WORKER



Published by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) No.2 30th Jan 1975 Price 3p

## ONLY SOCIALISM CAN SAVE BRITAIN

### Editorial

#### DEFENCE AND ATTACK

The class struggle which the working class have waged every day of their working lives from the very dawn of capitalism has to go on. The trade unions are the organisational form of this struggle.

But this defensive struggle is not enough. The working class has to go over to a revolutionary attack on the capitalist system itself. The organisational centre for this ultimate phase of class struggle is the Marxist-Leninist Party.

The line of struggle between the bourgeoisie and the working class, between the capitalist exploiters and the exploited workers not only divides the two classes. It runs through the trade unions themselves and even through the minds of individual workers - whether to fight courageously or surrender abjectly, to link arms with class brothers in struggle or to seek some private or sectional peace on the basis of class betrayal.

#### THE ATTACK ON THE UNIONS

We defeated the attack on the unions from without when, under AUEW leadership, we smashed the Industrial Relations Act.

We must wage as concerted a struggle against the enemies within: those who would tie the unions in bondage to the capitalist chariot of the Labour Government by a social contract; those who having failed to creep into the Labour Party itself would turn the unions into a shameful facsimile of it - a bureaucracy staffed by place-seekers and time-servers - thus destroying the unions as effective weapons in struggle as the ETU was nearly destroyed; those who scream "sell out!" at every action of union leadership on the ridiculously arrogant assumption that they could ever themselves take over the leadership of the labour movement.

#### THE LINK BETWEEN DEFENCE AND ATTACK

The fight against the attack from within on union democracy cannot be led by social democracy in any form - either its 'official' Labour Party form or its 'unofficial' forms of revisionist 'C'PGB or adventurist Trotskyite. Social democracy, which is bourgeois ideology disguised in proletarian or even Marxist garb, is itself the source of the rot.

This fight also can only take its inspiration from Marxism-Leninism. Thus the class struggle which has always been waged, more or less spontaneously, and the revolutionary struggle which the working class has to accept as its only course, are indissolubly linked through their need for the same leadership.

Only Marxism-Leninism has ever made or ever could make a successful working class revolution because it is the theoretical essence of the working class's worldwide experience of struggle. But also in Britain today only Marxism-Leninism can preserve the unions for their role as agents of the broad day-to-day struggle to defend class interests.

It is in the process of this broad struggle that the forces are recruited and the morale raised for the war against the capitalist system.



Holding a portrait of their great leader, Ho Chi Minh, and carrying the flag of Republic of South Vietnam, the people of Loc Ninh District celebrate the establishment of the local revolutionary administration

## SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF PARIS AGREEMENT

It is two years since the U.S. Government was compelled to sign an agreement on ending the war in Vietnam. An end to U.S. involvement, recognition of the unity of Vietnam and a programme for the promotion of peace and national harmony in that country were the main features of that concordat.

In that time there has been no peace. The dogs of war have not been muzzled. Reluctant to end its involvement in Vietnam, unwilling to see any progress towards peace or an end of partition, the U.S. have done their best to sabotage the Paris Agreement of Jan. 1973. Their puppet administration, under Thieu, has continued its pacification programme, has continued indiscriminately to pour death and destruction upon the villages of the South, to kill, maim and disfigure those whom they claim to represent. In the towns the imprisonment and torture of political opponents goes on and in the countryside persistent attempts are made to seize territory under Revolutionary Government (PRG). Government (PRG).

The people yearn for peace and are subject to the U.S. backed aggression of the traitor Thieu. At the same time as U.S. soldiers were leaving Vietnam, dollars, 'advisors' and the weapons of war were pouring into this ravaged country so that an imperialist war could be continued at a safer dis-

ance.

The people's response is an angry one. Thieu must go and his corrupt administration with him. The replacement of cabinet ministers and military commanders is a sop to popular feeling but changes nothing. These measures are insufficient. The demand is for an end to U.S. interference, an end to Thieu and the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

The consolidation of the liberated areas (the harvest of the revolution paid for with blood) and the massive military defeats inflicted by the popular forces, are the best possible response of the sons and daughters of Vietnam to the perfidy, hypocrisy and brutality of the Quisling Government.

Thieu's response is to whine for yet more money and munitions. Diplomatic begging letters change hands and the people's forces are charged with aggression. The United States ostentatiously manoeuvre their aircraft carriers through the South China Seas but Thieu's situation continues to deteriorate. The inalienable right of the Vietnamese to decide their own future will be asserted. Obstruction by Saigon will be removed however destructive its weaponry, however loud their frenzied squawking for aid and comfort. The Vietnamese people under the leadership of the PRG will prevail!

## SOCIAL CONTRACT SELF-EXPOSURE

We have always maintained that the Social Contract was none other than an attempt to lower the working class's standard of living and weaken its fighting ability. Now Healey has come out and said it for us. At last we have a clear and unequivocal statement from the government. "It is far better," said Healey, "that more people should be in work, even if that means accepting lower wages... than that those lucky enough to keep their jobs should scoop the pool while millions are living on the dole. That is what the Social Contract is about."

So now the threat of unemployment has been quantified into "millions" unless the working class accept lower wages. This statement provoked howls of rage from the opportunists of the trade union movement who in their arrogance imagined that they had defined the terms of the Social Contract. In truth they did but make a pact with the devil and now we hear the familiar screams as they begin to be dragged down. Yet lower wages always were implicit in the Social Contract; this much was plain even to the traitors on the TUC who chose to gloss over the fact. Such people have no right to complain, still less can they lay any claim to 'lead' a campaign against the 'new' Healey doctrine.

As for Healey and the Labour government, how dare they claim that those in work live off those out of work; for the "pool" is scooped by the employers who do not work and never have, but instead live off the labour of others. On top of this they have the gall to offer us the choice between poverty or unemployment when all their economic policies are designed precisely to bring us both. And those workers who foolishly forego rises thinking thus to maintain their employment will find themselves among the first to get the sack, such are the wages of loyalty to capitalism.

Cont. on page 4

# EMPLOYMENT PROTECTION? ACT



The so-called Employment Protection Bill that is to be brought before parliament has been designed by the Labour government to be the other arm of the new trade union laws which have followed the defeat of the Industrial Relations Act.

Although the bill parades under the name of 'employment protection' it is in reality a one-sided set of Queensbury rules designed for the coming period of even higher unemployment, even more lay-offs and even

more short time working - 'protection' Al Capone style!

The double-think implied in the name of the new bill is really aimed at the same self-deception which underlies failure to confront the philosophy of the Social Contract. Bearing in mind the way in which the TUC failed to reject the idea of voluntary wage restraint at Brighton, while the same people hope to scrub round the Social Contract in negotiations, so we must recognise the seduction

implicit in this package of proposals. We cannot accept it in theory yet hope to escape from it in practice. It is a mess of pottage for which we as workers are invited to trade our right to work.

But what does this legal peasoup consist of?

There are a few garnishings floating on the surface, - but the main substance of the proposals is aimed at regulating payment for short-time working and the handling of closures and redundancies.

For instance, a person on a three-day week would receive guaranteed payments as a proportion of average earnings during the other two days in the week. Although obviously this would be more than just three days' money, the fraudulent 'generosity' of the Bill tries to present what is in effect a wages cut as an act of Fabian legal philanthropy.

Similarly, on the question of redundancy, the Bill lays down legal requirements for the amount of notice that workers must be given according to their length of 'service'. Employers must give notice and information about redundancies and enter into negotiations with workers etc.

## LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Far from doing anything to protect employment, what the provisions seek to do is to create legal obligations so that we as trade unionists may enter into negotiations on these things and thus become party to our own dismissal - instead of being sacked today, we agree to the 'protection' of being sacked tomorrow!

The other side of the Bill which seeks to ensnare workers is the extension of the Conciliation and Arbitration Service - a piece of class collaborative machinery with powers to meddle in anything and everything. As an instant source of industrial 'wisdom' it is the body to which all workers are invited to refer problems in order that their employment be 'protected'.

The philosophy behind the welcome which the Bill has received from social democrats of both 'right' and 'left' is one which assumes that Parliament, the law and the state can protect people's jobs and livelihood. It is difficult to understand after the long struggle against the Industrial Relations Act how anyone can honestly believe that a Labour Government which designed the original anti-trade union legislation can now turn round and assume the mantle of Protector of Labour.

Capitalism and consequently capitalist governments, cannot offer protection to workers in a cannibal society - the only protection which we have is the knowledge and understanding we gain in our guerrilla struggle to smash capitalism and build socialism.

## Shrewsbury Pickets:

# Free our class brothers

Meetings and demonstrations of workers were held on January 14th in many places throughout Britain. The main object was to demand the release from jail of the two building workers' who were jailed for picketing during the 1972 building workers strike.

In London about 10,000 marchers converged on central London the main column assembling at Tower Hill and marching to the Houses of Parliament.

One of the main arguments now being advanced for the release of the Shrewsbury Pickets by the self-appointed leaders of the campaign, is that the sentences are excessive. In the Commons debate on December 19th the Home Secretary, great humanitarian that he is, was asked to release the Pickets in order that they could spend Christmas with their families. The answer given reminded one of the hangman who informed the condemned man that there was nothing personal in what he was about to do. Of course the sentences given the pickets were cruel and vicious. How could it be otherwise? Let those in our movement who talk of the treatment being given to these two building workers as being a travesty of British Justice, ask themselves what justice can there ever be for the working class under capitalism.

When the dockers were arrested and imprisoned in Pentonville, the response from our class following the lead given by dock workers was immediate. The strategy was

limited to the release of the dockers and did not include using the forces mobilised for this end to continue the fight against the Industrial Relations Act itself; but within this limited strategy the tactics employed, industrial action and direct appeal to the mass of workers, were completely successful.

This has not been the case in the campaign for the release of the Shrewsbury pickets. While the strategy was the same, the tactics leave a lot to be desired.

The main emphasis is directed at the official side of the trade union movement, the TUC and now, of course, the Labour government - not the mass of workers.

## Strike Don't Plead

In fact we were told that the return of a Labour government would make the campaign for the release of the pickets that much easier. What did happen during the election campaigns, was that the issue of the pickets was pushed into the background, much to the relief of the Labour Party and those who called for the return of a Labour government.

We neglect to learn the lessons of the fight to release the Pentonville dockers at our peril. If a shop steward is sacked at our place of work, we do not send a delegation to plead with the employer to give the man his job back because he has a wife and six children. We stop work and return when our shop steward has been reinstated.

# REJECT HOUGHTON!

On Saturday, 25th January, a conference of the Teachers' union, the NUT, will decide whether to accept or reject the Houghton Committee's recommendations on teachers' salaries. In the wave of opportunism currently prevailing amongst teachers it will only be the most brave and honest delegates who will speak out for rejection.

The Houghton Report itself arose from the stirring in the London schools and colleges beginning more than two years ago.

But the teachers' army so painstakingly marshalled never engaged the enemy and the promised reserves from the provinces were never forthcoming. Only a lively, but isolated, action in Scotland prevented the campaign against the Houghton Report from becoming a complete disaster.

The teachers, in their cravenness, have chosen not to reply to the social contract. They have chosen not to challenge the much proclaimed 'crisis' of capitalism. They have stood aside while the education system has been systematically dismantled.

We can expect the Houghton Report to be a prelude to an onslaught on the teaching profession. Already there are predictions that half of the 20,000 new entrants to the profession this year will not be employed. "Teachers are too expensive", say the Local Authorities.

The Report aims at destroying the unity and true working class outlook that has grown among teachers in the recent period. It talks of "professional standards" and "maturity". It seeks to have more teachers in more desperate competition with their fellows for promotion. Moreover, the career

structure is to be bought dearly. The reward for 'opportunity' is impoverishment. Salaries can be justifiably low. "Teachers cannot have it both ways", but the employer evidently can.

A further, Government inspired, review will be held in seven years time. This is a direct appeal to the teachers' organisations to abdicate their responsibility, and an ominous reminder that the corporate state makes daily advance.

It is a spurious rejection of Houghton to argue that a redistribution of the 'global sum' is all that is required. This is precisely the divisive game that the report was hoping to inspire.

The increases, hailed by some as 'massive' are in fact quite meagre. If teachers think only of the 'jingle in their pockets', then they are in for a rude disappointment. A typical teacher might receive a 20% increase. But in these days of rampant inflation and increasing deductions, such a rise so pompously proclaimed, becomes ridiculous. Teachers will soon be paying 35p for their school meals, an increase of 95%. The fact is, no teacher is under any illusion that the increase is at all substantial. The pretended eager interest in their new salary position is mere cover for the unwillingness to fight. Houghton could have awarded much less and there would still have been no reaction from the teachers.

This episode in the teachers' struggle may soon be closed. The day will be ruled. The present scattered ranks of the teachers; will only regain their composure and clarity around those who say 'Reject Houghton!'

# The Worker Interview

## Health Workers

In recent months the struggle of NHS workers to preserve their standards of living and protect the Health Service from the attacks of the state have extended to hospital doctors at all levels. A junior hospital doctor at a large London teaching hospital gave the following interview to THE WORKER and explained the situation at his place of work.

### WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE PRESENT STRUGGLE IN THIS HOSPITAL?

The action started here even before the publication of the new consultants' contract. The consultants were feeling dissatisfied and were preparing for action by joining the BMA as increasing numbers. They also formed an Emergency Committee on which we were represented too. The Committee was backed by all medical staff and consultants.

After the publication of the new contract the Committee decided that it was unacceptable and they were in a position to impose sanctions immediately. The junior doctors voted separately and decided by an overwhelming majority to support the consultants' sanctions. The Emergency Committee, which even includes a press officer, meets weekly to review the progress of the campaign and to plan the next stage. By the last meeting over 1,000 patients had been refused treatment and not one of them had complained. The sanctions did make extra work for the ancillary medical records staff; but we have taken steps to help them.

The Committee is in touch with the other teaching hospitals who have heard about the success of our campaign and so have been encouraged in taking sanctions themselves.

### WHAT IS THE MAIN EMPHASIS OF THE CAMPAIGN?

Initially there was some confusion even among the consultants about what they were fighting for. Some thought it was to do with private practice, but now the majority of consultants and all junior doctors are fighting on the contract itself. To emphasise this, the consultants have taken the stand of closing down the private patients' wing in order to make the point of the struggle clear and to forestall inappropriate action by any union which might not appreciate that the struggle is not about pay-beds.

The main disagreements with the contract are that:-

- Firstly, it doesn't pay the rate for the job.
- Secondly, it disguises unlimited working hours as a closed contract and it increases working hours and even takes away the lunch hour.
- Thirdly, instead of improving the Health Service in deprived areas, the contract bribes consultants to work in poorly equipped, under-manned hospitals.
- Fourthly, it is unfair to doctors who cannot work full-time - these are usually women with family commitments - since they will not be allowed to do private practice should they so wish.
- Fifthly, there is no payment for being on call.

### WHAT EFFECT HAS THE STRUGGLE HAD ON THE OUTLOOK OF DOCTORS?

We now realise the necessity of being united against the employer. Increasing government interference in the way we do our jobs has led to heightened awareness that we are not 'the bosses' but we are just government employees. The doctors I work with are seeing that they are workers, and there is a growing current of feeling among the junior doctors who are prepared to take militant action for a better Health Service.

### HOW DO YOU SEE THE STRUGGLE DEVELOPING?

This isn't a final stand, it's the beginning of a protracted struggle towards better conditions of work and a better Health Service. The fact that the consultants have taken this action will open a floodgate for the junior doctors who feel encouraged to struggle for the things we want. This fight has made industrial action acceptable to people who have not been in struggle before. The doctors' conscious recognition of themselves as workers will lead to greater unity with all other NHS employees.

# The Alternative ... Socialism in Practice

## Green Revolution?

In Hunan province in China a peasant rice expert has managed to grow 3 crops in one year on the same piece of ground, with a total grain yield of 23.47 tons per hectare. Li Kuang-Ching is now 69 but has no intention of giving up work. He came from a poor peasant family and all 5 of his sons died of starvation, yet he always had courage and optimism. In 1952 when individual peasants used to get about 2½ tons per hectare he worked hard to prove the value of mutual aid teams, and produced a crop of 5.25 tons. In 1966 Li Kuang-Ching began experimenting with 3 crops a year (2 of rice and one of wheat), trying new strains and methods until he achieved a yield nearly 10 times that of a poor peasant 25 years ago. If you ask him his age, Li Kuang-Ching says, "In the new society I have been born anew. I say I am 25, counting my age from the day of liberation."

## Standing on its Own Feet

Left to sink or swim 15 years ago by the Russians, Albania is proud of its record in 1974, and especially of the fact that it provides for its industrial needs in electric power, fuels and other raw materials. Four-fifths of consumer goods are also made entirely in Albania. Increased production on a planned basis, and guaranteed stable prices have raised the standard of living. The national product in 1974 was 33 per cent higher than in 1973 and the real incomes of industrial and town workers rose by 9 per cent and of cooperative farmers by 13 per cent.

The departing Russians swore that Albania could never become industrialised - their experts failed even to find the oil deposits now being worked near Stalin City. On the farms there are over 3 times as many tractors as in 1960 and plentiful use of fertilizers and insecticides has increased agricultural production to 4 times the 1960 figure.



ALBANIAN SOCIALISM

## Immigration Act Against the Working Class

An Italian immigrant catering worker who has been living in this country for 6 years has been held in Pentonville prison for more than three weeks awaiting deportation. He has not been accused of any specific offence. He is a legal immigrant with a job and a valid visa. He has been active in trade union organisation among immigrants working in the catering trade.

He is being held under section 42 of the 1971 Immigration Act, a section which has never been used before. It states that the Home Secretary can deport any resident alien - even if he has been living and working here for years - if he thinks it will be 'conducive to the public good as being in the interests of national security or of the relations between the UK

and any other country or for other reasons of a political nature.'

The worker being held has no right of trial, need not be told the reasons for the order against him and has no right of appeal - provisions which are remarkably similar to those of the recent Prevention of Terrorism Act. The only explanation which has been given to the detained worker is contained in a brief letter - stating that the deportation order is on the ground that he is a threat to national security. The specific nature of the offence has not been elaborated.

The only procedure under the Act is a panel which sits in camera, need not produce any evidence, takes place in the absence of the defendant and is composed of three people approved by the Home Secretary.

## No Honour Among Thieves

When the tip of the iceberg of US spying on British technological advances was revealed recently, British workers were amazed. Amazed at the surprise afforded by the bourgeoisie. Whoever doubted whether American capitalists or any others would stoop as low as possible to destroy their competitors - true to the form of a predator class?

The CIA's particular brief was espionage in the British air and transport industries; but the superpower's agents also have designs on electronics and defence equipment, since their products -

computers and auto-pilots are essential for the US aircraft industry. Even though they openly invest in British Rail transport research, here also agents continue to gain information by subterfuge. In the dog-eat-dog system of capitalism the ruling class cannot check its destructive nature. All others, even 'allies' must be used and if necessary destroyed.

But the US parasites, like their British counterparts, fear, even more than each other, their host - the working class whose skill produced the technology.

# ON THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT



## Unemployment and Short - Time Working

Twenty paper and board mills on short-time working; Walls Meat closing one of their factories; Leylands cannot guarantee jobs; 1800 hosiery workers on short time with 100 made redundant; Wearra Shoes sacked 200 workers; GKN have put 3,000 automotive workers on a 4 day week.

Short-time working and redundancies have been announced by British Steel Corporation, ICI Fibres and Chrysler's are working a 3 day week which will affect all firms supplying parts, etc. etc.

If you asked any of us older socialists what turned us against capitalism and made us adopt a working class ideology we would say without hesitation that in our childhood in the 'Thirties' we saw and experienced the degradation and poverty that unemployment brings. We grew up in the recognition that capitalism to survive severe economic crises throws overboard the working class and leaves us to fend for ourselves as best as we may.

The trade unions were weakened because we could only counter-attack when we were in work, not when we were out.

We became socialists because changing the system and destroying capitalism were ingrained in us by our experiences and, though the hardest road to travel, it is the only way to end the system which creates unemployment and poverty in the midst of plenty.

Marx's writings were based on the squalor and misery of nineteenth century Britain and the ideas for destroying capitalism and establishing a workers' state were carried out by Lenin and then Mao Tse Tung in Russia and China. Socialist reconstruction ends unemployment forever. Workers regain their human dignity and can make their full contribution to a co-operative, prosperous society.

## PLESSEY WHITE COLLAR WORKERS

A mass meeting of 2,700 white collar workers, members of ASTMS, TASS, APEX, T&GWU, and EESA, voted to take selective strike action in pursuit of a claim for full Threshold Pay (£4.40) and improved conditions. The meeting, held in Liverpool Stadium on Friday 10th Jan, also endorsed a proposal to ban Sunday overtime working.

Recently, shop-floor workers in the Liverpool region of Plessey won improved conditions for their members with more than 10 years service. This gave them equal, and in some cases, marginally better conditions than staff workers regarding overtime premia, holidays, service payment, sick-pay and pensions. Before this settlement, it was already a joke among workers that if you misbehaved management wouldn't sack you, but promote you to the staff, where average earnings were lower.

Enough is enough, and was pointed out at the mass meeting, while the claim is for Threshold Pay, the name doesn't matter. Staff at Plessey want money to keep level with both cost of living increases as compared with the national average earnings, and the earnings of their shop-floor brothers.

Selective strikes have been used by individual Staff unions at Plessey for some time, yet this is the first time that they have been used on a joint basis.

So far APEX and ASTMS members have been withdrawn from the Despatch and Inwards goods areas.

These members can be easily financed by the remaining staff since the total number withdrawn is 23. Managers have been sent into these areas to overcome the effect and action is planned to counter this move. In any effect, the staff are unanimous over the fact that their dispute will not end until the managers are disciplined to their satisfaction. Some shop-floor workers have expressed disgust that they could be laid off with no pay, while the small number of staff on strike are on full pay. However, the staff feel that such guerrilla tactics are simply common sense, since much harm is done to the company, at little cost to themselves. They hope that the shop-floor workers will take a leaf out of their book for future struggles, and in the meantime fight for lay-off pay.

## WALL CLOSURE

Wall management have announced the closure of their Willesden factory with the loss of 1,600 jobs. It cannot be argued that, as with motor cars, there is less demand for food! As

A mass meeting of stewards from all Walls factories has pledged full support to the Willesden workers in their fight so to save their jobs.

## BIRMINGHAM

The start of 1974 saw most of us on a 3-day working week. The start of 1975 seems remarkably similar with many of us again on 'short' weeks. Here in the Birmingham area some 26,000 are affected. At Chrysler's Ryton works (in Coventry) 4000 car workers are only in for 3-days (joining their 5,000 mates in Scotland already on short time). At Lucas's 4 big Midlands works 3,750 workers are now on a four-day week. GKN workers also face short time with 3,000 of them on reduced working time and, even worse, 400 redundancies. Other workers hit by short time include those at Wilmot Breedon, Goodyear, Dunlop and the Perry Barr works of Birmid Quilcast. At Midland motor cylinders 3,000 manual and white collar workers have been hit. Total redundancies in Birmingham itself over the past 3 months are estimated to have reached between 6,000 and 7,000 workers in a variety of industries.

## EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

The Government rejection of repeated TUC calls to outlaw fee-charging employment agencies and decision instead merely to carry out legislation to inspect them, is not only ducking the issue, but is actively aiding and abetting their existence.

There cannot be anything more parasitic than these people making money out of unemployment.

Dealing with temps, nurses, secretaries, lump labour, draughtsmen, they are a threat to wages and conditions of all the organised working class. No holiday pay no sick pay, no adequate safety standards, no trade union conditions - that's agency work.

One more instance of a government that supports private enterprise against the interests of the working class.

## ASSOCIATED AUTOMATION

At Associated Automation (part of the GEC group) Willesden, 600 AUEW members were locked out, after implementing an overtime ban and work to rule, in support of a claim which included full threshold payments.

Despite repeated attempts by the management to break the union organisation and solidarity, the effect was the reverse, the members unity and determination going from strength to strength.

After a 9 week lock-out, which included Christmas, an offer was made which was an acceptable basis for a return to work. The convener and stewards, who gave the struggle good leadership, report that the dispute has resulted in 100 per cent membership and the dismissal of the company chairman.

## BRITISH OXYGEN

3,300 production workers and drivers in 46 depots have been offered their third pay increase in a year which will give average earnings increases of £9.21 a week in two stages by April.

This is an interim offer until pay negotiations start again next May.

The workers were in a very militant mood and no doubt the company were aware of this in making the offer in a bid to avert an all-out stoppage.

The shop stewards were well aware of the increased profitability of the company, and National officials of the unions concerned have recommended acceptance of the offer.

## SAMCO STRONG

80 AUEW members in the fitting shop at Samco-strong Engineering in Bristol have just ended their 6th week of strike action preceded by 6 weeks overtime ban, in support of a claim to bring their basic wage up to the national average (the various trades are £5-£10 behind). This struggle has become important not only over the issue of wages, but because it has become clear to the strikers that, as a convener put it 'the management are trying to break the only organised union shop in the factory. The firm (a subsidiary of British United Shoe Machinery in Leicester, which is itself American-owned) completely ignored union proposals to negotiate until the work to rule began to bite. Their offers then were rejected as pitiful and the work to rule was tightened. Management then clearly decided to fight it out.

The workers went on official strike on November 29th and have maintained a strong picket since. Support from delivery drivers and fellow AUEW members in the district has been magnificent, but the problems of the struggle hinge on the attitude of other workers at Samco's.

Management have tried to play on divisions in the workforce, making offers of large rises to individual stewards and trying to get men still at work to do their other workers' jobs. The strikers have nonetheless remained firm. The coming weeks will be crucial in showing whether such hard direct confrontation tactics will have paid off for the strikers, or whether more flexible tactics such as lightning walk outs might have been more effective and less costly to the men.

## Social Contract Exposed ( cont )

The only loyalty workers owe is to themselves as a class. The only contract they can have is a contract to destroy capitalism. Mr. Healey, we have no need to bargain with you nor any of your ilk! The choice is not between lower wages or higher unemployment. Lower wages have always meant lower demand and higher unemployment, this is economic common sense. If the Labour government asks us to remember the 1930s, we will remember that at that time it was precisely Labour's policy of cutting wages, especially in the public sector and by Government decree, which aggravated the slump and deservedly led Labour to electoral defeat.

We have said in THE WORKER that it is not enough to reject the Social Contract from a day-to-day point of view. What is needed is an ideological rejection of the whole philosophy of living with capitalism. For the working class there is really but one choice - revolution or fascism.

If after Healey's statement any further proof is needed, tomorrow will furnish it.

## Sheer Opportunism

The rump revisionist 'Communist' Party of Great Britain, which backed the Labour Party in both elections, has just published a pamphlet by its national industrial organiser urging workers to ignore the Labour government's social contract which it intends to distribute in factories and workplaces.

Workers will know what to make of an organisation which campaigns for Labour and then advises workers to opt out of the results of that campaign. The Social Contract is a social democratic device. It can only be rejected by workers who reject social democracy, who reject the Labour government as no less a capitalist government than a Tory government, who reject any contract between the working class and capitalism.

## SOVIET REVISIONISM

### RUSSIA 'OFFICIALLY' ABANDONS SOCIALISM

The Worker has constantly pointed out the role of superpower selfishness that the Soviet Union plays in the international arena, with its financial manoeuvres and diplomatic trading of arms for economic and political servitude. That the Soviet Union is controlled by revisionists has been clear since the time of Krushchev. Perhaps he was too blatant, for he fell from favour. Now Brezhnev is carrying on work started by his predecessor in the sphere of revising the Soviet Constitution and putting the formal political seal on the obscene prostitution of the glorious party of Lenin and Stalin to capitalist 'reforms'.

The Brezhnev thesis that there are no nationalities but just 'one Soviet People' is being used to revise the 1936 constitution, to abolish the previously enshrined

right of constituent nations to autonomy, self-determination and secession... 'The country would then be regrouped into large economic units more suited to the needs of a superpower' (The Times, 10.1.75, p.9)

And equally fundamental to that 1936 Constitution was the call to the Soviet People for vigilance and constant struggle against their former ruling class and their ideological leftovers in the peoples' minds, enshrined as the dictatorship of the proletariat. Brezhnev seeks to remove all mention of this from his constitution, which amounts to abandoning 'officially' the urge to build socialism by struggling against the narrow selfish capitalist ideology in order to conform with the political reality of the re-establishment of capitalism.

## Student Rent Strike

One of the most effective tactics being employed in the Grants Cuts Campaign is that of rent strikes in Halls of Residence. Several colleges are continuing rent strikes begun last term, some are embarking upon this economic sanction for the first time. A new wave of action was provoked by the Government's duplicity in increasing the main rate grant in June 1974 and negating that award in September by increasing refectory prices and Hall fees by up to 50%. Students at Exeter University have overcome the demoralisation of a rent strike broken two years ago and are withholding £40 of this term's hall fees in a battle to counter the 20% increase imposed last October. The support for the rent strike has defeated those who maintained Exeter students were incapable of fighting and of winning.

On the other hand, the unanimous decision of a Union General Meeting of the Polytechnic of Central London Students Union ended the two year old rent strike there, marking a victory for the students

on their own terms. The students had withstood threats of legal action against rent strikes (a threat withdrawn during a week's occupation of the prestigious and money spinning Management Centre) and threats to freeze Union funds and of court action against Union saboteur officers, each attack on the Union an attempt to recoup the £45,000 held in the rent strike fund. At the beginning of this academic session the Union put counter demands before the PCL Authorities promising the return of the £45,000 on condition the 15% increase in hall fees was removed and that the fees be frozen at last years level for at least one year. The PCL Authorities capitulated to those demands.

All students must now be made aware that they are capable of exerting economic pressure on College Authorities so that those Authorities will be forced to take a stand against the directives of the Local Education Authorities on price increases. Students must seize their economic power to duplicate such successes.

## Universities Reject Contract

The universities Specialist Conference of the NUS on January 6th and 7th voted overwhelmingly for rejecting the Labour Government's latest device, the Social Contract. Students have consciously and unequivocally stated that they will not moderate their demands. In the face of increasing attacks on workers living standards and organisations, students are fighting all-out to defend the right to a free and complete education. Students as members of the working class have a duty to maintain this right and the high standard of skill the class has attained through education. It itself has fought for and won over the last 200 years.

Students struggle in the unions has matured over the past two years - consistently fighting for a living grant for all students and now against cut backs in education and closures of colleges. The postgraduate sector, research students are organising within the student unions against insidious cut-backs by way of the partial loan scheme and unpaid or cheap 'teaching practice'.

The understanding reached

by students in their day-to-day experience in their own colleges has developed out of an implementation of correct tactics. These tactics, canteen boycotts, rent strikes and a guerrilla approach were put forward by our Party in 1972. Rejected then practice has shown students that success depends on these tactics and they are now part of official NUS policy.

The Social Contract, a play on the sympathies of our class for a dying animal, has been thrown out by the universities. Practice has shown there can be no compromise. Although debated first, and accepted without a single argument against, by the Specialist Conference, it ironically was blocked at the National Conference by a closure of the debate immediately preceding the motion on the Social Contract. Thus it is not yet National policy. However, previous experience and the already practical rejection of the Labour government's contract of voluntary restraint by students, clearly lights the way to a vocal 'no to the Social Contract' by students all over Britain.

# LABOUR'S DAMP SQUIB

Mr. Benn's plans to nationalise the aircraft construction industry should come as no surprise to workers at the British Aircraft Corporation, Hawker Siddeley Aviation and Hawker Siddeley Dynamics. As Benn himself put it "In one way or another I think it reasonable to argue that the relationship between the taxpayer and the British aircraft industry has been a close one".

Too close for comfort should be the answer of our class to Benn's attempts to rubber stamp an iniquitous situation in which we are expected to pay for capitalism's problems!

No wonder that workers at Westlands Helicopters in Yeovil should want no truck with nationalisation - for such plans within a capitalist system can have no benefit for workers. The only thing that can be expected is contraction and redundancies and attempts to cut workers' standard of living still further.

Those who think that the added ingredient of worker participation industrial democracy or however the latest cliché describes it, will improve the workers' position are living in cloud cuckoo land for the only participation in which they will be involved, will be to negotiate the methods and numbers of sackings.

The aircraft industry encompasses some of the most skilled workers in Britain - that they should be part of a salvage plan is a clear condemnation of the archaic economic system under which we exist. The only answer for workers in all industries - nationalised or not - is to fight for the end of this system so that in a planned economy the skills and resources of our class can be used in our own interest.

## Anyone For A Wage Cut ?

The bourgeoisie are never too proud to ask other people to do their dirty work for them. But employees at the London Hospital Medical College thought it was taking things to ridiculous extremes when they were asked to voluntarily reduce their wages to 2 per cent below the level of October 1974 for the next 6 months. They were told that the cut was to avoid serious reductions in staffing. If all the staff agreed to the scheme the College would have 'saved' £35,000, the workers would have taken a large step in the wrong direction and the bourgeoisie would have been baring its nasty fangs in the widest grin it had managed at the expense of the working class since secretaries worked overtime free of charge during the 'I'm Backing Britain' campaign.

Of course, we must not malign the employers too much. At the London Hospital Medical College they were gracious enough to say that if anyone who took part in the scheme (to avoid serious redundancies, you recall) was made redundant after all, they would be reimbursed. Who could say fairer than that? Well, the workers at the London Hospital Medical College did say fairer than that and rejected the scheme.

### PREPARING FOR CIVIL WAR

In the current campaign to recruit officers for the army, advertisements have appeared in the national press under the heading "Any young man who says he wants to be an army officer should have his motives examined." In the ensuing copy, to the question, "Are you a patriot?" the definition given is, "As far as we are concerned it means, are you prepared to fight if necessary to prevent people taking control of this country by force or other unconstitutional means?"

In 1970, Brigadier Kitson wrote

"If a genuine and serious grievance arose, such as might result from a significant drop in the standard of living, all those who now dissipate their efforts over a wide variety of causes might concentrate their efforts and produce a situation which was beyond the power of the police to handle. Should this happen the army would be required to restore the position rapidly."

## BELLMAN BOOKSHOP 155 FORTRESS ROAD LONDON NW5

An important series of public meetings beginning on Friday, February 7th, at the Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, NW5 at 7.30pm will consider various aspects of the situation in Britain today. We have described this situation as revolutionary. Come and hear why this is the case and what it means for the working class and its Party.

Feb.	7th	The Struggle for Wages
"	14th	The Struggle against Anti-Working Class Legislation
"	21st	Is All Class Struggle Revolutionary?
"	28th	Deepening Class Contradictions
March	7th	The Fraud of the Labour Government
"	14th	The Dastardly Role of the Revisionists
"	21st	An Organised Working Class, not Terrorism
April	4th	The Ideology of the Working Class Does Not Match Its Capacity for Struggle
"	11th	International Contradictions and Their Effect on the Working Class
"	18th	New Tasks of the Working Class and its Party

### PUBLIC MEETING BRISTOL

#### POLITICAL CRISIS - A REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS

Tuesday, February 4th 8p.m.

Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road, Old Market, Bristol 2.

## 'THE WORKER'

THE WORKER,  
155 FORTRESS ROAD,  
LONDON, NW5.

£2 per year (including postage)

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....