

THE WORKER



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COUNTER-REVOLUTION THRIVES IF WORKERS KEEP SOCIAL CONTRACT

COUNTER-REVOLUTION directed by the Labour Government is cutting a swathe through British society.

Under the seal of the social contract unemployment reached a new post-war peak in January with a seasonally-adjusted official figure of 1,300,000, some 5.6 per cent of British workers. The real figure is, of course, twice as high.

During the last year the unemployment figure has steadily increased at the rate of 13,000 per month. A Prime Minister who makes no apologies says, "I do not think it possible that this figure will be reduced for some time as long as we are trying to squeeze inflation out of the economy". He referred to the ineffectiveness of such 'palliatives' as the job creation scheme.

Despite the Government's supposed labours, a dramatic increase in inflation has been forecast in January by the Prices Commission. Price rises already in the 'pipeline' are higher than at any time since the severe attack during the winter of '74-'75. Pointing to such factors as last year's fall in the pound, the chairman of the Commission said, "We have to go through a very hard winter on prices".

Price increases notified in advance by manufacturers are running at £1,000 million per month, twice the rate of 1976. As the Commission made clear, higher prices mean higher profits. "one is the mirror image of the other." Under the slogan, "Help raise funds for investment", nearly 500 firms are eagerly taking advantage of new price code provisions.

Food prices are expected to rise because of an EEC farm price review, a further cut in consumer subsidies, and a devaluation of the Green Pound exchange rate. These increases will materialise in spring, a "traditional" time for rent and rate increases and indirect taxes

being imposed. Nationalised industry price rises of 10 per cent on gas, 10-12 per cent on coal, and 6-7 per cent on electricity are also expected before the summer.

The annual rate of increase in the cost of living is expected to be around 20 per cent by April or May.

A Government White Paper published in January announced public spending cuts of £2,000 million for '77-'78. Local authorities will be squeezed and 20,000-30,000 of their jobs are to be lost this year. No account has yet been taken of a further £500 million of 'fiscal adjustment' to the economy which the Chancellor has promised the IMF in the Letter of Intent.

The Government still clings to

the ludicrous argument that the object of the cuts is to get more resources into industrial investment. Others recall that such cuts are accompanied by flourishes in the property market, principally overseas.

The White Paper, giving details of the Government's spending plans over the next two financial years says that the agriculture programme is to be cut in half to £550m, road and transport to be cut by more than £300m, education by £200m and housing by £300m.

Meanwhile wages are being so restrained that newspapers, speaking of British workers, can announce "Enter the coolie class" The strumpets of the TUC make great play of their discontent but nonetheless secretly meet with the Tories. For them the contract is with capitalism, be it administered by a Labour or a Tory Government. There is no loyalty to their present bedfellow.

In January, Jack Jones explained that without the social contract a right wing coup could have been necessary two years ago: "We could have easily faced a coup. The fear of hyper-inflation was strong. There was talk of private armies being assembled; there was talk of the end of democracy."

The social contract has proven to be a more "dignified" method of achieving a similar result. The violence of unemployment, hunger and a stolen hospital bed has been prosecuted all with the formal blessing of the Trade Union movement.

The folly and timidity of the working-class acceptance of the social contract is now taking its grim effect. The chickens of September 1975 are coming home to roost.

The working class is not yet

incapacitated. But a new generation of illiterate, unskilled and enfeebled will eventually develop, making revolutionary progress for Britain much more difficult. Today is the time to act. Let the working class throw out the social contract and assert itself. The alternative is a miserable future.

Stark look of the NHS

THE EVIDENCE currently being presented to the Royal Commission on the NHS confirms that the Health Service is heading for total disaster.

The British Medical Association in its evidence speaks of "a harsh form of rationing", the chief factors being general financial stringency, increasing work load, inadequate supporting staff and under-capitalisation, particularly of buildings. Present conditions, the BMA says, have "profoundly depressed the morale of all branches of the medical profession." "The Health Service is failing to provide the quality and quantity of service which the patients have been led to expect and have a right to expect." Of the truth of this, we are all too aware.

As a result of undermanning in the NHS, the Pharmaceutical Society talks of the 'developing practice' of unqualified staff, such as receptionists, having to write out prescriptions, 49 per cent of which do not carry adequate details, and many containing potentially dangerous errors. Most of these prescriptions are for elderly patients, especially women, and for pain-relievers and psychotropic drugs. Capitalism cares nothing (continued on page 4)

Cool look at Bullock

THE GREAT debate about the Bullock proposals on industrial democracy snowballs on. Radio, television and the press shriek of 'participation', 'democracy' and 'joint responsibility'. And as the employers gird up their loins for battle, the proposals are given a comfortable semblance of revolutionary innovation - in terms, of course, of traditional capitalist decision-making.

But it would pay any self-respecting worker to stand well back and take a long, cool look at these most illuminating words: participation, democracy and joint responsibility.

Participation in what? Joint responsibility for what? Democracy for what kind of decision?

The Bullock Report is most explicit. The aim, in a nutshell, is to put "the relationship between Capital and Labour on a new basis which will involve not just management but the whole workforce in sharing responsibilities for the success and/or profitability of the enterprise."

The logic of capitalism is the accumulation of profit - and by

definition, the maximum span attainable between return to the worker and return to the capitalist. Can the introduction of any number of workers to the boards of companies, with whatever voting rights, alter that fundamental law of survival for the capitalist?

What the Bullock proposals for worker directors are really about is not the alteration of the laws of capitalism in the workers' favour - this is ruled out by the very nature of capitalism. The reality is betrayed by hints that the Government is considering offering the Bullock proposals as a trade-off for the next round of pay policy. We must be clear that the Bullock proposals go hand in hand with the pay policy as central pillars of the social contract - designed as a further enticement towards corporatism, to suck the unions into participation in the machinery of capitalism with the sole objective of defusing, by claims of 'joint responsibility', workers' opposition to capitalist industrial policies - the move- (continued on page 4)

Triumph or disaster at Meriden Co-op

EVEN a cursory view of the facts surrounding the Meriden Co-op crisis shows that the government is determined to extinguish the dying embers of this, the last remaining part of a once great British motor cycle industry. Financial aid, amounting in fact to only 0.625 per cent of that amount of tax payers' money given away to Chrysler Inc., has been refused as aid to the Co-op.

Police forces, previously big customers for the 650 cc Triumph vertical twin, are now buying German BMW machines at £2,200 over twice the price of the Triumph machines. The government firmly believes the motor cycle industry to be dead, yet more motor cycles are now being registered per month than ever before - 90 per cent, of course, imported from Japan!

The latest 'angels of death' have appeared in the guise of Sir Arnold Weinstock and Sir Harold Lever! both of whose activities in the past have been responsible for wholesale job destruction - in manufacturing industry in particular.

Had it not been for the stand taken by Meriden, this famous factory would have gone the same way as did all the other 30-odd names that made up the British industry at the beginning of the post-war era. Yet, forming a co-operative out of a run-down and under-capitalised concern,

based on the manufacture of a dated design, has not enabled the workers involved to escape the wind of destruction which has been sweeping through this part of the engineering industry. In fact, the Meriden men have had to consider increasing amounts of sub-contract work involving the assembly of Italian and Austrian machines, and now, ironically, a 'jogging machine' for overweight business men!

Indeed, despite the 'Co-op' label, which has been attached to this venture, Meriden symbolises the complete desertion of industry and invention by British capitalism. The Triumph factory is the last remaining reservoir of skill in this area. Yet, it could, with adequate investment, produce new and advanced machines, particularly in the mass utility ranges that are now, with soaring petrol prices, so much in demand as a means of getting to work - a market originally whose abandonment by so many manufacturers led to the current demise.

Like other branches of industry that have been run down, Meriden shows that only those who work in it have any loyalty to the future of manufacturing. However, what Meriden also shows is that such a future can never be secured within a declining capitalism. The task must be to challenge and not adapt.

THE LEYLANDS 'peace plan', worked out between the company and a select group of stewards, is being increasingly submerged under the rising tide of rejection from the workers. The plan would restrict plant bargaining and impose severe penalties on workers taking part in so-called 'unofficial' stoppages, while holding out the carrot of lay-off pay to those who would abdicate their rights to struggle and dignity.

In the face of mounting opposition from Leyland plants all over the country, the big guns are being called in: the TUC, Jones and Scanlon. Backroom moves are in progress to push the plan through despite all objections. The original idea was to put the plan to a ballot of all Leyland workers to rubber stamp the decision. But workers are rubber stamps for no-one, least of all a Leyland management and unauthorised 'negotiators'.

Halewood job threat

THE HALEWOOD plant has been hit by a dispute over the introduction of the new Fiesta. Ford want to close down the Escort lines there to 'make way for the Fiesta', and are believed by some to be deliberately running

Little "peace" on the industrial front

down the Escort to smooth the way for its extinction - and along with this the extinction of a number of jobs too.

Grunwick's next next step?

THE GRUNWICK strike for union recognition now entering its 24th week is as strong and united as at the beginning. In spite of delays by ACAS who are supposed to enquire among the workers about their desire to join a union, and in spite of the obstructions and harassment by the employers, pickets are out early every morning, public meetings are held, and marches are organised.

However the question facing the strikers is: 'What is the next step?' Parliament, the law, ACAS will not bring the employer to heel. Only the strength of the Grunwick workers and the trade union movement will achieve victory. This must not become another 'Fine Tubes'. If the striking workers cannot get the remaining workforce out to achieve a total shutdown of the

firm, it becomes more imperative that other trade unions give the strikers full and active support through industrial action. The trade union movement cannot afford to lose on such a basic issue as union recognition.

Outside at Massey

THE REPOSSESSION order granted to Massey-Ferguson came as no surprise. The employers have always considered that they have the inalienable right only to be picketed ineffectually, and the bourgeois courts have always upheld this right in law. The workers are now outside the gates but still on strike. The dispute is over the company's refusal to pay some of them on account of so-called 'inadequate effort'. The fact that resort to the courts was taken by a Canadian-owned company should mislead no one to the conclusion that such practices are 'foreign' to industrial relations in Britain. No action is foreign to our employers if it helps them in their fight against us.

Worker Interview.. London building strike

Q. Can you tell me the background of this dispute and why you are on strike?

A. We are on strike for the right to negotiate a bonus scheme through our trade union, T&GWU. Up until now our employers operated a bonus scheme on a take-it-or-leave-it basis, even though the National Agreement covering the building industry allows for all bonus schemes to be arrived at through negotiations.

Q. I understand that there are only a small number of men involved in this dispute. Bearing this in mind, do you think that you were in a strong enough position to take strike action?

A. In our section of the industry we did not feel that this would be a hindrance, as the nature of our work means that by us striking, trades following us would be held up. We also took into consideration union strength on other contracts where our firm is carrying out work and asked for support from the members, who then 'blackied' our firm.

Q. What has been the reaction of your employers?

A. Although the firm has many of its operatives in the union, its involvement with trade unions has been very limited. I think its fair to say that the majority of lads on our firm were union members purely as a means to get on organised jobs, and in some cases the firm paid their dues.

The firm's first reaction was to sack us. At this point we refused to leave the job and consequently the firm took out High Court writs against us in an attempt to have us removed from the job, and to get an injunction to stop us picketing and to remove the 'blacking' on other jobs. In an attempt to intimidate us the writ also asked for damages and costs and a confirmation from the court that we were dismissed.

The firm also brought non-union labour on to the job.

Q. What effect did these actions have on the strike?

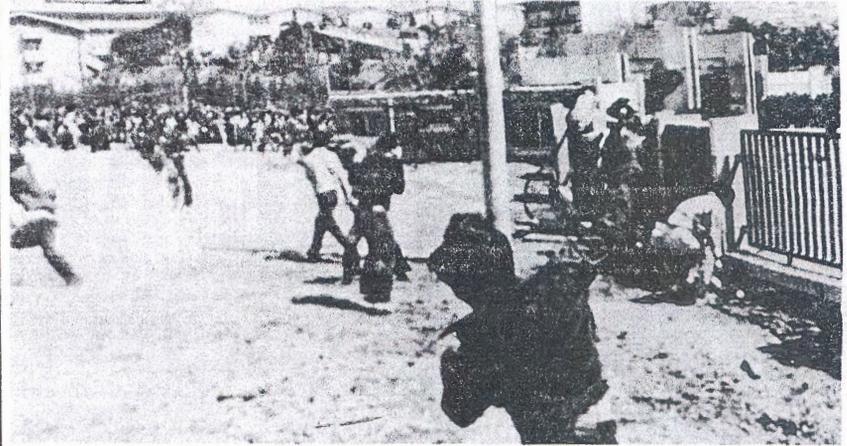
A. We had planned not to stay on the job anyway and had decided to picket outside. As was previously stated we were small in number but members of our union branch and building workers from sites in the area joined us in picketing. As a result the non-union labour, who, by the way, were also sympathetic towards us, refused to cross the picket line as did GPO engineers and electricians on the job. It was at this point that the firm asked for negotiations, which we agreed to on the understanding that the writs be withdrawn, which they were.

Q. What is the position now?

A. We have agreed to a return to work for an hourly bonus rate not far short of the original figure we asked for, and a guaranteed period of employment with no victimisation. We are also receiving basic pay for the period that we were on strike.

Q. Do you consider this a successful outcome then?

A. At face value it appears a good settlement, but we are very aware that given the casual nature of employment in the building industry, this is only a temporary success. We realise that unless we build the strength of the union organisation on our firm and in our branch particularly, as this covers only operatives in our trade, this settlement will be short lived. It is hard to prove victimisation in an industry where men are being laid off right, left and centre.



South Korean students struggle for democratic rights.

Engineers in loss of skill

A RECENT report from NEDC points out something we have been saying all along. There is now such a shortage of skilled engineers that even if the Government were serious about expanding industry there would be no one to man it. Only capitalism could sack workers in their millions, destroy skills with a 'social contract' that whittles away differentials and then weep tears of frustration because it has no skilled engineers to play with any more.

As if to drive this point home, the skill, ingenuity and inventiveness of the British working class, unvalued and discarded by employers, was on display at the 46th Model Engineering Exhibition at Wembley.

In spite of capitalism's attack on our class and its skills, workers with limited means at home and in tiny workshops produced for this exhibition a range of beautifully turned out models from steam engines to the most sophisticated electronics. It raised the question: Are we going to let them destroy these skills we have acquired over hundreds of years?

Trade unions' court defeat

IN THEIR eagerness to 'protect' the citizen from the almighty executive, the Appeal Judges left one question unanswered: Who is going to protect the citizen from their Lordships?

The occasion of the court hearing was used as a public platform to wage an attack on trade union workers in general. Throughout, trade unions were portrayed as undemocratic, law breaking organisations.

The question for the labour movement to answer is why was such an attack on trade unions allowed to take place, resulting in a virtual ban of industrial action by all Post Office workers? Why was it that in November 1976 when Post Office workers in sympathy with the Grunwick strikers blacked all mail to and from a film processing firm the UPW decided to retreat unconditionally as soon as the question of an injunction was raised?

Why on this occasion would the Post Office Union answer the dubious call for a South African boycott to begin with, if it was going to retreat again ignominiously at the mention of an injunction?

No division for Korea

THE WORKERS' Party of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, together with all other parties in the Front for the Reunification of the Fatherland have been discussing the question of preventing a permanent split of the nation, removing the danger of war and accelerating the independence and peaceful re-unification of the country.

In a letter to the south it was pointed out that all Korean people hope an end will be put to the division of the country and that the principles of peaceful re-unification decided upon in last year's north-south statement will be adhered to - principles which are being trampled underfoot by the occupying US invaders of the country.

The Party paper, Rodong Simun, pledges support to the people in the south in their struggle against the fascist dictatorship.

At a meeting at the Bellman Bookshop on Friday, January 28th, the heroic services of the Korean people in defending the socialist world against US imperialist aggression were remembered and the building of socialism in the People's Republic of Korea was contrasted with the colonial misery of the people in the south.

Workers must give a resounding 'No to Devolution'

THE LABOUR Government is pressing on with its massive devolution legislation; it will try to rally support for its proposals for setting up assemblies in Edinburgh and Cardiff with the announcement of the details of the promised referenda in Scotland and Wales. Our approach must be "No to Devolution".

In advanced capitalist countries progressive bourgeois national movements came to an end long ago. With the era of bourgeois democracy the highest point of 'democracy' is reached under the capitalist system. The implementation of a minimum democratic programme, one aspect of which was the call for the self-determination of all nations, is no longer on the order of the day. In fact, the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for the overthrow of capitalist governments is on the order of the day.

The 'freedoms' of bourgeois democracy, granted not by benevolence of the bourgeoisie but wrung out of them by the working class, are the maximum attainable and further concessions are not compatible with the continuation of capitalism itself. Reformism and liberalism are now a dead end. On the contrary, capitalism is not to be dictated to by ideals of liberty, but adjusts freedoms and liberties to its own vantage.

Regional inequality is inherent within capitalism, inequalities being encouraged and created by capitalism, also for its own advantage. The solution to these inequalities and the creation of real freedom for the working class is only to be found in the realm of the proletarian solution to British capitalism as a whole - the establishment of socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Here are some of the main points on the devolution issue which workers will want to bear in mind:

1. The party which is leading the national movement at the moment, the SNP, is of a social chauvinist, reformist nature and cannot remotely be expected to have the interests of workers close to its heart.

2. The national movement is enshrouded in a fog of petty nationalist sentimentality of a bourgeois nature which serves to distract the mind of the proletariat from what would be its urgent revolutionary duties.

3. The movement attempts to create splits on a national basis among workers and thus disrupt the unity of the British proletariat which has been forged over many decades on the anvil of capitalist exploitation.

4. British proletarian organisations such as trade unions are threatened with being torn

asunder on 'national' grounds, endangering the unity that is their strength.

5. The movement has discovered a 'national' culture supposedly common to Scots worker and exploiter alike: the culture of the Scottish workers is today perverted and used by 'nationalist' sentiment. This is part of the general attack of capitalism in decay. We must save culture too from perversion and destruction.

6. The highly centralised state of assimilated nations is to be cast asunder if the 'nationalists'

have their say, denying us the soundest base on which to build socialism.

7. Since the 'national' movement has no intention of advancing to socialism and intends to remain at the service of capitalism, it cannot possibly remedy any of those things which are an integral part of capitalism like regional inequalities.

8. The 'national' movement attempts to create a false community of interest between the Scots bourgeoisie and the Scots proletariat in an era of total class war when there can be no common interest. It thus follows a policy of 'class peace' so that the working class can be trodden upon even more intensively.

9. The 'nationalists' would have to rule the waves of the capitalist crisis and enforce its attack, thus pointing the way to workers for the real solution. But - as in the case of the Common Market with all the consequences of higher prices and greater unemployment, to say nothing of the weakening of the British nation which we foretold (being all too obvious now) - we cannot go on being wise after the event.

The proposal for the fragmentation of Britain can be seen as a continuation of the process carried out by British capitalism, hand in hand with international capitalism, of steadily destroying its very basis, but capitalism itself knows no national feeling and changes its flag at will.

So now the 'nationalist' movement lies bared in all its reptilian ugliness. It is a reactionary bourgeois movement to attempt to halt the decay of capitalism and try to delay its death at the hands of the working class. For capitalism feels the beginnings of a working class resistance to its attack and destruction. The philosophy of merely resisting and thus living with capitalism, that is, social democracy, the Labour Party, is being fast abandoned in Scotland only to be replaced by another illusion of the working class mind, 'nationalism', anger at a phoney enemy.

National and class struggle inseparable

NATIONHOOD is the essential genius of working people who in a particular place over a considerable period of time have developed their peculiar skills and arts and their own culture, including language, for the enrichment of life both materially and spiritually.

The bourgeoisie exploited this nationalism in the interests of capitalism, just as they enlisted working people to defeat the forces of feudalism and then bound them over into wage slavery. But profits have no nationality and the pursuit of profit has increasingly come to mean the erosion of the British nation. That inevitable development of capitalism, imperialism, suppresses nationalism abroad and perverts nationalism at home into jingoism and racism.

The attack on the organised working class based on British industry has meant an attack on that very industrial base; and the defence of British capitalism has become synonymous with the destruction of Britain itself.

The merger of Britain in a European Common Market is meant to eliminate nationhood, amalgamate cultures and traditions and do away with the individuality of the British people and of the other peoples of western Europe under the management of a reactionary cosmopolitan bour-

geoisie.

Now with devolution there is the attempt to divide Britain, like old Gaul, into three parts, in order, in the name of a phoney bourgeois 'nationalism', to create splits in a working class whose unity has been forged on the basis of a common national experience of exploitation by British capitalism reflected in common working class institutions which are thoroughly national in character.

The working class in Britain is thus the only defender of national integrity and independence. We are the only patriots. Against all attempts of the ruling capitalist class to destroy Britain in its efforts to destroy us as an organised force, we have to exert, in the interests of our own people and not profits, the co-operative energy, the skilled craftsmanship and the native ingenuity which have underlain all Britain's past achievements.

Our British patriotism is complementary to the struggles of workers everywhere for their own national independence. Proletarian internationalism is simply the outward face of working class nationalism which can only secure the nation's future by the revolutionary assumption of state power.

East, West capitalists integrate

IN RECENT months many Western bankers have become increasingly concerned about the growing amount of money which the 'Communist block' owes the capitalist West.

As recently as 1970 net Soviet debts to the West were estimated at \$1,700 million. But, by 1975, this had jumped to a conservative estimate of \$11,000 million. Private banking circles believe the real figure for net indebtedness by the Soviet Union is nearer \$18,000 million.

Some Western observers believe that the food riots and troubles in Eastern Europe are much more serious than appear in the news reports and that Western credits and loans are playing an increasingly important part in keeping the lid on the political pressure pot.

There we have it. In times of trouble capitalism comes to the aid of its own lot - at a price!

No firmer proof is needed that creditor West and debtor revisionist East all belong to the same capitalist world.

Britain's Geneva ploy fails

BRITAIN'S efforts at Geneva to change the direct oppression of Smith's white racist regime in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) into neo-colonialism under British supervision have failed.

However, the US's ambassador to the UN who is paying a visit to southern Africa has said that the US 'cannot afford to give up negotiations for a settlement of the Rhodesian question'. This reflects US concern over the extension of Russian influence in Africa through its spurious 'aid' to liberation movements in order to make client states of emerging countries.

The local white capitalist masters in Zimbabwe have easily survived an economic boycott most half-heartedly applied, at UN insistence, by other capitalist powers. With rich natural resources and a vast supply of cheap, practically slave labour still at their disposal, they will set up their own phoney show of some kind of black participation in government - rather like the



proposals for industrial democracy here in Britain. They think that will put them in a stronger position to do a deal with the US, gaining advantages in terms of dollar investment and military help in exchange for becoming part of a US-backed southern African anti-'communist' front. Hence the play Smith has made with the 'holy writ' of the Kissinger proposals.

None of these various capitalist interests has anything whatsoever in common with nor any interest whatsoever in assisting the liberation of the people of Zimbabwe and the establishment of genuine democracy there. The Zimbabwe liberation movement

has nothing whatever to hope for from any of these interested capitalist parties but it can use their differences and rivalries to win freedom in the only way it can be won - on the battlefield under the their own revolutionary leadership.

REG BIRCH, CPB(ML) chairman, reported on the VIIth Congress of the Party of Labour of Albania to which he was a delegate. He spoke about the role of the Party in Albania and its necessity as a vitalising agent in the building of socialism. In its courage, self-reliance and devotion to Marxism-Leninism, Albania has much to teach the world proletariat.

Bolsheviks took pride in nation

SPEAKING of the October Revolution on December 3, Reg Birch, Chairman of the CPB(ML) said:

"If we consider; supposing we began to seize power tomorrow. How can we do that? And all those other capitalist countries will descend on us. Such a dilemma of even worse dimensions faced the working class and the Bolshevik Party in Russia in 1917. We must not forget the great debt owed to the proletariat and peasants of Russia. Without their victory others would not have been able to do it, which is not to diminish what others have done but only to keep the chronology in mind. More than twenty countries waged war against a bankrupt Russia and their war of intervention failed. The decline of capitalism is a world crisis."

When Lenin spoke of working class nationalism on December 12, 1914, just three years before the October Revolution he said:

"Is a sense of national pride alien to us, Great-Russian class-conscious proletarians? Certainly not! We love our language and our country, and we are doing our very utmost to raise her toiling masses (i.e., nine-tenths of her population) to the level of a democratic and socialist consciousness. To us it is most painful to see and feel the outrages, the oppression and the humiliation our fair country suffers at the hands of the Tsar's butchers, the nobles and the capitalists. We take pride in the resistance to these outrages put up from our midst..."

"We have been called 'a nation of slaves' and we do not like to recall these words, yet they were spoken out of a genuine love for our country, a love distressed by the absence of a revolutionary spirit in the masses of the Great-Russian people. There was none of that spirit at the time. There is little of it now, but it already exists. We are full of national pride because the Great-Russian nation, too, has created a revolutionary class..."

"We are full of a sense of national pride, and for that very reason we particularly hate our slavish past (when the landed nobility led the peasants into war to stifle the freedom of Hungary, Poland, Persia and China), and our slavish present, when these self-same landed proprietors, aided by the capitalists, are leading us into a war in order to throttle Poland and the Ukraine, crush the democratic movement in Persia and China, and strengthen (the old gang) who are a disgrace to our Great-Russian national dignity... As Marx and Engels said 'No nation can be free if it oppresses other nations'."

"Full of a sense of national pride, we Great-Russian workers want, come what may, a free and independent, a democratic, republican and proud Great Russia, one that will base its relations with its neighbours on the human principle of equality. Just because we want that, we say: it is impossible in the twentieth century and in Europe, to 'defend the fatherland' otherwise than by using every revolutionary means to combat the monarchy, the landowners and the capitalist of one's own fatherland, the worst enemies of our country..."

Oxford teachers fight Labour and Tories

A MEETING in February of the Oxfordshire County Council will place the final seal of approval on plans to dismantle the county's education system. The decision will be to cut £3½ million from the education budget, a target which can only be achieved by removing nearly 500 teaching posts and cutting capitation grants to schools by 20. On September 21st, 1976 4,000 teachers came out on strike to show their strong feelings of abhorrence for such plans when they were first presented to the full Council for its approval. They only succeeded in postponing but not changing the decision. In the meantime teachers have made careful preparations to raise the level of their struggle. February 16th is the target date to start a campaign of sanctions in selected schools across the county. In those schools members of the NUT will refuse to cover for unfilled vacancies and for staff absences of more than one day known in advance. NAS/UWT members are already taking similar sanctions. Teachers are rapidly advancing their struggle. Every day it becomes clearer that they cannot

restrict their campaign to attacking a rogue local authority for disobeying the government guidelines, for at the same time as it issues a set of guidelines with the rate-support grant saying that there is no need to alter existing pupil/teacher ratios, the Government announces discriminatory treatment between different areas of the country. For Oxfordshire this means the greatest loss of rate-support grant relative to its total budget of any County in Britain, making it impossible for the local authority to conform to the cuts without exceeding the guidelines. Already plans are being discussed among Oxfordshire teachers to resist redundancies by strike action. The Council hopes to prevent redundancies and has prepared its way by making all new appointments in 1976 temporary.

The Council does not regard failure to renew their fixed-term contracts as redundancy. Teachers do not share their definition. To them it is a simple matter: redundancies occur when one day a teacher is doing his or her job and the next day he or she is not.

Stark look of the NHS

(continued from page 1) for those it cannot or does not want to exploit.

What perversion of will, what hideous twisting of mind and purpose would plot and plan to punish a people because some will sometimes be ill? Is illness a crime? No, not a crime, but still a condition for which we will yet be fined by the ruling class. And to be cured we will be made to pay twice over. They would have us humiliated, our

dignity and history impugned, by a means test to have a child's measles treated or an old man's broken hip mended. It is the perversion of will and the twisting of mind and purpose of a ruling class, the ruling class we tolerate, who would see us without health, without care for our sick, for our old, for our children.

Meanwhile, the McKinsey firm of (mis)management consultants, who played an important part in planning the disastrous 1974 reorganisation of the NHS, has suggested that we should be taxed more to put it right. Ennals, of course, raised his hands in mock horror at such an idea. "The phrase for this in the old days was 'your money or your life'. It is not the way we intend to run the health service," he said. So true - he does not intend to run it, he intends to run it down, not on the principle of 'your money or your life,' but on the principle of 'your money and your life.'

What a pickle Ennals has got himself into, for while he was making these very high-sounding statements, further cuts of £3m in 1977-78 and £28m in 1978-79 were announced. He has finally decided that he might as well show his true colours and has told us that, "It's simply no good calling for more and more money. There is no crock of gold...". Instead, there is his 12-point charter, including plans to send us home sooner after operations and cut down our food while we are in hospital.

There might not be a crock of gold for Ennals, but there is such a thing as a working class, angry and determined that no-one shall destroy what they have fought for and built, that no-one shall attempt to deprive us of health and care. For our class there is a crock of gold which is socialism and in that vessel is the cure for every disease with which capitalism attempts to destroy us.

A GENERAL meeting on January 18th last of the Students' Union of the Polytechnic of Central London voted unanimously to occupy the chief administrative offices and switchboard of one of the Poly buildings. The action followed a decision by the Academic Council of the PCL to reverse its previous policy and agree to implement a policy from the Inner London Education Authority to reduce the number of overseas students in the PCL to two-fifths present numbers by 1981.

The Students' Union together with the lecturers' union NATFHE and the local branch of NALGO has consistently opposed the ILEA's policy to reduce overseas student numbers. Last year the unions forced the governing and academic boards of four of the five ILEA Polytechnics to reject the quota policy. Now the ILEA have retaliated with a threat to the Polytechnics that unless they agree to the quota policy by February 28th next, the authority will cut teaching staff numbers next September. In the light of this threat the PCL's Academic Board decided to reverse its policy and recommend that the sovereign body, the Court of Governors, should do the same.

The unions view this threat from the ILEA as somewhat ironical and downright dishonest. The unions have opposed the quota policy on two main grounds: firstly, that the proposals are discriminatory and racist in essence and secondly, that they are only a smokescreen for major cutbacks. It is estimated,

Student occupation ends in victory

for example, that the quota would lead to at least 500 teaching staff redundancies and at least as many more non-teaching staff in London. Within the PCL itself, it would mean the closure of at least four major courses and the dole queue for at least 60 lecturers and as many more administrative and technical staff.

In promoting this quota policy the ILEA has been attempting to blame overseas students for the lack of educational provision in London for the more needy and underprivileged youth' in the same way as immigrants have been blamed for the employment and housing crises. The fact is that the major reduction in overseas students would result in less rather than more educational opportunity for home students, as courses and whole departments would be forced to close.

The Students' Union occupation disrupted the work of the chief officers of the Polytechnic including the Director. Within days, the students in occupation mounted pickets on the whole building and the local NATFHE branch voted overwhelmingly to support the student action and agreed to observe the picket lines. Members of NALGO also voted to support the students' actions and the house staff, members of NUPE, threatened to close down the whole building

if any attempts were made to break the picket lines.

By Friday the top officers of the Polytechnic were clamouring to meet representatives of the Students' Union to discuss matters. When the meeting was finally arranged, the Directorate agreed that the policy of the Academic Council "had now been overtaken by events and would not be proceeded with". Furthermore they agreed to liaise with the governing officers of the other ILEA polys to present a united front to the ILEA; they also agreed that the whole issue needs to be re-discussed within the various decision-making hierarchies of the PCL.

On the basis of these concessions, the students decided to call off the occupation, fully realising that the issue of the attacks on overseas students had not been finally settled, but also realising that they had shown the authorities the potential of mass student action, especially when co-ordinated with other unions.

Books, pamphlets,
available from
Bellman Bookshop
155 Fortress Rd
London NW5

Bullock

(continued from page 1) ment of investment abroad, destruction, redundancy and closure for Britain's factories, disuse for her skills.

What will be the position of the worker director where the logic of profit motive demands cut-back, redundancy and closure? The Bullock report is once more ready with an answer: "We are quite clear that an employee representative would be in breach of his duty if he voted in a particular way solely because of instructions from his trade union."

How would a worker on the board act when a strike was called in the firm? According to Bullock he "would abstain from voting on the board and the management's negotiating position should not be the subject of detailed and practical consideration by the Board."

There is no clearer expression of what Bullock-style industrial democracy is all about than the words of Len Murray himself: "It is high time Britain moved towards a form of industrial organisation which recognised capital and labour as equal partners...". An equal partnership in the destruction of Britain, in defence of profit is the aim of the Bullock report, and it is no accident that a prime exponent of the social contract, Jack Jones, is a central figure too in the preparation of the Bullock report.



PUBLIC MEETINGS

7.30 pm. Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, London NW5.

- February 4th Higher Education - the Struggle for the Future
- February 11th Could Britain Feed Herself?
- February 18th One Working Class - Unity not Devolution
- February 25th No meeting planned
- March 4th Women - One Half of the Working Class
- March 11th Karl Marx
- March 18th Vietnam and Cambodia on the Road to Socialism
- March 25th Health
- April 1st Meeting to be arranged by New Albania Society
- April 8th No meeting planned
- April 15th Science, Research and Technology in Jeopardy
- April 22nd Revolution - Britain's Duty

MEETINGS IN SOUTH EAST LONDON

- 14th February Against divide and rule - Unite to seize our heritage. 7.30 pm. The Anglo-Saxon Hall, Berkeley Road, Gravesend.
- 23rd February From workshop of the world to industrial grave-yard. Corinthian Restaurant, St. Fidelis Road, Erith. 155 FORTRESS ROAD, LONDON, NW5. **'THE WORKER'** £2.50 per year (including postage).

NAME

ADDRESS

LONDON student teachers held a week long vigil outside the Department of Education and Science in protest at the closure of 28 teacher training colleges.

At a time when 58,000 teachers are needed immediately to bring class sizes down to 30, this reduction of the number of training colleges from 162 to 70 would seem sheer lunacy if we did not know that the intention is the destruction of education. By using the diversion of the 'falling birth-rate' the Government attempts to disguise such vicious acts as the refusal to employ 20,000 teachers already trained.

The Education Secretary addressed the students holding their vigil under the slogan "Stop the cuts and save education". She said: "Education has not suffered disproportionately." She was quite right of course in drawing the students attention to the complete run down of all other social services as well - to say nothing of the five million unemployed!