

THE WORKER



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THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'

IN THE humble opinion of THE TIMES editor: "There have been ten Editors of THE TIMES since Barnes was appointed in 1817; in the same period there have been fourteen Popes. The one thing we have in common with the Popes is that we have an unqualified responsibility to protect the integrity and continuity of our Institution."

Perhaps infallibility is held in common also, although we doubt it in either case. There the difference ends. The Pope oversees a dying religion; the editor in question can't control a rumbustious workforce. Writ large on the editor's banner is "the Divine Right of management to manage", a declaration which the class-conscious worker rejects.

In fact, two newspapers and three associated literary and educational supplements, all published by Times Newspapers, have locked out 4300 workers for refusing to accept management's demand that new technology be employed instead of hundreds of workers.

Worth noting here is that the lockout, or "suspension of publication" as it is euphemistically called, is within the letter of the Employment Protection Act, a piece of legislation hailed by the more shortsighted as proof of the Labour Government's good intent. Also in evidence is the understanding involved that it is pointless taking a golden handshake when work in the trade cannot be found elsewhere.

The NGA alone stands to lose

perhaps thousands of jobs, leave alone its integrity as a union, if it loses the battle at THE TIMES. The union's general secretary regards it as the decisive issue in determining how new technology will be introduced into the British newspaper industry. The technology in question, single keystroking which enables direct input into the computer system by journalists and telephone advertisement sales staff using keyboard terminals, is not opposed so much as the employers who own and direct the technology. The NGA is determined that its control of inputting is a principle it cannot surrender.

Of the 54 union chapels involved in the lockout, about a dozen have agreed to management dictat. Thousands still

object, including The Times NUJ chapel who have asked for more money saying they will not work with new technology until management has reached agreement with the NGA over who operates it. Father of the NUJ chapel said, "We are not going to be used as a stalking horse for management." Plans to broadcast a one-hour 'talking version' of the SUNDAY TIMES on radio have been blocked by journalists. Meanwhile, NGA members working on the very profitable Thomson Regional Newspapers may be asked for support.

Times Newspapers, owned by the Thomson Organisation, has pleaded poverty and over-manning as the reasons for the lockout, but facts tell a different story. Thomson Organisa-

tion, an oil-rich Canadian-based conglomerate involved in book publishing, package holidays and newspapers, will this year make three-quarters of its £126 million from North Sea Oil. It has more than enough money, but for a capitalist what's enough?

Such enormous wealth enables these newspaper managements to buy full-page advertisements in all the daily papers explaining how the wicked workers have got to be stopped, while the geriatric gentry write letters of support. Support for Times' workers is essential because they have seen through redundancy payments and refuse to be thrown on the scrapheap. They are forerunners in the battle which millions of workers will shortly face - technology produced by the skill of workers being used against workers by capitalism.

We do not have to smash machines so much as the class which owns them. Times Newspapers has upped the ante in its campaign against organised workers. Let the religiosity of the Times editor not foil us. He has a till for a tabernacle.

The NGA is not alone, although it has most to lose. NATSOPA's London Joint Branches, with 2,200 members at Times Newspapers, has taken a determined stance also. They point out that "much of the expensive equipment already installed is either already obsolete or unable to do the

work required of it". They are not opposed to new technology but stress the better working conditions it can bring, rather than no work at all which is the way capitalism uses it. In some departments staffing levels would be reduced by 63 per cent.

There has been a great deal of trouble with the technology that Times Newspapers wants instead of workers. Dugal Nisbett-Smith, managing director, previously in charge at the Glasgow Herald, could not make the technology work. Workers there called it Disneyland, 'it dis nae' do this or that'.

Several years ago, Times Newspapers invited tenders for contract to introduce new printing techniques. Here the Times group fell victim to Capitalism's normal practices. Each of the five companies after this contract fell over each other to get it. The Systems Development Corporation of Santa Monica won the main contract.

Management has already spent £1.6 million on a system full of problems. The system is running two years behind schedule. The Hewlett-Packard computers are now obsolete. SDC has not yet produced the computer programming that will make the system work. SDC cannot be used for fear the company will collapse. In a word, it's a mess. The lockout enables management to buy time.

German workers fight against social contract

FOR THE first time in 50 years steel workers in Germany have gone on strike. Some 37,000 workers in the great Ruhr steel plants walked out over the refusal of the employers to meet their claim. The employers countered by locking out 29,000 more.

Steel wage negotiations are the first in the German bargaining calendar, like Ford negotiations in Britain, and the fact that the result of a settlement of the workers' claim for a 5 per cent increase and a 35 hour week could influence the negotiations next month in the engineering and metal working sector makes the steel workers' struggle something of a test case.

The final offer of the employers leading to the strike was 3 per cent but the real issue is the demand of the steel workers' union, I.G. Metall, for the introduction of a 35 hour working week in the steel industry. The same union also covers the more profitable engineering and

motor industries and the reduction of the working week in steel would soon be extended to these industries as well.

The background to the dispute is the high level of unemployment in Germany which the Government will do nothing about for fear of inflation. The stand of I.G. Metall is seen by workers as an attempt to do something about the general level of unemployment and the particular loss of jobs in steel. It has the backing of the German equivalent of the TUC. On the other side the Iron and Steel Employers' Federation refuses even to discuss a 35 hour week which they claim "would put the cost of labour too high for the present unsatisfactory level of output". Other employers federations have made it clear that they realise the steel companies are fighting a battle in the interests of all!

The loss of jobs in the German steel industry is approaching the situation in



Leyland workers meeting at Cowley rejected the management offer. The claim for an extra £27 a week on the basic wage for production workers made by Leyland shop stewards has been met by a company offer of a mere £3.65 per week increase on basic rates.

Britain. In 1975-77, 36,000 jobs were lost and 'rescue plans' for the Saar steel industry involve the redundancy of another 10,000 workers. At a meeting three weeks ago at a meeting organised by I.G. Metall on the rundown

of the German steel industry, the European Community's Industry Commissioner, Viscount Davignon, got a very hostile reception from shop stewards who charged that EEC policy was just a cloak for cutting down manpower.

One spokesman for the workers complained about the way the investment plans of such steel companies as Thyssen presuppose the loss of thousands more jobs.

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Highland clearances - devolution 1800-1850

THE ECONOMIC misery of Britain can be cured, say the Government, by splitting the country up into sections. It has always been a capitalist strategy to segregate and divide, in the modern jargon 'devolve'. An isolated area allows the people to be preyed upon more easily.

The policy of isolation and backwardness forced on the Highlands at the outset of the last century shows just how profitable and inhuman the constant capitalist strategy of devolution is.

Today we have the legislative farce of a Scottish Assembly. So in 1832, the Scots were offered the great Reform Act, which left virtually all the people as disenfranchised as before. Yet even the great marvel of Reform took second place to cholera, which came to ravage the Highlands in that summer. It found a population of crofters and smallholders cleared wholesale off their land by the waves of evictions of the previous 30 years - and crowded into piteous townships or the urban hovels of Glasgow or Edinburgh. Millions of sheep now

grazed on the valleys the people had cultivated. The people died, while the sheep lived on for a nobler end - profit.

A nascent capitalism's policy, then, as now, to Scotland and Britain as a whole, was destruction of a self-sufficient economy - of cereals and cattle, on which the Gaels had lived for generations. Ousted by sheep, the people now lived on and grew potatoes. Then 1836 brought the potato blight.

Capitalist farmers grew wheat on the best of the land emptied of people. In Ross-shire, for example, they sold half of their 20,000 quarters to London, the rest for flour. The shameful export of food for profit, now institutionalised by the EEC, had already started.

"Destitution Boards", like today's regional and other boards, were set up, with as little effect. As the INVERNESS COURIER wrote: "There never was a time when there need be less fear of famine. In the shipping ports of the South, the granaries are choked full." So now the 'surplus' population, once terribly evicted,

was to be offered starvation on the hills, exploitation in the factories of the south (if they were lucky), or the hell of emigration in the rusted ships to a New World of capitalism as the old.

If none of these, there was always the murderous discipline of the army. A whole village in Skye was named after the mass of combatants returning from Waterloo. Then in the midst of famine, came the Crimean War. The real problem, they said, was not the misery at home, but the Russians abroad.

Not so, wrote Donald Ross. "Talk of secret diplomacy and Russian intrigue forsooth! Are not whole straths and districts bargained for, and quietly let to sheep farmers and sportsmen months before the unhappy occupants know about it?" He denounced the "Russians of Ross-shire," the police (whether Lowlanders or English made no difference) whose truncheon attack on 70 empty-handed women at Strathcarron serves as an example of many, many more such incidents throughout the period. For example, Naomi Ross "was most violently kicked in the

breast and also in the most delicate part of her person. Had poor Naomi been wandering on the banks of the Danube and been ill-used, I could understand it, but in Christian Scotland to be butchered alive, who can think of it without a blush of shame."

Today we have Callaghan at the Lord Mayor's Banquet with pious platitudes about the EEC, just as the then Prime Minister, little Lord John Russell, used the same great occasion to advise the suffering people to eat less bread, along with Queen Victoria who ordered her household to eat no more than a pound of bread a day, while a string of Dukes pledged "to reduce as far as practicable (!) the consumption of bread and flour."

Economic and agricultural destruction, poverty, intervention boards. In the isolation and then destruction of the Highland people by a nascent capitalism we can see every trait of the destruction that a declining EEC capitalism would wish to visit on Britain as a whole, or, as they would prefer, its devolved and weaker parts.



(Vietnam News Agency)

This family of seven was slaughtered on April 16th 1972, by the American defenders of human rights.

civilisation and imposed slavery on them?

Whose human rights are they speaking of in our country? Those whom they are defending are first of all, army officers of the former Saigon regime, who are still attending re-education courses and who they describe as filling the prisons. Then they are speaking for people who have fled the country for one reason or another. You bought their souls with your money, they were trained in France and the United States as your instruments.

Do you want now to entice part of our population abroad to work for you then to commit crimes on your orders? Of the souls who have been lost at sea, the blame goes first of all to those who enticed them to leave their country.

We maintain that our policy is one of rare humanity. We could have killed or imprisoned all those who used imperialist arms to oppose and massacre the people. They are traitors who owe blood debts. But the overwhelming majority of them enjoy freedom and full citizenship rights. A very small number must still undergo re-education but they are treated as human beings. We once had first-hand experience of life in the prisons and interrogation chambers of the regimes you are representing today. We were treated worse than beasts. The massacres at Vinh Trinh dam and Cho Duoc, at Phu Loi prison, in My Lai village and elsewhere should not be forgotten.

Yet, the men responsible for those barbarities are today conducting a campaign which charges us with violating human rights. This is their way of taking vengeance upon those who defeated them and drove them out of Vietnam in order to put a stop to slavery and recover the most sacred fundamental right of man, the right to be master of one's own country and life.

With the glorious victory of the two sacred resistance wars which felled the imperialists' and reactionaries' strategy, the Vietnamese earned the esteem of all the oppressed peoples and progressive mankind. However, our enemies old and new, have joined hands in launching slander campaigns to tarnish our country's fame. We think it necessary to lay bare these forces' dark manoeuvres. What we have to say about human rights is simple, and can be summed up as follows:

Everyone has the right to be the absolute master of his nation. Those who encroach upon that sacred right are criminals and will certainly be crushed.

Everyone has the right to equal rights and obligations. Man's fundamental right is the right to be master of the means of production and means of consumption produced by society.

The highest and finest human right is the right to be collective master of the state, economy, politics and culture, the right to be master of society, nature and of oneself. Only in such a society can man enjoy freedom,

THE WEEK

THE BILL increasing the number of MPs from Northern Ireland from 12 to 17 at Westminster passed its second reading by 350 votes to 49. As notable as the unanimity between Tory and Labour for strengthening British rule, is the fact that nearly fifty MPs paid more attention to the public feeling for British withdrawal, than to party 'leaders'.

9000 provincial members of the National Union of Journalists are now on strike for a £20 a week rise. 200 London members struck in support of colleagues sacked by the 'Bolton Evening News' for pursuing their work to rule on the same claim.

THE LATEST treasury forecast is for a rise in the average underlying number of jobless from 1,315,000 this year to 1,350,000 next year. Growth is to fall from 3½ per cent per year to 2. By contrast, on latest figures, profits of the largest companies have been rising. BP's profits were £0.3 million in 1968, in 1977 £2.3m. For Shell, British American Tobacco, ICI and Unilever the growth is from £0.3m to £1.7m, £0.1m to £0.4m, £0.2m to £0.6m, £0.07m to £0.35m.

WHEN 21 elderly patients were kidnapped Nazi-style from Houslow Hospital, the hospital was occupied by volunteers who, after 13 months, have had to terminate the occupation. Their effort will not be in vain, if the public realise that they cannot in conscience shirk responsibility for health and allow the few to shoulder the struggle alone.

IN PREPARATION for the referendum on the Constitution, the Spanish Government has banned demonstrations, together with a number of political parties opposed to the Constitution, including the Communist Party of Spain (M-L) and the Republican Convention of the Peoples of Spain.

ROAD DEATHS in Britain are about half those in the EEC. Now the EEC, in addition to trying to introduce even larger juggernauts, wants lorry drivers approved in one country to be permanently licensed in all, so that standards required for the British HGV license can be even more effectively by-passed than at present.

'WAR ON WANT', the charity started a magazine analysing world poverty in political terms. They have had to cease publication after 3 issues, as political activity threatens their legal status. Similarly, they can no longer give aid to political projects in developing countries. Capitalism will nip in the bud any attempt, however modest or from whatever quarter, at change.

Vietnamese statement on human rights

A 'HUMAN RIGHTS' campaign has been mounted in some Western countries against Vietnam. Influential anti-communist organs which represent the interests of colonialism and which supported the French and US wars of aggression in Vietnam, have joined the campaign with glee. Certain eminent political figures have made melodramatic statements about the threat to human rights in far away Vietnam where their governments' innumerable crimes in the old days have had dire consequences. Joining this campaign have even been people who at one time or another sympathised with, or were objective towards the just struggle of the Vietnamese people.

What are the reasons for this campaign in the centres of capitalism? Are things satisfactory and human rights secured at home? Do they think their society so perfect that they can now sit back and feel satisfied? Their society is far from perfect. It is infested with critical, insoluble problems, first of all the problem of genuine human rights.

We are a decent people. We have nothing to be ashamed of. We challenge them to a debate with us about one of the main issues of the present time - the right of man to life.

What are human rights anyway? And what type of people are you gentlemen referring to? Factory directors and bank managers? People who control the army, the police and courts? The only right you let other people enjoy is the right to hire themselves. Slave work and exploitation today, of course, may assume a more decent appearance, but it is slave work and exploitation all the same. In your society the most fundamental rights of man are monopolised by a minority and since this society is your paradise you are correct in singing the praises of such rights. It is your slaves who have struggled resolutely to make you less ruthless in your exploitation and agreeable to certain

democratic liberties. You capitalist bosses cannot exploit and oppress people as freely as you used to. Your society, your wealth are built with other people's tears and blood. Capitalism was born by violence and has existed with the help of the worst kind of violence. How many bloody conflicts have taken place within each country and across the whole world since the 18th century? Hundreds of millions of people have died as a result of wars waged among the countries in your lovely capitalist system. The bloodbaths in Paris, Petrograd, Hungary, Spain, Germany and elsewhere during Nazi occupation should be remembered as epic poems of your creation. Barbarous repression is not wanting in the United States, in Britain and Italy either. What is the Ku-Klux-Klan? And right now are you averse to using tear gas, fire engines and rubber bullets against peaceful demonstrators who ask only for their right to life? This is your way of guaranteeing human rights after you have made labouring people in your countries and in colonies work their fingers to the bone for your profits. The right to speak for human rights in your countries should belong to the workers on strike, intellectuals of conscience, genuine scientists, the genuine communists in capitalist countries and those who rot in your prisons because of their opposition to exploitation.

You have a manifesto on human rights for your own purposes. We also have our manifesto on human rights and we have worked all our lives for these rights. Our views and your views will always be in opposition. Our people have fought courageously to rid themselves of the colonial system of the imperialists. The Vietnamese people struggled bravely for more than a century against national oppression, and regained their right to live in independence and freedom. Is it to uphold human rights that you have invaded other countries, trampled upon their national sovereignty and their

EDITORIAL

THE SANCTIONS imposed on Ford by the Government, however tentatively, are an example of contradictions in the ranks of the class enemy. The Labour Government speaks for the general interest of capitalism in keeping wages low so that there will be more profits. But particular employers will find it to their immediate benefit to bargain with their workers, whatever the stewards of the capitalist club may say about their individual conduct.

Capitalism remains anarchic in spite of the elimination of smaller concerns by the big monopolies and multi-national combines. It remains anarchic because the scramble for profits can never be other than a dog-eat-dog game. In the same way, the working class ethic is one of collective co-operation. The working class was born out of the socialisation of labour in factories which to the employer meant the opportunity of greater profits through more intensive exploitation but to the worker meant co-operating with work-mates both in producing goods and also in defending themselves from rapacious masters.

Every time we show the class unity which is characteristic of us as workers - such as just happened at Ford's - we exploit the contradictions in the ranks of the enemy - such as that between Labour Government and Ford management.

As was pointed out in last week's editorial, the enemy's ranks are rent by contradictions - over EEC membership, over devolution, over the occupation of northern Ireland, over southern Africa. In all these cases the frantic search for profits may yield very different answers to different employers and businesses. But these differences do not result in any group of capitalists sharing the same interest with the working class of saving Britain from destruction. In spite of their conflicts of interest the bourgeoisie are at least united in a common determination on the destruction of working class organisation.

They will ever seek to divide us, knowing no other law than divide and rule. But when we are united, we exploit their contradictions and they are no match for us. It is as the poet said to us after Peterloo:

Rise like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number -
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you -
Ye are many - they are few.

They seek to divide us in order to continue their exploitative rule. But against their divide-and-rule we raise our own militant banner - unite and liberate!

Revolt rocks the Shah

THE DAYS of the Shah are numbered. The Chieftain tanks, the machine guns, the soldiers have not intimidated the people of Iran. All over the country thousands of people came out in the streets in defiance of a curfew imposed by the military government shouting "Death to the Shah." The only thing that can keep the Shah on his throne is military intervention by Britain or the US directly or through some other agent like Israel or Oman.

army to massacre their brothers and sisters in the street has forced the Shah to import shiploads of gangs and mercenaries to do the job. The hands of the CIA and Britain which installed the Shah on his throne in 1953 are undoubtedly having a lot to do with the current attempt to save the Shah's regime.

What must be occupying the minds of the Iranian people is how to ensure that the Shah does not escape punishment. Death to the Shah means precisely that.

The reluctance of the conscript

MARCH FOR IRAN
Saturday, December 9th, 1.00 p.m.
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'The Worker' 155 FORTRESS ROAD, LONDON NWS
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Decline in new building hurts first-time buyers

NEW BUILDING drops, year after year. Last year the Government planned for only 100,000 new council houses, but local authorities planned to put up even less - 65,000. In the first six months of this year a mere 40 per cent of the target has received local authority approval. It is not just a question of the Tory plan to sell council houses. In the same period last year only 46 per cent of the housing target was approved. Local authorities are simply refusing to hand out renovation grants, mortgages and loans to housing associations, as house buyers know to their cost. Instead of new buildings, there is a risibly underfunded programme

of renovation of old buildings, while the demolition of historic areas goes unchecked.

The mortgage rate reaches unprecedented levels. Those able to buy fund the government as rising prices increase the Stamp Duty payable on buying a house.

The government gives help to first time buyers, in the most laughable way. They will qualify for an interest free loan of £600, when few houses now are not about or above the £10,000 mark. And even then it is hedged about with restrictive clauses. Buyers have to have saved with a building society for two years, and must have savings of £600.

Oppression in Greece

IN SEPTEMBER, 1978, representatives of the International Labour Organisation visited Greece and discovered facts about bad working conditions in Greece which every Greek worker has known all along.

At an interview the General Manager of the ILO said that factory inspections for the protection of labour are unsatisfactory, hygiene and safety are at a low level and government legislation concerning the environmental conditions in workplaces is completely inadequate.

Greece is at the top of all European countries in the number of accidents at work. The ILO tries to gloss over bad working conditions in the capitalist countries affiliated to it and a statement containing the worst charges about conditions and attacks on trade unionism was kept secret.

It is for the workers of Greece to fight for better conditions, knowing that only when they have overthrown the capitalist system of exploitation will all industrial abuses cease.

Albania's thirty-fourth

NOVEMBER is a month of celebration for the Albanian people, marking two important anniversaries. The first of them, on November 8th, is that of the founding of the Communist Party of Labour of Albania, which took place thirty-seven years ago in 1941.

At that time Albania was occupied by Italian fascist troops, and the various different communist groups operating independently in opposition to the fascists, decided to undertake an ideological struggle to merge into a more effective organisation. The result was a secret meeting of their representatives in Tirana, who decided to form the Party. Enver Hoxha, who had been instrumental in bringing the groups together was elected to lead the provisional Central Committee.

Taking as their task the liberation of Albania from fascist control and the setting up of People's State Power, the new Party immediately began to organise the resistance of the people. Armed actions intensified, and within a year the Party began to publish its newspaper 'Zeri i Popullit'. In September 1942 the National Liberation Front was set up to unite the people in their task.

As the Albanian people saw the correctness of the stand taken by the communists, more and more joined the partisan units, or actively supported their operations. By July 1943, the number of partisans was large enough to be formed into the National Liberation Army. At about the same time, Nazi German troops first became involved in the fighting in Albania, as Italy was on the verge of withdrawing from the war.

The liberation of the towns and districts of Albania continued, and by October, the Democratic Government of Albania was set up under the leadership of the Party. The liberation of Albania culminated in an heroic nineteen day battle for the capital Tirana, which ended on November 17th 1944. The Democratic Government entered Tirana on November 28th, which is now commemorated as Albania's National Day. The next day, Shkodra, the last city in German hands, was liberated. This marked the complete liberation of Albania

Once the People's Democracy had been set up, the huge task of reconstruction could begin, as large areas of the country had been laid waste by the occupiers. One important measure taken was the Agrarian Reform of 1945, which ensured the support of the peasantry and destroyed the capitalist relations which existed in the countryside, paving the way for the co-operativisation of agriculture.

Alongside this began the construction of socialist industry, which in itself was a huge and daunting task, because there had been little large-scale industry in Albania before the war, and educational establishments for training skilled workers did not exist.

Attempts by first the Yugoslav revisionists, and later by the revisionists who had seized power in the Soviet Union after Stalin's death, to divert the Albanians from their path of all-round socialist construction into a narrow and specialised "agricultural" path, which would benefit them rather than the Albanian people, were thwarted.

The internal and external plots and intrigues which these moves engendered, awoke the Albanian Party and People to the danger of revisionism as a counter-revolutionary philosophy. Their vigilance and understanding culminated in Enver Hoxha's denunciation of the revisionist trends within the Soviet communist Party at the 1960 meeting of the world's communist parties.

This brave stand by Albania, despite the intimidation and grave consequences in terms of loss of aid and credits, served as a source of great strength for Marxist-Leninists everywhere. The consistency of the Albanian line against revisionism has been further strengthened by their recent stand against the new Chinese revisionist line, despite the further sacrifices that this entails.

It is the importance placed by the Party of Labour of Albania on the ideological development of the people, and chiefly the working class, and its attention to the strengthening of Marxist philosophy in the minds of the Party and people which has helped to prevent the growth of bureaucracy and revisionism.

Births on the increase

1933, the year of highest unemployment, was also the year when there were fewest births. Thus experts were predicting that the population, which numbered 46 million in 1931, would drop to below 40 million in 1961 and would continue falling. Birth rate predictions are at best misleading

and at worst ridiculous justifications of a government's policy of cutbacks.

Experts in 1978 have been confounded by the recent unexpected upward turn in birthrate. Thus there is even more reason to stop the closure of schools and hospitals.

INDUSTRY IN BRIEF

OVER 300 miners at the Bentley Colliery struck on Wednesday, November 22nd, in protest at the poor safety conditions at the pit. This was following the deaths of seven miners and the serious injury of 17 others the previous day, when an underground pit train bringing the night shift to the pithead was derailed, a mile underground. The pit train, known as a 'Paddy Train', appears to have run out of control as it approached a bend. Automatic braking systems appeared not to have been working. NUM and Mines Inspectorate are investigating. The dead were aged from 18 years to men in their late fifties. The village of Bentley, near Doncaster, is in a state of mourning.

47 years ago Bentley had its worst mining disaster when 45 men and boys were killed on 20th November, 1931, when an explosion and fire ripped through the pit.

OVER 200 draymen and deliverymen employed by Tetley's Brewery in Leeds, part of Allied Breweries, have been locked out after implementing an overtime ban for the previous week in support of a pay claim. Several pubs of the 1200 Tetley houses in Leeds have already closed due to lack of draught beer. The men, members of the T&GWU and G&MWU, are part of the biggest brewery in the area. Over 200 clerical staff at the brewery are planning a one-day strike in support of their fellow workers. Allied Breweries has announced a record turnover for 1977-78 (interim) of over £90.2 millions, as compared with £77.2 millions the previous year.

SIR CHARLES VILLIERS huffs and puffs that British Steel lost £151 million in the last six months. His solution - to cut steel production still further. How can he be surprised that the industry, bled of 16,000 workers last year, should be in poor shape. The Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, are pressing ahead with a 12½ per cent wage claim, and organising a claim to reduce overtime. The Union's pressure has forced building of new plant at Ravenscraig in Scotland and Redcar on Teesside, so that production capacity will rise to 27 million tonnes per year. Yet under capitalist mismanagement only 17 million tonnes will be produced. When two new Scottish direct ore production plants are completed next spring, they will not ever be used.

BRITAIN'S dairy farmers and their cows (they got an extra vote for every 10 cows in their herd) have voted to keep the Milk Marketing Boards. A massive majority of 99.5 per cent decided that EEC rules about 'free and fair competition' were no substitute for an efficient distribution system. If they had voted the other way, the result would have been similar to what happened in Holland, which used to have a system like ours. There a price war halved doorstep deliveries with the result that less milk is consumed, and most of that is bought from supermarkets at higher prices. The surplus goes into the EEC milk lake.

So British farmers have voted for a system that gets their products to the consumer and not into the EEC milk lake which has cost over £2500 million this year.

Merseyside - No factories No fires?

THE REDUCTION of the working week from 48 to 42 hours for firemen is to be implemented at last, but at a price. The proposals for Merseyside's brigade are to reduce the fire cover as a means of footing the bill. Two fire stations and sixteen machines are earmarked for the chop.

The Fire Brigades Union is opposing the cuts and has lobbied councillors and leaf-letted Bootle, where a station currently serving 30,000 people is to be closed. The FBU acknowledges that the other station, in Hatton Garden, in Liverpool's city centre, has a case for closure. But they argue that a station should be built to replace it in a better location, in order to avoid reducing the fire cover available.

The FBU has been threatened with a delay in introducing their shorter hours if the cuts are not accepted. Since no redundancies are threatened, and their lobbying has had its usual effect - nothing - the men are likely to accept reluctantly.

In the Firemen's strike, fire losses doubled. Part-timers were used, and police were on duty an extra 4 hours each day. Fire watches were started at factories where this was not normal practice. These costs of the dispute



"I'M NOT THREATENING, I'M NOT WARNING, I'M JUST DESCRIBING THE LAWS OF ARITHMETIC."

(Healey)

"... AND THEN THE DIFFERENT BRANCHES OF ARITHMETIC - AMBITION, DISTRACTION, AGLIFICATION AND DERISION."

(the Mock Turtle)

were hidden. The argument being used to back up the proposed cuts is that the present fire cover is not required since the strike proved that for 9 weeks Merseyside managed with a vastly reduced cover.

The real reason is, of course, related to the destruction of Merseyside's industry by capitalism in decline. With fewer factories

capitalism can dispense with some of its fire cover. To maintain it at its current level would improve the service provided to individual workers in their homes (no thanks from us for the closure of factories however!).

Obviously, just as factories don't count for much any more, likewise capitalism views our class and its safety with a similar disinterest.

Unity in struggle - key to victory

THE MOST positive feature of NUPE's forthcoming pay battle is that, far from being spontaneous, it has been very well prepared. This year's National Conference set the objectives as free collective bargaining, a £60 basic rate, a 35 hour week and common pay settlement dates for all main negotiating groups, i.e. Council workers, Hospital ancillary workers, Water workers, Ambulancemen and Nurses.

Conference also resolved to call for the linking of public sector pay to the national average wage (in direct contradiction to the resolution on 'free collective bargaining') The Executive Council was to

initiate this year's pay fight immediately.

Conference policy has been implemented to date. The 'Low Pay Campaign', whilst raising an objective that is in direct opposition to free collective bargaining, has at least been used to mobilise the membership behind the £60 claim. Unity with the other unions involved - T & GWU, G & MWU and COHSE has reached a level never obtained in previous battles. NUPE's machinery from Branch District Committees, through the Area and Divisional levels to the Executive Council, is now totally geared to organising the pay battle. Negotiations on the council

workers, water workers and hospital ancillary claims have been rolled back to coincide with the ambulancemen's claim in January when a strike campaign on all four fronts will be launched at the same time.

Already there are signs that the Government will try to 'buy off' the water workers by offering £2-£3 on 'broadbanding' on top of the 5 per cent. They may also try to break our ranks by making the ambulancemen a special case like the police and firemen. Whatever plays the Government may use, we must not be diverted from our objectives, nor weaken our resolve.

German workers fight back

Continued from page 1

"In almost every company," he said, "the directors' wish is for an additional number of workers to be sacrificed in order to get the stricken ship afloat again. Employees are taken on when things are going well but when the economy is becalmed they are simply thrown overboard." He went on to remind the meeting of the co-operation of the pre-war steel bosses with the Nazis. Workers on the Continent are coming increasingly to realise that the EEC is simply a combine

Interview with IPC worker

THE DISPUTE at IPC Magazines over a house agreement is now over. We asked one of the National Union of Journalists FOCs (Father of the Chapel) at IPC for his impressions of the struggle.

Question: We hear that the journalists at IPC Magazines have called off their action and returned to normal working. What have you won?

Answer: I think we won three main points. These are a reading allowance, an allowance for working unsocial hours, and finally a limited amount of flexibility in working hours where it suited the individual journalists. These were the points management had said it would never concede.

Q: What is a reading allowance?

A: It is a payment by the company to cover the money journalists are expected to pay out for newspapers, magazines and so on. We wanted a fixed sum for everyone. We didn't get it all, but we are well on the way, and the principle has been established. All may now claim for a certain amount of publications each month.

Q: Is this merely a way of getting round the Labour Government's guidelines?

A: This was not a struggle against the 5 per cent. But on the other hand, a reading allowance is so commonplace in newspaper journalism that we thought we were entitled to it. The company's original offer had been so insulting, on this and other matters, that we had to fight for the claim. We couldn't let it lapse.

Q: How was the fight conducted?

A: Nobody actually went on strike and stood outside the building. We started off with a work to contract, then stepped it up into a campaign of non-cooperation - though that is only the bare bones of it. We have had a work to contract before, but never so effective. The FOCs drew up sanctions and all had to adhere to them. But the journalists started treating the sanctions as the least they were going to do. The unwritten guideline was 'hit the company as hard as we can, as fast as we can'.

Q: What was the effect?

A: Quite devastating. By the time the action was over, the company had suspended publications with a total circulation of well over 6 million copies. But because we prepare issues well in advance, you won't miss the magazines till this week.

Q: How did the company react?

A: At first they treated us like some sort of bee - buzzing unpleasantly but unlikely to sting. Not surprising really, because in the past we have tended to back down before them. But this time it was different - we grew stronger with every day, and soon the threats began. Planned launches of new magazines - more jobs for our members - were cancelled or suspended and we were told that journalists on suspended magazines would have their pay stopped.

Q: How did you deal with that?

A: It was at about this time that we realised the dispute was not solely about pennies - the claim was small enough to be met easily. No, we saw that the company, confronted with the unpleasant sight of its journalists united in industrial action, was determined to slap us down once and for all. It had become a question of the survival of our union organisation and indeed of our self-respect as a collective. And this knowledge gave us a tremendous unity and strength. We didn't step up our action - no need. We simply held a meeting and told the company "We don't give a damn if you suspend our payment; we're carrying on messing you up until we get a decent agreement" - in different words, of course.

Q: And you won?

A: Yes. Within a couple of days the company made a 180-degree turn and started negotiating on matters on which it had said it never would negotiate. In money terms, we didn't get everything we were after, and even if we had we'd still need more. But yes, we won on basic principles and we got a decent agreement.

Q: Is this kind of fight commonplace in magazine journalism?

A: No, not at all. Certainly, the agreement we won has set new standards for the whole industry. And in terms of unity and determination there's never been anything like it at IPC. IPC is the biggest magazine company in Britain - in the world in fact - and the ripples will spread.

Q: Finally, what sort of support did you get, from your union and from others?

A: Magnificent. The NUJ officials and head office backed us all along the line. Support from other unions, both inside the company and outside was also good. We never once felt isolated.

of their capitalist class enemies and this will provide the basis for a genuine west European internationalism - the support the workers of each country give each other in defeating their own bourgeoisie in their attempts to fasten the anti-working class shackles of the Common Market around our necks.

Ever since the printers' and engineering workers' disputes last spring the labour courts in Germany have been swamped with cases brought by workers against employers

who locked them out. The class war which has come out into the open in Germany at the end of the so-called "economic miracle" is taken a stage further by the steel strike. Capitalist employers have never yet discovered any device for permanently damping down working class resistance to exploitation. Even the most carefully designed trade union structure for serving the interests of employers instead of employees can be seized by workers and made to serve their own class.

Bookshops

Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortess Road, London NW5

Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road, St. Philips, Bristol

Brighton Workers Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton

Northern Star Bookshop, 18A Leighton Street, Leeds

Basildon bookstall Tues Fri Sat Marketplace

Liverpool bookstall - every Thursday at Liverpool University

Hull Bookstall - Old Town Market, Saturdays 9.30-4.00

BRISTOL MEETING: "THE FIGHT FOR WAGES" 7.30 p.m. Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road, Old Market, Bristol 2.