



GOVERNMENT NUCLEAR DEATH THREAT

THE WILLINGNESS of the Thatcher Government to use the lives of the British people as the stake in a horrifying nuclear escalation is the key to NATO's present war plans. NATO hopes that British and European public opinion will not seize on this issue, as it did on the question of deploying neutron bombs in Europe, and prevent the siting of nuclear weapons capable of destroying the Soviet Union on US bases in Britain, Holland, Belgium and West Germany.

The proposal, which is to be decided on at a NATO ministerial meeting in December, is that improved US Pershing missiles capable of wiping out Moscow or Leningrad are to be installed in West Germany and US Cruise missiles capable of penetrating to any part of the Soviet Union will be stationed in East Anglia, in Holland, Belgium and, possibly, Italy. Tomohawk missiles with a range of 1500 miles could also be positioned at five US bases in western Europe.

There is resistance to these plans. Norway and Denmark have sensibly opted out of this perilous nuclear game. In both Holland and Belgium the governments are concerned about public reaction, particularly after Brezhnev's offer to reduce Warsaw Pact armed forces and missiles in eastern Europe and to guarantee immunity from nuclear attack to countries not producing or harbouring nuclear weapons. West Germany would like at least two other NATO countries to agree before going ahead. The Government there is aware that there is bound to be particular concern about the placing in Germany, from which the Soviet Union was so recently savagely invaded, of nuclear weapons which could destroy the Soviet Union; and the assurance offered that "an American finger will be on the trigger" does not help.

Only the British Thatcher Government made known from the start its complete willingness to accept the nuclear missiles, at the direct risk to the people of Britain. The Defence Minister has said that the decision must be taken with "the fullest consultation with other members of the Alliance". But in fact, even if other countries have the good sense to back out of this fatal scheme, NATO will go ahead with it on a joint US-British basis. Indeed, it is the stupid

boast of the British Government that it is the only country in the Atlantic Alliance, except for the US, that contributes to all three legs of the NATO war cauldron: strategic nuclear forces, tactical forces and conventional land, sea and air formations.

Of course it is easy to see the attraction for the US of planting nuclear weapons capable of destroying the Soviet Union all over western Europe. The scheme is presented as linking west Europe more firmly to the massive US nuclear deterrent and therefore making nuclear war less likely; but it would make it possible for the US, particularly with SALT agreements limiting its own strategic commitment, to let western Europe and the Soviet bloc destroy each other - the old dream of letting Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union destroy each other - and then at last to realise its frequently thwarted ambition of absolute world domination.

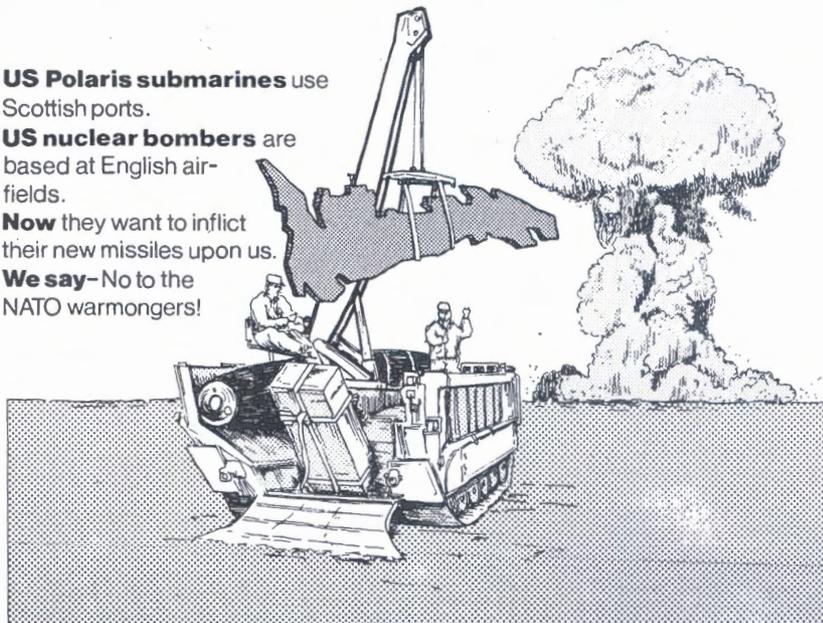
There is only one answer to this scenario of death which is being written by the major capitalist powers. The people must speak out. We, the people of Britain, must say to our Government: you will not gamble this way with our lives and the lives of our children. We demand an immediate withdrawal of all US bases from our soil and the

US Polaris submarines use Scottish ports.

US nuclear bombers are based at English air-fields.

Now they want to inflict their new missiles upon us.

We say- No to the NATO warmongers!



NATO means war against workers-everywhere!

Immediate elimination of all nuclear weapons in this country. These nuclear weapons are not for the defence of the British people but for the defence of capitalism against the world's people.

We must realise that in making these demands not one of the Parliamentary political parties will speak for us. They are too committed to the preservation of the capitalist system themselves. We have to speak out in the name of the British labour movement, the vast majority of the people of Britain, who have everything to gain and nothing to lose in a Britain that threatens nobody.

We must call on the people of western Europe and the people of the US to join in a mighty denunciation of the making and stockpiling of nuclear weapons that will echo among people all over the world and put a stop to this utterly gratuitous horror which has haunted us ever since the first atomic bomb was exploded on unsuspecting civilians as a threat to socialism.

Keep US missiles out of Europe!



Unemployment and sickness benefits - another tax ?

THE INLAND Revenue has announced a study into the possibility of taxing unemployment and sickness benefits. Presented as the righting of an anomaly, this is part of the government's attack on working class militancy. High unemployment is no guarantee of a docile working class and so the sick and unemployed are now to be held hostage.

The government's plan reflects a long cherished desire on the part of some sections of the ruling class. Its last concrete expression was the proposal for a tax credit system under the Heath administration. It is more than vindictiveness, however. It is part of a philosophy of destruction which would rather see starvation than unprofitability.

Unemployment insurance by the State was first introduced in 1911, although it did not cover all workers until after the Second World War. In origin it aroused doubts of being a step on the road to corporatism. This has not stopped the ruling class from continually trying to erode the benefits. In the thirties there were arbitrary cuts in the rates. More recently there has been great pressure to replace it with means-

tested benefits.

It has always irked the employers that workers would say no to starvation wages. This unwillingness to be threatened has grown in the last decade. Consequently the ruling class seeks new form of intimidation. Whilst arguing that the taxation of benefits would eliminate the "poverty trap", the solution presented is to impoverish the sick and unemployed still more. The threat to disqualify strikers' families from benefits is more openly aggressive.

Both attacks show the extent to which the ruling class will go to achieve its aims (a quiescent working class and an increased rate of profit). They reckon without the strength of the working class which will resist their barr plans for Britain.

Just as the fight in the 19 years was not for increased redundancy payments, the fight now will be for jobs and health and welfare services not just to raise the level of benefits. What the government has shown by its attack on aspect of the welfare state that it has done with reform. So should we have done reforms within capitalism and the class that destroy at the same time.

Historic Notes

THE TERM 'Luddism', has in common parlance, come to mean 'mindless wreckers'. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Luddism was a coherent working class movement which grew up in the early 19th century in the cloth industry in Nottinghamshire and which spread to Lancashire, Yorkshire and other surrounding counties. The slick explanation for this movement, which made a concerted attack on machinery in the cloth industry, is that it was a spontaneous outburst of violence against new machinery which had brought about a loss of jobs and a drop in wages.

Thus the 'ignorant' workers smashed the machines which were the tangible cause of their employment and falling wages. However, hosiery machines had been in use in Nottinghamshire since Elizabethan times. Moreover, the workers in the industry had suggested and made many improvements to the machines since that time. Similarly, in 1812, when the Luddite movement in Lancashire was growing, power looms were not much in evidence. In fact, hand looms increased in

Luddites – workers against exploitation

number well into the 1820's. New machinery in itself was not the target of Luddism.

So-called friends and experts on the working class, if they bother to acknowledge the existence of Luddism at all, take a slightly different line, but come to the same conclusion – 'stupid, ignorant workers who can see no further than their noses.' The explanation is that the poor workers were misguided, that all mechanisation was progressive at a time of emerging capitalism.

All such explanations are false. First, to say that the Luddite movement was spontaneous and unorganised is to say that the persons involved had not thought about it. In fact, the Luddite movement was very organised, with well thought out campaigns. The organisation was so good, at a time when any working class solidarity was illegal, that the ruling class never broke it. Indeed, this is the reason that we know so little about it. Vast numbers of men, from far and wide, were organised with military precision into forces to attack planned targets, often

factories, where the owner had introduced new machines to undercut labour, produce shoddy goods and herd workers like cattle. Were the Luddites wrong to organise against this? Far from mindless wrecking, the stockings of Nottingham hung notices on frames, owned by employers who had agreed to the conditions laid down by the workers, declaring: "This frame is making full fashioned work, at the full price." These frames were untouched.

Those participating in Luddite activities were from a wide range of trades, not just from the cloth trades. As the records of those Luddites caught and convicted show, there were cutters, cobblers, farm labourers, inn keepers and mechanics. That the Luddites were an integral part of the working class communities in which they lived is shown by the support they received from their communities which hid them; hardly ever was an activist informed upon, except by spies, and that only rarely because spies found great difficulty in breaking into the organisation and commu-

unities.

Luddism must not be seen in isolation from other working class movements, both before and after 1812-14, the hey day of the movement. Known Luddites included men who were at the forefront in organising the emerging trade unions, then illegal. Future leaders in the battle for the Ten Hour Day and in the Chartist movement, as well as former Despardists and Jacobins.

Some apologists of Luddism say that it was a 'narrow' trade union movement, to achieve higher wages and preserve jobs. As if trade unionism was ever narrow! What was at issue was the 'freedom' of the laissez faire capitalists to destroy the customs of the trade, with the lowering of wages, the destruction of skills and a reduction in the quality of the finished product. The principles that the Luddites fought for were the exact opposite of these. It is the same fight that we are faced with today; firstly survival and eventually the destruction of the system that maligns us, physically, morally, economically and mentally.

Book review

'A tale of a tub and other satires'

by Jonathan Swift

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY writers understood the value of satire as a weapon and the best of them, including Swift, used needle-pointed rapiers to expose evil. "Gulliver's Travels" was an indictment of the British social system but the unflinching optimism of human beings has turned it into a harmless tale for children.

No one however could smooth out the black satire of "A Tale of a Tub". Swift saves his blackest humour for the rich and their relations with the poor, particularly in Ireland. "What the Guests cannot eat may be given to the Poor and the Dogs under the Table may gnaw the Bones." He described a plan to lessen the number of unwanted children of the poor.

"Pigs, too frequent at our Tables, are in no way comparable in Taste or Magnificence, to a well-grown yearling Child; which roasted whole will make a considerable Figure at a Lord Mayor's Feast."

"Merry gentlemen of this Kingdom, having of late destroyed their Deer; the want of Venison might be well supplied by the Bodies of young Lads and Maidens, not exceeding 14 Years of Age, nor under 12; so great a number of both sexes is now ready to starve for Want of Work." "I would recommend buying the children alive and dressing them hot from the Knife as we do roasting Pigs."

The Milk Snatcher is now snatching childrens' dinners and closing childrens' hospitals. Workers who have a "nice" line of their own in black humour can describe her as well as could Swift. Better still, they can throw into oblivion her government, ie her personal servants, puppets though they be.

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No comedy in Ealing just £2.5 M cuts

WHEN the government first announced its intention to cut £4000 million from public expenditure, The Worker saw this as an attack on 200 years of working class civilisation. This was not merely short-sightedness on the part of the Government, it was a concerted attack on the very existence of our class and all that it stood for in terms of human dignity and independence. 'For two hundred years,' said The Worker, 'ever since the brutality of the industrial revolution, the working class has fought for dignity. There was a time when health care was only for the rich, when unemployment meant starvation, when education was too seditious for the common people. Now we have the spectre of that time returning, masked in the mathematics of £4000 million.'

The sombre truth of these words has been proved again and again over the last few months. Councils throughout the country, with one or two honourable exceptions, are beginning to implement Government directives, and with an eagerness that is downright undignified. Ealing is but one example amongst many. The Policy and Resources Committee met on October 2nd and decided to recommend to the full Council ways of reducing public expenditure in the borough by 5 per cent. A starting price of £2½ million pounds has been put on the welfare of the people of Ealing.

First the elderly. Increased charges for meals on wheels and at day centres, and the stopping of transport provision to voluntary organisations during the evening and at weekends will fetch £45,000, the closure of Elthorne day centre a further £33,000. It is proposed to stop holiday provision for the elderly too, a measly £9,000. The young are also to suffer. Amherhurst Lodge Mother and Baby Home and the sale of the site will fetch £18,000. Children will be unable to go school until 'strictly required by statutory admission requirements', a bargain at £285,000. Ealing College of Higher Education is to restrict its ex-



Demonstration against the cuts.

Photo: Ealing Gazette

penditure by £1½million; this will bring in £105,000 net of pooling. Southall College of Technology is to lose 3 per cent of its budget and adult education centres are to be sold. One school has already been sold to the Church of England, bought with the help of an £80,000 grant from the Council, and there are plans to sell at least one other. An asset stripping exercise even private industry would be proud of!

But the biggest savings of all will come from the jobs of the workers who provide these services. Their skills and dedication are to be rewarded with redundancy. Why else would the Policy and Finance Committee seek to rescind previous agreements of no enforced redundancies? Twenty posts in the education central administration could go for £92,000. The cuts proposed for Ealing College alone would mean some forty redundancies if translated into job equivalents. And those teachers still lucky enough to be employed will find little security. If school-teachers were employed on 'flexible short-term contracts', the Committee tells us, the saving on restricting school admissions mentioned above could rise to

£480,000. As if all this were not enough, a reliable source at the Town Hall tells us that this is merely the 'thin end of the wedge'. A further £½ million cut is to be proposed for the education budget alone once this lot has gone through.

The Further Education sub-committee has already refused to agree to the proposals. At a rally on October 16th, Ealing Council is to be told in no uncertain terms that these assets are not theirs to sell, they belong to the working class of this country. The Town Hall will squeal that they cannot afford them, that they will have to put up the rates if they don't cut. We shall tell them to look again. The Daily Telegraph recently reported Biffen explaining the present Government's policy. The Government, he said, was not interested in blanket cuts. There were increased expenditure priorities and these were defence and law and order.

We must say however, let us have back the money that is to be spent on defence and law and order. Let us decide the priorities of this country, not a government bent on the destruction of working class welfare.

The Week

THE US have had a base on Cuba since 1903. Yet this is not enough. They are to set up a Caribbean task force, which will stage assault landing exercises using US marines. And Carter speechifies on television about world peace!

This week, more than 8000 firemen, representing every brigade in the country, marched in Nottingham to protest against 22 redundancies announced by Nottinghamshire County Council. It marks the beginning of a campaign by the Fire Brigades Union to fight impending cuts in services all over the county, at a time when Fire Brigades are already severely under strength.

Riot control equipment is to be introduced into Britain's prisons. Officers are being trained in the use of helmets, shields and staves, based on the army's and police's experience in these matters. Another example of how the military occupation of Northern Ireland has had an effect here.

As Hua prepares to visit his capitalist friends in Europe - including Britain - the Chinese have announced that Chiang Ching, Chang Chun Chao, Yao Wen Yuan and Wang Hung Wen are to be put on trial. The invasion of Vietnam was obviously insufficient to divert attention away from China's internal problems, so that now the ruling clique have to resort to 'show trials' instead!

EEC taxpayers will have to pay out £1000 million in the next year to dispose of the powdered milk surplus. To remedy this, the EEC Commissioners intend to try and cut back on dairy production. Nor can a more systematic programme of destruction for the dairy industry be ruled out; they do not regard milk as a 'basic human food'.

SID HENKE, life-long fighter in the organised workers' cause and Marxist, died on September 9 at the age of 88. He will be missed by his many comrades

Editorial

Drug production blocked

THE BRITISH Government is about to give the one country in the world which has ever had the inhumanity to use atomic weapons on a civilian population the right to place on British soil nuclear missiles pointed aggressively at Moscow. The US intermediate missiles, to be installed on American air bases in East Anglia will make Britain a prime target for nuclear attack the moment there is even the possibility of nuclear war sparked off by the actions of a country which has already started two major wars since the end of World War II in the interest of American capitalism.

Adding an insult to our intelligence to this terrible injury to our safety and the safety of our children yet unborn, the Government calls this stupid and vicious arrangement for delegating British sovereignty to Washington the 'defence of Britain'. This Government has already shown what it thinks of the British people, condemning some to death, robbing many more of a decent education and attention to their health and attacking the very citizens least able to look out for themselves, children, the old, the weak and infirm; and all in the name of creating a climate where profits will be healthier. It maintains and increases the expenditure that makes profiteers in the armaments industry fat and cuts the expenditure which maintains the well-being of the people. The Government is no doubt defending something, but it's not the people of Britain.

How could the defence of the people of Britain possibly link our country in a deathlike embrace with the most war-like, nakedly aggressive country in the world today which props up numerous brutally repressive fascist regimes in the interest of the 'free world' ie the world free for the exploitation of the big corporations?

How could the defence of the people of Britain have required British governments to fight wars in Malaya, in Kenya, in Cyprus, in Aden, in Oman and to keep thousands of troops in Ireland? - troops which have also been used for strike-breaking in Britain.

How could the defence of the people of Britain be served by NATO, a military alliance of capitalist powers, formed originally as an anti-communist force to carry on Hitler's good work, and maintained because it was a useful depot of arms and men for putting down revolts in the colonial and semi-colonial territories of the European imperialists, or for threatening the working people in the NATO countries themselves as De Gaulle did at the time of civil disturbances in France in 1968?

The truth is that none of these actions or arrangements of British governments have been taken for the defence of the British people. They are all for the defence of capitalism, both here, in the US and in Western Europe. The policy, once secret, now quite open, is to defend capitalism to the last British worker still alive. To call this most recent escalation of the preparation for a nuclear holocaust on British soil 'defensive' is the biggest, blackest, most vicious lie any government has ever told any people in history.

The defence of the British people can only be undertaken by ourselves and it must begin with ridding Britain of all foreign bases and taking Britain out of all aggressive alliances. Britain will and can be defended by us, armed with purely defensive weapons and determined that our country shall never be invaded by anyone, including the 'defenders' of capitalism's right to operate anywhere in the world to the harm of the people there. We Britains can defend ourselves in the same way as the working people of Russia, China, Korea, Vietnam and Albania did in their struggles against capitalism and imperialist aggression.

A capitalist government can only defend capitalism. If our defence of our own people on our own soil involves the overthrow and replacement of capitalist government, so be it!

THE DEVELOPMENT and supply of new drugs to treat rare diseases has almost come to an end in Britain. Like every other industry, the pharmaceutical industry looks for profits, and there is no incentive to develop drugs for rare diseases because the costs of development greatly exceed the return from limited sales.

Before marketing a new drug, a manufacturer or distributor must obtain a product license from the Licensing Authority, whom he must satisfy that it is both safe and effective. To do this, lengthy and costly preclinical trials on animals and clinical trials on patients are necessary. This legislation is a legacy of the thalidomide disaster.

The protection it affords was long overdue, but the cost of the development of new drugs is now enormous. Drug companies, caught up in the race for profits

and for new 'brand leaders' every five years (the life span of a drug patent) turn to the production of drugs for common conditions with potentially vast 'sales', such as antibiotics and tranquillisers.

Not all drugs come from the pharmaceutical industry, and important contributions are occasionally made by individual clinicians and research workers. In the past the industry was prepared to raze up their products and manufacture them, even if the demand was small. Now they are only taken up if there are prospects of high profits.

In this instance the cumbersome and inflexible safety regulations designed to protect people from the big profit-making firms create barriers for the individual clinician seeking to produce a new drug. Further developments are blocked, and he is faced by a choice of two evils.

He could either apply for exemption from the requirement to hold a product licence. The drug could then be obtained legally if he could find a manufacturer willing to supply it, but the necessary quality controls would not be available, nor could any other doctors use it.

Or he could obtain a product licence himself and arrange for a drug company to manufacture it, but if the drug is required for only a few patients, drug companies are not likely to be interested.

An example of this appalling situation is the treatment of Wilson's disease, a painful and crippling disease which, untreated, is fatal. Since 1956 a small group of patients have owed their continuing lives and health to the efforts of one doctor and his laboratory staff. Penicillamine, which is now in general use for a number of other conditions, was first developed and prepared in his own laboratory. It was the first drug to alleviate Wilson's disease and is extremely effective. The one drawback is that it is unsuitable for long-term use with some patients because of toxicity. This same doctor went on to produce in 1966 a new drug, triethylene tetramine dihydrochloride, which did not have this problem. He is still unable to find any manufacturer willing to supply this drug, and he has to prepare the drug in his own laboratory. It has still never been subjected to formal toxicity testing. What will his patients do when this doctor retires?

Another example of a much-needed drug being available yet unobtainable is cysteamine which could be used to treat paracetamol poisoning - a much more common condition than Wilson's disease.

Just imagine how the treatment of these and other incurable diseases could be improved if we had control over our resources and if they were properly used for drug research and development! Under capitalism 'safety regulations' are designed to protect the drug companies from incurring huge insurance claims rather than to supply the people with the drugs they need. What greater condemnation could there be?

Attack on higher education - colleges to be downgraded

THE RULING CLASS attack on higher education continues with the publication recently of an article in the Three Banks' Review by that well known enemy of all students, Sir Charles Carter, the former Vice Chancellor of Lancaster University.

The article gave the impression of floating a new view for discussion only, that at least 9 of the UK's 44 universities were not of sufficient academic excellence to continue as universities, but should be downgraded, with no postgraduate teaching or research.

He goes on to suggest a tiered system of higher education, with the lowest tier of about 200 community colleges' around the country giving most students two year courses, while living at home. The middle tier of about 50 colleges would include the downgraded universities but would not include all the present 30 polytechnics; obviously those polytechnics not included would be downgraded.

The two year course students, while entitled to grants to cover basic costs, would have to obtain loans for all extra expenses. It

would seem therefore that as well as many students having to accept lower standards of education, they will even have to pay extra for the privilege!

The Committee of Directors of Polytechnics has already discussed plans to abandon the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) validation for some of their courses, which means downgrading them from degree level.

For several years all sections of higher education have been put in a financial straight-jacket. This is yet another example of the classic ruling class tactic, of starving an industry of funds and then turning around and saying that the industry is not viable because it is declining.

Quinquennial reviews are due soon for several polytechnics and obviously there is a danger of some losing their CNAA validation. Concrete proposals are being made for the North East London Poly which may well result in the downgrading of many degree courses. Teeside Poly has already been threatened by the CNAA with the withdrawal of validation unless the authorities increase its funding.

Pay battle in Universities

FROM A VERY successful national one day stoppage and rally of over 1000 members in London, their first ever national strike, Nalgo members of clerical, administrative and related staffs within the universities have been implementing various forms of industrial action in pursuit of their pay claim of 24 per cent.

Depending on their depth of organisation, experience and impact, over 35 universities are blacking registration, banning overtime, working to rule, organising lightning strikes and blacking private work. The response from the employers, in their usual feudal manner, is one of threats, intimidation and bullying. Members have been suspended at Warwick, Kent, Cardiff, threats of suspension have been made at Leeds, Swansea, Exeter, Strathclyde and Brunel.

Wherever members have been suspended other sections have upped the tempo of the action, usually involving lightning strikes.

Warwick University, famed for its political files on staff and students, is now being blacked totally by university staffs throughout the country. The most successful blacking of student registration has been at Sussex University with the management postponing student registration completely until January 1980! Also at Sussex, by blacking fees, the sum of over £1½ millions has been prevented from reaching the university's bank accounts. Throughout finance departments and computerised library systems, and with the distribution of student union cards etc, disruption and backlog prevail. East Anglia University, not content with blacking registration this year are threatening to black next year's as well.

It is estimated that the large universities could lose up to £1 million pounds per week in blacked income if the dispute is prolonged. Support from other campus unions, AUT, ASTMS; NUPE and NUS has been forthcoming.



Pupils of Highbury Hill School seeking support in local Chapel Street Market for their fight against secondary school closures in Islington. Their vigour has inspired other schools and an extensive campaign against draconian ILEA proposals is well under way



TED ROYCRAFT, friend, brother and comrade, has died. Ted's whole life was devoted to the labour movement of Britain. He was, till his retirement some eighteen months ago, AUEW Assistant Divisional Organiser. Before becoming a full time official he was a Shop Steward and Convenor at Hilgar Watts. He also served for several years as a delegate to the National Committee.

He was dedicated to obtaining 100 per cent trade union organisation in all engineering factories. He was a brilliant negotiator on behalf of organised workers. He made a considerable contribution to the advancement and progress of engineers and never ceased advocating the need to change the capitalist system and make Britain socialist.

A Londoner, Ted was a founder member of the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) and right up to his death served on the Central Committee and in the Secretariat. An Authority on many aspects of the labour movement, he wrote many articles and leaflets and contributed to the preparation of Party pamphlets.

As well as for his many services to the working class, Ted will be remembered and cherished for his unflinching cheerfulness in adversity, his dry humour and his completely dependable, warm-hearted comradeship over his whole working life.

* IN BRIEF

Housing

The latest government figures on housebuilding show that they are the worst since 1951. And as council house sales continue apace, families on council waiting lists will find little comfort in the Tory plans for public expenditure.

Jobs

With another oil price rise on the way, and European Governments calling for more energy savings, British Leyland have unveiled their contribution to the problem. They have announced that they intend to close their plant at Park Royal in London which makes Titan double-decker buses.

This London South District Committee pays tribute to all Members Shop Stewards and Officials of this Union actively involved in our struggle with the EEF for improved wages and conditions.

The improvements obtained and the victory achieved was due to the loyalty, unity and determination of our members in the face of the prolonged and aggressive resistance of the reactionary EEF supported by a hysterical press campaign against the union.

Our members in a major industry have paved the way through their fight and sacrifice for progress to be made on longer holidays and reduced working hours for all organised industrial workers in Britain, Europe and the world.

Let us make our union an even stronger organisation for progress and to achieve our members' full aspirations.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Tory Party in Conference

WE ALL know too well the vile policies the present government intends; little more than refinements in cruelty were added at the Conservative Party Conference. Delegates disappointed in not yet having a hanging government had at least the thrill of imagining military style detention camps proposed by Whitelaw, applauded the idea of cutting welfare benefits, but increasing by 450 the number of staff employed to investigate unlawful claims, bayed not only for the sale of council houses but delighted in the proposal to abolish private tenant's rights as well: offered full support to the pro-apartheid Muzorewa regime in Rhodesia, and so on.

But who could have been prepared for the stupidity of the gathering? Waiting lists under Labour rose to "an all-time peak, a disgrace", said Vaughan, the Health Minister. But can they really believe that by pointing the finger at another they will escape blame themselves for increasing that self-came destruction of the nation ten-fold.

It is as naive and stupid as to believe (as apparently they do) that by painting the evils real (and most often imaginary) of a far-off Soviet imperialism, the British people should accept the present evils perpetrated at home in Britain, with the destruction of British industry in the name of a NATO and US imperialism which sees no other role for the country than that of a launching pad for missiles.

The money diverted from hospitals and schools is £4 million, they say. They say the cost for the current missile redevelopment is around £4 million. Can they believe that no-one can put two and two together - even before the education cuts bite?

In similar vein, the Education Secretary, Carlisle, plans a 5 per cent cut in education provision, but maintains that it "will not damage" education.

On health, they deny that cuts in spending are destroying the service, but trumpet the need for lotteries and private fund raising, since the NHS is near financial collapse.

Even the line-up of front-bench speakers paraded their "realism" and mock conciliatory posture towards the trade union movement (in striking contrast to the so-called Tory trade unionists who made up for the lack of numbers by their venom and volubility). But it was as if in the hope that we would remember their "reasonableness" after the great leader had hogged the applause of the faithful, in delivering the summation all wanted to hear.

Her final words at this Conference were an impassioned plea to trade unionists to defy strike orders and scab "in the national interest". She condemned the "militant madness" of the unions and claimed that millions of workers went in fear of trade union power. This is a vicious reversal of a situation in which millions of workers have only their trade unions to protect them from this worker-hating, union-bashing Government.

Education attack

WE ARE constantly harangued by reports in the press about violence and vandalism in our schools, but the identity of these vandals was never more succinctly exposed than at a public meeting held last Friday by the CPB(ML) at Conway Hall.

Titled "Education attacked from nursery to college", the facts which emerged from the speaker's introduction were devastating. Britain's nursery provision is the worst in Europe, class sizes are increasing, 40,000 teachers are unemployed, student grants are being eroded, discretionary awards slashed, courses closed, 39 colleges of education shut down, a 6 per cent reduction in university places - the list went on, and all of this the logical conclusion of successive attacks on education by successive capitalist governments.

But the meeting did not deal only with the harsh facts. Instead, it got down to the task of coming to terms with the crucial questions of "Why this attack?" and "How do we fight?" In order to understand the 'why' we explored the myth that education is a privilege given to the working class by a benevolent capitalism. The truth of the matter of course is that any advance we have made as a class, we have had to fight for. But as a developing capitalism required skilled workers, so the 'privilege' myth was spread.

We fought for mass education, for inherent in that education is the dignity of our class and from that dignity comes organisation and strength. Education, which is all about imparting knowledge

(and as one speaker pointed out, that is the oldest skill of all), provides the means by which we can begin to solve contradictions.

Demands such as those for smaller classes are demands we must fight for if we are for education, particularly when thousands of teachers are unemployed. A teacher present at the meeting pointed out that the average class size at Eton is twelve! The ruling class is not arguing for large class sizes for its own children - only for ours.

More sinister still is the decimation of teacher training. In London there is a situation where the future supply of teachers will not replace those who will retire or die.

The claim that education must be geared to the needs of industry is very telling - if the destruction of British industry continues, what need does the ruling class have for an educated, skilled working class? Which of course is where outfits like the Manpower Services Commission enter the picture - those employed will push buttons, those who aren't will dig ditches - and they call that 'education'.

What emerged from the meeting was that it is clear that the ruling class is bent on destroying education and we can only save education by destroying them. For, by destroying education, they seek to destroy us. A student present summed it up by saying, "We have to get smart" and have no more illusions. It's not just a fight for education, it's a fight for Britain and it's a fight for the whole of the working class."

Bookshops

Bellman Bookshop 155 Fortess Road, London NW5
Brighton Workers Bookshop 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton
Clarion Books 5 The Precinct, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex
Main Trend Books 17 Midland Road, St. Philips, Bristol
Northern Star Bookshop 18A Leighton Street, Leeds
Basildon Bookstall Tues, Fri, Sat Marketplace
Hull Bookstall Old Town Market, Saturdays
Liverpool Bookstall every Thursday Liverpool University

Public Meetings

Public Meetings in London will start at 7.30 pm

Fri Oct 26	The Party of the British Working Class.	Bellman Bookshop
Fri Nov 9	Britain in the World Today.	Conway Hall
Fri Nov 23	Britain's Future, solely in the Working Class.	Bellman Bookshop
Fri Nov 30	Britain in the 80's, an Industrial Wasteland	Conway Hall

OXFORD

Mon Oct 29	Save Education	Cowley Community Centre, 8pm
Mon Nov 26	For an Industrial Revolution	Cowley Community Centre, 8pm

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