

THE WORKER



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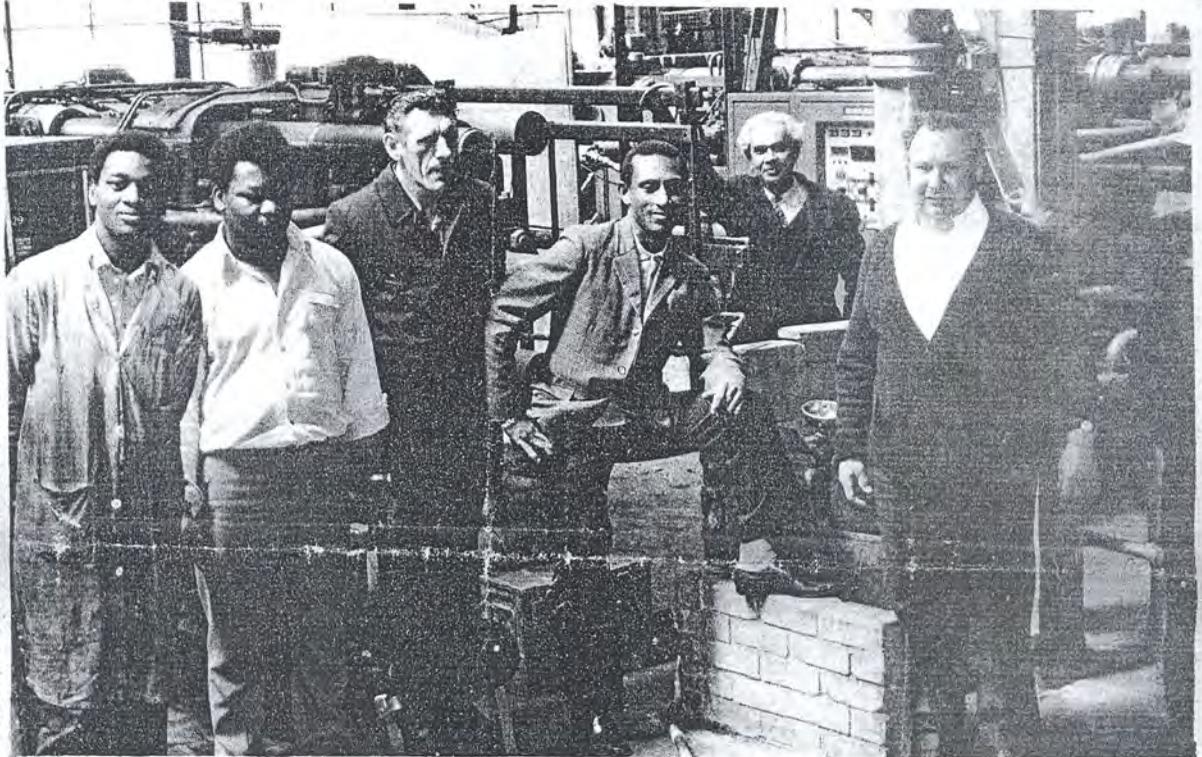
MID-JUNE ISSUE

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FEWER JOBS ; MORE OCCUPATIONS

Redundancy announcements used to mean the end of struggle. Often the unity, the organisation, the fighting spirit built up in years of action against the employer would be destroyed, dispersed by the closing of a factory. But with unemployment above a million, a change is coming about.

At first haltingly, but now with ever-increasing confidence, workers are occupying factories to stop redundancies. And from redundancy fights the tactic spreads to the fight for better wages and conditions. Not just because the sit-in is a proved winner in factory after factory. But also because it fits a growing determination to challenge the employing class. To challenge their power to throw men out of work. To challenge their power to control the factories.



All over Britain engineering workers are occupying factories as a new tactic in their struggle over wage claims like these workers at the Stanmore Engineering Company in London (see p.3)

GOVERNMENT VS. GUERRILLA WAR

The Engineers threw the Engineering Employers' derisory national offer out of the window and went over to a factory based guerrilla struggle, striking wherever the class enemy was weakest and fighting on the whole of their claim or whatever part of it was particularly relevant to local conditions. The Employers' Federation countered with a directive to all members 'to adopt a policy of maximum possible escalation when faced with industrial action on the basis of making the action as costly to the Unions as possible.'

Guerrilla Action

Anti-trade union legislation in the United States in the form of the Taft-Hartley Act with its cooling off periods like that recently imposed here on the railmen, has had the effect of bringing about fewer, longer but more predictable strikes—

just the kind of confrontation the Engineering Employers' Federation has been calling for. This is what led Henry Ford II to say at the time of the Ford strike in this country that in the U.S. employers had ample warning of strike action and could prepare for it but in Britain you never knew when or where the workers would strike next.

The only effective answer of the working class is to ignore the Act and fight their own kind of guerrilla struggle while building up their strength for the final confrontation at a time they will choose.

This is the line the dockers have adopted and in the Appeal Court counsel for the container firms whose lorries are still being blacked complained that 'the docks had become a no-go area for the law.'

To enable the Industrial Relations Act to limit workers' struggle

in the way intended shop stewards must not be agents of the workers who elected them but servants of the Union who could be dismissed by union leaders when called upon by the Industrial Relations court to do so; and union rule-books must be reformed to become the equivalent of the 'articles of association of a limited company or the statutes of the foundation of a charity!'

But the dockers are not being drawn into arguments about 'servants' or 'agents', or whether the T&GWU rule-book is 'defective' or not. They are simply persisting in

struggle—a 'persistence in error' which counsel for the employers likened to 'the persistence in the sin of heresy which used to get people burned at the stake!'

The Chairman of the General and Municipal Workers' Union has said: 'We must exploit every loop-hole in its ill-drafted clauses so that it is undermined and its inadequacies exposed to the wider public.'

This is simply a prescription for learning to live with the Act. It is a particular instance of the general line of social democracy, of learning to live with capitalism instead of smashing it.

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Railmen beat Govt.

The rebuttal of the ballot by the rail workers makes nonsense of the Industrial Relations Act. The Government accepts this. Hence Barbers' threat to 'Protect the nations!' This is to ensure that the rail workers and all others come to heel when Corporate State Laws fail. Bring in the troops?

Does the Government still fail to understand that the railwaymen, like other trade unionists, have achieved clarity? And this despite all the attempted confusion and the desire to suborn leaders — get them hopelessly compromised in their negotiating positions. The railmen fight and have shown in a ballot, thrust upon them in stupidity, that they are not stupid.

An all-out defeat for the Government and a lesson to moderates — don't qualify, don't quibble, don't nibble — you cannot avoid the battle.

The stand of the railway workers was against the Government — the Rail Board is the same thing. A refusal to succumb to inflation — a fight for a living wage.

What now? A question not so much for the railmen: they have won out against the Industrial Relations Act and all coercive legislation, but for all workers. Of course there will be further repressive and punitive acts against the workers by the Government.

Ballots which have no right to be imposed, should be ignored. Their basis is — never mind what you think (even when we ask you) do what we tell you!

The railmen have made a mockery of this illegal law. The Government will now defy their own pernicious Act. There is no time to spare — the outlaws attack the lawful, the workers.

TWICE THE STRENGTH

The appearance of this, the first mid-month issue of **THE WORKER**, marks an historic development in the growing maturity and strength of the British working class and its Party, the CPBML. Through this Party the workers of Britain have acquired for the first time their own press enabling their paper, **THE WORKER**, to come out every fortnight.

This fundamental step forward was never more important for our class—coming at a time when the employing class, wracked with internal and external contradictions, are desperately intensifying their efforts to drive Britain toward the corporate state.

This leap forward has come about for three reasons, the first being a growing demand from workers throughout the country for a fortnightly paper. Secondly, the tremendous generosity and support of thousands of workers in Britain has made this step possible. And thirdly the Party took the decision that all obstacles had to be overcome in order to meet the growing challenge from the employing class by equipping our working class with a more regularly produced revolutionary newspaper.

Since the first monthly issue of **THE WORKER** over three years ago we have consistently reported the real political significance of the developing struggle in Britain. By applying scientific socialism, the principles of Marxism-Leninism, to concrete conditions in this country and by learning from the rich experience of the working class in struggle we have been able to formulate a correct political line on the major issues confronting our class.

DON'T VOTE

At the time of the General Election of 1970 we alone urged workers to have done with the phoney parliamentary alternative of two parties equally capitalist, equally anti-working class, **DON'T VOTE**, we said; **ORGANISE TO DESTROY CAPITALISM!** And this line was so in accord with the thinking of the most militant section of the working class that in many constituencies workers in their thousands boycotted the polling booths. The same line applies to the Government's attempts to impose secret ballots on workers in struggle.

Analysing the industrial struggle we put forward the strategy of protracted war which workers must carry through to the end with guerrilla struggle the correct tactics for the present stage of class conflict. This line was adopted by the Engineers who are waging ever-mounting factory-based struggle against the employers and devising new techniques of conflict like factory occupations.

When the Labour Government sent troops into Northern Ireland in 1969 our understanding of the nature of British imperialism enabled us to say straight away that they had no business being there at all. Ireland is one nation. **BRITISH TROOPS OUT!** The workers of Britain must make this land an untenable base for British troops to operate against their fellow workers in Ireland.

SOLIDARITY

We opposed the blue print for anti-working class legislation devised by the Labour Government, In Place of Strife, and we identify ourselves completely with the actions of workers against the present Government's Industrial Relations Act which is the equivalent of Nazi Labour Laws intended to destroy the trade unions as working class organisations.

We provide news not elsewhere available of the revolutionary struggles of people everywhere against imperialism: the heroic people of Vietnam and the rest of Indo-China who have defeated US imperialism, the swelling revolutionary tide in India, Dhofar, Palestine. We support these struggles of our class brothers not just by marching up and down and waving banners but by building our revolutionary movement in this country against our common class enemy.

CLASS STRUGGLE

The mutterings of those 'educated' fools who say that the workers can be 'bought off' with concessions and minor reforms, that the class struggle will 'fade away' with the 'redistribution of wealth' are exposed as rubbish. Far from the class struggle receding it is intensifying with each passing day, embracing an ever increasing number of workers from wider sections of the working class. The truth is, the greater becomes the oppression in Britain, the sharper becomes the struggle.

The prime task facing our class is not simply to wage a relentless series of battles to defend what we have gained but to prepare ourselves for winning the war when the workers will, in a decisive manner, replace the dictatorship of the employing class with the dictatorship of the working class.

In preparation for this victory, we, the workers, must quickly develop our own revolutionary Party, the CPBML, and our own paper, **THE WORKER**. Let the fools chatter, let the cowards flinch and let the traitors plot — the workers have nothing to lose and the world to gain. History is firmly on the side of the working class and its Party.

ON THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT

REDUNDANCIES

Metro-Cammell's carriage and wagon works at Washwood Heath, Birmingham is cutting its 1,100 strong labour force by 300 from August, only a few months after receiving a £15 million order for 121 London Tube trains.

Britain's biggest animal feed producer, BOCM-Silcock is going to be feeding less humans in future, 2 of its 9 port mills will be closed over the next year, and administrative staff are also being cut. When the two Unilever companies, British Oil and Cake Mills and Silcock and Lever Feeds, merged last February they employed a total of 7,000. Now this is down to 6,500 and the new measures mean a further 660 redundancies.

At the very heart of Britain's heavy industry the slump in capitalist investments is dragging down the process plant industry. 70 major fabricating firms, designing and building chemical plants, steelworks etc, remain in the industry, 21 having closed down or been taken over in the past 6 years. This has destroyed 6,000 jobs since last November, bringing the number down to 34,000. The number of manual workers on the construction sites is expected to be cut from 40,000 to 33,000 over the next three years.

NO LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE

The root cause of the redundancies? Profits. And don't just take our word for it. The P. and O. shipping line passenger division is taking three ships, employing 1,850, out of service and the shore staff are being cut by 25%. The reason? "The group's world-wide profit improvement programme!"

ROWNTREE-MACKINTOSH

250 engineering workers at York went on strike for parity with engineers at Rowntree-Mackintosh's Halifax factory. They wanted £4 a week more to give a basic of £29.

A settlement was finally reached after one month giving £3.25 immediately and another £1.50 from November.

PROFITS UP

Engineering employers swearing blind they can't afford wage increases had better not swear on a copy of the latest 'Company Financial Results in Mechanical Engineering'. This survey of

1 survey of all the major concerns shows pre-tax profits on capital employed up to 13% in the year to March 1971 compared to 11.3% the previous year.



BUILDERS

Following the building workers' claim for £1 an hour and a 35 hour week, action in Birmingham is centred around Bryant's, with more than 100 sites in the area, especially at the sites at Woodgate Valley where the company has 500 men on an estate of 2,000 houses. But the militants did not manage to bring the whole workforce out and Bryant's hit back with blackleg labour and with blacklisting. In protest against the blacklisting, two men sat in in lower cranes on Bryant's Londonderry House site. Meanwhile in London another building worker was sitting in on top of a crane in protest against redundancies when the subcontractor employing him went into liquidation. (Although the same subcontractor is now in business again, with 'lump' workers, on a different site). This action was followed up by a half-day strike and a march of building workers in protest against subcontractor's use of 'lump' labour. To sit in and stop the use of a tower crane is a useful new tactic — but the determination of one can never substitute for the determination and organisation of many.

VOTE FOR

OCCUPATION

Nearly 3,000 workers at the Ransome, Hoffman and Pollard ball bearing factory at Newark, Notts. voted almost unanimously on 1st June to occupy if the management went ahead with plans to make more than 500 redundant. The company had announced plans to dismiss a total of 1,475 at its three factories. Since the company was formed from the three separate firms in early 1970 the workforce has been cut from 15,000 to 10,000. But the workers have called a halt and declared that the occupation would last until all redundancy notices were cancelled.

VICKERS

With Vickers' 1,200 boilermakers sticking out for an extra 5p. an hour on top of the management offer of £1.75 above the recent nationally negotiated shipbuilding rate, the management hit out and effectively closed down the whole town of Barrow. By closing the yards, some 8,500 workers were put out of work. The town's unemployment rates shot up from 3.6 to over 30 per cent. Such power (every second family in the town is depen-

'PEACE' IN IRELAND

The people of Northern Ireland, through their no-go areas and direct action have pinned down the British Army to the point where it is unable to operate as it wants in what is claimed to be a part of the United Kingdom. This is a very real achievement, one which cannot be lightly given up.

ONE ROAD

Whitelaw wants "peace" in Ulster, not "to save innocent lives", but to maintain the firm hold of British imperialism in that country. He is the agent of that same ruling class which has introduced the Industrial Relations Act to create "peace" on the shopfloor. For workers in Britain and Northern Ireland there is only one road to lasting peace and that is to fight until the capitalist system which enshrines the violence of exploitation, of unemployment and imperialist war, has been done away with.

BOSSES' STATE

Those who would see Whitelaw as a Prince Char-

ming come to rescue Ulster from the big bad wolf of Faulkner's Stormont would do well to remember what the British State represents. It is nothing other than the armed protection of British capitalism, the bosses' main support against workers' struggle.

CORPORATE STATE

When through the Industrial Relations Act, Immigration Act, entry in the Common Market, as well as its violent occupation of Ulster, Britain is rushing headlong towards a Corporate State, it is a strange time to come to terms, through truces and "moves for peace", with that State, and allow it, once more, free rein to plunder Britain's oldest colony.

The task of the hour that faces the Irish and the British people, is not how to reach agreement with the British ruling-class but how, led by a Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics, to make each fight a step on the road to overthrowing that class once and for all.

BLACKBOARD BUNGLE

Since a shopping basket of household goods which cost £5 only 18 months ago would now cost £5.90 (an increase of 12% per annum), schoolteachers should hardly rejoice at their recent 9.6% arbitration award. Let's not be sidetracked into any false sense of victory simply because we were awarded 2% more than Further and Higher Education teachers, or believe that this 2% in any way justifies accepting arbitration. The truth is that no fight was put up by NUT or ATTJ union members. Each chose a different way of dodging the struggle and the discrepancy in the pay awards

has nothing to do with the main issue: ALL teachers will fail to get REAL wage rises while they sit back and allow arbitration to take its course without themselves engaging in an all-out effort to win their demands.

WHY NO ACTION?

In 1970 teachers proved their great bargaining power. Concerted action secured almost their whole claim. How is it that teachers, who were so aware of the need for struggle and who fought in such a determined way, could be so inactive throughout the recent claim?

JAGUAR

The threat of a strike by 8,000 workers at Jaguar's Coventry works — the first major move in the area on the engineers' claim — resulted in a doubling of the pay offer from £1.50 to £3.00 on basic rates and New Year's Day as an extra holiday.

A SCREW LOOSE?

Who gets locked out in a lockout in the prisons? Do striking prison officers occupy the cells? But the Home Office does not have to face these problems just yet. The Prison Officers Association conference by a small majority rejected a resolution to set up a fund for use in any strike, lockout or other industrial action.

SINGER

4,500 production workers at the Singer factory, Clydebank went on strike demanding an extra £4 a week, a shorter working week, improved conditions and better holiday pay. The management has offered increases of between £2.50 and £3.25 by next January.

SUNDERLAND

Engineering workers in Sunderland imposed a work to rule and overtime ban as part of the engineers' claim. Hepworth and Grandage, making piston rings, tried to pile on the pressure. They announced that future plans for extension at Sunderland had been abandoned and that the engineers' action was threatening the whole future of the works. Then they started sending workers home because of a 'lack of work'. Despite the vicious level of unemployment in the North-East, the 900 production workers were not frightened off. Instead they walked out.

ENGINEERS STRUGGLE BROADENS

— DOCKS —

FROM A L'POOL DOCKER

As the dockers study proposals for dealing with redundancy in the docks before taking their decision on a national strike, we publish a report from a steward in the Liverpool docks where the blacking of container lorries brought Government and dockers into direct conflict.



In an attempt to get the T&GWU to curb its dissident docks section the Government has used the Industrial Relations Act to fine the Union and to obtain a court ruling that the Union is responsible for the actions of its stewards. The Union leadership would also like to exercise full control over the 'troublesome' ports, but is finding this impossible in the face of organised rank and file dockers.

Fight for jobs

The recent struggle of dock workers has centred on the issue of containerisation and the rank and file's policy of blacking, which developed following the Devlin Enquiry's recommendations in 1967. Then bosses and trade union leaders combined to get the dockers to accept a report which carved up the dock industry in preparation for the enormous job-loss which predictably followed the implementation.

The dockers' stewards got together on a rational basis to fight the bosses and the struggle developed around the fight for jobs. The blacking action decided upon then has in the past two months been used systematically and effectively. The fight for jobs has intensified as the full effects of containerisation have been seen.

Containerisation

Before, a typical storage job could involve 150 men for 10 days. Using modern machinery to handle the containers the same amount of material can be stowed by 6 men in a single day.

No one is against progress, but who benefits? Certainly not the workers. Teams of 6 dockers getting about £40 each are seeing a single warehouseman getting £20 doing what is substantially their job. They know into whose pockets the difference is going. Dockers alone know the value of the job and are therefore fighting for the right to pack the containers.

Long considered an overpaid and troublesome section of industry by the bosses and an embarrassment to the less militant leaders of the union, the dockers are refusing to sit back in the face of the drastic reduction of their numbers. There were 67,000 dockers in 1970. This year there are 40,000 and in ten years time, if all goes according to plan, there will be 7,000.

The dockers have been late entering the struggle against containerisation for several reasons. It is difficult to carry out effective blacking when you don't know what's in the container and the dock authorities are well organised and can easily switch container ships from port to port.

Formidable weapon

However, the main factor has been the lack of unity in a work-force scattered around the country. Employers, abetted by certain union leaders, have been quick to exploit this weakness. Parts of the Devlin Report recommendations were differently accepted throughout the country so that no two ports have the same agreement with the employers. The union leadership has no interest in the unity of the dockers. They have preferred to concentrate attention on the transport section which, as well as being larger and more lucrative, is also even more fragmented and thus more easily handled.

Clearly, in the protracted struggle the dockers have entered upon they are going to have to rely on themselves. Their strength lies in the level of consciousness of the workers themselves, their experience of past struggle against the bosses and the determined leadership of the stewards who represent their will to fight. In this struggle as in all others the workers have one formidable weapon— their own organised strength.

MANCHESTER AREA

BRISTOL

The Westinghouse Brake and Signal Company, the largest factory in Chippenham, was brought to a standstill this month as 2,500 engineering workers staged a surprise occupation.

Following a ludicrous offer by management, worse than the national offer of the Engineering Employers' Federation which the AUEW rejected, the workers planned in secret the occupation and carried it out with military precision.

As one of the workers said: 'It's difficult for management to deal with this because they don't know whether we've come to work or not until we're inside'.

Workers at the factory expressed their determination to keep possession till the management came up with a reasonable offer to the claim.

STANMORE OCCUPATION

Throughout last year the workers were pressing their employer for improvements in the bonus scheme. This culminated in a strike lasting five weeks in November-December. A settlement was reached which gave an extra 2½p on waiting time and an hourly rate increase of 5p. It was also agreed that negotiations would commence in January of this year on a new bonus scheme.

No such negotiations have taken place, the employer claiming that this was due to disruption of production arising from the Miners' strike. The shop stewards then put in their claim in line with the AUEW national claim for £6 per week, 4 weeks holiday and a 35 hour week, this claim also involved the workers at the Queensbury factory of the same firm.

Standstill

The AUEW official with the stewards presented the claim to the employer in May and no agreement was reached on any part of the claim. The workers at both factories decided on occupation but were forestalled at Queensbury where the employer locked them out.

However both factories are at a standstill with the Queensbury workers sitting in in shifts with the Wembley workers.

These factories produce the castings for Zenith Carburetors and the strike and occupation are having their effect on the Zenith factory who are rapidly becoming involved with the consequent lay offs. The occupation continues with the workers in good spirits.

By the end of May more than 45 separate firms had buckled under the determination of the workers in the Greater Manchester area, who had gained concessions on all three points of the claim— pay, holidays and hours.

Although there are still 12 factories in the area being occupied, a number of settlements have been made recently, while Ferranti have shut down five of their factories in the area as 'a reprisal for go-slow tactics by the workers', causing 8½ thousand to be locked out.

The 1000 workers at Bredbury Steelworks at Stockport, the first factory in the area to be occupied on 15th March, rejected an offer of a £3.50 a week increase, continued their occupation and on 22nd May accepted an offer of the full £4 a week plus two days extra holiday.

At G.E.C. - A.E.I. at Trafford Park, the 3,500 shopfloor workers have accepted an immediate £2 a week, with a further

£1 a week from next March and an extra day's holiday this year and next. One of the engineering workers at the factory told us: 'We were a bit slow off the mark here. The lads were locked out for a month when we should have been occupying the place, but the overtime ban's still in force. We've learnt a lot from this though, and this'll be just one of the battles we'll be involved in. If they think this is going to shut us up for the next three years someone's going to be sadly mistaken.'

Other settlements have been made at Flexibox, in Sharston Wythenshawe, Linotype & Machinery, Kearns Richards, and Record Electric as well as other factories in the area. At Linotype the 900 workers have accepted £2.50 immediately with another £1 in November, plus an extra 2½ days holiday by next year. A similar agreement was accepted by the workers at Kearns Richards, while the overtime ban will continue at both factories.

The 70 workers at the A. J. Edmeston factory at Eccles had been occupying the plant for the last seven weeks before the agreement was made. Before this the men had been on short time, but have now accepted the bosses' offer only on the condition that there is full employment. The workers at the factory have also agreed that the overtime ban should continue until there is a reduction in the working week.

At the B.S.C. factory at Trafford Park the 280 workers have ended their occupation of the plant, while the bosses have made threats that up to 60 of the men 'may have to be made redundant'. A worker told us: 'Yes, we've got the increase we've been after, but we are definitely not accepting any redundancies. If the bosses here think that we'll occupy the factory for increased wages, etc. and then just sit back and watch 60 blokes get the sack, well they really must be stupid.'

WORKERS' CONGRESS

The CPBML was privileged to send a delegate to the 7th Congress of the Trade Unions of Albania in May. He writes:

This was a congress of workers, but quite unlike a Trade Union congress in any capitalist country. The difference is fundamental, because in Albania, the workers are not engaged in economic struggle against employers and a capitalist ruling class. They settled that issue long ago. They drove out the Fascist and Nazi invaders and proceeded to take all power into their own hands, once gaining that power never relinquishing it to class enemies at home or abroad, but proceeding to build socialism.

Down to earth

An outstanding feature of the speeches was the down-to-earth content, no punches pulled, no covering up, everything out in the open, no hushing up. Examples of bureaucratic behaviour were exposed to the light of day, not in an atmosphere of point scoring so familiar at the British TUC, but because the theme of working class control so prominent at the congress cannot go along with dictate from above. Again and again it was stressed that nothing handed down to the workers at factory level or from the state organs must be received without question, that the imprint of control by the workers must be on all decisions.

Whilst always critical the congress simply



Rita Marko, Chairman of the Central Council of

Albanian Trade Unions addresses the Congress

and industry was virtually non-existent. Not only was this so but the agriculture was the most backward, some of the flattest land was swamp and marshland, a breeding ground for malaria which afflicted nearly half the population. This land, drained and in cultivation, is now a huge asset instead of a liability. This is typical of how adversity has been transformed to advantage. Only under Marxist-Leninist leadership could this be achieved and developed in the certainty that with the working class firmly in control there could be no turning away and going back. In the words again of Rita Marko, 'Approving in full the Marxist-Leninist line pursued by our Party, and thinking highly of the results achieved, the working class and its militant organisations of the Trade Unions of Albania, holding the red banner of the Party higher and higher, are determined to march always in the forefront of work and struggle.'

To walk in the streets in town or village and mingle with the people is to see the living evidence of socialist achievements in a healthy people well fed, well dressed and cultured. It is difficult to understand how all this has been achieved against the fact that before the revolution Albania was 87% agricultural

'A VICTORY FOR ALL'

EXTRACT FROM PARTY STATEMENT

We strongly condemn these latest war crimes of US imperialism, which betray the fear of defeat being sensed by Nixon and his government as ultra-modern military technology proves to be no match for peoples' war waged by peasants and workers of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Your victory is a victory for all of us fighting to overthrow the rotten capitalist system that enslaves us. The British Government, past master in colonial wars, and this very minute escalating its own colonial war against the people of Northern Ireland, will naturally support US imperialism's bloody deeds in Southeast Asia. It neither represents nor speaks for the working class of Britain. For workers here, as in every country of the world, the magnificent struggle of the great Vietnamese people is an inspiration for our own fight.

PRODUCTION DEFIES BOMBING

In the story given below of a farm in North Vietnam we can see the human spirit created by years of struggle for freedom and socialism - a spirit not unlike that shown by the people of Britain during the blitz.

Moo Chau farm in Son La Province of North Vietnam was built as a socialist enterprise some 10 years ago. Young people demobbed soldiers, men and women from the plains all flocked in answer to their Party's call to make a huge area in the mountains of the north-west, then covered with weeds and scrub, into a grand socialist farm which would combine tea planting and cattle-farming.

Ever since U.S. imperialism started attacking the north the young men have gone to the front leaving mainly women workers both in charge of production and defence. In the three years, 1965-68, when U.S. bombing was intensified the farm

workers shot down 7 bombers, captured 3 pilots while, at the same time, increasing production quotas of tea, maize and milk.

Protecting the cattle is more important than their own lives and women workers of the livestock brigade have dug underground shelters for the cattle who are driven there every time the bombers come.

Workers of the tea processing factory have also shifted to night work. They too have dug caves in the mountains so that production can continue day and night despite enemy bombing.



"MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL COOPERATION"

NIXON IN MOSCOW

The Soviet Union, despite having its ships in Haiphong harbour bombed and having one of its sailors killed, was determined to have Nixon visit Russia, soft-pedal U.S. aggression in Indochina and proceed, in the words of the Financial Times, "from co-existence to co-operation on a broad front." Such co-operation is very necessary for both parties.

On the American side its losses in Indo-China and its generally low economic position relative to its ever-escalating military expansion has necessitated some kind of accommodation with its nearest rival - the Soviet Union. The possibilities of rationalising their military machine especially when faced with the enormous cost of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, the ironing out of differences between their common expansionist aims and the reduction of forces in Europe now that the Soviet Union is no longer a socialist threat to the capitalist

status quo -- these were some of the American objectives. Undoubtedly they were also keen on Soviet pressure on Hanoi to stop fighting and compromise on terms favourable to the U.S. But since this kind of brokerage has been used to no avail in the past, surely Nixon does not continue to harbour illusions about Moscow's leverage over Hanoi? The Vietnamese people have stated categorically, and continued to show by their actions, that they will fight for the next twenty years or more until the last foreign aggressor has been kicked out of their land.

Fraud

Much has been said in the propaganda about the better prospects for peace in the world because of the Soviet-American treaty on the limitation of anti-ballistic missiles. But war and peace don't depend on this kind of bargaining between the two super-powers. It is the same kind of fraud which was tried out on the world

The Housing Finance Bill will introduce huge rent increases for large sections of workers over the next few years. Tenants will suffer a disguised wage cut through the rent book so that landlords and financiers can maintain and extend their profits.

The essence of the bill is an extension to council housing of the 'fair rents' formula of the Labour government's 1965 Rent Act. The system of means-tested rent rebates for families receiving a weekly wage is an attempt to make large numbers of workers totally dependant on the welfare mechanisms of an increasingly corporate state.

RENT REVOLT GROWS

Throughout the country the forces are gathering. Tenants associations are being formed or existing ones are preparing for battle. Marches on town halls and public meetings have been held. It is now for the tenants to decide whether they will organise rent strikes to defend themselves and when and how they will take place.

But tenants have a history of militancy against such rent increases and as a new struggle dawns some of the lessons of the past should be remembered. The classic examples are the 1960 St. Pancras rents battle, and the 1968 struggle with the G.L.C. In the latter fight, tenants, relying on their own strength, and organ-

isation, forced the increases to be dropped. Under the threat of such independent mass action the G.L.C. was unable to evict a single tenant when the increases were not paid. Unity and independence won the day, and it was only when the movement became involved with legality and 'fighting through the courts' that it lost its direction and degenerated.

Once again tenants will learn that they must fight their own battles on their own terms, organise themselves into associations and not place their faith in phoney 'leadership' by Labour councillors playing the party game with the Tories. Whichever party is in

power the rents still go up, and the election promises fade into the background.

The struggle intensifies, on all fronts, and the fight on the housing question is a useful supplement to the principal fight at the point of production. The antagonists are the same: the workers, against the capitalist class which subordinates all social needs such as housing to private profit.

The class which controls the means of production must be destroyed, and with it the whole system of land and property speculation. Only a strategy which recognises this can succeed in solving the problem.

LYDDA NO SUBSTITUTE

Nixon's 24-hour stop in Teheran while returning from his summit with the revisionists in Moscow emphasises the importance with which the Middle East is viewed by the imperialists. What worries Nixon and his counterparts in the USSR is that revolutionary movements in the Middle East are gaining ground - the people of Dhofar have extended their operations; the Communist Party of Iraq (Central Command) is beginning its armed struggle and in Palest-

ine, the forefront of the Middle East anti-imperialist confrontation, the Fedayeen, overcoming their difficulties, continue their operations inside occupied Palestine. And this despite the UN resolution, the Jarring mission, the Rogers plan, the massacre of Palestinians in Jordan and the collusion of the Arab regimes against the Palestinians.

Adventurist

The killings at Lydda airport hit the headlines in the British Press immediately. Those who do not raise a finger against the daily murder of men, women and children by US bombs suddenly display shock and horror. While in Jordan, King Hussein, hands dripping with the blood of thousands of Palestinians, cried his moral indignation. What criminal hypocrisy!

not the Palestinian revolution. The mainstream of the revolution is a consistent and protracted armed struggle which alone will lead to the ultimate defeat of the imperialist forces and the liberation of Palestine. Adventurist actions, the 'glamorous' idea of a roving band of revolutionaries without a mass base, bring no advance for the revolutionary forces.

The Palestinian people see through such actions as hi-jacking and blowing up planes and find that blackmail and theatrical stunts are no substitute for mass struggle. The Al-Kareemeh battle was won by the heroism and fighting spirit of the Fedayeen engaged in concrete armed struggle; no hi-jacking (of the whole El Al fleet if you wish) would have made the slightest difference.

The Arab regimes who have always opposed the Palestinian revolution and accepted super-power plans for 'peaceful settlement' unequivocally supported the Lydda killings as 'showing that the Israeli forces can be defeated. The Palestinian people do not need such events to prove this. They have inflicted many defeats on the Zionist forces since the beginning of armed struggle in 1965. The support of such people as Aziz Sidky, the Egyptian Prime Minister and Al-Badr of Iraq seeks to strengthen opportunist elements in contradiction to the mainstream of the Palestinian revolution.

All revolutions have their set-backs. The important thing is to continue on the road of protracted peoples' war, for there are no short cuts to revolution.

But such activities as the Lydda killings are

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- JUNE 23rd FRIDAY. Film Show "Strike" 7.45 p.m. at the Bellman Bookshop.
- JUNE 30th FRIDAY. Public Meeting on the 7th Congress of Albania Trade Unions addressed by the delegate who attended on behalf of the CPB (ML) 7.30 p.m. at the Bellman Bookshop.
- JULY 1st SATURDAY. Jumble sale, a wide variety of goods to choose from. Bellman Bookshop.
- JULY 7th FRIDAY. Film Show "End of St. Petersburg" 7.45 p.m. at the Bellman Bookshop

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