

THE WORKER



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INTO ACTION AGAINST

THE FREEZE!

Every week of the freeze brings more workers into battle against it. Employers trying to hide behind the freeze are being flung into the front line. A working class in which manual workers pushed their earnings up by £4.89 a week, or nearly 16 per cent in the year up to last October, is not to be confined within Phase II's straitjacket of £1 plus 4 per cent. This limit, since it is the standard first offer in nearly all negotiations, has removed most of the scope for fudging the issues. And with Phase III planned to be even tougher, even longer, with prices rocketing in the meantime, there can be no dodging the present struggle with hopes of jam tomorrow under a long-term deal. There will be no jam tomorrow unless we fight for it today. Sections hoping to be treated as 'Special' Cases should remember that the government treated miners as a 'Special Case', not because of their hardships, but because they had been strong enough and determined enough to smash down government resistance. It will be the same this time. The government has failed to beat the working class, fighting one section at a time, now it is forced to take on many sections, united against a single target.

Ford

2300 Ford Workers at Halewood downed tools immediately on hearing that the management offer was down at the Phase II level. The 55,000 Ford workers are claiming increases up to £10. Stewards threatened an all-out strike from March 1st unless the offer is improved. The old agreement expires on this date.

Gas workers

Britain's 47,000 gas manual workers are banning overtime, withdrawing co-operation and staging selective strikes in protest against the freeze. Their demand for £3.05 increase, shorter hours and longer holidays came up against the Phase II limit of £7. Like other sections, the gas workers were once content to follow the pattern set by other workers, in this case the electricity supply workers, but have now found themselves at the forefront. The first actions in this battle were not only against the freeze but against redundancies, which have already hit gas workers hard. Such a start puts them in better shape to resist the obvious threat of individual increases above the limit while the total payroll is kept down to the limit by further reductions in the workforce.

BRS drivers

900 British Road Services drivers paralysed the motor industry in the Midlands. By the skillful use of salami tactics, forcing one haulier after another to concede a £2.50 bonus to holders of the now mandatory heavy vehicle licence. BRS, the largest target, was left isolated. BRS claims the dispute should have gone through procedure, and in the same breath admits that the freeze would ban the increase anyway unless buried inside some productivity deal. So the drivers handed in their HGV licences, on the assumption that BRS did not want drivers to use them. This cut off the

supply of components to the Midlands factories.

Bus drivers are threatening the same tactics with their public service vehicle licences.

Civil servants

260,000 civil servants are banning overtime, withdrawing co-operation and will hold a one-day strike on February 27th. The Civil and Public Services Association (190,000) the Society of Civil Servants and the Customs and Excise Group (8000) have agreed on this action in support of a claim for wages comparable with outside industry which would be some 70 per cent. Five other unions in the civil service have chosen to wait and hope for justice from the Phase III Pay Board. Some hope!



Ford workers voting for industrial action at the beginning of the big strike in 1971

A GREAT VICTORY FOR MARXISM — LENINISM

'The great victory of the resistance against US aggression for national salvation is the victory of all-conquering Marxism-Leninism.' This is how the Workers' Party and Government of North Vietnam described the agreement on the withdrawal of US troops from Vietnam.

'This victory of the Vietnamese nation, the NLF, stated in its appeal to the people of Vietnam, is also a victory of the peoples of the three fraternal countries on the indo-chinese peninsula, who have united and fought against the common enemy. It is also the victory of all the independence- and freedom loving nations of the whole progressive mankind, including the American people who have justice and peace at heart.

'The great victory of our Vietnamese people proves that in the present era, a nation who, even with no large territory and no big population, have a judicious revolutionary

line, know how to unite the entire people and achieve international solidarity, and are determined to fight and win, can certainly defeat any aggressive foe.

'Before our people, a new period is being opened and a new situation is being created, very advantageous for the completion of the national-democratic revolutionary cause. However, our people's struggle has not ceased to be a difficult and complex one. Fascist forces dependent on foreign countries are hatching many ulterior intrigues to undermine peace and oppose independence, democracy and national concord.

'We solemnly declare that we will strictly and fully implement the agree-

ment and persistently struggle for the full implementation of all the provisions of the signed agreement.'

The NLF finally called upon all officers and combatants to 'implement seriously the ceasefire order and in any of your contacts with republican soldiers, treat them as brothers and take the first step in realising the great cause of national concord'.

China & Albania greet triumph

All China has hailed the victory of the Vietnamese in forcing the US to agree to the withdrawal of their military machine from Vietnam. A state-

ment from Party and State leaders on January 29th praised the heroism, perseverance and self-reliance of the Vietnamese, both North and South. With the Americans gone, the conditions would allow for the Vietnamese to solve their own problems free from outside interference.

A massive rally of 10,000 people celebrated the victory in the Great Hall of the People in Peking. Present was the Vietnamese leader Le Duc Tho and he was told by the Chinese speaker, Chang Chun-Chiao, 'every victory of yours is a great inspiration to us, and your revolutionary spirit is what we should always endeavour to emulate'.

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FROM THE WORKERS TO THE WORKERS

Interview with a London teacher

WHAT PROBLEMS FACE THE LONDON TEACHER?

Keeping fit enough to respond to the alarm clock each morning. Take me. As a young teacher I clear £50 a month. I pay £30 of that for a flat in which I am crammed with four others. Another £10 goes on travel to work, and food is very expensive. I don't spend a lot on going out since I'm exhausted at the end of most days. We have to cover for teachers who are away sick, and at the best of times thirty sophisticated London kids are quite a handful. The strain of living and working in London sends many teachers away and that only compounds the problem for those who stay.

So I'm living at subsistence level and it must be worse for teachers looking for a house and with young families. We pay £10 Union subscription and most pay by instalments because they haven't £10 to their name.

HOW DOES LONDON COMPARE WITH OUTSIDE? AND WHAT IS YOUR PRESENT ALLOWANCE?

Take housing. You're lucky to find a house in London for less than £11,000. Outside an average figure would be £7,000. Meanwhile the London allowance is - wait for it - £118! That was fixed in November, 1970, when houses in London went for about £6,000.

WHAT ARE YOU ASKING FOR?

We were looking for an increase of £182. According to the last arbitration award on salaries generally, the London allowance was to have been freely negotiated on the Burnham Committee between teachers and management and the revised allowance was to have taken effect from 1st November last year. But the Government broke its promise and using the impending pay freeze as a pretext, prevented the management side from offering more than £15. We rejected.

WHAT IS THE PRESENT SITUATION?

Teachers are due for a national increase in salaries on 1st April. The Government, under its Phase II scheme, has said there is only a certain amount available. If London is to get its allowance increased then it must be at the expense of teachers outside. What a cheek! We've said the London allowance question must be kept separate. The Government just doesn't want to pay its debts. So, 15,000 London teachers are about to act as balliffs.

HOW WILL YOU CONDUCT THE CAMPAIGN?

Last November we organized a half-day strike which mobilised teachers throughout London. We are now about to begin a series of three-day strikes in certain schools. The executive has been in touch with the membership and is determining which schools are strongest in terms of organisation and militancy.

British Steel cutback

'The most exciting thing to happen to the British steel industry since the war' was how Minister Peter Walker described the latest and most vicious of the cutbacks planned by BSC. It will not be so 'exciting' for the 50,000 facing redundancy - a quarter of the total work force. When they are added to the 31,450 thrown out since nationalisation in 1967 we see the magnitude of BSC's crime against the working class. And hardly less guilty are those who called, and still call, for nationalisation as the panacea in all industrial struggles. The mines, railways, docks, gas, electricity have all witnessed the same story of nationalisation followed by 'rationalisation' and massive destruction of jobs. Not only jobs but whole communities. The living corpses of Durham mining villages are now to be joined by whole valleys in Wales. 65,000 (one in nine) of the men working in Wales are BSC employees and 16,000 of these jobs are to go in the next seven years. The number of Welsh coal miners has dropped from 120,000 to 35,000 since the war. At the same time as the cities become intolerably overcrowded, the government is creating ghost towns.

Nationalisation

With the exception of the docks, this decimation has taken place with hardly a whisper of opposition. Nationalisation has proved a tranquilliser of the same quality as thalidomide. Wages paid by the state have similarly slipped down to poverty levels. Does the capitalist have to wear a top hat and drive a Rolls in order to be recognised? (And surely the Tory nationalisation of Rolls Royce - a pinnacle of capitalist industry should show how 'socialist' nationalisation is.) With massive interest payments (£37 million from BSC last year), plum jobs on the state corporation boards, and low prices to industry, what sane capitalist can object to nationalisation? We must not be lulled into defenceless apathy by illusions that the capitalist state is less of an enemy than any individual capitalist. It is central to the entire class enemy and is made doubly dangerous by any illusions.

As for 'nationalisation under workers' control': under capitalism this would be an empty facade. BSC already has 'worker-directors' and look at the results.

BSC are very proud of the new plans which will mean £3,000 million invested, mainly in building new steel plants on the coast at the expense of older open-hearth plants. But these will not provide much new employment. For example, £1,000 million investment on Teesside will produce the largest steel complex in Europe, producing 12 million tons a year. The new complex will provide 30,000 jobs in all. Precisely 500 more than at



London teachers voting for action against their employer.

EDITORIAL

Voting with your fist

"Voting with their feet" - that is how Lenin described the decision of Russian soldiers to march back from the front and join workers and peasants in making the October Revolution.

Half the electorate in many working class constituencies in Britain who stayed away from the polls in the last general election and in recent by-elections voted with the seat of their trousers. In this way they registered a vote not against this capitalist party or that but against the capitalist system itself.

This does not represent apathy on the part of workers. Never has the working class been so politically alert and industrially active - as the Government's need to pass anti-working class, anti-trade union legislation proves. It is an expression of disgust with the whole fraud of parliamentary 'democracy' and also with that political misnomer the Labour Party.

The Labour Party is the political embodiment of the working class's social democratic illusions. As those illusions evaporate in the heat of real class struggle the very existence of the Labour Party is threatened.

This growing political astuteness on the part of workers is worrying the capitalist ruling class. It may be forced to dispense with the trappings of bourgeois 'democracy' itself but as long as they are still useful it is upsetting to have the parliamentary conjuring act exposed; and a major part of that act is making two capitalist parties which are the mirror image of each other appear to the workers as different alternatives.

The whole capitalist press has recently been engaged in trying to dust off Labour's image and make it look like a real opposition. Wilson's flattery about the poor little individual's sense of powerlessness is hailed as a great policy statement and even Heath tries to give Wilson some measure of prestige by calling him a socialist.

(Heath himself is called a socialist by the *laissez-faire* buck-woodsmen of his Party. British capitalism requires a good deal of state capitalist shoring up and that is the nature of both Heath's incomes policy and Wilson's proposed nationalisation programme.)

In this effort to persuade workers that they have something to gain by delegating their struggle to a re-elected Labour Government the TUC plays its part by sitting down with the Labour pundits in joint consultations about industrial relations - which are no different from the consultations it has entered into with the Tories. The pseudo-left shouts loudest of all in the same chorus urging workers to divert their attention to the task of getting Labour back in office.

When the capitalist press, the revisionist 'communists' and the various brands of Trotskyites all agree on what workers ought to do, that is the best warning workers could have that they had better do something else. Workers won't vote employers off their backs at the next general election, nor will they ever elect a non-capitalist government under the capitalist system.

Workers won't wait to 'vote' with the seat of their trousers at the next general election. They will 'vote' with the hard fist of industrial action and they will 'vote' now in their mass strength. Because that is the only way of ending the freeze, halting the slide toward the corporate state, and eventually, smashing the capitalist system.

present, £2 million for each new job! And some scoffed at China's backyard blast furnaces. For the whole country an investment of £3,000 million producing a loss of 50,000 jobs. So much for the argument that we must let capitalism have higher profits, for otherwise there will be no new investment and the country will go to the dogs. The dogs are running the country already.

Plessey's, Fisher-Bendix, UCS have all shown that redundancies can be fought off. Can the 'traditional' forms of protest like lobbying the Westminster gas-works claim the same success? Only militant action, demanding and not begging, can save the threatened jobs. The form of the government's charity has already been spent out. A 'consultative group' consisting of Tom Boardman, Minister for Industry, Lord Melchett, BSC Chairman and Vic Feather of the TUC will look into the 'social problems'. This will be of as little use to the working class as that other three-sided set of talks over holding down wages.

Lynch law elections

The biggest con-trick is again being put over on the Irish working-class. Lynch is 'going to the people' for a mandate on his policies of crushing all resistance to the present status-quo in Eire. The 'opposition' are forming a coalition to offer 'a real alternative' to Lynch's Fianna Fail. This 'real alternative' is just a slight modification of Lynch's policy.

Lynch, acting as the servant of the British ruling class and state, in order to protect their economic interests in Ireland, put through the Offences Against the State Act (after Reichstag-like bombings in Dublin).

In Ireland, as in Britain, voting one capitalist party in after another has not nor ever will advance the interests of the working class. The only way that the working class can advance is not by voting, but organising to smash capitalism.

Freedom

- to exploit

The apologists of capitalism have a great fear of communism because it means an attack on private property. They see the right to own a factory, invest capital or become a landlord as indicative of freedom for the individual.

However, the frequent experience of evicted tenants and redundant workers shows that this is freedom at the expense of the working class. Take the recent example of a retired bricklayer, Mr. Quinn, who received notice to quit his bed-sit because the landlord wanted to sell the property for development. While Mr. Quinn was out the landlord hired 'strong arm boys' to wreck the room, which they did very thoroughly - stripping it completely bare. When Mr. Quinn arrived home the locks had been changed. He was helped into the house through a window by another tenant and was of course shattered to see the state of the room.

The effect of the entire incident led Mr. Quinn to commit suicide. Not all cases of eviction orders end in this manner, but always stress is placed on the people, or families, concerned.

The working class has nothing to gain from maintaining this status quo of exploitation. As workers we have nothing to live by but our labour. The only answer to the problems and ills of free enterprise is to abolish it.

African people rise against racist regimes

BLACK WORKERS ZIMBABWE - CLASH WITH THE STRUGGLE FASCIST POLICE BROADENS

An estimated 100,000 workers in and around Durban, South Africa, have been involved in wide-spread industrial action. Reports have been received of armed clashes between striking textile workers and the fascist police in Hammarsdale, 30 miles from Durban. The government has moved units of the armed forces to strategic places around the city to assist the police in suppressing the successful strike.

Undoubtedly there have been and will be more unreported armed clashes. However one thing has already emerged clearly from the situation: black workers have revolted against the starvation standard of living imposed by the fascist government of South Africa. In doing so they struck fear into the hearts of the employing class and that class was forced to make an immediate, albeit pitiful, offer.

The bitter bit

For some time now the employing class in South Africa, and let us remind ourselves that our employing class constitutes a major part of theirs, has been worried by the fact that their fascist, apartheid system of rule has begun to work against them. They cannot get enough white skilled labour so black workers have been doing jobs illegally. This situation has forced the organised white workers to begin to abandon their divisive class position of 'superior' and to demand that black workers doing skilled jobs must be paid the rate.

Such movement heralds the development of the necessary and inevitable unification of the whole working class in South Africa and, taken together with the current industrial action, signals the advance of the struggle of the people of South Africa, led by the working class, to liberate themselves from the imperialist maintained fascist regime.

'We will not be slaves in the twentieth century,' declared a spokesman for the guerrilla fighters who have been attacking Smith's racist regime in Rhodesia. 'In fact,' the representative of the Zimbabwe African National Union said in an interview, 'the blows we have already struck are much more wide-spread and more devastating than the Smith regime has dared admit.'

No alternative

Explaining that the violent repression practised by the white racist government of Rhodesia left the African people no alternative to a violent liberation struggle, the representative charged both the Labour and Tory parties of Britain with a direct responsibility for driving the people of Zimbabwe to violence.

'Smith's collective punishment to try to stomp out support for the liberation movement inside the country will only help us. He has always pretended to have a paternalistic concern for the African people while oppressing them viciously.'

He said that the main source of support from outside came from the Liberation Committee in Dar-es-Salaam and encouragement was also received from the socialist countries. 'We are not interested in any other minority government for Zimbabwe, however liberal. We will no longer be ruled by anyone else in our own country.'

Smith himself has blundered badly over closing the border with Zambia. When South Africa made him open it again, Zambia made it clear that as far as any concessions to the Smith regime were concerned the border could stay closed. And when Smith tried to pretend that he had received assurances about guerrilla activity along the border from an 'honest broker' between the Zambian government and Rhodesia he was exposed as a liar.

ON THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT

Once upon a time it used to be fashionable for some on the so-called 'left' to run down the British working class and compare it unfavourably with more glamorous labour movements in Europe. How superficial a judgement this was can be seen for the figures of days 'lost' in strikes last year. In Italy there were 11.5 million days, in France less than a fifth of that and in Britain 23.9 million (and this is omitting the strikes against the NIRC in July over the jailed five dockers and in December over the firing of the AUEW - Britain has nothing to learn from abroad about fiddling statistics either). Of course it would be equally stupid to try and sum up the breadth and

length of the labour movement in a single statistic. A stronger movement or a less worried ruling class could mean settlements without any need for a strike. We should study the powerful currents running below the surface, not just the froth on top.

Fame and fortune

In one field we are trailing behind the Continent. We have only one trade union federation, while they usually have three. Looking at the TUC, most people would groan that surely one was enough.

But inspired not so much by Europe as by the Industrial Relations Act, we have not one but two rival TUCs. promised. Both are designed for registered unions and staff associations. One, backed by the Union of Sales Technical Representatives and Agents is to be the Federation of Registered Trade Unions, known as 'Fortune'. An unlikely name considering the dismal history of registration and the NIRC. The other is to be the Confederation of Independent Staff Organisations (CISO). 'Independent of what? you may ask. Independent of any sense whatever is the answer if we see that the draft constitution provides for it being 'cosmopolitan and classless'. You can only be classless if you're dead. And cosmopolitan implies that the battered corpse is floating down the Channel. We wish them the very worst of fortunes.

TUC - what is it up to?

When Vic Feather has just been elected first President of the European Trade Union Confederation it might be tempting to think that this new Europe-wide organisation is a big step forward. Feather's boys, however, despite their claims, will do no more to advance the struggle of workers than the TUC has done in Britain.

It is significant that the most telling blows aimed against the Industrial Relations Act had nothing whatever to do with the TUC. When the five dockers were gaoled the TUC was the last to move and only then out of fear of isolation becoming more obvious than ever. By that time the workers had released the dockers themselves. Likewise the fight against the government's wage freeze and other anti-working class measures will surely develop from the grass roots where it matters, not from Congress House. With the developing struggle there must develop the political awareness that will not allow the struggle to be sidetracked into reformist parliamentary channels.

TUC and Government

The TUC sat round the table with the Government and the Employers CBI to discuss ways of dealing with inflation. The government policy was wage control accompanied by phony prices and dividend control and the TUC was invited to become party to this.

For the TUC to sit round the table with the very people who are trying to destroy the trade unions as effective instruments of the working class was an act of treason carried out under the guise of "statesmanship" in that they purported to use the talks to secure concessions for the workers. They offered trade union cooperation in a voluntary incomes policy in return for some alteration to the anti-trade union legislation and some economic reforms. They came away empty handed (of course!) and broke off the talks which they should not have had in the first place.

The split

There have been voices raised against the action of the TUC in breaking off the talks, notably that of the Electricians' representative F. J. Chapple who with others claim that the TUC should resume tripartite talks even after the government action, following the first round of talks, in imposing the wage freeze. So with anti-trade union legislation and a wage freeze in force those who would lay claim to representing the workers see the government and trade unions as parties to a mutual problem who can sit down in a friendly atmosphere and talk. This attitude can only serve to demonstrate how unreal is their claim to leadership. How remote they are from what real trade unionism is all about. If an employer treated the union at factory level as the government has, would the shop stewards sit down and chat or lead the workers out of the gate? At TUC level there is no parallel to this, they have neither the power nor the authority to lead anybody anywhere. Not that they would be inclined to use such power even if they had it. The alternative voice in the TUC is that which says no talks with the government at all. But the fact that this is said by those who have themselves taken part in talks at Chequers and Downing Street weakens their position. It is this situation which the press characterises as a split within the General Council.

The TUC's 'Tough Demands'

Since breaking off the talks with the government the TUC has presented its own anti-inflation programme, described as 'tough demands' by the commentators of the national press. These demands range over almost the whole field of economics including food subsidies, rents, land price controls, minimum wage rates, equal pay, - you name it! These are presented as the cure for inflation and at the same time the price for cooperation with the government by the TUC.

There is nothing in the TUC plan that has not been the subject of election promises by the Labour Party as recently as 1964. But in the event all the promises went out of the window when Labour won the election to be replaced by cries of woe about "thirteen years of Tory misrule." Of course the TUC knows that there is no more chance of a future Labour government carrying out the TUC plans than the present government. After all, wouldn't the TUC describe the present government's record as 'misrule'? Thus, while producing the policy to campaign for the return of a Labour government, which is all it is, they have already the excuse for shelving it after the election.

London teachers

1,500 teachers in 100 London schools will be striking for three days from February 20th, and a bigger second phase will begin on February 27th. The teachers want an increase in the £118 London Allowance.

Laycock engineering

40 workers in the overdrive assembly section of this Sheffield engineering subsidiary of GKN went on strike following the sacking of a worker for allegedly making false work recordings.

Sludge

The Greater London Council's fleet of sludge vessels has been tied up since the New Year. 80 ratings have refused to sign articles since new disciplinary regulations came in. As a result our administrators, who make so much noise about pollution, have been pouring up to 50 million gallons of activated sludge into the Thames each week.

Westoe colliery

The threat of a walkout by miners all over Durham stopped a man who had left the NUM, after refusing to pay a £3 fine for working too much overtime, turning up for work at this South Shields colliery. Finally the NCB was forced to sack him.

Bookmakers

163 William Hill betting shops in the North and Midlands were closed by a one-day strike in protest against the basic wage level, following a takeover of the Leeds-based Windsor Group.

Briant Colour Printers

The work-in committee at this South London plant said they would boycott any High Court hearing and defy any order made against them on behalf of the liquidator, who has applied for a possession order. An offer which would have saved the 110 jobs has fallen foul of the liquidator, who hopes to make more money from a closure.

CAV Fazakerley

The workers at this Liverpool plant, part of the Lucas group, have been forced to abandon their 18-week occupation and accept the closure of the factory. They did secure redundancy payments of 11 weeks money on top of the ordinary redundancy pay.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Friday, Feb. 23rd, 7.30 pm. "Wages, Prices, Freezes". Public Meeting at Bellman Bookshop.

Friday, March 2nd, 7.30 pm. Public Meeting on "India Today" Bellman Bookshop.

Friday, March 9th, 7.30 pm. Public meeting on "Guerrilla Struggle: the line for Britain". Bellman Bookshop.

Thursday, March 1st, 4 pm. 'Industrial Relations in China and Britain' Reg Birch. Room 220, Middlesex Poly, Enfield Annex, Queensway, Enfield, Middlesex.

Sunday, March 4th, 7.30 pm. Meeting on Albania. October Books, 99 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool.

'The Worker'

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Equality for women

Neither parliamentary legislation - the Equal Pay Act, or the Bill at present being introduced in Parliament against sex discrimination - nor top-level trade union negotiations will bring equality for women. It will cost the capitalists between £600 and £900 million a year to give women equal pay. Of course they will not hand this over if they can help it.

The greatest economic advances by women were won through struggle. In the 'Sewing Machine Strike' at Fords, for example, the women, only 600 out of a work force of 60,000, repudiated agreements and began a struggle on equal grading - i.e. a struggle on equal pay. Their clarity and tenacity won them the whole-hearted support of the men and their fight was successful.

The Equal Pay Act supposedly due to be fully implemented by 1975 was not introduced by the



Women demonstrating on 'Equal Pay Day' in May, 1969

Labour Party through concern for the position of women, it was a frightened reaction on behalf of the employing class. It is legislation designed to obstruct the fight for equal pay at the point of production and transfer it to the fake battleground of parliament.

The employers' response to the directive of equal pay for men and women doing 'the same or similar work' has been to introduce techniques that will

consign women to low-paid positions in industry and commerce. They are introducing new job gradings, segregating female employees and keeping the unskilled rate as low as possible. Their great fear is of 'unfortunate precedents' that may close the pay gap between men and women. The British Paper Box Federation for example has recommended 'seriously not cynically that in the event of proper provision not being made now to

provide for an acceptable differential between the take-home pay of men and women, the following discrimination factors are available: long service merit; attendance bonus; willingness to work overtime to a given number of hours.'

Did we really expect anything else from capitalism? It is time to be done with all the philosophising about equal pay - in the end it comes down to the fight where you are.

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GREAT VICTORY

Congratulations to the Vietnamese have also been sent in a statement by the leaders of Albania. The news of the agreement had been received with joy throughout the country.

Both China and Albania have remained most solid in their support of the Vietnamese through the most arduous periods of the war. They share in the victory, and both have pledged continuing support until the triumph is complete. On February 7th an agreement was signed in Hanoi on Albania's economic aid to Vietnam.

Mao meets Le Duc Tho

In a meeting between Mao Tse Tung and Le Duc Tho the Vietnamese politbureau member said 'We have come to pay our respect and regards to you, Chairman Mao, and to express our deep gratitude to you and the Chinese Communist Party for giving us great help and encouragement in our war against US aggression and for national salvation.'

Chairman Mao said to the Vietnamese comrades, 'Our help has been very little. We should thank you. It is you who have helped us. You have been fighting against US imperialism for more than ten years. We have helped each other all along.'

US forces remain

The last United States soldier to be killed in Vietnam has been buried in Arlington cemetery, but the US wars of aggression still continue in Indochina, and perforce so do the people's struggles for liberation. But a new stage has now arisen in Laos and Cambodia; the liberation forces in these two countries are strengthened by Vietnam's victory in ejecting US forces from Vietnamese soil.

Cambodia

Though the US involvement in Vietnam has terminated, it still retains its bases, troops, aircraft and fleets for operations in the rest of Indochina. US imperialism continues with its bombing raids there.

In Cambodia, 1972 was another year of victory for the National United Front of Cambodia. The national liberation forces wiped out 109,000 puppet troops and liberated 870,000 people. Since the counter-revolutionary coup d'etat and subsequent American invasion 3 years ago, most of the country (except for Phnom Penh and a few other cities) and over 5 million population have been liberated.

In a statement on January 29th the Government of the liberation forces announced that a lasting and just peace could only be based on the permanent cessation of the bombing and strafing by US planes and the withdrawal from Cambodia by the US troops allowing the Cambodian people to settle their own affairs.

STUDENTS — THE NEXT STAGE

The present strike of NUS for a direct increase in the grant is the first national strike of the Union's history. This national claim is backed up by each college taking its own action in support of the claim, a fighting policy advocated by our Party and adopted at the Conferences in Margate 1972 and Sheffield 1973.

With each college striking in the way (or ways) most suited to it the struggle gains momentum - with 25 colleges on rent strike and canteen boycotts under way - so further unsuspected tactics are coming to light. At Swansea there are plans for lightning occupations of administrative buildings. The Warwick University porters and cleaners showed the way for students by withdrawing their labour in support of their own claim. This explodes the fallacy that students in their colleges cannot likewise take industrial action at their own point of production. Postgraduates have already withdrawn their teaching labour, in support of increases. Teacher trainees can do the same. Further actions - such as holding up expensive capital equipment in laboratories or disrupting work on government and other contracts - must be envisaged.

No matter that such industrial action may have occurred only

in isolated areas. The rent strikes, the canteen boycotts, the marches and meetings already under way within colleges in support of the national claim are not only in themselves economically disruptive. They are the pointers and essential training grounds for eventual action to immobilise the millions of pounds' worth of capital equipment that students have access to, across the length and breadth of the country.

The state will never accede to an acceptable grant increase - unless we so attack it that settling our claim will be less costly to it than refusing, and paying the costs of our strike action.

This is a mammoth task, seemingly a long way off. But with every college involved in its own action, no matter how small that action may be - for no action is too small to contribute - students will be building up to disruption of the economic system. It will be a guerilla campaign, a national campaign, with no area of higher education unattacked.

Success in the destructive tactics of this guerilla stage in the offensive against the state is the key to that destruction without which we cannot be free - that of the capitalist state and this rotter education system in its entirety.

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Leeds University strike

A week-long strike by security patrolmen at Leeds University (all NUPE members) ended on 8th February with the University authorities being forced to make concessions.

The strike was over the suspension of six patrolmen when they refused to do supervisors' work without supervisors' pay.

The strike received widespread support from all sections of workers at the university and from the students, who helped by providing facilities for the strike committee and helping with picketing.

In the end, the University was forced to discuss the point at issue and, until a mutually agreed solution had been found,

not to give the disputed duties to the patrolmen.

This was the first strike in living memory by workers at Leeds University: it will certainly not be the last. A whole host of grievances have surfaced during the struggle. One underlying issue is the refusal of the University to implement in full national agreements on wages and conditions covering local authority workers. There is also resentment at the many petty tyrannies and extra work-loads which are arbitrarily imposed.

Moves are now afoot to set up a joint shop stewards committee throughout the University. Strong bonds of friendship have been established. The security patrolmen have shown the way, the fight continues.

Concorde and discord

In preparation for his visit to Washington, Prime Minister Heath tried hard to ingratiate himself with Nixon. After all, the barbarous Christmas bombings of the US in Vietnam had drawn not a murmur of protest from Heath's lips. The US however was not impressed with this servility for when Heath got to America he couldn't even sell a Concorde.

Pan-Am and TWA cancelled their 13 options on the plane and opened

the attack on the British aircraft industry. What future then for the 30,000 British workers involved in the Concorde project? The conflicts between American and British capitalism find expression in redundancies and insecurity for British workers.

While smarting from his slap in the face, Heath is hoping that his new-found European cronies will enable him to stand up more to the American

bully. He talked of 'a new European dimension which will enable us to secure by common action benefits which would be beyond our reach as separate nations'. And so he warned Nixon, 'you have your complaints about some of our European trade practices. We for our part have very real grievances about US trade barriers.'

Nixon is hoping that Heath's servility will continue and that Britain

will play a conciliatory role in the relations between the US and the enlarged Common Market. In a den of thieves Nixon warned of the temptation to 'engage in economic confrontation that could leave bitterness and which could harm us both'. Heath agreed and on the question of European defence hoped that US troops would continue to be stationed in Western Europe 'to take part in the common defence of the Atlantic partnership'.