



# RESISTANCE GROWS

## Local councils, water workers, seamen, civil servants, fishermen, take on Thatcher

THREE THOUSAND marched in South London to support Lambeth Council workers in their week of action directly opposing this, the most unpopular and most destructive government of the century.

Heseltine doesn't just withhold rate-support grants, he steals the money we pay as taxes and, what's more, he makes us pay twice for our services with higher rates. Councils opposed to government policy find not only that "support" is withdrawn but that they are undermined in their struggle to save services and jobs. Camden Council receives no government "grant" but still a district auditor can finger through the accounts to accuse Labour councillors of overpaying refuse workers since 1979. If convicted under the 1972 Local Council's Act the councillors face individual payments of £60,000 and disqualification from office. So, Thatcher seeks to inflict personal bankruptcy on those who stand in the way of her attempt to make a nation bankrupt. The demonstra-

tion in Lambeth was a step towards disqualifying Thatcher. And what of those councils who don't rebel but who set about a full programme of destruction? The people of Solihull gave their answer to the Tory-controlled council's intention of shelving 600 local authority jobs. Four thousand lobbied the council meeting forcing the authority to retreat behind Heseltine's rate rise.

Whether supporting councils who refuse to wield the axe, or opposing those who manoeuvre to swipe against us, we are forced to make war on the government. For just one week Lambeth workers gave a graphic demonstration of what Thatcher would introduce for good: the rubbish piling up in the streets, the library doors locked and barred, colleges of education closed.



The workers of Lambeth marched last week in support of the Week of Action against the Thatcher Government's policy of destroying our local services. As with the councillors at Clay Cross, Thatcher is attempting to pick off local councils who defy her Government's dictates. Photo: Andrew Wlard (Report)

## Water unions force better offer despite Thatcher

AN IMPROVED pay offer of 10 per cent has been rejected by the leaders of England and Wales' 33,000 water industry manual workers. Members are now to be consulted by their unions so that industrial action can be approved in the light of the new offer.

A 7.9 per cent offer that the employers, the National Water Council, said would not be improved in any circumstances has already therefore jumped by a further 2.1 per cent. Sir Robert Marshall chairman of the NWC admitted that they had upped the offer because of the "very great certainty of industrial action if we did not make any improvements."

This is a clear lesson to others who have accepted less without even the pretence of a fight. Thatcher may have steeled the resolve of employ-

ers up and down the country but neither she nor they have been prepared to take on workers who have refused to be cowed. Hence the heartwarming victories of the dockers, the firemen, Gardners and others.

Clearly, employers whose final offers have proved not to be so final after all can be budged again.

Showing supposed surprise at the rejection of the new offer Sir Robert Marshall now says the NWC is considering their own secret ballot of the workers. Is he so stupid as to think that water workers voted so overwhelmingly against 7.9 per cent just for an extra two per cent?

The manual unions are planning to meet again on February 25th and the craftsmen, also offered 7.9 per cent, meet the employers on February 13th.

## Our fishermen fight for British industry

FISHERMEN have once again taken steps to prevent to import of cheap fish, which is destroying the industry.

The fishing fleets of England, northeast Ireland and Scotland will remain in port till February 11, after which, if no satisfactory news comes out of fisheries negotiations in Brussels, plans have been made for picketing and "other decisive forms of militant action."

The price of catches has recently fallen from £40 to around £18 per box. It is ironic that in northeast Scotland, which is supposed to be 'booming' from North Sea Oil, fishermen cannot afford to put to sea because their fuel costs are so high.

Their action, which began in Scotland, but rapidly spread to northeast Ireland and northeast England, has so far tak-

en the form of a refusal to put to sea. In Peterhead, for instance, over 200 boats are being kept in harbour.

In some ports, fishermen are also preventing foreign trawlers from landing any fish; and a mass blockade of ports is being threatened unless there is action from Thatcher.

The chief executive of the Scottish Fishermen's Organisation described the situation in the following terms: "The men now find again it is cheaper to stay in port than go to sea and make huge losses when they cannot hope to cover the cost of a trip. We have lost Britain's deep sea fleet and if we are not careful, the inshore industry will go as well."

As the EEC is now attempting to hammer out a common fisheries policy, it is vital that fishermen take a stand to

stop the further carving up and over exploitation of British waters. Action to prevent cheap imports should only be a prelude to a wider campaign to extend our fishing limits and enforce catch quotas to ensure that a valuable natural resource is not destroyed for ever.

### ... as do seamen

THE SUCCESS of the seamen in forcing Townsend Thoresen to settle with a 14 per cent increase and more for over time may well lead to ship owners making an acceptable national offer to the NUS, since it follows on from last week's settlement between Canadian Pacific and its seamen. Some 200 ships are now being held up indefinitely by strikes and congestion in ports is getting worse

## Workers' internationalism and import controls

AGAINST the background of the destruction of the textile industry, it was announced at a recent meeting of the Spen Valley Trades Council, in West Yorkshire, that a two-year old struggle for union recognition by workers in the US textile firm of J. Stevens had been successful, for an international boycott had been

applied to scab-produced goods exported to Britain, among other countries, and this had helped the US workers achieve recognition and a 19.3 per cent wage increase.

The Trades Council has called on the TUC to impose the same kind of boycott on all American textile imports which are destroying our text-

ile industry here.

It is now widely anticipated that the Government's latest cut, that of reducing Temporary Short Time Working Compensation from a level of 75 per cent to 50 per cent will be the final straw for many

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## Historic Notes

# Samuel Plimsoll and the 'Sea-Villains'

"1032 seamen were drowned in 1873. from causes other than shipwrecks, due mainly to unscrupulous ship-owners who sent overloaded ships to sea. I am calling for a minute survey of all unclassed vessels in the Shipping Survey Bill I am bringing before Parliament this very week". This was said by Samuel Plimsoll, regarded as a madman by some, when, in the House of Commons he described the shipowners as murderers: "There are shipowners in this country who have never either built a ship or bought a new one, but are simply what are called 'ship-knackers". The shouting of members and rebuke of the Speaker could not stop him as he went on to name the ships lost at sea and their owners' names, and to express his determination to "unmask the villains who send these sailors to death and destruction". This dialogue followed:-

## We want no neutron bombs!

GEORGE WEINBERGER, US Defence Secretary, has given notice that the Reagan administration intends to 'make use of' the neutron bomb, the weapon that kills people while leaving property intact. This weapon, which caused such a furore when Carter proposed it and which caused its withdrawal in 1978, will be stationed in Germany. This comes as news to the Germans, who may be expected to have an opinion of their own.

Egon Bahr, national secretary of the Social Democratic party, maintains his previous position that the neutron bomb is a 'perversion of thinking'. Another SPD member of the Parliamentary Defence Committee, Hermann Scheer, regards it as 'unbelievably misguided human thinking'. The recent 15,000 strong demonstration in Frankfurt against US military support for the El Salvador dictatorship will surely be repeated all over Germany on this resurrected threat of the neutron bomb.

Lord Carver, former British Army Chief of Staff, has made quite clear his opposition to this 'enhanced radiation weapon' being stationed in Europe, because used by 'conventional forces in the field' it is 'likely to blur the edges' and lower the nuclear threshold. On the other hand, and so true to form, Thatcher has 'much sympathy for' this weapon. Not only that, but she lectures the Dutch, "If you value your way of life - the freedoms we have in the West - you must be prepared to defend it!"

The Dutch people, very wisely, will have no truck with cruise missiles, leave alone neutron bombs, and have surely heard from Britain what the people think of her ladyship.

Reagan and Thatcher's travelling salesmanship on the benefits of warmongering are accompanied by economic policies in their own countries which 'destroy people; leaving property intact'. Reagan, in his State of the Union message, berates American workers with the need for tax cuts, public spending cuts, lower wages and higher productivity "to avoid economic calamity of tremendous proportions". How much does the fleet of US war ships in the Gulf cost, now that the hostages are free? What is the cost of military support for the El Salvador dictatorship?

Speaker. "The Honourable Member made use of the word 'villain'. I trust he did not mean it to apply to any member of the House"

Plimsoll. "I did sir, and I do not mean to withdraw it".

Angry cries of "Order" and "Withdraw" came from Members.

Sailors had always been the worst treated of workers and suffered bad food, long separation from home, a host of parasites from those chandlers who provided rotten meat and wearily biscuit to the bumboat - men who infested every port, and discipline that ensured prison or worse for disobeying an order even from a mad captain.

The arrival of steam ships brought greater safety from the hazards of the sea and shorter journeys but as usual with all discoveries, greedy men degraded and made worse the situation of the work slaves. The new Insurance of Ships which should have benefited all was used as a further source of profit by a large number of shipowners, big and small.

Rotten ships were bought up cheaply, heavily insured and sent to sea where the loss of life in these 'coffin ships' was of no importance because of the large insurance paid out to the owners. Other owners, less daring or less evil, just overloaded seaworthy ships so that they were dangerous.

Samuel Plimsoll MP became a thorn in the flesh of both Liberal and Tory Prime Ministers. Gladstone and Disraeli: he was called 'Rude and tactless' while his moods of impatience irritated both Prime Ministers. He continued to make scenes in Parliament but won the support of the engineers and miners as well as the seamen, the TUC and the general populace, as shown in packed meetings everywhere in the country. Citizens of

LATIN AMERICA is facing a future torn between the promise exemplified by the Nicaraguan revolution, and the despair and oppression exemplified by Ronald Reagan. Long running dictators like those in Paraguay and Uruguay must welcome an openly imperialist Uncle Sam in the driving seat; and must welcome not having to put on even a thin mask of concern for human rights. Argentina's President now openly acknowledges their intervention in Bolivia - 'We didn't want another Cuba on our doorstep' he says. As expoted thousands have been arrested and hundreds murdered.

Chile hasn't had a very good 1980. All plans for achieving international respectability have failed - the plebiscite on Pinochet's retention of power for 9 years was universally denounced as a fix. Pinochet has discovered that simply brandishing the word "constitution" doesn't fool anybody - especially as even the slightest glance at the said constitution shows that it gives the president even more powers than he at present wields.

More humiliating for Pinochet was the disaster of his much heralded tour of the Pacific, with planned visits to Fiji, the Phil-



The workers of Laird Bros. photographed during the building of the "Royal Oak" at Birkenhead in 1890. Safety was accounted for. (From John Gorman's 'To Build Jerusalem' Scorpion Publ.)

Derby and Liverpool collected £600 for what he had done for the seamen, which he used for a new lifeboat.

In 1876, the passing of "The Merchant Shipping Act", Plimsoll's crowning achievement, confirmed the necessity for a Load-Line, the Plimsoll line, but he had to fight another 14 years to put the responsibility into the hands of the Board of Trade rather than individual shipowners. The National Amalgamated Sailors and Firemen's Union of Great Britain and Ireland was formed in 1887 by J. Havelock Wilson, a young seaman from Sunderland and Plimsoll presided at their first Convention. In 1928

Wilson, now President, ashamed that Plimsoll had been almost forgotten, had his Union install, in Victoria Park Embankment Gardens, a bronze bust on a granite column with the inscription, "Samuel Plimsoll born 1824 died 1898. Erected by the National Union of Seamen in grateful recognition of his services to the men of the sea of all nations".

He was also long remembered in another way. Inspired by the courage of Plimsoll, Sir John Lubbock, saddened by the fact that workers of all trades worked all the hours of daylight, never seeing the sun and having no holidays because Britain did not

celebrate Saints' Days as did Europe, secured the passing of a modest little Bill, The Bank Holiday Bill in 1871, knowing that other workers would want to go "to see the buttercups" and the Holiday would become general. An enterprising manufacturer made shoes for the new holidaymakers and called them "Plimsolls".

Samuel Plimsoll, the failed coal merchant and eccentric MP, had no connection with the sea, except, as a child he was rowed out by his father, an exciseman, to see the ship imprisoning Napoleon who, said his father, had killed more people on earth than any previous tyrant.

## Latin dictators - how much longer?

ppines, Tahiti, and others. On arrival in Fiji he was pelted with eggs by demonstrators at the airport, then heard that President Marcos of the Philippines would not receive him. Within 24 hours of his ceremonial departure he was back in Chile with egg on his face.

To our shame, only Britain has sought closer contact with Chile last year. Following Thatcher's decision to restore the ambassador, the Government authorised trade with Chile covered by full export credit guarantee facilities. In July the arms sale ban was lifted, and the Junta sent representatives to the Aldershot Arms Fair. In August the Minister of Trade led a delegation of senior executives from Plessey, Hawker Siddeley, and Lloyds to Chile and Argentina. Even the USA rejected the plebiscite, reduced their diplomatic staff in Santiago, and re-imposed an arms-ban, though whether these measures hold up under Reagan remains to be seen. The revelation that a British student, Claire Wilson, was being tortured in Chile 4 days before the ban on arms sales was lifted, has re-kindled the anger that the world's workers feel towards Pinochet and our

Huddersfield Trades Council and the Labour Party.

In the fifteen months to December. West Yorkshire has lost 21,000 jobs in 69 factory closures and 169 partial shut-downs.

own Government - whose only defence was that they hadn't heard about her torture until the day after the ban was lifted.

1981 looks like being the year of the revolution in El Salvador. The USA backed a "moderate coup" last year in order to prevent another Nicaragua, but over the months all reforms have been blocked, and the moderate members of the Government have resigned in disgust. The US continues to pour money - a record \$80m in 1980 - into the junta, but their days are clearly num-

bered. The collapse of the economy is widely predicted to be imminent; the Government debt increased 104 per cent last year and their only answer was to run the money printing machines non-stop. As one side collapses the other becomes steadily stronger and more unified - the people control great tracts of land, have harvested the coffee (upon which El Salvador's economy so much depends) and kept the proceeds for the revolution against the US imperialist backed regime.

## Ireland - One Nation

PAISLEY'S threatening demonstration of 'loyalists' prepared to violently oppose a 'united Ireland' is possible because British troops are in Ireland, and also because we, in Britain, have done so little to demand the removal of those troops.

The burgeoning 'peace movement' in Britain, opposed to nuclear weaponry and US cruise missiles being stationed here, has, as yet, done very little on the question of British troops in Ireland. Because those troops use 'conventional weapons' only against the Irish people, does that make it all right?

If we reject the nuclear terrorist threat of Reagan and Thatcher, do we therefore accept at face value, the Prevention of Terrorism Act (Temporary Provisions) gaining in permanency every time it is renewed,

on the nod, in Parliament?

'Ireland is one nation' was the theme of a recent CPBML meeting in London (full report next issue) at which these and related issues were discussed. Paisley's demagogy cannot be condoned in Britain, nor can he dictate his terms, but he is allowed to because we have skirted the 'intractable problem' of Ireland. It is not intractable at all. It is, if you find yourself in the British cabinet, and want to hold on to Ireland at any cost.

Ireland's geographical proximity to Britain is no excuse for the interference of the latter in its internal affairs of the former. Ireland's affairs are the concern of the Irish people - alone. The longer we allow British occupation of Ireland, the more do we compromise our own aspirations to freedom and independence

## \* IN BRIEF

HUNDREDS of trade unionists took part in a demonstration against unemployment on January 31 organised by the

# Editorial

# Report demands higher pensions

On the occasion of Reagan's inauguration several weeks ago THE WORKER said: "Thatcher has already offered Britain up as a launching pad for Cruise and Trident. What more can she give?"

Now we know: 'sympathy' for Reagan's neutron bomb - the great capitalist weapon that kills people and leaves property intact. How Thatcher's mouth must water at the thought of getting her hands on the ultimate solution of labour unrest.

Reagan also wants murder contingents of US troops, modelled on the blood-thirsty SAS which put on such an exhibition of mowing down terrorists who had laid aside their weapons, to be stationed in the Middle East, in Egypt and Israel. So that is what Camp David is all about!

Thatcher will encourage Reagan in his interference in El Salvador, where but for US support for that dictatorship, the revolutionary offensive would have already won. Murder gangs, armed by the US, have aroused the fierce resistance of the people of El Salvador, a resistance which a simpleton like Reagan sees as a Cuban plot. It will be the British Government's shameful support of US mass murder and destruction, as in Vietnam, all over again.

Of course, Reagan's Deputy Secretary of State, the man he once appointed to the Supreme Court of California after he had failed to pass his law exams, is so ignorant of foreign affairs that he is quite likely to send the US's neutron bombs to the wrong country. But it is no consolation to us to know that one of those instrumental in the employment of such a weapon, which could unleash untold death and destruction, is in fact a man who cannot name the leader of southern African countries regularly in the news and who has not the most remote idea which European countries are opposed to having US nuclear bases on their soil.

The alliance with the US is as disastrous economically as it is dangerous politically. Britain's jet airliner, the Comet, for example, was sabotaged because the US was determined to keep Britain from ever becoming a major supplier of civil aircraft. Only last month Rolls Royce took a Prattfall when Delta Airlines bought a US aero-engine still on the drawing board rather than buy a much better British aero-engine already operational.

For every reason of self-interest and common humanity we must get out of the NATO alliance which is the major threat to peace in the world today. The fact that it would probably have to be over Thatcher's dead body makes leaving even more attractive. Thatcher out, Britain out of NATO!

THE REPORT of the Scott Inquiry into public service pensions is said to have displeased Thatcher. They refused to suggest greater deductions and suggested that all workers should enjoy a similar scheme on retirement. This underlines the isolation of Thatcher and the fragility of her position, it has given a boost to the morale of those who are preparing to fight her.

One of the main planks of Thatcher's anti-working class stand is that everything in the public sector is wrong and that workers in this sector are a privileged minority and therefore dispensable.

The workers know otherwise. There are over 4.6 million of them, together with another 1.8

million in the nationalised industries and their families. They know that the division between public and private is false and that an attack on one is a prelude to attack on the other.

Part of the assault on the public sector was intended to be the Scott Committee, hand-picked as the Prime Minister's pet propaganda exercise. It included as well as a monetarist economist, two industrialists, an actuary and a token trade unionist. It was hoped that this would produce a single figure for the extra "benefit" of index-linking, by which wages could be reduced.

As an added bonus, it was said 'sotto voce' that an attack on the principle would not go amiss either. In which case the

scene would be set for reducing the pensions themselves.

Instead Scott (former Chairman of Lucas Industries) found that the principle ought to be extended to all, that the actuarial computations of the present deductions were reasonable, and refused to take any account of job security because of the 'horrifying outbacks in British Steel and elsewhere.'

Who now can Thatcher claim as an ally, except those who want to brutalise and destroy Britain? A small but positive step has come from a surprising place. It is now up to those who are able to rid the country of her, the organised working class, to save not only the pensioners, but the whole country.

## THE STATE OF BRITAIN/Industry/Transport/Health

### Water research to be cut

IT IS NOW quite clear that the Government have plans to drastically curtail the vital work of the water industry. Cuts in capital expenditure, reductions in manpower and interference in wage negotiations have all been highlighted in recent issues of THE WORKER. On top of all these attacks there is now a threat to the industry's research programme.

After a meeting of the Water Research Centre Council that decided to save almost a million pounds by cutting staff, the Water Research Centre, the vital research arm of the water authorities, has announced its intention to get rid of seventy staff at the Stevenage and Medmenham laboratories. The IPCS has announced its intention of fighting these cuts.

Among other possible cuts are proposals to halve reservoir and aquifer pollution staff, to stop fish protection and flood forecasting, environmental protection to lose 21 staff, 6 from waste treatment, water research to stop for a year to resume on water authority sites only.

The Water Research Centre provides an internationally respected service to the water authorities and Britain's lead in this field reflects the investment made. Now this progress is threatened by a government that cares nothing for the future. So much for the argument that we have to have cuts now so we can have a future later. They mean cuts for us and a future for them - we must turn that on its head!

### Railway accidents increase as British Rail cuts back maintenance of track and railway freight stock

AN INCREASING number of railway accidents is occurring as a direct result of the financial starvation facing British Rail. This is the conclusion of the Chief Inspecting Officer of Railways, Lieutenant-Colonel McNaughton in his Annual Report for 1979.

In that year, derailments caused by faulty track increased from 13 to 17, and the total number of derailments caused by faulty track conditions rose by 2 to 48. Nine of these derailments occurred at places where a renewal of track had been deliberately postponed!

The report sees no hope of improvement so long as the aver-

age age of the track continues to rise. The imposition of speed restrictions, where track repair has been postponed, only increases the margin for human error.

British Rail's inability to replace outmoded 'derailment-prone' freight stock figures disproportionately among accidents caused by defective vehicles. This constitutes a major and mounting safety hazard.

The report was able to focus on one bright spot. The number of staff fatalities (24) was the lowest ever - and injuries below the average for the last five years. This improvement reflects the increase in safety awareness amongst staff in all grades.

### Health Service unions organise against reorganisation plans

HEALTH AUTHORITIES are on course for a confrontation with the Unions over possible job losses under the NHS re-organisation plans. From the outset Jenkin made no secret of the fact that re-organisation was about saving money by getting rid of 10,000 jobs. It therefore came as no great surprise to the Unions that the management side of the General Whitley Council has rejected Staff Side demands on job and salary guarantees. The Unions, including the BMA, wanted no redundancies, no salary reductions or loss of job

related service conditions. Re-organisation always meant redundancy and should never have reached the debating table. Health Authorities have said that only employees over 40 will get protection. It seems that the mass of the workforce are to face the threat of job losses.

NALGO is calling a meeting in February, after the Employers have come up with their proposals, to discuss a suitable response. Re-organisation has got this far - we must stop it in its tracks if we want to save our jobs and our Health Service.

### Attack on higher education

'RARELY CAN such a fundamental shift in higher education policy have been presented in such a philistine document without even an oblique reference to its educational implications.' This was the reponse of The Times Higher Education Supplement to the government's proposals to take the control of higher education institutions away from local authorities and into a central body under strict government control.

It is a plan for the wholesale destruction of higher education and with it further education. The skirmishes of last year regarding the funding of Advanced Further Education have now developed into a full scale war.

Restriction on the funds for Advanced Further Education has meant course closure and redundancies in many polytechnics. The cut in the rate support grant for local authorities is threatening large scale redundancies in further education colleges.

The government is intent on destroying the very structure of further and higher education. The attack may be directed at higher education institutions. However, further education colleges, whose excellent standards have been maintained by the Advanced courses they run will be deprived of these, resulting in deterioration and contraction in all other courses.

The proposals, outlined in a memorandum circulated within the Department of Education and Science by Carlisle, make no effort to hide Government's intentions: "Resource constraint together with the prospect of sharply declining numbers after 1984, will oblige higher education to contract."

The local authorities are not to be trusted. They have often resisted the outrageous demands of the vandals, in control of the Government, so Thatcher's stooges, Carlisle and Boyson, are to do it themselves.

These proposals are for further and higher education what the break-up of the ILEA would have been for schools in London. They must be met with the same response. All in further and higher education must oppose and ultimately ensure the withdrawal of these plans.



The gaunt silhouette of Normanby Steelworks in Scunthorpe, threatened with closure. Photo: The Worker.

### Bristol busmen fight to keep service

BRISTOL CITY bus service has often been condemned for its notoriously high fares and inadequate service to the public. If the present 'mixed economy' ownership gets its way now, then the service is due to be virtually wiped out over the next few months.

500 jobs are at stake now, and a further 500 by the end of the year; 2 depots - Avonmouth and Winterstoke - are due for closure; and it is estimated by the TGWU that the total package of cuts amounts to a 55 per cent reduction in this vital local service.

The scale of the attack makes the Bristol bus service very much of a test case for what happens to other local bus services throughout the country. What the union is saying is that there is a need for a reliable public transport system which people can afford. They have appealed to the employers, only to come face to face with the Thatcher mentality for them-

selves, ie. point blank refusal to negotiate on anything.

What the busworkers want is an improved service, based on a cohesive transport policy which they are in the process of planning. They say the Council should take full responsibility for running the service, and that the government's "break-even" dictat should be broken. A first issue of 15,000 copies of a petition urging public support for a fight to save Bristol Bus Service has already gone out, and more are on their way.

Having failed to get the Transport Commissioners to reject further fare rises, the busmen have taken the decision to refuse to implement the increases themselves, and are organising for a mass demonstration in the City on Saturday 21st February. In the meantime, they are continuing to build up support through the labour movement, and by talking to people locally in the central shopping district of Broadmead.

# It's no go for TUC at NEDC

THATCHER'S REACTION to the alternative proposals for directing the economy made to her at the recent NEDC meeting between the TUC, CBI and Thatcher shows how wrong it is to attempt to change her policy by polite dialogue and 'talks'. The TUC must stop talking to Thatcher and campaign to get her out.

Thatcher's mandate when she was elected was to destroy the working class and its organisations. Len Murray told her to her face, "You are using unemployment to lower wages. You

wouldn't change direction if unemployment reaches 5 million." Thatcher did not contradict him.

The CBI, many of whose members are involved in manufacturing industry and suffering considerably, has swung from calling for a 'bare knuckle fight' to declaring that "there are sectors of industry where it isn't going too badly". Moss Evans retorted, "That's like applauding a plane crash because one or two survivors come out alive." In Thatcher's single-minded determination to destroy

the working class it is just too bad if manufacturing capitalists get caught in the firing line.

The proposals put forward by both the TUC and CBI, control of imports, the revenue from North Sea oil to be channelled into industrial production and employment, fell on deaf ears. They will not be taken up by Thatcher. The TUC cannot continue to make proposals which would make life more bearable under Thatcher. Life will only be more bearable with Thatcher out for good.

## Civil Servants on war footing to oppose Thatcher pay limits

AT RECENT National Pay Conferences, representatives of over 300,000 Civil Service Trade Unionists of the Society of Civil and Public Servants (SCPS) and the Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA) voted overwhelmingly to reject the Government's 6 per cent wage ceiling and to take direct action for an increase of between 15 and 19 per cent.

This marks the growing recognition on the part of

Civil Servants that the use of a cash limits policy is merely a manifestation of Thatcher's industrial and economic scorched earth policy for the whole of the working class and for Britain.

Now is the time for all workers to stand and fight against the destruction of jobs and services by tackling the central issue of pay.

Civil Servants are planning a campaign of selective action, guerrilla strikes, and support-

ive action to hit hard at government finance and the administrative machinery during the first week in March. The importance of involving the greatest number in struggle is accepted and the difficulties of involving workers in the benefit services in the DHSS and the DE will need to be thought through.

The theme of unity is strong in the Civil Service. Attempts to weld an effective combination for joint action, and co-ordinating machinery for all Civil Service Unions are bearing fruit in centres all over the country.

On the 5th of February, plans for common action were bolstered by a decision of the Council of Civil Service Unions (COSCU) to submit a joint claim for a 15 per cent wage increase across the board with an underpinning minimum of £10 per week.

## A welcome for ILEA victory

THE GOVERNMENT has conceded defeat on their plan to break up the Inner London Education Authority as a result of almost two years of sustained campaigning by teachers and parents in London.

The Wandsworth Teachers Association (WTA) which fired the first shots in the campaign welcomed the announcement by the Secretary of State, describing it as a victory for the education service in London. The President of WTA declared that the campaign to save ILEA is far from over. There still remains a serious threat of financial starvation by the government which must be defeated.

## Miners

# call for end to pit closures

MINERS in the Yorkshire Coalfield continue their leading role in resisting threatened NCB pit closures. In the Pithead ballot of January 29th and 30th, 85 per cent of the 63,000 miners, rejected closures and supported the call to defend the industry, including the use of industrial action, as moved by the Yorkshire NUM Council.

The pit closures being prepared by the NCB arise from political considerations, not the exhaustion of coal supplies. It is part of a deliberate Government attempt to break this well organised section of labour.

The production of coal in Britain is the cheapest in Europe, so boasts Ezra, Chairman of the NCB. Yet in

the last two years coal imports have soared by 20 per cent, paid for at high prices, coal stocks are high and lo and behold, the loss of 25,000 jobs and the closure of 18 pits in Yorkshire alone is mooted, the scene is being set for a provocative Employers attack.

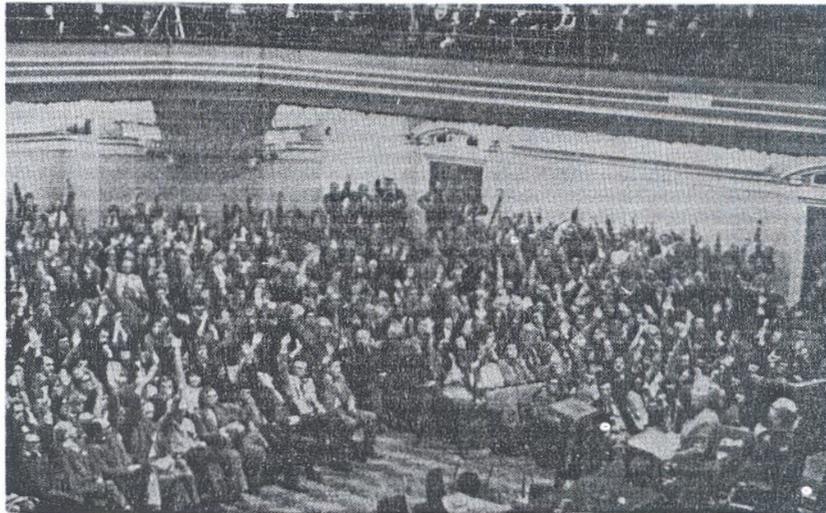
The loss of jobs in the Coal Industry has resulted in nearly 2 million jobs being cut in the last 50 years. Robens in the 1960s cut a swathe of destruction through the Coalfields, irreversibly destroying communities in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Scotland and Wales. Thatcher's 'Yes-men' represent the 1980s Robens model.

Thatcher has already stated that the development of Nuclear power in Britain, will

not be for the benefit of the people of Britain, but solely to break the power of labour be it miners, power station workers, power station workers relating to the production of electricity. Instead of using technology for progress, it is being used as another weapon to attack workers with. The Thatcherite grasp on the idea of production is such, that if Coal and Electricity are essential to industry then attack them.

This recent decision to halt threatened closures, coupled with a similar 95 per cent vote from the South Wales Coalfield and the gathering momentum in other Areas and pits are positive signs of the attempted halt to 50 years decline in the Coal Industry.

The end of a successful civil service union debate. Photo: The Worker.



## OCCUPATION AT BPC

The Writers' Guild of Great Britain has written to BPC expressing full support for the NUJ chapel in dispute with BPC management. The letter goes on to say: "Unless a settlement is reached to the satisfaction of NUJ, the Guild will instruct its members to take industrial action."

## Bookshops

**Bellman Bookshop** 155 Fortess Road, London NW5  
**Brighton Workers Bookshop** 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton  
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## Public Meetings

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## Dispute at Reckitt's

1800 WORKERS, members of the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU), are on strike in support of 30 colleagues who were suspended by Reckitt and Coleman, Hull, for refusing to install and operate new machinery which would result in job losses.

They have now received messages of support from workers in other Reckitt and Coleman factories in Europe. The TGWU headquarters in Hull received a telex from the International Chemical Federation, representing workers in the chemical industry, informing them that an instruction had gone out to all workers in the company's European plants not to produce any additional goods which might be

used to make good shortages in Britain. Reckitt and Coleman goods made overseas will be prevented from being exported to Britain.

In Hull itself Reckitt and Coleman shop stewards met with the Shop Stewards Committee for Hull dockers. They have agreed that Hull dockworkers will refuse to handle all products from the Hull factory together with any raw materials bound for the same plant.

The Hull dockers are also making efforts to seek support from all registered ports in Britain and from the International Shop Stewards Committee which represents European dockworkers.

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 Textile controls

textile and engineering firms currently on short-time working as an alternative to closure. The cutbacks also remove holiday pay. These payments to industry currently affect around 150,000 workers nationally. The CBI in Yorkshire recently estimated that 20 per cent of all firms in the region receive this subsidy and that 80 per cent of engineering companies in the Bradford area will be affected.

So much for the rejuvenation of industry. To succeed in that after all she's done, Thatcher would make the Garden of Gethsemane look like child's play.