

THE WORKER



Published by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist - Leninist)

No 22 Nov. 5th 1977 5p

REJECT THESE PRODUCTIVITY DEALS

THE MINERS have already indicated by an overwhelming majority their opposition to the Government's productivity deal which is a disgusting attempt to make them pay in blood for any wage increase. It may be that by including the votes of those in the industry who don't work underground the Government can get a bare paper majority for its shameful deal when the Electoral Reform Society has finished counting the votes this weekend. Workers must treat such productivity deals with contempt.

THE miners should declare a resounding NO to the newly thought-out productivity scheme - as they did in 1974. The new scheme is in fact no different to the one put forward in November 1974 and it is to be as divisive as that would have been. Gormley says that this is just not so - but how convenient for him to be able to create this smokescreen when the miners want to raise their basic wage. They won't have to bother if they have an 'incentive' to work that much harder to boost their weekly earnings - and therefore won't find it necessary to embarrass the Labour Government by pushing for their 'extravagant' claims!

The miners of Britain know through bitter experience that this, as with any other productivity scheme, is a gigantic con trick and they must expose it for what it is.

Appalling state

At a time when capitalism is in absolute decline it is small wonder that the mining industry is in the appalling state that it is today. The workforce - which has been drastically reduced from 703,000 miners working in 958 collieries in 1947 to 268,000 miners working in 281 collieries in 1973 (the figure is even lower now) - are being asked to work even harder to increase the coal output in order to ensure a future for the industry! In 1947 the miners' productivity rate which is measured in output per manshift was 21.6 cwts - whereas in 1973 the rate was 45.8 cwts - an increase at that time of more than 100 per cent. What rate is hoped for in 1980 from this decreasing workforce? It must be realised that there is no future for any industry under capitalism. The real investment for the future - youth - is being actively

discouraged from entering the mining industry. Fewer collieries each year offer training schemes which used to encourage many young people to take up apprenticeships by doing day-release courses with local colleges. The continuance of such schemes would be beneficial to all as young, skilled craftsmen are much needed in our pits today.

Although conditions in many of our pits have improved considerably over the last few years there are still a few pits where the men have to overcome tremendous

difficulties to get coal to the surface. The accident rate in our pits has not fallen in recent years. Since nationalisation in 1947 over 7000 miners have been killed and over 40,000 have been seriously injured in the pits. Miners lose fingers and limbs so frequently that there is a sliding scale of compensation with so much for a leg or an arm. One statistic is the spectre for them all: British miners are killed at the rate of one a week.

The 'dust disease', pneumoconiosis, which is contracted by being exposed to dust underground and is incurable, mainly attacks the older miners. Since 1954 more than 16,000 miners have died from 'the dust' with 38,000 suffering from it at the moment, many of them still working underground. Each year more than 600

new cases of 'the dust' are medically confirmed and every day a miner dies from pneumoconiosis.

Dishonest Budget

THE satisfaction with the latest budget of the CBI and the City and no doubt the approval of the IMF, shows that this budget, in spite of some tawdry window dressing, is simply a continuation of the Labour Government's anti-working class line.

From our point of view as workers, it is a fundamentally dishonest budget. It pretends that it is dealing with the basic issue of massive unemployment in order to create a better climate for imposing its under-the-counter wages policy, but all it does is to promise a few thousand more jobs next year. One has even to question the Government figures on unemployment which so fortuitously showed a remarkable drop just before Healey got up to try to sell his dubious package to workers!

The utter hypocrisy of the Government is shown in the £400m shot-in-the-arm for the building industry which is supposed to be spent on 'hospitals, schools and roads' while existing hospitals are still being closed down and trained teachers are denied the right to work. There is no drawing back in this budget from the destructive cuts in health and education.

As though anticipating the indignant response of the working class to this budget, provision is made to the extent of £9m for increasing the effectiveness of the police force! But the police pay settlement had to remain within the Government's reactive guidelines or it might give workers an additional argument for smashing through them.

The relief to small businesses and the raising of the threshold to £25,000 for capital transfer tax are simply further devices for making the two major capitalist parties absolutely indistinguishable.

Yet it seems there is serious doubt as to the necessity for early retirement. Of course it is only human lives involved and to the capitalist these are expendable. The retirement age for miners in Britain is, disgracefully, the highest in Europe.

Throughout the coalfields in Britain there is a distinct feeling of loyalty and comradeship to fellow workers which in many ways is unique. This potential strength which comes from unity is precisely why the employers find it necessary to introduce productivity schemes - designed to set man against man, pit against pit, area against area and ultimately to weaken the entire mining workforce.

Now is the time for the miners to put a stop to this particular scheme and to any others which will come clothed in many disguises in the future. The miners in Britain alongside all other workers in Britain must say YES to the unity and strength of our class and demand the only scheme which will work for the working class - socialism here in Britain.

Call from Halewood

"ON Sunday October 23rd the workers of Fords Halewood attended a mass meeting where they decided upon acceptance of a negotiated wage claim. Ford workers up and down the country have now accepted the Company's offer on wages and conditions.

"That's not bad because the Company had to offer much more than they were advised to by the Government - perhaps up to 18 or 20 per cent. The lads in their natural modesty had understood that they were breaking the national norm and setting a standard for others to take or even break if possible. To have tried to push it further at this time would not have been the wisest of actions.

"The tragic part of the episode must be the conveners' attitude (Continued on page 4)



The mass picket which closed Salfley Coke Depot in 1972. This demonstration of class solidarity was the turning point of the miners' strike. All workers must learn contempt for productivity deals.

The Bolshevik victory in 1917 is a lesson for the world

SIXTY years ago this month (October in the old Russian calendar), Russian workers rose up and seized for themselves the country of their birth. And if today we honour the great Bolshevik Revolution, then we do so that we may learn and follow that great example.

Inheritors of the long tradition of political dissent under Tsarism, the Soviet workers understood above all that the root of evil lay in their own class enemy within - landlord, Tsar or capitalist. Industry, though limited in extent, concentrated vast numbers of workers into single enterprises. The understanding and singlemindedness of that industrial proletariat led to their seizure of power.

The line of revolution sprang from the refusal of workers to accept the dictate of the employers, from their daily struggle for existence and gains which never was simply economic. In the February Revolution, spearheaded by women textile workers, the cry 'More Bread!' mingled in the streets with 'Down With The Autocracy! Down With War!' until a quarter-of-a-million Petrograd workers speaking with one voice forced the Tsar's abdication.

The woeful attempt of the bourgeoisie to rule in the months to October, 1917, took place against a background of agitation and demonstration, a background of rejection by workers of parliamentary rule, of any rule but their own elected Soviets. The worker who harangued a trembling gaggle of dignitaries makes

Cromwell pale into insignificance: "There are 30,000 of us here from Putilov. We're going to have our way. All power to the Soviets! We have a grip on our rifle!"

As *The Times* said: "The main feature of the series of enactments now published is the spoliation of one class and the transference of its property to another." Just as the bourgeoisie were clear, so too were the workers that it was a fight to the death. No quarter asked, none given.

Lenin and the Bolshevik Party voiced with particular clarity the fundamental tenet of the *Communist Manifesto* that society splits irreconcilably into capitalists and workers. They saw only too clearly that the solution to

all the problems besetting the working class - war, deprivation, economic disruption - lay only in the destruction of the enemy within.

They told the Russian workers and peasants, they told the soldiers and the sailors: "First destroy the ruling class and take power, then we can end the war and shape our lives." The Bolsheviks learnt this clarity in a harsh school. Years of struggle, illegal and legal, always repressed ruthlessly, they had repudiated the conditions of wage-slavery, of serfdom, and eventually of the barbaric war they were ordered to acquiesce in. Just as the peasant soldiers at the front trained their weapons on the generals whose war it was before returning to reclaim their

lands, so the working class of Petrograd and Moscow turned their guns (given them by the soldiers) onto the capitalists, "those worst enemies of peace and socialism."

Those Russian workers and peasants did more than just seize state power: they dismantled the entire repressive machinery of the Tsarist empire; they defeated enemies within and intervention from without (from Britain too); they established peace and unity among all the various nationalities within the Soviet state. This land of workers and peasants was the only country to know material plenty and improvement in the post-war decades of capitalist crisis.

Theirs too was the defiant challenge to the brutality of

fascism. The sacrifice of the Soviet people in their millions was a most precious contribution to the emergence of socialism in Albania and China, and to the survival of workers everywhere.

No doubt today the USSR languishes again under reaction. New imperialists, new Tsars strut in the Kremlin. But who can doubt that counterrevolution will be overthrown, as it was before by revolution?

Above all, the October Revolution demonstrates the enormous strength of the working class. If the workers had done no more than overthrow the Tsar or shorten by however little the horrors of the imperialist war, humanity would have had reason enough for gratitude. But theirs was also the seizure of state power.

The magnitude of their achievement shows how correct was the line of the Soviet workers and their Bolshevik Party: destroy the class enemy of one's own country and establish socialism as the only means to peace and progress, for oneself and for all workers whose task it is to fight for in their own countries everywhere.

Shortly after the seizure of power, Lenin wrote: "Even if the Soviet power were to be crushed tomorrow, Bolshevik tactics have brought enormous benefits to Socialism and have assisted the growth of the invincible world revolution." Thanks to the gallantry of the workers, they were not so crushed. The October Revolution is an example for all to follow.



Petrograd: 9th November (27th October) 1917. A patrol checking passers by on one of the River Neva bridges seized by the Bolsheviks. Inset shows the great revolutionary leader, Lenin.

Cold winds in candyfloss production

ABOUT 4 per cent of the total labour force in the EEC are engaged in the production of motor cars including lorries. In motor manufacture and assembly 1 to 1.5 per cent of all workers in Europe are employed and there are four times as many work in related and sub-contract work for motors. The production of cars in Japan is 40 cars per man per year; next highest is West Germany with 15 cars per man. Nobody bothers to count British production. Now the Common Market analysts are alarmed at the prospect of a further decline in Europe, so plan greater mergers, rationalisation and more division of the market within Europe on the specious argument of efficiency and greater competitiveness. Thus they plan the intensification of output per worker, herald contraction and redundancies. West Germany, which expelled many of its 'guest' workers, is now re-considering preparing for another boom.

The Commission of the European Communities has published a report "On the Working Conditions in the European Automobile Industry" with an emphasis on "humanisation of work" and "industrial democracy". The report starts off with "the average car worker is younger, better educated and less resigned to do monotonous and fatiguing work on the assembly line" but that he is "locked into the job by the better pay and fringe benefits won by militant trade unionism." It goes on "that there is one school of thought circulating among sociologists and specialists in academic circles on the periphery of the labour movement that their (the workers) frustrations are taken out in excessive absenteeism,

tardiness, alcoholism to some extent, and a general lack of work discipline." Sociologists argue that more involved and interesting tasks and responsibilities could cure these ills.

With the epic simplicity of a Japanese stone garden the workers' answer was "the work is fatiguing and very often dirty as well as dangerous, especially in car factories." Their answer to the problem, so the report states, "is a reduction in hours, longer holidays and break-times and more pay."

Swedish sociologists discovered that humanising work had many dimensions of which the wage system was central. In West Germany they decided that the speed of the assembly line could not be modified without prior consultation with the works council. Ford Germany tried cutting down noise, BMW vibration, Fiat's Italy found that they had less absenteeism when they reduced the speed of the assembly line by 75 per cent. In Britain they found that workers' stress was increased when the individual work was determined not by him but by a machine. One Swedish firm stated they reduced noise level therefore stress by removing production from their factory!

"Humanising" work, "democ-

Party of unemployment

"FULL employment as understood in the traditional form as jobs for everybody from 16 to 65 is unachievable." So said Mrs. Shirley Williams at a recent meeting organised by Youth Aid. "In the not very distant future governments would have to consider taking new measures, such as work sharing..."

racism" in industry all boils down to more efficient methods of increasing profits or forcing workers to suffer losses, and in every EEC country workers, through their unions, resist. A characteristic of car manufacture is the division of tasks, the moving belt or its development, the system of Bedaux (friend of the former Prince of Wales) taken up with such enthusiasm by Henry Ford. As Charlie Chaplin showed so mordantly in his film "Modern Times" the belt did not always provide the desired results of trouble-free car production. At first this meant the destruction of the human beings involved; a man was too old at 35 to work on the belt, but any worker who sets his mind to it can wreck the cleverest technical device to increase profits.

So new methods are being tentatively introduced. In the Volvo car plant the car body moves along on battery powered carriers which travel individually; the worker goes to the area where the units are to be worked on, so the assembly line has been replaced by an assembly area. In the Saab-Scania plant group work is established and the group works at its own speed. The workers here are women so no doubt the employer feels that infant school methods will suit them. West Germany is assisting an experiment on the assembly of motor engines on an individual basis instead of assembly lines in the VW works in Saltgitter.

The report is worth study and no doubt to the taste of employers and the EEC mandarins - as long as they remember that their problems will not be solved by trying to teach grandma to suck eggs!

Mao Tsetung volume 5

IN "Talks at a Conference of Secretaries of Provincial, Municipal and Autonomous Region Party Committees" (January 1957), Mao Tsetung deals with the international situation at the time of the Anglo-French-Israeli attack on Egypt.

"The British bourgeoisie, past masters of machination and manoeuvre, are a class which we know best when to compromise. But this time they bungled and let the Middle East fall into the hands of the Americans... From this incident we can pin-point the focus of struggle in the world today. The contradiction between the imperialist countries and the socialist countries is certainly most acute. But the imperialist countries are now contending with each other for the control of different areas in the name of opposing communism." Mao Tsetung mentions three forces at that time in conflict in the Middle East; "one, the United States, the biggest imperialist power, two, Britain and France, secondary imperialist powers, and three, the oppressed nations." Perhaps it is from this list of contending forces in the Middle East that some have manufactured the ridiculous 'three worlds' theory.

In the very next paragraph Mao Tsetung makes his own ideas on world divisions perfectly clear. "We, the socialist countries, should pursue the policy of consolidating ourselves and not yielding a single inch of land. We will struggle against anyone who tries to make us do so. This is where we draw the line beyond which they can be left to quarrel among themselves. Then shall we speak up or not? Yes, we shall. We certainly will support the anti-imperialist

struggles of the people in Asia, Africa and Latin America and the revolutionary struggles of the people of all countries. As for the relations between the imperialist countries and ourselves, 'they are among us and we are among them'. We support the people's revolution in their countries and they conduct subversive activities in ours. We have our men in their midst, that is, the Communists, the revolutionary workers, farmers and intellectuals, and the progressives in their countries. They have their men in our midst, and in China for instance they have among us many people from the bourgeoisie and the democratic parties and also the landlord class." One world divided by class!

Mao Tsetung writes of revisionism and great-nation chauvinism in the Soviet Union: "This time when our delegation went to the Soviet Union, we came straight to the point on a number of questions. I told Comrade Chou En-lai over the phone that these people are blinded by their material gains and the best way to deal with them is to give them a good dressing down. What are their material gains? Nothing but 50 million tons of steel, 400 million tons of coal and 80 million tons of petroleum. Does this amount to much? Not at all. Now at the sight of this much their heads are swelled. What Communists! What Marxists! All you have done is to extract something from the earth, turn it into steel and make some cars, planes and what not. What is so remarkable about that? And yet you make all this such a heavy burden on your backs that you even cast away revolutionary principles. Isn't this being blinded by material gains?"

EDITORIAL

WE HAVE frequently said that the best service workers in Britain can perform for embattled fellow workers anywhere else in the world is to make a revolution here. But that does not mean that proletarian internationalism, which is the comradeship of workers all over the world in their revolutionary struggle against capitalism, has to be postponed here until there are barricades in the streets of London.

We have also said that socialism will never come if we sit back and wait for it. Finding revolutionary solutions to the problems facing our class here and now is the road to socialism. But finding revolutionary solutions to the problems we are facing here and now is also proletarian internationalism. Workers all over the world have the same interests and the same mission of liberating mankind from exploitation. Therefore, whatever genuinely advances the working class cause in Britain must be of value to working people everywhere in the world.

We have taken up a stance of forthright opposition to the Common Market as being in the interest of European monopoly capitalism and completely alien to the interests of British workers. In opposing the Common Market, in struggling to take Britain out of Europe we are, at the same time, supporting the struggles of fellow workers on the Continent against this capitalist combine particularly our fellow workers in Spain, Portugal and Greece who have just emerged from open fascist dictatorship and before they can consolidate a less dependent position are about to be merged into a more and more fascist-orientated Western Europe.

Self-reliance

We have set ourselves the task of saving Britain's industrial base by keeping capitalism from destroying it; but we don't save it just for ourselves. Those skills which our bourgeoisie deprives of employment could be providing goods for others as well as for us here and they could be passed onto workers in other countries, making those other countries more self-reliant.

In striving for self-reliance ourselves British workers will begin to rectify some of the world distortions of capitalism's uneven development. A world in which some countries make things and other countries grow things is a world divided in such a way as to weaken both to the advantage of capitalism. Nor anywhere in the world is it in the interest of workers that their labour power can be bought more cheaply to flood Britain with foreign goods.

And most important of all, if we could take Britain out of the capitalist war pattern of which NATO makes up a major part we could encourage and help in their fight against war and for socialism workers on the Continent and also workers in other parts of the world which capitalism still dominates through the European imperialist powers - led by Britain. Making it absolutely clear to the bourgeoisie in Britain that any war they try to start against others we will certainly turn into a civil war against them is the greatest service we can do our fellow workers anywhere.

We have the technology

IT HAS just been announced that technicians at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology have pioneered the development of an all-metal shoulder joint to replace diseased arthritic joints. Excellent news, but judging by the use made of previous British 'firsts' in medicine, it would seem that elation is definitely not in order, for all life saving and life enhancing techniques have now to be judged under the harsh light of British capitalism's cost-effectiveness.

The fact that with dialysis machines and kidney transplants, anyone with kidney disease or damage can be kept alive would seem to warrant satisfaction of doctor and patient alike. However capitalism ensures that this is not so. The Department of Health has ruled that, due to health cuts, only people aged between 15 and 45 are eligible for kidney machines or transplants. Doctors have now the task of informing any child under 15 old enough to understand, and any adult over 45 suffering from a serious kidney complaint that, although treatment is available, they are to be allowed to die.

Now, since capitalism has sentenced to death any 'non-useful' member of society, we have fewer machines than any country in Europe, except Spain, due to overtake us next year.

Capitalism itself is plainly suffering from a terminal disease

and if the practice of medicine is to advance, or even stand still, we the working class must administer to it the treatment it has prescribed for us - death.

Penny-pinching attack on school meals service

IT is tempting to think of reforms won under capitalism as permanent and indestructible. But a review of just one of these, the school meals service, shows that this is not so. As a national service it has been in operation for 33 years and from its inception has been attacked.

The attack now being made upon it is of a fundamentally different nature - it not only impedes the provision of the service, it strikes at its very roots. The attack is in the form of a 86% price increase, from 15p to 25p for each meal.

Already, since the introduction of the increase in September there have been reports from various parts of the country of a fall of 14 per cent or more in the number of children taking meals. In Inner London the local authority anticipated the fall by not filling vacancies arising in school canteens during the last year.

It is not merely a price rise, which hits our pockets, but a crippling of the service, an attack on the nation's health. Increasing numbers of children are losing the benefits of the service, social habit forming as well as nutritional. The price

PROPOSALS made by the Health and Safety Commission threaten to undermine the absolute duty of employers to report to the Factory Inspector forthwith, all serious accidents occurring on their premises. The new scheme, which is being advocated because it is administratively more convenient for employers, will abolish the present reporting procedure called Form 43. What it will do is formally recognise the fact, that because of lack of staff, the inspectorate are unable to investigate the vast majority of accidents reported to them.

If adopted, what the Commission's proposals will mean is that only what are called 'serious bodily injury accidents' will have to be notified directly to the Inspectorate by the employer. All other accidents will only be reported much later via the DHSS when the injured person decides to claim national insurance industrial injury benefit. In turn this will mean that in practice it will be up to the employer to decide if something qualifies as a 'serious bodily injury accident'. If the possibility of subsequent prosecution is involved, obviously he will try and opt for the more

lengthy route - giving plenty of time for things to blow over and evidence to become conveniently obscured.

At the moment the employer has a duty under Section 80 of the Factories Act to report within three days all accidents resulting in three or more days absence from work. He must also report within three days certain dangerous occurrences. The Inspectorate then has a duty to investigate where necessary, to advise and, if it can be shown that the law has been broken, to institute proceedings against the employer.

Following reorganisation of the various inspectorates under the Health and Safety at Work Act (despite a small expansion) inspectors find themselves more stretched than ever before. At the moment they are only about 900 strong (1 to every 500 premises registered!). They perform a vital function and should be regarded as a worker's friend rather than establishment opponent. Yet, so far as dealing with reported accidents is concerned, they are only able to investigate about 3 per cent of roughly a quarter of a million accidents reported to them annually. (About 30 per cent of industrial accidents go unreported altogether.)

Further evidence of the effect of reorganisation under the new Act can be seen from figures on visits by inspectors to registered places of work. In 1971 there were 204,798 registered factories and there were 279,778 visits. By 1975 (the first year of the new Act) there were correspondingly 209,573 factories but only 177,414 visits.

What the Commission's proposals mean is that because of staff shortages, accident reporting can be little more than the collection of statistics. The trade union movement has campaigned for a long time for the number of inspectors to be substantially increased (possibly trebled). Yet all the new Act has produced is greater specialisation amongst inspectors (itself necessary) at the expense of cover and frequency of inspection. Inevitably, therefore, stinging on resources dilutes even capitalist justice - for instance, in 1975 only 81 successful prosecutions were made against employers who failed to report (in fact over 100,000 failed to do so). The average fine for the class of offences in which this falls, was a mere £33.



September 11th, 1977 London. Old Hounslow Town Hall. Over 100 picket people were finally allowed into the meeting of the West Middlesex Area Health Committee. They started making speeches from the gallery. The Committee Chairman vainly tried to make himself heard. The Committee then gave in and left the hall. (Picture by Andrew Ward (Report))

increase will not even be an economy - the higher the price the fewer the takers.

By the Government's own admission the price is unconscionably high for it has extended the entitlement to free meals. But it has refused categorically to publicise this, and must know full well from past experience the consequences of that refusal. The take up of entitlement to free meals is, at a conservative estimate (by a 'Labour' Government) only 75 per cent and is still regarded by many parents either as the acceptance of charity or an admission of failure to cater.

In May 1946 a speaker at a conference of schools meal organisers, borrowing a simile from Bunyan, described the passage of the 'pilgrims' to the School Meals Service from the City of Deterioration. 'We have seen him bogged in the Slough of Parental Responsibility, seen him much hindered by Mr Legality, Mr Save-All, Mr Money-None and Mr Beyonds of Fair Speech at the gate of the Palace of Westminster, whence he gets a far-off glimpse of the Delectable Mountains of free meals and

milks, down through the valleys of the Shadows of two great wars and gaining strength in each'.

Those 'Delectable Mountains' now do not even appear on the horizon. And it was a promised land: 'In view of the ultimate intention to make all dinners free... (Ministry of Education Document 1949); 'In order that there may be no avoidable delay in bringing the provision of school canteen facilities to the point at which school dinners can be made free... (Ministry circular 1946).

Since capitalism is eternally in economic crisis, 'the difficulties the nation is in' is always a handy excuse to cut the service and has invariably been used to justify each price increase. This should not be allowed to mask the nature of the attack, nor should we mistake the heartless penny-pinching attitudes behind the many ideas currently being peddled.

It is said that too much money is spent on administering the service as opposed to spending on food - as though the food would cook and serve itself! Most 'progressive' is the idea of a

slimmers' lunch for weight conscious pupils - less food for the price of a full meal! Kites are being flown for the Government by some local authorities, a few of which have called for straight cuts in nutritional content and others who suggest that children should be charged for drinking water and eating sandwiches indoors.

The ruling class would surely approve of Oliver Twist. 'You've overfed him, ma'am. You've raised an artificial soul and spirit in him, ma'am, becoming a person of his condition.'

If parents, teachers and trade unionists are serious about the education and health of children then they should demand free meals for all (meals which have already been paid for through taxes and rates). 'An army marches on its stomach,' the French general said and clearly the ruling class sees this. We should see it too and realise that we have now to choose: between capitalism, or a future for our children.

ON THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT

STUDYING Department of Employment figures industry by industry of hours of overtime worked compared with unemployment provides a sharp reminder of the results of the social contract. As real wages have declined overtime working has increased dramatically and so too has unemployment!

Over the whole field of manufacturing industry hours overtime worked (divided by 40) came to 406,550 and the number of unemployed came to 342,264, both totals extremely high. (Source: Department of Employment Gazette September 1977.)

NUT resists

REDEPLOYMENT has reared its ugly head in Rotherham. Rotherham Authority requires twenty 'volunteers' for their redeployment scheme affecting 17 primary schools in the area. Local NUT members are refusing to co-operate with a scheme which only guarantees redeployed jobs for four years and does not guarantee a scale post of those redeployed teachers on scales 2 and 3. NUT members in Rotherham are meeting again in the near future to discuss possible action should the Authority decide to implement

this 'voluntary' scheme through compulsion. It is essential that redeployment is resisted. If the Authority has an easy ride, what next - redundancies?

Lorry drivers

A 35 per cent pay increase for 250 lorry drivers has been negotiated by the TGWU with a Neasden film distribution firm. Harold Walker, Minister of State for Employment, met with company officials before the deal was completed in the hope of averting this breach of the Government pay code. Having failed at that level, the Ministry could only send a letter warning of Government sanctions to the firm.

Teachers win

THE London Borough of Enfield has been forced by teachers' action to withdraw 25 planned redundancies and to drop its plan on teacher transfers. Instead, four more teachers will be employed and a further 20 are scheduled to go into primary schools in January.

Sanctions started in September 1976, when teachers decided to refuse to cover for absent

colleagues. At the time, pupil-teacher ratios in the borough were among the worst in the country. Following a long and bitter struggle involving no-cover and refusal to teach oversize classes, with teachers enlisting the support of local parents, the council had to surrender.

Success breeds confidence. At a recent general meeting, NUT members pledged themselves to fight on for further improvements in the next year and to keep a close eye on teacher provision in primary schools.

Busmen strike

FOR the last three weeks TGWU busdrivers and conductors throughout South Yorkshire have staged lightning one-day strikes in pursuit of a 60 per cent pay increase. The busmen have already rejected a 10 per cent pay offer from their employer, the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive. Mass meetings are being held this week in Rotherham and Doncaster with a view to escalating the struggle to a full-scale strike action which will start on 17th October.

Firemen prepare for battle

ON October 26th leaders of the National Union of Firemen met their employer to submit a national claim for a £20 a week pay rise, backed by an angry and determined membership. They are under no illusion that the battle ahead is going to be an easy one; much work is going on in preparation for action.

Firemen are not newcomers to struggle, the most notable example in recent years being the fight over the 1973 claim. Glasgow firemen played a prominent role and troops had to be brought in to man Glasgow's Fire Service (a miserable job they made of it as well - so much for the employer's opinion that a fireman's job is not skilled).

At National Conference this summer they voted for no more wage restraint and a wage rise to redress the losses of previous years and a revaluation to take account of the increasing complexity of a fireman's work. The £20 claim seeks to achieve the national average wage plus ten per cent for firemen.

In recent weeks there have been two large and angry demonstrations by Yorkshire firemen at County Council offices in Wakefield and Barnsley. Both were attended by well over 1500 firemen demanding the full claim and threatening strike action. It is instructive to note how little coverage the media has given to the demonstrations so far. It will be very different once the struggle begins in earnest, then the press will scour the nation for a death in a fire and lay the responsibility at the feet of the firemen.

An interview with a Bradford firemen's leader was revealing - a 48-hour week split into shifts; many firemen killed and injured each year; the long term effects of stress and smoke resulting in most firemen dying within 5 years of retirement (retirement age from 50 upwards

after 30 years service). All that for what? A take-home pay of less than £40 per week. "Well it's nothing like enough. The large number of experienced firemen leaving the service is further proof of that."

In reality their coming struggle has two objectives; to prevent the destruction of the Fire Service and to secure a decent income.

Halewood call (cont. from p.1)

which should provide a lesson for the future. They knew that the negotiators had done a fair job with the claim without any real backing from them. So to appear to be leaders with more militancy than they have earned, they invited the workers to reject the offer and then, to make sure that they wouldn't, invited them out on an indefinite strike. That way they believed their superiority over the workers would be established. Not that they would lead the workers to greater victories, but that in future months they could say 'we weren't satisfied but you were!'

"They missed the point. Workers need to believe in their leaders. They won't be conned into accepting an occasional display of leadership which isn't supported all the year round.

The convenors and stewards set themselves up as a body apart from the workers, and the unions spend their time vying for positions rather than on their credibility with the rank and file.

"Ford workers can go on proving their worth, given the leadership they deserve and will have to see to it that they get."

This message was sent to THE WORKER by a leading worker at Fords Halewood, Liverpool, who is a member of the National Joint Negotiating Committee.



'Confrontation of police and workers outside Grunwick. The Government must be forced to withdraw their mass police picket.

The state prepares for class war

THERE are still those in Britain who regard the state as neutral, something apart from class war. The extent to which the Government is the tool of the bourgeoisie has been illustrated this year by events at Grunwick, and later at Lewisham and Birmingham. In all three cases violence was provoked by police. The bourgeoisie in Britain is determined that the organised power and independence achieved by the working class will be smashed.

They would prefer to have us deliver our surrender in the form of some eternal version of the social contract but they are not counting on it. Various changes in the law recently introduced give the police unprecedented powers to search and detain. "Reasonable suspicion" allows a search of anyone under the Dangerous Drugs Act 1970. The Prevention of Terrorism Act 1974 was rushed through in one night after the Birmingham bombings and described by Jenkins as "temporary" and "draconian". Nevertheless it was re-enacted in 1975 and is still with us: this allows detention of any suspect

for up to seven days with the Home Secretary's permission. In the last session of Parliament the Criminal Trespass Bill was approved giving the police extensive powers to intervene in occupations. This includes the right to intervene if there is "intimidation" which the courts have decided can mean as little as outnumbering any security guards (try and get in if you don't outnumber them!).

Neither should we forget the Public Order Act 1936 which is now being revived and which Rees has threatened to extend. This was brought in ostensibly to deal with Moseley's British Nazis, but in fact it was used to harass communists and trades unionists. Apart from the provisions for bans on marches and meetings, Section 2.1 makes it an offence to be organised in such a way as to give "reasonable apprehension" that you are "organised for the purpose of using physical force for a political purpose". As usual the wide drafting gives scope for considerable harassment as was discovered in the thirties. Section 2.6 goes on to reinforce this by allowing premises to be raided

if there is "reasonable ground" for a "reasonable apprehension". Always so reasonable!

Changes in the law have been matched by the preparation of the security forces (whose security?). The bourgeoisie in Britain has always lacked a paramilitary third force to be used in attacking demonstrations - they now have such a force in the "Special Patrol Group". At Lewisham, new equipment was aired publicly for the first time - by the next day in Birmingham the sight of massed riot shields was being treated as quite normal by the media. From shields to snatch squads the police have been using techniques pioneered in Northern Ireland - such a useful training ground.

Now they have started to ban marches and meetings using the National Front as an excuse. There is always an excuse - for the Official Secrets Act it was the Germans; for the Public Order Act it was Moseley; for the Prevention of Terrorism Act the IRA. The truth is bans are aimed against our class as was all that legislation.

Public Meetings

LONDON At Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortess Road, N.W.5, 7.30 pm:

- Fri November 4 Housing in London: for people or profit?
- Fri November 11 The erosion of civil liberties.
- Fri November 18 NATO, capitalism's policeman.
- Fri November 25 Albania, an example to the world (organised by New Albania Society).

LIVERPOOL At AUEW office, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, 8 pm.
Tue November 8 Meeting to celebrate 60th anniversary of the October Revolution.

BRIGHTON At Brighton Workers' Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Rd., 5pm
Thur November 10 Skilled youth the key to the future.
Thur November 24 Socialism - people not profit.

LEEDS At City of Leeds School, Woodhouse Lane (opposite Merrion Centre):

- At Northern Star Bookshop, 18a Leighton St., off Great George St Leeds 1, 7.30 pm:
- Mon November 7 60th Anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution.
- BRISTOL** At Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road, Old Market, 7.30pm:
- Fri November 25 One world divided by class.
- Wed December 14 For an independent Britain: No to devolution, No to the EEC.
- MANCHESTER** At Millstone Pub off Oldham Street, 7.30 pm.
- Thur November 10 Smash the Labour Party.
- GRAVESEND** At the Terminus, Stewart Road, 7.30 pm.
- Wed November 30 Britain One Nation.

"ALBANIA TODAY" - the theoretical magazine from Albania - is now available on subscription from the Bellman Bookshop. The subscription is £2.40 a year for six issues, including p.p.

'The Worker' 155 FORTRESS ROAD, LONDON NW5
6 months £2.50 (including postage)
1 year £5.00 (including postage)

NAME.....
ADDRESS.....