

THE WORKER



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NOT SOCIAL CONTRACT SOCIALISM!

PRESSURE from the labour movement to end the social contract which ends its present phase in August continues to mount. Train drivers, miners, motor car workers and technical and managerial staff in both ASTMS and TASS have all declared against the social contract, against allowing their wages and standard of living to be further reduced. Already the reduction in real take-home pay has fallen by as much as 20 per cent.

In this ground swell against the pay policy there is much interest in the meeting in May of the National Committee, the policy making body of the AUEW which last year by a narrow margin voted to support the pay policy. Numerous resolutions against the social contract are pouring in from engineering branches and districts all over the country.

Of course there are those 'leaders' who make a pretense of opposition to appease indignation against the social contract at rank and file level.

And many who are objecting to the social contract will be prepared to be bought off with pro-

mises of more flexibility this time and a measure of concern for the preservation of differentials. The unwillingness of TUC leaders to discuss a pay policy until after the budget reflects their willingness to regard any tax concessions Healey offers as acceptable bait for a third phase of the pay policy.

We must make it absolutely clear here and now that the social contract, too long treated with a respect akin to a death wish by our class, must go - unconditionally.

Already the frenzied howls of the ruling class, their government servants and their mass media, show their fright at the very thought of a working class refusing to be bound by the restraints that have been put on them.

Already those 'leaders' in our own movement who usually at this time come out with heart-rending pleas to help the Labour Government in office are having to demand more flexibility in the pay policy to be able to sell it to their members.

We say the battle against the social contract is not about pay levels and differentials. It is a battle against the capitalist

system itself which crushes us and destroys our country in order to survive on our prostrate bodies.

Social democracy tries to make the chains of the social contract acceptable to us by entwining in them the flowers of 'industrial democracy'. But Bullock and all the rest represent bourgeois democracy not our democracy. The only working class democracy is working class seizure of state power in its own right. It is revolution.

Our rulers, so anxious to bind us hand and foot here in Britain while they range the world for easy profits, whimper because we so much as cough. A good hearty sneeze will clear away the miasma of social democratic fog which has obscured our revolutionary path.

Only our class can save our industry, save our skills, save our country and only by making revolution can we do it. And we can make a revolution. Our potential strength is greater than ever. We have only to use it. Capitalism is in decline and fighting rear guard actions with the ferocity of despair. No one can defeat us but ourselves.

Leyland- Workers must challenge the Contract itself

SIX industrial disputes at Leyland, of which the strike calling into question the social contract launched by the toolroom workers at Longbridge in Birmingham is the most serious, have resulted in the lay-off of 30,000 workers and the halting of production on a dozen models. A strike of drivers at Fords, Dagenham, has brought about further loss of production and strikes have recently disrupted work at Vauxhall.

It is not surprising that the motor car industry should be the scene of such industrial unrest. This was the industry in which was first developed Taylorism, that peculiarly capitalist technique of the moving track method of production which de-skills and de-humanises the process of production. It is in this industry that was pioneered a form of bargaining whereby the employer buys a period of wage restraint with a two or three year package deal using 'fringe benefits' as bait - the precursor in the private sector of the Government's social contract on a national scale. It is in this industry that the irrational and wasteful character of a system of production for profit instead of satisfying people's needs is most obvious with millions of workers applying their labour power to the production of millions of inferior products with built-in obsolescence to replace far safer, more convenient and more economic forms of transport. The utter nonsense of all this from every one's point of view but the profiteer's is shown by the fact that we paid £40m in taxes last year to keep Chrysler going in Britain while Chrysler's overall operations were netting £250m profits!

This helps to explain the exploding into action against the social contract of the toolroom workers at Leyland, and it also helps to explain some of the weaknesses of that action. In the motor car industry the whole process of eroding skills was given a faster impetus by the flat-rate form of the Government's pay restriction and differentials, the distinction between payment for skilled and unskilled work, have been cut from 20 per cent to 10 per cent.

As one of the toolroom workers on strike put it: "When you have been working for a firm for 30 years and you are a skilled man, yet earning less than a typist, there must be something wrong." At the same time Leylands admits it is having to subcontract work abroad because of a shortage of skilled labour and the Government initiates its phoney education debate on why we are not producing enough skilled workers.

Hence the upsurge of indignation against the social contract and the demand for an end to it which all workers must support. But while this action is right, it must not be narrowly based. Their 'unofficial' strike leaders say that they are not striking against Phase Two of the pay policy at all but only against its effects on them. They want to be treated as a separate bargaining unit in pay negotiations in the company so that they can prevent their own position from deteriorating even if the pay policy is renewed for another year.

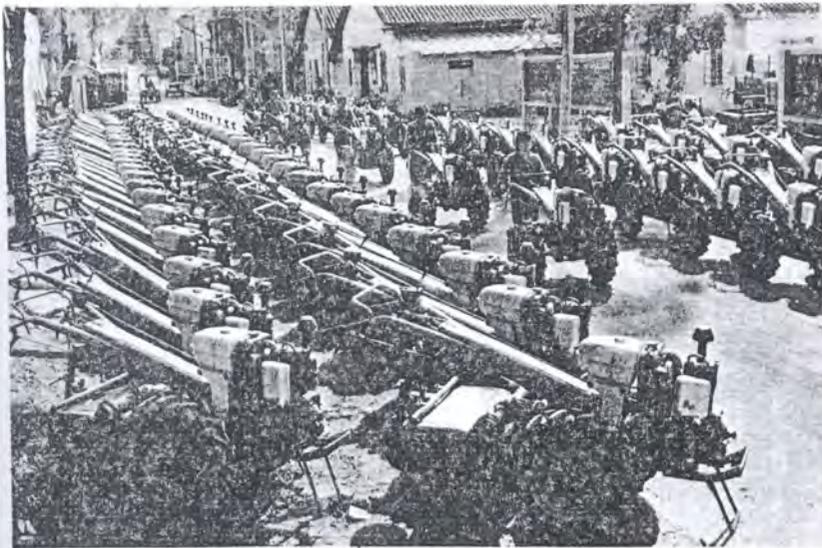
The Executive Council of the AUEW, while agreeing with the demands of the toolroom workers for the establishment of "adequate and acceptable differentials" and promising all possible support at the appropriate time, nevertheless had to instruct them to return to work. Members of the AUEW cannot allow the EC's hand to be tied by a democratic Nations Committee decision to support the social contract and then call on the EC to bail them out of a spontaneous challenge to it.

When the workers at Leyland or anywhere else launch an uncompromising attack on the social contract they will win the support of the whole working class because the social contract is directed in the interest of profits against the whole working class. Employers fully understand, if a lot of workers as yet do not, that the Labour Government is backing profits up to the hilt against the labour movement. As the head of public affairs at Leyland said about workers who strike: "They are not just striking against some sort of management that owns the place but against the Government."



Andrew Ward (Report)

At a meeting of the Middlesex Area Health Committee at the Old Hounslow Town Hall on February 9th, hospital workers and members of the public joined in defence of the NHS (See EDITORIAL page 3)



Walking tractors line up in the compound of the Shaokuan Tractor Plant in Northern China. Recognizing the importance of agriculture, Shaokuan's industrial departments are turning out tractors, chemical fertilizers, insecticides and dozens of other products for rural use.

China - Socialism's great achievements in industry and agriculture

MAO TSETUNG wrote in 1945 that 'The task of the Chinese working class is to struggle not only for the establishment of a new democratic state but also for China's industrialisation and the modernisation of her agriculture'. The Chinese people have applied themselves to this task and have achieved huge and impressive advances, turning a poverty-stricken and semi-feudal society into a country of sound and independent economic growth and stability in both industry and agriculture.

How could this be done? It could be done because the Chinese people have chosen and fought for socialism and have established that the means of production in agriculture and industry belong to the entire people and are used for the benefit of all, answering their needs, instead of the call of capital and profit. In building socialism, the creative and productive skills and abilities of the whole people have been released and applied to economic development.

How is this demonstrated? In agriculture, for example, the total yearly output increase is nearly double the rate of population growth. In the spirit of self-reliance, of maintaining independence and keeping the initiative in our own hands' farm mechanisation will be almost

complete by 1980. In a vast country like China, natural conditions and farming techniques differ considerably from region to region, but the workers engaged in the manufacture of farm machinery and the people working on the land together have solved this problem.

So, by turning out medium and small farm machines, the differing needs for farm machinery in hilly regions, plains and areas dotted with lakes or criss-crossed by waterways, are met. By giving local industry the major role in manufacturing farm machines, the initiative and special knowledge of the local people is fully used to achieve greater, faster and better results in agriculture. On the basis of the peoples' agricultural communes, the scale of farmland improvement and building has been constantly expanded. The principle of 'taking agriculture as the foundation and industry as the leading factor' has been implemented with outstanding success.

'Without independence, freedom, democracy and unity, it is impossible to build industry on a really large scale'. Industry has indeed been built on a really large scale. China produces most of its own machinery, ranging from petrochemical and power plant to machine tools, compu-

ters and communications equipment. The electronics industry is rapidly developing. Steel production meets the needs of agriculture, industry, national defence and scientific research. Yet at the same time at the Electrical Transmission Institute in Tientsin, a 250-watt hydraulic turbo-generator about the size of a kettle was specially designed and made to meet the needs of two families who tend forests and live far from other people. Chinese industry has advanced 'by serving the people, and relying on them also.

The correctness of Mao's words in 1945 has been proven: 'The productive forces of the Chinese people will be released and given every possibility to develop only when the political system of New Democracy obtains in all parts of China'. Apologists for capitalism write about the technological gap the Chinese have to make up; but it is capitalism in absolute decline which lags far behind China where socialist relations of production have freed a whole people for creative work. Surely our own working class, the working class of every capitalist country, suffering the closure of industry and the increase of unemployment have important lessons to learn from the revolutionary example of the Chinese people.

NEW YEAR GREETINGS TO THE CHINESE PEOPLE AND PARTY

Comrade Hua Kuo-feng,
Chairman, Central Committee,
Communist Party of China.

Dear Comrade,

The Central Committee of CPB(M-L) sends warm fraternal greetings to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the occasion of China's New Year. While we have hitherto not singled out such a day we felt that the last year was so full of sadness and tragedy that we particularly wanted to convey our sincerest comradely feelings to all comrades in the CPC.

The year which saw the passing away of our dear friend, Prime Minister Chou En-lai, and the great leader of the world's proletariat, Chairman Mao Tse-tung, also witnessed one of the worst natural calamities to hit the Chinese people - a devastating earthquake. All these disasters the great Chinese people have surmounted courageously and, under the leadership of the Party, are developing socialism and consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat.

We who are striving for socialism in the oldest capitalist state in the world reaffirm our allegiance to Marxism-Leninism and pledge to fight the poisonous cancer of revisionism in all its forms.

Long live proletarian internationalism which sustains the revolutionary struggles of workers and peasants throughout the world.

Reg Birch for Central Committee

Middle East - Who can declare peace between classes?

THE CENTRAL question in the struggle of the Arab people is the question of imperialist exploitation in the Middle East. Diplomatic talks, visits by US Secretary of State Vance to the Middle East and the shuttle diplomacy of his predecessor from one capital to another are no more than a cover for the consolidation of such exploitation.

Peace in the Middle East will not be brought any nearer through juggling about with state boundaries or the establishment of a Palestinian state on this or that part of Palestine. Neither is it a question of the existence of Israel. Rather it is a question of the existence of a base of imperialism in the Middle East in the shape of the state of Israel. There can be no peace while such an aggressive base exists. President Sadat of Egypt, Assad of Syria, King Hussein of Jordan and Rabin of Israel driven by fear of their respective proletariats

are only too happy to jump in the arms of one imperialist power or another. As US secretary of State Vance said following his tour of the Middle East; the Arab states as well as Israel are desperate for peace. Desperate to declare a formal peace so as to turn their attention to the developing class struggle in their own countries. The support the Palestinian people are seeking must take the form, as it has done judging by recent developments, of the peoples of the Middle East fighting their own ruling class.

The Geneva conference now favoured by the Arab states, Israel as well as the US, and by the Soviet Union is a device to formalise imperialist presence and exploitation of the Middle East. The spectre of revolution is haunting Arab and Israeli ruling classes. Formal peace might be declared. But it will be a sham. For who can declare peace between classes.

Welsh roundup - The struggle continues

MORE than two hundred representatives of many of the local branches of the major public sector unions (NUPE, NALGO, CPSA, TGWU) marched through Swansea on February 19th. Sections of those unions represented are at present engaged in direct action against the local authorities' plans for expenditure cuts.

Swansea District Council has pursued a consistent policy of undermining the strength of trade unions. Its attempts to achieve economies through 'natural wastage' are being strongly resisted. There exist at present within this authority 46 vacancies, and a number of vacancies in the past have been filled by open-ended temporary appointments. The council has attempted to achieve a 5 per cent reduction in manning

levels throughout the authority, and has introduced a staff review to facilitate this.

NALGO has replied to this by boycotting the staff review and putting an end to the practice of filling full time posts with temporary appointments, as well as going ahead with its proposed overtime ban from April 1st.

The 200 UCATT members at Pontins, Prestatyn, continue their occupation of the site despite a writ, and now have official union backing. In their attempts to prevent lump labour finishing the job. The same determination is reflected by 30 AUEW members building an electric arc furnace for Dupont steel at Llanelli. Their three-week-old strike over bonus payments has resulted in their dismissal and a lock out.

NALGO fight in Medway

A CAMPAIGN of struggle is being waged by local council workers in Medway, North Kent. The Borough Council have threatened 25 workers with redundancy, including the Directors of Finance, of Planning & Architecture and of Environmental Services.

A one day token strike organised by Medway NALGO was an overwhelming success. The Trades Council and union members from a local engineering factory were among those supporting the march. Despite an invitation, the local Labour MP, Bob Bean, discovered a previous alternative engagement.

Typists, directors and manual workers from NUPE all gave support on the picket line - the only section of workers to cross

the line in significant numbers were the tenantes - so that they could supply refreshment to the pickets!

One of the conveners said he was delighted by the support from the working class. "We know this is not an economic measure - it is a political attack. The Council have cut two of the most skilled and brilliant directors - probably because they are the most outspoken.

Workers in the Finance Department in particular were shocked and angry at the sacking of their director. The way the Finance Department has been cut - it is virtually unworkable. They have sacked the only highly qualified man in the Rate Collection Department!"

EUROPEAN STRUGGLE

FOLLOWING the strike at Fords Valencia, and the struggle of Spanish workers for Union recognition, a wave of Union action against the intensification of class-collaborative legislation has recently erupted in France, Holland and Belgium. Dockers in Rotterdam have spearheaded the battle against the Dutch government's version of the Social Contract, and building workers' strike action has smashed through wage legislation. Belgian rail workers struck for the first time in 17 years against the ruling class's attempt to institute a programme of cuts and reductions in services.

Roundup against Social Contract

RACS Woolwich and Mitcham

RESOLUTION "Carried" at a mass meeting of all unions at RACS Woolwich and Mitcham working under Engineering Agreements:

"This meeting of members of all unions represented by the Engineers and Bodyshop Joint Negotiating Committee of Woolwich and Mitcham, are united in opposition to any continuation of wage restraint, in the form of an extension of the discredited Social Contract, beyond the current period, terminating at the end of July.

Over the past two year period of wage restraint, designed to cope with a promised 5.6 per cent inflation rate (which was in fact nearer 15 per cent), this period has been a total disaster for our members and their families, suffering cuts in their stan-

dard of living, not reflected amongst all strata of Society.

This mass meeting urges and requests officials and delegates of all trade unions involved in the welfare of their members and families to abandon the disastrous policies of the Social Contract and return to more traditional and beneficial methods of negotiations with the employers, acceptable to our members."

Opposition in Brighton

IN BRIGHTON, a motion, proposed by the NUJ and seconded by the EEUPTU, called on the Brighton and Hove Trades Union Council to hold a May Day Demonstration for the return to free collective bargaining and an end to unemployment.

By its vote the Council showed its overwhelming rejection of the Social Contract.

Metal Box, in Portlaid; the engineers have shown that the Trade Union Council's decision is backed by workers on the shop floor. More than 150 AUEW members - all but a handful of the Factory's membership, signed a petition calling on the Executive Council to reaffirm the Union's independence with a return to free collective bargaining.

SPCS resolution

RESOLUTION put to branches of the Society of Public and Civil Servants.

"That this Conference rejects the whole philosophy of the Social Contract which has led inevitably to cuts in members living standards and massive cuts in Social Services. It therefore instructs the Executive Council to disassociate the SPCS from all 'Social Contract' agreements and to pursue an independent salary claim designed to improve members standard of living."

its 34,000 bakers to come out on strike from February 27th in support, the employers conceded the women's claim.

3000 strike

PIPE layers, members of G & MWU, stopped work on February 25th in protest at the use of contract labour. Members of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions employed by North Thames became involved when they refused to cross picket lines.

The Confederation had already arranged for a one day strike and mass meeting on March 3rd anyway as the beginning of a campaign against North Thames refusal to implement a restructuring agreement which would mean £9 per week for craftsmen.

terialise.

The fact is that you can't beat dumping by counter-dumping. But Britain's membership of the EEC seems to stop any action to halt dumping within Europe or in Britain. Playing the rules of the EEC game means that whatever you do, things get worse.

Bakers fight for equal pay

WOMEN in the baking combines are fighting for equal pay. Allied Bakers, Rank Hovis McDougal, Spillers, and the Co-op are refusing to upgrade 5000 women who make bread rolls and are paid £5 less than the men.

After the Bakers' Union called

Steel - Dump the dumpers

THE BRITISH Steel Corporation is currently making great play of its 16 per cent price reductions in hot rolled coil and sheet steel prices. This is the Corporation's answer to the dumping of low-priced steel in Europe by over-producing countries elsewhere.

While this action may temporarily ensure continued sales in a depressed market, the problem of steel in Britain is not helped at all. The lower prices will ensure that British Steel makes a huge loss, thus backing up the Government's excuses for accelerating closure in Cardiff, Ebbw Vale, Teeside, Shotton and Port Talbot - especially so if the hoped-for upturn in steel demand this summer fails to ma-

CAMBODIA FORGES AHEAD



Cambodian workers threshing rice in the Anchang agricultural co-op on the bank of the Mekong River. The rice harvest this year is an exceptionally good one.

CAMBODIAN workers and peasants are getting to grips with the massive tasks of establishing people's power and reconstructing the country.

Journalists visiting Cambodia in January this year saw for themselves the growth of a new generation of industrial workers. A number of factories ranging from tool-repair shops, smelting plants, timber-processing

work shops to ship yards have come into being.

The common aim of these projects is to serve agriculture and the needs of the people, the form of advance is on the basis of independence, initiative and self-reliance.

In Phnompenh, workers in the city, among them former military commanders and guerrilla fighters in the revolutionary

army, together constructed three medium-sized workshops in five months. Starting from scrap, workers in Phnompenh have built a shipyard.

Cambodian workers and peasants are showing the world that they can not only beat the might of the imperialist powers on the battlefield but that they can build a socialist economy for themselves as well

Editorial

THE GOVERNMENT'S cuts in public spending have no economic motive. They are not designed to save taxpayers' (our) money. They are part of a strategy of destruction of a class, so their role is political.

Cuts in schools, hospitals, housing do not make even bourgeois economic sense, for a rejuvenated capitalism - were it a possibility - would need healthy literate workers. "Cut education and health for the sake of industry" is a contradiction in terms.

Capitalist economists admit in their more rational moments that spending cuts have not affected and will not affect inflation, and result in vastly increased unemployment. What is the purpose of cuts, according to them? "Publicity" - to convince money-lenders abroad that workers here seriously intend to sacrifice themselves to help British capitalism to a 'new recovery'. In other words, their real aim is to destroy the working class and more - to gain our acquiescence in our own destruction. The "publicity" would be for them to present to the world the spectacle of our self-immolation.

All cuts are part of this political whole. Where we negotiate over redundancies, it is their victory; where we refuse even to discuss cuts they are already partly defeated. We must oppose every cut, and not fall into the trap that it is more worthy to save this than that - teachers v school meals, doctors v hospital porters. Every single cut is an attack on us, on all of us. We will not be reformists who argue when they hear of cuts in the Inland Revenue that they prefer inefficiency in that area, or that there are too many civil servants anyway. Nor can we bargain wage restraint for less spending cuts as if the two were opposites. They are two sides of the same Social Contract coin. To oppose cuts must be to oppose the Contract as a whole.

No group of workers is excluded from this fight, because in fighting cuts we are not fighting for reforms within the present diseased form of society, riddled with capitalism. This fight is the assertion of our dignity and of our belief that the future belongs to us. We must seize that future.

Scottish roundup - The struggle continues

IN SCOTLAND the "devolution debate" has receded as workers are compelled to deal with problems of cuts, closures and redundancies that beset the whole of Britain.

Education

Staffing and students from all 4 teacher training colleges threatened with closure are already out demanding support from workers for their struggle to keep the cottages intact.

Two colleges (Falkirk's Callender Park and Ayr's Craigie College) are basic to the future of education in Scotland. If we let the doors close on them, all primary education in Scotland is left without a centre. The nature of the work there lays the base for future development in learning for the children.

Building

The organised strength of 1000 shipyard workers at Marathon, Clydebank saved their place of work from the axe. Not so in construction however. Nationally the employers have put quarter of a million building workers on

the dole knowing that the fragmented nature of trade union organisation makes resistance easy to overcome.

In Scotland the axing of the Storehouse New Town project has removed further the prospects of work for builders and dealt a cruel blow at the over-crowded families in the Glasgow Central Belt area.

Energy

Faast on the news that huge coal reserves have been discovered beneath the Forth comes the decision to close Polmaise Colliery a few miles away at Fallin. 600 miners face redundancy until their action committee forces the NCB to concede victory.

Who needs coal - unless for export - when industry is being so savagely destroyed throughout industrial Scotland. For the same reasons who needs power and power stations. At Babcock and Wilcox on Clydeside this is the question that should be posed by the 1100 who have accepted voluntary redundancy. Babcock is the key on Clydeside to the rundown in electricity generating plant.

Figures say it all

ONE OF the arguments for the social contract was that it would bring down inflation but in January alone the retail price index rose by 2.6 per cent. Over the last year wages rose by only 11.8 per cent while prices rose by 15.1 per cent. That is not wage restraint: it is a swingeing wages cut.

The proposals for a new 'prices clamp down' is just bait for luring us into accepting one more round. Hattersley, the prices secretary, leaves us in no doubt about that when he says, "Falling living standards cannot be restored by a simple abandonment of the social contract, a sudden increase in public

expenditure or a haphazard price freeze that squeezes profits, prevents new investment..."

In the same period of rising prices Lloyds and Barclays announced rises in profits over the last year of 55 per cent, and ICI made profits of £540m, £200m more than in the previous year. Even though profits have been re-defined to make them seem less outrageous we shall see some pretty staggering figures as the yearly accounts of national and international firms are announced.

It is all very simple. Unless there are wage cuts and cuts in public expenditure for us, there would be no huge profits for them

LSE victory for education

THE MAGNIFICENT blow for education struck by the students of the LSE in their occupation has completely exposed the vicious nature of the present attacks upon education. But more than that it has shown that a united and determined working class is an irresistible force.

In the course of the struggle against increased fees, the students of the LSE defeated a scurrilous press campaign, an intransigent administration and base treachery on the part of some of its elected leaders.

When four members of the union executive resigned and went to the gutter press with tales of intimidation and violence, the students replied by totally rejecting their cowardice. At a mass meeting a proposal by this quartet to call off the occupation was defeated with contempt.

When the director, Ralf Dahrendorf, having refused to negotiate and having failed in his attempt to split the students, went to the law courts for an injunction the students reacted with renewed determination. New posters appeared offering the hand of comradeship support for the 'boys in blue' and their present campaign for the right to strike.

When 600 police arrived to evict the students the confrontation politics of the administration were ridiculed by the students who left in an orderly and peaceful manner which emphasised the unity and determination shown by the students throughout. Indeed the good humoured banter exchanged between the students and police typified the jollity of the whole campaign. When police eventually battered their way into the occupation one student was heard to remark on the quality of the room service provided by 'our comrades in blue'.

The messages of support from all across the country show the depth of feeling in the student movement against education cuts. The national demonstration on March 9th will be a massive demonstration of the solidarity and determination of students as members of the working class. ***At a meeting in the rain on March 1st more than a thousand students of University College, London voted for a two day occupation in protest at increased fees.

Liverpool teachers threatened

ALL teachers in Liverpool have recently received the minority Labour Council's plans to 'redeploy' staff between city schools. This was incorporated in a 'code of practice'. Both secondary and primary schools have been informed that they are up to 25 per cent overstaffed! They must submit plans outlining schemes to reduce their numbers to establishment quota. What schools were not told was where these teachers were to be redeployed - for all schools are apparently overstaffed. They undoubtedly mean the dole queue. Is not the class's experience that redeployment is without exception a prelude to unemployment.

This news has followed closely the education authority's previous plans whereby they will seek to reduce the number of teachers in Liverpool by between 700 and 1000 over the next five years. All this under the guise of a falling birth rate and school population.

Teachers in Liverpool must repudiate this 'code of practice'! We have a responsibility to our unemployed colleagues, to our future, our children.

Not a single cut!

Kent teachers resolve

The forthcoming cut of £3.7 million in the Kent Education Budget for 1977-78 includes a £1.8 million cut in books, stationery and apparatus, and £640,000 on maintenance of buildings and grounds. Well over 60 primary school teachers are to be lost on the basis of falling rolls, despite the fact that Kent still has among the worst staffing ratios in the country. In just one school the Authority hopes to reduce the establishment from 14 teachers to 10!

Before these cuts were published, a decision was made in principle by Kent NUT to initiate sanctions against teacher unemployment. Now it is necessary for that decision to be taken up and implemented in every Association and every school in the county. Within Gravesham Association overwhelming support for such action has been given in all but two schools that have discussed it.

FIGHT TO ORGANISE

AT LANCASTER university several hundred students - acting on a mandate from the student union - occupied the university administrative building for 48 hours in the first of a potential series of disruptive guerrilla actions in protest against the attempt by the university authorities to dictate through the law courts how the students union should spend its own funds.

The university seeks a ruling that no payments shall be made by the student union to any organisation outside the university itself - payments technically called "ultra Vires". This of course is a direct attack on the right of the students to belong to a union at all.

The action at Lancaster - withdrawn after 48 hours - was successful in that the vice-chancellor of the university undertook that no legal action would be taken against the students by the university. However, Lancaster students are correctly wary - they know how certain "freedom-loving" individuals have gone to the bourgeois law courts against other trade unionists recently.

Avon acts

Last autumn Avon NUT members voted overwhelmingly for action against the cuts - they are now acting in line with that decision.

Following the sacking of 32 part-time teachers and the reduction in hours of another 34, members have taken action in over 200 schools by refusing to cover any absence known in advance. This has resulted in employment for many supply teachers and has eased the burden on permanent staff. Avon Authority's attempt to implement new restrictions on the availability of supply teachers will have serious consequences... for them!

The latest round of cuts will involve some 300 redundancies among teaching and non-teaching staff, showing a blatant contempt and disregard for the future of the county's children and employees. Refusal to teach classes over 35, of which there are 400 in Avon, will soon be implemented. It is clear that teachers and the Authority are diametrically opposed in their aims. Teachers wish to defend education and the Authority is bent on destroying it. It will be a long, hard fight.

WORKER INTERVIEW

800 OCCUPY to save jobs at Wildt Meilor Bromley factory, Leicester.

Q. What is the background of the occupation?

A. On the 21st January 1977 the management called in Union officials at 4.25 pm (the factory closes at 4.30 pm) and told them, with no consultation, that the factory was to be closed and 400 men were to be made redundant. The machinery and the remaining 400 workers were to be transferred to another factory in the Bentley Group in Leicester.

The factory has a full order book but the management propose to send the work to other factories in the group at the expense of our jobs. We feel that this means that the men are being made redundant and not the jobs. In actual fact it turns out that the work we do is not to be transferred to another factory in Leicester, but that our jobs are to be re-created in Surrey, where labour is cheaper and not unionised.

This is yet another attempt by the Bentley Group management to smash organised trade unionism - we will not allow them to succeed. Q. How many men are involved?

A. Virtually all the men - about 99 per cent - are supporting the occupation, about 800 men. The shop stewards had a mandate from the shop floor that the men would back them in any action they took if negotiations fell through.

Q. What support have you?

A. The wives have set up a 'wives support group' which has been campaigning and organising food for those on duty in the factory.

The occupation has just begun, but so far TASS has made it official, and it is being recommended that the AUEW do likewise.

We have had many donations from various groups, and many people are helping us to organise fund-raising activities.

Q. What is the aim of the occupation and how long do you think it can last out?

A. Our aim at the moment is 'no redundancies'. At the moment morale is very high indeed. We have organised ourselves into three shifts, each working for eight hours. We have an entertainments committee and we have spent much time spring-cleaning and cleaning the machines. We wanted to continue working but the management withdrew all insurance.

Q. In what other ways have the management reacted?

A. They say they want to negotiate, but they have cut off the telephones and they are not coming in here.

(Since the Interview the management have decided to bring a Court Injunction against the men.)

New pamphlet

AT this time when the capitalist Government is bent on destroying the National Health Service which the working class won through struggle the CPB(ML) has brought out a new pamphlet: FOR HEALTH - A REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE. Available at all CPB(ML) bookshops at 10p.



Public Meetings

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

March 11th	Karl Marx
March 18th	Vietnam and Cambodia on the Road to Socialism
March 25th	Health
April 1st	Meeting to be arranged by New Albania Society
April 8th	No meeting planned
April 15th	Science, Research and Technology in Jeopardy
April 22nd	Revolution - Britain's Duty

ERITH
March 7th From Workshop of the World to Industrial Graveyard, White Hart, Erith High St. (opposite Erith Post Office) 7.30 p.m.

EXETER
March 9th Higher Education: The Struggle for the Future. Crown and Sceptre, Lower North St., Exeter 7.30 p.m.

BIRMINGHAM
March 11th Albania - The Only Socialist Country in Europe Dr. Johnson's House, Bull St., Birmingham 7.45 p.m.

CROYDON
April 14th Away with the Social Contract Federation House, Elmwood Rd., Croydon 7.30 p.m.

Bookshops

Marxist-Leninist literature and CPB(M-L) publications available.

Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortess Road, London NW5

Brighton Workers Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton

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ABORTION BILL - TO ATTACK OUR CLASS

THE ABORTION Amendment Bill which received its second reading is another insidious attack, launched against the health of the working class.

In any society the right of women to terminate pregnancy must be an accepted fact. In Britain the 1967 law was fought for and won by the working class. That victory is now under attack. Is it no coincidence that this Bill emerging from a government committee comes at the same time as the closure of so many hospitals and a general attack on the NHS.

One of the means used by the bill to restrict this right of women is to reduce the period after conception during which an abor-

tion may be performed. At present this stands at 28 weeks. The bill proposes an absolute ceiling of 24 weeks, with stringent conditions attached to any operation intended for the time between the 20th and 24th week of pregnancy which would rule out about a third of the abortions performed in 1973.

A further clause of the bill would severely restrict such charities as the British Pregnancy Advisory Service which performs 22,000 operations a year.

At a time when infant mortality is rising, poverty increasing and the health service under attack, this mean and petty bill must be resisted as an attack not just on women but on the whole class.

Maternity closures

AND while there is this move to limit abortions, the Bexley and Greenwich Health Authority is trying to close a maternity hospital where 700 babies are born every year!

Doctors opposing the closure have organised public resistance. At a meeting of 150 people at Bexley Heath it was pointed out that there were going to be so few beds for maternity cases that women in some cases would have to be driven for miles through city streets to the nearest hospital "and many births will occur in the ambulance."