

# THE WORKER



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From the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam to the people still under the Thieu-US tyranny

DEAR COMPATRIOTS,  
The Nguyen Van Thieu junta directed by the US imperialists has been striving to rush tens of thousands of youths into the war in sabotage of the Paris Agreement and against the legitimate aspirations of the entire people. We call on all Vietnamese to unmask the odious and cruel face of the U.S. -Thieu clique. Let's rise up to defend our sons and brothers and our life.

We call on all parents, members of religions and all those who think of the future of the young generation and the country, we call on all youths, students and pupils to stand up together and with the entire people to defeat the U.S. -Thieu clique's scheme of forcible conscription, forcible evacuation and concentration of people and intensification of the war.

SOLDIERS, OFFICERS, POLICE AND PERSONNEL OF THE SAIGON ADMINISTRATION,

You must clearly realize the failure and inevitable collapse of the Nguyen Van Thieu administration. Oppose its deceitful and vicious policies aimed at pushing you to the most tragic death. Join your families and native villages and hamlets to oppose all terror campaigns and land-usurping operations by the U.S. -Thieu clique.

Bravely stand on the side of the just cause of our entire people for the building of a peaceful, independent, and prosperous South Vietnam and for the eventual peaceful reunification of the Fatherland.

## VICTORIES FOR PEOPLE'S WAR

It can scarcely be possible to overstate the magnitude of the victories being gained in Vietnam. The U.S. looks on bewildered, helpless, as its south east asian strategy collapses in ruins. This debacle, the rout of Thieu's spent divisions, is the most eloquent proof - if proof were needed - of the invincibility of People's War.

It has always been a fundamental tenet of the Marxist-Leninists, and of them alone, that people are more important than weapons, that armed with a correct political point of view a small nation can defeat a much larger oppressor, an apparently weak nation can triumph over the seemingly stronger. It is surely no exaggeration to say that the victory in Vietnam marks a turning point in world history, for it was not secured in the aftermath of a war between imperialists as was the case in the Soviet Union, Albania and China. On the contrary! Vietnam was the chosen battlefield of reaction. Here it sought to assert the superiority of steel and terror to the forces of progress, to the human spirit. To their eternal credit the Vietnamese were the first to travel this most arduous road. Many, many more will follow. The enemy is much weaker. The route is more clearly marked.

People's War has two distinguishing characteristics. Firstly, it is firmly grounded on the bedrock of the broadest sections of the population. Secondly, it is directed by the most advanced scientific understanding of society, Marxism. To this end the struggle is led by the party of the working class (the most advanced class in society) - a Marxist-Leninist Party.

The principles of People's War were first formulated in the fight for liberation and the democratic revolution in China and in Albania. Here too the theory was elaborated, tried in the testing heat of battle, and proved valid. This legacy to the whole of progressive mankind has been greatly enriched by the experience of the Vietnamese revolution, dearly won and therefore the more dearly cherished. In Britain we may well exult that the fruits of this triumph accrue also to us - but let us also acknowledge our indebtedness, for we played no part in gathering the harvest and let us not forget the fawning pro-American policy of successive British Governments which we did nothing to change.

For more than two years the stru-

gle in the south has centred on the just and reasonable demand for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The content of that agreement embodies fully the aspirations of the Vietnamese people, namely, peace, independence, democracy, national concord, neutrality and the ultimate peaceful reunification of the country. The agreement was won at immense cost in lives, suffering and hardship. The prime obstacle to the enjoyment of that victory is the U.S. -backed Thieu Government, the policy of which has been characterised as a 'four no's' approach - no respect for its signature, no ceasefire, no peace, and no national concord at all. Thieu himself has said that 'everything must go on as previously'.

In the face of the stagnating situation and against a background of rising demands for an end to Thieu's frustration of the popular will, the NLF and the PRG have acted to end further US interference and obstructionism of the Thieu Government. The sweeping successes of the liberation forces demonstrate clearly that the existence of the Thieu Government was based solely on American support. The programme of the NLF (1967) and of the PRG (1969) are in total accord with the Paris Agreement. Both stated that their main tasks were to build an independent, prosperous, neutral democratic and peaceful South Vietnam and ultimately to achieve the peaceful reunification of the country. The first step towards those ends is an effective application of the provisions of the Paris Treaty. In order for that to become possible Thieu must go. Thieu will go!

The wringing of hands and shedding of tears over the plight of the the refugees by Government and press are as disgusting as have been their attitudes to this heroic liberation war of the Vietnamese people all along. Every effort has been made to throw people into panic by lies about what they can expect from their liberators. The demoralised puppet soldiers have mingled with refugees to secure their escape or to be able, perhaps, to regroup and carry on farther south an unjust war for U.S. dollars. If the refugees only knew what conditions are like in the the Democratic Republic of the North and in those parts of South Vietnam already liberated, they would have remained where they were like millions of their fellow countrymen and greeted their brothers in the Liberation Army with open arms.



People of the High Plateau in South Vietnam celebrating their liberation.

The Management is now getting tough and sending threatening letters to all employees.

The unity of members not sacked with those who are is magnificent. Adopting a true class attitude with scant regard for the boss, workers took from the main site work that they had produced and stored it in the confines of the factory they occupied. Workers on all London sites have downed tools and travelled as fast as they can to attend mass meetings.

The main union in dispute, the AUEW, has received tremendous support from sheet metal workers and electricians and plumbers working for the Company. The support has come from the liaison and respect for one another that has developed over the years by a willingness to join together and present a united front against the common enemy, the employer.

A fair day's work for a fair day's pay is a sick joke in a sick society. This is a blatant attack by the employer to smash trade unionism if it does not conform to what an employer thinks it ought to be - meek and mild.

Workers who watch the episodes on television on the slave trade, can quite easily draw the parallels. We are wage slaves. The ship that is capitalism throws overboard those who dare oppose it, and those it considers necessary to dispense with to keep itself afloat.

Workers drown in a sea of unemployment. Some do die physically, others die mentally, and others physically deteriorate.

## Crosfield Electronics FROM DEFENCE TO DEFIANCE

Workers at Crosfield Electronics held a mass meeting on Wednesday 26th March and decided to occupy the No. 1 site. Nearly all of the 180 workers on that site had been given the sack as from the following day. The employers' plan was to transfer the work of this site to their firm 'Westwood Instruments' in Peterborough, where a few of the men were offered employment. They hoped that this carrot for the few, and redundancy payments for the many would divide the workers against each other and put paid to any resistance.

However, all the manual unions are 100 per cent in support of the occupation. They are fighting not only for the right to work, but for the right to work where they live, in London. Struggle began with a demonstration and lobby of the GLC and workers' representatives met local MPs

and Meacham, Under Secretary to Wedgwood Benn. The MPs did no more than pass the buck on to the Department of Employment. No one was surprised that Social Democracy did not come to the aid of the working-class, though it was necessary to go through this exercise to show willing before stepping up the struggle.

The occupation enjoys 100 per cent support of the manual workers. All members of London factories with true class-consciousness, with correct class leadership, have rallied round the Shop Stewards Committee half of whom have been sacked.

In a tactical move the other two sites continue to go to work, but are taking time off to picket the main factory and occupied site. Machine shop members travel two miles and do two hour stints on the picket line.



Outdoor factory meeting of Crosfield workers.

Comrade Tung Pi-wu, member of the Central Committee and the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party, and Vice-Chairman of the National People's Congress, died in Peking on April 2nd, at the age of 90.

One of the founder members of the great Chinese Communist Party in 1921, all his life he fought for the cause of the working class, winning the love and respect of the Chinese people and progressive people throughout the world. His death is a loss to workers everywhere.

# The Worker Interview

One of the workers occupying the Crosfield's No. 1 Site gave an interview to The Worker on Saturday April 5th.

## WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STRUGGLE?

This is the first struggle of its kind in London. We're not just fighting for the right to work, we're fighting for the right to work in London, where we have found housing and schools for our children. We are not gypsies to be moved around when the management thinks it can produce more cheaply elsewhere. This is a fight to save industry and the industrial working class in London.

## WHAT ARE YOUR CHANCES OF SUCCESS?

The occupation took the management by surprise. We have the support of the members still in work, who man the picket lines. They realise this fight is theirs too, as they are the next in line. We are sitting on three finished Magna Scans at £50,000 each, as well as several unfinished pieces of equipment the management would like to get its hands on. The high redundancy payments and promises of work in Peterborough for the few have not divided us.

## WHAT LESSONS HAVE YOU LEARNT?

The unity of the workers and their enthusiasm is fantastic. We had to argue hard to persuade young women with families that they need not stay in occupation all night! Years of hard work went into building this union strength. Crosfield's was the first factory to come out on a one-day strike against the Industrial Relations Act. Workers who joined the Union (AUEW) only reluctantly now say, "It will have been a privilege to have fought in this struggle". Trade union activity is very high and all decisions are taken democratically at mass meetings. Taking this defiant stand was a conscious decision of the members to challenge the capitalist philosophy that workers are just cogs in a machine that can be scrapped.

Even if they turf us out tomorrow we will have won. We can never guarantee jobs under capitalism, but each battle is an ideological gain for us. These workers will never be the same again.

## Cowley Tuners Win Skilled Status

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service panel which heard Reg Birch, representing the AUEW, defend the motor mechanics at Leyland's Cowley works in their claim for skilled status has granted the substance of the men's demands, although as a face-saving device for the Leyland management there was some quibble about the exact definition used.

This is a victory for the argument that organised workers themselves would decide whether their work mates are skilled or

not. And even more important it is a first major step in re-introducing the whole idea of skill in the motor industry from which managements have tried to banish it in the interest of a simplified pay structure more profitable to them.

Most important of all, Reg Birch in agreeing to address the panel at all made it clear that workers had no intention of allowing the ACAS to assume the role of the Industrial Relations Court which they had got rid of.

## On the Industrial Front

### BAC

The traditional method of workers was, and in the main still is, to strike in disputes with their employer. With rising sackings and unemployment more and more workers have gone a step further and occupied the factories instead of standing outside the gate. It has obvious advantages, especially in winter.

Now workers at B. A. C. Headquarters, Weybridge, have occupied the top management offices and telephone switch board and continued their sit-in at the production area of the plant. Workers at Hurn and Filton have taken similar action. The essential difference in this dispute was that it was over wages, not sackings.

There is great significance in workers having the courage to order management off the site instead of workers walking out. They then begin to feel that the factory belongs to them. The realisation of power is much more evident when it is the management who cannot manage and have to negotiate to get back into the factories.

### Imperial Typewriters

The occupation of Imperial Typewriters, Hull, has now been

going on since February 21st. 300 men and women are participating and a skeleton force is maintained during the night. In the factory it is cold and not comfortable, but the workers are fighting for the right to work and they are determined to win.

The management at first refused to pay workers money due to them until the occupation was ended. They have been gradually giving way under pressure until they finally announced, one month after the closures, that they'd pay up. Since then there have been talks between the management and the unions, and further talks are to be held on April 7th. Talks are to be held with the government on April 5th.

Meanwhile in Hull, a town of high unemployment, Ideal Standards, electrical and bathroom manufacturers, have put 1200 on short time working. Thorne Electronics who came to Hull 1½ years ago with talk of a bright future and rapid expansion, are closing down their factory, causing 225 redundancies. It is Thorne who owned the Fisher-Bendix factory in Kirby whose workers occupied when Thorne pulled out 3 years ago and have since then fought again to maintain their jobs.

## Hello -

### Just Testing

After six months hard thought and preparation GEC's 1000 or so telephone installation engineers have stood up for themselves and hit the Company. The engineers who install the equipment in GPO telephone exchanges are seeking a 40 per cent pay increase to bring them into line with Post Office engineers.

The Company, true to form, have issued them with lock-out notices together with some 6000 electricians who work alongside them. The immediate cause of the lock-out was a work to rule by the engineers which had the effect of piling up stocks of telephone exchange equipment. It is obvious that the Company's present action will rapidly make things worse for itself while production continues.

At the same time workers in Coventry are planning to strike in solidarity. So GEC is going to be in for a rough ride on all fronts.

It was the decision to form a national branch of installation engineers within ASTMS last year, however, that marks the new desire among the men to tackle the Company and not expect someone else to get their wage demands for them. As the engineers mostly work away from home and move around from site to site a national branch was the only way they could get themselves organised.

GEC is the biggest employer and employer of labour in the country, bar the Government, and within the forefront of Wilson's 'white-hot technological revolution' in the sixties, accepting Government hand-outs and closing down Hoovers, AEI and others. They obviously hope to demoralise the men sufficiently to pay any increase in wages by getting a reduced work force as men drift off in search of alternative employment.

But the engineers certainly did not create this chance to fight the Company in order to throw their efforts down the drain. The struggle has made them very optimistic and unlikely to give up fighting one employer to have to fight another employer somewhere else.

### Fishermen

The action of workers in this industry whereby some 1400 vessels blocked 40 ports is a result of the chaotic effects of belonging to the EEC.

In agriculture, with its mountains of beef and a glut of foreign eggs, the basic economy of the country shows no logic. Workers both on the land and at sea have a right to expect a reasonable standard of living, and not have it cut from under them by dumping.

The action the fishermen took has brought a quicker solution to the problem much nearer than endless talks ever could. Their demands include the banning of all frozen fish imports and an extension of subsidies to smaller boats and an assurance that they will continue to be allowed to land their own catches.

In all these disputes on land or at sea the low prices are never reflected in the shops, and the big capitalist firms, Findus, Birds Eye, etc., make enormous profits.

## Editorial

### CPBML's 7th Anniversary

Seven years ago this Easter the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) was founded. We had to include Marxist-Leninist in the title because the Khrushchevite revisionists who betrayed the socialist revolution in the Soviet Union and the home-grown revisionists of the 'Communist' Party of Great Britain who never intended making a revolution at all had made ambiguous the glorious word 'communist'. When the CPGB changed the name of their paper from the "Daily Worker" it was a sign of their disowning the working class. We were glad to call our Party paper THE WORKER as a sign that the CPB(ML) has no interest separate from and apart from the working class.

### What Was the Importance of This Event for the Working Class?

Revolution, the only alternative to everlasting wage slavery, has been put into the perspective of the working class as a practical possibility. The CPB(ML) makes it a practical possibility by formulating for the working class a revolutionary line - that is to say, a concentration in theoretical form of the world-wide experience of workers in revolutionary struggle to be applied to the specific conditions of Britain.

The world-wide experience of workers in revolutionary struggle is Marxism-Leninism. Through its close fraternal ties with the Communist Party of China and the Party of Labour of Albania which have both led successful working class revolutions the CPB(ML) is in a unique position to share this international experience and to show what socialism is like in those countries where workers already enjoy state power.

But that world-wide experience has to be applied to Britain. The CPB(ML) has made a thorough study of the working class in Britain where it began. It has been able to confirm the completion of a trend noted by Marx of the polarisation of capitalist society into two classes only - capitalists and workers. So we know who is to make the revolution - all who live by selling their labour power whether in factory, mine, office, store, school, in short, everybody except those who own or control the means of production.

### Why Do We Need a Revolutionary Line and What Does it Do?

We need a revolutionary line because in two hundred years of organised struggle within the capitalist system workers have not been able to win for themselves either job security or the assurance, no matter how hard they worked, of a decent standard of life. They have to carry the struggle from one of engaging capitalists in this place or that to one of taking on capitalism itself and its whole state machine.

The revolutionary line shows at once why the fight for better pay and jobs is not enough and also how that daily fight, as the recruitment and training ground for our class forces, is linked to the revolutionary overthrow of the system that exploits us.

The CPB(ML) has made a study of the capitalists crisis and its real cause. We, the working class, are the ultimate cause of the crisis. Our fight to defend what we have gained through concerted struggle over pay and conditions and the trade union organisation which has made that struggle possible has eaten into capitalist profits and driven the capitalists to such expedients as attacks on the trade unions and massive inflation to effect cuts in pay they could not make directly. We must go on from being capitalism's crisis to being its overthrow.

### Crosfield and Vietnam

The kind of struggle going on at Crosfield's now is a promise of the revolution to come. With correct leadership the workers are fighting for the right to work with no illusions that such a right can be guaranteed under capitalism. They are challenging the very basis of the system we live under. Using their initiative the workers have countered the management's threat to divide them by closing down one section by uniting and occupying the whole, taking over valuable equipment as a hostage in the struggle.

We do not mean by this any Trotskyite nonsense about establishing red bases while leaving the capitalist state intact. We mean simply that this is the kind of struggle which carried out on a national scale, under Marxist-Leninist leadership, will take over not just a single factory in a tactical move but the capitalist state itself as the culmination of revolutionary strategy.

It seems a long way to go? That is how it must have seemed the first time Vietnamese communists in guerrilla struggle ambushed a section of the huge, massively-armed US invading force.

### NUT Pimlico

Penny-pinching in education is not new. To save money in building the showpiece all-glass-and-concrete Pimlico school, the ILEA bought a 'bargain' heating and ventilation system at £28,000 five years ago. But every sunny day in summer temperatures in some crowded classrooms reached 94 degrees.

After four years of complaints matters came to a head last summer when N. U. T. members refused to work in hot rooms on hot days. Wheels were set in motion resulting in the award of £29,000 last month to improve ventilation and other defects of the building. Teachers all over the country can fight cuts and false economies by uniting to fight where they are.

# The Valour of Vietnam

In July 1966, when US troops were pouring into Vietnam, President Ho Chi Minh stated: "The U.S. imperialists may bring in 500,000 troops, one million or even more to step up the war of aggression in South Vietnam. They may use thousands of aircraft for intensified attacks against north Vietnam. But never will they be able to break the iron will of the heroic Vietnamese people to fight against U.S. aggression, for national salvation. . . . The war may last still 5, 10, 20 years or longer. Hanoi, Haiphong and other cities and enterprises may be destroyed, but the Vietnamese people will not be intimidated! Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom. When victory day comes, our people will rebuild our country and endow it with bigger and more beautiful constructions!"

How can we write of the incredible valour of the Vietnamese? Poetry is not yet fit to speak of these heroes, who stood in their paddy fields and shot down Stratofortresses. It is a valour born of wisdom - they knew, even in the darkest days of their struggle, that they could



win. And now they are moving towards final victory after over 35 years of struggle.

We claim this as our victory too - a victory for the British working class. Not that we really contributed to it, but that we are its direct beneficiaries. First, as a small country, Vietnam shows that we can throw out any giant that should dare to invade. Indeed their daring must be greatly reduced.

Second as workers: this is a victory led from the start by the working class and its party, founded in 1930, the Indochinese Communist Party led by Ho Chi Minh. Since then they have demonstrated how to wage protracted struggle under all kinds of conditions. Above all they have shown that reliance on the mass is the first principle for any working class party. The science of working class struggle, Marxism-Leninism, has been greatly enriched by their experience.

The cost has been immense. 3 million Vietnamese killed (just by the Americans) is one estimate. The United States must bear full responsibility for all its crimes in Vietnam: for the orphans, the maimed, the destruction of industries and fertile land as well as the dead. How many souls can the devil buy for 87 billion dollars? Quite a few. But for all that money could not buy courage. The collapse of the Thieu army which was numerically superior to their foe and possessed the world's fourth largest air force, should be a lesson for all time. No one will help for them.



Children in a primary school in the liberated province of Quang Tri. The kidnapping by the US Government of Vietnamese children who are thus denied the right to grow up in a decent socialist society and are being thrown on the 'tender mercies' of capitalism in the last stages of moral decay is the latest crime of US imperialism against the Vietnamese people. This may be somebody's idea of saving America's conscience - like the half dozen Japanese girls who were sent to the US for plastic surgery after the atom-bombing of Hiroshima. We say it is one more crime to be added to all the others committed by US imperialism in Indo-China. And the British attempt to get in on the kidnapping act is beneath contempt.

## NO JOY FOR U.S.

Before leaving Tel Aviv, Secretary of State Kissinger said that the failure of his mission in the Middle East is 'a sad day for the United States'. One wonders how can a failure to reach 'agreement' between two states thousands of miles away from the US be a sad day for the latter. Obviously the agreement was to be first and foremost to protect the interest of the US rather than any interests of the two participants. It is a sad day for the US because now that the step-by-step approach has failed, the Soviet-favoured Geneva conference has to be convened where the Soviet Union shames the chairmanship with the US.

The Soviet Union has been pressurising the Arab countries to go to Geneva. So much so that we had the spectacle of President

Sadat openly complaining of the Soviet embargo on arms for Egypt since the October War in 1973.

Behind the 'consultation' and 'common approach' lies a deep and aggressive contention for spheres of influence in the area. Where they have a 'common approach' is towards the interests and desires of the Palestinian and Arab peoples. Both stand firm against these interests.

For the Palestinian people, victory comes through armed struggle and not through super-power manoeuvring. Palestinian commandos continue to attack the Israeli aggressors deep in occupied Palestine. In late March, enemy patrols were attacked near Jerico, and the settlement of Geshar. Intelligence buildings in the heart of Tel Aviv were also attacked.

## Socialism and 'Socialism'

The Chinese Communist Party is at the moment leading a nationwide study of the theory of socialism. They are emphasising the fact that under socialism the economic principle is 'from each according to his ability - to each according to his work'

and that this is basically unequal since some are able to work more than others and some have greater financial burdens than others. One of the principal goals of socialism is to aim for the communist principle 'from each according to his ability - to each according to his need'. The whole people are studying and discussing the necessity of making this transition and it is gradually being made.

In Russia, movement in the opposite direction is gathering momentum. An article in 'The Times' of April 2nd reports with

approval the contents of the "Collective Agreement 1974" from a Ukrainian steel works, where productivity is being improved partly through offering material incentives to workers. Between 20 and 50 per cent of Russian workers' wages are made up of locally-agreed productivity bonuses and this is a growing trend. What this signifies is that the Russian 'Communist' Party and state are not interested in leading the Russian people to communism; like Western capitalists they are interested only in increasing the profitability of their industries.

## Rhodesian Conference Denounced

All talk of negotiation or reconciliation by the racist Smith and Vorster regimes is pure fraud says the official organ of the Zimbabwe African National Union.

According to ZANU, the Constitutional Conference on Rhodesia projected by Smith at Vorster's insistence is expressly "for stopping the raging armed revolution of the oppressed people of Zimbabwe." The only thing the Smith and Vorster regimes are interested in is "the maintenance of the 'status quo', that is, state power in the hands of the so-called 'civilised' people.

"The oppressed African people of Zimbabwe have no recourse but to continue the armed revolutionary struggle till final victory is achieved."

## Plessey

During the past couple of months, there have been rumours and hints of redundancies within the Plessey, Liverpool, site, which has been the cause of anxiety among the workers. As a result of this, a £30 million order from the Post Office going to Sweden, a mass demonstration of 8000 workers was held to see the Senior Stewards off to Westminster for a meeting with Merseyside M. P.'s about the security of our jobs.

However, it has now become clear what management are up to. With the pay deal finishing last

## Cambodia

On April 1st the Cambodian people and armed forces captured Neuk Luong the south east gateway to Phnom Penh. Neuk Luong was a major military base of the US-backed Lon Nol clique. The Cambodian people's armed forces have now gained complete control of the Mekong river from Phnom Penh to the Vietnam border and have cleared the way for the final advance on the US stronghold.

Lon Nol has not stayed to meet them. Under rocket fire he fled to Indonesia, accompanied by loot

October, they asked for, and got, an extension until April. They stated that there was a labour surplus of 770 but that natural wastage would cover this.

Management then showed their true colours when we asked about more money for those on short time. Their answer was, 'if they don't like it, tell them to seek alternative employment'. It became obvious that Plessey were intending to squeeze us out to save them paying thousands of pounds in redundancy money.

Workers' first reaction was 'It must be some joke' but they are determined not to be intimidated by management and have given management one week to come up with a respectable offer. If not, industrial action will be taken.

and some of his cronies.

Meanwhile the US and their vultures have called for 'negotiations'. The US would like to see a 'Government of National Concord'. The Cambodian people reply that their national united front already provides for such national concord. Seven principal traitors have been sentenced to death, but clemency will be extended to those who disassociate themselves from US imperialism and surrender Phnom Penh unconditionally.

Latest position:

Due to the 'National Agreement' of 30 per cent, Plessey shop stewards decided to give management until April 18th to come up with a considerable offer. If nothing is forthcoming then industrial action will be taken.

Management feel we are too frightened of their threat of redundancies to ask for a reasonable pay rise, which we consider to be £10. Management have also rejected a 20 per cent and 15 per cent claim by staff employees, who have called in their area officials for April 8th. Staff too will be taking action if management continue with their present intransigent attitude.

The slogan is 'Money now, fight for jobs later!'

## Kurdistan

When after the Second World War The Kurdish rebellion suffered a defeat at the hands of the British-backed monarchy in Iraq, it was the socialist Soviet Union which extended its friendly hand to the retreating partisans. Today, it is Soviet planes with Soviet bombs, Soviet guns and Soviet napalm that are burning villages, maiming and killing the people of Iraqi Kurdistan indiscriminately.

Iraq was the first country (outside the East European bloc) which the Soviet imperialists have succeeded in dominating. Today Portugal is heading in the same way. The complete isolation of the Baathist regime and its lack of any social base necessitate its independence on a foreign power for its continued existence. With the aid of the local revisionists who sold out for the sake of a few ministerial seats the Soviet Union has created out of Iraq a base in the Middle East.

The present Kurdish rebellion is the latest in their decades-long struggle for autonomy, national and basic democratic rights. In less than a year, the Kurdish Pesh

## Students

With projected losses of £900,000 at Leeds University and £650,000 at the University of London this session, unprecedented measures are being taken by college authorities to improve finances and, as usual, it is the students who

Merga fighters beat back the well-equipped Iraqi army and established their control over a large slice of Iraqi Kurdistan. The inability of the Iraqi government to make any headway in its chauvinist war and the increased resistance of the Iraqi people to the war and fascist rule began to threaten the men in power in Baghdad.

Hence the 'unexpected' deal with the Shah of Iran which was not so unexpected. The Baathist regime, accustomed to barter national independence, territory and wealth for internal stability, accepts Iran's claims in the Gulf. In return the Shah is to cut the Kurdish supply lines through Iran leaving thousands of Kurds at the mercy of the merciless Iraqi government. That the Baathist government will now begin a systematic massacre of the Kurdish minority is without any doubt. One can almost see the vampire froth at the mouth at the smell of blood. What is also without any doubt is that the Kurdish rebellion is far from over. The present setback will serve an important lesson for the future course of the struggle. Through self-reliance and revolutionary unity between the Kurds and Arabs the parasitic monster will ultimately be destroyed.

suffer. The authorities at Swansea University are making mid-session increases in hall fees and catering prices, the two factors that have wiped out the main rate increase in the grant won last June.

# No to EEC

"We the CPB (ML) are in favour of a Common Market - of workers in Europe for revolution. We are absolutely opposed to the existing Common Market which is the brain child of capitalists who in the extremity of their own contradiction are driven to seek a coming together.

It cannot work, since the uneven development which creates this need also provides the grounds for the predators to attack their weaker partners. It is a capitalist family of inbreeding and incestuous relationships whose members will devour each other (they hope) to the last worker.

It is a capitalist alliance in denial of capitalism's own credo of private enterprise and laissez-faire, into which capitalists themselves have been driven by the growing strength of the working class of Europe. We oppose monopoly capitalism. We oppose multinational capitalism. We oppose international cartels.

The whole Common Market idea is a vulgar capitalist day dream of how nice life would be without contradictions. Dead common is the word for it."

# Ireland

Now, more than ever before, a leadership with the quality of that shown by James Connolly and his comrades is needed in Ireland. Not for them the mindless sectarianism and terrorism, but a battle for the true unity not just of a land but of a people. The Irish people have during centuries of oppression shown resolution and courage in their struggle for independence. That courage will ultimately prevail, the false 'leaders' will be discarded and the objectives of those men of 1916 finally achieved.

This year we commemorate the fifty-ninth anniversary of the Easter Rising in Dublin. In 1916 the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizens' Army came together to form the Irish Republican Army. On Monday, April 24th of that year, despite the failure of the rest of their forces in Ireland to rise, the Dublin division, led by James Connolly, marched from Liberty Hall and seized strategic points in Ireland's capital. From the steps of their command centre, the General Post Office, they proclaimed the formation of the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic.

"We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and the unfettered control of Irish destinies to be sovereign and inalienable. The long usurpation of that right by a foreign people and government has not extinguished the right, nor can it ever be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people... Standing on that fundamental right and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a sovereign independent state and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of its freedom, of its welfare and of its exaltation among the nations."

For a week they held out against the forces of the British Empire. Finally they were shelled into surrender, their rifles and shotguns succumbing to the might of British field guns. Within a fortnight fourteen of their leaders were sentenced by a court martial and executed in Kilmainham Jail. Over two thousand republicans were interned or imprisoned. But this proved to be the beginning rather than the end and the war of liberation continued.

The tasks of those brave men of 1916 have not yet been fulfilled. The British Army still occupies six counties of Ireland. All revolutionaries recognise the right of the Irish people to national self-determination, understanding that true internationalism involves the brotherhood of equal nations as well as the brotherhood of equal citizens.

# NUT Conference-Cautious Steps Forward

The supreme authority of the National Union of Teachers, the Conference of the Union, assembled at Easter to determine policy for the coming year.

It was an earnest and anxious gathering. The cuts in educational expenditure, initiated by Margaret Thatcher and now administered by her 'kindred soul' Prentice were identified as being of a fundamentally different nature to those of old. Lower standards are now being deliberately planned.

The Conference addressed itself in particular to the question of teacher supply. It has instructed the Executive to issue a 'firm declaration to resist any further cuts in teacher training and the supply of teachers to schools' and to prepare such forms of action as will mobilise the Union into implementing this declared resistance". The Government has been lured far enough and evidently has not been impressed by mere publicity.

Dealing with class size, Conference has ordered all possible assistance to its divisions "faced with a cutback in provision or seeking to improve unsatisfactory standards of staffing or school accommodation".

The Conference failed however to emerge with a course of action to oppose all cuts in education. Teachers will learn that default today will make harder the struggles of tomorrow. Already the quest of smaller classes meets

the retort, "but there are just not enough teachers to go around".

Unanimously, the Conference has agreed that teachers should assert their professionalism and define a teacher's duties. Guidelines will be prepared indicating what the Union regards as the general scope of the "work of the school" and specific demands have also been agreed. The effect is that teachers will have prescribed duties to which they can strictly adhere when under stress or when in pursuit of some objective.

The Conference has made only surreptitious reply to the social contract. The Union will seek "wherever possible" to improve standards of living. But, seemingly unaware of its own potency, the Union confines itself principally to maintenance of standards of living, seeks parity with "average male earnings", and falls for Houghton's "professionalism" which really means a depressed starting salary.

One advance however was the recognition that Prentice's pre-Houghton £10.8 million to "social priority" schools was a divisive ploy. The Union will have to reject the whole philosophy of "positive discrimination". Prentice's boast to conference of £31 million "reallocated" to schools of social priority reveals the true nature of "positive discrimination" - deprive all schools on the pretext that there is always another school worse off.

The Conference has not discriminated in the tasks it sets before teachers. All must pursue them.

# Labour's Public Disservices

Earlier this year the Metropolitan District Council of NALGO, covering the Greater London area, passed a motion recommending branches to fight any cuts in standard of service offered to the public and to refuse to cover posts deliberately kept vacant by employers; thus strengthening NALGO's 1974 Annual Conference decision to fight cuts in local authority expenditure.

THE WORKER recently reported that some branches, in the face of proposed cuts, had entered into agreements with the employers which allowed for vacancies to be unfilled in exchange for no redundancies. Branches entering into such agreements may be seeking to protect their existing members, but, in reality, are providing little protection, if any at all. Decreases in staffing means increased workloads for made loud noises about generous increases in improvement grants under the Housing Act 1974, they forgot to say that they would introduce a clause that would prevent those remaining and a weakening in organised strength.

We must be under no illusions. The Labour Government is not going to treat our public services or the workers who run them with kid gloves. They are intent on using an iron fist. Not only has the Labour Government provided a completely inadequate Rate Support Grant for the year 1975-76, drastically limiting local authority expenditure, they have also made harsh cuts in other central government subsidies.

Freeson, Housing Minister, has recently brought local authority housing programmes in London to a halt by slashing borough spending from £121 million to £55 million and the GLC's from £18 million to £11 million. These cuts will mean that there will be no money available for rehabilitating houses; countless families have consequently been condemned to sub-standard living conditions.

This, after the Government has actively encouraged local authorities not to demolish but to buy and rehabilitate houses.

When the Labour Government house owners obtaining an improvement grant if the rateable value of their property was over £300 a year; thus, heavily reducing the number of people in need who would benefit from such a grant!

Not content with these attacks on an already inadequate housing service, the Government has advised local authorities to build 'temporary' prefabs on redevelopment sites (we all know how 'temporary' those war-time prefabs were!) and to set building standards lower than normal Parker Morris standards for room sizes. This so-called 'socialist' Government is, in effect, attempting to condemn the working class not only to sub-standard old property but to sub-standard new property as well!

That these cuts should be made at a time when many local authorities are reorganising or planning to reorganise their 'old-style' housing departments into 'new, caring, consumer-oriented, comprehensive' housing services, illustrates the absolute contempt of social democracy for the working class. Of course, the reorganisation is about even further cuts - in the wages bill.

NALGO members should not delude themselves that any worthwhile agreements will be won easily from the employers. We will have to fight all the way to defend our rights as workers and the right of our class to expanding, not decreasing, public services. The Government is hitting us on all sides, in obvious and devious ways. As social democrats they are masters at Capitalist trickery. We must be on our guard.

In this climate, NALGO enters into negotiations on its National Pay Claim, due in July. Workers in NALGO must prepare themselves for the struggle ahead.



Striking dustcart drivers are joined by other workers marching to enforce a mass picket of an army-operated rubbish incinerator in Glasgow's east end. This is not the first time the Labour Party has used State force to strike-break. The drivers' reply is: "Troops out of Glasgow!" - and flying pickets, who spread the strike to other localities, from Greenock to Dundee.

## May Day meeting

MAY 1st 7.30 p.m. CONWAY HALL RED LION SQUARE.

## FROM DEFENCE TO ATTACK

- April 22nd 7.30pm Fight Unemployment Destroy Capitalism, Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Rd. Old Market, Bristol 2.
- April 23rd 7.30pm Crisis in Britain - The Workers' Solution, The Terminus, Clifton Road, Gravesend, Kent.
- May 1st 7.30pm Film, "October", Parklane College, Hanover Way Leeds 3.

## BELLMAN BOOKSHOP

155 FORTRESS ROAD LONDON NW5

PUBLIC MEETING IN THE BELLMAN BOOKSHOP. 7.30pm

April 18th New Tasks of the Working Class and its Party

April 25th 7.30pm Albania Society slide show, 155 Fortress Rd. NW5

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## Leeds Electricians

The strike by Leeds Corporation electricians and lift engineers enters its eighth week, with militant action increasing. The strike over a new basic rate if one of several electricians' strikes taking place all over the country - Glasgow, Cardiff, Sheffield, Hull, Liverpool, London and the Midlands. The present wage rate for the electricians with Leeds Corporation is £29.20 basic. Initially the Corporation ignored the demands from the men, saying that during national negotiations no local agreement could be reached. Unperturbed the workers struck for one day last November, showing their seriousness and that the Corporation could negotiate locally if it wished. On January 13th the electricians served notice that if no move on the claim was forthcoming there would be a total stoppage from the beginning of February. Negotiations nationally and locally were deadlocked; the electricians struck.

Within a matter of days most lifts in high rise council flats were out of order along with many other council installations and properties maintained by the electricians. The Labour Council, attempting to smear the Union, started a well-publicised campaign showing the hardship the strike was causing the old and disabled, even though an emergency service was provided by the electricians.

With the failure of electrical equipment in the Civic Hall, a 24 hour picket is being enforced there. Support, financial and practical, has been forthcoming from local government unions. The electricians are determined in their actions, despite threats of redundancies and cutbacks. The eviction from their depot base by the Corporation has only hardened the protracted struggle of the men involved.