

THE WORKER



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THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT DESTROYS BRITAIN

BREAK THIS CAPITALIST TOOL

The onslaught by the Labour Government continues. As unemployment mounts to its highest level since the War, Chancellor Healey introduced a cut in public expenditure of £1012 million.

The ink on the social contract mark 2 hardly had time to dry before the Labour Government broke all its 'undertakings'. More people will be thrown on the dole. In some regions unemployment is expected to rise as high as 15 per cent. House building and mortgages are to be reduced, education and health are to suffer a further cut of £45 million and £70 million respectively, and there will be higher dental and ophthalmic charges. Food subsidies are to be phased out on an accelerated scale and school meals are to go up by 10p from August 1977, an increase of 67 per cent.

These measures are a crime against the working class shamelessly perpetrated with the promise of prosperity to come, of jam tomorrow. But how can we have jam tomorrow if they are closing the jam factory today?

Those who talk of pressure by the international financiers are giving succour to the real villains. For the ruling class which this Labour Government represents are not the underdogs being forced by some faceless men from abroad into taking measures against their will. Our ruling class are among the leaders in international monopoly capitalism. British imperialism remains one of the major imperialist powers in the world. The financiers of international finance still meet in Threadneedle Street.

The British bourgeoisie are no longer demanding the surrender of the working class. If they want surrender, they had surrender in the TUC Special Conference on June 16th. Just as the French bourgeoisie upon the fall of the Paris Commune in 1871 conducted a massacre of the communards on a scale never witnessed before, so the British ruling class, the oldest in the world, is intent on nothing less than the complete destruction of the working class. And in this they have the full support of world monopoly capital.

The decision has been taken to destroy the working class and with it Britain. It is a political decision that has nothing to do with any economic consideration, for who can justify curing malnutrition with a severe diet unless murder is the intention? Not even the bourgeois economists are able to carry out such intellectual somersaults.

The ruling class has made its choice. With the working class, have no choice but revolution to save Britain.

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Government declares war on hospitals

One of the most abhorrent crimes of warfare is the willing destruction of hospitals and the slaughter of the wounded. The Labour Government is setting out to do this to our hospitals. Poetic licence? Scant licence, and no poetry at all! This government has never built hospitals, and construction projects now being completed were developed and paid for years ago.

The proposed cuts, which are only additions to a decline, affect the workers of this country from cradle to grave.

In detail, one of the better served regions of the NHS, the South West Metropolitan, is to reduce its budget by 10 per cent this year. In this over-privileged area, the waiting time for an elderly man or woman to get into a geriatric hospital is a mere two to four months!

At the new St. George's Hospital in Tooting, the waiting list for some surgical operations is a mere two years. Yet the government claim that there are

twice as many beds for surgical patients in this region as there should be, and in the inner area of south west London itself three times as many beds for medical patients.

In the proposed reorganisation of this area, hospitals are to be closed, and specialist posts in remaining hospitals will not be reappointed after retirement or death of the doctor now working. This of course leads directly to loss of jobs for all other health workers.

The problems facing all health workers are great. For junior doctors there is the prospect of mass unemployment. By 1985 4000 medical graduates on the market will be chasing 2500 jobs in general practice, and specialist hospital medicine. For all there is an attack on the standards of care for the patient. Ennals has broken the spirit and the letter of the agreement won last year by the junior doctors after their successful strike. For the first

time hours between 40 and 80 per week were to be paid for, and this not overtime, but a compulsory and integral part of the job. Now this money is to be withdrawn for holiday, study and absence through sickness. The response has been strong and united. Representatives of the junior doctors have called for the resumption of industrial action, and this call has been supported by the whole BMA. In many areas 'emergency only' now applies, and in other hospitals different tactics will be adopted.

From defence to attack - how to turn a rearguard, defensive action into an offensive? Only when the whole organised working class faces the reality of this Labour attack on their health and their children's lives, and responds, can real success be achieved. It is the duty of all Trade Unionists to support your health workers, and we call upon you to do this - now.

Tanzam railway completed



Chinese, Tanzanian and Zambian workers completing the final stretch of the Tanzania-Zambia railway.

The Chinese people's largest overseas aid project, the Tanzania Railway through Tanzania and Zambia, was recently completed more than a year ahead of schedule. The railway runs for 1155 miles between Dar Es Salaam on the Tanzanian coast and the Zambian copper belt. Along the route the construction team had to overcome some of the most inaccessible country of the African continent, rising in southern Tanzania to 6000 feet in the mountains. In this especially difficult terrain up to 15,000 Chinese and 45,000 African workers were engaged in building tunnels, bridges and major landscaping.

Polish workers win victory

The sham socialist mask slipped once more from the face of the Polish government in its recent attempt to raise the price of food and fuel by 100 per cent. The absolute decline of capitalism has become so acute that like capitalists everywhere the Polish capitalists attempted to reduce the living standards of the working class.

Yet as in 1970/1 the Polish workers have shown their strength and courage. The workers took up the fight against the government in a mass of strikes and demonstrations all over the country. The brutality of the so-called "workers" government was revealed in its attempt to suppress the workers. In one town alone 2 workers were killed.

By forcing the government to withdraw the proposed price increases the Polish working class have dealt a massive blow against revisionism. The Polish working class have shown that they will not accept a decline in their standard of living in order to save capitalism.

Workers Strike for Public Safety

In Hull there is a dispute between management and workers of North Eastern Gas centred around a decision which would end prompt treatment of all gas leaks. This has been portrayed in the local press as a squabble over a hole in the road. But as a senior shop steward involved in the dispute explained, it was a question of whenever the Gas Board deferred dealing with a gas leak, workers would leave the hole unfilled to warn the public of what was afoot.

This is what led to the incident reported in THE WORKER issue 13 when the whole thing blew up and the men all came out as a result of the disciplinary proceedings taken against the senior shop steward.

The strike was carried out with great discipline and organisation and scab contractors called in from Wakefield did not dare go inside and, in any case, Nalco members refused to work alongside them. The strike spread to all North Humberside on the second day and on July 12th flying pickets went to the large depots at Leeds, Batley, Bradford and Wakefield being warmly received in all these places.

Faced with such growing action the management withdrew disciplinary measures. Asked if he thought the campaign against Negas' negligent attitude toward gas leaks would become national, the senior shop steward said he considered even a minor gas leak a major hazard, a potential killer and hoped that all gas workers felt as did those at Hull and would take similar action in the interest of public safety.

In socialist Albania every village has a clinic for mothers and babies and a complete system of preventive medicine is in operation throughout the country.

EEC-Parcel of Rogues

The EEC, which was meant to open a new era of British and European growth is showing itself to be a group of arguing cut-throat rogues. Faced with problems of direct elections, monetary union or agricultural reform the response of the European capitalists is save profits at all costs. In response to the "problem" of a European butter surplus, the EEC raised the price of margarine (100 per cent in Britain) so that we are forced to buy dear butter. This at a time when we are told that wages cause inflation.

The nine talk of union while at the same time arguing viciously amongst themselves. While Holland calls for closer monetary union France and Britain meet with the USA and agree to economically cripple Italy, a fellow member, if her elections are not acceptable to international capitalism.

This is the true nature of the EEC. It represents another example of the absolute decline of capitalism. As capitalism declines, it forms new organisations to attack the working class. The call for direct elections to

the European parliament is a crude attempt to destroy national sovereignty. In its determination to maintain capitalism the destruction of the British working class is seen as a vital task. Thus British capitalists who are the world's second largest capital exporters use the EEC countries as areas to invest their capital and allow British skills to decay into redundancy and poverty.

This is the test for the British working class. The vote to remain in the EEC was a vote of shame. The high level of unemployment, the destruction of British industry and high prices have removed any illusions that may have persisted about the EEC. The eagerness of Portugal, Spain, and Greece to join the EEC shows that like wolves hunting in a pack European Capitalists want to use the EEC to prey upon the working class. We must say no to the EEC and Yes to Britain. A united working class will turn these quarrelling rogues into a new EEC, the organisation of European Expropriated Capitalists.

Social workers banish deception

"Cuts in Social Services in Oxfordshire are not real cuts, because they started from an expanding service... the cuts that I have been reading about in the newspapers I do not recognise. I don't think we've cut social services so far," said the Treasurer of Oxfordshire County Council. In social services and elsewhere destruction goes along with deception and self-deception. But phoney arguments for priorities or 'national' interest and phoney economics cannot hide the truth of attacks on the social services.

In the past in Oxford, social workers' concern for those they are intended to help has been used to hide the situation. Much unpaid overtime has been done, despite which a backlog of 30 cases a week has been built up. Now already 62 per cent of social workers' caseload is statutory work - that is work done by people who must by law be helped - and any further reduction of staffing levels will quickly raise the proportion to 90 per cent. A list of priorities for jobs has been drawn up by the Director of Social Services for the County Social Services Committee, which shows that work for mentally handicapped and physically handicapped and the elderly comes well down the list.

Under such pressure it is only a matter of time before things go wrong. True to the nature of capitalism, the authorities and

newspapers will attempt to put the blame onto the social workers and divide our class. Indeed new procedures for dealing with cases will leave the individual social worker responsible and possibly liable for prosecution, while the authorities are let off the hook if things go wrong.

Oxford social workers are no longer prepared to tolerate this deception. Those in NALGO have voted not to undertake extra work if field workers leave and are not replaced. The British Association of Social Workers at their AGM, after a speech pointing out that "we should refuse to take on additional extra responsibility because we are not protecting the clients, and we are deluding ourselves if we try," voted to ban extra work and oppose the cuts.

HUMBERSIDE
The central government has told Humberside County Council that it must cut its planned expenditure by £9.6 mill. It must attempt to see where cuts can be made. At first councillors said they might be able to reduce by £2 - £1 mill, but no more and certainly no 'staff cuts'. Two days later they were still maintaining £9.6 mill. was too high, but perhaps £6 or £7 m. would be alright, and there would have to be some staff cuts after all. Humberside County Council's General Purposes Sub-Committee is now looking into ways of cutting



COMRADE CHU TEH, MOURNED BY SOCIALISTS THE WORLD OVER, CALLING ON COMMANDERS AND FIGHTERS OF THE EIGHTH ROUTE ARMY IN 1937 TO ADHERE TO CHAIRMAN MAO'S POLITICAL LINE AND CARRY THE LIBERATION WAR AGAINST JAPAN THROUGH TO THE END.

Message of condolence from CC of CPBML to the Central Committee of the CPC July 6th 1976

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) grieves at the sad death of Comrade Chu Teh, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China and hero of the Long March. It sends its deepest condolences to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on its great loss.

Outstanding communist fighter, general of the Red Army and leader of innumerable campaigns of the Chinese Revolution, Comrade Chu Teh symbolised the strength, dedication and brilliance of the victorious Red Army later to become the Peoples Liberation Army. Guided by Chairman Mao's correct political line the Communist Party of China undertook its epic Long March almost 41 years ago. Over some 12,000 miles through the length and breadth of China, over snow-capped peaks and marshy wastes the Red Army, under the brilliant leadership of General Chu Teh, overcame unbelievable obstacles and hardships and defeated the enemy's many encirclement and suppression tactics.

Through the anti-fascist war against Japan and then the final phase of the Revolution Comrade Chu Teh's communist military genius was one more factor leading to the final victory.

"Clouds of fighters and commanders

Are singing like a great wind..."

wrote Chu Teh in a poem of those tremendous years. We who have witnessed the march of socialism in China and see the red banner of Marxism-Leninism rising high in five continents salute our departed comrade and pledge ourselves anew to fight the greatest cause of mankind --- socialism.

DEATH OF AN INDUSTRY Engineering in Leeds.

The working people of Leeds are being called upon to witness the murder of one of the city's principal industries - engineering. There is nothing unique in this for it could be said of the situation in dozens of towns throughout the country.

Between 1951 and 1973 Leeds lost 54,732 jobs in manufacturing industries, with the result that by this decade 56.6 per cent of all workers in the city were employed in service trades, the City Council being the largest single employer.

In engineering, in the same period, 4114 jobs were lost. Since 1973 over 2000 jobs were officially lost from the industry, the rate of job loss is speeding up, and recent closure at Crabtree-Vickers (printing presses) and redundancies at Doncaster Monkbridge (aerospace) have put nearly another 1000 workers out of jobs. They have joined those from Hudsell Clarke, Jonas Woodhead Marshall-Fowers, Wilsons and Mathiesons, Tange-Epco, Yorkshire Vehicles, Associated Engineering, Kirkstall Forge, Yorkshire Imperial Metals, TRF Plant and Fairburn Lawson in ever growing dele queues.

Most of these companies are or were subsidiaries of companies with a multinational base - notably Vickers, with interests in 13 countries; I.M.I. (ICI) in 4 countries; Tube Investments

in 12 countries and GKN with over 200 subsidiaries in 23 countries. They shift their capital where labour is cheap and profitability high. Some such as Vickers in Leeds have been involved in blatant asset-stripping, along with the International Nickel Corporation (Canada) which is currently running down the precision engineering side of Doncaster Monkbridge.

Others such as Tube Investments and GKN are in the van of those companies spearheading the flow of capital out of Britain, whilst dismantling here.

The resistance of our class to this attack has been muted and muddled. Factories which boasted of being strongly organised; Crabtree, Tange-Epco, Monkbridge, have collapsed like houses of cards. These factories were well organised - but only for social-democracy, when capital launched its offensive with the Labour Party as its weapon they were swept away. It is no accident that of the two Crabtree-Vickers factories, one well organised and one badly organised, the former was closed immediately with Government approval; the latter was kept open after a prolonged dose of short time and redundancies. The lesson of who was boss and on what terms and at what price government "aid" was granted has been ruthlessly rammed home.

'Detente' in the Middle East

The Zionists have carried out an act of absolutely unjustifiable aggression against an independent African country, attacking an airport deep within Uganda's boundaries, killing its soldiers and destroying a number of aircraft. This brutal operation was possible because the Israelis themselves had built Entebbe Airport and could use this 'aid' to a developing country to inflict damage on it. Let this be contrasted with the real aid of the Taa-Zam railway constructed with China's help. Countries that would be independent can only afford aid from socialist countries.

The aggressive attack was also made possible by the nature of the backing which was used as its excuse. Terrorism invites counter-terrorism which it is incapable of defeating. Terrorism is the failure to trust the people when only people's war can defend or regain a people's homeland. "Only the peasant and proletarian can achieve liberation for it is they who are slave."

The Israeli expansionists are encouraged in their aggressive acts against neighbouring states by the direct and indirect support of the USA. It was the US air force which carried out the

reconnaissance of Egyptian airfields for Israel before that country's pre-emptive strike in the 1967 war and the Pentagon chiefs constantly reiterate their need of a "strong Israel" in the Middle East which they will keep supplied with all the most terrible modern weapons.

The Syrian Government uses its Russian-supplied arms to invade a neighbour country, Lebanon, and carry out murderous attacks on the Lebanese and on the Palestinians - while the Israeli look on in approval. It is a repetition of the Jordanian slaughter of Palestinians using American and British arms. "No emancipation and true liberation can be completed in alliances alone of shifting class forces."

The world is divided into the capitalist arena and the developing comity of socialism. Everywhere in the capitalist arena the imperialist powers compete and collude in the suppression and exploitation of the people "with the connivance of each national bourgeoisie". No true independence is possible within the capitalist arena and no peace either because the essence of capitalism is the exploitation of man by man. To be free people have to take themselves out of the capitalist arena and into socialism. "No true liberation can be achieved

within this one world without the strong development of Marxist forces."

(All quotations from the document "CONGRESS '76" available from the Bellman Bookshop price 10p)

In Brief

Challenging white supremacy and those who collaborate with it is called by the press "introducing politics in the Olympic Games" and it sins against the political truce which in ancient Greece was supposed to last while the Games were on. But then the whole political system of the enlightened originators of the Games rested on slavery.

Shop prices for sugar will not fall after the signing of a new agreement between the Common Market and sugar producing countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific which gives the producer £186 per tonne guaranteed minimum compared with £280 last year. This reduction of £74 per tonne would, if it 'worked through', come out at about 6p per 2 lb. bag of sugar. However this reduction will not 'work through' the system. Only the multinational corporations will reap the benefit.

A Shameful anniversary



Seven years ago, in August 1969, the British Labour Government introduced troops into Northern Ireland. Since then savage repression, terrorism, sectarianism and murder have spread through that part of Ireland.

Never was the army there in a disinterested peace-keeping role but always as the instrument of British colonial interests. The truth is that the events set in motion by the Civil Rights Movement had so demoralised the Royal Ulster Constabulary and so weakened O'Neill's government that the situation was rapidly sliding out of control. The situation in the North threatened British colonial rule, and faithful to its masters the Labour Government moved to protect the interests of British imperialism.

True to its traditions the Labour Party promised much and produced little. Wilson in the Downing Street Declaration

promised democratic reforms. Callaghan, then Home Secretary, went to Northern Ireland in August 1969 and in Derry said "new structures" would have to be created to give all sections of the community "a sense of belonging". Indeed, the 'B' Specials were abolished and the RUC was disbanded, but the guns on the streets now belonged to the British Army.

Essentially, nothing changed then, and nothing has changed now. The reforms have been minimal and still there is massive unemployment, decaying industries, poor housing and a police state.

Northern Ireland is still a colony. The British Government is still the enemy of the Irish people. On this seventh anniversary of British Troops into the North of Ireland, we join with the Irish working class in demanding British Troops out of Ireland now.

On the Industrial Front

Trico Women

The 400 women on strike at the Trico windscreen wiper factory in Brentford, Middlesex, with the backing of the AUEW have refused to allow the case to be taken to an industrial tribunal as the Company wants.

They point out that in the first six months of the Equal Pay Act, 72 per cent of the cases brought to tribunals for decisions under the Act have failed to win anything at all for women workers. As one of the shop stewards puts it: "We are simply not prepared to abide by the tribunals which are clearly failing to help the majority of women reach equal pay."

In fact there could be no clearer case than that of Trico's which deals with men workers doing identical work, carried out at the same time on the same machines.

The women fully realise now that they are not only fighting their own battle but also the main case over whether the Equal Pay Act can ever be made to serve the workers for whom it was supposed to have been passed.

Commenting on their willingness to continue their action for as long as is necessary, a member of the strike committee said: "There has never been this sort of solidarity before. It's a small revolution for us. We have suddenly found a voice and our unity and determination will win the day."

Mason Scott Thrissell

In Bristol recently engineering workers on four sites of Mason Scott Thrissell were on strike in a six-hour show of strength. The immediate reason was management's demand to move a skilled man to another site to do other work, which he refused to do. Support snowballed from

his own section round the works, and to other sites through a mass meeting - which was pretty good going for a snowball in the present temperatures.

"Restrictive practices of the type that have ruined British industry," complained the employers. But workers have the prospect of years of sacrifice merely to conserve capitalism's destructiveness if they accept that argument. At MST they argued otherwise - if an extra job needs doing, take on and train if necessary one of the million and a half pairs of hands idle outside the gates.

The same reasoning lies behind the fight of MST workers to preserve the jobs of 7 apprentices coming up to the end of their time and whom the employers wish to sack.

BBC sacking

Members of the National Union of Journalists working at BBC Radio London were called out on strike on July 22nd in protest at the dismissal by the BBC of a reporter who happens to be on the national executive of the Union.

The reporter was dismissed because, when asked by the producer of a phone-in programme to ring in under an assumed name pretending to be an ordinary member of the public, he made a disparaging remark about the former Tory minister, Reginald Maudling.

The BBC's action against the reporter is victimisation - an attempt to divert attention away from the practice of having BBC staff pose as listeners which an MP has described as "a fraud perpetrated at the public expense."

BBC Radio London which relies heavily on news staff for its programmes had to put out music and chat shows by non-Union presenters on July 23rd

and the strike is expected to continue.

Oriakes

Oriakes is a small Dagenham company making records and throughout the years have employed mainly women on part-time, poorly paid work. Its recently formed Strike Committee write:

"Oriakes are well aware that, because of family commitments, women are least able to struggle for improved conditions. Nine weeks ago, however, unable to tolerate out conditions any longer, we went on strike and today are still demonstrating the same unity as we displayed on our first day on strike.

"This dispute has the full support of our Union, TGWU, who are calling for every assistance to end the scandal of our low pay - for full Trade Union rights - and for no victimisation of our members.

"Cheap labour is a menace to all workers, men or women, and we believe our struggle will benefit all women who have to work to supplement their family income..."

Legal & General

Workers at the Legal & General Assurance Society in Hove have started action in their fight for union recognition. After continued refusals by management to discuss the issue, the ASTMS members decided to hold a protest meeting, and marched 200-strong round a nearby park, handing out leaflets to the public explaining the situation.

This was the first step in a campaign to sweep away the existing Staff Consultative Council and implement the rights of the workers to negotiate with management as a Union.



Unemployment Britain's Biggest Growth Industry

This Labour Government has achieved the highest level of unemployment since the Great Depression at the end of the 'thirties - over a million and a half out of work, more than 6 per cent of the working population jobless, more than 200,000 young people leaving school to join the endless queues at the labour exchange.

The Labour Government has boasted of its "strategy of growth" for Britain's declining industry. All that grows is unemployment - not accidentally as a side-effect of other policies, but deliberately as the main object of Government policy which is to destroy the working class's resistance to whatever suits capitalism.

We were told that the way to prevent unemployment was to vote Labour instead of Tory. Labour got in and unemployment went up. We were told that the only way to prevent unemployment was to join the Common Market. We joined and unemployment went up. We were told that the only way to prevent unemployment was to accept with the £6 limit a wage cut. We accepted and unemployment went up. We, shamefully, accepted the same argument again over the 1 1/2 per cent cut and unemployment has now soared to the greatest heights yet.

The answer is simple. Unemployment is not the unfortunate result of the so-called fight against inflation: the 'fight against inflation', like all deflation before and since the War, is simply the means for creating massive unemployment which is capitalism's major weapon against the working class.

Unemployment is a crime against workers. It is completely characteristic of capitalism which gets fat wasting the world's resources and wasting people. It is ridiculous to suppose that any real strategy of industrial growth could possibly involve the massive laying off of the sole creators of wealth.

The Labour Government's pretension that it is concerned with industrial growth in Britain is a lie. It is concerned with nothing but capitalist profit. The task capitalism has assigned the Labour Party is that of smashing the organised working class of Britain - just as the task the Ruhr industrial barons assigned the Nazi thugs was smashing the trade unions in Germany.

Many years ago at the first signs of post-war unemployment Reg Birch in the National Committee of the AUEW, raised the issue of the fight for the right to work. That fight can now take no other form than workers' war to break capitalism's principal tool of the moment, the Labour Government, and destroy the capitalist system itself.

At each stage when unemployment has reached a new brutal height, half a million, a million, a million and a half, we the working class have expressed horror and indignation and then have decided that we could live with it. Every time we do so we are acquiescing in our doom; we are signing our own death warrant.

NUT extends sanctions against unemployment

The National Union of Teachers, faced with the prospect of 20,000 unemployed training teachers, has announced an extension of sanctions against unemployment from September. Members in certain schools will be advised to refuse to cover for colleagues absent for more than one day, for unfilled vacancies or to teach classes of over 35. The executive has also empowered the action committee to ask certain areas to undertake action following a ballot of members. There is recognition that opposition to unemployment is a national problem. Nor is concern confined to the profession. There has been increasing defiance from local education authorities. At their recent conference the cuts were opposed. Speakers warned of the closure of village schools and teacher redundancy. The need was stressed to challenge the idea that public expenditure was wasted or inflationary. Those in struggle for education will welcome allies to their cause.

The message for all teachers in all areas is clear enough is enough, there must be no further retreat. Every diversion will have to be rejected. The Government aims to foster division between college leavers and those nearing retirement, the unemployed and married women returning to the schools. Most pathetic is the cry of "ineffective" teachers. It is high time workers said, "Away with capitalism, the ineffective system! Save Education!"

Health cuts in maternity care service

The proposed cutbacks in the National Health Service are drastic and severe - that they will affect everyone in one way or another is inevitable. One specific area to come under attack is the Maternity section with a planned cut of £10 million by 1980. It seems it is no longer necessary for mothers to produce healthy babies and to be looked after themselves - the future working class is to be an illiterate, unhealthy one.

The Government claim that because of the falling birthrate and the drop in inpatient and outpatient, in number of maternity beds and in the length of stay, maternity services cost has risen 4 per cent a year. Even ignoring the great improvement in the service which can be demonstrated by better maternal and foetal health, this is a totally shortsighted and unworkable solution especially when the Government talk of spending more on preventive medicine and at the same time less on obstetrics which is the very beginning of preventive medicine.

In one notable London Maternity Hospital screening of women in their first months of pregnancy has meant that the numbers of babies born with spina bifida or as mongols has been reduced considerably. Owing to the proposed cuts in the Maternity services in this particular hospital it will be impossible for screening to continue on the same scale,

Hull teachers take a stand against unemployment

A July meeting of the Hull Association of the National Union of Teachers overwhelmingly passed a motion for active commitment by teachers to the fight against unemployment.

The stand was taken following meetings in the schools with student teachers involved in the occupation of Hull Colleges of Education and with the unemployed.

The resolution recognised, "that teacher unemployment is a problem for the employed to solve, and a national problem. The Association therefore directs the sub-committee on education cuts to campaign within the schools for appropriate sanctions to get the unemployed into the schools as properly paid teachers."

Hull members pointed out that the students' campaign and the massive level of teacher unemployment, with worse threatened for next year, had confronted teachers with an inescapable and urgent responsibility to act. There is not a glut, but a shortage of teachers. Schools are understaffed, and cuts in teacher training places will mean bigger classes and a savage deterioration in conditions in the future, unless something is done to prevent it.

It was also agreed that confronting teacher unemployment is not a philanthropic exercise, but essential to prevent the erosion of past gains for the employed. The recent

Conference of Education Committees, the employers' organisation, decided that, because of education cuts, the existing teaching force would have to work harder to compensate for reduced staff.

Since the Government has abdicated responsibility for education, the teachers are having to assert their responsibility for defending it. As a teacher remarked, "We have got to insist that the assets are saved, the most important being our own skills. Schemes which destroy and debase those skills, such as voluntary early retirement, job creation programmes and voluntary assistance must be totally opposed."

There is a great variety of sanctions that can be imposed ranging from 'no cover' for teacher absence to a ban on ancillary duties. The key sanction is a refusal to teach classes over 30.

The teachers in Hull are setting an example for the country. In May they rejected collaboration in bargaining over 'priorities' in cuts. Now they are demonstrating the need for teachers to win their Union's support for sanctions, to develop into a national guerrilla campaign that will force the Government to bring all unemployed teachers into schools, reverse the decline of the colleges of education, and safeguard our youth's skills for building socialism.

EGA Hospital - Bitter medicine

On the 21st July approximately 700 health workers demonstrated in London against the closure of the Elizabeth Garret Anderson Hospital, Euston. This action was backed by members from COHSE, the AFEW, NEPE and ASIMS. Throughout the day there were also successful picket lines outside four associated hospitals; University College, St. Pancras, The National Temperance Hospital and the Royal Free hospital Hampstead.

Patients and hospital staff from the Elizabeth Garret Anderson Hospital are now receiving letters of compulsory transfer to the Whittington Hospital, but no one is fooled into thinking that either these jobs or hospital beds will be maintained for any period of time under this new arrangement.

Already the 'Save the EGA' Campaign has assumed a wider front. Not only are these hospitals in the Camden Group affected by the intended cuts in the National Health Service, but out of 150 hospitals in the London area, no less than 120 are scheduled for closure within the next five years!

A message broadcast from the Head of the march called for a determined protest by the whole trade union movement against these vicious closures. This fight can no longer be seen as the sole responsibility of those who work in the hospitals. The issue affects all our class, and there is no trade union which cannot afford to discuss and commit itself to support those who work for our health.

Two-faced capitalism

When Edward Heath labelled Lonrho as the "unacceptable face" of capitalism most of us wondered what he really meant. Was he saying that capitalism was two-faced? Nothing new there. Or that Lonrho was the Mr. Hyde to capitalism's everyday lovable Dr. Jekyll?

Lovers of literature will remember that the wicked Mr. Hyde grew steadily stronger while Dr. Jekyll steadily weakened. Finally in a last vestige of decency Jekyll killed both himself and Hyde to put an end to the evil.

Our problem is that no such generous self-destruction can be awaited from our destructive capitalism. In any case, to hope your enemy will defeat himself is nothing other than an admission of defeat on your part. To us all faces are unacceptable, not merely those which peek out from behind the protective veil of law.

Lonrho's mistake lay in not keeping things hidden. Like Poulson, Lonrho was hounded because both had exposed what was current practice. But unlike Poulson, only an individual and therefore dispensable, Lonrho is a flourishing multinational company. So instead of languishing in jail, Lonrho received by way of consolation £5 million of Government money to take over Brenford Nylons.

Meanwhile, in both 'public life' and the boardroom new 'standards of conduct' are being prepared. Naturally, this cosmetic surgery will take some time to complete and however long it takes it cannot hide the evil face of capitalism.

NALGO call for action

At a Special General Meeting of Leeds Metropolitan District branch of Nalگو held on 12th July, four resolutions calling for industrial action were carried by the members present.

Social Services staff who have been labouring in a Victorian slum school, condemned in 1971, have decided to strike from 1st August, unless better accommodation is provided by the Council.

Education technicians who have been waiting five years for the decisions of an arbitration award, decided to reject all its proposals and called for industrial action to back up their claims.

Environmental health officers are struggling against EEC regulations which interfere with meat inspection and attempts to subject their work to veterinary officers' supervision.

Library staff, who having accepted cuts in 15 posts, but are opposed to further cuts and undermanning, such as one person shifts working 11 hour days without proper dinner, tea breaks or cover at all, stated their intention if the Council refused to give cast iron assurances on staffing, to strike, closing key libraries in the city.

The half-day strike by 5000 teachers in Leeds on 1st July, the meeting and decisions by Nalگو on 12th July, the strike by school ancillary workers on 13th July, the demonstration by 500 parents on 14th July against the axing of 11 nursery schools are a beginning in the fight to save our services in Leeds.

In Brief

Recently arrested in West Germany for not paying his hotel bill was the ex-Nazi who during the war was given the job of flooding Britain with forged pound notes in order to destroy the value of our currency. A series of capitalist governments since the war have succeeded where the Nazis failed.

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Exploitation of our children

How can an employer get a pair of hands without having to pay a real wage? By employing a child under school leaving age. Under the law, children under school leaving age can work in certain jobs for limited hours - and must be registered. But children are very often illegally employed as street newspaper vendors, doing morning paper rounds before 7 am, washing up for long hours in hotels, working on lump building sites, on fairgrounds, or in markets when they should be at school.

There will always be exploitation as long as we permit capitalism to exist. Laws regarding the employment of women, children, etc., demanded by us for our protection, can only be limited in their effectiveness. The laws under the 1963 Children and Young Persons Act are supposed to protect children from what is harmful to their health and education. But what's the point of such protection if there are inadequate people employed to enforce it? Education Welfare Officers, whose job it is to see that nothing adversely affects a child's education, are recommended by their professional association to have no more than 2000 children in their care. Some have 6000, of whom 10 per cent have problems. So with 600 children (and their parents) to sort out, the EWO has little time for checking markets, hotels etc. So many cases of illegal employment slip through the net.

The Employment of Children Act 1973 - which presumably extends the 1963 Act - is still in draft form. Why? Because the Government is concerned less with protecting the young as with cutting public expenditure. The Act would cost money to implement - not least because the EWOs would be strengthened in their demand for more staff to cope with the extra duties. Our slogan is not "No cuts". As they try to cut back our Services, we retaliate by demanding more Public Services, more Education Welfare Officers, more teachers, etc.