

# THE WORKER



Published by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) No 39 9th Nov 1978 5p

## FORD WORKERS STAND FIRM...

Ford workers solidly supported their negotiators in rejection of the latest final offer from the company. In voting to continue the strike they showed their contempt for the penalty clause the employers tried to smuggle in. In their struggle to smash the Government's 5% pay policy and restore collective bargaining, Ford workers are inspiring fellow workers all over the country to do the same.



SHOP STEWARDS from Fords Dagenham support their negotiators in efforts to get more money from the employer, with no strings. (Picture, THE WORKER)

## QUEENS SPEECH – A PROGRAMME FOR DESTRUCTION

THE most important thing about the Queen's Speech, which sets out Labour Government policy for the months to come, is what it did not contain - any hint of a pay policy which could be presented as having even a modicum of TUC support. The Government had been angling for something along these lines to put in the speech but such was the concerted stand of the unions that any kind of a "social contract" was conspicuous by its absence.

That was why Callaghan had to save till the debate following the Speech his angry insistence on sticking to his 5 per cent. He expressed his fury with Ford for offering more than this limit by demanding threateningly what Ford would do about prices. He hinted that workers should scab by crossing picket lines if they faced militant attempts by shop stewards "to bring the country to its knees".

The main points in the Queen's Speech itself were a ragbag of anti-working class measures cobbled together in such a way as to enable this present Government to survive. Callaghan, in referring to "union power which was greater than ever before", sounded exactly like some Tory backwoodsman. Hence the proposal in the Speech for legislation to bring about a scheme for "worker participation". The whole aim of such phoney "industrial democracy" propositions is to replace union organisation with the illusion of having a say in the running of companies.

On the question of the right to work, instead of provisions for increasing employment, there was a proposal for spreading unemployment even wider and subsidising it. Employees put on short time would have part of the pay they lose made up out of public funds. This will actually be an encouragement to employers to make their workforce part-time the moment there is the slightest fall in business activity.

The proposals for pressing on with the devolution of Scotland and Wales and naming dates for the referendum are just expedient means for this Government's prolonging its shabby, discredited life by gaining the support of nationalist MPs. So is the plan for increasing the number of MPs in northern Ireland from 12 to 17. This last measure also shows that the Government intends to go on wielding the imperialist position in northern Ireland for its own ends.

What measures do seem to have been included out of any regard for the conditions of the working class, like the adoption of the Tenants Charter or reforms in the training of nurses, midwives and health visitors, are completely negated by the fact that on the pretext of fighting inflation there is going to be no let up in restrictions on public expenditure. There will be a Tenants Charter but no council houses; better trained nurses in a rapidly dwindling number of hospitals. No wonder there is a proposal for greatly strengthening the police force.

## ... AS OTHER WORKERS JOIN FIGHT

FOLLOWING the lead taken by Ford workers, others are smashing their way toward settlements based on their strength - not on capitalism's weakness as reflected in the Government's 5 per cent guidelines.

Leyland workers at Longbridge, Birmingham, rejected the company's 5 per cent offer and showed what they thought of Callaghan's remarks about making British Leyland workers pay for the Ford workers' breakthrough.

Union officials and shop stewards representing 40,000 workers in the gas industry have agreed on a pay claim between 15 and 20 per cent. Workers at British Oxygen have rejected an improved 'final offer' of 9 per cent and are threatening industrial disruption.

An alliance of industrial

and non-industrial civil servants has launched a one million pound fighting fund to help smash through the Government's pay policy.

Bakery workers have rejected an offer of 5 per cent by the two biggest bread makers and the negotiators of the Bakers Union are calling for strike action by their 26,000 members starting on November 7.

A claim for a 20 per cent pay rise has been lodged on behalf of 11,000 engineering and maintenance workers in civil air transport.

The threat of industrial action by Scottish lorry drivers has increased with their rejection of the employers' final "last pay offer".

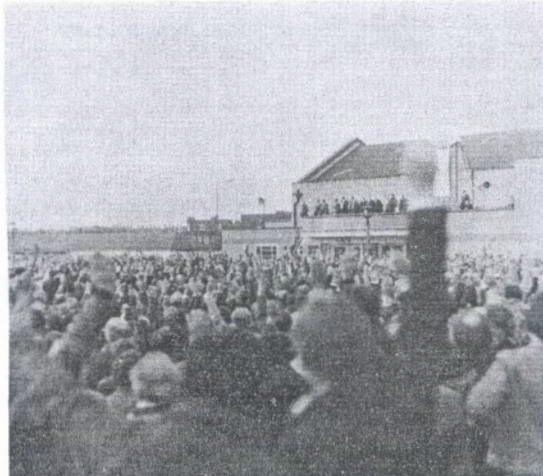
Workers at Michelin plants have rejected a 9 per cent offer linked to a productivity deal.

The argument between Cal-

laghan and Thatcher about a 5 per cent pay limit has become about as relevant to the situation as the argument about how many angels can stand on the head of a pin.

### In this issue

Britain in the World	P2
Ireland	P2
October Revolution	P2
Editorial	P3
Health	P3
Housing	P3
Anti-War Demo	P4
Postal Workers	P4
County Councils	P4

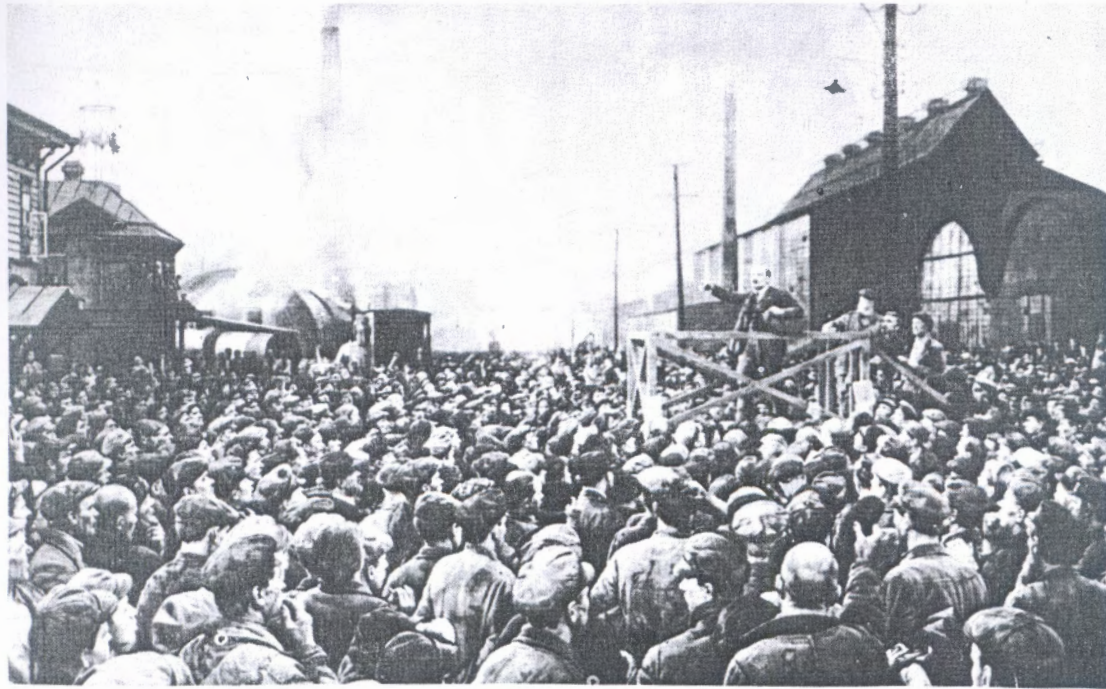


Workers vote at Dagenham. (Picture: THE WORKER)



# Long live the glorious October Revolution 1917

## THE WEEK



LENIN addressing the historic Putilov Factory at the time of the October revolution. These workers played a very important role. They led the General Strike and turned their engineering skills into revolutionary skills by taking over the factory and making guns.

## Britain in the world - our task is revolution

ADDRESSING a packed audience at the Conway Hall on November 3rd, the speaker from the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) outlined the two fundamental truths which stare us in the face today. Firstly, that capitalism is in decline and that in Britain it is in total decline, an impasse from which it cannot be extricated, whatever the endeavours of the capitalist class. And secondly, that it is the working class - and only the working class - that can save Britain and the world.

If capitalism were tilted ever so slightly, that would have reverberations around the whole world; but here in Britain this must be done quickly before more damage is inflicted on our working class. That is our debt to the world. And that is our guilt - that we have allowed for so long the development of British imperialism - more cruel than the Nazis - from which the working class derived nothing. All the exquisite houses and gardens, and art collections filched from all corners of the globe were for the ruling class. For the working class there was squalor, whether in 1880, 1920 or 1978.

There were, she pointed out, two very good reasons why the working class could do it. One was our capacity for endurance and she cited the second world war when girls drove ambulances amid the bombing, and there was no turning away, and no looting. The other was our innate refusal to put our faith in leaders. There would be no Hitler or Krushchev in Britain. We chopped the king's head off centuries ago, and we didn't believe in divine providence either.

Our freeing ourselves from mediaeval superstition led to our emergence as the first industrial nation and so we created the trade unions, and that meant iron discipline, to be improved upon only by Communism. We were strong in class-conscious-

ness. There were only two classes, us and the boss, the enemy. We have a genius for organisation, but lefties and righties deride it, because they want workers to be hurt, to be defeated.

But workers don't listen to them. The working class are the thinkers, and for all their affiliation to a reformist Labour Party, they express revolutionary sentiments and act in a revolutionary way. It was the job of our Party to give extra clarity to what the class is already thinking.

The speaker paid tribute to the Ford workers, many of whom were at the meeting, for their present leadership in the struggle of British workers. They had earned the support of Ford workers throughout Europe, and put fear into the hearts of the management. They were an example of why we should never be pessimistic - pessimism was a fault of the old, but at Fords they were young, clear, strong and united. There was no need for a picket line, there were no scabs.

The speaker went on to say that there was now not a section of the working class not in struggle, even if it had taken Ennals one month to realise that included hospital supervisors! And the struggle was not just economic; it was against the government and its pay policy, its destruction of Britain and its veiled insistence on war.

On the question of war the speaker attacked the shameful line being peddled by some so-called Marxist-Leninist parties to the extent that in the USA a protest is to take place against opposition to the manufacture of the neutron bomb, and against peaceful, civil uses of nuclear power. And it was not just in the USA. It was happening in Britain too. The working class does not want war; only those who do not have to fight in one want it. But we must guard against the idea

that the working class are a lot of cloth-capped sheep. No ideas are ever foisted on them.

But the point at issue now is that they do not believe in social democracy, nor - as yet - in revolution, unless it is somewhere overseas. Our job as a party is to explode the myth that there is any other way, and to show that it is now a question of survival. We are already well on the way to being the beggars of Europe through entry into the EEC and all the other capitalist snares. While the Dutch, the Belgians, the Germans and the Americans busy themselves in Wales and Cornwall, some say Brittany, Cornwall and West Cumberland should be devolved since they share some ancient heritage.

In conclusion the speaker said we should look forward to the day when the government can no longer govern, the governed will no longer be governed, and we have a strong Marxist-Leninist party at our head. We are still far from strong, but we should not deride either setbacks or successes, and we have achieved much - on Ireland, on the two-class line, on demolishing the 3-world theory that would have us gang up with a bunch of murderous thugs, such as the Shah and Pinochet. We are rooted in the working class, are part of the class, yet we need to think more. We cannot take the day off and get drunk or not go into work because we feel tired. To enter such a miserable place as Fords today is revolutionary.

## Terror masquerades as law and order in Ireland

THIS WEEK a Government - sponsored survey of social and economic trends in northern Ireland reported that, in an area notorious for its high unemployment and lack of basic social and cultural amenities, the provision for 'law and order' accounted for ten per cent of the total public expenditure in 1976-77 (compared to a figure of four per cent for the rest of the United Kingdom).

At the same time a recent court case details exactly what in northern Ireland prevails as 'law and order'. In a "no-jury" trial five police detectives were cleared of assaulting a prisoner during interrogation even though the presiding magistrate was certain that "ill-treatment" had occurred and that the defence "was not convincing in its evidence" that no assault had taken place. Clearly, despite

the repeated denials of the Labour Government, systematic torturing of suspects under interrogation is still being maintained at the Police Interrogation Centre at Castlereagh in Belfast.

All in all a force of 14,000 troops, 8,500 members of the Ulster Defence Regiment, 6,186 regular policemen and 4,636 reservists are needed to maintain the presence of British imperialism in Ireland - the sheer size of the numbers being indicative of where the real balance of terror lies.

In a situation where public opinion is being carefully prepared to readmit a British military presence in Africa it is important that the British working-class have recognized the machinations in Ireland.

British troops out of Ireland!  
No British Troops for Africa!

THE Department of the Environment and the Department of Education and Science are to spend £40,000 on a two-year research project into the educational, social and economic consequences of the closure of rural schools. Those parents and children currently resisting such closures could save them the money and give them the answers straight away!

COMMENT by John MacLean, Prince Charles' bodyguard, to a Yugoslav diplomat, during their recent visit: "The whole problem facing Western democracies is strikes". No doubt Tito, having advised Chairman Hua on how to run a corporate capitalist state, will be happy to offer his services on this problem too.

THE FOLLOWING conversation was overheard during the week by a WORKER reader, a teacher in a south London primary school. Some new entrants to the school, recent arrivals from Rhodesia, expressed surprise at seeing coloured children in their class. "We didn't know blacks came to school in Britain," they declared. Their classmates turned on them and said, "If you speak like that we won't speak to you." One boy asked, "What do they mean by blacks?" The teacher did not consider it necessary to intervene.

IN IRAN the struggle against the Shah continues unabated. Telecommunications workers have joined bank employees on strike. Strikes by oil workers have also virtually halted oil exports for nearly a month.

FARMERS on the Larzac plateau in southern France have been fighting to save their land from being taken to expand a military camp there. A recent day of action supported by 75 action committees from all over France has demonstrated that the people will not tolerate the destruction of this highly fertile ground for such a useless purpose.

THE PRESS and Ford management have both been questioning the validity of the 'show of hands' vote at the last mass meeting, when workers decided to continue their strike. It is interesting to note that no such doubts were voiced over the Vauxhall workers' decision not to strike!

LAST week the AFL-CIO (America's largest trade union organisation) rejected the Carter administration's 'Anti-Inflation Programme'. A statement from the unions' council has unanimously rejected the government's proposals for wage guidelines, and ridiculed the notion of price controls whilst 'banks and other financial institutions remain free to speculate against the dollar'.

As far as the unions are concerned, a deal with the government now would be the surest way of guaranteeing yet another recession with mass unemployment, declining living standards and all that these imply. It seems as if they have come to the same conclusions as we have!



## EDITORIAL

CALLAGHAN, one of capitalism's agents in turning Britain into a vast industrial slum of crumbling cities where youth in their hundreds of thousands are without jobs and without any hope for the future, is very worried about vandalism and pretends that he is innocent of having had a hand in the very conditions in which acts of despair by young people rejected by society are likely to occur.

In a message to a national conference on vandalism organised by the Home Secretary, Callaghan said: "Mindless destruction and damage is a danger signal of the breakdown of the rules." That is precisely what THE WORKER has been saying for some time now. The mindless destruction and damage of the declining capitalist system is a signal of the breakdown of the rule of the capitalist class.

There could be no clearer illustration of wanton capitalist destruction than towing a salvageable oil tanker representing so much labour and skill out to sea and scuttling it - because unplanned capitalist construction and a "free" capitalist market make it more profitable to destroy.

Callaghan thinks the main responsibility for vandalism by the young must lie with their parents - particularly, no doubt, if they are Ford workers. The Home Secretary thought that the solution to the problem of vandalism was "to support the police and find ways of increasing their effective strength."

For such masters of destruction as the members of a capitalist government to be holding conferences on the dangers of vandalism by alienated youth is rather like Hitler's inner council discussing ways of keeping Germans from spitting on the pavement.

## Destruction of people

Growing up in a declining capitalist society, what do young people see all around them but further evidence that destruction is what pays - not construction. Capitalists get rich investing in the destruction of Britain's industrial base, iron and steel, shipbuilding, machine tools, while those who work to make useful things for society are faced with an ever-falling standard of living. Speculators make fortunes out of the destruction of the inner cities while people who live and work in towns are surrounded by housing estates turning into slums, closed docks, fewer and fewer jobs and public services that are shrinking out of sight.

And the worst destruction of all is the destruction of skills through the elimination of jobs because this is the destruction of the people themselves - people who are the only source of real wealth. Capitalism has to destroy people because it cannot satisfy their needs and cannot afford to have disaffected people around who will organise themselves to destroy the destroyers.

Capitalism cannot use keen, idealistic, well-trained youth capable of making things and organising a decent society. It only wants a demoralised lumpen proletariat which can be terrorised into submissiveness by a strong police force.

All this emphasis on the dangers of vandalism is simply to distract us from the real vandalism on a world-wide scale of capitalism. Give our young people a chance to show what they can do with their energy and skills and dreams and they will transform this country and create a socialist paradise. But first we shall have to drive out the vandals and barbarians of profit.

## Playgroups The enemy is at home

PLAYGROUPS ORGANISED by tenants' associations, neighbourhood groups or whatever for children under five are no substitute for provision of proper nursery schools run by qualified teachers, the National Association of Head Teachers said this week. It called on the Government and the local authorities to launch a campaign for more nursery schools.

The association also deplored the wide disparity in nursery school services provided by different local authorities. While Manchester provided most with 42 per cent of children aged between three and four in nursery classes, some authorities made virtually no provision at all.

Even 42 per cent is nowhere near enough. Every child should have the opportunity of pre-school education which has been shown to have an excellent effect on a child's later progress at school. With 40,000 teachers unemployed there is no reason why nursery education for all cannot become fact - except that it is part of the capitalist attack on education and the working-class that nursery education should be only a "luxury" enjoyed by a few.

# Nurses demand money for health care

WHEN a prestigious hospital like Great Ormond Street had to close its doors to patients because of staff shortages, the intolerable effects of the government's attack on the health service were vividly highlighted.

How, one might ask, in these days of mass unemployment - when trained nurses are on the dole - can there be nursing staff shortages? Many hospitals find it difficult to recruit staff for certain specialties - theatre staff and ophthalmics are two examples.

The delegation from the Royal College of Nursing to David Ennals was clear about the crux of the problem, money. As medical knowledge grows and treatment methods become more complex, the demands on nursing staff in these specialties increase. There is no reflection of these responsibilities in the appalling pay for these staff.

Throughout the country, because of the cuts in allocations to health authorities, crisis management has led to the reduction of nurse training schools, and in some cases to the cancellation of a whole intake. In March 1977 there was a drop of 4595 learners compared with March 1976. By last March the total number of new entrants to nursing had dropped to 22,537 from 27,104 in 1977.

In one major London teaching hospital there are 'crises' of nursing staff levels every few months as a result of the reduc-

tion from three to two intakes of learners per year, which began three years ago and is now having its full effect. So wards are closed for a few weeks until the 'crisis' is over and the next intake of student nurses goes on the wards.

The document prepared by the RCN details the disastrous pressures on standards of care. Wards are frequently left under the charge of untrained staff or learners. Ward staff often don't have the time to carry out basic nursing routines, and experienced staff have less time to teach and

supervise the junior nurses.

The answers are clear: more money - more money to train the number of nurses we really need and to train them well, and more money to pay our nurses the salary they deserve.

The government's promise of "a steady expansion of the funds available" is no guarantee. To achieve their aims nurses will have to conduct a tough campaign, but, as the general secretary of the RCN said, "We made it clear that we expect action and we will continue to press the issues until we see action."



(Picture: Press Association)

## GLC attacks No funds for research housing

EVERY one of the GLC's 210,000 London's tenants has just received through the post an expensive colour brochure detailing the properties which the GLC wishes to sell.

So far it has cost the GLC more than £250,000 in their efforts to force their reluctant tenants to buy the property they live in. It was felt that by approaching tenants in this formal way, the whole scheme would seem more plausible.

From humble beginnings, of selling an isolated house here and there, the campaign has broadened. Now whole estates which were originally intended to rehouse tenants from older estates are being reserved for buyers.

At the moment new houses are for sale at Tottenham, Islington, Thamesmead, Poplar, Hendon, Orpington, and Tring. And while these estates lie empty waiting for buyers that never seem to come, the older property gets more and more decrepit in the inner city areas.

It matters little that it is a Tory controlled GLC that is responsible for this outright attack on the whole concept of publicly-owned housing. A GLC under Labour could do no better.

A capitalism in absolute decline which can no longer guarantee the working class of Britain adequate provisions for education or an adequate Health Service and which presides over unemployment of almost two million, is not interested in maintaining housing standards.

It wants to wash its hands of any responsibility for housing.

IN 1975 with the grand sum of £2000 per year, work began at Musgrave Park Hospital, Taunton, into links between diet, psychiatric disorders and migraine. It was carried out on the top of a shared work bench in a nissen hut for two years, until the British Migraine Association, excited by the possibilities given proper facilities, donated £8000 to buy a portakabin.

The research team need the modest sum of only £10,000 per year to continue, but the lack of funds threatens to end the research. One of the avenues the

team are exploring is coeliac disease causing vomiting and nausea in babies due to allergies to cereals. Somerset has the highest incidence rate of the disease in the world (1 in 350 babies is affected).

The research is based on changes of diet (eg gluten free) and as such will hardly benefit any capitalists. One of the main sponsors of medical research - drug companies - can have no interest because it seeks to end drug prescriptions for migraine, asthma, and eczema. The result ... the research gets no funds.

## No to school closures

THE NEW Oxfordshire Chief Education Officer has provoked a determined response to his warnings that schools may have to be closed and options in secondary schools curtailed. Teachers in the Oxford District Association of the NUT have voted by an overwhelming majority to oppose all school closures and reorganisation of 16 - 19 education arising from falling rolls and rejected the notion that falling rolls are a problem. It was clear to them that a declining school population presented an opportunity to improve not reduce educational provision. As a first step they have decided to set up a committee to monitor falling rolls and their effects in the schools within the Oxford District area.

The CEO's warnings have been made in the immediate aftermath of a vigorous and for the time being successful campaign by parents and teachers in South Oxford Middle School to prevent its closure. The Authority is now trying out its familiar

"divide and rule" tactics. On the one hand it tries to divide teacher from teacher by pointing out the contrast between the pupil-teacher ratio at South Oxford Middle School and the ratio in the rest of the County. On the other hand it says that the cost of keeping the school open can only be met by halting the construction of new buildings for neighbouring East Oxford School.

Such tactics will get them nowhere. Teachers know that despite their struggle in 1977, Oxfordshire now has the worst pupil/teacher ratio in the country. They must make the pupil/teacher ratio of South Oxford School the standard which they demand for the whole county and that will only raise Oxfordshire standards to those of the ILEA. As a first step to achieving this improvement all Oxfordshire teachers must say an absolute NO to school closure.

The same approach must be echoed nationally. Already the NUT is discussing motions for its national conference at Easter.



# Workers opposed to war

THE capability of the armed forces to fight another war is a recurrent theme in the media. Usually it boils down to a simple numerical comparison of hardware, followed by demands for more money to spend on the latest technology of mass destruction.

A recent paper entitled 'Public Opinion and the Armed Services' and written by a deputy commander of the 1st Armoured Division, Brigadier Palmer, is quite different, and revealing in its content. It voices publicly the fear of the military - and by implication our governors, the bourgeoisie - that mobilisation for another war would be made impossible by public hostility. This is because of the development of a "moral repugnance to war and a climate of opinion which restricts the freedom of action of governments and makes the moral cost of military action increasingly difficult to bear."

To remedy what he sees as an increasingly serious situation, Palmer argues for a more 'open' and sophisticated public relations approach to "reawaken public interest" in defence matters. If something is not done, then, "as a nation we may have more to fear from a lack of popular support for military action than from a potential enemy."

Unfortunately for Brigadier

Palmer and the rest of the ruling class, it will take more than a few posters and commercials from Messrs Saatchi and Saatchi to persuade workers that it is in their interest to die in their millions for the sake of capitalism. The massive opposition of workers in Britain and the rest of Europe to the deployment of the neutron bomb, and the growing movement to get British troops out of Ireland prove the futility of this sort of exercise in the clearest way possible.

In fact, the vulnerability of the whole military machine to disruption by civilian action was demonstrated by the strikes of industrial civil servants in naval dockyards earlier this year. These strikes have completely disrupted the refit programme of warships and led to the work being done in commercial shipyards, providing the workers there do not black the ships in turn.

Today, the massive swell of feeling against war, and the complete disregard by growing sections of workers for government wage fixing, for example, are all tending to disintegrate the ruling class's control of the situation. So when the ruling class talk at this juncture of their inability to make war, they are really voicing their fear of revolution. Let us confirm all those fears.

# WORKER LETTER

DEAR EDITOR,  
Could you please consider printing these facts about the haulage industry in Hull.

Lorry drivers in Hull had a mass meeting last week to boycott 'clearing houses' which give away loads to out of town trucks for return 'bonus' loads at cheap rates.

These clearing houses pocket a high percentage for themselves of the original rate. This accounts for 50 to 60 loads a day out of Hull, leaving Hull lorry drivers unemployed - 400 are now out of work. Also these back street clearing houses which run no trucks themselves, do not put the money they make back into the haulage industry.

What the drivers' unions (TGWU and URTU) plan to do is to set up their own central clearing house on the docks run by eight or more major Hull haulage firms, among other advantages giving Hull drivers priority over the loads. The drivers are seeking support from dockers. Trucks which don't go through the central clearing house would be blacked and prevented from taking loads.

I am a Hull lorry driver and would like to see a similar scheme operating nationally.

Yours sincerely,  
A Hull Lorry Driver.

# County Councils set limits

ALI OVER the nation the County Councils are now drawing up their target figures for their 1979/80 budgets. The Sub-Committees are given 'guidelines' on spending; in reality these are cash limits as expenditure must never rise above this figure.

It seems that the local authorities can look back with some pride on having managed to underspend by about 2½ per cent in 1976/77 and 1977/78, and are well on the way to a similar achievement this financial year. The Government is then able to report to the International Monetary Fund on its success in holding down public expenditure. Surely the local authorities deserve some congratulation from central government for performing so well?

The Rate Support Grant for 1978/79 (the money given to local authorities from central funds) had provided for increased teacher training and the employment of thousands of teachers as school rolls decline. A survey carried out by Surrey teachers shows that this money is not being spent as intended, but often pooled to spend on other items, or used to keep down the rates.

This year the government has issued Circular 28/78 which contains the national guidelines' on current expendi-

ture suggesting that there should be an overall increase of 1.1 per cent above the 1978/79 budget.

Yet as Berkshire County Council quite justifiably replied - "the Circular, which was issued in January, took an over-optimistic view of the prospects for increased production, reducing inflation, and the balance of payments and therefore of the increase in public expenditure which can be afforded on the basis of the Government's own policies. We have to make allowances for a further loss of rate support grant and other possible damaging decisions by Government during the budget process - we suffered them last year and we have already begun to suffer them this year."

It is some tribute to the struggles of trade unionists, especially the firemen and teachers, that both local and central government feel the need to blame each other to justify public expenditure cuts - yet it would be futile for workers to join this 'Great Debate'. Let them find the money any way they can; it is up to us to demand that there shall be no more cuts: in fact to go on to the offensive to win back all that we have lost over the past years. The 1979/80 budget should be made to reflect our determination.

## In brief... In brief... In brief

THE FATE that awaits us if the warmongering imperialists have their way was made apparent by a meeting held by the Greater London Council this week.

Two thirds of the London boroughs were there to learn about dealing with the aftermath of a nuclear attack on London. You may be relieved to hear that, in the opinion of Mr Bernard Brook-Partridge, chairman of the Public Services and Safety Committee, it is "likely that two thirds of the population would survive nuclear attack".

A TEN per cent rise in rail fares has just been announced, clearly a further attempt to force passengers off the network.

30,000 more vehicles each day are pouring in and out of central London than at the same time last year. They now plan to close the Richmond-Broad Street line and force 2 million a year to find alternative travel. According to the NUR, 17,000 British Rail employees left last year.

THEY talk in the latest report of £8000 million spent on health. What isn't said so loud is that spending on health per head per year is in Germany £149, in France £116, in Britain - £94. That £94 also goes to pay for an increase by 400 in the number of inspectors to prosecute and prevent anyone forging prescriptions. The Government would like to turn the health service into a police service.



CHILEAN folk singers at a disarmament rally in Trafalgar Square. (Picture: THE WORKER)

# Postal workers need clarity on pay

AT THE Union of Postal Workers Annual Conference a decision was taken to hold a special conference later this year, because the work load had made it impossible to debate and reach decisions on all category 'A' items. It was felt that it was better to hold a special conference rather than remit these items to the Executive Council for decisions.

The Annual Conference decided to accept the Executive Council Report and not to support a return to collective bargaining. The line was 'accepted that collective bargaining causes inflation and unemployment, and that workers and in particular UPW members fared badly under normal collective bargaining.

However, the trade union movement as a whole does not accept this analysis. Even if the analysis were correct, which it is not, the movement has now returned to collective bargaining. It is now up to the membership of the union to prepare for this new situation at branch and conference level and plan accordingly.

In all fields except remittance services, the GPO showed large profits last year totalling £367 million, £76 million up on the previous year. Over the last three years prices will have increased by only 7½ per cent, while the retail price index has risen about 50 per cent. This could only have been made possible by the greater exploitation of

post office workers during the recent period of wage restraint.

For the future, the problems of mechanisation must be faced. This was outlined at the Annual Conference and in the GPO publication "The Courier" where it was stated, "currently, 75 per cent of postal service costs go to pay for manpower - machines will help to contain that figure."

Postal workers in Canada and the USA, where mechanisation is more advanced, have had to face this already. The Canadian UPW is currently engaged in a struggle over this very problem. How can the advance of technology be used for the benefit of the working class?

## Bookshops

- Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortess Road, London NW5
- Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road, St. Philips, Bristol
- Brighton Workers Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton
- Northern Star Bookshop, 18A Leighton Street, Leeds
- Basildon bookstall Tues Fri Sat Marketplace
- Liverpool bookstall - every Saturday at Paddies Market, Great Homer Street, Liverpool
- Hull Bookstall - Old Town Market, Saturdays 9.30-4.00

## Public Meeting

The autumn series of public meetings held in London and organised by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) will be continued:  
Bellman Bookshop, Friday, November 17, 7.30 p.m.  
"Labour Movement - Workers' Organisation"  
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn; Friday, December 1, 7.30 p.m.  
"Socialism in One Country"

## 'The Worker'

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

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