



NO IFS-NO BUTS-NO CUTS

The TUC's slogan of No Return to the Thirties underestimates the gravity of the present situation. We are back in 1911. This government is coming out in open fascism. It seeks to beggar us and then decimate us in the holocaust of war, as before in Flanders. Except that now theirs is the appalling project of launching us into war against the Russian people, recreating the carnage of the Crimea a million-fold. We are facing not just cuts but the absolute destruction of British industry and our people. The truth is that the government is proceeding so fast and so far, because it believes British workers will not resist. Will the willing acceptance by Leyland workers of the demise of their industry not be followed by others? It depends on us alone that that should not be.

THE GOVERNMENT has declared war on the British people. That is clear from the recent publication of the Government's Expenditure Plans 1980-81 and the accompanying statement in the Commons by Biffen, Chief Secretary to the Treasury. The phoney war is at an end. The trappings of civilisation, so hard fought for and won, are now threatened with savage attack. And in the same week Thatcher and Hua, whores of war, parade themselves before the people of Britain.

Government policies at home mirror its policies abroad. As workers we must now engage en masse in the historic fight to save Britain from capitalism and to prevent war. At home and abroad workers are threatened.

Biffen made clear that planned expenditure cuts of £3500 million will put at least another 300,000 on the dole by the end of 1980, and that is a Conservative estimate. Others claim it will be 750,000. Now the Government openly forecasts the effects of their policies, just as Howe's Budget, he admitted, would cause prices to rocket. Their intention is clear. They are the Traitor Class and we are betrayed.

The old, the young, and the infirm are particularly at risk. The Worker has documented for months past the location and proposed scale of cuts. Military expenditure and police activities are underwritten at a cost of millions. Trident missiles at

£4000 million are being financed by teacher redundancies, prescriptions at 70 pence (14 shillings in real money) and housing cuts, to name but a few. The recently published monumental work 'Poverty in the United Kingdom' by Peter Townsend is ignored by the Government. After all he doesn't mention 'law and order' or the 'Russian threat' (He only mentioned 14 million people living in poverty.) To show the completely class-ridden nature of these cuts, while 20,000 teachers from the state education sector face redundancy, £70m is being added to the subsidy of independent schools sector.

And who leads the fight from the Opposition benches? Why, Healey himself who as

Chancellor administered £3500m cuts, the man most likely to lead Labour in the next election. Just like Barbara Castle with her anti-union In Place of Strife ten years ago who led the Opposition against the Industrial Relations Bill in 1970.

As a class we must come to political maturity, throw off the illusions that will hamper our fight. Public expenditure cuts since 1975 have posed a fundamental challenge to our existence and our organisation. How often have we fought off anti-union legislation only to see it return? But now time is running out. These proposals aim at our utter decimation. Our need for a revolutionary perspective was never so clear as now.



Knocking down the Welfare State

Corby lead shows the way

THE STEEL unions met the British Steel Corporation's notice of closure of iron and steel making at Corby by immediate plans for industrial action on a national scale

The executive of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation instructed its members at the Northamptonshire works to black any steel brought to the plant and called on all union members to pull out of further talks with management

At a meeting this week the ISTC will make its recommendations for national industrial action, banning all overtime, and calling for selective strikes throughout the industry, to the seven unions representing 150,000 steel workers. Full approval of these measures is expected and they could have the same kind of national effect as the engineers strike. What has made it possible for the executive of the ISTC to move so quickly in this matter of resisting Government destruction, is the mass campaign of Corby steel workers and their supporters against the Steel Corporation's closure move of Corby and Shotton.

Lemmings at Leyland

How different was the reaction of workers at Leyland to the proposal to close down 13 plants and make 25,000 workers redundant. Their massive vote for Edwardes' proposals can only be compared to an orderly march of lemmings.

Britain's decline - the outlook for us and them

AS DISTINCT from, but related to the overall and absolute decline of capitalism are periodic booms and slumps like the depression the capitalist world is just now entering.

And yet in spite of all these warnings the Prime Minister told the House of Commons on October 30 that the Government intends to stick to the economic policies which have played their part in bringing about this very decline and will persist in further cuts in public expenditure, hiking of the cost of living and making millions of workers redundant.

This is just like Herbert Hoover at the beginning of the great depression in the US persisting in 'orthodox' economic policies which closed down half of the factories in the States and put 15 million workers on relief. And the CBI is so stupid, even about its own narrow interests, as to applaud

Thatcher in her fatuous obstinacy.

But there is one very great difference between our situation in Britain today and the situation in the US before the War. A Labour Government armed with Keynes cannot ride in at the last moment, as Roosevelt did then, to stave off radical change for another few decades. There can be no future Keynes to save capitalism.

Depression

There are plenty of signs of this depression in Britain. Workers have known it for some time. Now Cambridge Econometrics, a team of university researchers engaged in commercial forecasting, are predicting a decline in total output by 1.3 per cent with unemployment rising to 1.8 million in 1980 and 2.1 million in 1981. Engineering output will suffer a decline of 9.3 per cent; motor vehicle output

will drop 12.8 per cent and there will be a 10 per cent decline in instruments and electrical engineering.

A confidential Treasury economic projection shows a steep decline over the next four years in Britain's metal-using industries. Their forecast of the drop in motor vehicle production and mechanical engineering generally is even more severe than that of the Cambridge group.

The CBI has reported a sharp decline in business confidence over the past four months and forecasts a fall in profitability of industrial and commercial companies to below 2 per cent next year. So much for the Government's boast of creating the climate in which industry will flourish

Fascism

So what will they try? They have nothing left but fascism. All they can do now is change the rules of the game to outlaw resistance on the part of the working class to helotry

which is all capitalism on its last legs can afford. That's the context of increased expenditure on the armed services and law and order and legislation to weaken the trade unions.

That is why any refusal to resist the destruction of industry and jobs, as by the workers at Leyland, or any failure to resist cuts in our standard of living, as by those who think the Government has some kind of mandate for killing us off, is exactly like the refusal and the failure of all to many German workers to take on and defeat Nazism at its first appearance.

The true meaning of the Thatcher Government is that capitalism has no alternative but fascism.

For us that means that if we workers are to survive in any conditions but abject slavery, we have no alternative to socialism.

For us the very struggle to exist has become revolutionary.

The Week

WORLD military spending has grown faster than inflation and is now 70 per cent higher than in 1970, standing at \$425,000 million.

"WHAT was permissible in a convict prison for the rigours of penal servitude on the reoccupied Napoleonic site of the 1850's is now simply against nature", says the Government's report on prisons, recommending the closure of Dartmoor and a large-scale building programme to improve prison conditions. The report stems in large part from continuous agitation to this end from prison officers, who have recently won a part of their pay offer. Whitelaw's short, sharp shocks will of course not affect long-term prisoners. Nor will the major recommendation be acted on, namely that the mentally ill and socially inadequate should not be in prison with criminals. On the contrary, this and overcrowding (which is already hideous) will rise, with the wholesale closures of mental hospitals.

PRODUCTION workers at INCO's Clydach plant near Swansea, who make nickel pellets, have been joined on strike by craftsmen, in pursuit of a 35 per cent claim. The strike, in response to an employers' offer of 27 per cent has received both national and international support. Workers at INCO's Canadian and USA plants recently won a 34 per cent claim after a nine month strike, and have pledged all support.

NOT content with filching the profits of our labour, British business (according to the Labour Research Department) donated at least 1.8 million pounds of that, our money, to the party whose aim is the economic ruin of Britain. And yet they attack any trade union organisation dependent on voluntary and not extorted contributions, which opposes this state of things.

NOTHING could illustrate more clearly the total lack of support by the Irish people for the terrorist Provisional IRA than the fact that they depend on gigantic arms shipments from the USA. For all their denials, it is clear that Ireland, subjected to every sort of imperialism including the British army, is to be de-stabilised in the interests of US imperialism. A plan so stupid that only those who want to see Europe a missile base would conceive it.

DECLARED profits of £347 million in telecommunications and £33m in the postal service have not prevented the next round of price rises due to be implemented on January 1st. Meanwhile, the service is worse than it has ever been, and taxpayers money is wasted on circulars that lay the blame on the post office strike.

AFTER the Pope's gallivanting round the world in military aircraft to whip up war fever against the Soviet Union, anything goes, and the Russian bogey is found in the unlikely places. One of the latest is the threat to "strategic islands" discovered by the Lisbon Institute for Strategic Studies. The islands are Cyprus, the Azores, Madeira and the Canary Islands, and Iceland. The natives are totally loyal to the West, said the Institute's Conference, yet, absurdly, the Soviet Union is an "enormous threat".

Historic Notes

THE GREAT October Revolution is 62 years old this month but the passage of time has done nothing to diminish its historical significance. Indeed, as capitalism in Britain sinks into its final decline its great lesson, that the working class in a country can seize and effectively hold state power, has never been more important. Faced with an unprecedented attack on everything they have struggled for over two hundred years, the British working class, like the Russian

people before them, must look

ДОНЕЦКИЙ УГОЛЬ ДОЛЖЕН БЫТЬ НАШ!



НЕТ УСИЯ - СТОЯТ ФАБРИКИ.

НЕТ УГЛЯ - СТАНУТ ПОЕЗДА

ПОКУДА ДОН НЕ НАШ - ГОЛОД С НАМИ.

**ПОБЕДА НАД ДЕНИКИНСКИМИ БАНДАМИ,
№21 - ПОБЕДА НАД ГОЛОДОМ.**

The poster reads: "Without coal - factories stop; Without coal-trains will stand still; While the Don is not ours - we shall be hungry. Victory against Denikin's bands - Victory against hunger!"

Warmongers united on destruction

HUA GUOFUNG has found British ruling class circles the ideal platform for his war mongering attempts to embroil the imperialists of the West with Eastern imperialism at the cost of the lives of millions and millions of working people. He has also used the occasion to advance his own imperialist manoeuvres against socialist Vietnam by continuing to play a dirty game over Kampuchea.

It has been obvious from the day that a factional putch put Hua Guofung in office that Mao Tse-tung was not one of his heroes. That is understandable now that we know who his hero really is - Churchill, the imperialist whose Fulton speech launched the Cold War.

At the grave of Karl Marx, Hua Guofung was met by some British workers, members of NUPE, who suggested that he might learn something about what his new girlfriend was doing to the working class here. But Hua is not interested in workers, only in his close friends the big European capitalists. We say to him what socialists and anti-imperialists are saying to US personnel all over Latin America "Go Home! The only thing we are glad to see about you, Hua, is your back!"

While in Britain Hua, as though he had assumed the mantle of the Son of Heaven, grandly said there

to revolution as the only way forward to peace and prosperity.

The Soviet working class were the inheritors of a long history of political dissent under Tsarism, but the advent of capitalism in Russia widened the scope of this dissent into a formidable weapon. Grouped together into huge factories (the Putilov works in Petrograd employed more than 30,000 people), the Russian workers saw the importance of organisation. The daily struggle for a better existence led to the

repeated outbreaks of strikes which were never purely economic and which led to the understanding that the root of all oppression lay within, at the hands of their class enemy - Tsar, landlord or capitalist.

The Bolshevik Party, with Lenin's influence, provided the organisational leadership which turned general dissatisfaction into resolution to overthrow capitalism and to seize power for the working class.

Fed up with the war far from home which would obviously mean no benefit to the peasant or the worker, the land hunger which had burned unsatisfied across the centuries welled up and burst in the demand for "Peace, Land, Bread". In the February Revolution, mass desertions from the front spilled discontented soldiers into the big cities and factories long geared to war production became the revolutionary arsenal of the working class. Led by women textile workers the cries of "More bread" were soon transformed into "Down with the Tsar", "Down with the War", until a quarter of a million Petrograd workers with one voice pushed the Tsar into oblivion.

The bourgeois government, conniving at a Tsarist restoration with Admiral Kolchak, had to appeal to the armed workers to come to their aid, it became clear where the effective power lay. When the time came to wield this power in another revolutionary thrust, support for the Provisional Government melted away, and in an almost bloodless evening, with the bourgeoisie being defended only by a company of cadets, power passed completely to the workers of Petrograd and Moscow.

A few days later, with the merger of the Soviet Soldiers and Workers Deputies and the Soviet of Peasant Deputies, the historical alliance of worker a

and peasant was complete and one stage of the October Revolution over.

Through civil war, famine, and the indescribably difficult struggle to industrialise, the working class defended their revolution, always surrounded by the hostile capitalist countries, eager to ferment counter-revolution in every way.

With the creation of the Nazi war machine, the capitalist class realised their dream and unleashed a war of unprecedented savagery against the Soviet Union. It was only the singleness of mind and courage of the working class as displayed in the October Revolution that saved the Soviet Union and the world from complete destruction.

If a new clique of bourgeois rulers now struts in the Kremlin, who can doubt that they will eventually be overthrown.

The lessons to be learned from the October Revolution are immense. The fundamental tenet of Marxism, that society splits irrevocably into capitalists and workers was clearly shown as was the fact that the solution to all the problems besetting the working class - war, deprivation and economic disruption - can only be solved by destroying the class enemy within.

As the war-mongers prepare for a new war in Europe, we honour the Russian people and their great October Revolution, so that we can learn and follow that great example. We will not be dragged into the war against them.

French bar lamb Capitalists bleat!

IN RESPONSE to the demands of trade unionists - dockers (who have physically prevented shipment of lamb) consumers and farmers alike - the French government has been forced into preventing the import of British lamb, while French-produced lamb is still available.

The British government stance is to starve us in Britain of the lamb produced here and export it abroad - simply because a higher price can be found in France. Nothing could be more absurd than the chatter of illegality, international rights, unbelievable national chauvinism (the earl with a fleet of Renaults who won't buy a French car! but will he buy Leyland?), when all that is at stake is the profit margin of import-export sharks.

Would the government consider protecting British agriculture from needless imports? Of course not. British bacon producers are driven out of business as the government refuses even to organise an internal market. Danish producers, heavily subsidised, are encouraged to import, and this into Britain, one of the world's largest per capita consumers of bacon. And what has happened to British apples?

The crying need is for total dismantling of the absurd Common Agricultural Policy and withdrawal from the EEC, a movement neither the British nor the French governments are prepared to tolerate. Only mass action by French people has forced its government into a semblance of rationality. The same mass action is needed by the workers of each European country, to force its own government OUT of the EEC.

or slave labour camps.

On my return to Europe people don't ask me about the situation in Cambodia but whether I saw Vietnamese soldiers in the capital. I saw none. But I did see Vietnamese doctors, nurses and scouts in all the hospitals we visited. They had brought with them surgical instruments and drugs.

In Kampong Speu, a city totally razed to the ground by Pol Pot, 41 Vietnamese scouts had built a hospital on the ruins of a former primary school. Vietnamese sappers, mechanics and electricians repaired generators for indispensable electricity in the reopened and restored hospitals, installed airconditioners in the operating theatres and in official buildings and purified the municipal water-tanks. They have now completed the repairs on the railway between Phom-Penh and Kampong Som, the only deepwater port, which will help solve the problem of transporting aid.

The operation by the Vietnamese Army saved 800,000 Cambodians due to be executed by Pol Pot this year, as substantiated in the extermination prison of Tuol Sleng.

As it is, thanks to the young Vietnamese soldiers who gave their lives, the numerous relief societies now eager to come to the rescue of Cambodians dying from famine are able to do so".

Editorial

THE STATE OF BRITAIN

Basic way paramount in struggle for coal

EVER since Russian workers toppled the capitalist system shouting the slogan "Bread and Peace", socialism has meant that as a first priority the people must eat, the children must be fed. How else could there be a next generation to continue the broad march of social advance?

Capitalism is not directly concerned with whether people eat or not. Just as at the beginning of the capitalist era in Britain, the capitalist class was prepared to see people who had been uprooted and herded into cities forced into factories by hunger, so now, at the end of the capitalist era, reports on child poverty show that there is malnutrition in Britain and the Government snatches milk from children and tries to deny food to the families of workers on strike.

Capitalism in its imperialist phase is responsible for famines in which millions perish. While Britain was ruling India, in the Bengal famine of 1942 some 5 millions died - and at the very time this was happening food was actually being exported from Bengal to other countries. During the period that China was a prey to Western imperialist powers, hunger killed off people in their millions; and in those countries in Latin America still in thrall to US imperialism, starvation is endemic. Reactionary governments like that in Indonesia which murdered progressives in their hundreds of thousands to prevent socialism, are now starving hundreds of thousands to death in Timor.

Starvation a weapon of Imperialism

Socialist China was able to feed, clothe and house all her 800 million people and disproved for all time the inhuman lie that people in populous, industrially-backward countries are bound to suffer malnutrition and death by starvation. And yet China today, departing from a socialist foreign policy of helping other socialist countries expand economically and feed their people better, supports, for imperialist reasons, a regime like that of Pol Pot in Kampuchea which demonstrated that it was by no means a socialist regime by letting millions of its people go hungry.

The US has proved that starvation is one of imperialism's main weapons against working people the world over. Not only in its war of aggression against Indochina did it destroy crops and food processing plants; it even used chemicals and defoliants to keep the land from ever producing anything again. That a wretched Kennedy who never dissociated himself from the US's vicious war against Vietnam, should have the nerve to criticise the Vietnamese (who are going short of food themselves to feed their Kampuchean neighbours) must make any honest man sick at his stomach with revulsion.

Oxford fight for Health

"WE CREATED it, we will fight to keep it" was the unanimous statement of a large audience gathered in Oxford. The purpose of the meeting, called by Oxford Trades Council, was to hear from health workers of the attacks on our health service and to take this knowledge and concern to a wider public.

Several speakers told how the proposed government-imposed cuts would cripple an already teetering health service. While Oxfordshire health care had never been properly financed, and has always been short of human and material resources, it is now to be pushed backwards fast.

Numerous hospitals are threatened with closure, while inadequate staffing levels make it impossible to run even the newest hospital safely. Oxfordshire already suffers from a shortfall of 386 nursing posts while EEC directives and VAT will make the shortage of resources worse.

In addition we were told that there is no longer a school dental service in Oxfordshire, X-rays take up to 5 weeks to be processed, old peoples homes are closing, home-helps are being priced out of most old people's reach. And waiting lists have risen by 20 per cent. The situation locally and nationally is drastic.

As one health worker put it, "The Tory government is simply not interested in a health service for workers". Several speakers pointed out that these cuts are a logical intensification of those under the Labour government, a government which fell when workers in the health service and other industries demanded the basic necessities.

One feature of the meeting was the stress that health cuts cannot be taken in isolation. When the Tory government claims that there is not enough productive capacity in Britain to pay for a decent health service, we must reply, "We, unlike you, are concerned about resources, for the health worker knows he needs steel and chemicals as the steel worker knows he needs health. We fight against the whole system of cuts and closures in any industry, including Health and Education, for all are interdependent."

One health trade unionist put it like this: "Our fellow workers must join their Trade Unions, must take an active part in them; they must be made to realise how truly irresponsible they are if they do not strengthen us in the full campaign against the destruction. It is not too strong to say to them, 'The truth is that inactivity in our Unions is very much activity on behalf of those who want to destroy our industries and services.'"

THE THREAT of strike action by 3000 actors in provincial theatres has produced an immediate pay offer. By raising the basic rate by £6 a week, the subsistence and touring allowances by £4.40 and £7.40 a week, the Theatrical Manager's Association has lifted the threat to 100 pantomimes and 22 shows.

WITHIN the mining industry today, we witness how dearly the working class pays for lack of clarity in the wages fight.

Last year the NUM sacrificed its wage claim in order to save the coal industry. Needless to say, neither benefited.

In the fight to save the coal industry, the workers must yield nothing. At their Annual Conference last July, the NUM resolved to save Deep Duffryn Colliery in South Wales from closure. They succeeded - only for it to be listed for closure for geological reasons in the near future.

However, there was no resolve to say 'No to pit closure', and Teversal colliery in the Nottinghamshire coalfield is to close with little opposition.

Pit closures must be opposed not as a token gesture, nor is there a need for a 'cause celebre' but as a matter of principle. Geological faults are not necessarily insurmountable problems but may be overcome by investment and further investment.

This year the NUM has put forward a claim for: a return to November 1 settlement date; the

claim for grade rate to be £140 for faceworkers and £80 minimum on the surface; the introduction of a protection of earnings scheme; the implementation of a four day working week.

Through the disunity amongst the members of the NUM resulting from the acceptance and reintroduction of productivity schemes, the task of fighting for a basic wage has been made more difficult. Throughout the coalfield there is a realisation that unity within the NUM is needed.

There are some notable moves in the industry. Resolutions from areas are revealing a shift away from comparability. During the last round of wage negotiations, the union produced papers illustrating the problems caused by inadequate differentials. The documents highlighted three areas of concern: 1) The need to control and curtail overtime; 2) The fact that wages in general were too low; and 3) That the unity of the NUM was vulnerable in such a situation. If wages are low the question of differentials provides the hammer for driving wedges between grades of men.

To follow the policy of a minimum wage should mean reject comparability. As a correspondent to 'The Miner' pointed out "Apart from the obvious problems - to whom will each be compared? What happens when all the comparisons have been made and we are all paid the same? What will the criteria for the future increases? Comparability is the negation of free collective bargaining".

The wages policy of the NUM is correct in the claim for a minimum wage. It is wrong in that the £80 figure has been reached from a comparability viewpoint.

The fight for wages is the key to saving the British coal industry and the feeling from many areas is that the unity of 1972 and 1974 must be regained. The industry needs a highly skilled labour force which must be attracted to the industry, retained and progress within the industry. The only way of ensuring the future of the industry is by guaranteeing all round job security and high wages. The basic wage is paramount to the struggle to save the British Coal Industry.



Miners are not alone in their struggle. Firemen have reaped the benefits of the 1978 strike by accepting a further 20 per cent increase on the basic. The Fords manual workers are lodging a claim of 37 per cent. Outspoken opposition to planned cuts comes from NUPE and NUT.

Miners' Strike of 1972 'The world on our back'

"THE STRIKE has already won something", said Lawrence Daly at a rally during the 1972 Miner's Strike. "There are eight miners walking around today who would have been killed in the last four weeks."

This comment, given by Kent miner Malcolm Pitt in his book "The World on Our Backs", illustrates the conditions facing the miner in his daily work. These conditions, and the solidarity among the miners which arises from them, are described by Malcolm Pitt as a precursor to his chronicle of the 1972 miners' strike.

Improved conditions in the pit have been won, of course, by union struggle since the early days - and although you won't see women and children down the mine you will see men crawling on their bellies in a narrow tunnel to reach the coal face, sometimes working in deep water, sometimes in extreme heat when to wear any clothing is unbearable.

Mining exemplifies the "socialisation of production", where workers, herded together by the employer as a producing unit,

combine together of necessity to defend against the employer.

And the contradiction between worker and capitalist (or the state acting on behalf of the capitalists after nationalisation) is probably nowhere more sharply defined than in the struggles underground. For the union has to be always on the lookout to defend its members' working conditions against "new methods" and "rationalisation" by the Coal Board. The employer not only uses every last ounce of the labour power he buys from the miner every day. He sometimes takes the miner's life and always robs him of his health. When a miner dies, it is said "his eyes set like two lumps of concrete". Incidentally, it took only a few years for miners to realise that the NCB was no different an employer from the private owner, having closed 548 pits and destroyed 410,000 jobs between 1956 and 1971.

The personalised description of the well organised, well supported miners' struggle of 1972 is a lesson from which every member of the working class

should learn. It was a military operation. The Kent miners were made responsible for the area from Fulham Power Station down the Thames and round the South coast to Shoreham to ensure no power station was fuelled. Workers all over the south east supported the Kent miners by giving them food and accommodation close to their picket lines and taking numerous collections.

Examples of the ingenuity of the working class fill the book. The NUM organised launches to traverse the Thames across the path of scab ships delivering to power stations. Any coal which subsequently landed could therefore be legitimately blacked.

The 1972 strike cannot be seen as a complete entity. It arose out of miners' struggles all over the country, and out of it arose the 1974 strike which was to bring down the Heath government. But 1972 must be remembered as a significant advance in the long history of British workers. "The World on Our Backs" - The Kent Miners and the 1972 Miners' Strike by Malcolm Pitt. Available at Bellman Bookshop.

* IN BRIEF

THE GOVERNMENT is selling 80 million of its shares in British Petroleum. They will sell at 363p each, the minimum application being for 75 shares, so as to make sure that only those with money can make more money.

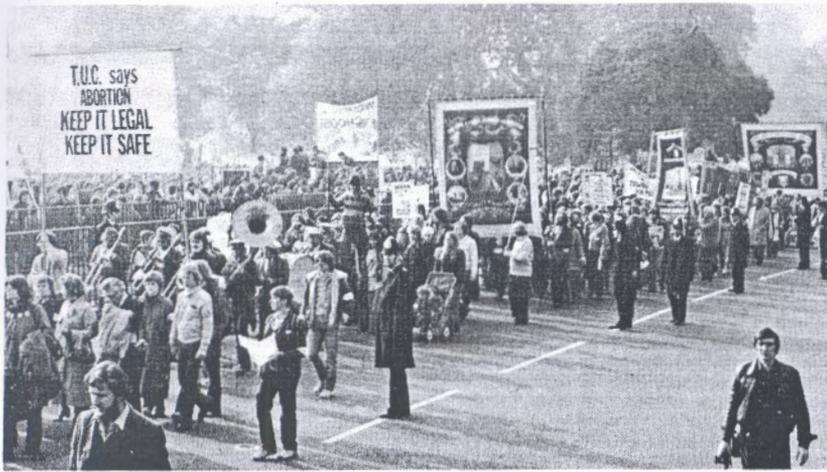
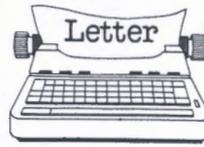


Photo:THE WORKER



TUC march for women's rights

Dear Editor,

As a steward who was at the front of the TUC abortion march, I would like to clarify through your columns what actually happened, since a very confused picture was drawn by television news.

It was a fine display of the strength and organisation of the working class. The trade union movement asserted its support for a working class right which an arrogant government is trying to remove. There was a magnificent display of banners, old and new; the sound of brass bands and punk groups; and a show of strength such that the entire police force of London could not have stood in the way. It was strange to hear the leading police officer asking the Chief Steward and General Secretary for instructions. The march numbered nearly 40,000, men and women old and young, 'all for one and one for all.'

Naturally, the cameras seized on the antics of a hundred anti-trade union marchers led by the London Women's Liberation Group, and shamefully joined by another hundred trade unionists. In their chauvinism, they insisted that 'women should lead the march'. They really meant their own group, since the TUC General Council had filled the front row with women, apart from the General Secretary.

Dressed as if for Halloween, they screamed at male stewards, who had given up their Sunday, "What's this got to do with you, it's a women's issue." And when they got to Trafalgar Square, to face

a platform of women speakers and TUC representatives, they still cried out that their banner must be raised, not the TUC's. Their chant changed from "Not the Church..." to "Not the unions, not the state, Women will decide their fate", as they tried to drown all speeches.

Let us get the politics right. The 'women's right to choose' is the issue of the entire working class. It was a fine thing for the National Abortion Campaign to ask the TUC to organise this march, and well organised it was, down to printed maps of the route and sandwiches for the stewards.

We have a government that wants, like the Nazis of the thirties, to banish women from class struggle by forcing them to stop work. This government's aim, in closing nurseries and stopping school dinners, is that workers' families go hungry but the mothers cannot fight the boss for bread. The rights of working class women are an important issue for the trade union movement to defend.

In addition, the curtailment of NHS abortions is part of the drive to undermine the National Health Service. The Corrie Bill's real aim is to callously use the emotional crisis of unwanted pregnancy to encourage us to resort to private medicine, in this and any other emergency. It is the political significance for the working class that must be appreciated by all, as it was by the trade union movement on Sunday 28th.

Kent teacher

Thatcher sucks Britain dry Enfield

A CROWDED MEETING of teachers, parents and residents of the London Borough of Enfield was held recently as part of the growing national campaign to fight attacks on education.

The main speaker pointed out that even before the present plans £1500m had been removed from the national education budget since 1973, with a drastic effect on the education service. Further cuts could only mean 'dreadful risks' being taken. The meeting heard of actual teacher redundancies being planned by some Authorities and their pleading for the relaxation of statutory requirements. One contributor from the floor stressed that 'education cuts were a complete denial of the creation of wealth

The meeting turned to the situation in Enfield where a borough which already has one of the worst educational provisions in the country is facing the possibility of a 3 per cent cut in funds this year and 7½ per cent next. Speeches from the floor stressed the particular meanness of Tory controlled Enfield Council.

Further education was not ignored; a speaker from NATFHE spoke of the need for continuing access to education and described the cuts in part-time teachers already implemented by the authority.

The meeting concluded in a mood of determination to fight for education both nationally and in Enfield. A

motion condemning the local Council and pledging total opposition to their plans, by whatever action necessary, was overwhelmingly endorsed.

Newcastle

NEWCASTLE CITY Council has recently announced the proposed cuts it is thinking of making in local government. The proposals attack all.

Starting in the area of care for the young with plans to close (by December) all nursery schools, to close all playgroups and outdoor centres to cut free school milk and school uniform grants.

The proposals pass through to an attack on the youth with plans for reducing by 60 the number of teachers employed, to abandon support for school concerts, and to abandon all teacher secondment and inservice training (so preventing the development of new skills).

Finally, and a great number of proposals have been missed out, the proposals attack the elderly and ill with plans to cut the number of home helps by 241, to close a number of elderly people and childrens' homes, and plans to raise OAP's rents.

Glamorgan

IN 1976 the Labour-controlled County council in West Glamorgan attempted to centralise all 6th form education in certain schools in the area, necessitating increased travel



for pupils wishing to pursue certain 'minority' subjects and 'greater' use of teachers offering such subjects.

All teaching unions were joined by headmasters and parents' associations in totally opposing such a plan, on the grounds that pupils were unlikely to pursue such courses in the future and those who were would suffer educationally from the bigger classes involved.

Having been forced to back down three years ago the present Labour-controlled council has gone one step further in accepting Tory cuts, announcing that within 2 years the phased closure of all 6th forms in the area will begin, with such teaching being centralised in just two further education colleges in the county.

This time the council has refused to consult with parents and teachers' organisations. But the response has been no different to three years ago.

Making common knowledge officially secret

GOVERNMENTS find leaks of information a constant source of embarrassment. Their defence since 1911 has been the Official Secrets Act, which has not only been used in cases involving espionage, but also to suppress or discourage the publications of such leaks. The usual procedure is to issue 'D' notices which effectively prevent newspapers publishing information.

The most recent case which resulted in a prosecution was the ABC trial concerning signals intelligence material. The trial degenerated into a farce centred around the identity of Colonel 'B'.

The result of this debacle was a fresh resolve by the Labour Government, then in

power, to reform the Act. The Tories have recently unveiled their own proposals. And any hopes that reform would result in a more liberal Act have been dashed.

There have been cosmetic changes involving some Cabinet documents and 'information' about sterling and monetary reserves. But in critical areas such as defence and international affairs the revisions are more repressive than the present Act. If it becomes law, the new Bill will make it a crime to disclose any protected material, even though it may already be public knowledge.

The authorities would not have to prove any harm to the nation arising from such a disclosure. All they would have

to do is to show that the person disclosing information had reason to know that the material was 'protected'. The penalty would be a maximum of two years imprisonment and an unlimited fine. Civil servants will decide what is 'protected information'.

It can be no coincidence that at a time when the Government is set on pursuing unpopular and destructive policies at home, restrictions are to be placed on reporting leaked information which might help to strengthen resistance to those policies. Not only will the proposed Act effectively hinder investigative journalism in sensitive areas of government activity, but it would also lay the basis for wider forms of censorship

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