

THE WORKER



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A SINGLE WORLD DIVIDED BY CLASS

All over our world the two class forces, the capitalist class and the working class, confront each other with their radically different ways of life and thought: profits, exploitation and war on the one hand, production geared to people's needs, freedom and peace on the other. The front line is drawn between those countries where the working class is in power like China, Albania and Vietnam and those countries where the capitalist class is in power. There are no third countries where neither rules. The front line is also drawn within each country between capitalist forces ruling with ever greater ferocity where they are still in power or seeking restoration where they have been overthrown, and the working class which everywhere can only end its exploitation by establishing and retaining state power itself. That is why the working class of every country has to have its own Marxist-Leninist party applying scientific socialism to its own conditions.

Britain has a special place in this alignment of class forces. The action of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in granting a conditional loan to British capitalism and in propping up the Sterling balances shows that Britain is world capitalism's front line.

Because Britain was the first capitalist country it is the locus, in capitalism's general

decline, of its gravest internal contradictions. The essential nature of those contradictions is the struggle between the working class and the capitalist class which exploits it; and in Britain that struggle is more developed than in any other industrialised country.

The bourgeoisie here has found it more and more difficult to govern under a bourgeois

democracy. The counter-revolutionary riposte of capitalism is shown in the economic battle with a setback of all reform and savage cuts in wages. We have to go back to the old struggles over wages and conditions in order to go forward; but those old struggles are now revolutionary.

We can never opt out of class struggle nor compromise with the class enemy. We will never go to bed with our bourgeoisie, nor will we get into any common monopoly-capitalist bed which our bourgeoisie makes up with the bourgeoisie of Western Europe. EEC membership, devolution, IMF and World Bank agreements are all part of British capitalism's counter-revolution on the political front. We repudiate the EEC utterly and will have no more to do with phoney direct elections to a 'European Parliament' than

we have with phoney elections in Britain as to which capitalist party shall be in power over us. We denounce devolution and will use any referendum to express the working class's rejection of this attempt to destroy our national base which is the political equivalent of the economic attempt to destroy our industrial base. We recognise no conditions on our struggle which our bourgeoisie has agreed with the organs of international capitalist finance.

As we have said in our Congress '76 Document: "The most devastating setback to the working class in struggle in all their weakness was the new revisionist 'Power' of a former socialist country, the USSR. It was in its coming a necessary shot of adrenalin to a dying capitalism prolonging and postponing its expiration date." But we would be collaborating in and

compounding that setback if we accepted "a philosophy of co-existence in order to save Britain and Europe from the USSR. To save it for the bourgeoisie." There can be no question of the working class anywhere allying itself with a weaker or weakening imperialism. We will never cease, because Britain is under some kind of threat, from our total opposition to British imperialism which rules part of Ireland, attempts to resume direct power in Rhodesia and dominates many other parts of the World. The defence of Britain devolves on us, the working class. That is the only devolution we countenance. We made Britain: we must save it.

The danger of world war from Soviet or from US imperialism we do not separate because they are identical in purpose. The imperialist thrust to war cannot be given the shape somebody would like it to have. The question of which imperialism is the more dangerous is a question of time and place - not of type.

For us there is one world and one enemy; but that enemy can only be grappled with in the guise of one's own bourgeoisie. However, that bourgeoisie is linked to the bourgeoisie everywhere in the capitalist world. That is why when we overthrow our bourgeoisie in Britain it will have such a devastating effect throughout the capitalist world. And the effects will not be limited to that world; it will strengthen the socialist countries and, indeed, will be a discharging of the debt we owe to our working class brothers in those countries for their sacrifices in first demonstrating the visibility of the socialist system.



A SINGLE WORLD DIVIDED BY CLASS. THE OLDEST WORKING CLASS IN THE WORLD, THE BRITISH, WITH VIETNAMESE WOMEN, ALBANIAN YOUTH, RUSSIAN ARMED WORKERS, ZIMBABWE LIBERATION FIGHTERS, ALL UNITED AGAINST A COMMON ENEMY - CAPITALISM.

THE YEAR 1976 was extraordinary in the history of the People's Republic of China. It saw the death of three great revolutionaries: Chairman Mao Tse-tung, Premier Chou En-lai, and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, Chu Teh. These were sad and immeasurable losses to the whole world as well as to China herself.

China was also hit by natural disasters, the most terrible of which was the massive earthquake at Tangshan which, as Chairman Hua Kuo-feng said, "inflicted a loss of lives and property that was rarely seen in history." China astonished and impressed the world by remaining calm and efficient in the face of this calamity, thanking those who offered aid from outside, but declining it, preferring to rely on the resources of her own people and confident in her ability to do so.

In spite of these tragic events, China was undaunted in her determination to consolidate and develop her socialist economy.

In agriculture, the movement for self reliance - "Learn from Tachai" - has already seen great successes. The South China Autonomous Region followed 1975's big improvement in grain output by registering new increases for 1976. The yield per hectare topped 7.5 tons in 15 counties in the Region, and in some areas the output of sugar cane was 50 per cent higher than 1975. They did this by building farmland improvement projects, improving farming conditions and strengthening the capability of farmland to resist natural calamities. After several years of hard work, 260,000 water conservancy projects were built. These enabled high, stable yields to be produced despite drought or waterlogging, and created 266,000 hectares of fields. What should have taken two years was achieved in one. The Region also

Extraordinary Year in China



Peking steel mill increases production

built several iron and steel plants, and developed its coal and power industry. It can now produce tractors and motor vehicles for agricultural use, and chemical fertilizer.

The 1976 production plans for the coal industry were completed and overfulfilled in some areas, despite loss and damage caused by earthquakes. The State plan for coal output was exceeded by 8.3 per cent. The yearly plans for tunneling footage, operative capacity of new mines, geological prospecting and manufacture of mining machinery were also met. In fact the miners of the Yangchuan coal mines not only fulfilled the annual production plan 41 days ahead of time but went on to realise the ambitious goal of exceeding the mine's designed capacity by 100 per cent before the end of 1976.

Crude oil production was another example of industrial

success in 1976. The Shengli oilfield in Shantung Province - one of China's big oilfields - overfulfilled its state quotas both for crude oil and all other major products, and made new prospecting discoveries. Oil workers built two new oil zones and greatly improved the old oilfield and tapping production potentials in spite of problems caused by ice-floes and snow storms.

These successes were matched in major heavy and light industries throughout the country.

In a speech on December 25th at the 2nd National Conference on Learning from Tachai Hua spoke of 1976 as "a year in which the whole Party, the whole army and the people of all nationalities throughout the country have withstood vigorous tests...". He spoke of his confidence in the prospect of development of the national economy. He stressed

the important role production plays in the building of socialism:

"We must launch a big drive to increase production and practise economy, step up technical innovations, tap production potential, lower costs, improve the quality of products, raise labour productivity, increase accumulation, give full scope to the production capacity of the existing enterprises and bring about an upsurge in grasping revolution and promoting production."

The key to this economic strength is politics, it depends absolutely on the continuance of the people's dictatorship, and the strengthening of their Party - the Communist Party. As Chairman Hua said "The Party is the force at the core that leads everything".

May 1977 be an even greater year in the history of socialist China.

New Stage in Vietnam

IN HANOI at the Ba Dinh Conference Hall, the Fourth Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam, formerly called the Workers' Party of Vietnam, ended on December 21, 1976.

The First Secretary, Le Duan, made a political report on behalf of the Central Committee:

"With the great victory of our patriotic war against US aggression, our entire Party, entire people and entire army have satisfactorily fulfilled the historic task of national liberation and reunification of the country laid down by the Third Party Congress and accomplished their sacred mission towards the Motherland and their noble internationalist duties.

On this grand festive day our Congress warmly hails the ardent patriotism and the supreme revolutionary heroism of our fellow-countrymen, fighters and party cadres and members from all fraternal nationalities in the North as well as in the South who have united and tirelessly fought for national liberation and the reunification of the Motherland."

After analysing the features in the new stage of the revolution, the report put forth the general line for the socialist revolution of Vietnam in the new stage, and stressed the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The report said: "Inaugurating the new stage of the Vietnamese revolution, the 1976-1980 five-year plan has an extremely important position. It has at the same time to do away with the heavy sequels of 30 years of war and neo-colonialism, and to re-organise an originally poor and backward economy so as to take the first steps in building large-scale socialist production and lay the foundation for the industrialisation of the Country."

Equal Pay Fraud

THE EQUAL Pay Act was introduced in 1970 by the Labour Government, not to bring in equal pay, but precisely to forestall it.

Now a report issued by the NCCL into its workings, published last week, proves conclusively what many workers have known through experience: that the Act is not bringing Equal Pay. The report shows that 7 out of 10 equal pay cases which come up before tribunals are decided in the employer's favour.

It also claims that officials of the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service are "bullying" women into dropping their claims.

Quite rightly, the report points out that the Act was never intended to bring in equal pay.

The fight for equal pay was born in the last decade by women in struggle - most notably at Ford's. The Labour Government gave the employers five years to find loopholes.

In 1976, the year when all pay should be equal, the women of Trico showed by their courageous and clear-sighted struggle that neither acts of parliament or tribunals but acts of struggle and defiance alone will bring justice.

The British Construction Industry The Prospects for 1977 - a Grim Outlook

What future will 1977 hold for the construction industry? The past year saw unemployment amongst building workers reach a level unheard of since before the war. Apprenticeships became harder to find for many youngsters who wished to become the bricklayers, plasterers or electricians of the future. New starts in both the public and private sector declined. The employers turned their attentions to Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

"A massive house-building programme" was a major point of the social contract, yet shortly afterwards it is announced that huge cuts are to be made on civil engineering and local government house-building. Last year housing starts were 148,820, completions 150,500. The National House-Building Council predicts that in 1977 starts could fall as low as 100,000. The cuts being imposed on education and the health service mean less hospitals and schools, still more unemployment.

Building workers should not suppose that these cutbacks in construction are anything other than a calculated attack on workers in the industry. As the December 1976 issue of "Inveutors' Chronicle" said: "In the end it is the private sector and almost exclusively the battered construction industry that will bear the brunt of cutbacks on housing, school building and roads. But the Government will not have forgotten that building sector unions are less organised than most."

If we permit it, 1977 will see unemployment in the industry rising to a level surpassing that of the 1930's. The spending power of wages will be cut still further. The 'lump' will continue to flourish, sick pay, proper holiday pay and the de-casualisation of the industry will all remain dreams. Jack Jones will continue to draw his salary even though he insists on doing the exact opposite of what he is paid for, and the General Secretary of UCATT will probably once again call for

an enquiry into the imprisonment of Des Warren - whose release the whole class ought to have demanded and secured.

This need not be. The trade unions, and in the construction industry the TGWU and UCATT are the largest, were built to secure a living wage, to improve working hours and conditions, sick pay, job security. They are not doing this but must be made to do so. Two motions from the Building Group of the TGWU have been forwarded to the Biennial Delegate Conference. The first reads: "The Conference demands a return to free collective bargaining with no strings attached," and the second: "An immediate political and industrial campaign to be launched for implementation of the policy of this union - i.e. decasualisation of the building industry."

Both represent a guideline for action within the industry, the first step in building a Britain in which construction workers will be able to build for people not profit.

No Loyalty to Employers

MUCH as workers are urged to be loyal towards their employer, especially when dressed up in fine rhetoric as being in the "national interest", we are reminded by the closure of a small clothing firm, Grafton Manquest, in Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, that this loyalty as far as the employer is concerned is just another marketable commodity.

A hundred and thirty workers, ninety of them women, were given a mere half day's notice of the closure of the two factories on the 5th January, after the Official Receiver had been called in the previous day, with only a promise of receiving pay until the end of that day, disregarding outstanding holiday and redundancy pay. This was despite the fact that the workers had foregone a pay rise agreed last September nationally between the employers and the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers - an increase which the national officer of the union said "was binding on all firms". In the words of one woman shop steward: "We did not take action over the pay issue to keep the firm going, now we don't even get notice until the end of the week."

Capitalist Pensions Offer No Security

THE NEW PENSIONS Act (1975) represents an intensifying attack on the aged, watching today's destruction by capitalism of industry and of us who work in it. Its machinery does more than perpetuate the misery of the aged. It is a corporate web of legislation which, while arriving at shortening life after employment, ensnares every worker in employment. The Act is a means of political enslavement, one of the many poisons of the Jubilee year.

The kernel of capitalist pensions is exploitation, to pay out less in benefit than what has been contributed. As the CBI writes: "a failure in the intentions of the Act, and a cutting back of occupational schemes, will substantially reduce a source of finance for industrial investment."

Pension funds, whether state or private, are assured of capital from 20 to 40 times the value of the benefit. According to an EEC report Britain is "the most advanced in the EEC" in transferring wealth from workers to capitalists by means of pension contributions. So much so that in 1965 they say that pension funds in Britain accounted for 5 per cent of fixed investment and 22

per cent of the GNP, well ahead of the EEC. The aim of this report was to import into Europe British capital's expertise.

There are 11 million workers covered by pension schemes with private employers, most of these paid on top of the state pension. This is a tribute to the organisation of workers in particular sectors. Many of these schemes offer a benefit roughly equivalent to 1/60th of final salary, per year of service. The state benefit is equivalent only to 1/80th of salary averaged over 20 years - the 'best' 20 years of a worker's life. With inflation the best 20 are the worst and in a continually devalued currency the result will be a pittance.

The Act divides the pension into two halves: a flat rate basic and an earnings related supplement. This supplement is supposedly equivalent to 25 per cent of earnings, but only workers who have completed twenty years of service after the Act comes into force - in 1998! - will be entitled to it in full.

One vaunted feature of the Act is indexation - itself an implicit promise that inflation will continue. And as real wages decline,

so the higher paid tend to the level of the lower. The Act tends a hand in this decline: higher earners contribute more in tax but receive proportionally less pension (on £40 a week 47 per cent of "earnings", on £80 a week 36 per cent - the figures are only the government's imaginary projections, but show what they want to happen).

The 20 years' averaging means of course that records will have to be kept of wages received over those 20 years in any number of workplaces, so the government will have at its fingertips our full employment records. Clearly another pretext for all-embracing corporate regulations a jungle in which trade unions will be asked to participate.

Employers who "contract out" and continue to provide private schemes will pay reduced contributions to the state fund. If, as the CBI hopes, the private schemes flourish, state pensions will be deprived of income and the shortfall can only be met by increasing levies on wages. The Government Actuary estimates that these levies will rise continually for the next 30 years.

The end result therefore will be, not a secure future after a lifetime of work, but the prospect of more and more money being drained from our pockets while we work, meantime continuing wage restraint and inflation ensure us reduced benefits

Save Hull Docks Fight

HULL DOCKERS have been an area of constant activity in the past, and in the last few months a positive trend has emerged. Through organisation the dockers achieved a situation in the 1960s where men could not be fired or hired along with fluctuations in workload. However, over the last few years there has been a marked drop in trade passing through Hull, and an increase in mechanisation. The management have taken advantage of this trend, and of the men's mood of basic compliance, to cut the workforce by half, via a voluntary redundancy scheme.

In opposition to this decline in the workforce and the decline of Hull docks which it represents, there have been many demarcation disputes. These have taken two forms; a positive one, to maintain a clear distinction between trades, so as to keep skills intact, and the requisite number of men on the job, but also sometimes a pirating of other workers' jobs, with a bastardising of skills, creating a division within our class.

This was the strategy of the Dock Work Labour Bill. The proposed 5 mile "dockers' corridor" was reduced to half a mile by Parliament. The dockers regard this as irrelevant because, regardless of distances, they must still deal with "cowboy operators". When management attempted to disband a four-man standby team

the men went on strike. This was followed by a decision to wage a series of one-day strikes against management attacks on manning levels.

A number of recent developments demonstrate the growing unity of the docks, the realisation that the fight against cutback in the dock labour force is a fight to save the docks and Hull's trade and livelihood. The dockers' dispute with the riggers, which had been a cancer within the docks for some time, has been solved by the workers themselves, who have rejected the divisions fostered by the manning agreement made by their respective bosses early last year. The fight for survival is forging unity among all who work on the docks.

On the pay question matters are unfortunately different, though here too, there are small signs of positive development. The dockers accepted a 'pay code' rise but stated that they thought they ought to have got more. This shows the limitations of the dockers' development so far, a limitation our class is placing on itself by allowing collaboration and holding back from outright struggle against the attack on our right to live. The dockers' sentiment will only have meaning if it is acted on at the TGWU Conference by a rejection of any further social contract and class collaboration.



North Korea, unlike the US-dominated South with its repressive Park regime, is building socialism. The picture shows women workers in a factory producing synthetic yarn which has enormously increased its output. Where the working people set their own production targets and produce to meet people's needs, not for profit, a high level of economic growth is maintained without unemployment or inflation.

Civil Service — A Glimmer of Light

AS THE Government puts more cuts into effect, it draws fresh sections of workers into conflict, especially its own employees. Every slight resistance is painted in the colours of a national crisis, yet the unions are denying any attempt to confront the Government.

Although it is virtually the only "growth area" of the economy, the Government is trying to cut the level of staffing in the Job centres and benefit offices. In response to this, the CPSA called a ban on statistical returns, thus hitting employer and not the unemployed. This brought open threats of suspension without pay from the Government, and Murray had to leave his Xmas pudding to deliver the message. In the face

of this the union has decided to stop its action for the moment, while not dropping their demand that the public services be properly staffed.

No Demoralisation

They withdrew without defeat or demoralisation. Now it is the task of the rest of the Civil Service to take up this lead and that given recently by the DHSS staff banning overtime, and fight against cuts wherever they are.

As part of a long-term scheme, the Government is embarked on moving 31,000 Civil Service jobs out of London between 1975 and 1985. Even though some areas

will get more jobs, there will be an overall loss of jobs for the class, for this is the aim of the exercise. Let anyone still think that the cuts are economic rather than political, let him look at the Government's own figures, which show the net cost of dispersal rising to £101 million in 1982/3 and not breaking even until 1986/7.

The Civil Service unions have moved to a position of active questioning and fighting. In two isolated cases the moves have been opposed (one successfully and one still in dispute).

Civil Servants have argued against public service cuts because they know that not one penny would be diverted to manufacturing industry. Similarly they ought to carry their doubts over dispersal into action, for it is just another part of the attack on our class.

Education - The Great Debate

A SHORT while ago James Callaghan began a "great debate" on education. This he did during a much-heralded speech in Oxford. Since that time a number of conferences and seminars have been held, radio and television programmes broadcast and numerous articles written as part of this "debate"

Callaghan and the rest of his miserable train have no real interest in the educational welfare of Britain. All that is intended is a massive diversion from his attempts to strangle the fruits of decades of struggle and sacrifice.

While some discuss the desirability or otherwise of children learning their tables, thousands of children are being deprived of a decent education, taught in large classes in decrepit buildings. Many younger children are being totally denied any education. Nursery education has been completely cut out of the development programmes of many local authorities. In

numerous areas children now have to wait until the September following their fifth birthday before they are admitted to school. While this is taking place thousands of teachers are unemployed.

Meanwhile the proper debating style is being shown by teachers throughout the country. We must salute those such as the Stockport teachers who are refusing to teach classes which are larger than the limits set by their unions. All but one of 21 secondary schools and 95 primary schools in the area are involved. In other parts of the country teachers are applying pressure on their employers to take on more staff.

Decaying capitalism does not tolerate a healthy, well-educated workforce. It sends its trained doctors to the Middle East, its nurses and teachers swell the dole queues, the skills of thousands. Debate will not alter this: revolutionary struggle will.

Avon Firemen

Put Authority on the Run

CAN you imagine that an industrial complex which houses ICI chemicals, large gas and petroleum storage tanks, and is an area of high flood risk, should be without a fire service? Yet this is exactly what Severnside Industrial Complex was faced with a month ago: a cut which would save £16,800 in running costs, £30,000 in vital repairs and place thousands of lives in danger!

This attack by the Local Authority invoked immense feeling among the local residents who organised petitions in an attempt to stop the closure - but the real fight was to come from the fire-

men themselves, deciding upon industrial action. Since the end of September the whole of Avon fire service were answering emergency calls only.

The result of their action was to force the Local Authority to reverse their previous decision to close Piling fire station and turn their attack to other sections of the service in the area.

Since then the firemen have stepped up their fight by deciding to implement a work-to-rule over conditions.

For us, the working class, our answer must be clear, we must fight each and every single cut, when and where it arises. We must make them run from our place of work and deny them refuge wherever they seek it!

All Done in the Name of the Working Class

A REPORT by an industrial worker on where certain trade union 'leaders' are leading us - if we let them.

Jack Jones, still sporting a cloth cap on his return from a holiday at workers' expense with other trade union leaders in Spain, where he talked about the government-controlled, official unions being repressive and undemocratic, proceeded to tell us we must work like beavers in 1977.

How repressive and undemocratic have these 'leaders' become in their dirty deals like the social contract, which destroys workers' freedom to bargain collectively in a capitalist society? Or what are we to think of a TUC which sets itself up as the arbiter of how the country is to be run, and is thought by some actually to be running the country, when unemployment is at its highest since the great depression?

Trade union members may ask "why do we have a ticket?" when nothing is being done for us and Jones and company are getting set for yet another pay

deal when the existing pay policy runs out in August.

They are not even deterred by the sinister representations of the CBI to the Government that there must be no wage increase at all in the next round. With the high level of unemployment, a concerted effort is being made by employers, their confidence somewhat restored by what a Labour Government has already done for them, to attack existing wage and conditions agreements, reduce manning arrangements and cut piece work prices.

In the dispute between The Times and the print unions over an article by the former editor of The Observer accusing print workers of censorship and industrial sabotage, a Tory MP summed up what is meant by a free press by saying that it implies the freedom of those who own the papers to print inaccuracies - others can then reply to them. Freedom of the press in this country means freedom for capitalism - to make money out of pornography, to use the vilest

motivated advertising to induce the working class to part with its money.

Jones, Jenkins and others have also been sitting on the Bullock Committee on worker participation to foist on the working class a new fantastic hybrid, the worker-director, who is supposed to combine the characteristics of manager and bench hand. The employer members of the Committee have obligingly opposed the proposals to try to make them look more acceptable to us.

But what about us workers? Are we not guilty? How is it that from a position of strength we have allowed this degeneration into ineffectiveness?

To those trade union members who say "what do we need a card for?" the answer can only be "hang on to it" because if we are to have our freedom it can only be done by returning to the attack on capitalism - and that means attacking our class enemy and any of our own 'leaders' who join forces with him. While they are off in huddles with Government officials and employers, let's quietly use the opportunity to take our trade unions back for our own working class needs!

Goodbye to the Godmother

PASS round the begging bowl - the Labour Party is once again running out of cash. From political bankruptcy it slides now towards financial bankruptcy.

As the Party's treasurer, Mr. Norman Atkinson, points out, the "trade union magic", which has previously saved the Party, is running out.

Unions are reluctant to help a party which is so obviously dedicated to principles and policies they do not share. The treasurer's absurd answer is to look elsewhere for money - to aim for a "mass membership" - and this at a time when individual membership of the Labour Party is rapidly falling away.

He lavishes praise on the Transport Union - the Party's landlord - for playing "fairly godmother" over the year, but admits that the end of their special relationship is in sight. Unlike most pantomimes we can be sure that in this one the two sides will not live happily ever after.

New Pamphlet: Higher Education The Struggle for the Future

"TODAY'S economic and social distress is not an uncomfortable prelude to a period of prosperity and well being, but a manifestation of the absolute decline of capitalism in Britain - a decline brought about by the strength of our own working class. The student movement, a relatively new yet important sector, has played its part, rapidly developing from its earnest but politically immature actions of a decade ago to building a developed trade union, fighting for its independence from the state, for improved grants and conditions of work.

But today capitalism has shifted our struggle's focus from conditions within education to its continued existence. To meet the challenge, all workers must be crystal clear about the place of higher education and of stu-

dents within modern society and their relationship to the rest of industry." (from the Introduction)

Commotion in the Pacific Ocean

OUR world will never be big enough to satisfy imperialist greed. Approximately 1000 miles off the coast of Japan severe underwater volcanic action is about to result in the appearance of an entirely new island. Although nothing is yet visible above the surface of the ocean, the Japanese and Americans are already in constant competition to be the first to spot any part of this island which peeps sufficiently above the waves for them to plant their flag. This area is a very rich fishing ground and anyone who can lay claim to the land here would 'of course' qualify for imposing extensive fishing limitations.

Too bad this doesn't come ready-made with a few islanders on it, deporting them would make it even more fun for the victor.

YOUR LETTERS WELCOME

Write to: The Editor
The Worker
Bellman Bookshop
155 Fortess Road
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HIGHER EDUCATION

The struggle for the future

10p

South - West Building Slumps

The new year soon reminded Devon's construction workers that capitalism had made no resolutions except to continue their attack on Britain's people. January was only six days old when another building firm closed down, sacking 70 men in Exeter.

With one in eight men depending on construction for a job in the South-west, the industry is an important one. However, the region is suffering even by standards of national decline with the workforce of 33,000 in 1973 now slashed to 22,500. Another 5000 are fully expected to be lost by the end of the winter. In Devon alone there are now well over 4000 unemployed building workers - a rate of 20 per cent.

When the Minister concerned with construction was challenged with these facts his response was to promise that in future the unemployment figures for builders in the South-west would be published separately from the rest of the country. To rub it in? A Minister of Destruction if ever there was one!

At the same time building is being brought almost to a halt. Exeter Council has cut its already pathetic housing programme from 250 to 150 units this year despite having over 2000 on their housing waiting list. 70 per cent of primary schools in the region are said to be substandard.

So what of the future? Are we just waiting for the Great Revival? Hardly. South-west architects have on average less than 6 months work in hand and have cut their numbers by 48 per cent in two years. Many apprentices and long-serving craftsmen have left the industry and firms are turning away young apprentices. The Exeter Brickwork Training Centre has closed. The first-year brickworking courses at South Devon College have been scrapped.

Is this the stuff revivals are made of? Capitalism is not only clearing the ground, but sterilising it. We must oppose their destruction with socialist construction.



In Memory of Chou En-lai

To Chairman Hua Kuo-Feng and the Central Committee Communist Party of China

On the first anniversary of the death of Comrade Chou En-lai the Central Committee of CPB(M-L) remembers with sorrow the void left in the world by the departure of this true Marxist-Leninist and staunch friend of the world's proletariat.

Workers in Britain like millions of peasants and workers throughout the five continents found Comrade Chou's profound Marxist understanding and comradely concern of great assistance to them in their struggle. Our Party like many other fraternal organisations looked to him and found unwavering friendship and encouragement.

May we like the people of China learn from Comrade Chou En-lai's brilliant and heroic life, from his modesty and selflessness and above all from his proletarian internationalism.

Reg Birch for Central Committee
January 8 1977

Public Meetings

LONDON

Friday, 28th January Building Socialism in Korea.
Friday, 4th February Higher Education - the struggle for the future.
All meetings are held at 7.30 pm in the Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortess Road, London, N.W.5. (Tufnell Park Tube)

GLASGOW

Saturday, 5th February Report back meeting with slides by members of a CPB(ML) delegation to Albania in 1976.
Partick Burgh Hall, Room 1, 9 Burgh Hall Street, off Dumbarton Road (Merland Street underground).

SOUTH EAST LONDON

Monday, 24th January From Workshop to Graveyard shall we permit it? 7.30 pm The Anglo-Saxen Hall, Berkely Road, Gravesend.
Monday, 31st January For the Youth of Britain what future? 7.30pm The Anglo-Saxen Hall, Berkeley Road, Gravesend
Tuesday, 1st February Run-down in Medway shall we permit it? The Hare and Hound, High St., Rochester 8 pm.

LEEDS

Friday, 28th January The State and Revolution in Britain.
Friday, 4th February The Role of the Communist Party in a Revolutionary Situation.
All meetings begin at 7.30 pm at Northern Star Bookshop, 18a Leighton St., off Great George St., Leeds 1.

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