

# THE WORKER



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## UNIONS DEFY EDWARDES' PLANS FOR LEYLANDS



Leyland workers in action last year against the social contract. (Photo John Sturrock - Report)

THE AUEW, in supporting the 15-week-old strike at the No 2 British Leyland plant at Speke, Liverpool, has openly condemned the Labour Government-backed plan of Edwardes for "trimming" the only British car industry by laying off workers.

The TGWU had made the strike official earlier and so both major unions have said that they have no intention of allowing the run-down of Leyland and the cutting of the workforce in the name of efficiency. We have had it all before with Ryder who was going to put Leyland on its feet and then proceeded to bleed and mutilate it. As The Times reported: "Edwardes was looking for a plant to close as a symbol of his new regime and the new, more commercial outlook." So the Speke factory with its militant workforce was naturally selected for this exercise in demanning. The AUEW and the TGWU, in supporting the strike at Speke after Edwardes designated it for destruction, are denouncing the plan and supporting the right to work.

What is utterly disgraceful is that the Labour Government should back a plan for sacking workers in Merseyside where unemployment is already running at an intolerable 12 per cent. Particularly is this a treacherous act when taxpayers' money has been used for regional development to prevent high unemployment and has also been poured into Leyland. They cut our throats and make us pay for it to be done.

## Cosmetic change for Zimbabwe - West approves

THE British Government has only opposed the Smith regime in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) because it was thought that his racist minority rule would stir up such popular resistance by the Zimbabwe people that British interests and investments in the area would be threatened. The American Government was worried that such a movement against the Smith regime might provide Russia with an opportunity for extending further its own imperialist

influence in Africa.

Hence the Anglo-American plan designed to substitute a neo-colonial system of capitalist exploitation under a United Nations cloak - as had been done in the Congo.

Smith had countered the Anglo-American plan with the collaboration of certain 'national leaders' inside the country in a pre-emptive internal 'settlement' which, looking vaguely like a one-man, one-vote constitution, guarantees 'white interests'

and maintains the same basic exploitative structure.

The first reaction of the American UN Ambassador, Young, was to reject the Smith agreement; but kicked under the table by British Foreign Secretary, Owen, he quickly changed his line to qualified approval if the 'settlement' could be extended to include representatives of the Patriotic Front. A case of "Put down your arms and become slaves again."

## Healey talks of victory as British capitalism declines still further

SINGLE figure inflation is being hailed by the Labour Government as the greatest victory since Trafalgar. Actually it could have been announced at any time, since the Government makes up its own inflation figures to suit its own policies and it was necessary to keep the figures high as the excuse for cutting wages by Government fiat.

With unemployment at two million (our figures, not the

Government's cooked ones), with production stagnant or declining, with the standard of living of the working class reaching a new low, if anybody expects us to raise even the feeblest cheer for what the Labour Government has done for British capitalism, he must be crazy.

### North Sea oil

Even the North Sea oil

which was going to give the Labour Government a new lease of life - just as though they had put the oil there themselves - is proving a double-edged asset for capitalism. Oil improves the balance of payments position, hot money flows into Britain, the pound goes up, exports fall, and we are landed once more in a balance of payments deficit.

The truth of the matter is

that wealth is produced by the skill and effort of workers making things. If that economic base is rundown or destroyed by capitalism in maintaining profits, not all the financial juggling in the world can stave off disaster.

### Export bosses

A few more pyrrhic victories like Healey's 'inflation

miracle' and there will be even more unemployed workers not making anything in Britain while British capital chases all over the rest of the world looking for cheap profits. If we workers were smart, we would export the exporters of capital and start rebuilding Britain on the basis of the working class's capacity to produce wealth faster than ever with no capitalists on our backs.

**HISTORIC NOTES****C19th poverty - Middle East****The myth of 'degeneration' of the race**

IN 19th century London, a bourgeois writer said of the casual poor: "...physically, mentally and morally unfit, there is nothing the nation can do for these men except let them die out by leaving them alone..." The threat from the poor, both real and imaginary, to the propertied and wealthy figured constantly in public debate.

The problem of poverty was perennial, but the Industrial Revolution greatly magnified it. Mechanization and external competition disintegrated many traditional industries like silk weaving, or forced small employers mercilessly to exploit their workers in 'sweatshops'.

Other trades like building were seasonal, which, along with considerable immigration of workers from the countryside, and a constant flow of the old and infirm from more skilled trades, led to an increase of the unemployed or semi-employed. A trade depression from the middle of the century reinforced this.

Once reduced to poverty, it was difficult to escape. Even in a good period, many had to repay interest or debts incurred during slack months. To the bourgeois observer, however, this poverty resulted from a lack of virtues befitting a successful businessman - thrift, prudence and hard work.

One solution to this 'demoralization' was to break up the working class 'rookeries', which were regarded as spawning crime, vice and low living, by driving great streets through them. It was reckoned that "the moral condition of these poorer occupants would necessarily be improved by communication with more respectable inhabitants."

During the century, up to

100,000 people were displaced by clearances (for New Oxford St, Farringdon St, etc) as well as the building of the railways and docks. But far from benefiting the poor, these demolitions simply forced them to move to the next parish, which became even more overcrowded.

For this 'solution', a manifest failure, a crude biological "theory" was substituted, which argued that urban life caused "degeneration" of the race, necessitating constant immigration from the countryside. Furthermore, Poor Relief and the Workhouses shielded the unfit, who would normally have been eliminated through "natural" selection, thus allowing them to "contaminate" the fit. This was exacerbated because the "criminal and pauperised classes with low cerebral development renew their race more rapidly than those of higher nervous natures."

To prevent this, sections of the bourgeoisie, including the 'socialist' Fabians, favoured compulsory sterilization; others, the setting up of 'labour colonies' where the inmates would exchange

"their half-fed and half-idle and wholly unregulated life for a disciplined existence, with regular meals and fixed hours of work (which would not be short)."

Seen in this light, the struggles of these workers for their basic dignity, which led to the wave of 'New Unionism', take on a new meaning. In fact, these struggles prevented the possible implementation of these vicious schemes.

Ultimately, the First World War transformed the casual labour market, as the demand for workers as cannon-fodder or for war production sucked up the unemployed. Degeneration was proved to be a myth, and the 'residuum' to be as capable as other sections of workers: before, they had simply not had the opportunity to exercise their skills.

Today, when we hear the arguments of those like Eysenck, Jensen or the National Front about the more oppressed of our class, we have only to think of the struggle for dignity of the London poor to see how false they are. Last time a war was one of the 'solutions' to the problem: now only revolution will suffice.



London's poor in the streets of East London

**Action committees defend agriculture**

A RECENT meeting of the Yorkshire Action Committee of the National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers showed Farmworkers are asserting themselves in the struggle to save their industry and skills by fighting for wages.

The formation of the Action Committees in several counties last year has led to a wage increase above 10 per cent.

Now, in this biennial Conference year, many resolutions have been forwarded for their next claim

which demands a rise in basic pay that recognises the skilled nature of agricultural work. At the moment, the Agricultural Wages Board sets the rates for the industry. For Farmworkers to attain the wages called for, they will have to move away from the AWB and act for themselves, negotiating on a national level with the National Farmers' Union, being prepared to use industrial muscle.

But the age-old problem of organizing the scattered work-

force which tends to weaken the Union is being overcome by the setting up of these Action Committees with the intention of building a national network; also there is an intensive campaign for recruitment.

The Yorkshire Action Committee recognized that the only way forward for farm workers is to forge a stronger Union which in turn requires commitment to action, on wages above all else. The fight for wages is the barometer of trade union morale.

**The rule is - we don't fight for capitalism whatever the rules the warmongers make**

ONCE upon a time, glittering uniforms and tales of brave exploits were thought sufficient to mask the reality of war, but the horrors of two world wars have changed all that. Nowadays, the warmongers have to hide behind a set of 'humanitarian principles embodied in the Geneva Convention, euphemistically described as the rules of war, and which define certain military acts of violence as illegal - mistreatment of prisoners, for instance. Recently, the Geneva Convention was updated to take into account the difficulties raised by the growing wave of people's liberation struggles throughout the world, and the military

status of the guerrilla fighters involved. But the reassuring tones of the revised Protocols will do little to convince people that things have really changed.

Indiscriminate saturation bombing is now a War Crime - which is fine if you survive it and are on the winning side. Guerrillas carrying their arms openly are given the same international rights as uniformed troops. Of course each government has to formally endorse the new rules before they can apply internally; and how many governments, faced with open armed struggle, would treat the revolution like a game of cricket? An indication of what will happen in

practice was reflected by the dropping of an Article prohibiting military orders of 'no quarter' for survivors. We in Britain have only to look at events in northern Ireland - which at present is outside the scope of international law, so long-standing rules prohibiting the use of such things as gas or torture do not apply - to see how the ruling class would interpret the rules in response to a revolution in this country. The torture, harassment and murder of Irish workers is a dry run for capitalism's counter-revolutionary war against the British workers. In this field, therefore, workers must also set up their

**Peace Talk Hypocrisy**

FAR from creating a peaceful atmosphere in the Middle East, Sadat's and Begin's moves towards agreement - 'my peace initiative' as Sadat prefers to call it - is setting the scene for war of more pernicious and vicious nature. The US, looking after its imperialist interests in the area, is fanning the flames of war by supplying fighter planes to Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. With Sadat and Begin pledging towards to go to war with each other again, against whom will these planes and the rest of the massive arsenals be used? Will it be the other Arab countries, the Palestinians, the Horn of Africa or insurgents at home?

**Capitalist club**

British imperialism, the traditional imperialist power in the area, retains its influence and importance. It is no coincidence that Begin and Sadat made a point of meeting Callaghan even before they went to see Carter. Foreign Secretary Owen is reported to have offered British troops to oversee any agreement in the Middle East.

**Race diversion**

While superficially the tension on the border between Israel and Egypt has been reduced, underneath, the divisions created by imperialism are intensified. The racial division which the Palestinians had successfully thrown on the rubbish dust is being salvaged. Sadat talks of the Jews when he means Israel Zionists. Begin talks of anti-semitism whenever Israel is attacked for its occupation of Arab land. And a US spokesman speaks of 3000 years of suspicion and conflict when in fact Arabs and Jews lived in peace for centuries before British imperialism introduced Zionist settlers into Palestine fermenting religious and racial tension. As in Britain, and anywhere else, religious and racial differences are a diversion from the main fight. The biblical political language of the Middle East is an anachronism. Capitalist expansion threatens all workers and peasants everywhere.

**THE WEEK**

JAPANESE capital might take over British Leyland's Speke plant, the newspapers say. Meanwhile, the Japanese are already building a pyramid in Egypt. So not content with being the most successful capitalists of today they also want to show the Ancients how it should have been done.

WHY did Labour win such a landslide victory in 1945? Because the Tories were deserted by the middle-class vote? Said Lord Beaverbrook that year, quoted in a recently published book, "The 1945 Revolution"

"Once the middle-class had been made up of small, self-employed business men... But now to an increasing degree (It) is composed of salary-earners whose relationship to the capital structure is precisely parallel to that of the wage-earning proletariat... and whose future is conceived in terms of pensions like the workers, rather than investment like the capitalist."

Not really middle class at all.

A JUDGE has said that men on social security who drink away their sole money should have their ears cut off. Judges who make such remarks should have another part of their anatomy cut off.

IN the debate on the Devolution Bill in Parliament, it was said that Parliament was likely to put on the statute book a Bill which it did not believe in. It was a Bill which the majority of the British public did not want. And by the fuss created about the requirements of 40 per cent 'yes' vote in Scotland, the supporters of the Bill have no confidence, and rightly so, in getting the support of the people in Scotland. So why does British Capitalism insist on this partitioning Bill?

A FIRM with a 'very bleak safety record' has pleaded guilty to allowing dangerous machinery to be used unguarded contravening the Health and Safety at Work Act.

The prosecution began after a 19-year-old boy fell on to the conveyor belt and was pulled into the machinery where he suffered a lingering suffocating death. Hemel Hempstead Engineering Co. Ltd, had already been prosecuted three times between 1969 and 1975 under the Factories Act, and the price they had to pay for the killing of this young worker was £500 and £75 costs.

**ZIMBABWE**

THE collaborationist agreement between Smith and two 'national leaders' announced in Salisbury recently is an attempt to give credibility to the racist regime in Zimbabwe and to turn African against African. The recent successes by the Liberation forces who now operate in two thirds of the territory and have two fifths of the territory under their control have speeded up the final agreement. Thus a reconstituted 'national army' is planned to do the job of fighting the Liberation forces that Smith's regime has so far failed to hold back.

## EDITORIAL

HEALTH care provision, like education, housing and social services, is basic and necessary to the growth and development of our class. Capitalism, this time well represented by a Labour Government, has launched a concerted offensive to erode and dismantle these vital support systems, so hard fought for and won by generations of workers.

The methods and effects of the ruling class's attack on our Health Service are well known; discussed, revealed and disguised by Ennals and his ilk in a sea of figures, juggled percentages and fine words. For example, "Public expectations of the health and social services will frequently outrun supply," wrote Ennals. In plainer words, when we're ill, we mustn't expect to receive treatment, because the Government might have closed your local hospital, or refused to provide enough money or people to run it. What he means is that capitalism will let you die.

The Northampton consultants who have spoken out to describe the Dickensian, inhumane conditions under which they work and their patients suffer, were speaking for many. Patients have died because waiting lists for operations are so long. Some patients suffer from certain cancers which have become inoperable while they waited for vital surgery. That is murder, plain and barbaric. That is what cutbacks in the NHS mean. This ruling class can dress up its savagery in rhetoric, as though we cannot recognise what is being done and why. As though we cannot see that a healthy working class is no longer convenient to the ruling class of this country. It is not that they cannot provide money for the NHS, it is that they do not wish to.

But why is it that they intend for us to be no longer maintained fit and healthy? It is because our class has never agreed to live with capitalism in peace. We have fought; we have wrenched from the ruling class some of the wealth we created. And we have forced them to find a different way of ruling us. So they attack on all fronts, including the very system which ultimately supports our lives and our bodies. And thereby they hope to weaken our resistance to their system. Well, let them hope, for our class will never give up the struggle.

The fight for the NHS has been a remarkably concerted and tenacious one, with all health workers, often supported by other sections of our class, involved. Victories in stopping the closure of such hospitals as the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson have encouraged our class to fight harder. The voice of angry defence has been raised in every quarter - from nurses, doctors, ancillary workers, technicians, surgeons and radiologists defending their specialities, and most recently students who have refused to be used to paper over the cracks of a failing service, when understaffing has caused departmental closures.

We need not document the ailing state of the NHS. Look in your own locality. You will find a hospital threatened there. You will find understaffed wards, overworked doctors and nurses, GPs with less and less time for each patient.

We have said, "The health of a nation is a reflection of the level of its organisation - of the consciousness of its people that no man is an island." It is a reflection of the organisation and strength of our class that we ever had a National Health Service in the first place. It is to the credit of those of our class who work so hard in that beleaguered service that it has maintained its present level. But the time has come to stop propping up a partly dismembered service and to make it whole again. The attack is only one aspect of many co-ordinated assaults on all our support systems and, indeed, on our industrial base itself. These attacks are all part of an offensive against our class. We must, therefore, respond as a class, and make our defence of the Health Service part of our attack on capitalism. The leprosy is capitalism. The therapy is revolution.

## Are hardworking steelmen really responsible for losses?

Continuing our two part feature on the destruction of British Steel

THE BSC was formed in 1967, bringing together thirteen companies in the largest merger in British industrial history.

The reasons for nationalisation were wrong from the start.

For the first six years the company concentrated on modernising and 'rationalising' existing steel works, but in 1973 BSC went grand. A massive restructuring was to take place, most existing plants would be shut, and production concentrated in five major areas. The result over four years was the reduction of the workforce by 20,000 jobs and a loss in steel production of 6m ingot tonnes.

So we are told that BSC is losing million upon million and the workers will have to pay for it. The first point to remember is that the BSC is not subsidised out of 'taxpayers' money (any more than any private firm). This would be contravening the

precious 'fair trading' laws of the beloved EEC; though before the regulations came into force it is estimated that the BSC lost £738m through government intervention in pricing.

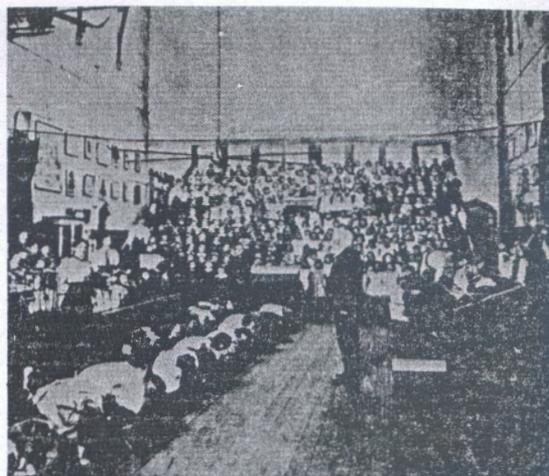
In 1969 the burden of the original compensation debt proved too much. The BSC's finances were 'reconstructed'. The major effect was 'to make its capital structure more like that of the large independent sector companies in the UK' - as the Select Committee put it. The BSC emerged a fully fledged capitalist conglomerate, interests abroad included, paying dividends whenever profits were made (three years out of seven). Today, 44.9 per cent of BSC's capital is accounted for by private shareholding (called Public Dividend Capital). Another 47.1 per cent is in the hands of the banks. This is the result of the 'investment' programme. In 1973

## Class size is crucial

A RECENT memorandum to be presented to the NUT Conference 1978, rightly pays tribute to the massive increase in industrial action in 1977 taken by thousands of members, in highly disciplined fashion, in no less than 26 different education authorities, in defence of educational standards and against teacher unemployment.

The onslaught on education continues apace, however, and teachers must now turn their minds to the question of how to move from a purely defensive position to one of offence, in the interests of educational advance.

Crucial to this advance is the recognition that maintenance or improvement of the ratio of pupils to teachers (PTR) is totally inadequate in a situation of falling rolls where, due to the fall in the birth rate, the number of children entering schools each year is declining. The danger here is that the number of teaching jobs can be reduced whilst maintaining or even slightly improving the existing Pupil/Teacher Ratio. Whenever we accept the level of Pupil/Teacher Ratio as the basis of our action, we find ourselves arguing about the best, most painless method of achieving the reduction in jobs required; shall it be compulsory or voluntary redeployment, or can we just sit back and let



A schoolroom in the 1890s. It was common to have a single large room housing the whole school, often divided by movable partitions. There might be only one qualified teacher, and the overall staffing ratio, even allowing for pupil teachers, was 35 to 1.

'natural wastage' take its destructive toll?

Pupil/Teacher Ratio must be rejected as the focus of our struggle, otherwise we countenance by inaction the closure of schools, the loss of jobs, the dismantling of the teacher training system. And thus we deny to the young the right to develop their skills. All of this can, and is, being carried out even though Pupil/Teacher Ratio is being maintained. We must struggle on demands we consider appropriate, and not on criteria imposed from without,

teachers must rally round NUT policy of securing smaller classes at all levels of education, regardless of falling rolls.

Leading to the Easter Conference, the NUT membership have voted as first priority a resolution calling for action based on substantially reduced class size levels, f.e. 25 for primary and secondary classes, 20 for reception children in their first year of schooling and 15 for practical classes. The implementation of this policy is a clear and direct way forward for all teachers.

## Steak House workers' strike firm

WORKERS at Garners Steak Houses, on strike for the first time, are solid in their determination to continue their fight for recognition of their union, the TGWU. The strike is now in its fourth week. Out of 16 restaurants in London, only four are now operating. Eighty workers have been sacked for trade union activity. Reasons given by the management include daring to vary their diet of chips-with-everything by sneaking a jacket potato or a lettuce leaf, thus violating petty company regulations reminiscent of the last century.

TGWU workers at Smithfield and the Covent Garden markets are refusing to deliver meat and

vegetables. The public, too, is showing support by dining elsewhere. At the Oxford Street branch about 20 instead of the usual 500 customers a day are being served. The business is all but at a standstill but Garners' millionaire owner, parroting Grunwick's George Ward, says he will shut up shop rather than admit the union. No wonder when we see what he stands to lose by way of profits! At present the average wage is £28 for a 55 hour week. In this fly-by-night industry of tourism, hotels and catering it is nothing new to transfer capital elsewhere as soon as the spectre of determined working class organisation rears its head.

The press is doing its best to instill a premature sense of defeat into the minds of the strikers by reporting this action as "the Grunwick of the restaurant trade". But if the employers are interchangeable, workers have learned something.

Mostly immigrants, many with language difficulties, all with little experience of class struggle, they have nonetheless learned that what counts is disciplined organisation and solidarity in their own ranks. They have identified themselves with the British trade union movement and thus with the British working class, and shown themselves ready to fight for their dignity as members of that class.

## Radiologists see through Government intentions

"THE NHS is clearly in a financial mess. One cannot really wait for the Royal Commission to report (if it ever does). Doctors should refuse to co-operate in cutbacks ordered by Government... The blame for lack of services must be placed on the Government."

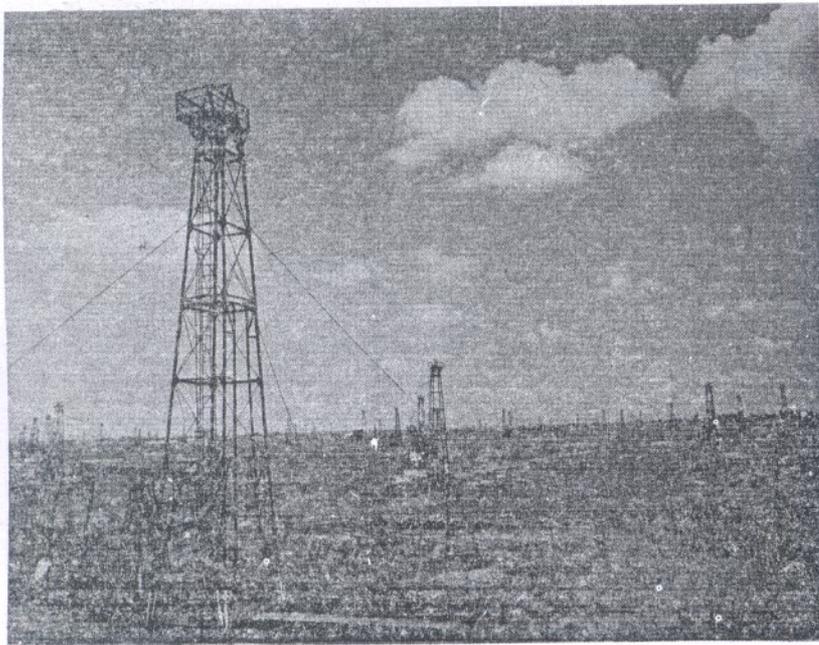
These words were spoken by the chairman of the British Medical Association's Radiologists' Group. The only thing he did not say is that this policy is deliberate. No Government which had the intention of caring for the health of the people could let the means of such care deteriorate as capitalism's governments have done.

Much radiology equipment is very old, some dating back to the 1940s, a lot from the 1950s. The expected life of equipment, however, is about 10 years old. "We are in danger of having the most antiquated equipment in western Europe", added the

radiologists' chairman. In Oxford much-needed apparatus, such as ultrasound for kidney transplant and similar patients cannot be purchased unless it is funded by charitable trusts. This situation can be found in many parts of the country.

Many radiologists have a workload which is more than double the suggested norm: and the work is yearly increasing as the scope of radiological examination widens. East Anglia and Essex seem particularly badly hit. In Britain, the number of radiologists is about half the number per million of the population compared with the average in other western countries. Meanwhile, the DHSS is withholding permission for almost all new posts.

But the radiologists are not content to sit back and let their speciality and the care they give be attacked and eroded. They have begun to fight back.



A new oil field in Albania, a socialist country where all the benefits from the country's natural resources are reaped by the people. Compare this with Britain's North Sea oil fields which are hived off to multinational companies around the world and exploited for profit alone. Britain's oil resources will have been exhausted in ten or fifteen years time with no proper thought of alternative sources of energy. In Albania, where the working class is in power, supplies of energy are carefully linked to an ever-expanding industry and agriculture in the interest of people now and of generations yet unborn.

## Book and magazine journalists take industrial action in pursuit of claim

ACTION by Book and Magazine members of the National Union of Journalists is accelerating as workers pursue 1978 wage claims in defiance of the 10 per cent government guidelines.

The 120-strong NUJ Chapel (work-place branch) of the book, magazine and part-work publishing firm, Marshall Cavendish, have been on strike since 19 January in pursuit of their salary claim for 1978 and the right to negotiate for

their wages. In the management's first and only offer, they have incorporated into the 1978 rise, an increase of £500 which was agreed for 1977 (under a break-clause at the expiry of Phase II in July) but which remains unpaid - thus making the actual offer for 1978 range between 9½p per week for the lowest grades and £4.80 per week for the highest.

The Chapel has stood its ground and refused ACAS or any other external involvement in the dispute, maintaining morale, determination and discipline despite management's efforts to break the strike by employing freelancers and by shifting production to other companies of the Marshall Cavendish Group.

### no division

Slowly but steadily, the Chapel is tracing the freelancers, informing them of the dispute and requesting their support. A number have already responded by refusing to cross the picket lines. At Lyncross a company which management have persistently denied is part of the Marshall Cavendish Group, and to which they are shifting production, NUJ members have been called out by the NUJ's National Executive Council in support of their fellow members at Marshall Cavendish.

Other attempts to split book from magazine workers within the Marshall Cavendish chapel by trying to in-

stitute two chapels and two union agreements, each with different conditions (one for magazines and one for books - traditionally the poorer cousin) have been steadfastly ignored, and the chapel is being well supported by others in the Magazine and Book Branches of the NUJ, with financial help and picket-relief.

At Penguin Books, part of the massive Pearson-Longman financial Empire which also owns the Financial Times and the Westminster Press, NUJ and ASTMS members have united in their rejections of a 10 per cent wage offer and have embarked on a programme of disruption and sanctions including an overtime ban, the banning of in-house freelance work and lightning strikes, the first of the strikes being on 8 January when over 200 workers walked out in a disciplined and well-organised action which does great credit to union members with little experience of industrial action.

### Heinemann

At Heinemann Educational, the NUJ chapel have issued notice of unspecified industrial action unless management improve on their 10 per cent offer, while a number of other chapels in the NUJ Book Branch are currently going through established disputes procedures in pursuit of their 1978 wage claims.

### 'The Worker'

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## SKF bosses profit from loss made by productivity

HOW ever workers may attempt to increase "productivity", the employer can still manufacture a loss.

Britain's second largest bearing company SKF(UK), a Swedish subsidiary, has declared a loss for the second year running. Ironically, the company has managed to increase its turnover from the £47m to well over £55m in 1977.

Each employee at SKF(UK) contributed £13,750 worth of products. Another leading bearing company, Ransome Hoffmann Pollard, declared a profit of £3.7m from a turnover of £73m. In this case each employee contributed £7500 worth of products; only half of their SKF counterpart.

SKF's Swedish parent company uses a "counterbalancing effect scheme" to achieve

these apparently impossible accounts. This is a method of transferring capital from one company to another by means of selling or buying at a price designed specifically to show a loss or profit. It is reported that the company buys bearings from Germany at £22 per set of 12 and sells at £12 a set to Ford! In spite of their generosity SKF(UK) still managed to pay a 10 per cent dividend to the parent company for the 1977 financial year.

The Luton workers, certainly no less productive than their counterparts at RHP, are to suffer a further 350 redundancies by the end of 1979 as a result of this conjuring trick. The Company is paying interest of about £2m on their loan; more cash for the capitalist from this "loss-making work force".

## Mayday nurses act to raise standards of care

LAST September, nurses and doctors at Croydon's Mayday Hospital, alarmed at the lowering of standards and staff shortages, petitioned the Area Health Authority in an attempt to persuade the Authority to maintain adequate standards of nursing care. Since that date the situation has not improved and at present 42 extra full-time staff are needed on night duty and 52 on days.

The nursing staff have now decided that this situation must not go on, and with the backing of the Royal College of Nursing, have begun action to redress the nurse-patient ratio.

In the short term this means that some patients will not be admitted to the hospital, although this does not

include accidents and emergencies. In the long term the nurses' action is part and parcel of the struggle to save the health service.

Mayday needs more fully-trained nurses and the nurses' action is aimed at forcing the Area Health Authority to provide these, as well as insuring that existing patients are given adequate care. It is thought likely that the action of the Croydon nurses may well spark off similar action in other areas.

Moves are being made to gain support for the nurses' action from the local Trades Council and to initiate its help in bringing to the attention of the Croydon public the seriousness of the cuts in health spending.

## Journalists' local action defies 10%

PROVINCIAL journalists have discovered in the past month that united action does bring results.

The employers' organisation, the Newspaper Society, has been forced to back down over their rigid application of the Government's "guideline"

Before signing a 10 per cent national pay deal, the employers demanded that the National Union of Journalists guarantee that there would be no extra claims at a local level.

Journalists retaliated by imposing a well-organised "work to rule" which brought many news rooms to chaos.

The employers have begun to retreat paper by paper, giving in to the NUJ.

It is now up to the journalists at local level to agree on their needs and demand the wages they require.

They have advanced through struggle - even winning a spin-off strike at Brighton - and should now set their own wages guidelines.

## Books, pamphlets

**Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, London NW 5**  
**Northern Star Bookshop, 18A Leighton Street, Leeds**  
**Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road, St. Philips, Bristol**  
**Brighton Workers Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton**  
**Liverpool bookstall** Every Saturday at Paddies Market, Great Homer Street, Liverpool

Now available:

TWO NEW CPB(ML) PAMPHLETS:  
Food For the People (10p each + 7p postage)  
Unity Not Devolution

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

WORKER readers are invited to the CPB(ML)s London meetings listed below. The meetings will take place on Friday evenings at 7.30 at Bellman Bookshop, 155, Fortress Road, Tufnell Park, London, NW5.

February 24	What is a Marxist-Leninist Party?
March 3	Down with Phase Four
March 10	The Politics of Economic Struggle
<b>OXFORD</b>	
March 1	The Theory and Practice of Revolution Organised by the New Albania Society, 8.00pm Friends' Meeting House, St Giles, Oxford.