

THE WORKER



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CONGRESS ... TUC SAYS NO TO CALLAGHAN

THE TUC this year was predictable, which is not unusual but, with the incredibly confused and complex political and economic understanding from so large a gathering, good.

It emerged as a stronger expression of a great mass of workers slowly groping through a morass of previous conspired confusion to a degree of clarity not to be expected in such a situation and quite unprecedented.

The economic fight on paper, by resolutions, has at last been won and the Government and all its friends pushed back. It is now imperative that the mass allow no turning back, no resting on victory, no underestimating of the persistent work of the right wing within unions, the General Council and the labour movement to divert and turn away, thus undoing what has been achieved, breaking through the clarity so painfully bought and taking us back to the weary defeatist role of the past ten years.

Callaghan it would seem is very aware of this.

In spite of the superficial enthusiasm and facade of loyalty to the Labour Government in an election prospect, at last the working mass makes plain - no more dictates on wages, no 5 per cent. The unions shall function again in their true purpose and reason of creation - the maintenance and improvement of wages and working conditions.

Callaghan's speech on Tuesday was not a fighter's speech, not a leader's exhorting the troops to battle but a soft shoe shuffle, evasive and wary of 'his own' forces, unable to inspire them for another struggle for the same old end. They know now and wish for a clean

break with dalliance and alliance with capitalism.

Consequently Callaghan did not challenge this nor even truly call for fighting under one flag, his. A bit of audacious but tired footwork around inflation, a reiteration of 5 per cent and a reference to a shorter working week, but no heart.

The resolution calling for the return of a Labour Government, however larded with false emotions of loyalty demanded by the mover simply underlined and made worse the strains and hostilities now apparent.

So Callaghan's postponement of an election is neither climax nor anti-climax. It is gutless pessimism which he tried to cover with a music hall tune, but was so mediocre an amateur that he got his lines wrong.

No War

The attempt to exploit dissident outcry into a full war cry call for the revival of the Cold War was resoundingly defeated. Because of oppression in some parts of the world and the natural humanitarian sentiments of workers all over the world, some try to exploit this and use it as Churchill did at Fulton - and failed. No matter the problem of 'super' powers and the emergence of a new form of imperialism, we the workers will not join the witch hunt and demand a Third World War.

What is clear in spite of all the past confusions is our present understanding - No more. Tend to our own house, the house of our British working class and also to the affairs and hopes of workers throughout the world.

Because Congress has be-

come a show talking place with alleged 'star' speakers, a place 'to strut one's hour on the stage', a grievous mistake was made in connection with the resolution on the Freedom of Information Act from the NUJ - a misnomer since it is a demand for such as no Act exists. The mistake was just about redeemed by no less than the General Council itself.

In truth the purport of the resolution was properly aimed at the dangerous power of the Official Secrets Act in respect to civil liberties, arising most immediately from the prosecution of the journalists now proceeding.

The resolution as published was held on legal opinion safe enough and not calculated to incur 'contempt' charges. In all the tussle of many views on the General Council a device was at last agreed sound. Avoiding dangers of uncontrolled debate which could have been disastrously damaging to those at present on trial, leave alone 'contempt' charges against Congress, it was proposed and agreed by the General Council unanimously to adopt the resolution together with a statement of sympathetic support to those directly involved in the trial, an instruction to visit on the Government a demand for an Information Act without delay and a clear expression of the dangers and felt abuses of the present Official Secrets Act. But the resolution should be immediately remitted thus being adopted by all without debate - a quite unprecedented and unique stand expressing the views of 12 million trade unionists.

This failed for reasons already stated about the tendency of 'progressives' and 'leftists' as much as any to treat Congress as a place to show off their 'political

turns'. The resolution was not remitted, wrongly so. However, the statement of the General Council remains and clearly shows the stand of Congress.

A significant gain likely to be overlooked is the return of George Guy, General Secretary of the sheet metal workers, elected to the General Council for the first time last year. Big brother AUEW, the former nominator of Guy, switched. They switched to one of their own from the foundry section, no doubt fully expecting that because of their size all other unions would follow suit. It is clear that such days are past and smaller unions and indeed bigger ones will not be dictated to in such an imperious manner. This victory against previous Tammany practice it is to be hoped will continue in the future.

Such steps of advance begin long before and relate to the split down the middle of the General Council over the Fire Brigade dispute - a 20 to 17 split - at that time showing the establishment to be a creaking and decaying temple.

No SPG

No longer is a resolution slighted because it comes from a smaller union and might once have been considered as lacking in decorum and not quite respectable. One of the best statements emerging was the resolution on the Special Branch and the new force euphemistically entitled Special Patrol Group. It condemned outright the brutality and perverse use of such forces as a pointer to the times and warned of similar previous bodies in other lands such as the Brown Shirts in Hitler's Germany. Not before time!

Notes from an observer at Brighton

THE CARTOONIST Lowe became famous for his drawings of the TUC as an immense, slow moving carthorse. Perhaps the image was to show the TUC as an out-dated, stupid but kindly beast. But technology is no longer the god it was and the carthorse is a happier symbol than a juggernaut. Today 'intellectual' journalists, as opposed to industrial reporters, write that the TUC is superseded, it means nothing to its members and is reactionary in that it is as obsolete as the dinosaur. Lowe was cleverer though just as wrong.

The Congress of the TUC with its 12 million affiliated members is the best example in the world of democratic centralism. In spite of 'left wing blocs' and the newly triumphant 'right wing blocs' the Congress reflects accurately the attitudes of the delegates present and the aspirations of the majority of the working class, even though a large number of delegates and of the working class are of better quality. The parts may be greater than the whole but not yet do the mass of workers want the whole to be as good as the best of them.

Many thought that the 1978 Congress was duller than usual, only one fight against chairman's ruling and only one card vote. The main debate on economics was uninspired and a surprising number of delegates who use their democracy to ignore what they consider important, spent the period in the tea room. Some blamed the new American style conference hall costing £9 million as the mayor informed us but the more thoughtful described the schizophrenia of people determined to support the Labour Government electorally and just as determined to burn its main plank, the wages policy.

The PM had a standing ovation after a thin speech. His demand that workers pay for their 35 hour week out of the Pay Code of 5 per cent did not please anyone and strengthened the resolve of almost everyone present to throw out his 'phase four' the next day. When two youngsters shouted at him from the gallery, he made the error of replying 'come back to me after the meeting and I'll give you the job'. "And the other 2.6 million?" could almost be seen written on the air of the hall.

The most impressive and admired contributions are not the smooth plattitudinous statements read by platform speakers but those lovingly and carefully worked on by workers on aspects of health and safety. Sometimes

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British Imperialism oils Rhodesian war machine

THE OIL sanctions busting by Shell and BP has proved that the main support to the Smith regime in Rhodesia came from British imperialism. Without British oil Smith's fascist troops and airforce would have found it very difficult to carry out their murderous raids on villages and their numerous invasions of neighbouring Zambia and Mozambique.

It usually takes thirty years before the skeletons are dusted and brought out of the cupboards of Downing Street. But the liberation of Mozambique from Portuguese colonialism brought this one

almost straight out and showed how the British Government broke its own sanctions. It was in the days immediately after Mozambique's liberation that information regarding oil deliveries to Rhodesia came to light which, upon investigation by two determined journalists, turned out to involve the two British oil companies, Shell and BP.

What the mass media calls an embarrassment is nothing short of a scandal, compared with which Watergate sinks into insignificance. The absence of a public outcry is only indicative of the contempt in which the British

people hold all politicians.

The scandal involves two prime ministers and several members of the cabinet, Labour and Tory. It shows that the true policy of British imperialism, which had no intention of abandoning their kith and kin, the racist Smith regime in Rhodesia. On the contrary it proved to be the main supporter of the 'illegal regime'.

Let this be a warning to those who put faith in British proposals with or without US support. The refusal by the British Government to support the "internal settlement"

stems not from disagreement with its aims, rather from the knowledge of its bankruptcy. Hence the counter proposals for an all-party conference.

The liberation of Zimbabwe will not be achieved by those who court publicity at every opportunity and try to keep their names in the headlines by horning in on every news story printed in the bourgeois press. Liberation will be brought about by those who will not show their faces to the cameramen because they are engaged in fighting the war against the imperialist-backed Smith.

HISTORIC NOTES Social progress and the Great THE WEEK

Unrest of 1910-12

"The syndicalists say never mind the law; take no notice of Parliament they will do nothing for you... What kind of advice is that?" A voice: "Sensible." (Report of a Lancs. miners leader at a mass meeting in March, 1912).

The first sparks of the Great Unrest took place late in 1910, when lock-outs occurred against the cotton workers of Lancashire, boiler-makers of the Tyne, miners in South Wales. Eleven months later the miners were starved back to work, but their leaders (many of them syndicalists) remained unbowed. They toured the country, demanding in lodge after lodge the establishment of a national minimum wage - the demand of the first ever national miners' strike a year later.

In August, 1911, the first national railways strike took place. Starting as an unofficial stoppage in Merseyside, it spread to involve 70,000 men within days and soon received official support. They struck not only for higher wages, but to be rid of the conciliation and arbitration boards that had been imposed on the rail-Dockers, sailors, clay workers, tin miners, builders, engineers were among those to pursue their claims without reference to whim or wish of the Labour Party in the following year.

This unrest was mental as well as industrial. It was in part a revolt against the direction in which the Labour Party had been pulling the labour movement. In their quest for social progress, workers had won places in county councils, education and hospital boards, burial and poor law boards, conciliation boards. They had made their mark on the administration of the capitalist state - but in return they had had to learn to be 'practical'. They had accepted the claims of 'parliamentary democracy'.

Social progress was fast becoming sophistry. "In this country the State is the people - theoretically at least - and when the people turn to the State for an improvement in their condition they are in reality turning to

themselves." Keir Hardie argued in defence of the Labour Party's stance. And in keeping with this 'argument' the Labour Party stayed silent as the industrial conflict was violently suppressed. In Tonypanydy one miner was killed by police. In Llanelly six railwaymen and tin-miners were massacred by troops. In Liverpool the shooting of strikers united the previously hostile Catholic and Protestant areas in street fighting against the 3,000 troops sent in. Similar repression followed in the transport strikes in Ireland.

In the first instance, in Tonypanydy, only 17 of the 42 Labour MPs could be persuaded to protest. And this set the tone for the following three years.

The old, deep-rooted working class suspicion of the state re-emerged in force. Tom Mann, leader of the legal 8-hour move-

ment twenty years before, renounced his former beliefs, admitting that he had been "among simpletons" who had put parliamentary activity before the "real kernel" - workplace trade union and political organisation.

Victor Grayson, expelled from Parliament, published "The Problem of Parliament", to be followed by Tillett's "Is The Parliamentary Labour Party A Failure?". Blatchford, one of the original founders of the Independent Labour Party in 1893, vowed that he would "give the Labourists a damn good hiding" and called for the establishment of a socialist party.

The anti-parliament Daily Herald was set up following a printers' strike - soon surpassing the Labour Daily Citizen with a circulation of 150,000. Its first article, in April, 1912, demanded "We want thrashed out - and this requires to be done very quickly - the question as to why it is and with what object we send Labour and Socialist members to the

House of Commons."

Nationalisation, that old slogan, was attacked as "the mere governmentalisation of certain public services for the convenience of the bureaucracy and its rich employers." "All the so-called 'Socialist' experiments in municipalisation and nationalisation are merely increasing the dependency upon the Capitalist Class... every single experiment is effected by a loan," one pamphlet declared.

Such ideas gained credence. The national conference of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants saw just under half its delegates voting for clear anti-parliament resolutions. The attempt to set up a political fund in the ASE was defeated after a vigorous anti-Labour campaign.

The fact that 'parliamentary socialism' necessarily leads directly to corporatism in practice and in thought was seen by leaders of the class as soon as the Parliamentary Labour Party had had time to show its mettle.



The South Wales coalfield was occupied by police during the miners' strike of 1910. The picture shows a typical scene at a Glamorgan colliery in the winter of that year. At Tonypanydy the strike led to the death of a miner at the hands of the police.

Kenyatta

A LARGE group of Kenyan workers will remember Kenyatta with contempt.

Many thousands of them had gone on strike for more money and were determined to win. The strike had been on for several weeks before Kenyatta decided to intervene and tell these workers what they could do with their claim.

Along with the employers, he met them in a local football stadium. "I am offering you 5 per cent," said a confident Kenyatta. "No, no, no," roared the crowd, Kop style. A terrified Kenyatta moved back several feet. The roar continued. After quick consultations with employers, Kenyatta increased the offer. "No, no, no," was chanted back. Kenyatta increased the offer twice more before a figure of 10 per cent was offered and agreement was reached by a ripple of applause going round the stadium.

That's what we call collective bargaining. We could learn from those Kenyan workers.

IRAN ON VERGE OF REVOLUTION

THE SHAH of Iran's troops have opened fire on unarmed crowds in the capital city, Teheran, killing hundreds of demonstrators protesting against the Shah's repressive regime.

Now it is clear why the Shah has brought such massive amounts of war material from the US and Britain - to mow down Iranian people when they refused to tolerate a dictatorship imposed on their country in the interests of US and British imperialism and

the rich Iranian bourgeoisie.

Opposition to the Shah is nationwide and martial law has been declared in Teheran and 11 other Iranian cities.

Police are arresting all opposition figures including lawyers, writers and artists.

It is no longer possible to maintain that resistance to the Shah's fascist regime is limited to religious leaders who oppose 'reforms'. As one of the spokesmen for British capitalism brutally put it:

the Shah's regime may be vicious and repressive but no alternative would suit US and British interests. This is like the cynicism of the Labour Foreign Secretary, Bevin, at the time of the toppling of Mossadegh when he said to left-wing critics: "Do you want the bloody oil or not?"

On his recent visit to Iran Hua may only have succeeded in establishing cordial relations with a thoroughly reactionary regime the people of Iran will destroy.

CLASS STRUGGLE IN TUNISIA

39 TRADE unionists in Tunisia are facing the death sentence for organising trade union opposition to the Government. This represents the tip of the ice-berg of repression which has followed the decision of the UGTT (Tunisian TUC) to break its 'social contract' with the Government and fight for better wages and conditions.

In the months that followed this decision the UGTT paper 'Ech Chaab' rapidly overtook the circulation of the 'establishment' newspapers only to find itself banned.

Government-backed gangs attacked trade union offices, and eventually on January 26 a General Strike was called in protest at this harassment.

The ruling 'Destour Socialist Party' replied with the savage repression still continuing today. A 'clean sweep' of trade union organisation in the country from top to bottom has taken place. The UGTT general council, the leaders of the metal, railway, power, transport, public works, tourist, petrochemicals and shipbuilding

unions have all been imprisoned, and one of the leaders of the Bank workers' union has already been killed. Hundreds more rank and file trade unionists have also been rounded up - twenty phosphate miners have been sentenced.

French dockers have shown their support by blacking Tunisian goods, and inside the country the illegal 'Ech Chaab' is reported to be the most eagerly sought after newspaper. No amount of repression can keep a brave people from fighting for their liberation.

WHEN the number of people on the in-patient waiting lists in England and Wales rose to over 600,000 at the end of last year, it is a tribute to NHS staff that, despite the health cuts, a record of over five million in-patients were treated last year, with out-patient attendances up to seven and a half million. At the same time it is estimated that more than 8000 nurses are unemployed, while 15000 hospital beds stand empty through lack of staff.

THE European Court of Human Rights has just ruled that secret surveillance of private citizens by governments tapping telephones or opening mail does not contravene the European Human Rights Convention.

THE NUT is to extend its action against oversized classes to 74 more schools, bringing the total to 897. There are still 17,000 teachers out of work, and two million children in classes of 31 or over.

WHEREVER they are, protesters against war are treated like the wild men they so clearly are not. In Moscow, Americans carrying a banner "USA-USSR disarm" had it ripped down by police; in Washington, protesters in the same cause were arrested by secret service agents.

WHEN 600 garment workers have been made redundant in the Midlands, British Rail acts in a 'diabolical' way, importing t-shirts from abroad for advertising purposes, according to the Nottingham district of the Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers. The same story in electronics, where further massive redundancies have been announced. At least £6 million worth of goods have been stockpiled from British production prior to its rundown.

AS THE general strike in Nicaragua against the American-backed dictatorship of Somoza gathers strength, we wish the Nicaraguan working class well in their struggle for internal freedom and against Yankee domination.

NOT least among Peugeot-Citroen's difficulties in their takeover will be British workers. As the AUEW spokesman said: "We want recognition of the role of shop stewards. We shall not tolerate any suggestion of the French practice which Peugeot encourages of semi-fascist company unions." At the TUC there was unanimous condemnation of Chrysler's profitable exit from Britain, and the demand that all jobs be guaranteed.

EDITORIAL

Callaghan says that an election now could not solve anything. That has been our Party's line all along on parliamentary elections in general as far as the working class is concerned. Callaghan obviously believes that a lot of people in the labour movement are prepared to heed the CPB(ML)'s advice not to vote for any capitalist party, whatever it calls itself. So there will be no election - not immediately.

He went to the TUC to get support for his greatest achievement on behalf of British capitalism - a three year wage cut which he hoped to extend to four. He tried, as usual, to justify this as the only means of curbing inflation, although even bourgeois economists know that wage rises do not cause inflation. Wage rises eat into profit and it is profit that Callaghan serves. The TUC said no. Resoundingly and overwhelmingly they rejected Labour Government guidelines and reaffirmed support for collective bargaining.

Some speakers at the TUC tried to argue that rejection of the Labour Government's pay policy did not mean that the labour movement would not unite solidly behind Labour in an election; but they did not convince Callaghan. He knew that it was not possible for the working class to be opposed to his main claim to deserve re-election, pay restraint, and at the same time to throw themselves into a whole-hearted campaign to keep out the Tories at all costs.

Callaghan's capitalist masters, on the whole, want him to remain in power a little longer because, in spite of the TUC vote, they still think he has a better chance of restraining wage demands than Thatcher. They do not want him to go into an election in which he would do no better and might fare worse than he did last time. That Callaghan, leader of a party that pretends to represent the workers of Britain, cannot expect a majority of the votes when the working class, all those who live by the sale of their energy and skill, make up 95 per cent of the population shows the weakening grip of social democracy.

There is no election now because while Callaghan still has the support of British capitalism he has lost the support of all those in the labour movement who realise that every vote cast in a parliamentary election is a vote for the continuation of the capitalist system that exploits them. It is quite different from a vote cast in an election of shop stewards or trade union officers which take place within organisations we workers control.

How will Callaghan hang on in this minority position? Partly by dropping even window-dressing reforms if they are at all controversial. Mainly by courting the support of Scots and Welsh nationalists by pressing on with devolution, which also has the advantage of being a means for splitting the working class as a punishment for withholding support from him.

It is like the situation of Labour in 1970 when Wilson had just lost an election. At a post-mortem reception in the House of Commons Wilson pointed to the Chairman of our Party and was heard to say: "There's what brought us down."

The vital task of the labour movement is to go forward from a position of simply being able to recognise and oppose, as capitalist and hostile to its interests, the political line of a Labour Government and to begin to recognise and support a political line that is genuinely working class, a line running through revolution and real change to socialism.

An Act against Liberty

WHEN, in 1974, the Labour Government passed the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act, it contravened the Trade Descriptions Act. It was never intended as temporary; it was renewed in 1976 and the latest review under Lord Shackleton suggests only minor alterations.

In the first year of the PTA, there were over 400 people detained (detention can last for seven days continuous interrogation) but only a dozen convictions. To date 3771 people have been detained, of whom 145 have been charged with offences ranging from murder to non-payment of fines. Murder, if proven, is a serious crime, but when the PTA is used to retrieve overdue library books and traffic fines it clearly needs more than minor alterations; abolition, for example. Particularly as many innocent workers wake at dawn to find armed policemen at the door.

When the Labour Government passed the PTA, helped by the Tories, it admitted the measures were 'draconian'. But it was not a temporary aberration in an otherwise good record on human rights and civil liberties. They have passed other laws.

Their solution to homelessness has been to slash expenditure on construction while passing the

Criminal Law Act (chapter 45) (1977). A month ago this Act was used against homeless families squatting in Central London, in the form of 500 policemen with shields there to oust these 'criminals', an action that was condemned, without exception, for the ridiculous over-kill and enormous expense. But this Act will not be repealed by a Tory Government, any more that the Labour Government of 1974 repealed the Emergency Provisions Act (1973) used in Ireland to convict without jury trial or evidence other than police evidence.

Nor will Labour's Immigration Act be repealed by the Tories. Less than a month ago, under this legislative masterpiece, 10 Indian seamen were arrested in the Port of London. Being low paid they had struck for proper payment, staying aboard while anchored. They were known to have committed no crime, yet were held incommunicado, under an Act which allows indefinite detention, no jury trial and no appeal. In this instance, the employer was not frogmarched off to the Department of Employment for the crime of paying low wages.

Let those concerned with human rights apply themselves more fully in Britain. Would you vote for politicians so criminal as to pass laws like these?

At least three workers die every day. Who is responsible?

EVERY working day, official statistics (themselves incomplete) indicate that at least three workers are killed whilst at work and over 1000 are injured sufficiently seriously to be off work for at least three days. Over 700 still die every year from occupational diseases and the harmful effects of constantly changing chemical technology continue to emerge years after new and untested substances are introduced into industry.

October 1 marks the introduction of new regulations on safety representatives and safety committees. These measures, which have been introduced under the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) aim to guarantee certain basic functions to Trade Union representatives in relation to health and safety at workplace level. Any independent recognised Trade Union may appoint a safety representative - usually a shop steward - who can make regular

inspections of the workplace, investigate accidents, dangerous occurrences and cases of industrial disease. The regulations also entitle safety representatives to receive a wide range of legal and technical information from employers and from Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspectors who must liaise with them. Trade unionists can also call in other outside advisors of their own choice, and can have paid time off to go on day release Health and Safety training courses organised by the TUC. Employers must consult them over the health and safety of new chemicals and machines introduced into the workplace.

Britain has arguably the most developed system of protective legislation in the world. The only draw-back is that it is only enforced in a piecemeal fashion because of the small number of inspectors whose gallant and resolute efforts are so often under-

mined by the failure of the courts to impose realistic penalties upon defaulting employers.

The average level of fines during the first year of the HSWA was a mere £75!

Yet the reorganisation of both the law and the various inspectorates which has taken place as a result of the HSWA has been a typical productivity deal. The new Act has attempted to achieve an improvement in health and safety with only a marginal increase in resources.

It will be important for all trade unionists to ensure that their vigilance and enthusiasm as lay-people do not become a cheap substitute for employing more professionals in this field, whether these be HSE inspectors (at present there are only about 900 inspectors engaged in the field - one to every 23,000 persons employed) or whether they be qualified safety officers, safety engineers, industrial hygienists, scientific staff and occupational health personnel employed in industry.

The TUC argued quite correctly against the kind of phony industrial democracy which would lead to a shift in legal liability away from the employer and onto the trade union representative. In fact, they have insisted that the regulations be accompanied by an undertaking that safety representatives would not be criminally liable in the event of an accident.

The response of employers, predictably, is that they cannot afford all these changes. Already the Government which finally only introduced the regulations after persistent representations from the General Council, has taken the position as an employer that resources for implementing these measures, for employing more specialists and for making necessary physical improvements to workplaces throughout the public sector can only come from existing approved allocations.



The building industry has one of the worst records of all for safety. Photo by THE WORKER.

MSC'S DOUBLE DEVON CON-TRICK

THE chairman of the Manpower Services Commission visited Exeter boasting 'we are better organised', with planned job creation getting under way for the next five years. Already 1200 'work experience' schemes are operating in Devon, and the MSC itself admits that 40 per cent of those employed on such schemes are sacked after six months. The MSC is fulfilling its role of institutionalising unemployment and short-term work for a pittance. Experts employed by the 'rival' Tory County Council, see things in exactly the same way; they anticipate that spending on such luxuries as roads and sewerage will be cut to 'much less in real terms than ten or so years ago'.

SOCIAL WORKERS FIGHT ON

SOCIAL WORKERS in three areas of the country are entering their fifth week of strike action in an attempt to end the stranglehold of Local Authorities on national negotiations.

Social workers in the London Borough of Southwark attempted to move away from the idea of Whitleyism by lodging a pay claim with the Council last April. As one of the social workers told THE WORKER: "the Whitley machinery is archaic, far removed from the average social worker

Exeter is in steady decline. Key industry is disappearing - upwards of 50 per cent of South West construction workers are unemployed. The determination to invest capital more profitably abroad is backed up by the sabotage of what remains.

Last year D.B.E. Evans, a leading North Devon contractor went bust 'as a direct result of Government cutbacks'. 150 workers with a high reputation for craftsmanship lost their jobs.

Manufacturing in Exeter was always small-scale but it has not escaped decline despite the slogans about little companies. Turbothermic (making turbine blades) was closed in April 1978 costing 100 jobs. Between 1961 and 1971 there

was a cut from 20 per cent to 13 per cent in the number of workers employed in Exeter manufacturing, a trend which is continuing.

Services have also suffered: 574,000 patients will be carried in Devon ambulances in 1978 compared with last year's 631,000. What a miracle worker Ennals is that 60,000 people should suddenly pick up their beds and walk! An isolation ward has been closed at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital. Exeter's line to Waterloo is threatened with closure. Rural roads, the life-line to village communities, have been closed, 472 Devon CC jobs lost, two colleges half closed - the list could go on for ever. We have no future if we permit this decline.

and totally unnecessary".

Southwark, eager to hide behind the skirts of the Council, refused to negotiate locally, insisting it could only be negotiated through Whitley, thereby closing ranks with the other London Boroughs.

A ballot of NALGO members showed overwhelming support for the call for strike action which has concentrated on area offices, 2 hospitals and the head office, with picketing carried out at each. An emergency service

is being provided by the Authority, not by senior social workers, but by management. The attitude of the social workers is that this is dangerous because management are taking decisions affecting clients, on very little knowledge, which may be very harmful.

Planned escalation of the action is proposed by the picketing of town halls, day centres, meals on wheels etc.; one day stoppages by fellow members; the enlisting of support from fellow trade unionists on picket lines.

Teacher training conference backs the fight to provide education tomorrow

THE OUTCOME of this year's annual conference of the National Union of Students' teacher education sector, held at the beginning of September, marked the greatest step forward for student teachers since that massive wave of occupations over two years ago.

In many ways, teacher training has been the major target of the Government's attack on education, for it represents the foundation, the very future of mass school education. The Government's plan to close 39 colleges of education as part of the devastating cutback in the future supply of teachers by two thirds (from 114,000 teacher training places in 1973 to a mere 36,000 in 1980) is a vicious recipe for the destruction of education.

In response to this attack, NUS has argued for the retention of the threatened colleges not for teacher training, but for 'alternative' educational uses. The very nature of this policy and its complete failure, has led to demoralisation and frustration among members. Student teachers find themselves being forced to train in rundown colleges for the dole queue while classrooms scream out for their skills. All this at a time when 58,000 teachers are needed immediately to bring about the moderate, long standing demand of reducing all class sizes to a maximum of 30.

After two years of seeking 'easy road' compromise solutions to this intolerable situation, delegates representing teacher training colleges all over the country voted to

fight back. The motion that was carried strongly condemned the Government's strategy on education and rejected any notion of the Manpower Services Commission buying up 'closing' colleges for 'alternative' educational uses. It concluded with a firm NO to cuts and unemployment with the belief that "education, a hard won right, belongs to the working people of Britain, along with the provision for at least 114,000 teacher training places that represent the only safeguard for the future of mass school education. The future of the colleges of education are therefore not for NUS, the MSC or any other body to negotiate away in attempts to ameliorate and disguise the cuts." Delegates left in a new mood of confidence.

Civil Service pay research a problem, not a solution

THIS winter will see civil servants at the forefront in demanding substantial increases in pay. Since the annual conference of the SCPS overwhelmingly backed their executive's call to fight for substantial increases, contingency plans have been prepared for a battle royal.

But Civil Servants will have to decide how pay demands will be determined in future. Of course, any union when deciding a claim will be aware amongst other things of how much similar workers in other industries are paid. What is unacceptable, however, is when the right of trade unions to determine the size of their claim is given to an 'independent' body and this has been the case with Civil Service pay bargaining for many years.

The Pay Research Unit was set up as an 'independent' body to study how much similar workers in other industries were earning, and to report to the Government so that it could determine what pay increases it would offer to civil servants. This institutionalised form of wage bargaining abrogates one of the major functions of a trade union. If all unions were party to such a system there would be no pay increases. Moreover the employer has never taken the findings of the

'independent' body and offered the full amount for all grades. It must not be forgotten that the Labour Government even closed down the PRU for a while. Because of embarrassment at its findings at a time of wage restraint, perhaps?

The tendency in the Civil Service for the last couple of years has been for the unions to get caught up in fighting for the continuance of the PRU as an institution (since at least it shows how relatively badly civil servants are paid even if it does nothing about it.) rather than for the unions themselves to determine the size of their demands and to fight for them.

This winter will see the publication of the findings of the reactivated PRU; findings which will undoubtedly show the need for large increases above the guidelines. Once again the Government will not accept the findings, but this time the unions are prepared for battle.

Such a fight will strengthen the Civil Service unions, and show more clearly the irrelevance of pay research in the struggle for pay. However, at a time when one part of the public sector, long bound by this iniquitous system, has the opportunity to throw it aside, other sections seek to impose upon themselves the same shackles.

Student nurses-no raw deal

EDGWARE General Hospital saw a remarkable turnout of student nurses at a joint COHSE and RCN meeting on September 3rd.

The meeting was called to discuss the Hospital Management's decision to cut by half the time available for secondment. This would mean students would be completing their training, either without experience of the maternity department, or without hospital psychiatric experience. In addition, the time in community nursing would be cut from eight weeks to ten days. This at a time when the government claims to be encouraging community nursing, and using that claim as an excuse to close hospitals.

Pressure of work on the wards and the shortage of trained staff at the hospital (60 vacancies at the last count) were cited as the major causes of a marked decline in standards. In the recent final examinations only one third of the students passed. As one nurse said: "They get three years' hard

labour out of us and our going away present is a place on the dole queue."

There are many ways to close a hospital, to destroy a health service. The government is aware that if it announces a closure openly, it will face great public opposition. Far easier to run down nurse training, as without qualified nurses the hospitals effectively close themselves.

The great public support for preserving the health service will be wasted unless there is union organisation. Despair and exhaustion have been a way of life for nurses at Edgware. Organisation is a new thing. To see a 90 per cent turnout of those involved was a leap forward. From that meeting, management have been called to answer the nurses' proposal for both the psychiatric and maternity secondment to be restored, and for a community secondment of eight weeks. If management's answer is unsatisfactory, then the students propose action.

Undersea life under threat

"AN energy-hungry world is turning to the oceans to satisfy its needs. Already, oil and gas are being extracted from the seabeds. In the coming years, this use of the seas will increase while the harnessing of waves, wind and tides and the possible siting of nuclear sites on artificial islands will involve new technologies and - in their wake - new hazards to the marine environment." (IUCN News.)

While these developments are of great potential value to mankind, future benefits must not be won by endangering the survival of animal or plant species. Capitalist states are myopically failing to address themselves to the problem of ensuring the retention of a proper balance in the marine environment when exploiting the resources of their waters. Coastal states, for example, are to be allowed to develop their fisheries even to the point of endangering their own interests (witness the destruction of the Scottish herring fisheries).

Notes from an observer at Brighton; contd from Page 1

over-technical, even incoherent, the floor recognised the concern and humanity expressed in them. The polished performances with rehearsed wit are received tepidly but the moments of passion, anger or enthusiasm for justice are greatly admired.

A quivering fury against injustice was expressed by a black South African answering the resident 'commie basher' and once a big 'commie' himself, who in conformity with the American guest had expounded his hatred for Russia. The African, using the name of the anti-communist in derision and contempt, but with no "brother" attached, said: "you denounce the USSR for selling arms to the people of South Africa. We shall go to the devil himself to buy arms. Get back to your high church."

The debate on the international scene was the best and one of the best attended at Congress. The delegates made it clear that they were opposed to war and that they refused to be drawn into any crusade against the USSR. The war-

mongers of the 'left' and the 'right' should have paid particular attention to this section. The quietness and firmness shown by workers from the floor that they were not going to play in the "James Bond scenario" being prepared for the workers of the world were noteworthy. One of the protagonists of the 'kill 'em all' - meaning the Russians - school also put China and Chile in the same sentence. Politicians should learn who are their enemies

It was pleasant to see the large number of women delegates and better still the sound basic quality of their contributions. Women officers still speak in the bland and boring pattern on 'women's questions'. But from the floor came thoughtful speeches by working women on the problems of the working class including those of women. Two of the most admired speakers from the floor were women. One an NUT member who patiently and persistently fought for her right to speak, then gave the definitive statement on the care and education of young

children. The Minister of Education should hang her head in shame. Maureen Duffy, I must use her name because it provides her bread as a writer, delighted all Congress when she denounced a smooth talking man who opposed the resolution to pay authors for public library lending of books.

From one who has only watched, not participated, in several TUC Congresses, I came away strengthened in the belief that not only is the working class the source of all wealth, it is the source of all goodness. It was interesting that from the hundreds of leaflets distributed outside the hall, those of the Trotskyist groups and those of the Conservative 'trade unionists' expressed the same sentiments, hatred, fear and contempt for the TUC General Council, the delegates and the whole working class. None of them, however, would gain any comfort from this conference, nor would the Labour Government, or the opposition, or the war monger provoking the world in the guise of capitalism or socialism.

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Public Meetings
THE autumn series of public meetings in London organised by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), will commence on September 22nd, 1978. The venue of the meetings will alternate between BELLMAN BOOKSHOP, 155 Fortress Rd, NW5 and CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, WC1

Sept 22	Bellman Bookshop	If you vote, you vote for Capitalism
Oct 6	Conway Hall	Albania - Beacon of Marxism-Leninism
Oct 20	Bellman Bookshop	British troops out of Ireland; US Bases out of Britain

Bristol
An Autumn series of public meetings begins this month in Bristol. All meetings take place at Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road, Bristol. Friday 29th September... first meeting, on "Closures and the rundown of Britain".