

# THE WORKER



Published by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) No. 7 April 4th 1977 3p.

## NO CONFIDENCE IN CAPITALISM



A National Health Service for British Capitalism

### Plessey men opt for 'Breathing Space'.

PLESSEY'S staff workers on the Liverpool sites, bar Kirkby, voted at a mass meeting on March 14th to let management back in after the recent lock-out. The meeting heard a recommendation to end the lock-out based on a management guarantee not to release specific details of redundancy proposals as planned and to use the 90 day period for negotiations.

The occupation had not received the unstinting support of the hourly paid staff. The previous week, staff workers had accepted an eight-point agreement with the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, which included a call for a joint occupation in the event of negotiations breaking down. This latter point was stressed as a safeguard if negotiations were fruitless, it being argued that we were united with hourly paid workers behind this plan.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. That unity is required is obvious, but mass unity is the key. While staff workers had accepted these points from the

Confederation the hourly paid workers had not even been informed of them, let alone decided to back the plan. (In the same way, the implications for the future of the industry and the run down of the main Edgelane site had not been put to the hourly paid workforce when support was asked for by the staff). Clearly, the idea of buying time for "reasonable talks" was portrayed under false pretences. However, the breathing space can be used to good effect if hourly paid workers realise that their livelihood is equally jeopardised by the company's plans, and agree to unite behind the Confederation plan which they are supposedly committed to. Unity on a mass basis with the staff would strengthen and shorten any future struggle against redundancy.

Plessey workers may otherwise pay a high price for learning how bankrupt Social Democratic ideas are. This philosophy of living with capitalism rather than destroying it has meant in their own case substituting abject ne-

gotiation for struggle. However, the fight is not over, for the company will certainly insist on redundancies. Then, the "joint plan" to be put into operation by the workers, otherwise it will surely remain a 'sop' for aiding the return of management.

Meanwhile, management's hopes rest on keeping the workforce divided. They hope there will be enough workers volunteering for redundancy to undermine the struggle.

Enough examples of misery exist amongst the staff workers from the last batch of volunteers to indicate the futility of that! More hourly paid workers are now realising how suicidal it is, let alone the fact that their jobs belong to all of us and no individual has the right to sell what is not theirs.

Some workers are worried about losing pay for the duration of the work-in. This must surely highlight the need to fight since their worries over money will multiply with a life on the dole. This is not to say that pay is not important, rather to emphasise **cont. page 4.**

PARLIAMENTARY horse-trading, by which the Labour Government with Liberal connivance will continue in power, has nothing to do with the good of the country or the needs and aspirations of the working class. To the contrary, it is simply a shabby arrangement whereby the best interests of capitalism at this moment in time can be served. Only a Labour Government has any hope of squeezing another year of 'voluntary' wage cuts out of the organised working class. And with a ten per cent lag between wages and rises in the cost of living, even in terms of what the Government is prepared to admit, the enormous profits netted by the last two years of wage cuts can be appreciated.

And even if there had been a general election, there would have been no way for workers, by voting for this capitalist party or that, to register their condemnation of unemployment, inflation, the destruction of Britain's industrial base or attacks on British national sovereignty through devolution and membership of the Common Market. Bourgeois democracy

never could mean the right of workers to vote on whether they are to go on being exploited or not.

Sick old men being carried by stretcher into the Westminster precinct so that a vote could be counted for the continuation of a while longer of the capitalist policies of Labour make a perfect symbol for the present empty state of bourgeois democracy in capitalism's general decline.

The government of a capitalist country, no matter which party is in power, is nothing but the executive committee of the capitalist class. For the working class to think its interests will ever be served by anything that goes on in that area is like the fatuous belief that the Bullock proposals will give the working class some say in the management of industry. It is Parliamentary cretinism.

How could the Government be expected to do anything about unemployment or any other of the ills that beset our class when the Government itself is the biggest employer? And it does not matter in the least whether the overseer of this giant capitalist plant wears a cloth cap to try and look like a worker or a flowered bonnet in order to look like a lady.

The working class has, in fact, brought about the present situation. The party which says it represents the working class making up over 90 per cent of the population cannot even muster a majority. But passive withdrawal of support is no longer enough. Failure to reject the social contract outright is surrender. We have to go over to the attack, not on this capitalist party or that on the basis of some phony 'lesser-of-two-evils' argument, but an attack on capitalism itself. And such an attack must not be diverted into the usual Parliamentary channels.

### Budget--- Robbing Peter to pay Peter

EVERYONE knew that the main purpose of the Chancellor's budget was to use cuts in taxation to bribe workers to accept another year of cuts in wages. And the carrot, which we have to pay for anyway out of cuts in public expenditure, is really very small.

Healey is offering us £1500m in tax reductions; but £1000m of it which comes from reducing the basic rate from 35 per cent to 33 per cent is additional on working class agreement to a third year of pay restraint. Altogether this represents about 4.5 per cent on the average wage - at a time when the inflationary rise in the cost of living is running at over 15 per cent.

And in any case this 4.5 per cent is not a gift from the Labour Government. The only money the Government has is ours. The tax reductions are more than

accounted for by the cut in public expenditure, agreed with the IMF, from £8800m this year to £7500m next year! This cut is on top of cuts already made in public expenditure of some £3000m.

The only relief in this budget is for corporations big and small.

The point of the budget of course is to try to make it appear that if the organised working class refuses to agree to the social contract for the third year, they will be depriving others, as well as themselves, of the generous gifts of a bountiful Chancellor. In fact, this budget is a complete reversal in capitalism's interest of every Labour Party pretence of serving the interests of working people.

## ANGER EXPRESSED BY THE INDIAN WORKERS AND PEASANTS

ELECTIONS - what did the Indian people get out of it? Certainly the sheer human pleasure of seeing the mighty fall with a thud. It is not every day that one can revel in the sight of all-powerful autocrats like India's erstwhile Prime Minister and her entourage humiliatedly defeated at, of all places, their own safe constituencies.

What has greater substance is that the people were able to express their anger at those who wanted to conceal India's exploitative and oppressive system by eliminating the very victims. The mass sterilisation campaign initiated by Mrs Gandhi's son with the full backing of her government, ostensibly to control the population but in reality to intimidate and coerce the people, backfired with a vengeance.

Some people feel that the inevitable instability of the Indian government under the hotch-potch that has won - the Janata

Party - which contains about every shade of reactionary ideology conceivable and old-style political bosses ready to use the same weapons as did Mrs Gandhi and her clique, will hasten the demise of the landlord-bourgeois state. Not at all. For that nothing short of a prolonged civil war, fought by peasants and workers under the leadership of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) will do.

The civil liberties - constitution enshrined - but terminated under the Emergency proclaimed by Mrs Gandhi in June 1975 are, it is said, to be resuscitated by the new lot. Some minor changes and a certain measure of mild and irrelevant criticism no doubt will be allowed but the real challenge to the system will be no more permitted now than it was in the past and long before the recent emergency.

The real working class militants, the real communists have

been harried and persecuted, imprisoned, tortured and hanged without trial for years and not one has been released under any amnesty so far. Strikes, declared illegal during the emergency, trade unions with their offices ransacked and funds in disarray, leaders killed by thugs employed by those in power are not likely to be encouraged by the new Prime Minister whose political philosophy is more in tune with American free-enterprise.

For the Indian people to be really free or able to eat and live in dignity there is only one road - the revolutionary road taken by Russia in 1917, China in 1949 and Vietnam more recently. Ballot box confrontations, for all the fun of the moment, foster illusions about short-cuts and postpone the real task of overthrowing the feudal-capitalist-colonial-structure that is sucking the lifeblood of millions of Indians.

## A future of prosperity and economic growth for the people of Vietnam

VIETNAM has become a symbol of the invincibility of a people unified around the goal of their own liberation and peace in their land - of courage, integrity and determination.

The tasks and perspectives which have emerged from the 4th Congress of the Vietnam Workers Party (held in December 1976) show also that the people of Vietnam are an expression of the hope and direction of the future for working people the world over. They have before them a formidable task: the reconstruction and

development of a country devastated by 30 years of barbaric war. Yet they envisage and plan with confidence a future of prosperity and economic growth - a future in which all their aspirations will be fulfilled by their own efforts - their aims quite simply a happier life for the people, "peace, independence and unity."

The 4th Congress was a dramatic reaffirmation of the final goal of the Vietnamese revolution - communism. It was a call to the tasks of Socialist reconstruction, establishing a 5-year economic

plan (1976-1980) as the first in a programme which aims within 20 years to build a strong, prosperous socialist country with "modern agriculture and industry, high cultural and scientific standards. . . . guaranteeing a happy life . . . Independence and sovereignty to the country." And, in a symbolic confirmation of this goal, the Vietnam Workers Party once again took up its original name - Communist Party of Vietnam, which it was given on its foundation by President Ho Chi Minh, who led the heroic struggle.

## Drought in China but no starvation

REPORTS FROM CHINA tell of a spring drought worse than any since Liberation in 1949. But the Chinese people are rising to the challenge.

Before Liberation, drought meant famine and death for scores of thousands. It was said to be inevitable, but the only thing inevitable about the drought under a semi-feudal system was starvation for the masses.

In Shansi province, seven mil-

lion peasants are actively involved in combatting the drought, and the construction of farmland improvement projects is being accelerated. In one prefecture of the province - Yuncheng - over a million peasants watered 100,000 hectares of wheatfields in less than three weeks. Additional fertiliser was applied to a further 68,700 hectares.

Thousands of government cadres, party members, factory

workers and miners have joined the fight against the drought. All over China the people are taking the initiative. Chairman Mao Tse-Tung said: "We can surmount every difficulty by relying on the masses." The battle is not yet over, but socialist China, the country, belongs to the people and natural disasters are taken on and coped with. Nobody starves under socialism.



Irrigation and control of water supply in China have minimised the effect of the drought.

## BRITISH TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND!

THREE thousand British workers demonstrated in London on the fifth anniversary of Bloody Sunday the day when the British Army cold-bloodedly murdered thirteen Irish men in Derry. On almost the very same day the bombers returned to the streets of our Cities. They attacked in the same cruel and senseless way as before and though no one was injured in the new wave of bombings, this should in no way lessen our condemnation of any such attacks on our class.

Those who claim responsibility for such actions should realise that the real problem for Ireland is the ruling class, the same ruling class that plagues British workers, and that ruling class will not budge one inch or shed one tear for the death of workers, be they British or Irish. Indeed such terrorist activities will be used by that class to further drive a wedge between the British and Irish people and to undermine their common interests.

In our condemnation of the bombers, we do not lose sight of these common interests or turn our backs on the Irish situation. We must continue to demand the withdrawal of British Troops from Irish soil as we did when the troops were sent-in in 1969. Such withdrawal is the first step towards self-determination for the Irish people.

It should now be clearer than ever before, that there can be no British solution for Ireland, not only because all the attempts in recent years have failed dismally, but also because the partitioning and sectarian divisions of the Irish working class are the direct product of British imperialism. The recent case at the European Court of Human Rights throws a little light on the real nature of the 'peace keeping' role of British imperialism's army in Ireland.

The army's principal role is the protection of British imperialism's interests and this still includes the maintenance of partition and the sectarian divisions.

We in Britain hear very little of the conditions which prevail in the North of Ireland and we will hear much less if the army and the Northern Ireland Office succeed in their attempts to further restrict any reporting other than official army press releases. Sectarianism has been used to divide and rule the Irish working class in the North and the result has been much worse in employment, housing, health services than any part of Britain.

For fifty years this divide and rule policy was carried out by the Stormont regime in the interests of British capitalism and indeed sectarianism was the very foundation of that state. Since the crumbling of Stormont and the failure of all the other attempts

to replace it, like the Sunningdale Agreement or the Constitutional Convention, the British Army is now the main tool in the implementation of this policy.

Meanwhile the EEC, a collective of West European imperialist powers to which Ireland also belongs, has created a new context for the indefinite continuation of British imperialist exploitation of Ireland. The bourgeois government in Dublin has in various ways collaborated with British imperialism; but the feelings of the Irish people have forced the opposition party, Fianna Fail, to declare that sovereignty over the 32 counties of a united Ireland must be retained and Britain must be forced to recognise it.

The repercussions of British Imperialism in Ireland for British workers are numerous. The Prevention of Terrorism Act is only one. Let us be under no illusions about this piece of legislation, its application has not been confined to any particular group and it gives the police much more extensive powers to arrest and imprison those whom they more or less identify as enemies of the capitalist state. Almost 2000 people have been arrested under the Act and held for up to two seven days; less than a hundred have had any charges, even minor ones, brought against them. It may now become a permanent part of police powers and be used not against 'terrorists', but against anyone who the capitalist state defines as its enemy. We must not allow this Act to remain as a weapon to be used against us.

Another serious repercussion is the use of the army as a back-up or replacement for the civil power in Northern Ireland. The army publically declares that at times such use of the army is necessary. One army officer giving a careers talk, mentioned by way of example, the use of the army as strike breakers in the Glasgow dustmen's strike and the dock strike - all in the same breath.

British Army officers are experts in "Urban guerrilla warfare." Perhaps their expertise will be used in Britain against us or against other workers elsewhere in Europe. The men in Brussels are no doubt aware of the British Army's usefulness in this kind of activity. Brigadier Kitson is regarded as Europe's top expert in 'counter-insurgency' thanks to his experience in the British Army in Kenya and Northern Ireland. He makes no secret of the value of the army's experience in Ireland for future use in the streets of Britain.

It is clearly in the interests of both British and Irish workers that we continue to demand the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland.

## Students against the state

UNIVERSITY of Cardiff students union have held three separate occupations against increased tuition fees and each time the courts have issued writs whereupon the students have begun an occupation elsewhere in the University.

Now the High Court has

issued an unprecedented ban on all occupations for the rest of the academic year. This is aimed at destroying not just the present campaign but the union itself. The only response is the understanding that the fight against the rises is a fight against capitalism itself.

## An Englishman's house....

THE GOVERNMENT is preparing the ground for a well-organised and comprehensive attack on the corner stone of Labour housing policies - new Council house building. Several changes in policy and preliminary cuts have been introduced to test the reaction and defences of the working class before embarking on an all-out offensive. The report of a National Economic Development Council Committee on housing has proposed that council tenants must be made to pay much more and council house building should be phased out anyway.

Every means of cutting back on Council building is being examined. Firstly, restrictions have been introduced so that now only "high priority areas" can expect building schemes to be approved by the Government. At the same time, even within these areas, the Government is more and more refusing to grant permission for the acquisition of poor quality housing for redevelopment.

Secondly, the Government has cut the Rate Support Grant next year which means that the Government pays a lower proportion of building schemes and that if the same building programme is to be maintained, Council tenants and other ratepayers will have to pay substantially more. In many areas this

has meant rent increases from April 1977 of anything from 60p to £1.50 per week. Local Councils should not be seen as 'helpless maidens' in this - many have cut their building programmes as well as substantially increasing the rents.

Thirdly, the Government has allowed the yardstick limit to fall behind the rise in the cost of building and materials. The yardstick limit is the way in which the cost of building dwellings is controlled. Councils are not permitted to spend more than a specified amount on constructing each unit. By allowing the real value of this limit to fall, architects and builders are forced to cut corners and reduce standards in order to keep within the yardstick limit. Council housing has in the past been built to standards which were laid down as a minimum as far back as 1961 (by the Parker Morris Committee). For some years, these standards have come to be treated as a maximum and are now increasingly being described as too high. Even in so called "high priority areas", the Government has stated that "expensive schemes", even if they are within the yardstick limits, are unlikely to be approved.

This is only an introduction to the ruling class's intention - the end of decent housing for the British working class.

## BERKSHIRE EDUCATION BUTCHERS

NOTORIOUS Berkshire Education Committee, noted for its meanness in the past, is proposing more cuts of £1,756,000 for the financial year 1977-78. The minority Labour group on the County Council are going in for the usual round of Tory-bashing (conveniently forgetting that cuts are absolutely obligatory due to the Labour Government pruning the Rate Support Grant). Their only solution is that the cuts need not be so severe if 'only' the Council would up their Rates increase from 17½ per cent to 22½ per cent! The policy of the local Labour Party is dangerously divisive in a county where the majority directly affected by the cuts are ratepayers themselves.

Unlike Oxfordshire's heavy-handed methods, neighbouring Berkshire's rulers prefer 'salamite-tactics'. The Chairman of the Finance Sub Committee proposes 'a new attitude' to County services which will be implemented not only in 1977-78 but also be continued and intensified in the subsequent two years'. To add insult to injury he states that 'it will mean that lower standards will become the accepted thing'. In a hypocritical charade of a Tory believing in promises made by a Labour Government, it is proposed that provision for future inflation need be only 9 per cent!

### Threat of sanctions

The proposed cut in pupil-teacher ratio in the schools however has been balked by the intransigent threat of sanctions by the Teachers' Unions (a totally irresponsible attitude as one lady councillor ruminates). Yet the Council is likely to go ahead in eliminating School Meal Controllers, mainly local housewives, as "no redundancy pay would be payable because the average time worked is 7½ hours per week". Of course the County "expect additional voluntary help from the teachers in times of such financial hardship". The Berkshire Division of the NUT has responded by advising its members to resist any such proposals, and with the support of the Union Executive (who have decided to waive the notorious Rule 8) organised action may be taken for teachers to leave the school premises en bloc during the lunch hour. Teachers are determined not to 'volunteer' to take the job of some other worker made redundant.

## What the Unions are doing

### Leyland

ONE District Committee of the AUEW has passed a resolution criticising the toolroom dispute at British Leyland because instead of assisting the campaign against the social contract it gives credibility to the idea that differentials can be catered for within the limits of Phase III. Furthermore, the demand for separate negotiations undermines the bargaining structure of the rest of the trade union organisation at Leyland.

The resolution also condemns the Executive Council for actually endorsing the employers' threat to sack the toolmakers' on strike.

### Social Contract

THE BRIGHTON Branch of the EETPU passed the following motion for Conference unanimously:

"This Conference recognises that the Social Contract has in practice severely reduced the standard of living of our members. It has in no way alleviated the problems of inflation and unem-

ployment and in fact both have increased.

"Conference believes the traditional role of trade unionism can best be served by collective bargaining. Therefore we call upon this union to end its participation in the present Social Contract and to never allow itself to be shackled in this way again."

### Bullock

AT THE last Policy Conference of the EETPU an executive motion was agreed to the effect that: "Trade unions exist to represent the interests of their members and to see that the power of management is not misused... The executive council is of the view that the best means to this end is through an improvement of existing collective bargaining machinery and an extension of the matters it determines.

"Such a development would be consistent with our traditional role but the unnatural introduction of supervisory boards with worker directors would at best be ineffective and at worst create disunity and weaken independent trade unionism."

## Defending education in Bristol

WORKERS in a Bristol primary school have united in a work-to-rule as a protest against cuts in education expenditure. Members of the NUT and various branches of the TGWU met to consider a common policy of opposition to the reductions in teaching, ancillary, secretarial, dinner supervisory, kitchen and cleaning staffs threatened by Avon County's recent budget decisions. They agreed to implement their unions' 'no cover' policy to the fullest extent, and at the same time, as a signal of their own solidarity and determination to resist cuts, they

decided to pull a complete ban on all extra-curricular activities for a limited period.

At another school in the city, teachers with the support of the NUT proposed a one day strike in protest at the closure of their nursery class. Within hours of their announcement, the head was informed that a clerical error had been discovered and the class could remain open!

An action committee is now organising for a demonstration and lobby of the County Administration Offices by parents and children against the cuts in education expenditure.

## Freezing tuition fees

NATIONAL direction for students has been indicated by the students of Sussex University, a direction which can not be ignored. The recent occupation at the Sussex was something special.

To begin with, the demand - the freezing of all tuition fee levels - is extremely bold and transcends all parochial limitations. Yet in essence it is no more than a basic trade union demand. Protecting access to education is our equivalent to saying "No to redundancies."

The is not to say that it could be easily granted. What the students are demanding is a reversal of Government policy. We know that if we are to save education we can make no compromise, and the government, whose strategic aim is hindered by defeat in this matter, is likewise restricted.

In this context a different decision had to be taken. For the students there were no "realisable" or "winnable" demands that could offer the government an easy way out. For the first time the question was raised concretely - "Do we intend always to bow before government dictates or do we challenge their power, their right to rule?" The question is one of revolution.

Through its boldness the occupation succeeded in uniting not only the vast majority of students but also other campus unions. The action stung them into stating a position and acting

upon it. Not surprising then, that some hostility emerged. The AUT came out in opposition to the occupation and threatened strike action against students, although they were by no means united over this. But marvellous support from NUPE and ASTMS more than compensated for this negative attitude and students continued their action undeterred. TGWU bus workers offered assistance with publicity in the town. The spirit of trade unionism here shone through at its best.

Such unity as now exists with the campus unions has been built entirely on the basis of the essential action taken.

The occupation has now been called off in the knowledge that one occupation is not a campaign - even one which evinces so much energy and solidarity as this one. We always knew that we must cry off while still certain of our strength in order to direct our energies to the future of the campaign.

In ending the occupation when we did, we could be sure that it had given ample evidence of our power and our independence. Of course the government has not immediately capitulated to our demands - we did not expect it to. What we have gained is an understanding of the battles to come and a reassuring glimpse of the forces we can muster. This experience must be carried to colleges across the country.

## Public Meetings

Bellman Bookshop 155 Fortess Rd, London NW5

April 15th Science, Research and Technology in Jeopardy 7.30 p.m.  
April 22nd Revolution - Britain's Duty 7.30 p.m.

### CROYDON

April 14th Away with the social contract 7.30 p.m. Federation House, Elmwood Rd, Croydon

### CRAWLEY

April 18th Only Revolution can save Britain 8.00 p.m. AUEW House Robinson Rd, Crawley

### BRISTOL

May 20th The International Situation: a single world divided by class 7.30 p.m. Main Trend, 17 Midland Rd, Old Market

### BRIGHTON Brighton Workers Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Rd

April 27th No Food, No Money, but we still have the Social Contract 8.00 p.m.

May 11th Education: Who? Future for Youth? 8.00 p.m.

### EASTBOURNE

At the time of the annual Conference of the National Union of Teachers  
April 10th Away With the Contract 8.00 p.m. The Bourne Inn, 82 Pevensey Rd, Eastbourne

Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortess Road, London NW5

Brighton Workers Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton

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

Northern Star Bookshop, 18A Leighton Street, Leeds

## 'THE WORKER'

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## 'Normal remunerative employment'

DURING the Plessey 'work-ins' productivity in some areas actually increased. Absenteeism at Kirkby was the lowest ever, showing what potential for production there is when motivation changes.

The workers at Kirkby voted on March 23rd to call off the work-in, partly because of a lack of financial support. Usually when workers are on strike social security benefits are available for their wives and children; but a ruling from the Department of Employment classed a work-in as 'normal remunerative employment' and therefore no one was allowed benefits even though wages were not being paid.



Workers picketing the Kirkby factory (Plessey) during the work-in.

# Save steel from capitalism

STEEL workers' struggle against closures played its part in the Government's decisions to invest £835m in the Port Talbot strip steel works in South Wales and to withdraw the closure proposals for Shotton steel making in North Wales. The investment in the Port Talbot works is designed to double production and bring productivity levels up to 500 tonnes per man, as high as anywhere in the world.

But it still means a loss of 1000 jobs and there is mere stay of execution for Shotton since there is to be no replacement of the outdated open-hearth furnaces and therefore its closure has only been postponed.

The Government's intention to continue the run-down of the iron and steel industry in Britain is shown by calling into question the future of Welsh foundries supplying quasi-flake for use at Llanwern and Port Talbot while importing 12,000 tons of Swedish flake and by the NEDC proposals to 'rationalise' the use of tinplate, almost exclusively produced at three plants in Wales, Tostre, Velindre and Ebbw Vale, by cutting down the number of types manufactured. Ebbw Vale is scheduled for closure in September and E. Moors in 1980.

In their intention to destroy the steel industry, the very heart of British industry, the Government is urged on by the EEC. The Minister at the Department of Industry has assured the EEC's Commissioner for Industry that the expansion of Shotton and Port Talbot would be counter-balanced by certain reductions in capacity in the future. And the Commissioner has threatened to invoke against Britain article 4 of the EEC steel treaty which forbids any state subsidies to steel.

# FARMING OUTLOOK

IN A MAJOR new document "Outlook for Agriculture" the National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers outlines its policies on food production in Britain. The NUAAW sees plenty of scope to expand home production of farm and horticultural produce, the aim being maximum self-sufficiency in temperate products. To achieve this a skilled and expanding workforce is needed. Yet in the ten years ending June 1976 some 120,000 workers left English and Welsh farms and of the remaining workforce of 309,500 only 140,300 were regular full time workers, the trend being for a growing casualisation and use of contract labour which is a threat to the future of the industry. Most workers are not leaving the land through dismissal or redundancy but due to low wages and poor conditions compared to urban industry (there were over 35,000 non fatal accidents and industrial diseases on farms between 1969-1973 and over 500 fatal accidents in the same period). At the same time rural housing, transport, health and education facilities are rapidly declining, leading to further rural depopulation.

# MAY DAY MEETING

Speaker, **REG BIRCH**, Chairman,  
**COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN**  
**MARXIST-LENINIST**



*Not devolution - Revolution*  
*Not social contract - Socialism*



Saturday, April 30th, 7.30pm Conway Hall,

Red Lion Square, Holborn, W.C.1. (Holborn Tube)

**NOT DEVOLUTION-  
REVOLUTION**

**NOT SOCIAL CONTRACT -  
SOCIALISM**

May Day for Britain is like spring cleaning. The parlous state of Britain will continue toward greater decline except workers break from passivity and inertia.

The acceptance of the social contract, no matter why, is surrender. To demand a return to

free collective bargaining (as if it ever existed) is not enough. We must work to end wage slavery and direct our efforts toward socialism.

The Government is the biggest employer. We are a capitalist state and the Government is the capitalist. Devolution is a device to divert us.

At a time when Europe is in contradiction, national governments in chaos - except for West Germany - comes the call for a

European Parliamentary Government in Brussels.

And in Britain, separation - Welsh, Scots, Cornish? For us there must be no fragmentation. A united Britain of workers under the sovereignty of workers - the dictatorship of the proletariat.

By the same token: one Ireland of Irish workers.

**NO COMMON MARKET-  
BRITISH SELF-RELIANCE**

# MAYDAY MEETINGS

- LIVERPOOL May 1st 8 p.m. Mitre Hotel (nr. Tunnel entrance)
- BRISTOL May 1st 7.30 p.m. The Swan Hotel, Stokes Croft, Bristol 1
- NEWCASTLE May 1st 7.30 p.m. Bridge Hotel
- HULL May 2nd 7.30 p.m. Meeting Room No 1, Central Library, Albion St.
- LEEDS May 2nd 7.45 p.m. Room 102 Park Lane College, Hanover Way, Leeds 3

While agriculture has advanced considerably since the last war, further expansion is unlikely due to our declining capitalism.

Entry into the EEC is a severe threat to our agriculture since we are expected to import the result of inefficient controls such as the beef and butter mountains, while at the same time Brussels instructs the closure of our Milk Marketing Board simply because we consume all the milk produce produced in this country.

Agricultural land should be regarded as our most precious asset, yet every year 75,000 acres are swallowed up by building often speculative development. The area lost each year must include hundreds of acres from the top three grades of the Ministry of Agriculture's 5 grade land classification. Farmers are often pleased to sell up when an easy profit can be made.

Waste, which is endemic in capitalism, is a particular problem in agriculture. The Ministry of Agriculture estimates that 25 per cent of domestically produced food is wasted; a situation that would not be tol-

erated under socialism.

Research and development is essential for a progressive and expanding industry, but the Agricultural Development and Advisory Service and the Agricultural Research Council are being cut back generally. Two horticultural Experimental Stations are to be closed this year; one of them Cleppa Park, is the only such establishment in Wales. The National Institute of Agricultural Engineering, the source of many innovations in mechanisation and tractor safety, has had its staff of 450 cut by 10 per cent.

The root cause of all these retrograde steps in agriculture is that farming under capitalism is geared towards producing profits and not the food requirements of the nation. Thus we see the rich peat soils of the Fen District farmed so intensively that the peat is oxidising at a rate of inches every year - if no efforts are made to conserve the soil there will soon be no peat left; such is the shortsightedness of capitalism. That is why we need revolution now to establish an independent

Britain under socialism.

Many people will claim that Britain can never be independent since we rely on imports for 50 per cent of our food requirements. In the last war however we managed to grow 80 per cent of our own food, and at this time the NUAAW estimates that 40 per cent of temperate produce currently imported could feasibly be grown here under the existing agricultural regime.

Under the impetus of socialism the move to 100 per cent self-reliance would present no great problem to our already advanced agriculture. The example of socialist Albania proves what can be done: before liberation in 1944 a land of bare rock, swamps, and barren waste land, now richly cultivated, the swamps drained and hillsides terraced, producing virtually all the country's food requirements.

We have the technology and more importantly we have the people, a skilled workforce who remain loyal to the land - it is only through socialism that we can have a British self-reliant in food.

# Fight to save rails in Wales

BRITISH Rail's announcement of the shutting down of the container link between Fishguard and Ireland is a threat to the survival of railways west of Swansea and part of the Government's plans for reduction of the rail network in Britain.

The Government says it does not intend to reduce the network further, but by providing only £210m a year for maintenance and replacement of existing track when £315m would be necessary, inevitably means a big cut in track mileage. The concentration of funds on the inter-city lines instead of branch lines and the need for renewal of the diesel multiple units in 1985 mean that by that year the only rail link left will be the Swansea -Paddington line. That is one way to bring about devolution!

The fight to preserve the container link is the fight for railways in Wales. Since December 1975, the three rail unions have been staging a campaign to ensure that the public are aware of the effects of the Government's plans by distributing leaflets to passengers. Now these unions and the National Union of Seamen will have to move into an all-out offensive to defend railways in Wales.

# Britain the focus of world crisis

ANYONE still in the slightest doubt about Britain being the focus of world industrial counter-revolution would be well advised to read a pamphlet recently issued by two of Britain's leading experts on industrial organisation, "Alternative to Bullock" by Lord Wilfred Brown and Professor Elliot Jaques.

The authors point out that "Britain was the first to industrialise; over 90 per cent of its citizens who earn a living do so in employment for a wage or salary - a higher proportion than in any other nation; over 11 million of the 23 million employed are collectively organised in trade unions." They then explain, "It is for this reason of the scale and age of its industrialisation that Britain is experiencing particularly difficult problems of industrial relations. Other industrial nations will encounter similar difficulties in coming years. It is because of their seeming intractability that the problems of industrial relations - not only in (manufacturing) industry but in the public and social services as well - have moved into the position of the most important issue for the survival of Britain."

# PLESSEY cont. from page 1

the need for the class as a whole to see the fight to protect an industry, its jobs and skills, as part of their own fight to save Britain for Socialism.

If Plessey workers see through the numerous attempts to divide them, and declare again their right to work, they will surely need every ounce of class solidarity to spur them forward.

Whatever the outcome, one thing will never be lost. This is the revolutionary consciousness attained by the workforce that only comes from struggle.