

THE WORKER



Published by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) No.17 Sept 6th 1973 Price 3p

EDITORIAL

Line up for a Turbulent Autumn

Workers and Government-backed employers are squaring off for the toughest industrial battles this country has seen for many decades. This struggle will be no set-piece affair like the US car workers choosing Chryslers as their partner in the traditional end-of-contract ritual. Nor will it be like one of those continental dust-ups in which students and would-be leftists take over from workers to pursue their own noisy grudge fights with brutal police.

It will be the best organised workers in the capitalist world drawing on their long experience of class conflict to smash the legal bonds the Government has fastened on them - bonds intended to hold them powerless while the employers go on taking huge profits out of a declining system.

As workers' just demands begin pouring in, the employers will try to hide behind the Government's wage-restraint law. But this legal barrier has already been badly breached and is thoroughly discredited anyway in its original guise of an 'anti-inflationary measure'

factory based guerrilla struggle

Having failed to make workers' wages responsible for inflation - and a lecturer at Birkbeck College has made the astounding discovery that rising prices hurt the poor more than the rich! - the Government will now have to insist on keeping wages frozen to cope with the yawning trade gap. Workers will be expected to accept 'phase 3' restraints even tougher than 'phase 2' so that Britain 'won't be priced out of foreign markets with disastrous effects on the deteriorating balance of payments.' Again, nothing will be said about profits. Profits are the essence of the capitalist system.

The Industrial Relations Act which the Government had hoped to use to stifle workers' struggles has been made a dead letter by the concerted action over the imprisoned dockers and, even more, by the battle waged by the engineers against the NIRC fines which cost the employers far more than it did the union. As long as working class vigilance against the Act is maintained, as in the case of the latest action by engineers against a 'scab' fine imposed on the AUEW, the Government has to think of other ways to defend the interests of the interests of the capitalist class.

That is why it is so essential for the Government to get the TUC involved in talks about 'voluntary' restraint. The Government can afford to offer all sorts of apparent concessions on threshold agreements, price restrictions, rent controls, higher pensions and what have you, in exchange for some form of TUC capitulation over opposition to the wage freeze which could weaken working class solidarity on this issue.

And that is why it was out of a profound understanding of the present industrial situation and the nature of the forces confronting each other, that the decision was taken to pull the engineers out of any talks with the Government at all. Without being able to commit the strongest industrial union in Britain in their capitulationist bargaining, the TUC is obviously unable 'to speak for the working class' at No 10.

working class vigilance

Not only would 'voluntary' agreement without the AUEW be useless to Heath, but also Scanlon's enforced absence exposes those labour 'leaders' who excuse their traitorous talks with the class enemy by their boasts of what 'tough demands' they are making for what Heath is ready to promise anyway. This is the same sort of deception, 'left in form, but right in content', which these same 'leaders' are practising in an effort to ditch the NIRC boycott by calling on the TUC to 'lead a united policy of non-cooperation with the Industrial Relations Act.' The call for a 'united' policy means that if the TUC fails to get unanimity for the fight against the Act, the unions are entitled to recognise the NIRC to conserve their own funds at the expense of the working class.

Both of these questions, TUC talks with the Government and the continued boycott of the Industrial Relations Act, will be thrashed out at the Blackpool Conference. But whatever specious arguments are used or however votes may be cast, the working class itself will not be fooled by the opportunist - however militant they may sound on TV 'phone-in' programmes.

Workers do not have to wait for the General Council or these opportunistic labour 'leaders' to take them into battle. Just as last year when the engineers' demand for a rise was met by a ludicrous response from the Employers' Federation, workers will launch their own factory-based guerrilla struggle, advancing along the Marxist-Leninist line which alone leads on to the strategic war for workers' emancipation.

WAGE WAR!

WORKERS SET TO SMASH THE ANTI-WAGES, PRO-PROFITS LAW

AUEW Defies Bailiffs

Engineering workers in South London offered to physically defend the Peckham headquarters of the AUEW against bailiffs. This is the latest stage in the engineers' struggle against the Industrial Relations Act. Last winter a massive strike wave was unleashed when the NIRC fined the AUEW £55,000 over the James Goad case. The employers, in their secret memo to Judge Donaldson, have admitted that they were forced to retreat, and Mr Goad, that high-principled man, has still not tried to attend branch meetings. Now the employers are trying a slightly different tack - using a county court instead of the discredited NIRC.

A scab, Mr George Hill, refused to join a strike last August at the Hythe plant of International Synthetic Rubber. For this he was expelled from the union and the other workers refused to work alongside him. An industrial tribunal, set up under the Act, granted £2,800 compensation, and Mr Hill has applied to Lambeth county court to enforce this decision by using the bailiffs to seize union property.

But whatever the court, it is using the same anti-working class Act in the interests of the same employing class. The response from the workers was immediate. The S. London district committee of the AUEW was prepared to raise 700 to 800 men fairly quickly to defend union headquarters in accordance with the resolution.

'This London South District Committee congratulates Executive Council upon its continued refusal to comply with any decision brought about by the Industrial Relations Legislation and pledges our physical support



A deputation of AUEW shop stewards, convenors and the District Secretary of London South pledging all out support to the Executive Council and national officers for their forthright defiance of the Industrial Relations Act.

should any attacks upon the property of this Union, within the precincts of the London South District, attempted by persons acting upon instructions from any authority directly or indirectly

associated with such Industrial Relations Legislation." Carried unanimously THE ACT IS AS DEAD AS THE WORKING CLASS IS ALIVE TO THE NEED FOR VIGILANCE.

T.U. CONGRESS ARTICLE - Back Page

Challenging New Term

With the start of a new term, most teachers will probably go back to work with a certain amount of mixed feelings about the situation they will have to face. Certainly, there will be satisfaction at the experience gained by all (even those of us outside London not directly involved) during last term's campaign for the London Allowance. But there will also be some apprehension at the magnitude of the tasks ahead of us. A variety of problems ranging from petty inconveniences to outrageous injustices are with us everywhere, in all types of schools: inadequate facilities, oversize classes, bad buildings, staff shortage, etc. Every teacher in the country could contribute specific instances if we were to enter a list of grievances for the Guinness Book of Records. All this only makes worse our most common predicament: low wages.

The Future of Education

From Pamphlet entitled 'Education', published by the CPB(ML).
Over 500 years ago there was a Renaissance in Europe, a rebirth and rapid growth of intellectual and cultural achievement. This was the age of infant capitalism, and capitalism was driven by competition in pursuit of new methods of economic production. Just as the old mode of production was insufficient, so too was the old mode of thought.

No longer were the pronouncements of the medieval philosopher adequate. Leonardo da Vinci saw practical experience as his 'mistress'. This was the beginning of modern science, sponsored by capitalism, for then capitalism sought the truth. Its star was rising and there were no limits to intellectual progress. Bacon spoke of a light that should 'touch and illuminate all the border regions which confine upon the circle of our present knowledge.'

Bacon wrote 400 years ago. The capitalist sun has since burnt its brightest and is today in swift decline. Capitalism cannot give peace, so it generates war, it cannot find profit, so it generates stagnation, it cannot find work for those it would exploit, the parasite can only be antagonistic towards its working class host. Capitalism today must sponsor ignorance, for the truth today illuminates the corruptness of its system and points the way towards its destruction.

Education for the mass has always provided the ruling class with impossible contradiction. Capitalism must give to the working class the intellectual tools required to produce and wield a modern technology, but it cannot prevent the working class from using those tools to fashion its own emancipation. The working class has been proud and jealous of its skills and has incessantly demanded more besides. It has emerged as the sole custodian of literature, art, music, science, and all that is valuable from the past. Having carried the candles of learning through its Dark Age it will usher in a new Renaissance, a new leap in education.

The recapture of its true ideology, the beginning of the Renaissance of the working class, began with the birth of the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist). It began with the line of guerrilla struggle, and the future of education and the working class is reliant upon the implementation of that line.

Czechoslovakia-The Screw Tightens

The fifth anniversary of the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the armies of the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies has passed with the revisionists more firmly entrenched than ever - the occupying forces more strongly in control.

In August 1967 the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), in denouncing the attack, said "The revisionist leadership of the Soviet Union has committed an act of imperialist aggression against the people of Czechoslovakia. The country of the great October Revolution, the first Worker State in history, has been betrayed by its wretched leaders, Brezhnev and Kosygin, the heirs of the anti-Marxist Khrushchev, into appearing in the eyes of the world like US imperialism in Vietnam.

The Soviet Red Army with which workers everywhere identified their own interests as it defeated the interventionist powers that tried to strangle the proletarian revolution at birth, as it rolled back the armies of Nazi Germany and liberated the whole of Eastern Europe, has now been used by the revisionist leaders of the Soviet Union to invade one of those very East European countries in order to bring it to heel."

How has the situation changed in the course of the last five years? The American imperialists have been thrown out of Vietnam, but the USSR has tightened its grip on its Czechoslovakian colony. The original 'reasons' for the invasion - fear of 'encroachment' by West Germany (which Brezhnev has since visited calling for all-round co-operation between the two countries and with whom Czechoslovakia has

recently initiated a treaty on mutual relations) have long been forgotten.

The Warsaw Pact troops have expanded their military installations within the country, holding many large-scale military exercises to intimidate the population.

They have pressed ahead with 'economic integration' to intensify their plunder and exploitation and they have made Czechoslovakia 'co-ordinate' her foreign policy and activities with theirs - quite openly, in fact, treating Czechoslovakia as a colony.

Nor does the USSR show any sign of regret. At the recent con-

ference on European security and co-operation, a Soviet delegate, V. Sofinsky, confirmed his country's readiness to carry out a similar act in the future.

Mao Tse-Tung has said "The people of all countries, the masses comprising more than ninety per cent of the entire population, sooner or later want revolution and will support Marxism-Leninism. Though some people may support revisionism for a while they will eventually cast it aside... They are bound to oppose the imperialists and reactionaries in all countries: they are bound to oppose revisionism."



Reg Birch of the AUEW Executive Council receiving the offer from the District Secretary, London South, and other AUEW members to defend Union property if requested to do so.

ARMS FOR SPAIN

The dirty back stairs deal between the British and American Governments to provide fascist Spain with Harrier jump jets should not only provoke protest but action.

Trade Unions throughout the world have taken decision by resolution to back the fight of the Spanish workers for elementary Trade Union rights and condemn the brutal jail sentences being served by those who fight for those rights. The government who would treat the British workers in similar style if they were permitted gives backing to their Spanish class brothers by every means including arms.

After August 1936 two thousand British workers went to Spain to fight, and five hundred were killed or missing and 1,203 were wounded. The advance troops in the fight against fascism and nazism which was later to engulf most of the world.

Apart from those who went to Spain there were many thousands who in Britain campaigned in many ways. Arms for Spain was the slogan. But the British government's policy was 'neutrality', a neutrality which allowed fascist warships to sink British cargo ships loaded with food and medical supplies while the ships of the British navy watched and did nothing.

Workers in the British factories, notably the aircraft factories, gave hours of their own time making articles of military value to those fighting fascism in Spain.

The aircraft deal with Spain is not only a betrayal of the workers of Spain still fighting fascism. It should be seen by British workers, especially the aircraft workers in terms of our own struggle. Aircraft workers in 1936 were selfless in their support for Republican Spain regardless of cost to themselves; if the issue is faced they will surely deny planes to Fascist Spain also regardless of cost. But they should not be left to fight alone. The Trade Unions have stated their position regarding fascist Spain. Somebody has got to put their money where their mouth is, as thousands of British workers did in 1936.

VIETNAM NATIONAL DAY

26 years ago, on September 2 1945, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was formed, including what is now North and South Vietnam. It was the culmination of years of guerrilla fighting, civilian agitation against Japanese and French imperialism, and the final successful August Revolution. But the birth of the republic was immediately followed by a series of aggressive invasions by the imperialist powers. The DRV licked them all - the French in 1954 and then the biggest crooks in the game, the USA, in 1973. In February this year the USA was forced to come to Paris and sign a peace agreement which not only would mean the removal of all US forces and those of its satellites, but the formal recognition of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam as being in partial control of the provinces to the south of the provisional demarcation line (according to the 1954 Agreement).

To the extent that the US troops left, along with those of the satellites, the Paris agreement was implemented: but the US military presence has not disappeared at all. Countless military personnel have stayed on or newly arrived as civilian 'advisers' to the Saigon puppet administration. A great deal of military equipment was hurriedly transferred to them and a great deal has been introduced in violation of the agreement. Most important of all, the cease-fire has been systematically violated by the puppet troops with US blessing. In the north, US 'spy-planes' have been conducting military reconnaissance flights from Thailand bases and in the south there has been no end to the 'nibbling' operations by the puppet army against the liberated areas under the PRG. They can only be 'nibbling' because the puppet troops cannot fight and are deserting on an even more rapid scale than before February 1973. The DRV promptly released American POWs. But in Saigon to this day some 30,000 political prisoners are being kept in the tiger-cage prisons of the Thieu regime, while others have been tricked into staying under Saigon authority. Some 300,000 villagers have once more been herded into concentration camps - the infamous 'strategic hamlets' borrowed from British repression in Malaya. But it is not easy to imprison Vietnamese people, and repeatedly news comes through of thousands of villagers burning their detention huts and running off to join their brothers in native villages in the liberated zone.

Nothing should show up more clearly the difference between the socialist way of doing things and the colonial way than the economic conditions facing the people in the liberated zones and those in the Saigon zone. In villages in liberated provinces, the peasants, in mutual-aid teams, are busy clearing away bomb damage and the horrors of war, and once again restoring to its fertile state the Plain of Seeds north of the Mekong Delta, scene of heroic battles against the Americans. Rice acreage has increased over last year. In Saigon, however, rice is becoming increasingly dearer and scarcer. Right now there is such inflation and shortage that even the veterans of the puppet troops are engaged in almost daily demonstrations and agitation, against profiteers and foreign capitalists - French, American, Japanese and many others busy in newly formed consortia to exploit off-shore oil, minerals, etc..

In North Vietnam socialist construction is proceeding swiftly, and with the same enthusiasm and spirit displayed against American bombers. On May Day the workers of the north proudly revealed their quotas in the textile complex of Nam Dinh, so heavily bombed, and in the coal mines and locomotive factory. Top priority has naturally been given to transport and communications - to the rebuilding of railways, bridges, roads, electric communications. What perhaps should give us food for thought is that in capitalist Britain with its advanced technology we are being deprived of meat because of constantly rising prices and an apparent 'world shortage', while in war-devastated North Vietnam the state collective farms and agricultural producers' cooperatives are increasing the numbers of pigs they can breed, increasing their acreage of animal fodder, so that the people can have more meat.

The future is bright but there can be no let-up in constant vigilance against the machinations of US imperialism. Forced by the victories of the Cambodian Liberation Front, it had to stop the bombing of Cambodia on the 15 August. But the bombers are waiting in Thailand. CIA intrigues in Laos have so far failed to impede the move towards a coalition government in which the Pathet Lao (Lao Liberation Front) will have equal powers with the rightists, but once more US bombers have been attacking the liberated zones. It is up to the peoples all over the world to see that the tremendous victories of the peoples of Indo-China are not sabotaged by the imperialists and their henchmen.



RECONSTRUCTION RACES AHEAD IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

ON THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT

THE WAGE DAM BUSTERS



Slowly but surely the wages dam is approaching breaking point. The massive pressure of the engineers' claim, the miners', electricity supply, and others, is about to hit the incomes policy. And already cracks have appeared in that doomed structure. Workers' ingenuity and strength, coupled to the anarchy of capitalism, have reduced the wages dam to something that in parts resembles Gruyere cheese more than concrete. Merit increases, special bonuses, recalculation of bonuses, the list of concessions wrung out of the employers is endless. To give just one example, following industrial action, a group of draughtsmen in the North have won the standard £1 plus 4 per cent increase plus 'merit increases' for all members of an average 12 per cent. And this was achieved by the action of only 15 men. And in other sections, especially the building industry, employers have been more keen to maintain production than to keep the government happy. After all, the employers have plenty of experience in evading the so-called 'price freeze'. If necessary, we should force them to use this experience to break the wage freeze.

Fleet street

While editorial writers pour gallons of ink over acres of paper, urging employers and government to 'stand up to the unions', down below at the presses the newspaper barons have not been so out of touch with reality. The printing unions had an agreement with the Newspaper Publishers Association - a threshold agreement promising increases if the cost of living went above a certain level. (The Government is now very keen on threshold agreements - if the cost of living goes up by say 5 per cent you get nothing, if it goes up by 8 per cent you get 1 per cent increase, if it goes up by 15 per cent you get 10 per cent, worth about 7 per cent after the taxman has had a go - this they call 'protection against inflation'). The cost of living did go beyond the limit but the NPA refused to pay up. They said that the increase under the 'protection against inflation' threshold agreement was illegal under the Counter Inflation Act (the wage freeze), which bans more than one increase inside a year. NATSOPA, the print union, declared that if the employers would not honour the agreement, neither would the union. They pushed for 'house agreements'

with the individual publishers, using carefully timed industrial action to disrupt the split-second timing of newspaper production, picking off the weakest employers, and leaving Lord Goodman, chairman of the NPA, as a chief suffering from a severe shortage of Indians. A compromise proposal to pay the money into a 'benevolent fund' made very little progress, as the real action was taking place elsewhere.

"The curious incident of the dog in the night-time. . ."
 "The dog did nothing in the night-time. . ."
 "That was the curious incident," remarked Sherlock Holmes. "

In Fleet St the significant events were taking place where no industrial action was taking place. For example, at the Express, that true-blue advocate of standing firm against the unions, the management for some reason decided that the men had to start their shifts a few minutes earlier each day, which under existing agreements means a whole hour's extra pay.

BAC Filton

Filton BAC workers are at present claiming a £2.15 increase - in line with Phase 3, but the employer is claiming that bonus increases of £3 a week during the past year were not due entirely to increases in productivity. The union reply was to devise numerous forms of disruption, backed up by a complete ban on overtime. Their latest tactic was a complete closure of all gates from 8 till 9 in the morning. This

caused massive traffic jams through North Bristol. Many of those caught in the jams praised the effectiveness of such tactics. One who did not was the managing director of the firm, trapped near the front of one of the queues of halted vehicles. He threatened not to talk to the Pay Board if the gates weren't opened. He was told, "That's all right, mate because we don't want you to, anyway."

IRO site, Bootle

McAlpine's have refused to continue the £5 million Inland Revenue Office building contract in Bootle. In February 1971, electricians employed by contractors James Scott and Lee Beasley struck for parity with other workers on the site. Late last year, McAlpine's were forced to stop work on the site and they are now threatening to shift the burden of the penalty clauses, possibly half a million pounds, onto the electrical contractors. After trying to victimise workers by using the notorious Joint Industry Board, the contractors are now trying to hide behind the freeze.

Metal Box

Workers at the Metal Box factory in Portlade, Brighton, have been engaging in lightning stoppages. After the first walkout, the management backed down and admitted they'd been wrong on the issue of holiday payment due to a worker leaving the factory, but said they would not pay workers for the time of the stoppage. This and the lack of ventilation in the shops caused the next walkout, in which women workers gave the lead. Management backed down again, agreed to pay and to do something about the heat problem. Another long-standing point of dispute is the amount of oil particles given out by the machines,

Chrysler

156 electricians at Chrysler's Coventry plants, who maintain key production line equipment, went on strike against the freeze, at one stage bringing all Chrysler car production to a halt. The company used phase II as an excuse for reneging on a commitment to give the electricians staff status, already won by toolroom workers. The change would mean increases of £520 a year plus holiday improvements, while the company offer in line with phase II is only £190. The immediate aim of the struggle is to force Chrysler to 'honour the agreement'. But this victory would not end the affair, as the Pay Board would ban the increases for breaking the wage freeze, leaving Chrysler sitting pretty once again. The aim of the struggle is to get more money, not to obtain a token gesture from Chrysler, shifting the blame from one part of the capitalist class to another. Chryslers have the money, the workers want it, determined action can get it.

Docks

Another defeat for the Industrial Relations Act. The London Docks Labour Board has at last agreed that Cory Lighterman can sack a lighterman, Mr Andrew Shute, who left the T & G. He was said to be 'wholly unsuitable for employment' because other men refused to work with him. Mr Shute's regular appearances at the NIRC, sworn enemy of the closed shop, have done him no good at all.

Meanwhile other London dockers have been attacking the freeze, demanding special payments to match those already won by crane drivers. The crane drivers had been getting 62p a shift contingency payments when their special skills were required. Last month this was consolidated as an extra £3.10 on top of the £42.35 basic rate, whether they actually drove cranes or not. Now other dockers are also demanding that their contingency payments be consolidated.

Y.J. Lovell

The first signs of struggle appeared at the unorganised Y.J. Lovell site at the new Holloway Prison, London, when site engineers banned overtime because management were pussy-footing on overtime payment. Cheques for back pay were rushed to the four engineers concerned after two months delaying tactics.

Kodak

60 members of the Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians at Kodak's film processing plant are working to rule during the key holiday period. This action is in support of a claim for special payments for handling the new 110 colour negatives, and for union recognition. At present Kodak only negotiates with 'house' unions, and is busy using the Industrial Relations Act to try and keep things that way.

IRELAND

On the eve of the third anniversary of internment, the British government released less than 100 short-term prisoners. It was made clear by Whitelaw that this does not mean that the policy of oppression in northern Ireland has changed. On the contrary, it is intensified through more violence and under new laws.

The prisoners released were those found 'guilty' by a system that even The Times had to describe as entirely new to Britain - where a person is guilty until proven innocent. Meanwhile, the official figure of 588 internees remain held in Long Kesh without trial. The evidence against them must be so flimsy that the British government does not dare to try them, in a court set up under their own Emergency Provisions Act with one judge and no jury.

ARMY BRUTALITY

British Army brutality is a familiar terror in Ireland. It shows the barbarity which imperialism employs when a people dare to challenge its dictatorship, dare to struggle for freedom. From the moment the British Army appeared on the streets, citizens were attacked and savagely beaten, homes were broken into and wrecked, rifle butts, CS gas and rubber bullets were used without discrimination. In short the civilian population was made the target for the military operations of an army of occupation. The barbarity of the Black and Tans was equalled and surpassed. The infamy of internment, of concentration camps, sprang up again in Ireland. Men and women were snatched from their homes and families and were subjected to the most horrible tortures: tortures designed not only to cause physical suffering but to cause mental disorientation as well. It is necessary only to list some of the methods employed to understand the depravity of the torturers. They include beating and hand squeezing of testicles, insertion of instruments in the anal passage, injection of various harmful drugs, electric cattle prod, burning with matches, cigarettes and electric fires, beating with batons on every part of the body, Russian roulette, firing of blanks in prisoners' mouths, urinating on prisoners, deprivation of food, drink, sleep. . . And the torture goes on. During the



past weeks Gerry Adams a prominent Republican was kicked unconscious by troops in Springfield Road Barracks, Belfast. He was revived by having buckets of water thrown on him and was kicked unconscious again. His hands and body were burned by cigarettes. It is now common for anyone released by the army, even if they were only arrested by mistake and held for a matter of hours, to spend at least a week in hospital.

MURDEROUS

The facts speak for themselves. Violent deaths have soared astronomically as British Imperialism resorts to more and more armed oppression. The Derry massacre perpetrated by the hated 'Paras' (whose commander, Colonel Derek Wilford, was shortly afterwards awarded the OBE) was just one incident. Now even the rules which allowed 13 people to be gunned down and killed have been changed to make murder easier. The soldiers may arrest anyone including children aged 10 years whom they "suspect of committing, having committed, or being about to commit any offence". Physical force should be used "when the arrest cannot be made without it". They don't have to claim that their victim had a gun, they can now justify murder by claiming that the person killed was seen with a gun at some time in the past.

Unity is strength resolution AUEW

Resolution passed by London Central Branch (Division 24) on Tuesday August 14th. That this London Central AUEW/TASS Branch strongly condemns the continued presence of the British Troops and internment camps in Ireland, and calls upon all branches in our Union to strengthen their opposition to this, and their support for self determination for the Irish people. And, requests the EC to send copies of this motion to all branch secretaries.

Who takes the risks ?

Early this year a mobile crane toppled over under gusty conditions during the building of residential blocks for the London Police Centre. One worker lost an arm and died shortly afterwards. Two others only narrowly escaped.

The death was classified as an 'accident' - the worker died not because the crane blew over, but because he ran the wrong way.

An engineer investigating independently found that the crane was designed only to lift heavy loads at large lever arms during normal wind conditions. The crane did not have a wind-speed-measuring gauge to enable the driver to know

when to stop operating. But the machine 'rated performance in terms of wind conditions was in accordance with the relevant regulation' - apparently enough to save the employer from any liability.

Even the provision of wind gauges, or whatever safety measures are necessary for a particular work environment, cannot obscure one simple fact - that under capitalism when the interests of profit are at stake, the person is dispensable. As members of our class die in such accidents, the bourgeoisie talks of the 'risks' involved in financial enterprises, as justification of their profits!

T.U. CONGRESS 1973

One of the foremost issues to be debated at this year's TU Congress will be the continuation or otherwise of the talks with the government over wages policy and other matters. This should not be. The talks should never have taken place. It was a correct decision of the AUEW to refuse to be associated with them.

Those reporting on the talks which have already taken place will not be able to point to any advantage so far obtained. They never expected any. Likewise, the government never expected to get any sort of agreement from the TUC spokesmen either. It would not have been worth anything anyway. So why the talks if neither party expected anything tangible from them?

isolated action

The government having decided on its policies which benefit the class they represent, that is, the few, wish to be seen to represent the working class, the many. Likewise, the men of the General Council, with the exception referred to above (the Union that is, not its TUC rep), whilst sitting on its hands in characteristic fashion, wish to be seen to be doing something.

The TUC has a built-in mechanism which affords those who wish to sit tight and do nothing an excuse. This same mechanism almost makes sure that they who on the other hand decide to take action do so in isolation. If a Union proposes a course of action by resolution at the TUC and that resolution is outvoted, any action that union takes on the issue thereafter is wide open to be repudiated by the TUC. All very constitutional. If on the other hand the resolution is carried on a vote, any union is free to opt out. That is also quite constitutional because no union surrenders its autonomy to the TUC. The union that decides to take action is still isolated. This makes nonsense of the calls for action to the TUC. That is not its function and never was.

workers' action

All this has nothing to do with the working class or the class struggle. The anti-Trade Union law is still with us. If it appears to be on ice that is not due to any words of the TUC but to the actions of the workers. If the law is scrapped that again will be due to working class action, not to a TUC resolution. Similarly on

the wages front. Neither talks at Chequers or debates at the seaside will decide anything. Only action by the workers will be decisive, nothing else.

place of work

Despite all the attempts of the television and the press to make the Congress proceedings look for real, despite all the oratory and debating tricks with which we are all familiar, workers will recognise that the only place where struggle is for real is at the places of work in all the industries where the workers are. At the place of work only is there real honesty of purpose, the ability to wage a struggle and to control it. That is where the power lies, not at the seaside.

If one wants to see what the debates at the TUC really decide it is a simple matter to look back at the resolutions passed last year and all previous years and see what they have achieved and what attempt has ever been made to implement them. They are passed and left to gather dust. It has nothing to do with the class struggle.

How the USSR treats the workers

Any lingering doubts about whether the Soviet Union is now a capitalist country can be dispelled by the role Soviet delegates are playing in a conference at the London School of Economics from September 3 to 7.

converging approaches

The Third World Congress of the International Industrial Relations Association is attracting 800 participants from 40 countries to discuss "converging international approaches to problems of industrial relations"; and two Russian delegates, Alexandrov and Ussenia, are making a spec-

ial contribution on "the theoretical framework for prospective study of future trends in industrial relations over the coming 15 years."

As Professor Roberts, President of the Congress, puts it: "Russians, British and Americans are speaking a virtually common language of industrial relations underneath the 'philosophic' controversies - a language that covers the operation of plant bargaining, pay rates and methods, hours of work and common problems of technology and its effects on workers' attitudes and expectations." The Russians are expected to make particularly in-

teresting contributions on "workers participation" which is one of the main themes of the Congress.

The basis of Russian participation in such conferences is described as "the development of multi-national companies and the extension of their operations into the 'communist' bloc".

In socialist countries like China and Albania, where workers enjoy state power, industrial relations are not about how to deal with workers but how workers in co-operation deal with nature in the process of improving production.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

FRI SEPT 7: Public Meeting - 'Tunnel Warfare'. Film about guerrilla struggle against Japanese aggression in China.

7.30 p.m. Bellman Bookshop.

FRI SEPT 14: Public Meeting - 'Red Lantern'. Film of Chinese opera.

7.30 p.m. Bellman Bookshop.

Read 'The Worker'

A newspaper written by workers for workers, published fortnightly by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist).

We need your help to make the Worker a success.

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Contributions in the way of articles or money should be sent to:-

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NAME.....
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THE LUMP

It is seven, in the morning.

On a street corner in north London about twenty men have gathered. From their clothes and complexions they suggest hard work in the open air. They are in fact building workers, but ones with a difference because they are self-employed, the lumpers, the 'cowboys' of the industry whose numbers have trebled at the wishes of the employer since last year's thirteen week strike.

Because they are lump labour, dodging the taxman and critically deficient in insurance stamps, they tend to stand alone or in small groups. Conversation is scarce, strangers viewed with suspicion. Their inclination toward stoic silence, isolation and the use of false names and addresses are qualities which attract the building employer. He uses lump labour to split and weaken the organised building workers so he seeks the silent, uncomplaining worker who will accept his handout at the day's end and then vanish. At seven-fifteen a van appears

and pulls up at the curb. The ganger - man, sent by the main contractor, steps out and surveys the morning's pickings. With a clarity of mind totally out of keeping with the time of day he makes his choice, deciding who shall have work and who shall have none. His choice is based on the following criteria: IN - The men who have a record of being anti-union, of being grafters without grouses, of being prepared to work in rain, mud, ice and dangerous conditions without safety measures, drying rooms, protective clothes, hot water and proper eating places on-site.

OUT - The men who the ganger thinks are union inclined, who demand a decent place to sit and eat, who care about the risk to life and limb in an industry which kills a man every day of the week, who like to build a good job not a botched one and object to working up to fourteen hours a day.

IN - The young, the healthy and the strong.

OUT - The old, the injured, the ones which the employers have

brought close to being totally burnt-out.

The chosen ones are ushered into the van. The vehicle is windowless and bears the name of no known, registered contractor. Several times during its life it will be required to cross picket lines with blackleg labour and dodge the attention of site stewards. The employers learn their lessons the hard way but they still learn.

At the site an inspection of phoney exemption certificates will be made by a contractor's minion. The lumpers will bless the day they pushed twenty-five quid across the pub counter to obtain one.

At the end of the day the self-employed will be deposited back on the pavement, paid off with the lump sum, cash in hand, their labours over for another day.

It is circumstances like these which have led to a growing demand from site workers all over Britain for concrete action against the lump. Already action is being taken in London and the Midlands to outlaw lump workers. On the big Thamesmead development organised workers have ousted all lumpers from Cubbitts site, encouraging fellow workers with the same contractor in central London to do the same.

The guilt for the recent big increase in lump working rests with the employers.

They have learned the lesson from

last years guerrilla action which shut down sites all over Britain. At that time the workers took matters into their own hands during the battle to win better wages and less hours. The mobile picket had the contractors in a cold sweat. They bluffed and bullied but could do little to prevent the successful picketing of sites until whole regions were at a standstill.

The employers don't want a repeat performance. Their biggest nightmare consists of an industry where all the major sites and most of the medium-sized ones are strongly organised.

Consequently they will do any-

thing to divide and weaken the strength of organised workers. The traditional form of dividing, sub-contracting, is no longer enough so they have turned to the worst form of action, using self-employed or lump labour. Building workers must begin now preparing for action to abolish the lump.

Not so we can all be directly employed and subsist on low earnings. But so we can take on the main enemy, the contractor, without the impediment of lump labour. Last year's action provided us with enough tools. Now we must do the job.

CPB(M-L) leaflet-extracts

There are now 800,000 or more building workers on the LUMP or free-lance self-employment spread throughout the sites and offices. Why does the boss want the LUMP? Because he wants to avoid paying holiday money, insurance stamps and premium rates of pay for overtime work, to take no responsibility for accidents or for training apprentices in their trades, and finally to exercise absolute control over the labour force and reduce the collective bargaining power of the Unions on a 'Divide and Conquer' principle.

In this he is aided by the parasitic labour only agencies who take in 10 per cent of the hourly rate and their counterparts in the white collar sector, the agencies, handling temporary and freelance clerical staff draughtsmen.

On May 18th militant building workers in several cities struck in protest against 'THE LUMP', a threat to workers' conditions and organisation. The action was timed to coincide with the debate on a bill in Parliament to ban 'LUMP' working. The bill failed, of course. And so will attempts to fight 'LUMP' working - or any other abuses - if militants concentrate on Parliament, on token gestures and not on the mass of workers where they are at their place of work.