



# BREAD, PEACE, JOBS



The Queen's Speech -  
Tory programme  
for destruction

Our response to the Tory blueprint for destruction is bread peace and jobs. All are threatened - children, the youth, the pensioner, men and women. The fight for bread is about who owns the bakery. Out of NATO. Out of EEC. For peace and jobs. Put the capitalists on the dole and end the dôle for ourselves

THATCHER the 'milk snatcher' is poised to snatch more than just milk from school children, as she did when secretary of state for education in the Heath government. As Prime Minister of a new Conservative government she plans to take Britain a few decades back to a dark age the like of which the British people have not witnessed. Tory proposals are nothing short of an onslaught on human dignity and ordinary decency.

Gone are the disguises, the amelioration, the cushioning from the excesses of capitalism. Instead pure naked capitalist greed is to be the driving force for the whole society. Capitalist degeneracy is to permeate every institution, a truly corporate state of the overt type.

Central to government plans is the attack on trade unions. And central to this attack is the strengthening of the forces of repression, the police and the army with massive injection of money in terms of increased wages and improved weapons.

The trade unions are to be 'helped' with public money to conduct postal ballots. Experience has shown that such methods do not necessarily bring about the results desired by the government. Witness the Railmen's ballot during the Heath government. Where the government forced it onto the railwaymen, they voted and proceeded to vote for a strike. The real purpose of such proposals is to attempt to disperse the union as a collective and united body. Once the principle of government intervention in union affairs is accepted, it opens the way to further interference undermining the independence and sovereignty of trade unions.

It may be said that there is nothing new in the present government's proposals. It has all been tried before by successive governments over the last two centuries. What is different today is the coercion planned by the government. In 1971 Heath said at the UN that the danger was civil war. This Tory government has as its predecessor the Government of Pitt at the turn of the nineteenth century when the threat of radical ideas of the Jacobins and other sympathisers of the French Revolution resulted in the government imposing a reign of terror and oppression. Then the working class movement was just beginning. It took thirty years to break through the police state and its apparatus created by Pitt. Today the working class is at the peak of its strength in organisation and in number. We must use that strength to force capitalism out of Britain and put an end to the wanton destruction of all we have built.

## A summer of discontent

IN THE opinion of the Employment Secretary the pay scene at the moment is "jolly hot". And he should know because he's in the hot seat.

The 'winter of discontent' still casts its shadow in the form of pay increases for local authority manual workers, hospital ancillary staff, nurses and ambulance-men following strikes which ended only two months ago. Comparability studies are now under way with the onus on the employers to deliver.

But a hot summer is promised for government and employers unless they concede pay claims now forthcoming. The teachers are in action already, while local government white collar workers, Post Office staff and unions in the construction industry are engaged in strikes and continuing negotiations for substantial pay increases.

NALGO, representing half a million local government workers is seeking a 15 per cent increase, a shorter working week and longer holidays. Strikes have been threatened.

Postmen, members of the UPW, recently banned overtime and strikes occurred over a derisory offer of 12 per cent with a productivity deal. That was rejected by 5 to 1 in a union ballot. There has been a more realistic offer since but lower than

those offered to Post Office workers in the telecommunications and clerical sectors where strikes have been more widespread. With the Tory government threatening to sell off parts of the Post Office there is a need for unity amongst workers employed in the corporation.

Clerical and computer staff, members of CPSA and SCPS, are demanding pay increases of 20-30 per cent. The CPSA has voted overwhelmingly for a closed shop in the Civil Service, to the employers' dismay. A small proportion of union members are on strike, with all 37,000 CPSA members in the Post Office banning overtime. The month long dispute has meant over £250 million is owed the Post Office in outstanding telephone bills. Computers in Bridgwater, Crayford, Edinburgh, Swindon and Birmingham are out of action. The Post Office makes £1 million profit every day. Workers make it and will not be put off.

The 700,000 building workers in UCATT, TGWU, EETPU and AUEW seek substantial increases and are determined to get them.

Unions representing 96,000 power workers in electricity supply have rejected an offer for 14 per cent. Voting was 19,254 in favour of acceptance with

## Prices go up Profit rules

BREAD up by two pence, petrol up by fivepence, and to be over a pound a gallon in a couple of weeks. Gas and electricity up by 8 per cent.

By abolishing the Commission the Tory government is stating openly that price rises are essential to profit, and that nothing shall stand in their way. The Price Commission never had more than a minimal effect of delaying price rises. But in destroying it, the Tory government is destroying the pretence that prices might be controlled.

Powerless through the Commission was, it did at least monitor prices and give public information.

There are going to be redundancies in the 450 staff who service the Commission. About half of the staff are seconded civil servants (the Price Commission is not part of the Civil Service) who will have to return to their parent departments, departments which are already considering staffing cuts because of cash limits. The rest of the staff are employed directly by the Commission and have been told that there is little hope of other positions. The unholy haste in closing the Commission shows what the new government thinks about people's jobs!

This new government stands for unabated profit.

## Teachers' action continues

THE DECISION of the National Union of Teachers executive to continue action in the salaries campaign, despite government pleas to cease, has been vindicated by the treatment meted out to them since. The teachers' panel in the Burnham negotiating committee found the increase of 0.3 per cent on an earlier 9 per cent offer and staging of a full settlement over two years unacceptable. The new Secretary of State for Education has made his position clear by insisting that terms of any reference of the full claim to the comparabilities commission would include, as a priority, conditions of service, that is that any salaries increase would be tempered by the easier working life the pro-

fession's detractors suppose it enjoys.

If the offer on Monday 21 May is still unacceptable the government and employers have been warned that selected areas of the Union will be balloted for strike action. Should protracted struggle be necessary the exemplary tactics already employed by the NUT will prove a good guide - minimum expense to the Union members, maximum effect on the employer.

Teachers have already displayed their dignity and political clarity by pursuing their claim in the face of opposition by the past and present administrations. That same dignity and clarity will see them through this particular salary claim.



# The Week

REMEMBER the Bread Strike last year, and how the bosses were saying that it was ineffective? The Chairman of Rank Hovis McDougall has revealed that the pre-tax profit of the company for the six months up to the beginning of March were ten per cent down. The strike itself cost £7 million. This is in spite of the withdrawal of Spillers from bread making, which has boosted RHM's sales. Doubtless the departure of the Price Commission will help to ease their capitalist troubles!

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THIRTY-SIX per cent of the 38,306 applications to industrial tribunals in 1977 in respect of unfair dismissal resulted in a hearing, and 36 per cent conciliated settlements. Applications withdrawn: 28 per cent.

The likelihood of a small company being faced with a tribunal decision requiring them to pay compensation for unfair dismissal is about 1 in a 1000.

Industrial tribunals awarded less than £400 in 55.5 per cent of the awards they made in respect of unfair dismissal applications during 1977. For awards under £500 the figure was 65.4 per cent, and over £3000, 1.8 per cent.

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NATO DEFENCE MINISTERS have agreed to raise their spending by 3 per cent a year in real terms until 1986. They have declared that the general modernisation of nuclear weapons in Europe is a task of great urgency. NATO's "Infrastructure" programme is also to be increased to £2.75 billions over the next five years. What is the next EEC mountain going to be... neutron bombs?

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SO NOW the capitalists say that they will flatter yet another hurdle towards Women's Liberation. They are going to let us kill each other. There are already 110,000 women in the US military and now they are doing the basic training alongside the men, learning all those "skills" which have been denied women for so long - firing artillery missiles, laying mines bayonetting people. The British Military too are considering increasing the number of women in their forces - They are desperate to maintain their power despite a shortage of male recruits. Women must resist this call and dismiss it for what it is - a capitalist ploy to set proletariat against proletariat and to preserve the status quo. We are fighting for equality in living not killing.

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A RECENT Home Office Report has highlighted the increase in fire deaths caused by gas and smoke since the war. These increased more than six times between 1947 and 1974, and in 1974 accounted for 42.27 per cent of deaths in fires. A major cause of this increase has been the use of artificial materials such as polyurethane in furnishings - which give off highly poisonous gases when burning. The report shows that modern furnished houses produce a 7 per cent higher injury rate in fires.

Rather than putting forward measures to render these materials less dangerous, the report concludes that "ordinary market forces should be allowed... to govern the sale and use of materials."

## Australia's Deep North - all marks of a police state

THE NOTION that Australia is a land of milk and honey where all are equal, purveyed by the propagandists of the Australian government when encouraging workers to immigrate, is given a sharp kick in the teeth when one looks at the state of civil liberties in Queensland, a northern state. So bad have things become that Queensland is referred to by other Australians as the 'Deep North'. But any idea that people under capitalism are anything other than unequal, or that capitalist governments are anything other than repressive, is an illusion. It is a matter of degree and the example of Queensland is particularly bad.

Take events starting from 1977. In September 1977 the

Queensland government introduced an edict that all street marches in the capital were banned, the argument being that demonstrations lead to confrontation and violence. Many people set out to challenge this anti-democratic ban and marched to parliament house to protest at it. To prove his argument, the Queensland State Premier, a Mr Bjelke-Petersen provided the said confrontation and violence in the form of the state police, 700 of which were brought in to crush the demonstration and many arrests were made. Again in October 1977, a day of national protest throughout Australia against uranium mining and nuclear hazards, while 30,000 people marched peacefully in Sydney and Melbourne,

on the same day in the Queensland state capital when 3500 attempted to assert their right to protest, 410 were arrested. In the 15 month period up to the end of 1978 over 1800 arrests were made. By the end of last year the situation was becoming absurd when the police, in their enthusiasm for the job, arrested people who had congregated in a park one Sunday to sing hymns!

Opposition to this state of affairs in the State Parliament has been mealy mouthed, a fact which comes as no surprise to Queensland workers. It was the call of the Maritime Unions to 'provide the strongest possible challenge to Premier Bjelke-Petersen' that brought the nation to focus on the situation and in December 1978, 4000 workers

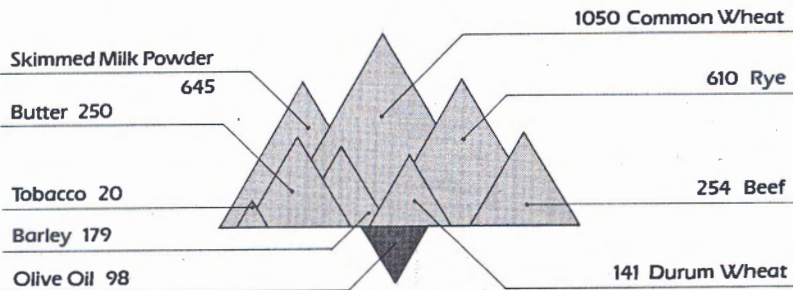
rallied in the state capital including trade union representatives from other states. Throughout Queensland itself thousands of people stopped work - at least ten thousand building and engineering workers. All coal mines in Queensland stopped for 24 hours. The support was tremendous.

Back in 1976 a Queensland Trades and Labour Council leaflet said that "property and profits lie at the root of the sorry state of civil liberties in Queensland". It hit the nail on the head. The erosion of democratic rights in Queensland is an attack on the organised workers of that state and as such has implications not only for Queensland workers but for all Australian workers.

### IN BRIEF/ Home News

THE MINISTRY of Defence are determined to continue the practice of low flying over Britain despite growing civilian concern and the loss of 44 British military aircraft through crashes in the last 15 months. Another 14 American planes have also crashed in Britain in the last five years. The most recent, a Phantom fighter bomber, narrowly avoided a school when it crashed near Whitby.

In the area allocated to this training, mainly in the North, East Anglia and Wales - the aircraft can fly as low as 250 ft, unless restricted by specific areas such as industrial or power installations.



## SOME EEC MOUNTAINS (000 tonnes) Feb 78

ONE OF THE first acts of the Tory Government was to reaffirm its commitment to the EEC and NATO. They plan monstrous rises in all things wasteful and pernicious - from food mountains (above), weapons, nuclear armaments, unemployment, rising prices.

## Queen's Speech - Tory design for dark age

THE Tory programme in the Queen's Speech is a declaration of war against the entire people of Britain. The demise of the Price Commission and the complete moratorium on recruitment by the Customs and Excise is only a beginning. They say they want to make redundant 200,000 civil servants.

The expressed aim of this government is to restrict the "claims of the public sector on the nation's resources". Yet the public sector is our money and our resources - 60 per cent of its funds come from tax on our income, 30 per cent in our social security contributions. The schools, hospitals, industries which we built and fund, they aim to destroy.

They will expand production only of weapons of destruction. The cost of the police and armed forces' pay claims alone is £200 million.

Wherever sections of nationalised industries, like the Brooke Marine Yard at Lowestoft, make profits, they are to return to private ownership. The rest will go.

Everyone who has worked in a nationalised industry knows that the government control has always meant run-down and destruction. But for the Tories, the run-down organised by the National Enterprise Board was too slow. In making the NEB redundant, they are making all those who work in it redundant.

With thousands homeless and millions in inadequate accommodation, council houses are to be sold. Inadequate provision of council houses keeps the price of accommodation high. Now council houses and flats are to be sold at 30 per cent discounts on the open market, perpetuating

that shortage.

Their programme is a programme of repression. As education provision is axed and children denied the education they deserve, the Tory government gives them instead courts with more powers and detention centres far harsher. How long till they introduce labour camps for the unemployed?

All this as the Chairman of the Police Federation echoes the government in calling for capital punishment. At the Police Federation conference a speaker declared that the police role in restoring public order "cannot be done in a gentlemanly fashion, with kid gloves".

Meanwhile, the government backs brutality abroad in Smith and Muzorewa, the new Defence Secretary commits Britain to raising the budget for war by 3 per cent per year in real terms, following the meetings of NATO and EEC chiefs which was their top priority.

War on workers at home and abroad is their motto.

### Return to 11+?

THE NEW Government is poised for a ruthless attack on the education system. They intend to interrupt the progress of comprehensive education, reintroduce the divisive second year modern/grammar school system, and finally lay the lot to waste.

Already, legislation has been presented which would remove the obligation on local authorities to go comprehensive.

Later, there will be encouragement for local authorities to send children to independent schools, and grants for less well-off parents so that their

children can be sent to non-maintained schools.

Back comes the 11 plus with a vengeance.

The immediate effect of the anti-education legislation will be to produce uncertainty in schools. What will be their future character? There will be uncertainty and worry for pupils and parents and long periods of disruption as the schools are reorganised.

Subsequently, resources will be provided in very narrow areas while the broad base of mass education will be starved of funds. An estimated £50 million is to be spent on sending a handful of pupils to independent schools while cuts of £400 million are threatened for state schools.

The prospect for all our children regardless of the institution they attend, will be training for a narrow skill and preparation for use as cannon fodder in a new World War.

It will not be as easy as that, however. The National Union of Teachers has anticipated such reactionary intentions and has already prepared for a vigorous struggle.

The Annual Conference of the NUT, held in Scarborough at Easter, agreed to oppose any attempt to interrupt progress to comprehensive education. Members will be encouraged to refuse all co-operation in selection procedures.

Teachers know that all children benefit where a comprehensive school caters for the whole range of ability.

They know that the real battle is to wring from the Government the resources whereby the education or all can be fully advanced.

### Workhouse back?

"MY Ministers will work to improve the use of resources in the National Health Service and to simplify its administration. A bill will be introduced to facilitate the wider use of private medical care."

So this government will "improve the use of resources in the NHS" which quite simply means that they want to see the health workers working even harder than they do now to care for the sick and needy.

They will "simplify its administration", and if that means, as no doubt it does, that they will cut jobs, then we must fight for those jobs. The delivery of health care requires many skills from many different professions. They are not going to eliminate a so-called "bureaucratic administration" - it is the health service itself they want to destroy.

They have reintroduced the divisive question of the existing private beds within NHS hospitals to lead into a new campaign to encourage the growth of private medical organisations. Unless the whole class takes up the fight for the health service, the ultimate dignity, so hard won under capitalism, of freedom from the fear of sickness or disablement, may be lost. They will force or cajole workers to set aside savings for so-called 'insurance' while encouraging private medical care to flourish. This would be nothing less than the destruction of "a comprehensive health service" which the 1948 Act proposed. They would have us return to the degradation of the workhouse and the Poor Law infirmaries, and we must not allow this.



# Editorial

THE TYPICAL feature of modern imperialism is the export of capital. An ever increasing amount of surplus value is created by the development of capitalist production in the highly industrialised countries, yet the realisation of profit becomes ever more difficult at home. Capital can only yield a 'reasonable' profit where the proportion of fixed capital would be less. Industry and science are thus brought to the 'backward' countries. We are asked to believe that such progress results in a welcome development, and ignore the resultant destruction of whatever prospects for a self-reliant economy that exist, enforcing a dependence upon the credit and markets of the donor.

Much thought and concern has been expressed on this latter feature of imperialism, yet with little appreciation of its necessary precondition - that the working class in the industrialised countries are willing to create the original surplus value that imperialism uses as capital to export - its own accumulated labour embodied in finance, machinery, and the skills necessary for their application. Moreover that the working class in the industrialised countries creates the surplus value necessary for the existence of the military force and state machinery essential for the exercise of imperialist power.

## Destroy imperialism

Many nations have fought valiantly against imperialist control, some have been successful in achieving its expulsion. It is only to our regret that the conclusion must be drawn that no matter how many national liberation struggles occur, even if they should involve Marxist-Leninist parties that have mobilised the workers and peasants to lead that fight, this will not by itself result in the downfall of imperialism. The wolf may be driven away from the flock, but then it would be necessary to mount an eternal vigilance against its return. The wolf can only be destroyed in its lair, or it will return again, more cunning and circumspect from its earlier failure. What matters that imperialism returns to its lair all bloody and bruised from its latest frustrated maraudings if its own working class would accept a social peace to allow it rest and recuperation?

The destruction of imperialism is now revealed in all its stark simplicity as the prime responsibility of the working class in the imperialism countries themselves. The entire existence of socialism and the future development of communism is dependent upon the move towards revolution of the proletariat in the industrialised heartland of capitalism. It is to the credit of the British working class that British imperialism has never been allowed to feel secure in its country of origin, now regarded purely as a flag of convenience. But it is yet true that the fatal blow has not been given out of a supposed notion that coexistence can be continued between the classes. The scavenging cur has become pestilent in its decay - the beast must die before it would infect us all.

## Troops out of Ireland

Our major failure of responsibility as a class has been to our brothers and sisters in Ireland. We have allowed the sectarian atrocities of the self-styled fighters against British imperialism to still our tongues, to make Ireland into an unmentionable subject. We must speak out loud and clear for the withdrawal of British troops from all their overseas bases, that we reject as a downright lie that British troops were ever sent to keep the peace out of humanitarian considerations. But the Irish people themselves must create the conditions for unity, for only unity will drive out the troops. Otherwise shall we see another Palestine or Indian solution where British troops were withdrawn on the behest of the US? Proving that imperialism has no consideration for the lives that will be lost, only the maintenance of its rule.

There is much confusion in Ireland, worst of all that some in their arrogance and lack of faith in the strength of their own people, should cowardly seek to carry the fight into places of commerce and relaxation of the British working people. Even that some would consider the assassin's trade a weapon in the struggle for liberation, whether consciously or not, in order to increase the oppressive power of the imperialist state against its own people, so that supposedly we would react out of desperation to bring about their victory. We reject absolutely the theory that purports to see a cause and effect between the degree of oppression and the level of resistance - those who seek to follow this route can only be regarded as an enemy of our class and a diversionary force within their own.

From a speech delivered at the May Day meeting held in London on May 1st, 1979.

## IN BRIEF/Home News

THE NEW Ugandan Finance and Planning Minister in describing Uganda's economy after the years of Amin's despotic rule, said, "Things seem appalling." He said that foreign exchange reserves stood at a low level, inflation was around 180 per cent, the key agriculture industries were in a state of collapse, and hardly any fuel was to be found; that shops and warehouses were empty, the copper mines had

closed, roads were broken, bridges knocked down and schools, institutions and government buildings had been destroyed; and that skilled manpower was lacking. He concluded that the full extent of damage could not yet be guessed.

The new Ugandan Government's 'solution' is to obtain 2 billion dollars foreign aid. Putting one's economy out to hire to imperialism will do nothing to remove the political restraints on economic development.



## Leyland deal produces dole queues not cars

BRITISH Leyland workers at Cowley, Oxford, are still awaiting the 'parity' payments which they should have received from February 1st. These are increases which are necessary to standardise wage rates in Leyland plants throughout the country. Management has used this claim as an excuse for a 'productivity' deal, saying that in order to finance these payments more cars have to be produced per worker. As Marx explained, a declining capitalism seeks to intensify its exploitation of the working class; last year Leyland got rid of 15,000 workers intending that the number of cars per worker, and therefore profit, be increased. This, of course, has nothing to do with real productivity in terms of numbers of cars produced; trade union representatives actually wanted a greater number of vehicles made last year, 1,000,000 as opposed to the management figure of 850,000.

The recent experience of

Oxford Leyland workers has shown the dangers involved in such productivity agreements. In January, the workers were told that the 'productivity' of the three months from November 1978 was not sufficient to finance parity payments beginning on February 1st of this year. This period included the lorry drivers' strike, when much of the Cowley workforce were laid off due to components shortages - a useful excuse for management to blame another group of workers for their own reluctance to pay. Workers at Cowley, and at Leyland plants throughout the country voted against a strike in protest against this delay, though 19,000 workers at Austin Morris, Longbridge, had walked out over the issue. They instead voted to accept the management proposal that if 'productivity' was sufficient during the eight weeks of February and March the payments would be back-dated. Austin-Morris workers at Cowley did succeed in their efforts to

maintain this rate of production (6.4 cars per worker per week!) but for a temporary stoppage in the neighbouring Pressed Steel Fisher factory which supplies their car bodies. This brief action, over the suspension of a worker, put a question mark over the plant's production record.

Whatever the outcome of this particular incident, the lesson must be clear. Productivity deals such as this will be used to confuse and divide trade unionists, to try to make us oppose the legitimate action of other workers because it ruins our own good service record. Their intention is to make us think that the interests of management coincide with our own, a confusion which should be entirely refuted by a speech made earlier this year by BL's chairman, Michael Edwards: whilst praising improved profits over the last twelve months, he announced his intention to axe a further 3000 jobs.



## ILEA plan threatens 18,300 jobs

"Schools under threat", a booklet by the Advisory Centre for Education, details the hatchet job planned for our schools. In the next three years 18,300 jobs are to go and the Inner London Education Authority, that bastion of progressive education, plans to close 40 primary schools over the next four years and amalgamate countless secondary schools. How hypocritical are those who attack teachers for 'damaging children's education' when they take action on pay.

Photo: The Worker

## Capitalism uses technology to axe jobs

THE specially-convened Consultative Conference of all TUC-affiliated unions will meet on May 30th at Congress House to discuss important business. Under discussion will be the TUC's interim report on "Employment and Technology" (price 75p). It could be a significant conference.

The report correctly notes the low investment in British manufacturing industry, linking it to relatively low productivity and high unemployment. Capital has avoided British industry for more than a generation to seek more compliant workers elsewhere. Thus the Industrial Strategy (established in early 1976) is seen as the solution. Unfortunately, its third birthday recently passed without celebration for very little has been achieved in the way of increased investment and more jobs in the forty sectors of industry it covers. Capitalism's strategy in Britain is to disregard industry, at least where workers are organised in any strength. The attraction of microelectronics for employers is its potential for cutting out workers who demand a

price for their labour power. Industrial robots don't answer back.

"New technology" need worry no worker, except that capitalism owns it; that's the threat for us. On our part it demands strong organisation and a perspective that says 'technology on our terms'. That has been the issue at Times Newspapers, where the employer wants the technology with 45 per cent redundancy in some departments. Our terms or their terms, there is no middle way.

However, new technology is not necessarily the answer employers are looking for, despite appearances. The complete group of newspapers around the Daily Mirror was planned to move from traditional 'hot metal' printing methods to computer typesetting and electronic page composition, cutting out jobs in the process. Only one third of the Daily Mirror's 32 pages are set with the new system, which has been shown to be much less flexible than traditional methods. More staff have had to be taken on running

both systems concurrently. New technology has cost the Mirror £5.5 million and much embarrassment.

Since the publication of the TUC's interim report, a forum organised by Morgan Stanley in New Orleans concluded that production of integrated circuits on silicon chips may fall far short of the target, a shortfall that will limit plans for their implementation in virtually every industry. The USA's domination of silicon chip production is being undermined by ferocious competition in the dog-eat-dog (or private enterprise as it is euphemistically called) atmosphere now prevailing.

The National Enterprise Board established Inmos, Nexos and Inscac to ensure Britain's expertise in integrated circuits and their programmes was not lost in floods from the USA or Japan. The latest government threatens to squander this production capacity for speculators to have their day. We reiterate, technology is not the enemy so much as the class which owns that means of production.



# NATFHE meet as 10,000 take sanctions

The National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE) is meeting this Spring Bank Holiday weekend for its 4th Annual Conference in Bristol at a time when over 10,000 members are actively engaged in sanctions relating to the present salary claim, with more becoming involved.

Appropriately, a large number of the motions before Conference deal with salaries and Conditions of Service on the one hand, and an equally large number with 16-19 year old education and training on the other.

As far as salaries are concerned, whatever the results of the present campaign (and many branches have responded magnificently to the executive's lead) NATFHE has entered the battle for wages and this conference has to build upon it immediately and in the future. It is not a question of an overall onslaught but a guerilla type struggle.

## A summer of discontent

(continued from page 1)

66, 162 against, conducted by postal ballot, of which Tories say they approve. But they can't really approve because Thatcher called a meeting of nine ministers to discuss how to deal with it. A confidential Tory document published last year admitted no government could win against power workers or miners.

The South Wales miners' conference, meeting last week, could have given the government no joy either. The miners' president said the Labour Government had paid the price for taking more notice of the International Monetary Fund than its supporters. On the new government he was just as explicit: "It is now fairly clear we are facing a near neo-fascist government determined to destroy any semblance of socialism in this country."

On educational matters the conference must address itself to the recent documents from the DES on the Education and training of 16-19 year age group. The Government say that facilities for expansion for this age group will not be provided and any changes must come about by re-allocation of existing resources in further education and schools. This is a clear attempt to divide the teaching unions and devalue education. These themes are outlined fully in a recent government "consultative" paper entitled "Providing educational opportunities for 16-18 year olds." This is, in effect, a negation of its own title, and a blue print for decline. The response should be clear and a campaign started with the NUT. The demand is for improved provision for both sectors of education. Training conveniently linked with education is the responsibility of the employer and must not be

used to dilute the education that must be provided in schools and colleges.

The Manpower Services Commission, a state agency which has a profound bearing on Further Education, has also been the subject of recent government documents. NATFHE has categorised the MSC as an attempt to create an 'alternative FE system' and an Executive discussion document warns that because vast amounts of money are being poured into the MSC, it will increasingly control the scope and nature of further education. Yet this far, though we have tended to condemn the MSC, we have taken the attitude that it is better to join it than beat it. In the long run this may turn out to be a dangerous position to adopt and conference will no doubt hear the argument expressed that the MSC is part of an overall attempt by the government to destroy and devalue education and skill.



100,000 demonstrated against Health Service cuts in 1977. The fight continues today to save the EGA. Photo: The Worker

## RCN votes to join the TUC

THIS YEAR'S delegates to the Royal College of Nursing's annual congress came pre-occupied with two main issues: behind them, this winter's wage fight; ahead of them, the proposed affiliation of the RCN to the TUC. In debate the two issues proved inseparable for the main current of the congress was the need to build and develop as a fighting organisation.

The final decision on whether the RCN should apply for affiliation to the TUC will be made by the RCN in general meeting. The congress however, voted overwhelmingly in favour of affiliation. The congress felt that the best way of pursuing the professional objectives so important to the RCN were from within the TUC - especially now that the very existence of the profession and its workplace,

the NHS, was under threat.

From the large question of TUC affiliation, the congress moved to more specific issues about their organisation. Many employing authorities are discouraging union stewards from exercising their statutory right to time off during working hours for union duties. Managers were playing on the nurses obligation to their patients where there were staffing shortages. A resolution was carried for stewards to negotiate a certain percentage of time off to do their job as stewards.

In the debate on wages and conditions some delegates were critical of actions taken by other NHS workers during the past winter. However many delegates asserted the right of those workers to take the action they deemed necessary and RCN general secretary, Catherine Hall, received a standing ovation when she told delegates that the people responsible for industrial disruption in the NHS were not the workers involved, but successive governments "who have consistently exploited the goodwill of all NHS workers." The extent of dissatisfaction with comparability schemes and "payments on account" show that this year's wage fight is by no means over.

In concentrating on its own organisation the RCN demonstrated its conviction that the attack on the NHS and the nursing profession must be countered by an organised workforce in each hospital.

mating the clarity of the workers who rejected it.

In pursuit of their demand for the right to organize the workers at Futers have already come out on a half day strike in April, which forced the management closer to negotiation. But closer isn't good enough. Stepping up their struggle, the workers, in conjunction with the North London AUEW, invited local trade unions and community groups to support them in their one day strike on May 14th. After assembling outside the factory gate in Harlesden they marched to the site of the new factory where they were joined by local workers expressing solidarity and support.

After a successful day of action the workers at Futers were more resolute than ever to carry through their battle until victory has been achieved.

## New closure threat to EGA resisted

THREE years on from the original attempt to close it, the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital, Euston, has become a symbol of resistance to the health cuts implemented by Labour and Tory governments.

Now once again moves are afoot to close it - on the basis of the Area Officer's report that it is 'unsafe' due to lack of staff, the AHA called an Emergency Meeting on May 7th, only to find its venue occupied by EGA supporters; at its regular meeting on May 14th, a decision was postponed, to await a promised statement by the new Health(?) Minister Vaughan, which never materialised; now another emergency meeting is called for this week.

Currently 24-hour pickets are once again in progress to preempt sudden closure, and a picket of Wednesday's AHA meeting is planned, with the demands of no closure, and expansion of facilities on the present site. The significance of this struggle goes beyond just one hospital, or the preservation of facilities for women to be treated by an en-

tirely female staff - if this battle is lost, it will be all the easier to close St. Columba's (terminal care) Hospital, and then the Royal Homeopathic, both mooted for closure in the same Area; and more broadly, to close hospitals and facilities all over the NHS, wherever such excuses as 'too small', 'too old', 'inadequate staffing', or 'bad facilities' (all results of chronic under-spending) can be used as justification.

The real cause for closures is the ruling class's desire to destroy our health service, and with it our health, our dignity and self-respect as a class, founded on our achievements in improving our conditions of life and work. When we refuse to accept closure of the EGA, or any other hospital, it is a beacon-light of resistance to this attack, a rallying point in the defensive struggle. No doubt there will be a new onslaught with this new government. The issue we must face is to go on to the offensive and take over for ourselves this and all the services our class has built.



WORKERS at Futers, a light engineering factory, marched through Harlesden during their day strike on May 14. Since October last year the workers have been in dispute over the issue of trade union recognition. They have recognized that the only way they can improve their appalling pay and conditions is to organize themselves within a union - the most appropriate for their trade being the AUEW. The employers, whose only concern is to ruthlessly exploit these workers in order to continue making the kind of profits that have enabled them to open up a new factory only last year, have so far refused to negotiate. In an attempt to divert the workers from their commitment to a trade union organization the employers tried to introduce a "works committee", underesti-

## Bookshops

**Bellman Bookshop** 155 Fortess Road, London NW5  
**Brighton Workers Bookshop** 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton  
**Main Trend Books** 17 Midland Road, St. Philips, Bristol  
**Northern Star Bookshop** 18A Leighton Street, Leeds  
**Basildon Bookstall** Tues, Fri, Sat Marketplace  
**Hull Bookstall** Old Town Market, Saturdays  
**Liverpool Bookstall** every Thursday Liverpool University

## Public Meeting

READING "Social-democracy: the road to destruction"  
 Thursday May 31st, 8:00pm  
 AUEW Committee Rooms,  
 Oxford Rd., Reading

## The Worker

155 FORTESS ROAD, LONDON NW5  
 6 months £2.50 (including postage)  
 1 year £5.00 (including postage)

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