

# THE WORKER



Published by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist - Leninist) No 26 Dec 3rd 1977 5p

# NO TO EEC! NO TO DEVOLUTION! NO TO PARLIAMENT!

TWO VOTES in Parliament have confirmed that body as a rubber stamp of declining capitalism.

Nothing could show more clearly the degeneration of Parliament from a forum of representatives of the people which it was at the dawn of the capitalist era to the subservient tool of naked capitalist interests which it has now become than the farcical vote on the Direct Elections Bill which has just resulted in a majority of 381 to 98 in favour of pressing on with the constitutional incorporation of Britain into Europe.

In the first place no sovereign body genuinely responsible to the will of the people of Britain could possibly vote itself into becoming, in effect, a small minority voice in a large factitious bureau like the Council of Europe responsible to nobody but the capitalist system which called it into being in its last desperate throes. Particularly in this the case when the only popular expression on the issue was Wilson's hastily cooked up referendum to save the integrity of the Labour Party at the expense of the integrity of Britain which yielded, in spite of all the ballyhoo of the capitalist-controlled mass media, a mere minority vote in favour of going into Europe to begin with.

In the second place the very conduct of the political parties in connexion with the vote show what 'going into Europe' is really about. In order to deal with its own substantial opposition to integrating Britain into the Brussels bureaucracy the Labour Government put out a two-line whip to keep its own members in line. Even so some 72 Labour MPs voted against the

Bill outright and 105 abstained, so that only a minority of the Governing party, 130, actually supported the Bill. However the Tories put on a three line whip to make sure that their big majority in favour of the Bill, together with the support of the Liberals, would give the Govern-

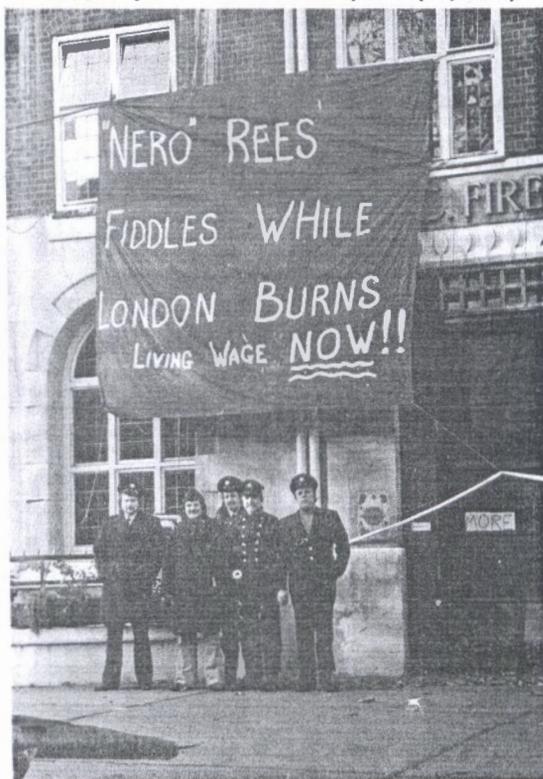
ment what would look like a huge majority in favour of going into Europe blindfolded with our hands tied behind our backs. In other words, the completely unrepresentative capitalist coalition government of the country which lurks just underneath the farce of political party rivalry

and phoney opposition is what was expressed in this vote; and it is this unrepresentative capitalist coalition which is trying to railroad us into the even larger unrepresentative capitalist coalition of the Council of Europe.

We do not quote the figures of the voting on this issue to suggest that we want to see a fairer thrashing out of the matter in Parliament but to show that Parliament has become completely irrelevant to the interests of British workers. To those MPs who are genuinely opposed to the destruction of British sovereignty which can only be the sovereignty of the people of Britain we say: you can only show your sincerity in serving Britain's real interests by helping

us to expose the parliamentary sham behind which capitalism is trying pitifully to hide its destruction of Britain. You'll always be outvoted in Parliament in any attempts to serve the working people of Britain.

On top of the vote on the Direct Elections Bill, was the vote on the Scottish Devolution Bill where the Government came a cropper in its first attempts to complement the merging with Europe with the ripping of sovereignty to pieces by devolution! The whole question of whether these attacks on British sovereignty should be by 'proportional representation' or not is like arguing over the kinds of knives and ropes to be used in hanging, drawing and quartering a victim.



Firemen at Euston. See interview p.3.

## NUJ : the wages story Fleet Street won't print

FOUR hundred Fleet Street journalists are determined to prove that they are no paper tigers. They are fighting for a £3000 a year pay rise. The London NUJ members at the Daily Mirror, Sunday Mirror, Sunday People and Reville have rejected the management's offer of £1200. In an already bitter battle the journalists have overcome a number of old hang-ups which have previously stifled their struggles.

First, they have been prepared to take guerrilla action to disrupt their newspapers. Second, they have not been fooled into a compromise by the management's ploy of refusing to publish papers.

Third, they have not flinched from voting overwhelmingly for a strike in support of their claim. Fourth, and most important, they refuse to be intimidated by the Government's ham-fisted intervention.

Management were forced by the Department of Employment to retract their offer. But journalists have made it clear that they are setting their own wages guidelines - in spite of the Government's unwarranted intrusion. The basis of the NUJ's claim is for parity with fellow workers in the light of management's decision to introduce new printing technology.

Mirror Group now agrees

continued on p.2

## Save agriculture

THE appalling hunger, and consequent disease, suffered by so many of the workers and peasants of the world, are direct results of the continued existence of the declining capitalist system.

Capitalist states, north, south, east and west sponsored the Green Revolution, whose aim was to benefit those capitalist states through the development of cash crops. Cash crops are produced for sale in another country. Their development separated a country's agriculture from its traditional sensible aim of the nutrition of the people of that nation. For instance; in the Sahel area, European corporations insisted that groundnuts be produced, rather than the rice, vegetables milk and beef of a rational subsistence agriculture. Results: over-intensive farming, soil depletion, inadequate irrigation, massive enforced decline of the value of the workers' products; and from 1970 on, repeated, worsening famines.

Another example: the Ethiopian famine of 1973 was the result of

the Ethiopian Government's giving the nomad pasturelands as concessions to the World Bank's International Finance Corporation and to Dutch, British, Israeli and Italian corporations. The nomads were robbed of their livelihood, the land was robbed of their care. The corporations established enclaves for cash crops amidst a starving landless people. Capitalism's abuse of land for short-term profit devalues land everywhere, and in the more difficult areas, it creates deserts. Two-thirds of the world's nations suffer from desert spread, and it is estimated that in 1882 desert and wasteland were 9.4 per cent of total land, and in 1962, 23.3 per cent.

Marx wrote over a century ago that capitalism worked against a rational agriculture. In its failure so manifest now, capitalism in decline would enforce the destruction of agriculture. The workers and peasants of each nation must instead enforce capitalism's destruction; for only socialism can save agriculture.

## Grain production up but...

BRITAIN'S production of cereals should rise over the next two years to top the 20m tonne mark - 5m tonnes more than present production. One variety of wheat on the market is capable of yielding 6 tonnes an acre which is three times present yields.

While we remain in the Common Market this improvement in production will not benefit British workers: it is likely to end up in storage. There are 22 grain stores in the UK at the moment specially set aside for 'extra' grain. Grain, within the EEC, is bought by the authorities and stored when the price falls below a certain level. This keeps prices and profits high.

The authorities don't buy just any grain for their stores. Only top quality grain is removed from the market. There are rigorous tests carried out before the grain is bought to ensure that the farmer is not trying to get rid of poor quality grain at

high quality prices. This high quality produce once bought is turned into poor quality produce and disposed of.

The EEC mountain for grain is incredible:

210,000 tons barley
160,000 tons rye
370,000 tons Durum wheat
1,400,000 tons other wheat

(1976 figures)

Improved British production would increase this mountain, and would not please those responsible for the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy).

British workers welcome improvements in agriculture. Membership of the EEC actively discourages such improvements. We must fight to ensure that the fruits of our labour do not end up in storage depots.

Our agriculture can only be in the interests of the people under socialism. Let us prepare for that day by ridding ourselves of the now infamous EEC.

## NUJ (continued from page 1)

want their journalists to accept less wages than composing room workers and more than fifty redundancies. But the journalists have stood firm: £3000 with no strings and NO redundancies. Their fight has not been made easier by the decision of journalists working in the newspapers' Manchester offices to jump the gun by accepting the management's offer.

That the London journalists have not given way against pressure from management. Government and their Manchester colleagues is a sign of their growing belief in themselves. What has baffled them, however, has been the hysterical reaction shown in Press reports. They have been genuinely shocked by the distorted and inaccurate articles on their struggle appearing in other Fleet Street newspapers. Most workers will ask: Why should they be? Don't MGN journalists perpetrate the same disgusting pro-management drive themselves? The fact is that during this dispute they are beginning to learn a harsh truth about the real nature of the media. They have discovered that Fleet Street is no friend of the worker in conflict.

Winning the wages battle will be hollow if the journalists go back to their old ways - of attacking fellow trades unionists and so undermining the struggles of the whole working class.

## Threat to children's libraries

"HUGE cuts are now wrecking the system of book availability in this country." This is the claim made in the latest edition of 'Where' magazine for parents. After a detailed inquiry into the state of British Libraries (school and public) they say "It takes some time to notice that the shelves are sparser or the books are tattered, but in a few years it will be clear that an energetic and lively library is dying."

Libraries of course are an essential part of children's education and adult literacy and education. This is another area where we must defend our hard won assets.

The Library Association are taking a strong line on this. They point out the contrast of the great education debate on standards in schools, while cuts in school libraries are reducing standards.

## The EEC threat to British agriculture

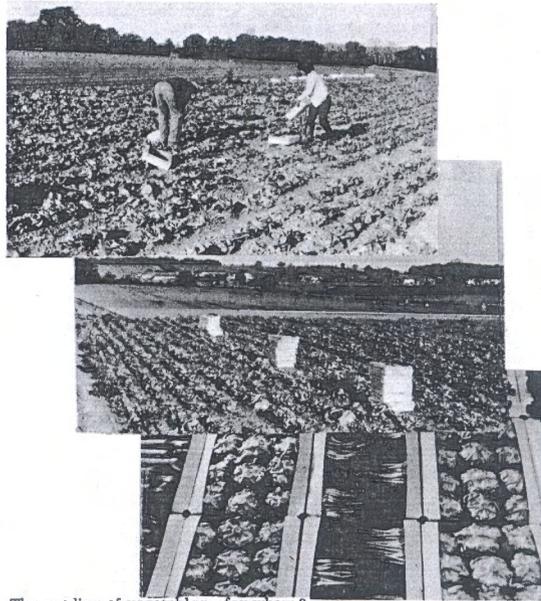
THE EEC with its Common Agricultural Policy poses a threat to British grown potatoes, since under the CAP the Potato Marketing Board must cease to exist from January 1st 1978 as it is a barrier to 'free trade'. At present the PMB controls the acreage, guarantees a minimum price to growers and controls imports. In this way a degree of stability is pre-

served, whereas the EEC has no control of inputs and at present hasn't even an intervention scheme for the likely potato mountains. If the PMB goes; the acreage of British potatoes is likely to drop sharply, due to the uncertainty of growing a crop without a guaranteed price, and as a result we would have to rely on imports. If Britain is to be self reliant it is vital that

we can produce all our own staple food such as potatoes.

The EEC grading system for fruit and vegetables is another attempt to undermine British horticultural production. EEC grading regulations stipulate that no produce may be sold unless it meets a minimum standard (the standards being set in Brussels) and that everything must be sorted into grades and labelled. The minimum standards are a blatant effort to reduce the supply of fruit and vegetables by 10 per cent and so maintain high prices. Produce that fails to meet the minimum standards is often simply too small or slightly misshapen, the type of produce normally favoured by single people, small families and the catering trade. These grades are of no help to the consumer: the British housewife is quite able to select the quality of fruit or vegetables she requires whether they are classified grade 1 or 4! Meanwhile, growers are faced with an inability to sell a proportion of their crops and an increasing bureaucracy associated with grading, therefore are encouraged to plough in crops or stop growing them altogether.

British farmers are not quite happy about the EEC, and farm-workers are definitely opposed to the EEC and all its CAP entails. It is up to all workers to reject the attacks the CAP has made and save our agriculture for a socialist Britain.



The grading of vegetables... for whom?

## REVOLUTION NOT DEVOLUTION

AS section after section of organised workers line up to enforce their wage claims irrespective of Government 'guidelines', the Government unfolds its timetable for its Bills on devolution in Scotland and Wales.

The timing of these events is no coincidence. As workers show their united strength in opposing the Government's pay policy, the Government presses on with plans to divide and weaken the British working class.

This attempted division of the British working class is, also part of British capitalism's plans for running down the heavy industrial base, machine tools, steel and so forth, in line with a European capitalist strategy of redeploying investment more profitably in which there is no future for an industrial Britain. The main hindrance to this design is a united British working class fighting the destruction of industry and therefore of jobs through its unions.

All attempts to persuade workers to vote for their own destruction, as were brought to bear on the working class at the time of the Common Market referendum of 1976, must be exposed, - such, for example, as efforts by the Welsh and Scottish TUCs to get workers to the polls to vote for the Government's devolution proposals.

In 'Britain in the World 1977' it is said that we workers in Britain would not ally ourselves with our bourgeois class enemy to defend Britain from enemies without, we'll defend it ourselves. Still less will we collaborate with the bourgeois class enemy for the destruction of Britain from within - either by devolution or amalgamation,

## THE WEEK

CONCORDE'S entry into New York airport represents the triumph of British skill and technology over domestic and overseas attempts to kill Britain's aerospace industry.

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"WHETHER the Government or local authorities were engaged in wage negotiations, everyone watched like a hawk ready to pounce if the Government broke its own guidelines or encouraged public employers to do so. And once that happens everyone else uses it as an excuse to do the same." A year or two ago, we were told by social democrats that in conditions of "free" collective bargaining the "weakest go to the wall". At least Callaghan now admits that if one section of worker advances its wages then other sections are inclined to follow suit.

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WHILE many other unions are holding back on pay claims, waiting for the outcome of the firemen's struggle, the Furniture Timber and Allied Trades Union, which has never accepted the social contract, has stated openly for a substantial pay claim of 25 per cent. Other unions should follow suit and set their own guidelines

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A BOOK called, "A Worker in a Workers' state" by Miklos Harszti gives a grim account of life in a tractor factory in Hungary. The hierarchy of the factory is capitalist throughout, with its company directors who earn "as bonus" 5 times a worker's annual wage, its foremen who hand out petty privileges to setters and inspectors, its divisions encouraged between blue and white

collar. The "party" is the road to promotion, a status symbol for those on the climb, and the trade union officials, nominated by the head foreman, are a mouthpiece of the bosses. Behind it all is the state, with its threat of forced labour for any worker leaving the factory after less than a year.

The title of the book is evidently ironic.

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REPORTS come from Italy that Montefibre, the fibres subsidiary of semi-public Montedison has sacked 6000 workers; Italsider, the public steel giant, has laid off as many in the past month; and a director of a state shipping line has been arrested on charges of corruption, adding to the already long list of state managers under corruption charges. This is the set-up that the Communist Party of Italy under the banner of the "historic compromise" wants to join so badly.

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THE baboons at Windsor Safari Park are the latest victims of Britain's 'economic crisis'. Apparently normally placid and friendly baboons have been attacking each other since a 75 per cent reduction in their food supply. Four trainers found themselves locked out of the workplace after complaining that animals were given insufficient food. They had, in fact been 'made redundant' after joining the Transport and General Worker's Union.

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THE Soviet Union is not the only revisionist country which cannot support itself. In 1976, East Germany imported 2½ million tons of grain from US monopoly companies. The agreements reached between the two countries envisage that East Germany will import more than 8 million tons of grain from the US by 1980.

# EDITORIAL

BY standing firm in their wage battle, the firemen have not only won the support of the whole working class; they have also split the ranks of the opposing class.

The firemen have pointed out in connection with their strike action that over the last four years, four independent inquiries have recommended wage increases without anything being done, and, indeed, they are still waiting for the shorter week they called for back in '918'. They have protected us with their skills and their courage: it is right that we should support them in this action, which is as much in our interest as if they were putting out a fire in our place of work or residence.

This support has prompted Callaghan's hysterical outburst to the EPTU Conference at Blackpool where he shouted that the Government would not budge in spite of demands inside his own Party and even from the Tories for more flexibility in respect to the firemen's claim. Whenever Government or local authorities are engaged in wage negotiations, "everyone watches like a hawk, ready to pounce if the Government breaks its own guidelines. That is why the Government stands firm. Otherwise the guidelines will be trampled in the mud".

This is exactly what should happen to these extra-legal completely arbitrary limitations imposed on us in the interest of capitalist profit. Callaghan says no section of workers can be treated as a special case or all workers will want to be so treated. We say all workers are a special case - a special case of organised workers who were foolish and pusillanimous enough to submit to wage cuts in a ridiculous bargain, but have now come to their senses and taken up again their time-honoured, class conscious task of fighting the class enemy for a living wage. (Incidentally, Callaghan who made so much of a public opinion poll vaguely supporting the Government's policy on inflation has not referred to a more recent public opinion poll which supported more money for the firemen by a comfortable majority.)

In the firemen's fight for wages are included questions of a shorter week, adequate staffing, preservation of skills and improvement of conditions of work. The way to fight for these important things is to fight for wages. They are also fighting to defend as an organised force in their class interest, their union, the FBU, which the Government is out to destroy.

But there is another aspect of the firemen's fight for wages which makes it somewhat different from, say, the Ford workers' fight for wages. The firemen's employer is the Government itself and when Callaghan says there will be no concessions at all to the firemen's needs, he is speaking as a boss. In his speech at Blackpool he took to task those employers in the private sector who "are pretending to keep within the guidelines but are offering disguised deals of settlements outside those figures." The Government will use its position as the biggest employer in the country to impose rigidly its wage restraint policy in those areas under its control. This means that the nationalised industries and the public service industries are most vulnerable to fascistisation, and this is what the firemen are struggling against. No wonder the police in their own conference took up a collection in support of the striking firemen.

And what a lesson for our working class - that the nationalised and public service industries, the very areas of the economy where socialism was supposed to start, are precisely the locale for trial runs of fascist control. This is why the workers at Leyland will have a more difficult job of organising themselves for effective wage demands than the workers at Ford. It is also the area of the economy in which those basic industries capitalism no longer needs, like steel, can be run down and destroyed. So much for social democracy and the parliamentary road.

## Not much left of 10pc

IN LESS than two months since the declared policy of our unions has become a return to collective bargaining, we have seen the Labour Government's guidelines of 10 per cent swept aside. A short list of pay settlements reached so far will remind us of the criminal bluff the government is trying to call in connexion with the firemen's claim:

- Mackies - 22 per cent;
- Fords skilled workers - 14 per cent;
- Farm workers - 12-13 per cent;
- Air Traffic Controllers - 14 per cent;
- British Oxygen - 12 per cent;
- Midlands lorry drivers - 15 per cent;
- Scottish lorry drivers - 40 per cent;
- Heating and Ventilating engineers - 20 per cent.

If we add to these successes the claims yet to be settled, how can the Government still maintain that its '10 per cent' is sacrosanct?

Meanwhile games of bluff and double bluff are being played by

employers and Government; Callaghan charges that employers in the private sector are concealing breaches in its guidelines behind phoney productivity deals and employers are trying to fool their employees with thinking that Government guidelines have been exceeded by these productivity deals when they have not. In all this bad faith there is only one line for us: go straight for wage rises, as much as our strength of union organisation allows.

## Success at RR

AT Rolls-Royce Mulliner Park Ward, where 600 workers have been on strike since the 12th September 1977, the company has attempted to undermine the Strike Committee by engaging the Electoral Reform Society to conduct a ballot without the permission of union officials. The men rejected this interference with their negotiating procedure and the ballot was declared null and void.

# Talking to the firemen



## Hull

IN HULL, as elsewhere, firemen are manning their picket lines and are in high spirits, going round the town with a petition and collecting box and gaining support from the public.

"The Worker" went along to the Central Fire Station and obtained an interview with the Secretary of the Hull Branch of the Firemen's Union.

Q: What has support been like from the public and trade unions?

A: Unbelievable. We had doubts on Monday morning but it's amazing. The support is vital. If you lose public support, you lose your struggle. Until now people didn't realise what our pay structure was. I'd earn more on the dole than going to work. And all this under a Labour government.

Another fireman informed us that the public in their role as trade unionists had not yet extended their support.

Q: Have you any comment on the way in which the press and media generally have dealt with the dispute, and on the claims that your job is not particularly dangerous?

A: Well, there's no risk behind a typewriter. First they slated us. Then when they saw that the public supported us they stopped. Now with the Government propaganda that there is no risk, they attack us again. When we go to a fire there is risk - more than danger, but they know nothing of how we work. They 'phone 999 and we make it look easy, however the army shows different.

Q: How long do you think the Government will continue with its intransigent attitude? What factors are needed for victory?

A: Till the people with the money put pressure on the Government. The Government is not taking any notice of the public. But when the insurance companies have to pay out and when factories are burnt and shares begin to drop, then the money will put pressure on the Government. Money, again it stinks.

Q: What do you think of the scheme put forward by some ministers, that there should be an increase in your pay by overtime?

A: Well, a 40 hour week was to be achieved in 1980; but this was to be done with no increase in establishment or costs. Now they talk of a 42 hour week, but we'll not get the men.

In "The Economist" they say: "A fudge on hours and overtime plus an agreed formula for a future pay determination could provide a way out, avoiding a humiliating climb down and preserve the Government's 10 per cent limits."

This suggestion shows what contempt the bourgeoisie hold for their own 'moderate' friends.

Q: What message can you give to other workers who are going for pay claims?

A: That depends on the conditions. We think our claim is just and fair but not the Government, who have reneged on their agreement. No! Jobs are so different that we don't claim to tell anybody anything.

Now the press talks hypocritically of the firemen not allowing access to fire fighting appliances. They say that it is the property of the rate payers and taxpayers. Well, it is the property of the working class and it is the duty of all workers to stand with firemen in maintaining con-

## Leicester

Q: What support have you had from other trade union bodies and working-class organisations locally?

A: We have had a number of letters and telegrams of support together with financial aid from individuals and organisations alike. A good many local trade union branches have pledged their support, including the Leicester miners, ASTMS and Leicester University Students Union.

Q: Are you receiving strike money?

A: No.

Q: Do you regard the firemen as a 'special case'?

A: I think we have been particularly hard hit but everyone has suffered due to the social contract. There was an ambulance man talking to us on the picket line only yesterday who was saying that they may be joining us on strike soon. Their wages are pretty abysmal also. No, I think we have a good case, but then so have many other sections, the police for example.

Q: What do you think of the Labour Government?

A: Basically, the Labour Government doesn't give a damn. Either about us or about the people who may die because of the action we are being forced to take. We have tried everything to prevent the strike. We don't want to strike. Callaghan would rather 'risk lives' than give us a decent standard of living.

Q: What do you think the outcome of the strike will be?

A: We're pretty solid at the moment. We are determined not to give in below our demand which will bring us just over the national average industrial wage.

## Euston, London

Q: Because you have attended serious fires in hospitals, has the cry of 'strike-breaking' from the media affected morale?

A: Not at all - in the London region morale can't be better. What's the point in not attending fires where primarily people, not property, will be damaged; warehouses for instance, we'll happily let burn to the ground. In fact our concern for human life has been used as a ruse to get us to property fires where life was not at risk at all.

Q: Because of the nature of your work, you must feel that you've let yourselves be victims of moral blackmail by Governments intent on keeping down living standards?

A: Of course, and hospital staff must have felt in an even more difficult situation as employers have relied on our having consciences in assuming we would never strike no matter how desperate our financial circumstances. But for an adequate fire service we need a decent living wage - how are we able to work a fire service otherwise?

## Catford

Question: How long were you asking for more money before you finally decided on strike action?

Answer: Eight years. We've always been underpaid since around 1969. All we've got so far are promises and enquiries. One enquiry took 2 1/2 years at a cost of £30,000. Now they offer us 10 per cent plus another enquiry.

Q: Was it a difficult decision to make?

A: Of course it was. It was the last thing we wanted. People ask us, wouldn't you feel bad if anyone gets killed in a fire? Of course we would, but how about when we get killed and leave wives and children behind?

Q: What do you think of the use of troops in firefighting?

A: We feel it's totally wrong to use troops, although we do feel sorry for some of the soldiers being sent to fight big fires. The Government are now going to give them breathing apparatus. It takes years of practise and skill to get in a burning building, some of these boys will be going to their deaths.

Q: Have you had much public support?

A: Yes, it's been quite amazing. We're getting hundreds of signatures and donations of money. People really do seem to realise the difficult job we do.

Q: What do you think of senior officers and volunteer workers still attending fires?

A: It's a disgrace, although our Union has now stopped the senior officers attending fires. Some of the so-called volunteers are getting more money to attend fires than we're getting in wages, but I'll tell you this, we know those who have been working and when this is over, we'll never work with them again.

Q: How do you think the popular press has treated you?

A: They haven't showed us any sympathy whatsoever. They seem to be waiting for some terrible tragedy with loads of deaths when they will really get the knives out. The only pressman to support us was immediately reprimanded and has since resigned.

Q: Do you think the Government will give in?

A: It's hard to say, but unless we come out of this with what we're asking, there will be a hell of a lot of firemen leaving the service. It just won't be worth it.

Q: How long are you prepared to stay out?

A: Forever. Morale at the moment is really high and as all stations are closeknit units it's easier for us to stop morale sagging. While this interview was being made nearly every car sounded its horn in response to the firemen's posters: "Toot if you Support us". It seems once again that the Government's old ploy of 'divide and conquer' the working class has failed - miserably.

trol of the equipment they have many times used to save life.

Now the capitalists put forward schemes to try and ban strikes. They reason that firemen, nurses, doctors and sewer workers strikes should be banned because life is at stake. Then gas and electric workers because they are essen-

tial, dockers, dentists and transport workers because they are crucial to efficiency. Why not extend this list to engineers, teachers and miners. In fact the whole working class because they are responsible for co-ordinating industry and producing wealth.

# Common percentage is needed for teachers

SINCE last Easter's NUT Conference declined to formulate a salaries demand for 1978-79 the NUT executive has now the task of deciding on the claim. Conference had pinned its hopes on a further phase of the social contract reflecting "the needs and circumstances of teachers with particular reference to the maintenance of teachers' pay relativities (with) comparable bargaining groups."

Like the Emperor and his new clothes, teachers have been rudely awakened to the fact that since the contract is no more they are denuded of a policy. They should now rectify their error by communicating their demands through their Union.

The executive has decided that the claim should be a common percentage increase based on an improvement in standards of living, and that there should be a continuous salary 'spine' linking all teachers' salaries. There are however some grave weaknesses which members should attend to.

Instead of standing or falling on its own merits, much of the claim is to be based on comparison with other groups of workers. As we said in January 1975 talking of the Houghton Report, the idea is "teachers cannot have an increase in their salaries unless someone else has already got a similar increase. Needless to say, such a concept, if accepted by workers, would have the effect of consigning the working class permanently to the destitute days of Dickens."

However we may dress it up, waiting until the Union has seen "the trend of negotiations in other areas" means in reality hoping to get more money on the backs of

the firemen and miners.

Along of all national papers, only THE WORKER (issues 1 and 2 1975) denounced the Houghton Committee and its report. Acceptance of the report meant above all else a denial of the role of the teachers' Union to negotiate and struggle for its members salaries. What is the point of a union deprived of this most basic role?

For how much longer are teachers going to hearken back to that anti-trade union report and its emphasis on a depressed starting salary? (We can learn much about the Houghton report simply by recalling who it was who set it up - a certain Mr Prentice, late of the Government benches.) Surely we are not awaiting the next promised review of salaries in 1981?

There has been an unhealthy tendency in recent years to lay great emphasis in salaries claims on one particular group of teachers and their 'special' needs - be it young teachers or heads - inevitably at the expense of all. Acceptance of the social contract meant for a time no increases for teachers earning above £8,500. Who cared?

Marxist-Leninists did, for they pointed out that this anti-trade union attitude would lead to further reversals. Now there comes a call for a return to the 'internal relativities' of Houghton, that is 35 per cent for headteachers and 16 per cent for teachers starting their careers.

We should reject all diversionary calls from 'left' and right for redistribution of incomes (divisive calls beloved of the Government) and concentrate on a demand for 25 per cent increase for all teachers to maintain and to start to restore living standards.

# Capitulation to the state threatens NUS

STUDENTS are at Blackpool for their December national conference. The issues of higher grants and cutbacks in education command every student's attention.

The basic demands of "No to all cuts" and a full grant for all students at restored value must not be debased by calls for 'prioritisation' and the effective down-grading of some students.

There are dangerous arguments now developing in the NUS which can only divide and demoralise our forces. The underlying theme is one of political capitulation, an attempt to solve the problems of students by becoming expert advisors on the structure of government administration, and denying the mass organisation.

Thus, the fight against tuition fee increases was turned into one of fee waivers for hardship cases (thus doubling the plight of discretionary awarded students).

The grants campaign, essentially a class fight for education, is to be restricted to the plight of only one section of students - those on discretionary awards.

The attempt has been to turn resistance to college closures into 'fighting' for alternative

use of educational buildings.

The defence of real capitation fees is to be turned into a question of accountability to the local authorities, a direct attack on union autonomy. Capitulation is compounded by dishonesty as these proposals are invariably wrapped in 'left' phrases, so making a mockery of the policy formulation process.

The struggle between these proposals for capitulation, and those of developing resistance underlies each motion to be discussed. The conference has the responsibility of reaffirming its principle of improvement for its members and the working class generally.

## NUS in Germany

A DELEGATION from the National Union of Students UK to the Federal Republic of Germany has conveyed the support of students in this country for the fight by the German Students' Union (VDS) against attempts to render it illegal.

The West German Government has introduced legislation which, on January 1st 1978, will effectively ban all student union organisations. The attack on unionism is made in the name of

anti-terrorism. The West German Government seeks to exploit the fear of the activities of the Baader-Meinhof gang and the 'Red Army Faction' and outlaw all political opposition in the German working class. VDS, on numerous occasions, has expressed outright condemnation of terrorism.

Members of NUSUK, themselves no strangers to attacks on student unionism, and delegates from many other European students' unions have spoken at meetings organised by VDS during their two week strike. But the most effective support students all over Europe can offer VDS is the continual struggle for autonomy in their own colleges.

## In Brief

EMPLOYERS have appeared with a booklet produced by the British Institute of Management called 'Employee participation - the Way Ahead'. It's a very backward employer who won't welcome the new scheme which could be summed up like this: "Now, shop steward, would you prefer this section of the workforce made redundant, or that section ...?"



On November 23rd a mass demonstration against the cuts in public expenditure was organised by those unions whose members work in the public service. There was a protest march against Labour Government policy ending with a lobby of MPs.

# Barclays Bank employees give lead to the whole of London NALGO

EMPLOYEES of Barclays Bank International have recently won a substantial increase in their London Weighting allowance. The central London allowance has been increased from £402 to £657 a year (a rise of 63 per cent) and the allowance in a three-to-six mile radius of Charing Cross has been increased from £345 to £484 (a rise of 40 per cent).

This award has been viewed with keen interest by London members of NALGO, the National and Local Government Officers Association. Their London Weighting allowance was last reviewed in 1975 and set at £435 a year for the ten inner London boroughs. Since then there has been a serious erosion in the real value of the allowance. The

official inner London index has risen by 35.3 per cent in this period and this does not include recent increases in London Transport fares.

Consequently many London branches of NALGO have passed resolutions pressing their national negotiators to lodge an immediate claim for the restoration of the full value of the London Weighting allowance. NALGO members in London are aware that the successful resolution of such a claim is essential not only to protect their living standards but also to provide the conditions necessary to attract and retain the skilled workers needed to run London's services.

In pursuing the claim, however, NALGO members must

be firm in rejecting the employers' argument that a rise in the London Weighting allowance must be offset against the money available for the national pay award.

It is the job of the Association to protect the interests of all its members. The "kitty bargaining" concept is a cheap device of the employers to try and divide the Association.

Similarly, NALGO must avoid the temptation of accepting an offer of a re-definition of the inner London allowance. The objective is more money for all. The employers' argument for "inner" and "outer" allowance is illogical. The cost of living in and around London is essentially the same, no matter where one lives or works.

## Books, pamphlets

Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, London NW 5

Northern Star Bookshop, 18A Lighnton Street, Leeds.

Brighton Workers Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton.

Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road, St. Philips, Bristol

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

## Public Meetings

LONDON At Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, NW5.  
7.30 pm:

Fri December 9 The changing role of the police and the armed forces.

Fri December 16 "The world is yours as well as ours, but in the last analysis it is yours."  
-The Role of Youth in Britain.

BRIGHTON At Brighton Workers' Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Rd., 8 pm  
Thur December 8 Britain in the World 1977.

BRISTOL At Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road, Old Market,  
7.30pm:

Wed December 14 For an independent Britain: No to devolution, No to the EEC.