

CLASS STRUGGLE

Paper of the Revolutionary Communist League of Britain.

Incorporating

NEW AGE

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TORY "CODE OF PRACTICE"

48 pickets were arrested at one go on Wednesday of this week outside an oil platform yard on the Firth of Clyde. Such scenes are going to become more and more familiar as the Tory government gets into its stride.

EMPLOYMENT ACT

These police attacks are already being carried out before the Tories bring their Employment Act into action. Already some police forces are acting according to the Tories' proposed "code of practice" which includes the notorious 6-picket limit.

Even the right to 6 pickets can be attacked by police if they feel like it. For instance, in

our last issue we published a report from the Nicholls Concentrate factory in Liverpool. Within a few days it was heard only four pickets were being allowed by police at that factory.

The Tories' proposed Employment Act is thus in some respects a political move to try to whip up support for union-bashing powers which already exist. However, there is another side to it as well: in the case of non-unionised workers, particularly those in small firms, new vicious forms of attacks are planned. As a result of this, women and national minority workers will be particularly hard hit by losing hard-won rights to security of employment.

"I saw police shove woman"

We have received the following report on scenes at a picket line which show what Tory rule is coming to mean for increasing numbers of workers in small firms:-

KING HENRY'S FOODS

King Henry's Foods, Levenshulme, Manchester, has now been on strike for over two months. The workers are in dispute with the management over union recognition, which was recommended over two years ago by the state arbitration body, ACAS. Management agreed that when 40% of the workforce of 70 demanded this, they would give recognition. However, when this actually happened, the manager sacked them all and replaced them with lower paid workers.

The 27 pickets who are still on strike have received a lot of solidarity in their struggle, and have succeeded in getting many products blocked. For instance, Liverpool hospital staff have refused to serve the firm's pies. But being such a small number of workers, they are still experiencing many problems, as when a supply of oil was brought in last week.

In order to show solidarity, there have been mass pickets organized on Fridays and Tuesdays, 6am to 5pm. On Friday 30th August about 200 people showed up. The atmosphere was fairly relaxed and cheerful with one of the women strikers singing songs of solidarity.

POLICE WADE IN

The bosses then started to drive the scab labour in. The crowd booted and a few people went towards the first car waving their fists, and one lad did attempt a passing kick at the car far from effective, as it was moving very fast. The police immediately leapt on and arrested a bloke. This was done in a really high-handed way - no warning or anything.

The crowd immediately objected. In the ensuing scuffle the police eventually won and dragged him off. They then proceeded to arrest another 10 people (6 women and 4 more men), 4 of them being workers at the bakery.

As far as I could see there was no need for such action to be taken. I saw one woman shout at the police for being so violent, and the police just turned and



shoved her onto the floor; she hadn't knocked anyone.

When I left the dispute I found in a side road 2 more vans of police and 2 cars ready to sweep into action."

WORKERS' ANGER

While low-paid workers face such struggles to retain their jobs, Tory ministers make vicious and smug statements to blame unemployment on workers. Keith Joseph says the unemployed can find work by showing themselves ready to work for less. Thatcher talks of setting up a volunteer strike-breaking force.

Neither the Labour Party - no matter how 'left' it allows itself to appear when out of the 'hot seat' - nor any other saviours from on high can win such battles of the working class.

Only workers themselves can do that, as the determined pickets at places like Nicholls and King Henry's - often largely unsupported by official union action are showing.

The 1980 TUC Conference has come and gone like a damp squib. While plenty of words were exchanged the Congress did precious little to organise workers to fight against attacks on employment, wages or workers' rights. The theme of the Congress was unemployment, yet the extremely short debate on the subject was nothing less than scandalous.

The Tory Employment Act came in for a lot of justifiable fire, with a demand for a sustained and vigorous campaign of non-cooperation with the Government including, if necessary, industrial action. In reality such a campaign is bound to be muted - is the TUC now going to support secondary and mass picketing as vital weapons in workers' struggles? Even the militant new member of the TUC General Council, Arthur Scargill, making an excellent speech calling for "a sense of unity of purpose to defeat the Act," added the rider "and above all to force a general election and the return of a Labour Government." The resolution on the Employment Act called on the next Labour Government to repeal the Act and introduce fresh legislation on the subject. Glynn Lloyd, a UCATT General Council member said that "unions must ensure in future that

the Government sought the cooperation and support of the TUC."

It seemed as though the main point to being in Brighton was to carry forward the election campaign of the Labour Party rather than organising a united working class fightback - a thought which was given credence with the arrival of Callaghan on Tuesday to make Congress an offer of a five year wage freeze in exchange for a TUC pact. While Congress opposed a wage freeze Len Murray predictably stated that he was willing to discuss "with anybody, anything, at any time..." Not so long ago the TUC and Labour Government had a voluntary code on picketing, and the TUC itself policed members into accepting a wage freeze...

It was the quietest TUC for years and not without reason. After years of supporting the anti-working class policies of the Labour Government and ruling alongside it, the TUC just doesn't know what to do. There may be 2 million unemployed, cuts in living standards and services, but they are not prepared to organise and fight. It may just jeopardise the return of a Labour Government...

From our postbag

PILGER LIES. From a London reader.

Last week, I watched John Pilger's documentary on ITV, "Cambodia, Year One." It was a disgusting bit of black propaganda - quite in the class of Leni Riefenthal.

When the Khmer Rouge liberated Kampuchea after facing the terrible onslaught of US bombing (more bombs dropped on Kampuchea than on Europe in the whole of WW2) they embarked on an ambitious project of rebuilding the country. No doubt they made mistakes but in a short period of time they built up the devastated Kampuchean agriculture to the point where they were once again a rice-exporting country.

For this they earned the undying hatred of the Vietnamese whose claims to be the natural leaders of Indo-China were redoubled by their strong desire to get hold of the rich food and oil reserves of Kampuchea. So, with Soviet backing, they invaded Kampuchea, creating further destruction and famine. And to top it all off, they tried to blame the plight of the country on Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge. The USA, anxious to cover up their war crimes, fell over themselves to collude in this.

So the circus started! The mass graves resulting from American bombing became the result of "Pol Pot's murders". The famine resulting from the Vietnamese invasion became the "result of the Khmer Rouge's food policies."

Fronting up this pile of lies in the West has been journalist John Pilger - initiator of the Blue Peter Appeal Fund. His film last week was a very skilled piece of work. We saw well-fed babies who last year were starv-

ing. We were shown palm trees that were supposed to have been planted over the bodies of massacred Kampuchean. We were shown a populated Phnom Penh, built up after the ravages of the past. Then we were hurried to the Western border where we were shown the efforts being made by the Americans (CIA etc) to use their aid programme to destabilise the Western border regions. There was a brief interview with a tense young Khmer Rouge commander whom we had already been told was a "butcher" - he "admitted" that the Khmer Rouge were rebuilding their forces. Anxious aid officials agonized about their role in rebuilding the "butcher's" army.

All this was done with the gaunt and earnest face of John Pilger making frequent speeches to the camera about "mass murderers", or picking up well-fed babies and of course talking about the need to prevent "them" from ever coming back.

The whole thing was a tour de force. Dazed by the initial impact one almost overlooked the fact that during the entire programme we had not heard one decent interview with either a Vietnamese or a Kampuchean. We had not been given so much as a hint that the Vietnamese needed an army a quarter of a million strong to maintain their presence in the country. We were shown nothing of the interior, and, in particular, we were taken nowhere near the Mekong where we might have seen tens of thousands of Vietnamese "settling" the "deserted" lands. And of course, nothing was said of the Vietnamese occupation of Laos or their own disastrous internal construction policies.

Pilger is a bastard. Throughout the programme we were presented with his monkish face either quivering with anger or

glowing with concern for dying babies. But pilger has been given plenty of evidence of what the truth of the matter is. Now, he may not accept that evidence, but in his programme and articles he does not even attempt to deal with the opposing arguments - he steers away from them like the plague. He is not a stupid man, so in my opinion what he is doing is quite deliberate - he is a propagandist for the Vietnamese occupation. He supports the army of occupation and all that goes with it. Behind his "bleeding heart" is a vile cynicism.

After seeing this garbage, I will redouble my support for the British Kampuchea Support Campaign.

COMING EVENTS

Friday, September 19th.

Mass picket at King Henry's Products.
6.30am, Ravenoak Ave., Levenshulme, Manchester.

Friday, September 19th.

Fight racism! Stop police raids!
Public meeting and cultural function organised by Asian Youth Movement (Manch.)
Speakers: Anwar Ditta, and from Bangladesh Workers' Assoc., Kashmiri Workers' Assoc., Pan Africanist Congress (UK) and Asian Youth Movement. Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi musical groups.
6pm, Birch Community Centre, Brighton Grove, Manchester 14. (Off Wilmslow Road.)

Sunday, September 28th.

Celebrate New China's 31st Anniversary
Reception organised by London Overseas Chinese Society. Tickets £3 (including food). 2pm, Large Hall, Connaught Rooms,, Great Queen Street., London WC2.

Monday, September 29th

Solidarity with Polish Workers and East European Free Trade Unionists and Human Rights Activists.

Speakers include Edmund Baluka, Chairman of Szczecin Strike Committee 1970. Organised by Eastern European Solidarity Campaign. 8pm, Opera House Foyer, Winter Gardens, Blackpool. Adm. 50p.

A WELSH CHANNEL FOR WALES!

Half a million people in Wales speak Welsh as their first language. In many towns and villages in north, west and south-west Wales, English speakers are a small minority. Welsh is very much a living language, a language which many Welsh people feel sounds more beautiful and expressive than English.

Yet this language has been under intense pressure over the centuries, as Westminster governments have tried to destroy it. While today, Welsh nominally has equal status with English in Wales, in practice, the policies of successive governments and big companies there have continued to deny Welsh its rightful place and pressurise people into speaking English. The latest sign of this is the Tory government's decision on the fourth TV channel in Wales.

When plans for the establishment of a fourth channel were announced, many in Wales said that this should be an exclusively Welsh channel. While Welsh speakers felt most strongly over this, many English-speaking Welsh people agreed. Some did so because they considered this a national right, others simply because of the absurdity of the present situation, which satisfies none of the TV viewers. ITV and BBC-Wales both show a few token Welsh programmes a week, which English speakers don't understand, and which fall far short of meeting Welsh speakers' needs.

CAMPAIGN MOUNTS

After playing an important role in getting bilingual road signs put up, and official forms printed in English and Welsh, the Welsh Language Society (Cymderthas Yr Iaith Gymraeg) decided to campaign for the fourth channel to be in Welsh. In furtherance of this demand, its members have used many forms of struggle from leaf-letting through to damaging BBC and ITV broadcasting facilities.

Plaid Cymru (PC - the Welsh National Party) also campaigned strongly for a Welsh fourth channel; aware of the strength of popular feeling in Wales, the organisations of the Labour, Liberal and Conservative Parties in Wales all declared their support for this demand.

In the run-up to the 1979 General Election, the Conservatives pledged that the fourth channel in Wales would be a Welsh language one; if they hadn't done this, their vote would have been considerably smaller than it was (1 in 3 Welsh voters opted for them). But they have gone back on their word, and Wales speaks with one voice in condemning them for that.

The Welsh Language Society has stepped up its campaign for the fourth channel, and has received strong support. After members obstructed the Secretary of State for Wales' car when he visited the Welsh National Eisteddfod (where poetry and song contests take place), one spokesman condemned them, but the Eisteddfod's Archdruid came to their defence.

PC's last conference approved a resolution calling for people in Wales to refuse to pay for TV licenses, and its President, Gwynfor Evans, twice MP for Carmarthen, has said that he is ready to fast to the death if the government does not agree to the establishment of a Welsh fourth channel.

Two thousand Welsh people have refused to buy TV licences in their continuing protest at the government's betrayal of its promise. Eight people have already gone to prison for this.

A WORKER'S NOTEBOOK

THATCHER HAS GOT IT WRONG. High wage claims are not to blame for the 2 million unemployed. This is the view of the "Sunday Times" analysis of the government's policies. The article agrees with a "Business News" survey of 20 companies which have recently closed factories or sacked workers. Both said the main cause of rising unemployment are high interest rates, the strong pound, cheap imports, lower consumer spending and high energy (gas electricity and coal) costs. But while some big business circles are beginning to question certain Tory policies, they of course do not admit or understand that the real problem is that all these things are part of their capitalist system and cannot be solved by just changing capitalist policies.

NEW TECHNOLOGY introduced at Fords, in the Post Office and in other firms is leading to a serious loss of jobs, which is contributing to the present level of unemployment. In the mid-60's, the Wilson government portrayed the "technological revolution" as the key to prosperity; as we can see today, under capitalism, new technology doesn't lead to greater prosperity coupled with more leisure time for working people, as it would under socialism, but to bigger profits for the monopolies and the dole queue for millions of workers. (Incidentally, Wilson's Minister of Technology who was supposed to help along the technological revolution was today's Tory bogeyman and "Champion of the workers", Tony Benn, then more generally known as Anthony Wedgewood Benn.

THE FIRST EIGHT WEEKS OF SICK PAY are to be made payable by individual employers instead of the state, according to Tory proposals. There would be a flat-rate payment of £30 per week or 75% of "normal earnings" whichever is the higher. This is a poorly-disguised attack on our living standards which will probably affect the low-paid and families with children. Occupational sick-pay schemes protect some, but one third of manual workers are not covered - for them, for example, a two-child family on £75 per week would be £13.67 a week worse off. And you can bet this only paves the way for similar changes in maternity pay, industrial injury benefit, etc.

33 YEARS OF THE NHS has failed to reduce social inequalities in health. This is the conclusion reached by the Working Group on Inequalities in Health. If you are a labourer, cleaner or docker you are twice as likely to die compared with someone working in the professions. Your child is twice as likely to die at birth and four times as likely to die before he or she is one year old. Social Services Secretary Patrick Jenkin says we cannot afford the £2 billion (only 4% of social services expenditure) to give the lower classes the same health services as the upper classes. That money would have saved the lives of 65,000 adults and 10,000 children during the last three years that the Working Group investigated.

USEFUL FACTS AND FIGURES on the British workforce were given by a recent Panorama programme on TV. For starters, it reported that less than 1% of the population owns a quarter of the wealth in the country - this makes Britain the most economically unequal country in Europe. Other figures also showed us near the bottom of the league - for instance: pay lower, life expectancy lower, amount of holidays lower, etc. West German workers get on average 12 days more holiday per annum than us and receive a holiday bonus of about one month's pay. And contrary to the picture painted by our bosses' media, days lost through strikes per worker per year between 1967 and 1977 were 0.85 - less than any other European country. Other figures were less surprising, e.g. that accidents were commonest in social class V and IV (unskilled) and are accompanied by less likelihood of getting any sick pay.

DEFENCE OR DISARMAMENT?

The following letter raises questions of growing importance and interest among working people. We welcome short contributions dealing with one or two particular issues that are raised in the letter, or raising other ones - the Editor.

Dear Editor,

Last week I watched the Liberal Party Conference debate on defence on TV. Throughout the country people are taking an ever-increasing interest in these matters, especially since the increased international tension arising from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. It is no accident that this is the first time the Liberals have debated defence policy for five years, nor that there is an increasing campaign against 'nuclear weapons in Britain. It is a reflection of real developments in the world. Communists must be prepared to take a stand on the issues, not just in general terms but also in terms of specific policies.

I think it is useful to look at the liberal debate, because there was quite a full discussion over different policies. Of course we do not expect Liberals or non-Marxist-Leninists to make a scientific analysis based on understanding imperialism and capitalism, but nevertheless we can see how different sections respond to the growing danger of world war and that will help Communists to decide their policies.

THE THREE OPTIONS

The Liberals debated three options. They were,

(a) Withdrawal from all military alliances and unilateral nuclear disarmament, followed by progressive conventional disarmament.

(b) The status quo. Back NATO and support negotiated multilateral nuclear disarmament and military disengagement in Europe through negotiations such as the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), and

(c) A process of replacing NATO with a European defence force (possibly non-nuclear) and withdrawal of all foreign troops from Europe.

UNILATERAL DISARMAMENT

The speakers for option a genuinely desired peace. Their idea is that it can be gained through setting a moral example. Britain will disarm on its own, whatever others do and others will follow! One speaker for it said "Let our magnanimity be our defence, and let our generosity be our deterrence." It must have escaped their notice that militarily weak countries have been subjected to invasion, Afghanistan being a recent case. Because they think that war

arises primarily through countries fearing each other, they assume that if Britain shows the USSR that it has nothing to fear from Britain, then the Soviet imperialists will no longer be aggressive! It is good that they have no desire to support British aggression against others, and will presumably support British withdrawal from Ireland. I suspect, however, that many of them will be equally critical of Irish people who resist British aggression - pacifists cannot see that there are just wars for independence as well as unjust wars of aggression. Such neutralists often therefore compromise with warmongers.

What they fundamentally cannot see is that imperialism is aggression and that the two superpowers and especially the Soviet expansionists are aggressive for their self-interests. They want to dominate others for economic, social and military gain and no 'magnanimity' will stop them. On the contrary those who call for unilateral disarmament in Britain are bringing war closer. They are encouraging aggression and war. Option a was heavily defeated.

It is no accident that in the forefront of the campaign for unilateral disarmament are the so-called 'Communist' Party (CPGB) and the pro-Soviet elements in the Labour Party and that these people are unsurprisingly silent about the rapid build-up of Soviet SS-20 nuclear missiles aimed at Europe. A new SS-20 is put into place every five days and the pace of the build-up is increasing. But the CPGB still promotes the USSR as the fighter for peace and detente! We would be foolish indeed as are some well-meaning liberals to fall for the con put out by these wolves in lamb's clothing.

NATO OR EUROPEAN DEFENCE

Few, if any, genuine Communists will have forgotten the lessons of Munich in 1938. We know appeasement leads to aggression. What then should be our attitude to defence?

I want to quote some remarks from the liberal speakers for a European defence (option c). He said, "We all stand for world disarmament - but how do we get it... there remain imperialist aggressive powers... Russia is provenly aggressive... the aggressive stands of both superpowers are real... we must stand for full control of the armed forces in our own territories... (and for) integrated European political leadership of an independent European military defence force... such does not rule out an alliance with the US - but an alliance of equals." The speaker criticised US control of NATO policy and pointed out that one man had the power to trigger the NATO nuclear force - the US President. This stand was narrowly defeated by option b.

UNEMPL

The hypocrisy of the TUC leadership has never become so blatant as with the discussion on unemployment at the recent Brighton Congress. While the main slogan at Congress was "Attack unemployment - not the unemployed", and the current jobless total of 2,001,008 was displayed in large bold numbers on the side wall of Congress, the TUC decided to do basically nothing to help unemployed workers or the struggle against unemployment.

The chairman called only 4 speakers and used less than an hour of Congress time to discuss the motion on unemployment. Clive Jenkins, General Secretary of ASTMS, in a militant sounding speech pointed out "When I predicted that there would be 4 million out of work by the end of the decade it was a serious underestimation," and that by the end of this year some 450,000 school leavers and youth would have been out of work for a full year.

Yet, fine speeches do not mean anything unless they are backed

NEW ERA BOOKS

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No British solution. A pamphlet by the Troops Out Movement giving a vivid description of the war in Ireland. 50p + 16½p

On the blanket - the H Block story. By Tim Pat Coogan. A detailed description of the prison struggle for political status £2.50 + 26p post.

The revolutionary press in Britain and what is to be done to rebuild it. Sums up the history of the revolutionary press in Britain with the aim of rebuilding it. CWM. 80p + 16½.

Why Paul Foot should be a socialist. Second printing of the CWM exposure of the SWP. £1.20 + 31p post.

Address: 203, Seven Sisters Rd., London N4. Phone 272 5894.
Open Mon-Sat 10-6 (Thurs 7.30).

I do not have the time to argue the Communist case for such a European defence and for opposing US missiles in Europe. I will later, if I may. I don't have the time to speak for UN-backed nuclear-free zones or the struggle to remove superpower bases from the third world or any of the other policies we should adopt as part of our general stand. But I hope I have shown that Communists can unite with relatively progressive forces in the struggle against war and aggression.

UNEMPLOYMENT - TUC fails to act

up by fine actions, and Clive Jenkins went on to move a resolution calling on the TUC General Council (of which he is a member) to "consider ways by which the interests of the non-employed could be represented." Apart from pointing out that unions should not abandon workers who became unemployed, and that the government "wants to drive a wedge between people who are out of work and those in work", all these fine words came to nothing. Now it will be another year before the General Council report back to a future Congress with their plans of how best to represent the unemployed. By that time it is likely that unemployment, even according to the official statistics, would have soared past 2,500,000 and onwards towards 3,000,000.

NO ACTION ON UNEMPLOYMENT

The TUC didn't consider any action to prevent the spate of closures and redundancies, nor to support attempts by unemployed workers to organise themselves. What a farce of a debate! Sir John Boyd, General Secretary of the AUEW, alongside other members of the TUC General Council, has made it quite clear that he is against any attempts by unemployed workers to set up their own unions to fight for their rights.

While members of the AUEW have suffered a massive increase in unemployment in their ranks (over 200,000 members of the AUEW are unemployed), unemployed workers are not allowed to join the AUEW until they first find a job. As a small indicator of

change this rule has now been rescinded and after 1st January next year unemployed workers can at last join the AUEW. But still the AUEW Executive Council do not show any signs of fighting against redundancies or unemployment in any meaningful way. This situation is paralleled in many other unions, with some like the National Union of Dyers and Bleachers refusing to have unemployed workers in its ranks.

According to an internal TUC document, some members of the TUC General Council feel that if the TUC were to organise the unemployed, it "could imply acceptance of high unemployment as a permanent feature." Today, for every 5 workers affiliated to the TUC, one is unemployed. With unemployment still rising it is clear that high unemployment has become a permanent feature of capitalist society. You can't just shut your eyes and ignore reality.

CONSETT WORKER CALLS FOR SUPPORT STANDING OVATION AT TUC - BUT CONSETT CLOSURES

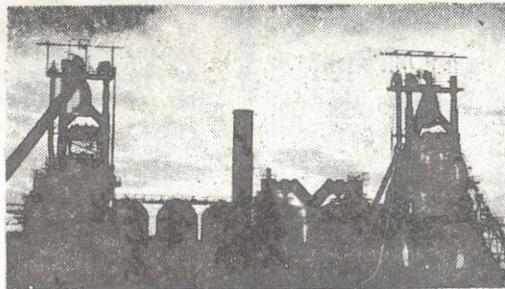
The closure of Consett steelworks, brought forward from September 30th to September 6th, coincided with the end of the 1980 TUC Congress. The reaction at Brighton? Virtual silence - typical of a campaign marked by its lack of national agitation. A struggle restricted to a local base while the unions sought, through private negotiations, to retain Consett as part of BSC while hoping for a bid from private capital.

Consett workers marched through the town; marched to Parliament to hear the fine words (but no deeds) of Labour MP's; they were visited by a European Parliament delegation in the week of closure. Too late were the offers of "backing" from the likes of Italian revisionist MP, Ms Gloriosa, in a special EP debate later this month.

The 9 months fight to save the Durham steelworks, which had been the life-blood of the town for generations, exhausted the 'orthodox' measures of marching and petitioning. It failed to adopt the militant example of French steel workers, with their pirate radio station, barricades and occupation as well as stealing the French F.A. cup to publicize their fight.

BACK ROOMS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR MASS STRUGGLE

Consett's fight was defused into sessions of private negotiations carried out at 'top level'. Gone were the promises of mass national campaign by the TUC that steel union leader, Sirs, and others had pledged. The struggle ended, firstly in a backroom in Brighton where union leaders agreed to accept the clo-



CONSETT - The end of the line?

sure - an easy decision after Corby and Shotton, and lastly at a mass meeting of the Consett workforce who "bitterly resent the wrong and unjustifiable closure". Sure, Tim Sessford, 38 years a steelworker, was given a standing ovation by Congress but when it came to the crunch two days later the TUC was lacking. We must judge by their actions not their words.



Consett workers on the march.

CLASS STRUGGLE NOT COLLABORATION NEEDED

The failure of the struggle emphasizes the danger of reformist ideology within the trade union movement. The union bureaucrats favour collaboration by participation in capitalist management, they see the state as the focus and fulcrum for change. Consultation within the system is their guideline. They try to "offer" a controlled and self-disciplined workforce in exchange for a "partnership" with Labour, and "access" to the Tories when either of these bosses' parties resides at Downing Street. This is the ideology that has to be fought. It is this ideology that has led to Consett's 3,500 steel workers being absorbed into unemployment figures of 2,000,000 plus.

BOYD BRAIN

Despite the TUC resolution to oppose the Employment Act, Sir John Boyd, General Secretary of the AUEW and TUC General Council member, has affirmed that he will be seeking government funds under the act to hold ballots. Presumably the next step will be to ask the government to take over his AUEW election machine.

The TUC Congress backed the government's nuclear energy programme in a debate on Thursday. The government intends to build 20 pressurised water reactors - the type that caused the Three Mile Island disaster in the US last year. It has recently been announced that Sir John Boyd has been appointed a part time director of the UK Atomic Energy Authority.

POLAND - THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

The situation in Poland remains volatile and unpredictable as the government attempts to restrict, limit and erode the important economic and political concessions it was forced to grant the striking workers - particularly in the Baltic port of Gdansk - and the working class seeks to defend and extend its new-found rights.

There has been a positive rush to join and establish independent trade unions by workers from across the country and from many trades and professions. A number of strikes are continuing and new ones have broken out. They include strikes at printing works, on public transport at an important sulphur mine, an aircraft factory and a farm. Inspired by the success of the Baltic strikers, they have sought to emulate their victories and have also pressed for more far-reaching demands in the political field and the sacking of certain officials.

KREMLIN'S LITTLE MAN

Increasingly alarmed at the threat to their domination of Poland, the Kremlin bosses engineered the removal of Polish boss Edward Gierek and have replaced him with the faceless Stanislaw Kania. Relatively unknown to the Polish people, he is a former head of the Secret Police and security services - an excellent qualification for his task of tightening the screws again on the Polish working class and people.

On assuming office Kania has received full-some messages of greeting from the Russian leaders and their puppets in Eastern Europe and around the world. Brezhnev proclaimed Kania as a man of high principle and a dedicated communist - dubious compliments from the Kremlin warlord!

Poland's first Deputy Prime Minister Mieczyslaw Jagielski went to Moscow for talks on Poland's economic problems. Significantly he had a meeting with Mikhail Suslov, known for his particularly reactionary and imperialist views on Soviet foreign policy, towards Eastern Europe in particular.

Meanwhile, Kania has been threatening the workers by saying that further strikes may place in danger those rights recently won - one of which was the right to strike! Describing the situation as 'alarming', Warsaw Radio said, "Any further demands... may place a question mark over the implementation of the undertakings already given." The Polish press has been making increasingly virulent attacks on intellectuals and dissident organisations who supported the strikers and has been attempting to split them from the workers - leading to speculation that this is part of a 'softening-up' to pave the way for new repression.

The newspaper Trybuna Ludu said, "While the party is trying to regain confidence... anti-socialist forces are sowing mistrust and sharpening tensions, planning to use them as a springboard for undermining the basic principles of the system."

The Self Defence Committee (KOR) has been singled out for attack. It has been accused of attempting to use the strikes for its own motives. It is alleged that KOR was financed by 'subversive centres' abroad and collaborated with hostile foreign forces.

However, the Polish workers are vigilant about any attempts to snatch back their victories. Twice before, in 1956 and 1970, Polish workers won concessions after strikes only to have them taken away later. They do not intend to let it happen

again. As one striker put it, "We don't want to have to go on strike every 10 years to put things right again."

The leader of the Gdansk Strike Committee, Mr. Lech Walesa said in an interview that, "Of course", he would be arrested at some stage. "They will come and fetch me... Maybe tomorrow, or in three months, or possibly not for a year... Only one thing is certain, my head is already on the block,"

The continuing struggle of the Polish workers and people inspires all the oppressed peoples of Eastern Europe.

Free trade unionist visits Britain

Vladimir Borisov, an exiled leader of SMOT (the Free Trade Union Movement in the Soviet Union) attended the TUC Conference in Brighton as a guest of the Electricians's Union (EETU). Whilst in Britain, he resisted any attempts by Frank Chapple to manipulate him in support of right-wing politics. As he explained in an interview with a British newspaper,



"The invitation to Britain came not from Frank Chapple but from the Executive of the electrician's union. SMOT is not a political organisation. We have invitations from left and right unions. The only criterion is their attitude towards the liberation of the Russian working class and people."

When asked what he thought about the electrician's union rule that prevented members of the 'Communist' Party from holding office, he said,

"In such a case I am obliged to defend the rights of workers who are not allowed to hold posts because of their political views."

INSPIRATION FROM POLAND

Borisov said that the Free Trade Union Movement in the Soviet Union was greatly inspired by the struggles of the Polish workers. "The Polish workers are undoubtedly the leadership of the East European working class."

SMOT was appealing directly to the Polish workers for support.

Borisov said that there had been new reports of strikes in the Soviet Union and three new trade union groups had been formed - one in Leningrad and one in Moscow.

Borisov was forcibly deported from Russia by being cragged onto a plane by the KGB and being dumped in Vienna with a visa for Israel - he is not Jewish! He now lives in Paris.

His wife, Irina, has recently become the first martyr of the movement. Victor Fainberg, a Russian socialist exiled in London explains what happened.

"She was forced to leave Moscow during the Olympics. She was travelling in a car in the country with relatives. As they approached a hill, a lorry loaded with cement slabs came towards them on the wrong side of the road. They tried to avoid it but it pursued them, and everyone in Irina's car was killed."

Whilst in Britain, Borisov spoke at public meetings in Brighton and London and pledged his support, and that of SMOT for the Right to Work March, which next month will march from South Wales (scene of mass unemployment) to the Tory Party Conference in Brighton.

CHINA CONGRESS HELD

The Third Session of the Fifth National People's Congress (NPC) was held in Beijing (Peking) from August 30 to September 10. The wide-ranging agenda included detailed reports and information on the national economic plan and the state budget and accounts for 1979 and 1980, as well as estimates for 1981.

Setting out economic targets for 1981, Comrade Yao Yilin stressed that priority should be given to agriculture and light industry. The people's living standard will rise on the basis of increased production and prices will, on the whole, remain stable.

The NPC session approved laws on nationality and marriage as well as regulations governing the tax and profit remittances of joint ventures with foreign companies. It agreed to the establishment of a committee to revise the constitution. One constitutional change was decided at the meeting. This was to delete the sentence that citizens have, "the right to 'speak out freely, air their views fully, hold great debates and write big character posters.'" This was on the grounds that these 'rights' had been abused to slander and frame people, create disturbances and betray state secrets and that the provision, "Citizens enjoy freedom of speech, correspondence, the press, assembly, association, procession, demonstration and the freedom to strike," was sufficient. A number of deputies reportedly voted against this deletion.

SPEECH BY COMRADE HUA

An important item on the NPC agenda was a speech by Comrade Hua Guofeng. He stressed the importance of eliminating left deviations in economic work which he said manifested themselves in departure from a basic principle of Mao Zedong thought (seeking truth from facts), divorce from reality, flouting objective laws and blindly going after rashly set targets.

Comrade Hua also stressed that cadres, leading comrades in particular, should set an example in observing law and discipline. Attacking bureaucracy, he said that all are equal before the law and an end must be put to the practice of bureaucrats shielding one another.

Comrade Hua reaffirmed China's foreign policy of opposing aggression and defending world peace, and extended support to the peoples of Kampuchea and Afghanistan. In an apparent reference to US presidential candidate Reagan's advocacy of resumed relations with Taiwan, he affirmed that there was only one China, of which Taiwan was a part.

A number of administrative changes were made so that cadres no longer hold their positions for life and hold leading positions in both the party and state. The aim of the policy is to promote those comrades who were in the prime of life and ensure that people do not hold too many offices. A number of elderly leading comrades resigned their posts and a number of vice-chairmen of the Communist party ceased being concurrently vice-premiers.

Whilst remaining Chairman of the Communist party, Comrade Hua resigned his position as Premier and proposed Comrade Zhao Ziyang as, "a suitable choice and worthy of trust."

The NPC session was permeated with a more lively and democratic atmosphere than in previous years and many deputies raised criticisms and suggestions. A total of 2,300 motions was tabled.

A number of deputies to the congress came from the British colony of Hong Kong. They took part in many discussions, including those on national reunification.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES



KOREA: The socialist Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) celebrated its 32nd anniversary on September 9. In a speech to a meeting, the prime minister, Comrade Li Jong Ok denounced the fascist regime in South Korea and urged the people there to rise up and to overthrow it so as to realise democracy. He demanded that the United States end its aggressive and interventionist manoeuvres against Korea, stop encouraging the fascist regime in the South and withdraw its aggressive forces and nuclear weapons promptly. He again called for Korea - US talks in order to replace the Armistice agreement with a Peace agreement.

FRANCE: A Strike by 25,000 fishermen has paralysed over half of France's sea ports. Small fishermen, demanding government subsidies and lower fuel prices, and seamen on industrial fishing boats, opposing redundancies, have united in struggle. In support of their demands, they have blockaded ports, occupied government buildings and blocked approach roads to Paris. On September 2 they fought with police who attempted to prevent them from marching to the Transport Ministry. Unemployment is already a serious problem in French fishing towns. In Boulogne, which is Europe's largest fishing port, it is 11%.

UNITED STATES: For four days in late June, over 1,000 black people met in New York to found the National Black United Front. It was one of the biggest gatherings of black political activists in America for several years. The conference united people of many political and religious viewpoints, including nationalists, communists, Pan-Africanists, Muslims and Christians. Many veterans of the black freedom movement were present as well as foreign delegations, including one from the black movement in Britain. Speaking at the conference, Comrade Amiri Baraka of the League of Revolutionary Struggle (ML) called for the broadest possible united front, "composed of all classes, organisations and individuals willing to struggle against the enemies of black liberation and for self-determination... based on unity and struggle (to) deal with the real needs of the people."

NAMIBIA: There can be no alternative to armed struggle for achieving independence in Namibia. This is because South Africa has kept creating obstacles to a negotiated solution. This was stated by Sam Nujoma, president of the South West Africa Peoples' Organisation (SWAPO) at a recent press conference. He pledged his organisation to the stepping-up of armed struggle and accused a number of imperialist countries of showing indifference to the cause of Namibian independence, because they are exploiting her rich natural resources with the connivance of South Africa.

VIETNAM: Former militants of the National Liberation Front and the "Third Force" (progressive neutralists) have formed a "Vietnam Witness Committee" in Paris. It "denounces the betrayal of the revolutionary ideal of reconciliation and national concord" by Hanoi, and demands that the Vietnamese leaders, "stop mortgaging national independence by alignment to the USSR and respect the territorial integrity of Laos and Kampuchea."

APPEAL FROM ZANU

The London representative of ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) has made an urgent appeal for help for the Party now, when there is an urgent need, and in the coming months.

ZANU is the major partner in the government of Zimbabwe but the government is an alliance of all patriotic forces. Therefore ZANU must be self supporting and has no access to government funds.

ZANU is now faced with consolidating Zimbabwe's political independence and preparing the way for economic independence in order to create the conditions for an eventual transition to socialism.

Concretely, here are some of ZANU's present tasks:

- * setting up political workshops that will become centres of discussion and learning;

- * opening offices in all the towns where until recently they were underground - every table and chair has to come from somewhere;

- * the establishment of a progressive bookshop in Salisbury to serve the whole country;

- * ZANU's London office is vital to its work. But they are threatened with eviction and disconnection of the phone;

- * ZANU comrades in London are badly needed at home - but are unable to raise the fare.

Other political parties in Zimbabwe have access to outside funds - from South Africa or the Soviet Union. ZANU, the most patriotic and revolutionary force in Zimbabwe, depends mainly

on self reliance. Its MP's hand their salaries straight over to the Party and many comrades are working fulltime without even subsistence money. But ZANU welcomes and needs help from Zimbabwe's genuine friends.

We know that very few of our readers are rich but by giving whatever you can afford to help ZANU, is to extend help to a movement that is scoring victories over our own main enemy, British imperialism. It will thus be of real help not only to the people of Zimbabwe but to our struggle here in Britain.

Please send what you can afford to New Era Books, 203 Seven Sisters Rd., London, N.4, making cheques payable to New Era Books and enclosing a note stating that it is for the ZANU appeal.

TURKISH DEMOCRATS DENOUNCE COUP

The following is a press statement from the Executive Committee of the Federation of People's Unions of Turkey in Europe, issued on Friday, September 12th, 1980.

The Turkish Armed Forces staged a coup and seized power in the early morning. Led by the Chief of Staff, General Kenan Evren, the Land, Navy, Air Force and Gendarmerie commanders have formed a National Security Council. The National Security Council has dissolved the Government and abolished Parliament, banned all political parties and prohibited the activities of associations and trade unions. Army General Evren announced that the constitution will be changed.

Evren, representative of the National Security Council, stated that political parties and Governments had been unable to prevent anarchy, had not taken the necessary measures, did not pay attention to the warnings of the Armed Forces and made Turkey weak, divided and on the brink of civil war in the face of internal and external enemies so that Governmental authority no longer existed.

Evren claimed that the Armed Forces will form a new Council of Ministers, prepare a new Constitution which will govern the setting up of new political parties and restore Government authority. The coup puts Turkey in a very dangerous position. Rather than abolishing Parliament and changing the May 27th Constitution, the country should be defended against

the external threat from the aggressive Soviet Union and against the terror, sectarian fights and the danger of civil war being provoked by the Russian fifth column and the fascist National Action Party (NAP).

The irresponsibility of the main parliamentary parties cannot be a reason to interfere with and abolish them. Similarly, the treacherous actions of the Russian fifth column and the fascist terror and massacres of the NAP cannot be a reason to ban all political parties and freedom of political activity.

Since the 1850s until today the people of Turkey have had to defend freedom and Parliament against the despotism of the Ottoman rulers, the occupation of our country after World War One and against those who desire dictatorship.

During the days of great disaster and division, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, founder of the Republic of Turkey, forged Turkish National Unity on a democratic basis and led the people against centres of treachery at home and abroad and won our national freedom.

In today's Turkey, which is in the grip of its worst depression, the only solution is to defend and strengthen democratic freedoms, the May 27th Constitution and Parliament. It is impossible to secure this through the intervention of the Armed Forces. Only a Government of National Unity that struggles against both sources of anarchy, with its power derived from the free will of the people and parliamentary democracy can

improve the situation in Turkey.

The coup creates very suitable conditions for the Soviet Union, which is provoking terrorism and separatism and trying its best to cause trouble in Turkey.

The Soviet Union has described Turkey as a weak link and will try to profit from the anti-democratic coup by creating disputes. Moscow wants to pursue her ambitions by using the adventurist groups under cover of the "Struggle against Fascism". Some Western countries see supporting the military regime as a solution. Defence of World Peace and the security of the west is closely connected with Turkey's destiny. The only assurance of Turkish independence and defence against Russian ambitions is to strengthen democracy and freedom.

Turkey has the necessary maturity to ensure the survival of democracy and she is determined to defend her independence and freedom. Western countries should see this truth and they should be on the side of the Turkish people so as they can return to parliamentary democracy. (Unofficial translation by 'Class Struggle'.)

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