

THE WORKER



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It is fashionable today to analyse every wage settlement according to whether it "breaks" or is within the social contract. It is the obsession of "lefties" to break the contract and the obsession of the right to abide by it. In essence both are the same. To accept the social contract as the acid test of success or failure is to accept the social contract as defining the area of class struggle.

Whether the social contract is "broken" or abided by is of minor concern to the Government. What frightens them is a working class which has declared itself ideologically opposed to the very basis on which a social contract is conceivable.

Wages Struggle

The first of a series of public meetings organised by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) on the current situation in Britain and the Party's role in linking the day-to-day struggles of the working class to a revolutionary war against capitalism was held on February 7th. The platform was shared by a teacher and a trade union assistant district organiser speaking on the subject of the struggle for wages.

It is no longer enough to struggle for wages. Engels has said that "the bourgeoisie rules temporarily, because we allow them to". It's time we put a stop to it!

Capitalism began in Britain because it was here, for various historical reasons, that workers were first forced onto the market to sell their labour power, which capitalists bought in order to profit from the appropriation of surplus value. That was also the beginning of the struggle for wages.

By such means as the reserve army of unemployed, now running in Britain at the rate of three quarters of a million, and rising, capitalists keep wages at subsistence level. Inflation itself is a means of defrauding workers.

Divide and Rule

Uneven distribution of incomes can be used by employers and their agents to divide workers and mislead them into demands for equality within accepted limits on wages. The value of teachers' pay was quoted as an example. It has declined through inflation. Acceptance of the Houghton pay award was a defeat, giving employers the opportunity of setting workers against each other, a tactic which the Trotskyists helped them to use. If 32 per cent was offered to headmasters, 32 per cent should have been demanded for everybody. From the very beginning we characterised the social contract as a cut in wages which workers were expected to volunteer for. It's the same old medicine with a different colour. We

are not interested in qualifying it: only in rejecting it outright. It's certainly nothing new. Since the war we've had numerous recommendations for wage restraint, with Labour and Tory governments vying with each other to think of euphemisms for it. There was Stafford Cripps' "cease" which workers had to enlarge before they could expect thicker slices; Selwyn Lloyd's "wage pause"; Wilson's first "freeze"; Heath's three-speeds-backwards "Counter-inflation Act".

If workers will just hold back on wages, or, better still, go without them altogether, we could have a completely stable economy and full employment. When they don't, employers, and now Healey, never say "you're eating into our profits", but, "you're cutting your own throats!"

Factories haven't usually closed because of the militancy of workers, but more often because of the speculative greed of other capitalists. But in any case our answer to the threat of closure could only be "give us the money and if you go broke, too bad".

Nationalisation no answer

Labour's answer - nationalisation' is no answer at all. 'Nationalised' industries have the worst record for rates of pay and redundancy. Remember Beeching and the railways, or the "comb out" of workers in mining. And workers' participation gets us nowhere either. If they showed us records making out that they couldn't afford to pay workers a decent wage, would we drop our claim?

To restrict the struggle to a fight for wages is to condemn ourselves to perpetually running like hell to stay in the same place. It's like carrying water in a bucket with a hole in it. In countries like China and Albania where workers do run things there's no unemployment, no inflation, no taxes.

As the trade union organiser put it:

"I don't go into a factory just to ask for another 3p, an hour for workers. If I don't try to

THE STRUGGLE FOR WAGES IT'S NOT ENOUGH



"... the bowl from which the workmen eat is filled with the whole produce of the national labour, and what prevents them fetching more out of it is neither the narrowness of the bowl nor the scantiness of its contents, but only the smallness of their spoons." Marx, "Wages, Price and Profit"

The Miners Wage Claim

The proposed settlement

On February 13th, the National Executive of the National Union of Mineworkers recommended acceptance of new wage rates for the industry following their negotiations with the Coal Board. The terms of the negotiations are to be voted on by members in a pit-head ballot before the end of the month.

The proposed new basic rates are:- for faceworkers £61 (£46), for other underground workers £47 (£36), and for surface workers £41 (£32). The figures within brackets are present basic rates. The

bring home to them that they've got to widen their horizons to putting an end to all this, my job isn't worth doing."

The Chairman of the CPB(ML) summed up the situation in respect to the struggle for wages. "The strength of capitalism is the weakness of the working class. A wage slave is only what he is because

new figures include consolidation of threshold payments at present being paid, totalling £4.40. Obviously differentials will increase under this scheme.

Lessons

Because of the 1972 and 1974 strikes, speculation has been rife as to what would happen with the 1975 wage claim. What lessons are there for us in the activity of the last few months.

In the first place it must be realised that the miners determined the nature of the offer, not only by their past solidarity in struggle but also by rejecting in a national ballot, as a matter of principle, the Coal Board's

his attitude is in fact, slavish. There will only be wages struggle while there are wage slaves.

"We are ever so pleased if everybody fights a wages struggle, if miners, for example, reject 22 per cent and hold out for a little more. But we want 100 per cent. We want the lot!"

productivity scheme. This would have had the effect of setting miner against miner and pit against pit, thus weakening the miners in all future struggle.

We also learn that the working class in Britain is an immense being and that one section cannot be expected to do all the labour and sacrifice, while others look on uninvolved. We have had the sad spectacle recently of certain unions waiting on the miners' settlement before pursuing their own claims wholeheartedly. Such a policy is fraught with danger. Those in other unions cannot sit back and abdicate their responsibilities in this situation. All must pursue their class interests and wage claims, and, in doing so, renounce the social contract, that collaborationist philosophy of harmony between the two classes, workers and capitalists, whose interests can only be completely opposed.

It is the essence of guerilla struggle that the employers and their Government should not know from what section of the working class the next onslaught will come.

EDITORIAL

Twelve months hard

The redundant steel workers who jeered Foot in his own constituency of Ebbw Vale had the root of the matter in them. How else could those who are unemployed salute a Minister for Employment?

What will those particular workers do now? Will they merely grumble as they go on relief? Will they vote Tory at the next election simply because it could not be any worse than Labour?

Or will they say to hell with a system that cannot or will not make use of our skills when people need what we know how to make? To hell with a Government, whatever it calls itself, whose only prescription for coping with a capitalist crisis is to sacrifice workers on the altar of profits?

Twelve months of Labour

We have had twelve months of Labour that have brought forth nothing different from what we got under the Tories. Prices and unemployment continue to go up. Real wages keep going down - but not fast enough to suit the Labour Government. Healey screams hysterically that "Britain herself will be bankrupt" if the national wages bill is not drastically reduced.

Those who suffer most from capitalism, the workers, are supposed to make the greatest sacrifices to keep it afloat. Why should we? It is not our system. Our system is socialism, as already exists in China and Albania where there is no unemployment, no inflation, no taxation, where wages go up and prices go down, where every person's skill is usefully employed for the benefit of all.

Healey likens the country to a company which will be bankrupt if wage demands are not cut back. We know what we would say to an employer who refused us a fair wage on the grounds that the company would go broke if he paid it. "You give us what we have a right to, and if that breaks the company, it was never a viable proposition anyway." That is what workers must say to the Labour Government.

Counter - Revolution

In the Financial Times the comment on Mrs. Thatcher's election was that the Tories have yet to learn to lead as successful a crusade against collectivisation (they mean socialism) as the Labour Party.

We have said that there is a revolutionary situation in Britain today. But every revolutionary situation is also a counter-revolutionary situation. The main enemy of revolution is social democracy. The main political manifestation of social democracy in Britain today, the Labour Government, capitalism's champion, is the main counter-revolutionary force.

Let the shout of protest that went up in Ebbw Vale from a section of workers against one Minister burst from the throats of the entire working class against this or any other capitalist Government, as our pledge to smash this system that exploits us, and replace it with our own.

CUTS IN EDUCATION

On February 14th Buckinghamshire's teachers walked out of their schools to protest at the local Education Committee's decision to cut spending by £3,500,000. An estimated 600 of the county's 4,500 teachers had been threatened with "redundancy". Further money-saving suggestions put forward by Buckinghamshire include the closure of Amersham College of Further Education, shutdown of most of the libraries and museums and cutting in-service training of teachers by one third.

As an editorial in "The Teacher", the NUT paper, commented last week: "... apart from the shockingly high level of the cuts proposed, there is nothing unique about the situation in Buckinghamshire. From all directions come reports of proposed savings by cutting back further education, savaging nursery education plans, reducing in-service training for teachers, drastically reducing teacher training facilities and whittling away the already inadequate protein content of school meals." For example, in Leicestershire 300 teachers are facing "redundancy" as the council proposes further savings on its budget. Massive cuts of £4 million have been announced.

More "savings" are to be achieved by slashing school building

programmes; no doubt the minds behind this proposal will argue that we need not fear an increased fire risk when larger classes are crowded into old, inadequate buildings, because they have already ordered schools to cut back on heating. Soon, schoolchildren will not only need to bring an extra coat to school to keep warm, they will need a torch as schools are being requested to save on lighting, and already some children are providing their own paper to make up for the cuts in stocks of paper and notebooks at school.

The only increases in education expenditure acceptable to the ruling class are increases which take money out of the pockets of the workers, e.g. the price of school meals for teachers is being doubled, and in higher and further education there is to be a 50% rise in fees. Meanwhile the ILEA is announcing a £½ million cut in its grant to universities, and drastic cutbacks are being planned in teacher training.

We must understand clearly the two main implications of these cuts, and the need to fight them. Firstly, they will result in lowering the conditions in which teachers work. Teachers fully recognise this and will fight the cuts tooth and nail. Secondly, the cuts mean that tomorrow our

children may be struggling to learn in an overcrowded, badly lit, chilly classroom, without a decent meal in their stomachs, and without enough paper to write on; but the day after tomorrow there may not be any school for them at all.

Education is a hard won right of the working class and must not be relinquished, every cutback in education spending must be fought and stopped. Teachers must follow the lead given by Buckinghamshire teachers and continue in earnest the nationwide struggle against the cuts.

ATTI

Students and staff of the Ealing Technical College have begun a campaign of opposition to the local Council's spending cut back. The college has 17 unfilled staff vacancies. A motion opposing cuts at any level has been passed overwhelmingly by the college's ATTI branch.

SCHOOL DINNERS

In Birmingham, school meals are to have their meat content reduced and replaced by "soya bean meat". An education department spokesman explains, "children will still get their traditional meat and veg - the only difference is that the meat will not be 100 per cent meat."

Toward compulsory collaboration

One of the main planks of the Labour Government's social contract regime is an extension of so-called industrial democracy.

Three pieces of legislation, one enacted and two proposed, place or imply statutory obligations on trade unionists to enter into joint consultations with managements on such things as health and safety, redundancy and short-time working and planning agreements.

The term industrial democracy means all things to all men. To the CBI it means participation and works councils, West-German style; to the TUC it means trade-union-appointed directors, and to the 'lefts' it means 'an extension of collective bargaining'.

What underpins all these views is an attempt to draw trade unions into the running of businesses, nationalised industries and the national economy as a whole, on the spurious grounds that management is autocratic and workers must have their say too! Very attractive - to the very naive!

Those who have the knowledge to produce the nation's wealth obviously have the knowledge to run industry in a more efficient way - something well understood by Mr Benn who, invoking the terms of the social contract, demands that we must invest our participation in management in order to help to 'regenerate' an ailing economic system - an economic system, however, in which as workers we have no long or short-term interests.

The 'debate' on industrial democracy has been a great commotion with all sides arguing

fiercely above the table but holding hands underneath it. It is worth examining, however, what has been said. The CBI sees industrial democracy as a means of selling management decisions. The Labour Party proclaims it to be the end of the 'divine right of management' and the TUC sees it as an extension of trade union activity.

The TUC's 1974 report and proposals followed the last Government's invitation for them to consider the EEC's commission's so-called 'Fifth Directive' on company structure harmonisation. This laid down guidelines for the inclusion of 30 per cent workers on supervisory company boards. In reality it was an attempt by the Common Market machine to embroil British Trade Unions in the same sort of class collaborations in which continental trade unions have become enmeshed in the running of many industries in EEC countries.

The TUC report made a great issue out of demanding 50 per cent trade unionists on the boards of companies and the 'lefts' have now denounced this and call for 'an extension of the normal area of collective bargaining'. This last posture is, in fact, the most poisonous. It wallows in moral indignation at the employer's claim of 'management's right to manage' and rejects the trade union worker/director as a boss-es' man but then effectively seeks to turn every trade union member into a member of management by demanding that he or she, through the trade union, take responsibility

for the forming of the policies which govern capitalist industry.

What the relevant sections of the three pieces of legislation (The Health and Safety at Work Act, The Employment Protection Bill and the Industry Bill) seek to do is to establish by law a duty specifically for trade unionists to collaborate in the creation of management decisions.

What is alarming is the enthusiasm with which so many have greeted Benn's 'new democracy'. As an attack on trade unionism it is more insidious and covert than the defeated Industrial Relations Act. It has not yet been consciously rejected.

What we desire is not 30 per cent worker directors, not 50 per cent worker directors, but 100 per cent worker directors in a 100 per cent worker-directed society.

FROM A MEETING ON STRUGGLE AGAINST ANTI-TRADE UNION LEGISLATION

The working class has been struggling against and defeating capitalist legislation against trade unions from the Combination Acts of 1799 to the defeat of the Industrial Relations Act in 1974.

But every time one piece of anti-trade union, anti-working class legislation is chopped off another grows in its place - like the heads of a hydra. The only way to prevent this endless proliferation of anti-working class laws is to kill the beast itself - capitalism.

The Verdict: Manslaughter

The facts speak for themselves. Two elderly patients at Leytonstone House, hospital for the mentally handicapped, died from food poisoning on Christmas Day. 56 more cases have been confirmed. The coroner's inquest revealed; cockroaches, filth, birds flying round the kitchen, and there was a cracked washbasin, no soap and

a dirty towel for the catering staff.

The reasons given: lack of finance, lack of personnel. The hospital had been running without senior administrative staff; the catering officer was off sick.

Even in 'good times', capitalism cares for its casualties in a miserly fashion, keeping them alive in

battery farms for the mentally ill. In lean times, it fails to do even that much.

Those workers who have refused to fight to preserve a National Health Service, so hard won, will take a warning from this. It is easy to excuse one's cowardice under the slogan "Soldier on in the interests of the patients". But the enemy class has no such principles.



Scouts of the Cambodian People's Liberation forces

New Year Victories for Cambodia

Six years ago the US backed Lon Nol in a coup to oust the Sihanouh government of Cambodia. Prince Sihanouh's policy of neutrality was an obstacle to America's aim to dominate Indochina. Since that time the people of Cambodia have been fighting for national independence and a return of the Royal Government of National Unity of Cambodia, and have liberated over 90 per cent of the country.

Only isolated enclaves are left where Lon Nol is still in control. Most important of these is Phnom Penh. Since New Year's Day the People's Armed Forces have completed their encirclement of Phnom Penh, and gained control of all the major supply routes to the city, notably the Mekong River. In the process they wiped out 16 battalions of enemy troops, captured hundreds of tons of munitions and destroyed

137 enemy strongholds. No supplies have reached Phnom Penh via the Mekong River since Christmas Eve; and Lon Nol is suffering from severe shortage of supplies and weapons.

In a desperate effort which can do no more than prolong the death throes of the Lon Nol clique, the US is airlifting supplies into Phnom Penh. Under the best circumstances this alone would be inadequate, but the PAF are regularly scoring rocket hits on the Phnom Penh airport.

The Cambodian people are determined to win total victory and have shown that small countries like Cambodia or Vietnam can surely defeat the superpowers. The recent victories are a triumph for the people of the world and yet another nail in the coffin of those who dream of world domination.

People's war in Oman

The Sultan of Oman is soliciting the support of the United States to fight the forces of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman. In the southern tip of the Arabian peninsula, Dhofar, the liberation forces have been conducting a war for 10 years. The vast inland areas of Dhofar have been liberated.

The Popular Front has successfully defeated the Sultan's army, officered and trained by Britain. The Labour Government, in spite of its defence cuts, has maintained its military presence in this strategic part of the Middle East, and the villages in Oman's south-western province of Dhofar get the full measure of Labour's 'socialism' as bombs and napalm are dropped on them.

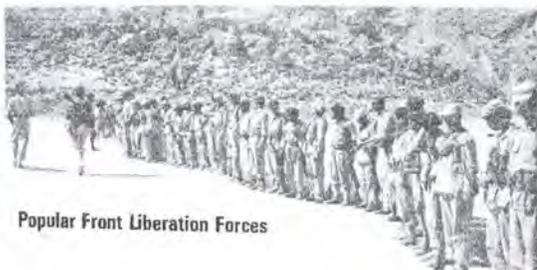
The Popular Front has also withstood the attacks by the army of the Shah of Iran. In 1973, the Shah of Iran sent over a thousand hand-picked men to do the actual fighting in the mountains of Dhofar. Trained by the Americans, the Shah's men were supposed to have cleaned up the guerrilla-infested valleys.

Today the US is asked for aid. Already US anti-tank guns and other hardware have been sold to the feudal ruler of Oman. The Sultan's army is being trained by American officers as well as British. In return for such US aid, the Sultan is offering the strategic base at Masirah, currently used by the RAF, to the American airforce to threaten the oil-producing countries as well as to counter the increased Soviet Naval force in the Gulf.

A decade ago it would have been sufficient for the American fleet in the Mediterranean or the Indian Ocean to make an unscheduled alteration of course to get the US what it asked for. Those were the days of nuclear blackmail. Today the open threats by US President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger are defied with impunity by some of the smallest states in the world. In such a situation, US involvement in Oman will surely end as ignominiously as its aggression in Vietnam.

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Popular Front Liberation Forces

THE ALTERNATIVE -- SOCIALISM IN PRACTISE

The People Plan Their Future

At the end of January the people's assembly in Albania approved the draft plans for production and expenditure for 1975, which had been drawn up after workers in the collective farms and factories had held discussions throughout last year.

Last year's plan was over-fulfilled by 101.3 per cent. A noteworthy point is that the State, for from overspending only spent 88.2 per cent of its income, so that it could build up reserve savings. These are used, for example, when Albania buys products such as butter or sugar from abroad, at inflationary prices, yet sells them to the Albanian consumers without

passing on the price rises.

Among the aims of 1975 are the expansion of the production of coal, oil, gas, electric power and machinery - for example the new section of the Tractor Spare Parts Plant, 15,000 hectares of virgin land will be brought into production - Albania has very little naturally productive, flat farmland, and the people are concentrating on terracing every inch of the hillsides to grow fruit trees, maize or tobacco.

The main item of expenditure in the 1975 budget is investment in the economy - 63.1 per cent. Economic growth is the solid base for all future advances and

next comes education at 11.6 per cent, since the technological level of young people and workers is the seed-corn of the future. Defence and health are the other two major items. Socialism makes a big saving on the expenses of state administration - only 1.5 per cent of the budget - probably because there are no tax-collectors to pay!

The overall aim of the 1975 plan is to maintain Albania's record of stable prices and currency and rising living standards of the people. Per Capita real incomes rose 12 per cent between 1970 and 1974 when the people decide, the priorities are right.

On the industrial front



Engineering Workers

Things are hotting up in the negotiations between Engineering Unions and the Engineering Employers Federation.

The Federation have indicated that the £2.50 due in March must be taken into account and do not intend to increase holidays. Also, they are only prepared to offer equal pay to women on the unskilled workers rate instead of the craftsmen rate when they are doing skilled work.

In March the minimum weekly national rates will be £32 for skilled workers, £25.50 for unskilled workers and £24.50 for women.

Council Electricians

Council Electricians have gone on strike for parity with contracting electricians which would give them another £20 a week.

The Council are hanging their hat on national negotiations where they know they will not have to settle for so high a sum.

The 150 strikers and union officials are meeting to decide how best they can put more pressure on to achieve a satisfactory conclusion to their claim.

Technicians Strike

200 workers at Bradford University from ASTMS, AUEW and EPTU took part in a one day stoppage in support of an ASTMS member whose appeal over restructuring has been outstanding since 1972. This man is the only technician in the university that is still on the old grading scheme. Patience exhausted, the workers intend to get this case settled promptly.

Hosiery Workers

300 hosiery workers at the Wigston factory of Mansfield Hosiery Mills have voted to accept lower piece work pay rates. The Company said the alternative was to make some people redundant and could lead to the closure of the factory.

The operatives, mainly women, voted to accept cuts by 207 to 63. The Employers are not slow in taking advantage of this backward step by workers. Employees at the other 3 mills of the Company, Loughborough, Shepshed and Leicester have been urged by the employer to take note of events at Wigston.

Surridge Dawson

Workers at Surridge Dawson newspaper wholesalers Brighton, a few months ago, along with Southampton, put in for a 40 per cent increase. Southampton took unofficial action and won a bonus of £3.50 in a few days. Brighton went through all the correct and official channels, two months later, not having had a penny, they started an official strike. Two days later they were offered the same sum as Southampton, which they have accepted.

Their pay is £30.32 made up from £25.50 basic, threshold, and £1.42 unsocial hours for getting up at 3.30 a.m. every morning. By working 3 hours every Sunday and rota day off, earnings average £38.77 for a thirteen day fortnight, actual take home being not much over £30.

In the late 20th century no man should be obliged to work these hours just to get sufficient for life's bare necessities.

Milford Haven

As part of a campaign to stamp out low wages being paid to seamen serving on ships flying flags of convenience, tugmen, members of the TGWU blacked three tankers at Milford Haven, Britain's largest oil port, when it was discovered that some seamen were being paid below international rates.

Stocton Surplus

Garage mechanics in Stockton, who are on strike over the bonus payments which they say they need to make a decent living wage, had this to say about their employers.

"The company charges customers between £3 and £4 an hour for Labour, which means on an eight hour day they are making more from us in a day than we do in a week.

They might have added that their's is not an isolated case, that "the value of labour must always be less than the value it produces for the capitalist always makes labour-power work longer than is necessary for the reproduction of its own value". But that general truth comes from 100 years ago, from the pen of Karl Marx. Times may change, but capitalism doesn't.

Container Blacking

As we reported in the paper some issues ago, it is no good the dockers sitting and waiting for the Government to implement a National Dock Labour Scheme. They will have to fight for their jobs themselves.

The dockers in London and Tilbury have taken the decision to do this. In 1962 there were 23,000 jobs in the London Docks. This has now dwindled to 11,000.

148 haulage companies are now on the dockers "Cherry Blossom" blacking list. Pickets are out at Dagenham Storage Depot, Millwall, where deliveries have been cut by two-thirds. Chobham Farm and Barking Container bases are affected.

In 1972 this sort of action won 500 jobs back for registered dock workers.

Plessey Liverpool

Mech adjusters at Plessey, department 15, Liverpool are in their third week on strike. This is over the suspension of three of their workmates, who received two weeks suspension for bad quality work after three previous warnings.

However, the adjusters quite rightly argue that the fault is entirely management's because of the ridiculous piecework system in operation in that department. Inspectors are paid their bonus on the number of switches they reject, adjusters by the number they turn out. Thus, it is obvious adjusters will turn out as much as possible and inspection will reject as many as possible! Adjusters are the victims of a piece work system which only benefits management.

The system only serves to divide the workers, by having each section at each others throats whilst forgetting the real culprits. The adjusters do, however, realise where the fault lies and will not return until management do something to change this and lift the suspension of the three men, clear their record cards and admit their fault.

Management have so far laid off over 200 workers from that department, but are now showing signs of conceding defeat.

WOMEN'S STRUGGLE

How to

Under the divide-and-rule policies of the ruling class, the exploitation of cheap women's labour has long been part of their capitalist system.

The women workers of Yarnolds, a Wolverhampton curtain-making factory, took the decision before Christmas to unionise. This they saw as the only immediate way of improving their miserable work conditions and pay - the basic wage is only £13 for a 40-hour week!

Two of the women began organising and recruiting the other Asian and English girls into the TGWU, were duly elected as shop stewards, and made the grievances known to the company.

The company's reply was complete refusal to discuss any of the problems, followed on December 2nd by the dismissal of both elected shop stewards. In an effort to smash growing shop floor militancy and unity.

After the failure of further efforts to get the employers to the negotiating table to discuss the dismissals and disputes, the women faced the company with an all-out strike for the reinstatement of their dismissed fellow-workers. Management's reply was to try to dismiss all of them!

The strike has now lasted 6 weeks, and has been declared official by the union. Throughout the area other workers are giving whole-hearted financial support as well as helping to maintain a strong picket line.

How not to

The Deans Rag Book Company are shutting down their Rye, Sussex, factory, throwing out of work some 70 workers - mainly women who are not organised.

Management often argues that for workers to organise and strengthen their bargaining position may make it impossible for a factory to stay open, but then only organised workers can fight closures.

Financial courses for unions

The T. U. C. is expected shortly to call on the Government to help Unions to provide urgent training on Company affairs for Trade Union Officials and shop stewards so that they can play a full part in the proposed National Enterprise Board and its planning agreements.

If one starts on the premise of being suspicious of anything said by management and then takes into account all that has been left unsaid as most experienced stewards do, then does a bit of poking and prying into the affairs of the company, one soon begins to uncover what the real facts are. Then when the management denies that the facts are as the stewards say they are, stewards know they are on the right road to assessing the true position.

Who needs courses?

Operation Green Card

One Saturday two weeks ago the Birmingham City police and the British transport police made use of their extended powers under the Anti-terrorist Act to mount 'operation green card' - a 14 hour security check at the main New Street Station.

Over 100 detectives and many uniformed police and dogs sealed off the station and searched the clothes and belongings of all

Ambulance Men

100 NUPE members are incensed at the crafty way in which the Council has interpreted national agreements. In April 1974 7 separate ambulance services each the responsibility of its own local authority were merged into one. They all had the national agreement plus a domestic one with their own individual authorities.

When the new agreement came into force, the local agreements were suspended by the authorities which meant the men would have received 30p increase for the next 14 months.

It points out two salient facts for workers

1. Never trust an employer.
2. Never accept agreements with strings such as a 14 month wait for the next pay rise.

Preparation for Civil War

The number of times guns are issued and carried by Britain's policemen might startle the public if the exact figures were known", reports the Times.

Many policemen are reported to be dissatisfied with the system whereby guns are normally kept under lock and key at selected police stations, and issued only on the authority of a senior officer.

Present training is considered insufficient: the Home Office is working on standardised training schedules. But one model force

has a rigorous 3 day course.

"An officer must pass with high marks before he becomes a qualified 'legalised assassin', as they wryly describe themselves."

Plans to install the military at ports and all on-shore and off-shore oil rigs and refineries are justified by the "danger of terrorists".

The Heathrow operation last year has heralded increasing co-operation between police and army.

Students V. Social Contract

The choice between poverty and unemployment has been echoed in the student world. 'If you continue rent striking,' the college

authorities warn us, 'We will not be able to build you places to live, we might be forced to close the college down.'

Those who think that 'contracts' can be made with college authorities should look at Sussex University. Here the authorities have been prattling about 'fair' rents - but they keep quiet the 40 per cent canteen price increases and new rent increase they are planning.

The fact is that colleges, acting simply as agents of the state cannot make any lasting 'fair' bargains. Talk about social contract and 'fair' rents is an attempt to disarm us and enslave education and all within it.

The fight for us is now within the mind. Do we look for illusory contracts with capitalism or realise that to do our job of preserving ourselves and expanding education for the working class we have to go onto destroy the system that threatens us.

NEW ALBANIA SOCIETY:
Wednesday 26th February, 7.30 pm
'WORKERS' CONTROL IN ALBANIA'
At - The Terminus, Clifton Road,
GRAVESEND, Kent.

E.A.V. Occupations

At Educational Audio Visual in Drayton Park, the London office of EAV Inc. of America, the staff, members of the National Union of Journalists, have occupied their offices in a fight for their jobs.

The struggle began on February 8th, when out of the blue management announced the closure of the London office, refusing even to discuss the reasons for their action. Immediately after, the NUJ Chapel (office branch) decided on occupation as the only viable tactic to counter this attack.

This occupation - the first ever against closure in the book publishing field - takes place against a background of impending redundancy struggles throughout the industry. The EAV workers, few in number yet determined to save their jobs, are thus the first this year to go into action on what is bound to be a very busy front.

Hour Robbery Ends at Guys

The employers have been dealt another blow by the victory of the administrative and clerical workers in the Guy's Health District: this resulted in their working week being reduced from 38 to 36 hours, agreed in 1973 but stolen under phase I.

The struggle was slow to begin, but this November, NALGO members in the National Health Service examined the success of fellow workers in local government in their struggle for a 36 hour week. From this, they learnt that tactics could best be worked out within the local branches.

Guy's Group members adopted the tactic "Let us work a 36 hour week now, when it will suit us, but be most likely to disrupt local management arrangements" - the advantage of surprise. Such tactics had been employed locally in previous struggles of technicians and nurses.

"Our selective action confused the management. They did not know when and where we would attack, and we knew their weak spots. As a result, various parts of the administration and management machine

Although relatively inexperienced in struggle, the chapel has so far conducted an exemplary struggle in terms of unity, discipline and morale. Once having taken the plunge, they have found strength in the dearyard into which they have thrown a complacent management and in the support received from NUJ members and other media workers.

On February 14th the dispute was made official by the NUJ executive, thereby setting an important precedent. This should be of considerable encouragement to other media workers contemplating action to defend their own jobs.

Instead of taking the easy option and accepting redundancy pay, the EAV chapel have taken the hard road of struggle. In doing so, they have shown that no matter what the difficulties, there are no excuses for not fighting. If the will is there, a way will be found.

were disrupted, namely work study, supplies, general admin, and medical records, which normally had to rely on overtime working. Our employer was defenseless - he could not introduce scab labour and eventually was forced to concede defeat.

"Yesterday, the District Administrator phoned the District Branch Secretary, and in a weary voice announced that the Department of Health had issued a memorandum authorising local management to use their discretion whether or not to operate the 2 36 hour week before 1st April 1975. The District Administrator gave his assurance that he now understood our union's case, and that he would hold a meeting as soon as possible to discuss how we should operate a basic 36 hour week."

When the NALGO branch secretary spoke to members yesterday, he found them elated and eager to fight other issues on a local basis using similar guerrilla tactics. Members in Guys Hospitals no longer want to know how to fight their employer for a better Health Service, but where and when.

Parking Meter Service Engineers

Thirty five newly organised members of the AUEW (Engineering Section) employed by AMF Vanner Limited, South London, as Service Engineers withdrew their labour in support of their claim for a reduction in working hours from 45 to 40 hours per week without loss of pay, a five day working week, also that appropriate overtime rates of pay be paid for overtime working. These conditions have long been established as the minimum basic conditions of employment for all Engineering workers.

The claim was flatly rejected by the Company on the grounds that these workers were employed on staff conditions - the so called staff conditions being no better than those already obtained by most other Engineering workers. At one stage during the strike Venners had the gall to offer the 40 hour week but accompanied by a five hour reduction in pay. The

After three weeks of united strike action they compelled Vanner to concede that following a resumption of work there would be a five day week of 40 hours without loss of pay with other conditions that were acceptable to the workers.

The experience gained by this action for these newly organised workers has been to understand the value of working class and Trade Union organisation. They found that by combining together, speaking with one voice and being willing to use their organised strength they could succeed. Response from the workers fully supported by the Union District Committee, Officials and Executive Council was to tighten up their organisation and to show greater determination to win improved working conditions which the Company had cheated them out of for so long.

BELLMAN BOOKSHOP

155 FORTRESS ROAD LONDON NW5

PUBLIC MEETINGS IN THE BELLMAN BOOKSHOP. 7.30pm

"	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

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