



NO CONFIDENCE IN CAPITALISM

'Major bloody irrelevance'

SO THE secretary on the staff side of the Civil Service National Whitley Council described the Government's 7 per cent pay offer. That the two major civil service unions, the Civil and Public Services Association and the Society of Civil and Public Servants, feel exactly the same way about the general election is shown by their determination to carry right on through the pre-election period with their industrial action in support of their pay claim.

The Labour Government made another pay offer to civil servants on the eve of the one day strike called by all the civil service unions in support of their pay claim.

This offer was obviously an attempt to split the civil servants' ranks on the Monday all-out strike. For the first time ever all the unions on the National Staff side were united in calling for their members to strike, with the higher grades' union the First Division Association doing so for the first time in its history. This is the positive side to the situation.

Unfortunately there is a negative side. It was inevitable that those unions which had until recently decided not to plan any action to bring about a realistic offer from the employer, would not be so clear on the divisive nature of this latest offer, but it is also much more than this.

The offer is for 9 per cent backdated to 1 April 1979 with the remaining increases outlined by the Pay Research Unit comparability study to be paid in equal halves on 1 August 1979 and the 31 March 1980. The offer itself is an insult and is of course further proof that comparability studies are not worth the paper they are written on - there is no justice on pay under capitalism. The negotiators representing some of the eight unions on the National Staff Side want the offer accepted. The two unions which have rejected the offer, the SCPS and CPSPA, have all along realised that the struggle would be of a protracted nature with perhaps a general election in the middle of it and have planned

accordingly. They have led the civil service unions in their clarity and determination and this is reflected by the stance of their negotiators.

It is clear that the Government has been forced to make even this derisory offer because of determined action by a considerable section of civil servants. The remaining sections must understand that all must be involved in the struggle - only if they are prepared to take action will the Government offer them a decent pay increase now rather than these 'gain tomorrow' promises. It remains to be seen during the coming week or so whether the membership of these unions reject the stance of their negotiators.

It must be seen that this situation has effectively destroyed the already shaky foundations of the National Staff Side's National Pay Agreement. This Agreement stipulates that all the constituent unions should attempt to reach agreement on salary offers before acceptance. That this Agreement is in shreds is no bad thing since it has in the past meant that individual unions had allowed their rights to determine pay for their members to be shackled by the need for collective agreement.

The SCPS and CPSPA have no intention of de-escalating their joint campaign of action, rather they intend to increase the use of selective strike action which has forced the Government to come to the negotiating table. We have made the employer concede a little - and the more unions involved in the battle, the greater the victory we shall achieve.

THE WORKING class's defeat of the Labour Government in sweeping aside the pay guidelines and the defeat of the Government's plan for devolution were reflected in the Government's defeat in the House of Commons by a vote of 'no confidence' - the first time a government has been brought down this way in 55 years.

All the wheeling and dealing by Labour in an attempt to hang onto office, the self-prostitution of the minority parties and the smirking Tories who expect to capitalise on a defeat they were incapable of bringing about themselves, reflect nothing but the emptiness of the whole parliamentary sham.

The dissolution of Parliament has been fixed for April 7. The disillusion of the working class with Parliament began a long time ago.

The date for the General Election is May 3. The intense class struggle to reassert the right of collective bargaining which the working class has been engaged in over the last six months was not directed simply against the Labour Government's attempt to defend capitalism but against capitalism itself.

That struggle has been in no sense an expression of a preference for one brand of capitalism as opposed to some other practically indistinguishable brand. We shall be exposed to huxtering over party brands over the next few weeks which will make even TV commercials look like discreet, tasteful suggestions as to how we should spend our money. And it will be about as meaningful to the working class and its genuine interests as the advertising of expensive junk to those in a dole queue. The choice offered on May 3 is entirely irrelevant to class struggle.

Worse than irrelevant, it is intended as a distraction of that struggle. The civil servants in industrial action against the Government over pay gave the right answer.

We don't care about an election. Our struggle goes on. The outcome of the elections cannot alter in the slightest the working class's absolute necessity of going on waging class struggle with ever mounting unity and intensity till final victory over the exploitative force of the capitalist system.

In the Edgell by-election voters registered their protest against the unemployment, the

bad housing and the general run down and destruction of Merseyside which Labour has most recently shown itself incapable and unwilling to remedy and which the Tories make no promise to rectify by voting Liberal. But the Liberals are another capitalist party and no more than Labour or Tory do they represent an alternative to capitalism. It is not possible to vote for an alternative to capitalism in a bourgeois general election. So why vote?

Will any of the capitalist parties be getting rid of US bases in Britain which are not to defend this country but to make sure that we are involved in any war the other NATO countries get involved in?

Will any of the capitalist parties begin to build a prosperous Britain for the people of Britain instead of continuing the destruction of Britain for the profit of capitalism?

We all know the answer to these questions. What we need to be able to choose is an alternative to capitalism.

In an 'Election Supplement' to be included in THE WORKER No. 16 we shall develop the theme of the alternative to capitalism and now the working class can, at this very time, express its choice for it.



Nurses' demo at Whittington Hospital. Part of the struggle which brought them victory. See story p.4.

Photo: Laurie Sparham (I.F.L.)

**In this
issue**

Housing: Thousands of homes needed
Health Service Victory
Vietnam: Meeting Report

The Week

JUST AS we in Britain will be boycotting the forthcoming election, so too will the socialist forces in Iran. They are now offered the so-called choice between the old Shah regime and the new Islamic republic. On each voting slip appears the rubric "In the name of God", and in accordance with this religious barbarism men and women have to vote in separate booths. The new regime is attacking workers' and civil rights in general, especially women, and is pursuing a policy of suppression of minorities such as Kurds and Turkomen, with a cruelty equal to that of the Shah. Significantly, no record will be kept of the names of voters, so that the number of abstentions, which should be large, will be unrecorded.

THE QUEEN will be given a rise of £174,000 per annum, her total income extorted from taxpayers being now in excess of £2 million. The announcement coincides with news from the Civil Servants' Unions that members of her household are less loyal to the monarch than to their unions, and have every intention of striking in the current campaign.

AS BRITISH Rail are proposing increased rail fares, the service is under another attack of Beeching. The plan is to chop out another 700 miles of rail. Presumably, if there were no tracks at all and if the fares were infinite, British Rail would be deemed "economic".

THE CHINESE have been lecturing some Vietnamese soldiers captured when they invaded Vietnam, and making them study the works of Mao. We wonder if the lessons included such observations as "A small country can defeat a big one" or "Whenever imperialism commits aggression it puts a noose around its neck."

IN SCOTLAND 30,000 civil servants are out on strike paralysing government offices after 39 of their colleagues had been suspended for refusing to do work normally done by people on strike. Fourteen more are to receive letters of suspension, and the response has been militant action. Edinburgh post office has been deluged with telegrams of support from all over Britain.

FROM THE Royal Navy welcome news. They are so short of men that they may have to start laying up ships, as the incoming First Sea Lord has said. All ranks are affected. The government's attempts at whipping up war fever and arms spending are continually thwarted by lack of cooperation from those it employs. After continuing unrest in naval dockyards, we now hear of the strike for more money by 200 supervisors at the Royal Ordnance factory in Nottingham, which halted production for several days.

6th form colleges attack education

NO SOONER had public and teachers' opinion forced the government to adopt the policy of comprehensive secondary education than the government began an active campaign to ensure that as few pupils as possible would benefit from the change. One major way has been their long-drawn and often effective campaign for Sixth Form Colleges, whose essence is to deny most schools in an area a Sixth Form, which is centralised under one roof.

From 1965 on, the demand of teachers that all secondary schools have their own Sixth Forms was implacably opposed by the government. The Crowther Report on 16-19 Education advocated axing Sixth Forms from schools in 1968, before most secondary schools even had them.

Unable to attack openly, they proceeded in a roundabout way. A reform particularly popular

with authorities was the division of education into three tiers: primary, middle and upper. Less radical than the Sixth Form College, the system still aimed at concentrating advanced teaching under fewer roofs than the 11 to 18 comprehensives, where each school would have its own Sixth Form. The figures for the establishment of Sixth Form Colleges show how this idea has advanced. Between 1964 and 1971 thirteen were established. Only then did they step up the attack. In 1972, 8; in 1973, 13; in 1974, 17; in 1975, 10; in 1976, 4.

Decline in educational standards makes further resistance more, not less, difficult. And to save money they still had to spend money on Sixth Form Colleges or Middle Schools far better equipped than they would have wished, because of pressure. So today their attack is cruder.

They threaten to close whole schools below a certain size (usually six or eight forms of entry). Or they close down courses where there are less than a certain number of pupils. The policy of the Inner London Education Authority shows why the pace of building Sixth Form Colleges has slowed. They judged that the system would have involved too much new building at too great a cost, and prefer to keep their existing schools in a state of augmenting decay, hoping the easier to close them.

Yet the Sixth Form College, although it has been displaced by more ambitious plans of destruction, is still a threat to education. In 1977, just before the Annual Conference of the National Union of Teachers, a Minister, Gordon Oakes, declared that there was no place for any school with less than 100 pupils in its Sixth Form. At the time, 60 per cent of all

secondary schools fell into this category. Conference, faced with a motion to safeguard all Sixth Forms in schools, chose not to debate it, but move to next business. This has left individual schools or areas having to fight their battles in isolation, guerrilla-style, a tactic which, though necessary, is clearly insufficient. In the face of the concerted government attack, we need a more concerted national Union response.

Sixth Form Colleges affect relations with the sister union, for teachers in Further Education (NATFHE). Where school Sixth Forms and FE have merged, this has created not only friction between unions to the employers' delight, but massive loss of jobs. In the London Borough of Richmond alone, over 300 teaching posts were lost, although the authority claimed to have sacked no-one.

PUBLIC MEETING REPORT SOLIDARITY WITH VIETNAM

FIVE years ago Saigon fell to the liberation forces. The most brutal war in history drew to a close and the Vietnamese, after years of suffering, achieved the dignity of a unified homeland. A nation once more independent.

In the north lay the China of Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai, a vast reservoir of assistance to the Vietnamese.

To socialists just those few years ago there seemed to be certain constants on the political horizon - China and Vietnam, united. And yet in February, 1979 China had more troops in Vietnam than the Americans at the height of their invasion.

With this thought the speaker opened her address to a packed meeting at Conway Hall on the 24th of March.

To "teach the Vietnamese a lesson" and "punish" them were

the ostensible reasons claimed by the Chinese. But what exactly was the "crime" the Vietnamese had committed?

Was it their treatment of the Chinese minority inside Vietnam? A minority, many of whom in the South had made vast profits from the war.

Was it because of a genuine border dispute? A border demarcated by treaties in the late nineteenth century and an agreement in 1957-58 on which there had been little disagreement.

Perhaps it was a punishment for the downfall of the detested Pol Pot regime in Cambodia? China's new-found friends in the West have made much of this, calling for a reciprocal withdrawal of forces, thus implying that the Vietnamese had brought the situation upon their own heads, and forgetting that Cambodia

attacked Vietnam in 1977.

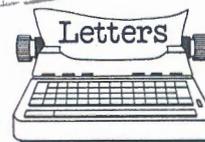
Or was it that the Vietnamese had "gone revisionist" and in becoming the "Asian Cuba" and stooges of Moscow, needed to be corrected by "socialist China"? But Vietnam openly proclaims that its intention is socialist reconstruction.

The inescapable conclusion must be that Vietnam is being punished for humiliating the mighty USA. America's new ally, China, in a desperate gamble to modernise its industry, and most important, its armed forces, must prove its worth and establish its hegemony over SE Asia in the interests of American imperialism.

During the long years of the war Vietnam maintained independence from both Russia and China. The present regime in China shows that it cannot tolerate an independent Vietnam.

Vietnam stands as testimony to the independence of peoples and as a model for development to others. Vietnam claims socialist goals and as such presents a threat to capitalist states old and new.

For these reasons it is incumbent on the British Labour Movement in the interests of peace and justice to condemn the Chinese aggression and call for the removal of Chinese forces from Vietnam.



Dear Editor,

With regard to your article on the Price Commission (No 9, 1st March, '79) I should like to protest. I have no argument with your analysis of the role of the Price Commission in bolstering capitalism, but I certainly would argue with your analysis of those that work within the commission.

Let it not be forgotten we are in the first place workers and are therefore objectively opposed to the capitalist class. In the second place, we are, many of us, trade unionists, which enhances our threat to that class. As yet we may still suffer from a misguided belief in social democracy - but do not think we are as weak as you suppose.

From a Price Commission worker and trade unionist - who is not so 'tame'!

Dear Editor,

I was recently appointed as a part-time youth leader in a youth club. Looking around me on my first evening I saw that the club's premises had been badly vandalized. Knowing that young people are not tuggish by nature I tried to search a bit deeper for the cause of the damage.

I didn't have to search for long. Two years ago the club was booming, but then came another wave of Government cutbacks in education spending. This meant that the club lost its full time leaders. But more than this, it meant that the club members were faced with further problems at school because of larger classes and less facilities. If they had left school they had to cope with the dole queue, or demoralising days with the Manpower Services Commission which attempts to pass sub-standard skills on to them.

This one small example reflects a frightening national offensive which is destroying the services which we as a working class once built and enjoyed. The destructive action of the ruling class leads our youth to humiliation and frustration. We all know that when employment goes up for a while people gain more self-respect and vandalism goes down. Where a person does not respect public property you usually find they have no respect for themselves. It is more crucial than ever now to come together and organise to put an end to the real vandals; those who pull down the schools and create unemployment. Otherwise we will find ourselves having to sweep up an even bigger, self-inflicted mess. But the problem is, it might then be against the law to take a broom into your hands.

From an Oxford worker



200,000 Irish workers demonstrate in Dublin against the Government's pay and taxation policies.

Photo: Derek Speirs. Report

Editorial

Peace is a word much in the news just at present when an agreement to perpetuate the injustice against the Palestinian people is being hailed as a peaceful solution to the problems of the Middle East. There can be no peace at the expense of a whole people driven from their homes and denied the expression of their nationhood.

It is a strange peace which is ratified by massive supplies of arms to the aggressor country, Israel.

Peace on the lips of capitalists is a snare and a delusion anyway. Capitalism knows only vicious competition, savage exploitation and insensate greed leading inevitably to war. One of the first acts of China with the restoration of capitalism was to launch aggressive war against its neighbour, Vietnam.

Imperialism bludgeons people less developed technologically into subjection and calls it, for example, the Pax Britannica. Others describe the same phenomena as 'making a desert and calling it peace.' But imperialism which is aggressive war against the people encounters, as the US did in Vietnam, people's war against imperialism.

When capitalism embarks on world war intending to use the working class as cannon-fodder to keep the destruction going, the working class must turn the conflict into a revolution against those very capitalists. Better still, the working class should pre-empt capitalist war by launching its own revolutionary struggle first.

The class war waged by the working class and the people's war waged by anti-imperialist peasants and workers are complementary. They assist each other against the common enemy to establish socialism, which is the negation of war and the affirmation of peaceful development to the mutual advantage of all.

Revisionism is capitalism disguising itself by speaking in working class accents and pretending to be proletarian. It says in the interest of capitalism that the transition to socialism and peace can itself be peaceful - meaning that a state when peace is the natural order of things can be attained without effort and without struggle. Workers know that without struggle they would not even have survived and that the violence of exploitation can only be countered by revolutionary violence. There can be no peace unless we dispose with the warmongers.

Revisionists say that peaceful co-existence among nations can best be established in the absence of anti-imperialist struggle. They say that 'green revolutions' make red revolutions unnecessary; that the 'third world' can wait for 'aid' from the 'second world' and does not have to do anything about its own capitalists who are in league with aggressive world capitalism. They say all this because they are not really interested in peace but in the continuation of capitalist exploitation.

To fight for peace sounds like a contradiction in terms; but it can come in no other way. Like independence it does not fall on us like manna from the heavens. The struggle for socialism is the struggle for peace and national independence.

Conserving our strength to fight again tomorrow - tactics for victory

THE GARNERS strike is now more than a year old, with few of the original strikers left. Most have found other jobs in the catering industry which encourages casual labour.

Token marches however continue to take place from time to time, as on March 24, on behalf of a handful of workers who long ago turned down the employers' offer. That offer, for the reinstatement of most of the strikers (though without the formality of union recognition) and a substantial cash offer in compensation for the others, was a sign of the employer's weakness at that time, and a turning point in this strike. But it has not been made a second time. Scab labour has enabled Garners to continue to function.

Other sections for example the CPSA at the Catering Job Centre, did what they could to

make this impossible, but the weakness was the lack of organisation within the catering section itself. It was important therefore that any offer made by the management be taken seriously.

As with the TGWU's other long-running disputes such as Sanderson's Fork-lift Trucks in Lincolnshire and the Economist Bookshop in London, we should beware of the false militancy which leads a weak army into prolonged and demoralising battle. So long as enough scabs can be found the employer is laughing. But he is not absolutely only relatively, invincible; it is up to us, the workers everywhere to act as a clan and see that he laughs on the other side of his face. And to do this it is often necessary to withdraw from the battle today, in order to fight again tomorrow.

more minor offences should not be subject to physical arrest. These moderate proposals have been treated by the media as if they were dangerous demands. But the police recommendations ask for 72 hours of detention for suspects, and immense restrictions on the accused.

Meanwhile, the last few days have provided ever clearer evidence of the need for the

DUNLOP WORKERS FIGHT ON

FACTORY closures and redundancies in Liverpool have already accounted for an unemployment figure of 100,000 and still the destruction goes on. Last year alone there were over 14,000 jobs lost. Dunlop's Speke plant, under threat of closure, will mean the loss of another 3,000 jobs.

There has been considerable protest about the Dunlop closure. Remembering what happened to the Triumph workers, whose redundancy payments have been used up, and who are still out of work, fewer than a hundred Dunlop workers have accepted redundancy offers. The other 2,300 want to save their jobs.

At a 5,000 strong march and

demonstration, a speaker said: "Remember that it is not your job that you are selling. It does not belong to you. It belongs to the next generation."

Another speaker listed the firms which have been threatened with closure on Merseyside, and imagined a son asking his father: "Where did Cammell Lairds go? Where did Plesseys go? Where did Dunlops go? Where did my job go?" And the father has to reply: "Well I sold it, lad."

Dunlop stewards have circulated information about the threatened closure, they have organised marches and demonstrations, they have staged sit-downs in busy roads and occupied job

centres. But the unified resistance of all Dunlop workers is still far short of making a real impact on employers and Government, and of calling out the support of the other workers on Merseyside.

Too many workers still believe with only three weeks to go and with Dunlop directors already transferring production abroad, that something or someone else will save their jobs for them.

If the 3,000 Dunlop workers are unified in their determination to save their Speke factory from capitalism, they have been promised the support of other Dunlop factories and of dockers and transport drivers as well.

0.5m homes needed yearly

WHAT are the alternatives for housing policy that we will be asked to choose between in the coming weeks? Is it a question of whether a "socialist" housing policy will survive or else slashing Tory cuts?

In essence there is no choice between Labour and Tory. It was Labour's policy which resulted last year in the lowest number of Council houses being built since the war. It was so low that the official statistics had to be doctored by including completions by housing associations in the published total of 115,000. In the same year, only 65,000 new Council houses were started.

Official population projections indicate that there will be, on average, an extra 170,000 new households formed each year up to 1991 in England and Wales. On top of that, about three and a half million of the housing stock of 20.4 million is over 90 years old. It has been estimated that about 200,000 new dwellings will need to be built every year in order to replace ageing stock. Add to this other factors such as

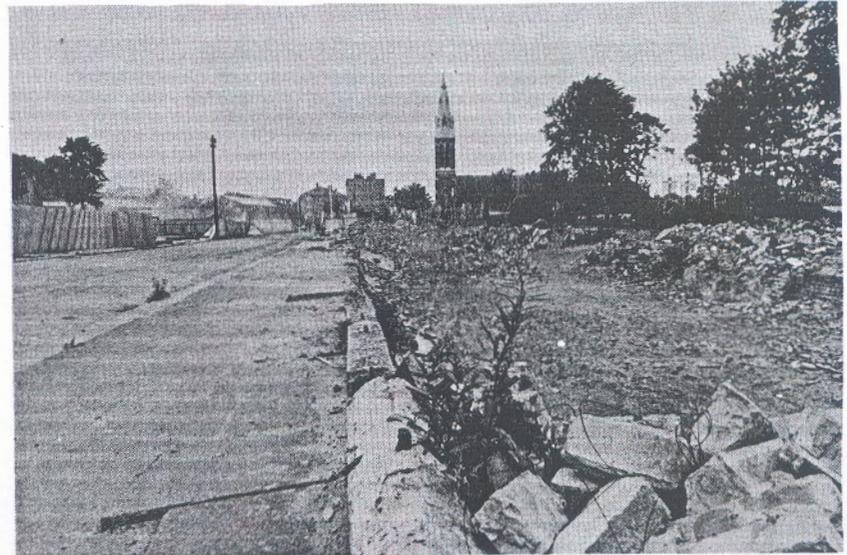
the extra homes needed for those who are homeless or living in substandard dwellings and the minimum target must be over 500,000 new dwellings each year. The present performance, including the private sector, is 270,000 and declining.

These trends are reflected in the declining level of cement and brick production. The former is down by nearly a quarter and the latter by a third in the five years up to 1977. Unemployment in the building trades is also at a very high level.

The need to build new homes could be lessened by a planned programme of repair, maintenance and improvement aimed at preserving and enhancing the existing stock. But the number of home improvements is now less than 40 per cent of the peak year of 1973 and is well below the rate at which homes are falling into decay. A recent national house condition survey confirmed this when it indicated a substantial increase in the rate at which dwellings were falling into disrepair. This is inevitable

with policies which require the expenditure of substantial sums of money by the householder to maintain and improve. Even in the public sector, the recently published Housing Bill, though seemingly now academic, includes provision for Council tenants to apply for improvement grants in an attempt to shift the cost from central and local government. This policy will doubtless be pursued regardless of the result of the election.

It was the present government who first tentatively introduced restrictions on housing capital expenditure in 1974 and the cuts have been progressively increased since then. One might say that this has been the only 'progressive' policy introduced by Labour. All major expenditure is now tightly controlled. The most recent restrictions announced before the election, shaved cuts of £449 million planned over the next three years. Meanwhile the housing waiting lists and the numbers of homeless continue to grow.



Destruction of housing in south London.

Photo: Nick Birch

Civil liberties attacked by police

CONSTERNATION has greeted the National Council for Civil Liberties' recommendations to the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure. Their proposals, among other things are, that the police right to detain at will should be reduced from 24 to 4 hours; that police interrogations be made in the presence of a third party; that the accused have a right to silence; that far

public to protect themselves from the police. The police recently shot dead their third man in three months. Then, in the Houses of Parliament, MPs were told that their names were on police computers, and that they, like the public at large, had no rights to know what was on the files. Finally, a judge freed a man whom the police had brought to court in connection with a brutal personal attack.

The grounds were that some prosecution evidence was inadmissible. This was after 7 months of detention before the trial took place. The police were reported as saying that "the case is not being reopened", while the detainee is reported to be initiating proceedings against the police for wrongful arrest and about "£10,000 compensation". The perpetrator of the original attack has not yet been discovered.

**Celebrate
International Workers Day**

The CPBML will be holding meetings nationwide under the slogan:

**'No Peace With Capitalism
One Solution Revolution'**

(Full details to follow)

Victory for nurses and our hospitals

Dunlop workers struggle against closure

THE GOVERNMENT'S offer to nurses of 9 per cent and £2.50 'on account' has been accepted by our national negotiators. Last year nurses failed to break the government guideline. This year, encouraged by the example of other workers, they broke the guideline and then pushed further for an improved offer.

No amount of government propaganda succeeded in dividing the nurses between themselves or from the working class they serve. Convinced that their claim for more pay was justified, nurses counter-attacked. They put their case at union branches; they stood on street corners, in shopping centres, explaining their claim and denouncing the hypocrisy of the government. Nurses have for many years

bewailed their lack of 'muscle'. This pay campaign went far to dispel that worry. It became obvious that what worried the government was the mass involvement and unity of the nurses in the pay struggle. Our long-lasting victory is the development of an organisation in hospitals throughout Britain.

In many ways, this campaign was a foundation for further struggle. Our new-gained self-respect must stand us in good stead to oppose the continual attack by governments of whatever party on the National Health Service. Be it delaying tactics on pay such as 'comparability studies' or threats of cut-back and closure, they can be dealt with by a determined and united workforce in every hospital.

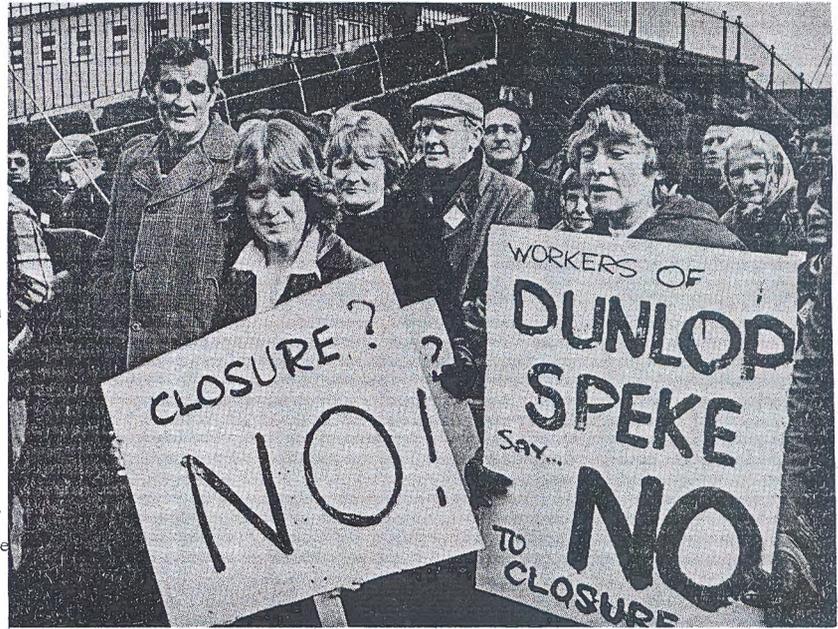


Photo: John Sturrock (Report)

British capital in Chinese not British steelmaking

NEWS has been spreading of the big new investment by British Steel in building up a whole new industry from scratch. Old plants are to be updated, and entirely new ones created.

But none of our readers should be misled - it is all part of the planned destruction of the British steel industry. It is British Steel's new deal with China.

The FINANCIAL TIMES describes British Steel rundown as a very slow conveyor belt which apparently has a life of its own and cannot be stopped. The workers in the industry see the rundown as destruction of skills and communities, which they must fight to preserve. After all, nothing is more basic to industrial society than the capacity to produce steel.

In Bilston another 2000 workers are threatened with the axe, and in Corby British Steel has begun to prepare the way for chopping 6000 workers - half the present

workforce.

Corby steelworkers have quickly organised themselves into an action committee for preserving their industry. The Corby Action Committee aim to preserve the only fully integrated iron, steel and tube-making plant in Europe, and are involving other workers in Corby whose jobs would be affected.

In fact, if Corby were closed the town itself would die, and it is their desire to preserve the community and refuse to accept any closure or rundown of steel. With slogans "Save Steel, Save Corby", "Fight Closure, Save Corby" and "Corby makes BRITISH Steel", the action committee has launched its campaign.

They are insisting that steelworkers refuse the severance pay, and take up a straight fight to keep their jobs, their industry and their town. They don't want Corby to become "the Speke of the Midlands."

WHILE a top ex-policeman is advertising new tyres on the television, workers at Dunlop Speke are stepping up their fight to keep their factory open.

On the 28 March the TGWU agreed to support this fight

to save the 300 jobs. The Dunlop workers' national campaign has so far organised a one day protest strike throughout Britain and is now organising another day of action. The workers at Speke are refusing to negotiate

severance pay with the company and are determined to turn down redundancy money. Besides the closure of Speke, Dunlop is trying to cut back another 800 jobs at Inchinnan in Glasgow and Fort Dunlop in Birmingham.

Ambulancemen return in victory

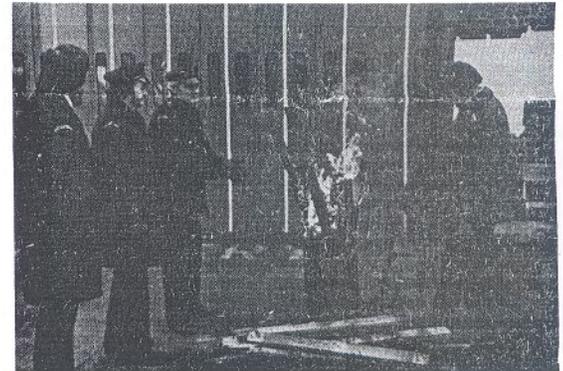
THE ambulancemen's campaign for more wages was as successful as it was because the four unions involved - NUPE, COHSE, TGWU and GMWU - agreed on a united campaign of action. The collective decision to return by the Executives concerned comes after an offer of 9 per cent, and £1, while awaiting a comparability award due in August.

By returning now, the unions are recognising that action cannot be so prolonged as to lead to exhaustion. Ambulancemen will need to recover their strength, for renewed action will be necessary - whether over the promised comparability award, cuts, or a new claim. The present action has won a significant increase over the Government's initial offer, and is one more step forward in our protracted campaign against their destruction of the service and its morale.

Kirkby workers co-op killed off

THE KIRKBY Manufacturing and Engineering Co-operative (KME) has been forced to close adding another seven hundred and twenty to Merseyside's dole queue. KME produced 10 per cent of central heating radiators in the British market.

Was the closure due to a lack of orders or was there a 'technological revolution' in central heating? No. The fact is that KME was unable to keep up with the demand for its radiators because they could not afford the



Ambulancemen manning a picket line in Northfleet, Kent, in January.

Photo: THE WORKER

Industrial tribunals sack workers

AN INDUSTRIAL tribunal in the West Midlands has ruled that workers who refused their employer's demand that they sign a "no-strike" agreement were not entitled to redundancy pay.

The managing director of Hall's Foundries issued an ultimatum to the 120 workers employed there that they would have to agree to no strikes for the next six months. When the men refused, they were immediately sacked.

They took their case before an industrial tribunal but the chairman decided that

the dismissed workers were not entitled to redundancy pay because they had not lost their jobs because of a 'redundancy situation' but because they had refused to accept a reasonable demand of the employer.

The industrial tribunal chairman said: "It might be thought that we are opening the way for an employer to drive a coach and horses through the Redundancy Payments Act by giving workers an ultimatum he knows they will not accept."

Indeed it might. That, in fact, is just what all workers will think. It is time we drove our coach and horses through employers and industrial tribunals!

Bookshops

Bellman Bookshop 155 Fortess Road, London NW5
Brighton Workers Bookshop 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton
Main Trend Books 17 Midland Road, St. Philips, Bristol
Northern Star Bookshop 18A Leighton Street, Leeds
Basildon Bookstall Tues, Fri, Sat Market Place
Hull Bookstall Old Town Market, Saturdays
Liverpool Bookstall every Thursday Liverpool University

The Worker

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

NAME

ADDRESS

Public Meetings

Croydon Don't Vote: Labour = Tory = Capitalism
 Tuesday 10th April at 8.00pm
 Norbury Library, London Road, Norbury.

London State of the Press
 Friday 6th April at 7.30pm. Bellman Bookshop