

THE WORKER



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WORKERS DECLARE PROTRACTED WAR

ENGINEERS OPT FOR GUERRILLA ACTION

ON the 10th of January the National Committee of the AUEW Engineering Section endorsed the clearest call for struggle ever yet made by that Union - to be waged in all workshops throughout that section of industry. It rejected the 'offer' of the Engineering Employers Federation and that of the Shipbuilders and Repairers National Association in response to the Engineers' claim and demanded immediate negotiations through shop stewards and District Committees with individual employers everywhere. Moreover it declared that in case of "no settlement" all disputes ensuing shall be approved "official" by the Executive Council.

"In the event of there being no domestic settlement, Executive Council shall give official recognition to any dispute which is supported by the District Committee."

It is important to understand that District Committees are rank and file bodies whose members are working at the trade.

In accordance with the decision of the 10th January, endorsement of that policy was secured from the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions on the 13th January, thus involving between 2 1/2 and 3 million workers in 16 unions.

This is the signal for struggle - the freedom to fight!

WORKERS UNFETTERED

The membership, the workers, are at last unfettered in pursuit of all or any features of the claim best calculated to engender the maximum unity at the place of work. They may also, as they choose, take it in stages, selecting demands one after the other correctly based on the rising level of struggle which is bound to develop.

Properly led by the shop stewards, by the militants on the workshop floor, it can be near perpetual and protracted war, ever conscious that without their, the workers, domestic agreement any strike arising therefrom is official. This is the natural chronological development of the termination of the national procedure. Workers are now free of these strictures too.

With the acumen only

militant workers possess they can make this round, or more properly these rounds, a nightmare for the employers. Where there are many women workers in the factory it is the clearest call for an equal pay fight ever issued.

It serves to accelerate wage demands already envisaged by shop stewards committees, for the factory as a whole or by departments.

EMPLOYERS DISUNITED

There is a chance now to exploit the disunity of the separate employers concealed up to now behind the facade of pseudo togetherness within the E.E.F. That body is moribund, dying of its own stupidity. So well served so long by the astute professionals whom they have now disowned the members of the Federation have shown themselves a truth a family of cannibals who never deserved to be so well served. Through the inexorable purpose and power of the employer members the Federation by its very nature has become more and more a figment, a myth.

Let that Federation of Engineering Employers, formerly leaders for their class in class struggle, console themselves like Saville. "I am ready to depart, the rather that having lived in good times I foresee worse" - but for the employers they depart to be confronted by the army at

SOLID BEHIND THE MINERS ALL COAL IS BLACK!

THE miners have taken on the employers, and by taking on their employer they have taken on the government, the political representatives of the whole employing class. The miners have come out with the solidity and determination that was to be expected of a section of our class that has in its history shown great heroism in struggle.

The miners by striking at this crucial juncture have placed themselves in the forefront of the class struggle. It is now upto the rest of our class to follow them onto the battle line. This does not mean to fall in behind the adventurist posturings of those who call for a "general strike", for the miners' strike has not taken place so that the errors and defeat of 1926 can be repeated.

What is meant is that if all those sections of the working class that have claims go into action now, instead of one after another as it was last year, both the miners and the other sections of the class so engaged will have victory ensured. Such a victory for our class on bread and butter issues such as wages hours, and conditions cannot simply be labelled

"economic" and dismissed as of little political importance. It will mean the defeat of the Government's "unofficial" wages policy of limiting wage increases to 7-8%. It will mean the defeat of the employers' policy of attempting to shift the burden of the economic crisis onto the workers. It will mean that we, the workers, have stood up and said to the employers and their Government: "It's your economic crisis the result of your capitalist system. You bear the brunt of it". This will be a decisive class victory, a decisive political victory which will open up the road to further advance.

The miners face a tough battle, but they have entered it seriously and with determination. If they maintain this determination, they are bound to win. Many sections of the working class have demonstrated practical solidarity, including engineers, dockers, and transport workers. More must and will act in solidarity with the miners, for their struggle is our struggle, the struggle of the whole working class. VICTORY TO THE MINERS! VICTORY TO OUR CLASS!

★ THREE YEARS OLD! ★

INVITED guests from home and overseas shared with the Communist Party of Britain (ML) a celebration to mark the third birthday of the "Worker".

Raising a toast, a speaker told the gathering that the paper represented the "spirit and guts of the revolutionary British working class". May the "worker" have many more birthdays!



UNEMPLOYMENT IS VIOLENCE 1,023,583 Unemployed (Official)

THAT is the admitted measure of the violence the capitalist class employs against the workers of Britain.

And let's not hesitate to call it what it is - violence! If a gang of armed ruffians threw a man out of his place of work, deprived his family of enough to eat and everything that makes life worth living and subjected them to constant humiliation and indignity, we would know what to call it. That is what is happening to hundreds of thousands of our fellow workers and their families in Britain today.

This violence amounts to a civil war waged by the capitalist class, supported by the capitalist government and its powers of co-ercion, against workers.

We choose our words carefully. They are the words Heath himself used in the United Nations forum a year ago when he predicted not war between nations but civil war as the future for industrialised countries like Britain - the war of class against class.

How are workers to meet this savage challenge in which their livelihood and therefore their very lives are at stake? Not by the slogans of the pseudo-left - "Heath Out," "A General Election Now"; "A General Strike Now to Force a General Election Later". They all add up to just one thing: urging workers to carry on their economic struggles as best they may while leaving the politics to those in Parliament who have already betrayed them over and over again. That is like telling workers to go on being slaughtered in the mud of the Somme and leave the direction of the war to the generals.

The Labour Party may stage its uproars in the House of Commons but it was a Labour Government that began the "shake-out" (which is just a fancy name for unemployment) through mergers and closures, in the docks and factories and mines, raising the figure of jobless to new heights. It was the Labour Party which initiated legislation against the unions to make workers defenceless. Both Parties, Labour and Tory, in their objective of "an acceptable level of unemployment" share the 'credit' for this massive waste of skill, this crime against British workers.

There is only one answer acceptable to workers and that's jobs for all. Since this can't be achieved under capitalism, workers have to combine their tactical struggles over specific demands with the political strategy which will destroy the system. The fight for the right to work is part of the fight to smash capitalism.

That is the significance of the engineers' decision. The troops of workers themselves, in their factories and at all points of production, are planning the battles and selecting the grounds on which to fight. The false generals and politicians can go to hell.

In the last General Election workers showed that they placed no importance on who carries out the demands of British capitalism in Westminster. Now they are showing that they can plan and fight their own war against the capitalist class and its government.

Workers need a political party. They need our Party, a party dedicated to revolution. They will learn; they will come; we shall learn from them and be stronger still. We are of them and for them and we know that we have to prove ourselves at every stage of the struggle by being able to work out with them, based on their own rich experience of industrial conflict, the next steps in the protracted campaign not to live with the capitalist system but to smash it - thus ending unemployment and every other form of exploitation for good.

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MINERS DIG IN

NOTES FROM A NOTTS MINER

THE following statements are of facts arising out of a meeting of N.U.M. members at a Nottingham colliery. It shows how the public have been given only the bare and very misleading facts of the meetings between the N.U.M. and the N.C.B.

1. The pay offer of £1.90, for grade A workers and £2 for other grades is not only derisory, but does not even extend to a further 80,000 mineworkers, formerly known as contractors. This has been left to a further meeting.

2. In its statement about Ezra's offer of a productivity bonus on an extra 3cwt. a man per shift to be backdated to January 1, the press omitted the fact that two cwt. of the three mentioned had been mortgaged out of this year's production to pay the £1.90-£2 already offered. Instead of getting paid for 3cwt. we would be paid for one. That would give us about £1 a month. This would be paid as a lump sum which would mean out of every pound 38p would go back to the tax office.

The Coal Board are now condemning miners

for failing to give help in the running of "safety" measures in the mines. Yet during the overtime ban the N.C.B. did not hesitate in sending all the men home at various collieries when they said repair jobs were not being done. This is the reason why "safety" work is not being allowed at some collieries.

LAST RESORT

If it comes to a last resort, a great many collieries will withdraw all safety men. At the Barnsley meeting it was put to the executive that a vote be taken, but it was left to the individual branches. Our voting was 139 for safety men to work and 136 against. This shows the feeling of the miners, even after being asked by our N.E.C. not to stop safety men from working.

The feeling expressed by miners is that this strike is against the capitalist Government. We don't wish to deprive anyone of fuel for their homes, but this stand has got to be taken. To win this fight we have to make sacrifices. We have only social security to pay the rent, and out of the total of £6.73 allowed for my wife and rent, they deduct my tax rebate which we hope to receive weekly.

LOCAL SUPPORT FOR MINERS - BRIGHTON

42 Kent miners arrived in Shoreham, Brighton on Saturday 15th January to picket the local power stations and coal dumps. Ugly scenes broke out when lorry drivers, supported by the police, tried to force their way through the picket lines. Atone point the gates of the coal yard were locked by the miners and the key thrown into the river. When one lorry tried to make off with a load of coal destined for industrial use, a miner jumped on the lorry and released the tail board and the loose coal spilled out into the road.

LOCAL SUPPORT

The miners have had a great deal of active support from the workers of Brighton. The Brighton branch of the Union Of Post Office Workers collected £6 for the miners. The dockers have blacked three ships bringing imported coal for the power stations. Other local workers some unemployed have been helping by printing and helping to distribute leaflets explaining the miners case and countering state propaganda. At a meeting of local trade unionists the miners expressed their



YORKSHIRE miners picketing a coking plant. The Coal Board notice says "The home of quality coal"

belief that the Industrial Relations Act was an attack on working class democracy, and declared, "The strike will continue with or without the Act. THEY also exposed the lie that the miner is a highly paid worker, by disclosing the basic rate for a miner working underground of £19 and for a surface worker £18 which after tax etc leaves £14 and £13 respectively. An insult, particularly when the job is hard, dirty, and dangerous. An average of 18 miners die each week through disease or "accidents" at work.

NATIONALISATION

If the miners had any illusions about Nationalisation subsequent history has shattered them. Since NATIONALISATION in 1947 6,545 miners have been killed and 38,000 injured at work. Pits

have been reduced from 958 to 292 and manpower reduced from 700,000 to 290,000, over 400,000 jobs have been lost to our class. Miners have in the past co-operated with calls from "Labour" governments to produce more coal for the country. Productivity per man since 1947 has risen from 25 cwt. to just under 45 cwt. The employing class takes this as a sign of weakness and attacks the miners even more viciously. Last year the payment of interests charges turned a profit of £34,000,000 into £500,000.

Like all Nationalised industries the labour of the workers is used to subsidise private industry. Miners produce coal at an average cost of £6

inists are setting a fine example in BLMC.

a ton. The housewife pays £16 to £18 a ton. Whereas a firm making nylon stockings buys the coal at a subsidised cost of £3 a ton, then extracts the fat from it to make nylon. The waste product (coke), the firm then sells for £8 a ton. The only class that benefits from Nationalisation is the employing class.

GUERRILLA STRUGGLE

The government now talks of restricting wage demands to between 5 and 6%. The working class will not ball Capitalism out of its crisis. The miners struggle and the struggles of other workers now waging war, or preparing to, will shatter any governments wage policy.

the redundancy notices are withdrawn.

The same firm attitude has been taken to C.A. Parsons' attempt to call the Industrial Relations Bill to its rescue in another dispute. After a lengthy battle the technical section of the AUEW had won agreement in 100% membership among technical staff and contracts were altered to include this condition. But then an organisation calling itself the United Kingdom Association of Professional Engineers appeared on the scene. Claiming with pride to have been set up as a result of requests from professional institutions, Ministries and employers, UKAPE sees itself as a 'non-militant' alternative to trade unions. A member of UKAPE sees himself 'not as an employee, but firstly as an engineer' according to the president. This 'professionalism' pays no bills however.

UKAPE had some 37 members at C.A. Parsons who refused to join a real union and the firm was forced to give them notice. UKAPE bought a court action over one man as a test case and won it. But Parsons, feeling discretion to be the better part of valour, were forced to say that the case was settled on a technicality and to proceed with the dismissals of 33 other "professionals" for refusing to join the union. Proof that a judge and his wig are no match for industrial pressure. Parsons was UKAPE's first real test and it failed miserably. But the Industrial Relations Bill seems to have injected some courage into C.A. Parsons and another case has been brought—this time under the Act. UKAPE, of course, is registered under the Act and the AUEW is not. But another empty court decision means nothing against the determination of the Parsons workers.

TRIMPH 650 workers at Triumph's Liverpool plant won reinstatement for two of their colleagues by shutting down the Liverpool and Coventry plants in a strike in early January. The men were sacked for "indiscipline"—refusing to be transferred to other jobs.

RONSON Nearly 500 workers at the Ronson plant on the Cramlington industrial estate in the North-East took strike action to follow up their demand for a £4 minimum increase in basic rates. This was the climax of a situation in which the workers had "completely rejected" an offer of £1.25 with a further 75p in July following their decision up by imposing an overtime ban and a work-to-rule, together with lightning strikes. The management at first claimed this was having no significant effect on production, but contradicted themselves later by their action in laying off 53 men and putting another 44 on part-time work. The workers' reaction was the all-out strike.

C.A. PARSONS "An absolute admission of failure" was how union representatives at the Heaton, Newcastle plant of C.A. Parsons described the management announcement of 950 redundancies. The announcement coupled with a warning that a further 600 jobs could be in jeopardy, was made just before Christmas. An immediate overtime ban was imposed by the 8,500 men. Other sanctions are planned, and in early January the 1,300 draughtsmen imposed their own four-day week. Workers at Rayrolle Parsons, the other part of the group, have pledged their solidarity with the fight against the redundancies, planned for June. The workers have refused to take part in any negotiations until

ON THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT

REDUNDANCY More butchery at British Steel. The Cookley Rolling Mills at Brierley Hill, Staffs employing 170 men making special steels for the electrical industry, is to be closed in June. Other victims are 120 workers in BSC's Rofren Works at Hooton, Cheshire making steel houses for an industrialised building system. Another of the ironies of capitalism. A system designed to make building workers redundant is itself redundant. These closures will be on top of the 19,000 jobs which will have been destroyed by BSC in the present financial year. In Manchester Avon Rubber is to close its Moseley division factory, which makes PVC conveyor belting, making 515 redundant.

REDUNDANCY AND RICHES In the GEC empire 450 jobs are to be 'phased out' at the Power Engine works, Stafford which makes heavy electrical equipment. In Coventry 150 jobs are to go in the transmission division. Meanwhile on the Merseyside another 90 men in the fusegear division and 195 in the switchgear division face the sack. The former English Electric Co. used to employ 12,000 at its three Merseyside factories, but Napier and Netheron have gone leaving only 4,500. This attack on the workers has been carried through in the interests of naked profit. How successful this has been can be seen in the dole queues and in the dividend statements. GEC dividends have risen steadily from 10% in 1967 to 15% in 1971.

A shareholder who had bought 1,000 GEC shares in 1960 at £2.140 would have drawn a total of £2,491 in dividends and would now own £15,000 worth of shares. Perhaps the 'depressed areas' should be renamed 'Weinstock areas'.

THE FIGHT BACK - ALLIS CHALMERS

At the time of the UCS occupation we said it should be 'Not One Off—but a Prototype'. This has been proved by the Plessey, Alexandria occupation and now by two more. The first was at Mold, Flintshire at Allis-Chalmers' agricultural machinery factory. The 120 workers proved that small numbers are no barrier to action. When the management announced that the factory was to close, the office and manual workers occupied the factory to prevent machinery being taken away. After 15 days of occupation the management backed down and the factory re-opened.

FISHER-BENDIX

The Thorn Group, which owns the Fisher-Bendix factory at Kirkby, Liverpool decided last summer to transfer all washing machine production to the Continent, getting rid of 500 men. (This is what the employers mean by 'increased opportunities in the Common Market') As reported in the August 'WORKER' the nearly 1,000 workers set an example by their strike to save the threatened jobs. And when the management decided to go the whole hog and close the entire plant in February the workers

turned the hog into bacon. 200 workers stormed into a Boardroom meeting on January 5 and the plant was occupied. The management walked out but the white-collar workers joined the takeover. The next day the action was stepped up by seizing spares from a nearby depot. The workers are now in physical control of £250,000 worth of products and £2 million of machinery. Support has come from Liverpool dockers in the form of blacking all Thorn products. The Thorn group cannot claim poverty as the reason for its actions. In the first six months of last year pre-tax profits reached a record £19.6 million and the interim dividend was raised to 11%. This makes Sir Jules Thorn about £200,000 better off. But this wealth is unlikely to buy him popularity in places like Kirkby, with almost 20% on the dole.

RAILWAYS

As the battle over railway wages shapes up, the fight against redundancy is already on. On January 3 the NUR began a boycott of rail wagons headed for repair by private companies. Last year 52,000 wagons were privately repaired. This situation has led to redundancies in British Rail workshops. A further 2,300 redundancies are planned for this year.

BAC

3,750 workers in three Lancashire factories of the British Aircraft Corporation's military division started staging one-day strikes on January 3 as part of their campaign for a 12% increase.

HOOVER 3,000 workers at the Hoover factory at Cambuslang, Lanarkshire did their best to take their employer to the cleaners last month. An overtime ban and work-to-rule were imposed, leading to a lockout on December 30. The employer offered rises ranging between £2.12 and £2.36 a week. This was rejected and the lockout ended after a week with the workers finally accepting increases of between £2.84 and £3.25.

I.R.O. SITE

Electricians working for James Scott & Co. on the I.R.O. Computer Centre at Bootle have been on strike since the 25 October in support of their demand for a decent living wage. Building tradesmen get approximately £1.10p to £1.25 per hour, while under the Joint Industry Board the electricians get 58p. An earlier strike by these electricians lasted six months and they have been on strike for all but nine weeks since last February.

AUSTIN-MORRIS

At Longbridge, Birmingham, two out of three Mini assembly lines and the 1800 line were closed down by the strike of 130 women sewing machinists. They were demanding a 15% increase in the piecework rate. The women completely rejected management attempts to replace piecework with measured daywork. An offer of £7 to £10 or about 33% on condition of accepting a flat rate pay system was turned down. The battle to save piecework has been lost in much of the motor industry but the women mach-

Overtime ban by Power men

FURTHER efforts by national negotiators to persuade the Central Electricity Generating Board to up their offer of about 7% to the Power Workers have ended up where the efforts of the unions representing other workers in nationalised industries have ended—a complete deadlock.

The announcement that a complete overtime ban is being called for February 1 may seem like very small beer compared with the struggles of other workers similarly situated, but it is not so simple as that. In present circumstances an overtime ban in this industry can take telling effect very quickly. This may seem strange in the light of agreements reached in this industry which have had the effect of almost completely eliminating overtime even though the industry has to run on a 24 hour day seven day week basis.

Complete coverage has been achieved by shift working and systems of staggered day working whereby a man's five days can include week ends, rest days being taken on week days and overtime, that is hours in excess of 40 being eliminated. With this system in operation the CEBG have not been able to meet their labour requirements and have used outside contractors extensively. This has been and still is a source of friction. The regular

workers seeing the contract labour, in many cases working longer hours than themselves as a sort of back door overtime. The difference in rates and conditions involved in performing similar work simply adds to the dissention.

MANPOWER CUTS

Having eliminated much labour in the form of reduced hours the CEBG have been introducing a bonus scheme which requires a drastic reduction in men employed. Overall, to fully implement the bonus schemes a reduction of manpower by roughly 50% has been the aim of the CEBG and they have already gone a long way towards achieving this objective. Its achievement by the carrot of early retirements coupled with severance payments well in excess of the available labour force considerably, but there are still many power stations, particularly in the South Eastern Region, where manpower has been reduced to facilitate the introduction of the bonus scheme but the workers have refused to go onto the scheme or to implement a clause in the agreement concerned with management-worker co-operation. The CEBG has therefore brought about a situation of a drastically reduced labour force without the opera-

tion of the bonus schemes and co-operation agreements necessary to make this reduced labour force fully effective to meet all power requirements. This situation has brought about the re-introduction of overtime in many power stations. Without this overtime the power stations cannot properly function now.

ILLUSION

There are many power workers who believe that an overtime ban does not go far enough, that it may take too long to bite. The power workers with the memory of the bitter hate campaign which was stirred up against them when they last worked to rule fresh in their memories evidently feel that a refusal to work overtime will be seen as the exercise on their part of a basic right. They believe that whatever the consequences of an overtime ban they will escape stricture so long as they are in fact working normally for their normal working week. Of course this is an illusion they would do well to shed. The employing class does not look with favour on any form of struggle, however legitimate it may appear. In fact the whole purpose of the Industrial Relations Act is to make all forms of struggle illegal.

The power workers, as with any other workers, must not be influenced by

what their enemies say about them. Only should they consider what is required to defeat the enemies. The Power Workers and the Miners have obviously much in common in that their respective wage claims have met with the same response.

They both recognise that there has been left to them no other alternative to struggle. That their struggles coincide in time as well as in character presents the logic that they should be conducted in unity. It is hardly surprising that the first recognition of this has been at rank and file level. It is to the credit of many workers at a number of power stations that they acted in support of the miners, in many cases even before the arrival of the miners pickets.

At a number of power stations coal in unloaded from abroad for distribution to other coal burning stations by coal gangs employed by the CEBG. This cargo has to be discharged by the Coal Gang before it can be driven away by the lorry drivers. One of the first Power Station coal gangs to refuse to handle this imported coal was Fulham, an example quickly followed by others.

The spirit displayed by the Power Workers in solidarity with the Miners is a good augury for their own struggle which is about to commence.

Northern Ireland: Workers and the State

AS the Irish people's armed struggle against the British occupation of their country intensifies, the nature of the Stormont regime, as the guardian and defender of the bosses, becomes clearer every day.

TOE THE LINE

Workers who say what they think, soon find themselves without a job. The Government offers work only to those who will toe the line, as thirteen unemployed men in Armagh discovered recently.

BUILD A CAMP

They were sent by the labour exchange to a disused factory and told to start building an internment camp. The men refused pointblank. They weren't, they said, going to build a camp where their fellow-workers (and themselves later perhaps) could be locked up for attacking their oppressors. Shocked at their boldness, the Ministry of Social Security at once cut off their unemployment benefit.

COUNCIL HOUSE PALACES?

In addition to their boast of providing jobs for all (unemployment is the highest in the British Isles), Stormont politicians make a lot of noise about their reforms in housing. The tenants of Denmark Street, Belfast would tell you a different story.

Recently rehoused from miserable slums, they pay £6 of rent (average wage is £14) for new houses with defective heating, gas leaks and burst pipes. Yet the Ministry of Development says families should be grateful for their 'new palaces'. In protest Denmark Street, learning from tenants in other towns in Ulster, has gone on an indefinite rent strike.

LICENCE TO KILL

While the workers of Northern Ireland have to contend with massive unemployment, Government-run housing frauds and political vetting at their place of work, they now face a new threat. The British Army has issued revised instructions which "justify" trigger-happy troops in killing anything that moves. Cars can be shot at without warning when troops believe the occupants "are about to open fire." If your car backfires that's just too bad. Soldiers can now use automatic fire from heavy

machine-guns when they choose, and carry rounds "up the spout" of their weapons when on patrol in working class areas.

CAPITALIST TERROR

The Stormont regime, backed up by the British State, is thus embarked upon a policy of anti-working class terror and intimidation.

The internment camps at Long Kesh and Crumlin Road Jail are packed with eight hundred detainees, held without trial. A new camp has had to be opened at Magilligan, near Derry, to hold the increasing numbers of women who have joined in the fight to liberate their country from British occupation and exploitation. Internment without trial shows that, when faced by a determined resistance from the working class, the capitalist state will put aside its camouflage of "democracy" and "justice for all before the law". So Mrs Rita O'Hare is being tried in great secrecy (even her husband and children aren't allowed in the court) for the "attempted murder" of soldiers in Andersonstown, after lying seriously ill in hospital since October from bullet wounds inflicted by British troops.

TAKING UP THE GUN

As workers in Northern Ireland realise that taking up the gun is the only way to deal with growing savagery and oppression by the State, they have nothing but contempt for the social-democrats of the Labour Party who believe that "getting reforms within the system" gets easier as capitalism becomes more mature. As Northern Ireland shows, the capitalist state will get more crooked and blood-thirsty as the bosses see they are getting near the end of their rule. The seven I.R.A. officers, who escaped from the prisonship of Maidstone gaol in Belfast Lough, didn't hang around for the due process of law to give them "justice."

They also had the courage and initiative to penetrate multiple complex detection devices and submerged barbed wire fences. They showed that when workers engage in struggle they learn to rely on themselves and their close friends, and to ignore social-democratic propaganda that would lead them into compromise and disaster. The victory must surely go to such as these who dare to struggle and dare to win.

Govt. delays attack on Student unions

THE following statement was issued by the National Student Committee of the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) on the eve of the massive 60,000 strong demonstration of students on January 23 to resist Government attacks on their Union.

is ours and we alone can win it.

HAVE NO ILLUSIONS

WE must organise and develop our fight for our demands and we must do it ourselves, relying on our collective strength. No one else can win the battle for us. Slogans such as "Tories out!" are just an escape from facing the real issue—that the answer will never be found in Parliament. In 1969 Labour began with a Select Committee on Higher Education (proposing loans instead of grants, and home-based study), and the Tories—as with the Industrial Relations Act—are following this lead. The attack on us will intensify, no matter who is in government, and we must prepare for it by organising ourselves in our colleges.

FIGHT FOR AUTONOMY

NO Student Union is totally independent of college authorities, so rather than defend, we must attack and achieve our strategic aim—total financial and constitutional autonomy. We must demand NO interference with our Unions. Attempts at compromise, such as the introduction of a Registrar, must all be rejected. The opposition of certain Vice-Chancellors, Principals, etc., (genuine (remembering that such statements cost them nothing) only concern the Government's means rather than ends. Enough lip-service from college authorities—let them show how sympathetic they really are by giving in to demands for complete student control of our Unions. The fight

CLASS NATURE OF OUR STRUGGLE

THE present attack on our Unions is aimed at stopping them developing into organisations fighting for the interests of their members, struggling as Trade Unions do. We must prepare to repel the onslaught. The proposals, going hand-in-hand with the Industrial Relations legislation, are part of an attack on the entire working class. All law is class law and we must develop and strengthen our organisations to oppose it and even break it when necessary until our Unions are ready to join the rest of the working class in opposing the capitalist state itself.

The non-existent Nursery school

IT comes as no surprise to parents to read the report this month that over 75% of all children in Britain get no pre-school education of any kind. In direct violation of the 1944 Education Act, which promised nursery school education for all, successive governments have actually cut back the places available in state day nurseries from 72,000 just after the war to 20,000 today.

Psychologists agree that the preschool years are the most critical in children's development, and especially in their capacity to learn. This was stressed in the 1966 Plowden Report, which also recommended that nursery schools be provided. But these pious promises and "recommendations" are just to fool the gullible. Nothing has been done.

Of course every child ought to have the right to education between the ages of 2 and 5, by properly trained teachers! But the reality is very different, especially for the children of over half a million mothers who work. The vast majority of these children are kept by child minders, often with children of their own or a number of children whom they are minding. They cannot possibly have the time to teach the children anything, even if they have the best intentions. These children of working women are deprived even of the minimum education that a mother can provide in the home without training.

But the numbers of women who work, even while their children are small, is growing. Why? Because the average man's wage is just not enough nowadays to

support a family. Which means that the mother faces an awful dilemma: how much longer can the family survive without her going back to work? Whichever choice she makes seems wrong. If she doesn't work they fall into debt. If she does, she has to leave her child with a child-minder in conditions she cannot be sure are even safe. The Act of 1948 on registered child-minding offers no real protection, even against fire hazards, over-crowding and unhygienic conditions. It also is a pious promise, and is largely unenforced.

Apart from the worry about her child during the day, the working mother still has a hard time making ends meet. As a woman, who earns on average just under £14 a week, out of which she has to pay the child-minder around £9. To get this she is working frantically till bedtime to get the household chores, shopping and washing done as well as her job.



DERBYSHIRE miners' wives who came to London to support the strike. They marched under their banner on the House of Commons.

ENGINEERS

Continued from page 1

the point of production, their own factories.

FIGHT ON ANYTHING

We, the workers, can begin the battle on almost any demand, such as the nature of the overall national claim. As we have written before in THE WORKER "It had everything in it, almost including the kitchen sink"

We can demand shorter hours, greater shift work pay, more holidays, increased wages, increased base rates, equal pay, the lot. With imagination the struggle need not be grey drudgery but colourful and exciting - an open mandate to fight, blessed by declared official policy, backed by the national executives and, above all, safe from the possibility of a ghastly compromise settlement in Cabinet. A truly national fight in the proper meaning of the workshop floor!

To engineers it is not 'foreign' but traditional to their normal conduct of struggle with now the smug knowledge of righteousness. We are carrying out national policy, may the saints bless us! Contrast this with so often the former situation: "Go back to work. The strike is not official!" ad nauseam.

A NEW KIND OF CIVIL WAR

Mr. Heath can learn of a new kind of civil war. It is not for him alone to declare for one. We too can hammer out a 'strategy' and develop tactics to meet all districts. The employers not to know! neither when

Britain's not-so-secret war in Oman

THERE has been a lot of coyness in the press about the death of 2 British soldiers belonging to the Special Air Service Regiment at the hands of guerrilla forces in Dhofar, part of the Sultanate of Oman in South Arabia. The coyness stems from the conspiracy of silence in the British mass media about the military activities of British imperialism in Oman over the last few years to protect the vast assets of British oil empires like those of BP and Shell in various parts of the Middle East.

The Sultanate of Oman, like so many other feudal sheikhdoms is maintained by Britain through the usual fiction of "advisers" and "training". Thus when the news of these two deaths was leaked the Ministry of Defence version was that they were in Dhofar "training" the Sultan's forces. In fact ever since the People's Front for the Liberation of Occupied Arabian Gulf was established some 3 years ago the British government has stepped up its military activities.

Recently the Front has scored new victories and launched a new offensive in central Dhofar in the first two weeks in January. More than two British soldiers have been killed so far although the news of previous deaths of British officers who command the Sultanate's 6,000-strong army was

nor where, never finishing. It will render also an accountability of strength and weakness in our enemy, essential to know and only made accurate, not by conjecture, but in the fact of struggle by which such knowledge is corrected. The contagion of action will be a quick corrective and developer where feet drag and faint hearts rule - an end to the amateur adviser not involved in the fight but always telling those who are, the workers, what to do and when to do. The workers can now say: Shut up! Join or get out! With politics in command, those who do, those who fight, those who act, those who are literally involved alone can effect.

It is, if properly seen, the greatest opportunity of national struggle ever envisaged. It marches in parallel with the miners' fight, not in contradiction. The miners have one national employer. The engineers thousands. It is an essential to the struggle on unemployment, the rebuttal of demoralisation and of intimidation.

Already we see the workers' strategy is so often in front of so-called political theorists - the occupations against employers as at Plessley's Fisher-Bendix etc are the brain child of workers' politics, proof of the revolutionary force groping for outlet.

The danger of delay should be discounted. Let the battle on wages, hours, holidays, equal pay, everything commence everywhere there are workers!

not given any publicity. Our paper has from time to time given news of the Front's successes and of its clear socialist line. At its 3rd Congress last year the People's Front outlined its aims to defeat imperialism and feudalism-through a people's armed struggle. Its military victories testify to its correct political line. In view of the new interest in this war being waged by the British government in a remote part of the world we thought it would interest our readers to know a few basic facts about the British presence in Oman.

First: the Sultanate is ruled by a British council of 4 military men-a colonel who is the Sultan's Defence Minister and 3 British Majors in charge of the army, intelligence and political affairs.

Second some 17 British bases including the RAF base at Sallalah, the air and naval base at Masirah to supply British submarines and ships operating in the Indian Ocean and a great many military bases dotted in various parts of the kingdom.

Third: many British officers and men either seconded from the British armed forces on "on contract" i.e. acting as mercenaries for the high remuneration provided by the Sultanate.

Fourth: oil. Some 85% of the oil assets of Oman are owned by British Shell,

CASUALTIES OF CLASS WARFARE

649 workers killed
321,741 workers seriously injured
12,000,000 workers with slight injuries

SUCH statistics never make the headlines of the capitalist press, but these were the numbers of workers killed and injured in British Factories last year, as known to the Chief Inspector of Factories. We in the construction industry with about 8% of all workers suffered over 30% of all deaths and injuries. So embarrassed are the employers by this record that when their organisations held a conference recently on safety in the industry, their evidence was not made public.



Conditions on construction sites has improved little since the first recorded death of a navvy working on the Liverpool and Manchester railway line in 1827. Then as now, death of construction workers, is explained by referring to construction work as inherently dangerous.

Science has developed so as to enable a man to land on the moon, it is

surprising then that science has not made the construction site safe. Faced with large financial penalty clauses if a job is not completed on time, employers force work on without paying sufficient attention to temporary structures. For example, soil mechanics can accurately predict the stability of cuts and trenches in the ground, yet workers are still buried when trenches collapse due to insufficient structing. We can design accurately scaffolding and other temporary structures, but workers are still killed when such works collapse because braces are left out etc.

The lump working, allow the employers to take even less safety precautions. For with the lump the employer avoids all liability for his workers. So that even elementary safety precautions are not followed. No protective clothing, no protective machines, electrical hazards, ladders not secured, unsafe walk ways, the list is endless. Some workers on the lump are under the illusion they receive higher pay and thus take risks. But what good is money if you are dead.

British capitalism has had enough of our blood, now is the time for them to do a bit of shedding. As construction workers we must strengthen our organisations and fight back, our lives depend on it.

TERRIFIC VICTORIES IN INDOCHINA

THE Americans are taking a tremendous beating throughout Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. In Vietnam Nixon's stupid renewal of the bombing of the north has only led to the loss of many planes and the capture of American pilots by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. In the south the liberation forces have stepped up their fighting along the central coast and in the central Highlands where US puppet troops are in total flight. To bolster up the position thousands of South Vietnamese puppet troops serving in Cambodia have had to be recalled.

But the biggest victories have been in Laos. In the last few days the strategic road linking the royal capital to the biggest city has been cut by the guerrillas who have also over-run major US bases including the notorious Long Cheng. This has prevented US

planes from providing the usual air support for their puppets.

Over 25 years ago, on the eve of their struggle against France, president Ho Chi Minh had said: "The Resistance War will be long and fraught with sufferings. Whatever sacrifices we may have to make and however long the Resistance War may last, we are determined to fight to the end, until Vietnam is completely independent and unified. Our victory is a certainty".

Indeed it is. They defeated the French and are in the process of smashing the USA.

President Nixon's latest "tricky" proposals for peace, trying to win at the conference table what the U.S. has lost on the battlefield, will be brushed aside by the Vietnamese in their drive to complete victory.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FEB. 5th ANNUAL CONFERENCE PALESTINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN. Saturday Feb. 5th 10am-5pm, Conway Hall, Holborn. (MEMBERSHIP DUES CAN BE PAID AT DOOR)

FEB. 11th MEETING ON THE FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO WORK. Friday Feb. 11th. 7.30pm at Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, London NW5 (Tufnell Park Tube Station).

FEB. 18th SOCIAL EVENING, held by West London Branch, refreshments, music, talk, Friday Feb. 18th 7.30pm at Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, NW5.

FEB. 25th MEETING HELD BY NEW ALBANIA SOCIETY. Talk on Industrialisation in Albania by Jack Tapsell Friday Feb. 25th 7.30pm Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, NW5.

FEB. 26th FILM SHOW (to be announced) Saturday Feb. 26th 7.30pm Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, NW5.



ER... HOW MUCH WOULD I GET IF I MANAGED TO UNIFY BRITAIN?
Common crisis in the Common Market

THE Government would have us believe that many of Britain's current problems, like soaring unemployment, will be eased once we have gone into Europe.

But unemployment figures are rising all over Western Europe too. With one million unemployed Italy has about the same rate of jobless as Britain. Unemployment in France has increased to the point where the Government is having to cut interest rates and pump money - frantically into the stagnant economy. In Germany unemployment has been kept under 1% but only because the foreign work force takes

the brunt of any shortage of jobs. During the 1966-67 recession this immigrant labour force was cut from over two million to under one million.

Indeed, Western European capitalism depends on a large number of immigrant workers to be sacked first when times are bad. In effect, Western Europe's unemployment has been partially exported to Southeast Europe and the Mediterranean area.

Does the British Government hope to find some such discriminatory means of splitting the unity of the workers of Britain in their fight against unemployment?

African resistance to fascist Smith Regime grows

WHAT is developing in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) on the part of the African majority is a people's struggle against their conditions of slavery and not just against a specific set of proposals hatched up by the Smith regime and the British imperialist government.

The miners, tobacco workers, farm labourers and students who have stood up against the tortures, imprisonment and killings of the white racist rule of their country are the first wave of what will surely develop into a massive people's liberation movement.

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