

THE WORKER



Published by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) No.8 April 18th, 1974 Price 3p

No contract with capitalism ON WITH THE OFFENSIVE

**There can be no social contract
between a capitalist government
and the working class**

Workers will never collaborate with those who exploit them. Such collaboration is what the Labour Government proposes in its 'social contract'. What Labour says to the working class is this: If you will agree to accept a cut in your wages voluntarily, then it will not be necessary for us to impose wage cuts on you.

In the election period the Labour Party boasted that it had achieved a 'social contract' with the TUC which promised industrial peace. The nature of this so-called 'contract' became clear on April 4th at a meeting of the TUC and Government officials under the auspices of the National Economic Development Council, one of capitalism's front organisations.

SPELLING IT OUT

There the TUC, in effect, promised the Government to do its best to keep wage claims within Phase III and to crack down on strikes. Union leaders agreed to use their influence to get their members to be 'realistic' in putting forward wage claims and to bring about a situation in which there were 'fewer strikes, particularly lightning strikes' and more negotiation based on "new forms of conciliation and arbitration".

The TUC cannot speak for the working class in entering into any 'contract' with the class enemies of workers. No more can union leaders speak for their members in accepting such a treacherous 'agreement'. Furthermore, both of them know this and that is the reason they keep hedging every time the Government tries to make them give specific undertakings of how they will police their side of the bargain.

THE WORKERS' ANSWER

In our Party Programme, "The British Working Class and its Party", we deny that there can ever be peace between exploiters and exploited, between capitalists and workers. "The working class lives in a state of perpetual guerrilla conflict with the employers". This is the fundamental political fact which the Labour Party and the TUC would try to deny with their 'social contract'. Already the honeymoon period of the new Labour Government is coming to an end. The engineers' overtime ban, the NALGO action in London, are just the first signs of a growing campaign.

Rousseau's original social contract was based on a myth - that at some period in the past people had agreed to restraints on their freedom in the interests of an orderly society. It is an even more incredible myth that British workers would now, when their class political consciousness has never been higher, agree to restraints on their wage claims in the interests of their exploiters.

WHAT KIND OF A BARGAIN?

And what is the TUC supposed to have got for workers in exchange for such a bargain? A favourable budget? But when the dust raised by the Chancellor settled, it was found to be an anti-working-class budget as any devised by the Tories. Repeal of the Industrial Relations Act? But workers, led by the engineers, had already killed it. Meanwhile, what did still matter to workers - the Counter-Inflation Act, Phase III - the TUC agreed could continue right up to the time when the Government could replace it with their own 'Conciliation and Arbitration Service'. The most Labour was prepared to promise in answer to the demand for the return of collective bargaining was

Engineers against Phase III

2½ MILLION ENGINEERING WORKERS TO BAN OVERTIME

The engineers smashed the Industrial Relations Act. It was their uncompromising opposition to the Act, their refusal even to recognise the Industrial Relations Court it set up, which made this vicious piece of anti-trade-union legislation inoperative, so that the Labour Government could make the gesture of 'abolishing' it.

Phase III remains on the statute books because, apart from the miners, the working class has not yet made it completely unworkable by driving claims backed by industrial force right through the middle of it.

But, from April 15, 2½ million engineering workers will be starting their action against Phase III with a ban on overtime. It will be remembered that the miners' successful action began in the same way.

THE ENGINEERS' CLAIM

The engineers' claim against the

engineering employers for a £10 rise in minimum rates, 4 weeks holiday with pay, a 35 hour week and equal pay for women has not drawn the crack troops into action. For those workers already getting above £35, and this includes most who have put up a fight in the past, there is not the money incentive for struggle there would have been in a claim for a flat £10 rise across the board.

This claim, in fact, makes a concession to the social democratic trick of weeping crocodile tears for lower-paid workers while using their backwardness in struggle as a restraint on the better-paid. Engineers on the factory floor know that where 'skilled' rates are good because of the level of struggle, there 'less skilled' rates are good too. You get what you fight for.

STARTING POINT FOR GUERRILLA STRUGGLE

But the national claim in full,

backed by the overtime ban, is a starting point; and the right pressure at the right time from that quarter in the Executive Council in closest touch with the real needs of the rank and file prevented all attempts to delay the kick off.

The National Committee met in November 1973 to discuss the Engineering Employers Federation's ridiculous offer of £2.50 on the basic rate, no cut in hours, no increased holidays and a further postponement of equal pay. Acceptance of this derisory offer was rejected out of hand. An adventurous call for a 'national strike' which could not be sustained was also rejected. The guerrilla line of rolling regional actions, which our Party has put forward as the correct tactics at this stage for the working class in general as well as for the engineers in this particular struggle, was not adopted at the time, but it can develop out of the national overtime ban which the Committee left to the Executive Council to call at the most suitable time.

From the action beginning on April 15, engineering workers can go on to guerrilla struggles best suited to their own strength and local conditions, turning each factory into a fortress, as happened all over the country in the nation-wide guerrilla struggle two years ago when hundreds of employers were forced to settle well above the Federation's offer - a rolling series of industrial actions as each district committee moves into struggle to the bewilderment of employers who will never know when and where they are going to be hit.

A STRONG UNION

It is the strength and initiative at rank-and-file level of the

(continued on page 2)



to take wage determination "out of Whitehall and into the conciliation and arbitration machinery".

Wilson has boasted: "We know the trade unions... we can get their cooperation." We workers know the Labour Party, that concentrated expression of social democracy which is only capitalist ideology in a cloth cap. The Labour Party long ago signed away its soul in a compact with capitalism. Workers will never enter into any bargain with these creatures of the exploiting class.

Engineers (continued from page 1)

AUEW which enable engineers to fight such guerrilla actions supremely well and is reflected in the line of the leadership. It is no coincidence that this union, which is kept in the vanguard of the working class by the militancy of its members has among its leaders the true voice of Marxism-Leninism which can never fail to make its impact on workers in struggle.

It is this strength which accounts for the AUEW's success in destroying the Industrial Relations Act and will make them so formidable in taking on Phase III. It is the reason why the

President of the Union had to speak with such reservation about the 'Social Contract' in the pre-election period and is kept now from joining in the chorus of those 'leaders' calling for all-out collaboration with a Labour capitalist government by moderating their members' claims.

Latest News: The Secretary of State for Employment has called engineering union leaders and employers to meeting on April 8th to try to find a solution before the ban on overtime begins.

AN AUEW OVERTIME-BAN NOTICE

THE CONFEDERATION OF SHIPBUILDING AND ENGINEERING UNIONS LONDON DISTRICT COMMITTEE

To All Members of the No. 8 Committee, Chairmen and Secretaries and Shop Stewards.

Dear Brother or Sister,

Engineering Wages - Conditions Claim Overtime Ban

All Unions in the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Union have instructed all of their members to ban overtime as from April 15th 1974.

This ban is to put pressure on the employers for the terms of the claim put to them on the 14th September, 1973 i.e.

£35 per week minimum rate for a 35 hour week, 3 days additional holiday and 6 additional statutory days and equal pay for women.

Every shop organisation whose employer is a member of the Engineering Employers Association or who follows the terms and conditions of engineering should now have a mass meeting and demand of their employer an end to the delay and the granting of this claim in full.

No lifting of the overtime ban is permitted until the claim is met in full and first reported to the Officers of the Unions concerned, and in finality endorsed by the No. 8 Committee.

Please ensure that this instruction is conveyed to all members.

ON THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT



PERKINS

Thousands of workers at the Perkins Engines diesel plants in Peterborough held a token stoppage to pressure the employer into offering a £5 increase toward parity with other Massey-Ferguson subsidiaries. At present the company is offering a Phase III increase of £2.25 with the 'promise' of another £2.75 when the law permits it.

£50 TUBE DEMAND

A mass meeting of workers at London Transport Acton works turned down a recommendation by the Joint Works Committee to accept offers of a new incentive scheme involving work study.

Instead, by an overall majority, the three-and-a-half hour meeting of all unions instructed the negotiating committee to seek an alternative bonus scheme, to claim a skilled rate of £50 per week and to recall the mass meeting in four weeks to discuss the next steps.

For the past eighteen months stoppages, go slows and non-cooperation on a shop-by-shop basis has exhausted the maximum to which the present bonus system can be pushed. To improve pay packets, the determination, unity and maturity of the mass meeting must be commended and shown the way forward.

Unity of the mass at shop floor level will always smash defeatist or adventurist policies. If we develop our struggle in this vein we can only win.

SHIPYARDS

Shipyard workers on Tyneside have given firm warning to the employer that they will not scab on their fellow workers. Faced with action by 2000 fitters at Barrow, the Vickers group threatened to break the strike by transferring completion of the guided-missile destroyer 'Cardiff' to Swan Hunter's yard on Tyneside. But Tyneside workers made it clear that the ship would be backed if the transfer took place against the wishes of the Barrow workers. 'If Vickers want to send the ship to the Tyne, they must first clear the transfer with the unions at Barrow, and then get our acceptance,' said a union official.

NHS CONSULTANTS

National Health Service consultants in Brighton threatened to ban overtime unless the current government review produces realistic salaries. This move is a reflection of the decline in consultants' living standards over recent years and the traumatic effect of the hospital ancillary workers' strike last year. One consultant said 'the point is that we are just a fragment of the mess the NHS is in. Successive governments have knocked down what was once a vocation into a job of work. We want a realistic salary geared to today's costs and the amount of work we do.'

PUNFIELD AND BARSTOW

AUEW members at this plastics factory at Queensbury, Middlesex, are in dispute over a claim for loss of wages arising from the three-day week. The £50 claim was met by offers of £8, then £15 and finally a £20 'gift'!

This was found unacceptable by the night shift - the management withdrew the offer - and the night shift downed tools. The other two shifts joined them.

Two weeks later, on Saturday 30 March the workers received their notice by post and were locked out that weekend. The firm has since posted a notice outside the works saying that they

BRITISH LEYLAND

British Leyland replaced piecework at their Cowley plant with measured day work three years ago. They are still having trouble getting the work measured. Small groups of workers have been walking out whenever industrial engineers appeared on the shop floor. Finally when the assembly line speed was increased from 25 to 30 cars an hour, 1200 men walked out.

PROVIDENT AGENTS

Provident Clothing Supply agents in Scotland and Merseyside struck for an 8 per cent commission rate on personal loan business, instead of the present 4 per cent. The company has offered a 6 per cent rate across the board, meaning a reduction in some other sectors. The claim covers some 15,000 agents.

SU CARBURETTORS

This Birmingham works, which supplies the whole of British-Leyland's Austin-Morris division with carburettors, was shut down when 260 women assembly workers and 120 men indirect workers struck to show their contempt for the management reply to their pay claim, which includes the demand for equal pay for women.



Pickets at Punfield and Barstow successfully preventing the movement of moulds onto a waiting lorry - destined for Liverpool. On police advice the management closed the gate. The moulds? - still inside.

are now closed. The workers suspect the employer will try to do a 'moonlight flit', taking the machinery away and setting up

somewhere else. They are maintaining a picket to prevent the movement of goods or plant, and are demanding their jobs back.

London pay battle hots up

On April 2nd, at a meeting between the Secretary for Employment and the National and Local Government Officers Association, it was made abundantly clear how the Labour Government intends to apply the Phase III machinery they have inherited.

The Secretary for Employment, that "most sincere champion of labour" as the General Secretary of the TGWU called him, totally rejected the union's claim for increased London weighting payments, and told the city's 45,000 local government white-collar staff to wait until the Pay Board's report on London allowances is published in June. He thus overrode an interim agreement between the boroughs and their staff to raise the inner and outer London allowances to £360 and £291 p.a. respectively.

TOWN HALL RESPONSE

Staff in thirteen boroughs and two computer centres had already been operating an overtime ban since February 25th, and strikes were in progress at Camden and the computer centre at Greenwich. In Camden eighty key staff (telephone operators, computer operators and security men) have been pulled out. The remaining members are operating a complete overtime ban, and have cleared out all agency staff by giving them the choice between becoming permanent staff or leaving. Camden is now in a position where rents and rates collection are severely threatened and its financial budget for all services cannot be processed.

ed.

After the Employment Secretary's ruling, this campaign of selective strikes and overtime bans was intensified. In Islington 1000 members walked out and were joined by colleagues from Kensington and Chelsea and Tower Hamlets. More boroughs will strike from April 17th.

The employers in London were so alarmed by this action that urgent talks were held between the GLC, ILEA and the Prime Minister on April 6th. Naturally, Wilson rejected all pleas for London workers being a special case.

PUBLIC SERVICE SECTOR

All this occurred in a week when the TGWU leadership was urging its members to trim their wage demands to a "realistic" size and to lay greater emphasis on negotiations and less reliance on industrial action. As Public Service employees well know, negotiations and less reliance on industrial action. As Public Service employees well know, negotiations have been taking place for over a year on the London Allowance whilst local government, London Transport and education services have been nearing breakdown because of the shortage of staff.

Referring to the miners' victory the General Secretary of NALGO said 'the lesson will not be lost on my members who are normally very difficult to provoke.'

The lesson has also not been lost on teachers who in the same week walked out of a number of schools in London, without notice, in support of the London Allowance.

YARDLEY STRIKE

500 women and 245 men, workers at Yardley's cosmetics factory, Basildon (a subsidiary of British American Tobacco) joined 30 engineers on strike, demanding that their bonus payments be included in the basic rate, as agreed with the company in July 1973. The average basic wage is about £25 per week for men and £20 for women.

TGWU pickets said that the company's failure to honour their agreement resulted in an escalation of the claim for all male workers to have their bonus payments included in the basic rate, and that while hiding behind Phase III, the company failed to agree to the workers' demands and send letters to all workers threatening strikers with the sack. A mass meeting outside the factory gate then voted over-

whelmingly to continue the strike until a satisfactory agreement was reached.

The outcome of the action was that after further negotiations and over two weeks on strike, a final mass meeting voted to accept management proposals for bonus payments to be frozen at 15% and an across the board increase of £2.25 to be made to both men and women.

A TGWU branch official said that though some workers thought that they had won a victory, this was far from the truth, because the bonus frozen at 15% constituted no increase in basic rate and therefore had no relevance to equal pay. Further, that an increase of £2.25 across the board for both men and women was not demanded in the original dispute but was introduced into negotiations when the strike was ten days old. This tactical error led to confusion.

MAY DAY MEETING

Camden Town Hall,

Euston Rd, Kings Cross

Wednesday,

1st May at 7.30pm

WE PARTICIPATE - THEY PROFIT

With 'left-wing' Wedgwood Benn of the Industry Ministry we are getting a new wave of propaganda for 'participation' and 'workers control'. Whether it is to solve the country's 'industrial troubles' or to deal with threatened redundancy, it means the same thing - workers are to carry the can for the employer's failure.

Which country is always held up as the shining example of 'participation'? West Germany. Hardly a workers' paradise - or else why the recent massive strike wave.

And what is the effect of it all? In poorly organised companies management often sees 'participation' as a way of setting up a kind of company union and keeping real trade unionism out. In every case, workers on the board have to accept the rules of the capitalist game. If the figures say the place is making a loss, something has to be cut. Of course the figures include in-

terest payments to the bankers, artificial prices charged by other subsidiaries of a large group, etc. but if there is no money in the kitty (even if there are other kitties stretching from here to the Cayman Islands) the workers 'representative' ends up by 'representing' the employer and telling the workers that redundancies or a wage freeze are inevitable. Just look at the history of the British Steel Corporation and its 'workers-directors'.

Under capitalism, 'participation' or even 'workers control' is as useless as having 'left-wingers' in Parliament, and with Benn, Foot, Heffer, Orme, Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all in the government we know how useless that is. Just a load of extra personnel managers. It is no use joining a cricket team if you want to score goals. Only when workers control the whole of society can workers control have real meaning.



'This (the cooperative) would be a serious development for shareholders because on the face of it, a work-in represents a straight clash between their interests and employees' interests, with management caught in the middle. However, in these matters appearances can be deceptive - and what is more, the eventual result need not altogether be disadvantageous for shareholders'. The article goes on to point out that the Meriden factory is a mortgageable asset. With liquidity problems solved by government or other investment after a period of Triumph men working on the lump in the changeover period, the end result would be a favourable one for NVT. The Investors Chronicle concludes 'But above all Meriden shows that sale of surplus plant to the workers concerned adds a further dimension to in-

dustrial rationalisation.'

What does all this mean? Firstly, that a group of workers are struggling against the callous policy of industrial closure, in a situation where there has not been a history of struggle as in other parts of the motor industry. But secondly, that you can't beat redundancy, closure and capitalism by setting up in business against it and and putting yourself in hock to the bank into the indefinite future.

Whatever tactics must be employed in the guerrilla struggle against closure - which are things known best only by those who must fight that struggle wherever it may be - our ultimate strategy can only be for revolution and socialism. We must close down capitalism if it is not to close us down!

READ

'The Daily

Asset Stripper'

Following the closure of the Beaverbrook group's Glasgow operations, the managing director and deputy chairman, Mr. Jocelyn Stevens, told department heads and union officials from the Evening Standard that the group's problems were still not solved. What lesson had Mr. Stevens learned from Glasgow? That the wage bill had been far too high. His conclusion? 'I do not think anyone in Beaverbrook Newspapers deserves more money from the company in its present financial state. I am asking you to accept a wage freeze, across the board, until we are out of our trouble.'

'Our assets are the ground we work on,' he stated, making the position quite obvious. That ground - plum city centre sites - is estimated to be worth some £50 million. Far more profitable business than selling newspapers. So the Beaverbrook group workers (and eventually most other newspaper workers) are to be the victims of salami tactics. Accept a wage freeze, accept a few redundancies, accept a few more redundancies, accept . . . or the whole lot will be closed down. And under the remorseless logic of capitalism this process will have to go on until exploiting print workers is as profitable as property speculation.

This slow murder can be stopped. The employers have to be shown that the choice is not between newspaper production and property speculation but between newspaper production and no profits at all. To sell the property, they have to get the workers out. If the workers make clear that this is impossible, the employers' whole threat collapses. The time to begin is now, before wage freezes and redundancies start to attack the capacity to fight back.

MERIDEN SIT-IN

The workers at the famous Triumph motorcycle works at Meriden near Coventry are still in occupation since having taken over the factory on October 2 last year. They had hoped to form their own cooperative under the guidance of a local TGWU official and Labour MP Leslie Huckfield. Norton Villiers Triumph management have upped the price to about £8m and now Mr Wedgwood Benn, with his well-known pre-occupations with 'workers control', has offered government assistance. Whether or not this is the Meriden's kiss of death needs little speculation.

Although it has now been reported (often that the cooperative terms have been agreed in prin-

ciple, the management has continued to prevaricate, and the men's future is still unclear.

The Triumph men have shown that a holding operation is possible and have gained wide support from Coventry and the district and other parts of the NUT set-up. Unfortunately about one-third of the workers have left.

Although at first the company and the capitalist press saw the cooperative plan as a 'socialist' plan aimed at undermining capitalist enterprise, recently their views have been revised. After all, instead of sacking your work-force when selling your factory in the industrial speculation game, get the workers to buy it!

Investors chronicle comments:

Trade Unionism in Banking Must be Defended

The most important matter for discussion at this month's Annual Conference of the National Union of Bank Employees, is the proposed merger of NUBE and the banks' Staff Associations. Though a final decision will not be reached at Conference, the decisions reached will have a decisive bearing on the merger talks and the future of the merger itself. On the final decision will rest the future of Trade Unionism in the Banking and Finance industry.

If the proposed merged body - the Association of Banking and Financial Unions - were to mean the destruction of the staff associations, for over half a century the tools of the employers, and the creation of a single trade union in banking, it would be a most welcome step. ABFU however, is not designed to create unity; rather it is designed to create divisions. It is not designed to further trade unionism, but to destroy it. The merger was proposed by the Banking Employers Federation because they feared the potential strength of a large and de-registered union, ASTMS, which

had recruited a large number of members, particularly in the Midland Bank. NUBE agreed to negotiations because of its long-felt desire to take over the Staff Association, and because of its weak financial position.

The negotiations however, have been unsatisfactory from the very beginning. Firstly, NUBE officials prepared a draft constitution for the new body but it was rejected by the union's executive committee. Despite this however, the document was put forward for discussion by NUBE's negotiating team. (The president, Tom Burns, explained that this was a 'snap decision' which had to be taken in view of the urgency of the situation). The document was not acceptable to the S/A's who produced their own draft constitution. The NUBE negotiators then agreed to allow the Secretary of the Employers' Federation to act as a sort of an 'honest broker' (3) and merge the two documents. Thus the proposed constitution of ABFU which is now before us, has been written - by the employers! and furthermore, welcomed by the CBI.

It allows, not for one trade union in banking and finance, but rather for a loose federation of autonomous house unions registered under the IR Act, giving nominal allegiance to a central body. This allegiance does not even allow the finances of the Association to be controlled by the central body. What it means is that bank workers will be more divided than ever; divided from their fellow workers in banking and from the rest of the Trade Union movement; submerged in a mess of powerless house unions, some of which pull in one direction and others in another.

The proposed Association of Banking and Financial Unions is an attack by the employers on Trade Unionism in banking and finance. It is an attempt to cripple the growing organisation and growing militancy of this large and potentially very powerful section of white collar workers. (There are approx. 1m workers in banking, finance companies, building societies and insurance. Their economic power is considerable) If allowed to come into being, it will destroy the bank workers' ability to fight and to defend himself.

Bank and finance workers are at a critical juncture. They must not allow their interests to be sold out. They must defend trade unionism.

NUT conference

The annual Conference of the National Union of Teachers meets at Eastbourne on April 13th, at a time of intense attack on the nation's education. The task of the conference is to unite the opposition to the economy designs of the Government and to lay a basis for the struggle against the decline. The conference will discuss the need for the definition of a teachers' duties and minimum conditions of work that can be expected. Teachers have never had at their side a 'rule book'. They need this weapon of struggle.

Meanwhile the struggle for an increased London Allowance intensifies daily. Teachers are now walking out of their schools on day strikes. Next term will see a flood of activity if Wilson does not relent. Discredited Parliament can expect no more lobbies from the mass of teachers. The Parli-

amentary calendar is of no consequence. The recruitment calendar demands an increase before the end of May.

Essex teachers

non-cooperation

Teachers at a number of secondary schools in Essex have refused to attend parents meetings after school hours in pursuit of their claim for travelling expenses for attending such meetings. (Teachers in some areas are already paid such expenses.)

Some of the teachers involved reported that teachers from five different unions, as well as some non-union teachers backed the action.

In view of the lack of militancy in the area in the past, this is a very significant development and shows the increasing awareness of local teachers for united action in the fight against ruling-class attacks on education.

'The Worker'

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Glorious Easter

In this issue we pay tribute to the Irish Citizen Army, which, with the Irish Volunteers, played such a glorious part in the Easter Rising of 1916. We salute the indomitable Irish people who gave birth to such fighters; who are still battling valiantly against their age-old enemy and oppressor, British imperialism.

1916 was the most important rebellion against British rule that Ireland has ever seen. It did not have the mass support it deserved, yet it laid the foundation for the greatest defeat ever inflicted on British imperialism in Ireland. It was the first blow in this century, in a war later to be engaged in by millions of colonial peoples throughout the world; a war which the Irish people themselves have yet to

complete.

Although it was a failure, it was, like the Paris Commune and the Revolution of 1905 in Russia, an action which brought the people of the world forward, and thus it was a great event.

The lessons of 1916 are still with us. The teachings of James Connolly are still with us. They will remain with us because they are weapons for the forward march of humanity, part of the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism. All that remains to be done is for the Irish working-class, the inheritors of the struggle for Irish freedom, now greater than ever, to act upon them, kick out the British and get on with the task of building socialism in Ireland.

REASONS WHY

YOU SHOULD JOIN

The Irish Citizen Army.

BECAUSE It pledges its members to work for, organise for, drill for and fight for an Independent Ireland.

BECAUSE It places its reliance upon the only class that never betrayed Ireland—the Irish Working Class.

BECAUSE Having a definite aim to work for there is no fear of it being paralysed in the moment of action by divisions in its Executive Body.

BECAUSE It teaches that "the sole right of ownership of Ireland is vested in the people of Ireland, and that that full right of ownership may, and ought to be, enforced by any and all means that God hath put within the power of man."

BECAUSE It works in harmony with the Labour and true National Movements and thus embraces all that makes for Social Welfare and National Dignity.

Reproduction of recruitment leaflet Irish Citizen Army 1914

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BRIGHTON WORKERS
BOOKSHOP
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Apr. 19th THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT. Bellman Bookshop, 7.30 p.m.

Apr. 28th VICTORY TO THE PEOPLE OF DHOFAR: the Arab People's struggle against imperialism. Bellman Bookshop, 7.30 p.m.

LIVERPOOL MAY DAY MEETING
Wed. May 1st AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool 3. 7.30 p.m.

TEESIDE MAY DAY MEETING
Wed. May 1st The Star & Garter, Middlesbrough. 7.30 p.m.

If you do not usually receive a programme of public meetings held by the CPB(ML) at the Bellman Bookshop please write for a copy to: Meetings Organiser, CPB(ML), 155 Fortress Road, London NW5.

Murder Incorporated

The British 'secret war' in Ireland gets dirtier and less secret every day. After years of denials, the government has at last admitted that the Special Air Service is operating in Northern Ireland. Brigadier Kitson's theory of 'gangs and pseudo-gangs' is appearing in its terrible reality. The monster, once created, even turns upon itself. We have seen British troops, in plain clothes, killed in a shoot-out with the Royal Ulster Constabulary, also in plain clothes. And then there is Kenneth Littlejohn, who the former Minister of Defence admits using as an agent 'because it might save the lives of British troops'. Littlejohn has now stated that he was authorised by the Ministry of Defence to kill British soldiers - 'if you have to'.

Once again our Party's demand is the only way forward: 'British Troops Out of Ireland Now!'

Penguin - A HIGH PRICE FOR CLOSURE

At Penguin Books and Penguin Education, warning in early February of impending redundancies among editorial and clerical staff followed fast on hard-won gains in pay and conditions. During the months just before Christmas, eighteen months struggle by NUJ members for union recognition and their first wage claim had finally born fruit - the first basic salary structure and backdated increases between £2 and £3 in excess of the Phase II limits, to apply to the Phase II period.

But in this area of the working class, as in any other, events have once again shown that every agreement is but an armistice, and tomorrow the war. The threatened redundancies - 75 in all - in an industry as tiny as book publishing means a flooded job market and many months without work. The warning was met with stubborn resistance by the Joint Union Committee composed of NUJ and ASTMS (representing editorial and clerical workers) and SOGAT (representing the warehouse workers) - a committee formed in the final stages of the pay and conditions struggle last year.

After six weeks around the negotiating table with the joint unions standing ready for action - the 33 threatened redundancies at Penguin Books have been withdrawn. But at Penguin Education, a separate division of the company, the redundancies implied not merely cut-back, but total closure. The workers are clear that the decision made by the parent company, Pearson-Longman, which owns the Westminster Press Group of provincial newspapers and the Financial Times, ostensibly for short-term cash flow reasons, really represents a fundamental shift in publishing policy, away from educational books and towards more commercial, profit-making

The road to freedom

The Labour Government hovers between Europe and the United States, hesitating in its search for a saviour. For the capitalists, the near bankrupt Britain must be sold abroad. For the working class it is time to realise that Britain will only thrive when she has become independent.

In 1944 it was said that Britain was made largely of coal and surrounded by fish. Only an organising genius could arrange for a shortage of coal and fish in Britain at the same time. But the most important resource of Britain is its people. Not only has capitalism succeeded in creating a shortage of fuel and food, it has also created a shortage of jobs and at the same time a shortage of labour.

Successive governments have managed to reduce Britain to the 'sick man of Europe'. Today, Labour holds sway. In its last period of office, 1964 - 1970, Labour was a champion of the "special relationship" with the United States and bowed to the master on matters of trade, money and war. The extreme of British subservience was approval of the barbaric attempt at the destruction of Vietnam.

The Vietnamese toppled the American giant. The United States fell from its position of unchallenged supremacy of the imperialist world. In Britain, Heath took over from Wilson and formalised the latter's approach to Europe. We would no longer fall behind the United States but jump to the dictates of the bureaucrats in Brussels.

The first year of entry to the EEC has been a disaster and so Labour promises "fundamental renegotiation". Callaghan will play the part with bravado: there will be 'less unemployment' and 'lower prices' and the press will acclaim the aggressive bargaining and the better terms. But nothing will be changed.

Over 200 years ago, Britain was receiving vast amounts of capital from Holland and using it to rise to the ascendancy of the commercial and industrial world. Today, Britain appeals for money from abroad to save it from bankruptcy. The capitalist wheel has turned full circle.

For the working class it is not a question of cheap Commonwealth food as opposed to the Common Agricultural Policy. It is not a question of easter markets in Europe as opposed to the United States. We will grow our own food, and industry will produce for our own use. We will defend ourselves, and protect our own currency. Our class, too, has received the bounty from abroad needed to set it on the road to prosperity. This bounty is the revolutionary experience of other lands. The thriving Chinese and Albanians of today can display the fruits of revolution and independence.

NIRC

Still out for blood

Although the Con-Mech strike is finished, and the National Industrial Relations Court will soon be finished, that does not stop Judge Donaldson taking another vicious bite at the funds of the AUEW. It was the AUEW which defied his preposterous Act and its court. It was the AUEW which doomed his Court. So naturally the Court rushes to grab another £47,000 of workers' money. Mr Dilley of Con-Mech is to be compensated for the loss of profits. As for his other requests, like £500 for holidays in Majorca for strike-breakers - too much publicity for this might damage the image that these people blackleg simply out of a love of individual freedom.

Just as every collision between the AUEW and the Act in the past was a test of the fighting spirit of the working class, so this fine is a further test. We have to fight again - to stop the fine and to get the money stolen in the past repaid.

publications.

The NUJ (office branch) at Penguin Education is one of the strongest and most resolute in book publishing. Together with a newly formed ASTMS secretarial group, it correctly judged its strength relative to the parent company and decided not to fight for a reversal of the decision, but to go instead for a maximum claim over and above the settlement contained in the current agreement. This has been won with the support of the Joint Union Committee - a minimum severance payment of £1725 or 22 months' money whichever is the greater, for every dismissed worker. For all part-time wor-

NUS conference

Continuation of the Grants Campaign and defence of the right to organise were major topics at the Easter Conference of the National Union of Students, held in Liverpool.

The demands, for higher grants and full grants for all, remain unchanged. Delegates recognised that unity of the campaign was essential and gave equal priority to all the demands.

For the first time Student Unions are to move to widespread action for the summer term, usually regarded as the quiet time of year. Even with impending examinations, the demand for adequate grants is important enough for the local based actions such as canteen boycotts and rent strikes to continue with mass support.

The recent return of the Labour government didn't cost much too. Students won't care the struggle for a few empty promises. This is a real advance over the days of 1968 when the NUS ended a grants campaign 'to help the Labour Party and the economy'.

Victimisation at Essex University was condemned, and understanding is now spreading that the fight of students is one which is hurting the capitalist class. Delegates resolved to resist attacks in their own colleges and to defend the right of all students to organise for their demands.

workers, and for many editorial workers earning well below £1725 a year, the settlement is substantial increase on a year's earnings. For Penguin Books it's a heavy price to pay to achieve the redundancy of 42 workers - a total cost in the region of £80,000!

But for the unions remaining in the truncated Penguin Books, the Penguin Education closure is only the tip of the iceberg. They stand ready to resist totally further attempts by management to create redundancies.