



NO TO PARLIAMENTARY CONTROL OF UNIONS

DETAILS OF the Government's war on trade unions have now been published. Mrs Thatcher frankly described them in the House as the Government's answer to "the events last winter" when the labour movement so successfully reasserted the right of collective bargaining.

The most serious of the three proposals for the reform of labour law is that concerning picketing. Having invented the loaded term "secondary picketing", which covers everything but a worker 'peacefully' picketing his own place of work under police supervision in a trade dispute to which he is personally a party, the Government now intends to outlaw it. This would mean that anyone picketing outside the extremely narrow limits defined would not only be subject to arrest for breaking the law, he would also no longer be protected by the trade union immunity established under section 13 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act.

The individual trade unionist could be tried and punished; and it would be open to the employer concerned to initiate action against the trade union "if he thought that picketing was unlawful and damaging to his firm's operations." This same action could be extended to other forms of industrial action like "blacking" or blockading, since they too would come under the blanket "secondary picketing" which would be illegal.

This would take the labour movement right back to 1900 when the Taff Vale judgement made trade unions liable for any damages claimed by the employer in any case of industrial action.

Another of the proposals concerns hundred per cent unionism or what the employers call a "closed shop". It would protect all non-union members from dismissal on the grounds of their refusal to belong to a union for whatever reason and it would give any worker the right of going right up to the High Court if he felt he had been unreasonably expelled from his union - as for scabbing, say. This issue of a union's right to decide on its own membership was one the AUEW fought right through to a finish, ignoring the Industrial Court set up under the Industrial Relations Act and thereby playing a leading role in smashing the Act.

The third proposal tries to bribe trade unions into using secret ballots for their own elections, for changes of rule, or for calling or ending strikes, by paying for the cost of the ballot. Of this proposal it can only be said that any union foolish enough to bargain away its independence and branch democracy in this way will deserve what it gets.

Class law in the class war

There are two aspects to this latest attack on the unions. It is part of the running battle capitalism has fought against trade unions ever since it tried to strangle them at birth. Combination Acts, Taff Vale Judgements, Industrial Relations Acts, and the present Tory Government's proposals, are capitalism's response to every success the organised working class has in its own defence.

But these proposals also have to be seen, quite specifically, as part of the vicious, anti-working class policy of a government more nakedly bent on our defeat than any government we have seen for many decades. Our tactics to meet this assault on our unions are to continue to take whatever industrial action is necessary to defend our standard of living and to reject forcefully any attempt to prevent our unions from functioning as they were intended in such struggles.

The best weapon of defence is the collective bargaining which the labour movement has been fighting for and which the TGWU at their Conference supported almost unanimously. Collective bargaining means guerrilla struggle. As the General Secretary of the TGWU said: "It means keeping all our options open, using all the different methods we have developed over the years. It means thinking carefully about where we fight our battles instead of letting the employers and the Government choose the battle ground."

There is no doubt that, just as the clarity of the unions on



Massive rally in 1971 protesting at anti-trade union laws

(Photo: Press Association)

Engineers to hit employers

AFTER MONTHS of negotiations with the Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF), the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (CSEU) has decided on an overtime ban from July 30. The CSEU seeks minimum pay rates of £80 per week, a claim on which the employers have prevaricated.

6,500 companies in the EEF will be hit as up to two million engineering workers press the employers. Within

one week of the overtime ban there will be a one day national strike involving engineers and kindred trades, on August 6. Similar strikes will take place on August 13 and 20.

Such militancy should persuade employers that the CSEU is serious when it talks about money. Should employers still not be convinced then further strikes can be expected. The 1972 pay claim comes to mind when guerrilla strikes, pitting our strength of organisation against the enemy's vulnerable points, split the employers. The employers' 'strike fund' did not save them then and won't save them now.

The necessity of the fight for collective bargaining was reflected in the correct stand of the TUC against the last Government's wage policy, so their clarity on the necessity of defending class struggle against this present attack on the unions will be reflected in a correct stand by the TUC against this Government's punitive amendments to labour law.

But there is, in addition to the specific guerrilla fight against this Government's anti-trade union proposals, the long-term fight against capitalism's permanent strategy of war on our unions as the single barrier to unlimited exploitation. Our own strategy in this war is not how to win this or that battle against the employers or against the government which acts for them but how to overthrow the class enemy and replace capitalism with socialism. Our working class strategy has to be revolutionary. True leadership in our labour movement consists in making our day-to-day class struggle, based on collective bargaining and guerrilla tactics, serve our revolutionary strategy of ending exploitation altogether.

Deep Duffryn jobs saved

IN KEEPING with the NUM Conference decision to assert coal's central position in energy policy, the threatened nationwide strike to keep the Deep Duffryn colliery in Mid-Glamorgan from being closed has forced the National Coal Board to back down. A new face is to be opened and the jobs of the 450 miners there have been saved.

This victory shows what working class unity and determination can achieve in the face of Government plans to close down industry. The NUM Conference in Jersey, as well as adopting the strong line of resisting pit closures, also raised the banner against the Government's attack on the trade unions, a banner to which the TGWU have already rallied at their Conference.

APOLOGY

The picture of Corby steelworkers which appeared in last week's Worker should have been credited to Andrew Ward of Report.

The Week

PARLIAMENT has agreed to an amendment which will radically alter the terms by which a woman can have an abortion. This outrageous move from a parliament full of men further oppresses women who only want the right to choose. It is insulting to women to suggest that they need such legislation to make them responsible especially as it comes from a parliament and a system who care nothing for human life.

* * *

ONE more step was taken down the road to hanging, so favoured by the Tories as a cure-all for society's ills, when the Minister of State for the Home Office announced further 'reform' in the treatment of offenders, in this case case young ones. "It is these young people who we believe will benefit from a short, sharp custodial sentence sufficiently early in their criminal career to bring them up short. It is with these in mind that we have been developing tougher regimes in a limited number of detention centres."

* * *

A NUPE shop steward has been arrested while members employed at Great Ormond Street hospital for sick children were protesting by standing on a zebra crossing. There is a plan to close 40 of the hospitals 349 beds for children as an economy measure.

* * *

THE NATIONAL Association of Head Teachers has called on its 21,000 members to write to parents to say that they can no longer guarantee educational standards because of cuts in government spending. A Tory MP has raised his voice in protest foaring that school funds might be used in this worthy cause. "If local authorities are to pay, it is an abuse of ratepayers' money for political purposes and should be drawn to the attention of the auditors."

* * *

ACTION by the Institute of Professional Civil Servants has led to pay increases of up to 34 per cent for 20,000 scientists. Action is still continuing on the claim for technicians and defence workers.

* * *

PARAFFIN, whose main use is in domestic heating, particularly among the aged and others who can't afford more expensive heating, is to rise in price by 25 per cent. The decision has just been taken by the Energy Secretary to abandon price controls, in order to "ensure supplies". Pressure for the price rises comes from the manufacturers, who have always opposed the price control adopted in 1973, and found the lower price a "disincentive" to supply retailers with paraffin.

* * *

MPs have voted themselves £2,500 a year increase and will receive a further £2,500 by 1981. And we're not even going to have the pleasure of the highly entertaining parliamentary broadcast anymore! Just how do they earn their money?

Historic Notes

LAST WEEK we saw how Robert Applegarth rapidly won wide respect as a leading member of the famous 'Junta'. But his activities as General Secretary of the carpenters was only one side of his work.

In 1863 Russia intervened to suppress Polish independence. British workers were hot with indignation, and Applegarth helped found the Polish League, a purely working class organisation pledged to support the Poles, and to fight war and militarism. Out of this grew the International Working Men's Association, the first International. Applegarth got the carpenters to affiliate as a union, and in 1868 at the Basle Congress he was elected chairman of the general council.

Applegarth rejoiced that workmen of different countries could at last meet to exchange ideas and express their common wants. "The International has done more than stop the importation of foreign labour during strikes. It has enlarged the views of the English trade unionists" and helped spread the example of effective trade unionism to the Continent.

At the Basle Congress Applegarth put forward proposals he had drawn up with Marx, urging the formation of trade unions in all countries 'until the system of wage labour shall be replaced by a system of associated free labour ... Trade unions are the best means of imparting that knowledge of order and discipline, and that strict regard for the interests of the whole, which are inseparable conditions to the success of cooperative production,' which Applegarth was convinced, must replace capitalism.

Holidaying on the Continent in late 1870, Applegarth was signed up by the NEW YORK WORLD as a front line correspondent to the Franco-Prussian war. His experiences there deeply affected him. "The working men of all countries," he wrote to the paper, 'should clearly understand the miseries inflicted by war on themselves as a class. I am convinced that if the working men but knew their strength, and were wise

enough to use it, we should have no more of the working men of one country being led, sword in hand, to slaughter their fellow workers of other countries, with whom they have no quarrel. The power of preventing war rests with the working class.'

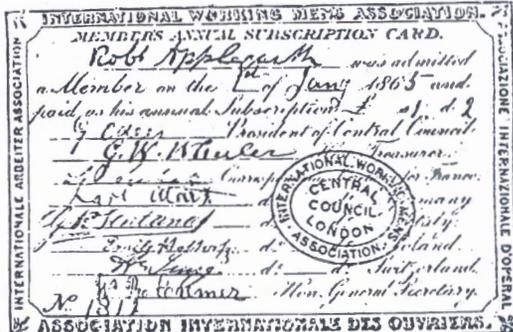
When the workers of Paris seized power in their Commune the following year, Applegarth gave them his full support, and later smuggled Communards out of France on his own passport, to save them from their bourgeois butchers, who murdered upwards of 25,000 Communards when Paris fell.

In 1870 Applegarth was re-elected General Secretary of the ASCJ by 2370 votes to 515 for his three opponents combined. But in September he accepted appointment to the Royal Commission on the workings of the Contagious

introducing the first public electric lighting and the first refrigerator into England. In 1892 he wrote to the Royal Commission on Labour that 'most of the sacrifice of health and life is easily preventable,' and he had no sympathy for workers who refused to wear and use safety gear.

In 1911, at the age of 75, he rallied to the support of workers striking all over Britain. Finding that the 'public' had collected a benefit for 'loyal' workers of the London and Brighton railway, Applegarth organised a much bigger subscription for the strikers. He also went to speak to meetings of striking hotel workers. His advice: 'Sit tight!'

Until 'production for use replaced production for profit', he said, strikes would be inevitable. 'Men do not deliberately throw up their bread and go on strike



Diseases Act. Applegarth considered it essential that trade unionists be involved in areas outside their own craft affairs, especially in this campaign to abolish the police right to stop any woman and subject her to physical examination. But some of his union branches found venereal disease a 'distasteful issue' for their General Secretary to be involved in, and forced his resignation. So ended Applegarth's brief but very significant union career.

His later years were spent testing safety equipment for miners and divers, inventing a submarine lamp and smoke-preventer, and

without some cause. If people will read more of the sufferings of the workers of the past and of how they still suffer they will see the cause of this great industrial upheaval.'

A deep and thoughtful man, Applegarth never rejoiced in struggle for its own sake. Some have pictured him as a compromised 'aristocrat of labour'. The truth is that this companion of Marx knew that the class struggle is war: a deadly and serious affair in which the stakes are too high for play. He had implicit faith in his fellow workers, and never doubted who would be the eventual winner in the class war.

Finance capital drives up land prices

BRITISH AGRICULTURAL land is in danger of being bought up by foreign capital - in particular from the EEC. "The relative cheapness of agricultural land, one third of EEC levels, is a major attraction. We think buying up of land is not out of hand yet, but we can see the avalanche possibly arriving." The Northfield Committee in its recent report on land ownership welcomes this as mastering technical change in British agriculture. These changes mean the destruction of the industry as a means of supplying Britain's food needs.

Land ownership, that holy of holies of capitalist property, has been investigated with due veneration. The committee, set up in 1977 and expected to report within months, has taken two years to produce a report, which in the vagueness of its proposals and the stupid lack of agreement among its authors, betrays an overriding fear of offending the landed interest.

The phenomenal rise in the price of agricultural land, which is rapidly driving the small tenant farmer out of a living, is widely thought to be caused by the insurance companies and financial in-

stitutions investing heavily in land. In the last three years 6 to 10 per cent of land coming on the market has been bought up by the institutions, which also acquired about 30 per cent of the let land sold. "Yet we see no case for restricting their activities on the grounds that they force up prices".

Blame for rising prices - another word the committee would not use - attaches apparently to wealthy land owners "anxious to increase the size and viability of their existing holdings". The fact that these were in the most cases either inherited or bought at low prices enables those already wealthy to pay higher prices and become even wealthier.

The report is as clear about this long term trend as it is unwilling and unable to propose a remedy. At the turn of the century only 12 per cent of the land was in the hands of owner-occupiers. The term is misleading as the capitalist owner is not necessarily a farmer or even the occupier, except by title, of his estate. This class of capitalist now owns at least half and probably as much as 65 per cent of all agricultural land in Britain.

Chairman of the International Health care is

a professional concern - so no return to amateurism

THE WORKING class has much to thank the ambulance service for, and their recent industrial action has highlighted how little we know of the service and its immense value.

The impetus for its establishment came from the ambulance men themselves. Organised in a number of diverse bodies including councils, voluntary organisations, hospitals, etc. The establishment of the National Health Service by the class resulted in a centrally funded operation, locally controlled.

The function of the ambulance service is twofold. First and foremost it exists to transport the sick and infirm from home to hospital and back again. This has always been its primary function, carried out by highly trained and dedicated officers, well capable of administering necessary care to their vulnerable passengers. 25 million cases were carried last year, illustrating the extent to which the service takes health care into the community. The second function is the accident and rescue service for serious emergencies, currently accounting for less than 10 per cent of the present workload. The proportion of accident and emergency cases carried between 1949 and the present day has remained fairly constant - 0.9 out of 15.8 million cases in 1959 (6.7 per cent); and 1.8 out of 25 million calls in 1977, (7.2 per cent). The employer has always been deaf to calls for increased manning to cope more efficiently with serious emergencies and manpower over the last 20 years has only just kept pace with workload, allowing no qualitative development.

The employer now wishes to cut the ambulance service and glibly claims it to be a taxi fleet for the less well. The average case costs £8.50p (7miles) and minicabs, relatives, friends and volunteers are a suggested alternative. In other words, back to 1949. This, it is claimed, would release ambulance men to provide a more comprehensive accident service. How you get wheel chairs, stretchers or people on crutches into minicabs is not explained. Perhaps a next-door neighbour might be taught to sutre and set broken bones thereby removing the necessity for a hospital visit. Such hypocrisy from the state that has closed down accident and emergency departments all over the country!

Transportation of the infirm is a skilled and exacting task which we must ensure that our ambulance men continue to carry out. The ambulance service is ours; demanded and fought for by the working class. It is the responsibility of all workers to defend and maintain it. The bourgeoisie would like nothing better than for us to leave the ambulance men isolated and frustrated to such an extent that emergency services are withdrawn. Working class lives are the responsibility of us all.

China's attitude to revolution

CHINA'S DEPUTY Prime Minister Li Xianmin in an interview with American journalists, having been asked if he thought Jimmy Carter was a weak president said: 'It's up to you to judge. Cuba is situated right at the gate of the US, but the US seems to have no way of dealing with Cuba.'

What he meant by 'dealing with a country' at your gate was made clear when he spoke about China's policy towards Vietnam. 'I would not like to exclude the possibility of another strike back against the Vietnamese in self-defence on the part of China ... We know that our "counter-attack" against the Vietnamese last February did not give them enough of a lesson.'

After 17 years of uninterrupted broadcasting in the cause of the liberation of Thailand from capitalist control, the Voice of the People of Thailand went off the air on July 10. The Communist Party of Thailand operated this radio station with China's support, but now China wants to brush aside any connection with the revolutionary movement in Thailand as an embarrassment to good relations with the present regime.

Editorial

The main plank which the Government is using to silence opposition to its policies is the much talked about mandate - an undemocratic concept based on the assumption that a minority will rule over the majority. The bourgeoisie and their apologists argue that a general election gives a government the authority to govern and the mandate to carry out its policies. Within the confines of parliamentary democracy this is of course true. It is no different from the authority the mediaeval kings and princes derived from the church. They received their mandate ultimately from God himself. In feudal times a king was ordained by the church not so that he could be accepted by the people but so that he might not be challenged by others who aspired to the same position. The church acted as an umpire to prevent squabbles and wars between the various factions of the ruling class.

Capitalism, casting aside feudalism, replaced the church with the popular vote by the people. The people, through a general election, would choose who among the factions of the ruling class should rule them. The king's divine authority was replaced by bourgeois democracy.

Throughout, the ruling class under feudalism or capitalism depended not on a mandate but on force to maintain its rule. Hence the present expansion in police and army. But it has always tried to cloak this rule of force behind the trappings of parliamentary democracy.

The working class on the other hand had to break through and act outside this parliamentary democracy. This did not stem from any theoretical understanding but from the sheer necessity to survive with dignity. All genuine working class struggle is on the periphery of parliamentary democracy. Sometimes it is overtly outside it as in the case of the struggles against the Combination Acts of 1799 and the more recent Industrial Relations Act of 1971 when the engineers refused to recognise a legally established court.

Working class practice, however, is not matched by theoretical understanding. Hence its participation in parliamentary elections, voting for a government one day and preparing to fight it the next.

The present Tory Government has brought out this contradiction very sharply and is challenging the working class to resolve it. And resolve it they must, for time is very short. The working class must declare what it has accepted in practice. Down with parliamentary democracy. Long live proletarian revolution.

TUC media study of millionaire press

THE LONG PROMISED TUC study of media coverage of industrial affairs has just been published. This interesting booklet is well worth a read. It's close reasoning and careful assembly of facts contrast starkly with its subject matter - the portrayal of unions as unreasoning and unreasonable forces of destruction by the media.

The booklet starts by highlighting the monopoly ownership and control of Britain's press. Virtually all of the dailies and many regional newspapers are owned by multinationals which 'are linked firmly to the rest of the commercial world' through their interests in other industries like paper and printing, transport, engineering, oil and property. Such companies include Reed International (Daily Mirror, Sunday Mirror and Sunday People), Trafalgar House (Daily Star, Daily Express and Sunday Express), News International (News of the World, The Sun), S. Pearson & Sons (Financial Times, 68 regional newspapers, The Economist), and of course the now infamous Thomson Organisation (The Times, Sunday Times, and 51 regional newspapers).

'Bias', the TUC points out, takes many forms. There is the unsubtle invective: 'In more nervous countries people would spit on Mr Bassett' (Newcastle

Journal). The selection of stories as well as their coverage contains a more subtle form of bias. Strikes are reported, but not settlements. The 'harmful effects' of strikes are reported in detail - their causes, the claims and views of the strikers often being ignored. Even the 'effects' are often carefully selected. The example is given of the woman who had to wait two years for an operation because of health service cuts. This was not 'newsworthy'. But an extra day's wait because of industrial action was headline matter. 'Old people may die' may well have been an individual's prediction displayed in banner headline - even though those who knew better pointed out why this was not the case. And of course, the actual death of a picket under the wheels of a scab lorry during the lorry driver's strike received scant attention.

Who are we trying to convince about press bias anyway? Surely anyone with more than a pea for a brain knew it existed all along? It may (or may not) be true that this campaign of vilification succeeded in mustering anti-trade union feeling in 'public opinion'. But who are the 'public' we wish to appeal to but trade unionists and their friends and relations? Don't trade unions, individually and collectively,

have their own press capable of answering any criticisms of their aims and methods and turning the whole issue into an offensive on the employers? Vilification campaigns may succeed partially and be very dangerous for that but there is another side to the coin. Even if the trade unions have fallen in the estimation of the 'public', hasn't the press fallen equally in the eyes of trade unionists? Sure the media has huffed and puffed but whose house is it really blowing down? Its credibility is seriously damaged.

Don't journalists with their Code of Conduct and TUC affiliation bear some responsibility for press distortion? What are they doing to stop it? Would the proposed National Press Finance Corporation with its 'workers on the board' achieve anything more than another step on the road to corporatism?

The Press is as successful in denigrating the labour movement as our union movement lacks conviction in its aims, and the courage of those convictions. To point to Press bias is fraught with problems. Is there at the back of some people's minds the vain hope that if somewhere 'bias' was removed and instead we had 'fair' reporting then at last the aspirations of workers would be 'heard' and met? As though the evils of today's society are created by misinformed opinion rather than palpable, real, institutionalised oppression and exploitation of one class by another? The real bias lies not in the press, but in society itself.

Frank Gore
Died at work on Thursday, July 12, 1979
A founder member of the CPB(ML)
Engineer by trade and a member of the AUEW

TUC demands full nursery education

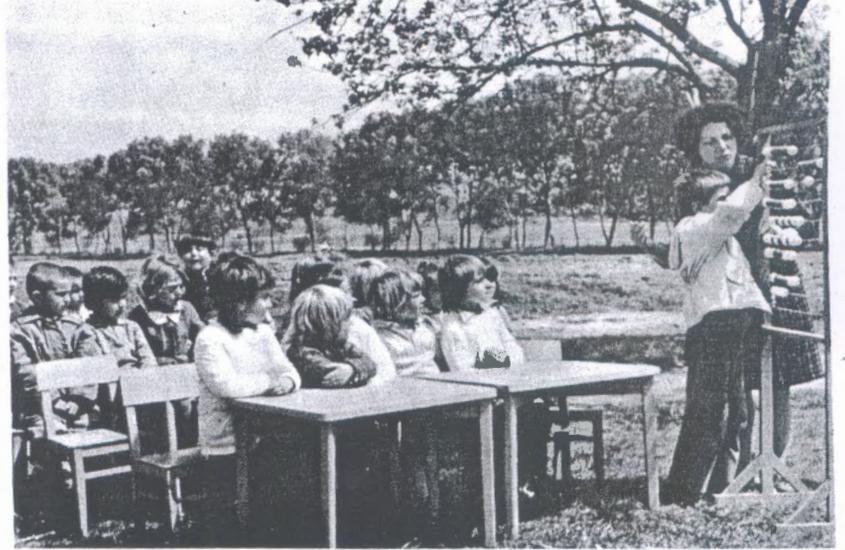
ON JULY 3rd a day of action jointly organised by the NUT and the National Campaign for Nursery Education was held in London, to demand state provision of nursery education for all under fives whose parents want it. One woman, among the hundreds picnicking with their children in St. James' Park prior to descending on Westminster, was asked how she would argue against the cuts in nursery education. She said if a family was poor it would never think of saving by cutting out food for the under fives altogether.

Certainly those who are involved in nursery education, whether parents or teachers, cannot accept cuts in the already paltry nursery sector. Equally certainly, cuts in education for any age group are a blow to us all. That is why the involvement of the teachers' union in this campaign is so important, for only in this way can the overall perspective of the value of education be maintained, and the fight against the cuts, for education, be welded into one united struggle.

The first diversion, tempting for any campaign for nursery education, whether national or local, to fall into, is to make out a 'special case' argument along the lines that nurseries are have been hardest hit by cuts and that it is therefore the turn of the other public sectors to suffer the axe. Just after the war there was better nursery provision than

there has been since, showing what can be done when capitalism needs to call on its reserve army of unemployed women workers, but also how readily any gain made under capitalism can be eroded unless it is defended tooth and nail by union action. It does not follow because nursery education in Britain is spectacularly underdeveloped that, say, resources should be diverted from higher education to nurseries. That kind of prioritisation, juggling with sums that are peoples skills and future is for the capitalist bookkeepers and not for us.

The approach of the TUC working party on the under fives appears to be excellent - it recommends full, free provision of nursery education by the state with no hint of depriving other sectors. But here we come up against the second diversion. All the detailed recommendations or the TUC Charter for the under-fives are well thought out and sound but no matter what government is in power, in no way is capitalism going to be able to afford to look after all our pre-school children or provide proper maternity leave or to train more teachers than ever before. Those of us who want those things - and all workers, whether they have children themselves or not - want the youngest members of our class to be well cared for - will have to take control of our own lives.



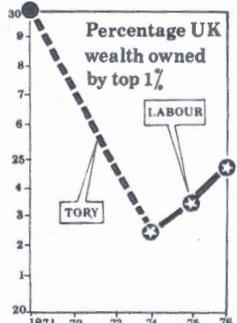
The picture shows Albanian children in an open-air school in the earthquake stricken zone of Lezha and Shkodra which was hit by earth tremors on April 15. In this disaster 35 people died, 379 were wounded and 10,255 houses and 439 buildings were destroyed.

From all over the country came offers of help and voluntary services. Agricultural co-operatives in many parts of the country have made funds available for the people of Lezha and Shkodra to repair the damage. (Photo: Albanian News Agency)

Wage control makes us poor and them rich

THE LAST report of the Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth (it has been an early victim of Government cuts) provides ample evidence of the continued inequality of capitalist Britain.

Social democracy's claim to the gradual creation of an 'egalitarian' and 'equitable' society is refuted by the statistics. Capitalism, with the full assistance of its state machine, still



provides a rich reward for that class which lives by the exploitation of those who must sell their labour power.

In 1976 the 'top one per cent' (few of whom can be assumed to work) owned 24.9 per cent of the nation's wealth and their share is increasing.

As the chart shows, between 1970 and 1974, a period of working class struggle, this 'top one per cent' did see a reduction in its wealth. But from 1974 to 1976, the Labour Government, avowedly determined 'to soak the rich' achieved that boost to profits and reduction in our standard of living which capitalism sought with its Social Contract.

The report fails to mention the most important statistic. One hundred per cent of the wealth is produced by the working class. When will we ensure we keep it?

Government scientists and technologists use strength

"WE NEVER realised that the IPCS had such industrial muscle." This was the response of a Civil Service Department (CSD) official after the impact of the one day strike and subsequent selective action taken by government scientists and technologists, members of IPCS.

The one day strike call on Friday, June 22, was followed by 90 per cent of members, and selective strikes, supported by a levy on the whole membership, began the following Monday at places such as munitions factories, the Hydrographic Department at Taunton where Admiralty charts are made, and the computer regulating spare parts to the RAF.

Action was then progressively stepped up to withdraw engineers responsible for power and heating supplies to government establishments, engineers from the fast breeder reactor at Dounreay, technical officers at the Royal Mint and at the Palace of Westminster. Thus, having a scattered membership in many government bodies proved to be a strength rather than a weakness,

made possible by the unity of the membership despite attempts to divide them along a bewildering number of lines.

As a result, the CSD, has conceded a major part of the union's demand - that scientists' pay be linked to the recent levels granted to all other civil servants. This was originally meant to be the basis of an agreement made two months ago, until the CSD reneged on it after sensing weakness in the union's resolve. Meanwhile, a settlement on the technical grades (engineers etc) is still awaited and selective action is being maintained until it is achieved.

A union which formerly always used "moderation" as its touchstone has now been blooded in battle. It has proved its ability to stand alone to defend its members, not to rely on the efforts of the bigger civil service unions. This should enable an effective response in future struggles no longer hindered by a naive belief in the "fairness" of the CSD and the government which stands behind it.

Nuclear waste dumped into the ocean

SHARPNESSE, Gloucestershire has been the scene of small but vociferous anti-nuclear demonstrations aimed at obstructing the loading of radioactive waste onto a ship called "Gem". This waste is sent to Sharpness from nuclear plants, hospitals and laboratories all over the country; encased in 2000 concrete filled steel drums and dumped 2½ miles deep, 500 miles out in the Atlantic.

Sixty-five dockers, half the workforce, refused to load the ship. As usual there are always those "mercenaries" who will do anything for money; consequently 15 "volunteers" have scabbed on those with principle and the ship has been loaded, but not before valiant dawn swoops on Wednesday morn-

ing, July 4 when protesters sat on the tracks in front of the nuclear waste train and climbed up and occupied the vital dockside cranes. The police finally got those people down after 5 hours by climbing up there themselves.

Clear and unified action among all the workers at the Docks would clearly have made it impossible to dump all that atomic waste in our seas. Stronger union action would have made the scab dockers shrink back into their holes. Workers in the related industries are in the best and unique position of dictating through Union discussion and policy the way they believe future energy of Britain should be planned and what place nuclear energy and research should take,



The AUEW Number 3 Park Royal Branch was host to engineering workers wanting to express their appreciation of Reg Birch's services to the Union and to the working class on the occasion of his retirement as a member of the Executive Council. It was a fitting site because it was here that Reg Birch began his union work, taking the rat-infested area, and, with other mates, turned it into a model of trade union organisation. "Now", Reg Birch said, "our employers may be running

off to Europe and elsewhere, in search of bigger profits; but we show that workers can make things anywhere. We will have to prevent them from destroying these places where we can make things. We will kill those who wish to crucify us and the workers will win." Representatives from Heathrow engineers and from many factories in the area presented Reg Birch with various gifts in thanks for his help in organising or in wresting better pay deals from the employers. (Photo: The Worker)

Nalگو fight cuts

LOCAL GOVERNMENT branches of NALGO must now meet to consider the employers' offer of 9.4 per cent on consolidated rates in preparation for the Group Meeting to be reconvened on July 27.

The employers' offer not only comes nowhere near the 15 per cent claim but also no advance has been made on the shorter working week or leave entitlements.

Although a comparability study was part of the original claim, it is clear that it is being offered in the hope of forestalling reaction to the inadequate offer and so give time to the local authorities and government to develop their policies of redundancies and cuts in essential services.

That cannot be allowed to occur; instead there must now be a massive rejection of this offer and a commitment by branches to industrial action.

Such a move would be an historic step forward for the membership, and serve to give warning that cuts in services to the public will not be tolerated. But more important for NALGO, it would give the confidence and boost to morale necessary for branches to engage in actions against the cuts.

rights the less profitable capitalism becomes. Capitalists respond by withdrawing the capital which workers have created for them and investing it where it can be more profitable. This often means taking it abroad to exploit a working class which is less organised and less determined to fight for its interests: Dunlop Speke closes and a new Dunlop factory is built in Taiwan. As long as we allow the ruling class to own the means of production our jobs will never be safe.

Students plan strong campaign on cuts

STUDENTS AT Reading University gave a lead for the whole student movement when they called for an Emergency General Meeting to debate the immediate problem of increased tuition fees for all students and the broader strategy for a campaign against the education cuts.

Motions calling for massive action against the system which has demanded school and college closure are being formulated for the next National Conference. Information on the precise and horrifying extent of the erosion of grants, library facilities, laboratory resources and academic courses is being gathered.

Reading, like most

universities, will be existing on a huge deficit for the coming year and within three years, unless action is taken now its entire financial reserve will be exhausted.

In the past University authorities have answered their financial problems by charging exorbitant rates to conferences using their buildings in the vacations. In this way they have avoided and worsened the problem. Next term the problem will be impossible to avoid. The hotelier instinct will have to be radically changed, the AUT and NUS, in solidarity with NATFHE, NUT and all those Unions represented on campuses must unite in the one fight for education.

The Worker

155 FORTRESS ROAD, LONDON, NW5
6 months £2.50 (including postage)
1 year £5.00 (including postage)

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

Toy factory closed

A TWO WEEK strike at the Selected Toys factory at Didcot, Oxfordshire was concluded when management put the firm into voluntary liquidation on June 25. The company had for some time been notorious for its low rates of pay, and when five shopfloor workers were made redundant, members of the TGWU at the factory took strike action.

When asked whether they

regretted the strike, a union spokesman advised the interviewer to "Go and work there yourself and try to live on the wages." Another worker added that the management had brought the closure on themselves by paying such low rates.

The example of Selected Toys represents what is happening throughout Britain. The more we assert our legitimate

Bookshops

Bellman Bookshop 155 Fortress 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
Basildon Bookstall Tues, Fri, Sat Marketplace
Hull Bookstall Old Town Market, Saturdays
Liverpool Bookstall every Thursday Liverpool University

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

The Police. Your Rights when Searched, Questioned or Arrested

Published by the National Consumer Council to accompany the BBC TV Series "For the Love of Albert". Price 25p (postage extra).

The Survey of London

By John Stow. Published by Dent. Price £2.75 (postage extra).