

# THE WORKER



Published by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) No.24 July 6th 1978 5p

## STOP ALL CLOSURES

STEEL HOSPITALS SCHOOLS DOCKS FACTORIES

### Humiliating climbdown by Steel Corporation

THE Government backed down over the proposed closure of the Bilston steelworks in the West Midlands when the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation called for a strike throughout the British Steel Corporation.

Steel workers heard about the move to close down the furnaces at Bilston while they were in Conference at Scarborough. In an emergency session the decision was taken to answer the threat of closing down the BSC altogether and demanding the resignation of the chairman.

The ISTC general secretary was loudly cheered when he said that if the instruction to shut down the furnaces at Bilston was not withdrawn "the whole industry would stop, and not an ounce of steel would move anywhere. I will inform

the International Metalworkers that they must not send steel here."

Varley, the Industry Secretary, quickly told the BSC to rescind the closure order and hastily explained to the workers that it was all a misunderstanding.

Of course the Labour Government would not dare provoke a national strike (particularly in a pre-election period). We have to remember that it makes no difference to us which of the two major capitalist parties organises our exploitation.

The steelworkers have at last shown how to prevent the Government from destroying the steel industry and their jobs. They must be prepared for further struggle: the Bilston victory is only a respite.

### £80, 35 hours a week, says Confed meeting

WORKERS at the meeting of the Confederation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Unions in Eastbourne confirmed their stand on collective bargaining by putting forward their own demands on wages. A resolution calling for no Government interference in wage bargaining was defeated but this was not the victory for the Callaghan line that the press claimed. Governments are bound to interfere. The question is whether workers press on with collective bargaining in the teeth of such interference.

The fight for the 35 hour week must not become a denial of wage confrontation. We want a 35 hour week but we want decent wages too. The two forms of struggle are complementary; the one must not be substituted for the other.

Addressing the Confed, Callaghan said that, "the trade unions will cry out in anguish"

when they hear the limits the Government is going to put on wages to keep inflation in single figures. What he ought to hear is such a shout of anger and such a loud demand for wages that the last whimper of the "need to support a Labour Government" will be drowned in the uproar.

#### Articles in this issue

Imperialism in Africa	See page 2
The rundown of the Docks	See page 3
30 years of Health Service	See page 4
No to school closures	See page 4

### OUR DOCKS STAY OK!

March and rally organised by Newham Docklands Forum  
Saturday 15th July  
Assemble 12.30 pm, Central Park, East Ham



Bethnal Green Hospital workers begin the campaign to keep the hospital open.  
(Photo, Nigel Norie IFL)

### Bethnal Green Hospital threatened but workers respond with occupation

ANCILLARY workers at Bethnal Green Hospital reacted to a plan to close the casualty unit by voting overwhelmingly on June 30 to take over the hospital and keep it open.

At a mass meeting NUPE shop stewards put forward a recommendation to run the 230-bed hospital themselves and the workers enthusiastically endorsed the proposal. The chairman of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee, a hospital porter, said, "This means effectively that the medical staff and ancillary workers are in control now."

The meeting produced a workers' charter emphasising the following points: A committee representing all members of staff would be elected to make sure the casualty unit runs as normal; Ambulance staff, the emergency bed service and local GPs would be called on to support the takeover; Workers in other London hospitals would be called upon

to take whatever action was necessary to support the Bethnal Green Hospital workers, and the people of East London were invited to give their backing.

The meeting also declared its complete lack of confidence in the Tower Hamlets District management team. Management was warned that if they tried to lock workers out of the casualty department "we will take hammers and smash the locks."

After the meeting, more than 500 workers from Bethnal Green and other hospitals in the area marched in defiance to the headquarters of the Tower Hamlet District Health Offices and proclaimed their stand in defence of Bethnal Green and their own jobs.

# HISTORIC NOTES

## Workers and the vote. An introduction

THE STRUGGLE for freedom of the press has existed since it was possible to print dissenting views. John Bunyan, the tinker author of Pilgrim's Progress was imprisoned many a time for his publications. In the late 1800s papers like 'Hogs Wash' and 'Pigs Meat' (a reference to workers being termed 'the swinish multitude'), fought a running battle with papers like the Government subsidised broadsheet 'The Times.'

But it wasn't until the turn of the century that the struggle began in earnest. The Napoleonic Wars brought hunger and misery to the people of Britain along with its slaughter. Resistance brought repression - the banning of trade unions in 1799, and the 'Gag Acts' of 1817 and 1819. These tried to succeed where the Combination Acts were failing - to stamp out independent working class ideas and organisation. Public meetings were banned, habeus corpus suspended, penalties for sedition increased.

Workers' reading rooms were closed, and taxes imposed on all publications to take them beyond the pocket of 'the mob'. Further to this, 'Prosecution Societies', financed lavishly by landlords and capitalists, paid stooges to take papers to court for blasphemy and sedition. The military, as at Peterloo, and the law were brought together to crush the growth of independent working class thought and organisation.

Richard Carlile, a tinsmith worker suffered nine years of prison for his publication of 'The Republican'. His supporters including wife and sister collected between them 200 years of incarceration for selling it. Families like that of Joseph Swann, a Macclesfield hatter, were left to starve when the breadwinner was imprisoned for hawking papers like 'The Poor Man's Guardian'. But their spirit was unbroken. In place of the tax-stamp, the illegal 'Guardian' printed: 'Knowledge

is Power. Published in defiance of the law, to try the power or right against might." Our aim, it said, is to publish "knowledge calculated to make you free", instead of the "namby pamby stuff published to stultify the minds of working people and make them spiritless and unresisting victims of a system of plunder and oppression."

What were these papers demanding? The central demand was for political equality. "The working classes must obtain their rights as men, before they can obtain them as workmen", argued the Metropolitan Trades Council. The corruption of government and taxes on the poor were seen as the main burdens, and parliamentary reform as the means to lift them. In this they were united with many employers who were also, at the same time, disenfranchised.

Some of the papers even welcomed the pro-capitalist 1832 Reform Act because, as one put

it: "It conceded to some extent the right of representation on the basis of population, and this concession once made to however a trifling degree, must be carried onwards to full extent."

Prophetic this might have been, but there were some who bitterly opposed this approach. One handloom weaver, who wisely kept himself anonymous, told 'the Guardian' that the rich should not have the right to vote at all, and that the "people who make the goods should have the sole privilege of making the laws." He made a fundamental attack on what was to become the main demand of the Charter - universal suffrage.

"People who live by plunder will always tell you to be submissive to thieves. To talk of representation, in any shape being of any use to the people is sheer nonsense... Those who make the laws now, and are intended by the reform bill, to make them in the future all live by profit of some sort or other. They will therefore, no matter who elect them, or how often they are elected, always make the laws to raise the profits and keep down the price of labour. Representation, therefore, by a different body of people to those represented, or whose interests are opposed to theirs, is a mockery and those who persuade the people to the contrary are either idiots or cheats."

And so, despite continued oppression the papers flourished. The 'Prosecution Societies' began to go bankrupt, and the illegal papers began to sell more in a day than 'The Times' managed in a week. Repressive laws had again, been made unworkable, and in 1834 the 'tax on knowledge' was repealed. Separately and together, 'The Poor Man's Guardian', 'Medusa', 'Gorgon', 'The Republican', 'Sherwin's Political Register', 'Black Dwarf', 'The Trades Journal', 'National Reformer' raised the banner of press liberty in Britain. And they also raised a question in their discussions which remains paramount today. Can working class liberation be achieved through Parliament?

# THE WEEK

WORKERS at Rolls Royce, East Kilbride, have (for the last four years) successfully prevented the return of four aero engines belonging to the Chilean Air Force getting back into the hands of the military junta. Not perturbed by courts of law which have ordered them returned, or by the whimperings of MPs who call it "banditry", they have placed the interests of Chilean workers and peasants higher than the interests of property ownership, and higher than their own self-interest, despite threats that other governments would be unlikely to send them engines for servicing in the future.

Certainly these workers would have laughed out of court any pseudo-Marxist claims that they ought to return the aero engines as Chile was a 'Third World' country. The only international duty of workers is to other workers and peasants.

As demand for the 35 hour week grows the Confederation of British Industry has begun firing off warning shots about the damage a cut in working hours would do to industry's unit costs and competitiveness. Callaghan has weighed in quickly on the side of the capitalists saying that the shorter working week some unions are already demanding would not solve the unemployment problem. The CBI has argued that a shorter working week would even increase unemployment by as much as 100,000 as costs went up and exports down. There were similar arguments in the 19th century, but workers still won the right to a shorter working day.

Sir John Cuckney, appointed by the government to solve London's dock "problem", may have a "solution": he is reported to believe that all the East End docks should close.



An artist's impression of the events at Peterloo.

DRAWING on a hundred and fifty years of British imperialist experience in Africa, Callaghan, on the occasion of receiving an award from the US National Committee on Foreign Policy, outlined a neo-colonial strategy for the West in continuing to interfere profitably in the affairs of African countries.

Against those like Mrs Thatcher who have been urging the US to intervene militarily in Africa to drive out the Russians, Callaghan appealed for "restraint among the Western allies in the face of Soviet and Cuban activities."

He pointed out that the very people calling for adventurist intervention are the same ones who always opposed the process of decolonisation - by which he means, of course, the process of replacing direct colonialism with neo-colonialism. It is these people who use any excuse to call for support of the Smiths and Vorsters whose virulent racism is matched by their fanatic anti-communism and who are thought to be the best bulwark against Soviet penetration.

No so, Callaghan says. It is colonialism of the Smith and Vorster type which has given Russia its chance to intervene. "The West has much more to offer Africans than simply to treat them as pawns on the chessboard. The countries of Africa know this. They can recognise without anyone lecturing them the new imperialism that comes

## Buying and selling Africa Callaghan tells them how

from the East."

Callaghan urged the US to go on working for detente, 'to involve the Soviet Union in a dialogue at all levels on all issues.' There is no need for military confrontation between East and West. The West can outbid the East in phoney "third world" type aid schemes and go on exploiting the peoples of Africa quite happily.

Nor only was Callaghan win-

ning much approval for his views in the US, he was also firing the opening shots in the election campaign in Britain by attacking the Tory line on the Smith regime and how to deal with Russia.

Just as we workers in Britain must not go on playing the "lesser of two evils" game of choosing which of the capitalist parties in Britain we think will exploit us with a gentler touch so the peoples of Africa do not have to

choose between direct colonialism and neo-colonialism operating through their own corrupt bourgeois rulers, between imperialism from the West or imperialism from the East. Real liberation means throwing out all the foreign interventionists of whatever stripe and the local bourgeoisie through whom they work - the way the Vietnamese threw the Americans and their allies out of Vietnam.

The award Callaghan was receiving in New York was the Hubert Humphrey award. Hubert Humphrey was the American 'liberal' who supported the US aggressive war against Vietnam up to the hilt!

## Albanian Constitution and Democracy

THE IMPOSSIBILITY of any genuine democracy existing in a society geared to the exploitation of man by man is recognised in the constitution of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania.

Instead of using the vote to pretend that the state does not take sides in this exploitation, Albania openly declares that it is "a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which expresses and defends the interests of all the working people."

The vote is important in Albania. Everyone over 18 is entitled to vote every four years

for the People's Assembly, which plans the future economic and cultural development of the country.

All deputies are liable to recall by voters at any time. They have to work in production, and have their wages limited by the constitution, with the aim of "preventing the creation of any privileged strata."

But the occasion for an election is not an opportunity for a display of phoney divisions for the sake of place-seeking - but the choosing of people who have proved themselves most capable of this difficult job. The real

democracy lies in the choice of candidates. Nor is the occasional election the excuse for excluding the people from the political affairs for every single day of the year other than polling day. The constitution demands that representative and state organs must "rely on the creative initiative of the masses of working people, draw them into running the country, and render account before them."

Voting in Albania is not a fetish, but a part of the process of a real, developing democracy - which is, by definition, working class rule.

The number of children drowning is likely to increase if local education authorities continue extensive cuts in school swimming lessons, says a report produced by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. Many parents did not realise that pre-school children had no understanding of water and its hazards. In a survey last autumn the society found that 46 of 95 local education authorities were making cuts in swimming lessons for the year 1977-78. Estimated savings ranged from £2000 a year in Northumberland to £400,000 in Essex, where schools that had pools built by voluntary effort were told they would have to finance the heating and maintenance.

The society said that meant many school swimming pools were not being used because of high running costs.

Earlier this year a great deal of publicity was given to the campaign by the managing director of the Philips subsidiary Mullard to keep any further developments by Japanese manufacturers out of Britain, ostensibly to protect the home electronics industry and employment.

Now the Philips group and its sister organisation PYE Ltd have launched two new ranges of Hi Fi equipment, made at a Philips plant in Japan!

## EDITORIAL

NOTHING so much as Callaghan's visit to the US could show up clearly that Britain's so-called defensive arrangements are merely capitalism's defence against British workers, Britain's alliance with the US, materially represented by all the US military bases here, is supposed to be the lynch-pin of Britain's defence against hostile invasion. But what Callaghan is doing in the US is agreeing to make the British aerospace industry a spare-parts subsidiary of the US aerospace industry. It is the equivalent of getting rid of Leyland and only keeping the various Lucas factories making parts - and that is beginning to happen too.

We are told that the only alternative is to make the British aerospace industry a subservient spare-parts operation in an EEC aerospace industry dominated by West Germany. Already membership of the EEC, complementary to the "special relationship" with the US as all part of NATO, has meant the running down of British steel and British shipbuilding.

## Planned Unemployment

Suddenly it dawns on us, as it should have done long ago. It was not that British capitalism wanted to join the EEC for a bigger market to exploit and then found that it meant the destruction of Britain's industrial base. British capitalism took us into the EEC precisely for the purpose of destroying Britain's industrial base because it was no longer profitable. At the same time this massive destruction of jobs meant the weakening of the British working class - always a prime motive of British capitalism.

It does not matter to British capitalism if the British aerospace industry is destroyed in the interest of the US aerospace industry: there is more British capital invested in US industry than that of any other country in the world. There is a public outcry when art treasures are bought up and shipped out of the country. British capital, which under our monstrous system represents jobs and therefore the livelihood of working men and women, is flowing out of the country at an ever increasing rate.

What can we do about it? How can we prevent the continuing destruction of British industry in a period of capitalist decline when it is more profitable to destroy than to construct? We must fight to preserve our industry, our jobs, our schools, our hospitals.

We can welcome whatever contradictions in the ranks of the capitalist enemy allow a brief reprieve for a section of British industry - like the Polish ship deal, the Roumanian aircraft deal or similar sales of the products of our skill to China. But such respite is only temporary - it does not get to the root cause of our having fewer and fewer jobs and getting hungrier and hungrier in a country that could produce everything we need. Only revolution will do that.

## Dockland destruction for speculative development

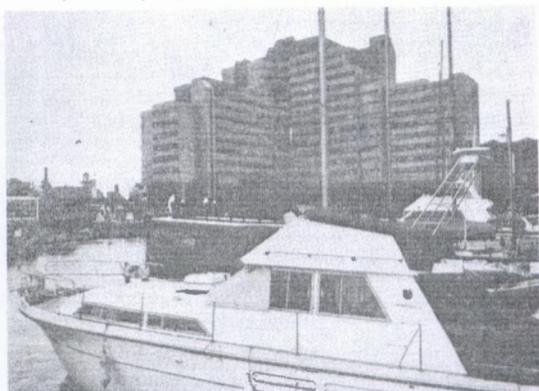
THE STRENGTH and diversity of the working class in London has long been a feature of the city. London has been the centre of revolt and at one time it had the greatest concentration of skilled organized labour in the world.

This strength, this organization, is being decimated by capitalism. There are now more people unemployed in Inner London than in the whole of Wales. Some areas have an unemployment rate as high as 15 per cent. The jobs have largely gone from the manufacturing base and most of the closed factories and work shops have not moved to other areas. The deliberate destruction of London's industry has not benefited the rest of the country - as if this were possible under capitalism anyway.

The decline of London's Docks is one aspect of the decline of industry. The Port of London Authority now wishes to close the remaining part of the Upper Docks, throwing 4,000 out of work at an estimated cost of £50 millions in redundancy payments. A total of 15,000 people will probably lose their livelihood if this plan to close the docks goes through.

The PLA claim to be bankrupt but its assets have been undervalued deliberately and it actually made an operating profit of £9½ millions over the past four years. If it was not for the huge interest payments to the government the profit would be even more. It is true that the reserves of the PLA have fallen but this is not because of the greed or unwillingness of workers but the incompetence of the PLA. Millions of pounds have been squandered in property speculation instead of being used to improve the docks.

Below: St Katherine's Dock, London: once a bustling centre of industry; now a playground for the rich.



## Keeping Hospitals Open - Pamphlet

AMID the State's destructive campaign within the NHS the working class are fighting back, and fighting back with ingenuity, determination and massive confidence - this is the message which comes across loud and clear in the pamphlet "Keeping Hospitals Open" written and produced by the hospital committees at Plaistow, St Nicholas, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and Hounslow.

It is firstly a guide to action, giving specific advice and pointing to the lessons learned in each of the four hospitals, but it is also an inspiring document in that it shows just how able our class is to provide for itself totally, in this case in terms of welfare for the sick, given the will to do so.

The pamphlet is split into sections covering such topics as the problem of getting GPs to refer new cases, the role of the Unions, winning support from other workers, the viciousness of the opposition (remember the 'Gestapo' style raid to remove patients from Hounslow Hospital) to name only a few.

Throughout, opinions of staff, patients and supporters are quoted together with information and advice from the authors. For example, the workers involved have obviously no illusions about 'workers control' within

capitalism:

"Work-ins have not aimed to take away the responsibility that the Area Health Authority and the DHSS have in law for patients and staff in a hospital, or for the provision of health service facilities. Opposing attempts by the authorities to close a hospital has meant, however, that some control has been taken away from the authorities and put into the hands of the staff. The amount of control that has been taken has depended on the situation and what has been needed to keep the hospital open."

Neither are there illusions about who needs to be involved: "One of the changes I've noticed is that you can go round talking to doctors. They're part of us now. They were fighting before us for an EGA somewhere else. But when they saw they were being used, they came towards us." (NUPE steward at EGA)

"Get the support of the suppliers... have a chat with the drivers and win them over that way," was the advice of a telephonist at Plaistow to ensure that the hospital continued to be supplied properly.

Finally if there are any doubts about the necessity of action as well as words in defence of the NHS, a worker at the EGA says:

"I've got some advice - do the same as us. I've talked to others who are getting up

pickets and petitions, but we've been all through that jargon. We've had pickets and petitions. We've been to see Ennals. We've had a one day strike, they're just not interested. So I say you're wasting time. You've got to take the action we're taking."

Obviously, though, tactics and action must serve the individual needs of each situation as the pamphlet points out.

If the pamphlet has faults they are born out of a real desire to win at all costs, and perhaps take short cuts: at times it seems as though the long established trade union machinery is regarded as useless, rather than those involved dedicating themselves to using it as a major weapon in the struggle. Also, no pamphlet, drawing the lessons from a particular period and type of working class action, can tell the whole story - the battle is continuing and the experiences of each part adds a wealth of knowledge and lessons for those involved and those yet to join in. And it is this knowledge and experience which will enable our class to go forward from defending against capitalism to destroying its enemy. Only then will we be able to write a new pamphlet describing a secure, forward looking, expanding health service under real workers' control - Socialism.



Above: a Newham housewife, a Liverpool docker (speaking) and the secretary of the National Ports Shop Stewards Committee address a packed meeting to prevent the closure of London's docks. (Photo: Andrew Ward, Report) Below: dock wasteland in London. (Photo: Nick Birch)



JULY 5th, the 30th anniversary of the National Health Service, marks a day of great celebration for the whole of the British working class. In 1948, the setting up of the NHS was the culmination of more than a century of struggle by the working class to safeguard its health.

1948 was also a landmark for personal social services. The National Assistance and Children Acts created a new system of care within the Local Authorities for the homeless and handicapped, for the young and elderly.

### Strength of class

This concession, forced on the ruling class, was a recognition of the growing strength of our class during and since the Second World War. Lloyd George's 1912 National Health Insurance Scheme was always seen as inadequate, applying only to those earning less than £160 per year. Where the class was strongest and most organised (for example the miners of South Wales) collective sickness insurance schemes and complete hospitals were the earliest signs of socialized health care schemes.

The NHS is the pinnacle of social democratic achievement. It is the largest organisation in the country, directly employing some one million people with a budget of over £6 billion. With the NHS as a base, Britain has become a world centre for medical advance developing open-heart surgery, renal transplantation, and hip-joint replacement among many other innovations.

The NHS was never, how-

## Gloomy prognostication for Health Service on thirtieth Anniversary

ever, a fully comprehensive health service. Its emphasis has been on curative rather than on preventive medicine. Capitalist control over the NHS is all too obvious. It has been continuously starved of funds. The 1958 Guillebaud Committee discovered that the real cost per person of the NHS had remained constant for almost five years. This is the biggest boast that the Government can make: Between 1966 and 1973, 4000 staffed hospital beds were lost each year in England and Wales. 1974-5 saw a real expenditure cut of £66.6m; in 1975-6 it was £70m and the cut for 1976-7 was £152m.

### Guerrilla tactics

On the other hand, workers have shown growing care for the future of the NHS. In 1973, the ancillary workers showed a clear understanding of guerrilla tactics against the Government over a frozen wage claim. Their move into the wage struggle was followed by the nurses in 1974 who held selective strikes and overtime bans to gain a 30 per cent pay rise.

When, in 1975, the Government attempted to impose a contract on Junior House Doctors, they drew on the experience of their fellow NHS colleagues over the previous two years. Striking through their

union, the British Medical Association, they forced a revision of the contract and at the 1975 BMA conference, the "new mood" amongst doctors was reflected in motions which turned the BMA into a real union. Earlier this year, this newly evolved strength was again tested when the BMA won a 28 per cent increase in pay over the next two years.

The ruling class's answer to this growth of awareness within the NHS has been a concerted attempt to dismantle the Service. The Labour Government has closed down at least 160 hospitals since it entered office. The Government's humanity was revealed by the Nazi-type raid on Hounslow Hospital which sought to destroy the determination of those who really care for the health of the nation.

The slashing of the building and other capital expenditure budget denies a future for the NHS and the spearhead of the attack is against wages and staffing levels. Staff pay accounts for approximately 70 per cent of total NHS expenditure and so the greatest burden of the health cuts has inevitably fallen on NHS workers.

And how the capitalist class play on their humanity and dedication! Longer hours, harder work and one person doing the work of two; all for

a pittance of a wage. They have turned a vocation into a job and converted social service into social servitude. NHS workers are even subsidising patient care from their own pay packets. The boast that has been made by every government since 1948 that our Health Service is both cheaper and more efficient than that of other capitalisms shows just how much exploitation of health workers there has been.

Now, a revolutionary professionalism must be found, as no amount of humanity, hard work and sacrifice can prop up the NHS. Better care will only come from more staff, beds and equipment and these essentials will not be gained without a struggle.

### Health the aim

Britain is in danger of having the most antiquated equipment in Western Europe. With at least 40,000 people in need of urgent care and over half a million waiting for in-patient care (no figures exist of those awaiting out-patient care) over 120 hospitals in London alone are due for closure. Is it any wonder that we are witnessing a reoccurrence of TB, malnutrition and rickets and an increase in maternal mortality? It is not by accident that they first attack those who are least able to defend themselves, the weakest of our class.

Our aim is health. To protect our health we must constantly challenge the capitalist class. To celebrate the 30th anniversary of the NHS, we need revolutionary change. The fight for health is a revolutionary fight.

## Future of science discussed at public meeting

THE SPEAKER at a recent meeting on the "Future of Science in Britain" at the Bellman Bookshop showed how capitalism was not interested in science except as a means to profit. Science had enabled them in the past to take over the textile, mining and agricultural industries, while later it was the means for colonisation and war.

Now they are no longer satisfied with the profitability of British industry, and so are destroying it. They are destroying science at the same time. Universities are financed in three ways: by industry which binds research to capitalism's short-term needs; by the government, which has cut back savagely - witness the 3000 unfilled vacancies in a university teaching force of 30,000; and by research councils, which are being starved of funds. The speaker gave the example of British based nuclear research, which will receive a pathetic £20 million this year and only £6 million by 1981 - a government commitment to end nuclear research in this country.

Fundamental research is expensive, speculative and long-term, and, by its very nature, cannot guarantee results in terms of more profits. Because of this, research workers are tied to specific, applied research assignments. In its present crisis, capitalism has lashed out at research and development, and scientific and technological education.

## Keep schools open - use falling rolls to improve class size

SHOULD fewer pupils mean fewer schools or smaller classes?

A recent public meeting at Robert Montefiore School in East London, discussed the Inner London Education Authority's proposal to close the school. ILEA's Education Officer, Peter Newsam, received a hot reception.

"We are here for one thing only" Newsam was told by a member of the school's governing body, "and that is to save the school. How dare anyone on the platform," he continued, "speak such a thing as school closure." Parents, teachers and pupils supported the school governor vocally. If the ILEA press ahead with their plan to close the school, a sit-in is being considered.

At another public meeting, teachers from Sladebrook High School promised Brent Council "the fight of the century" if they ever try to close the school. The meeting was arranged by teachers to campaign against a council move to cut 10 teachers from the staff due to falling pupil intake.

A teacher told the meeting, "I believe we will be an example to other schools in this country. We have started talking about fighting closure before they have even mentioned the word. Of course they are not going to tell us, but we

all know what is going on." It was pointed out Sladebrook would be in a similar position to Robert Montefiore in two year's time, if rolls continued to fall. A guest speaker from Robert Montefiore said that she wished that they had started fighting cutbacks due to falling rolls sooner.

A National Union of Teachers' Executive member said, "The falling birth rate gives a golden opportunity for smaller classes, something which the Authorities a few years ago all said they were in favour of. Instead of that, the Authorities are redeploying and cutting back. Why is that?"

"The key reason is not that people believe it is the best way to run schools. The reason is that the Government is cutting public expenditure."

Brent is not the only area affected. Many schools are either in the same position or soon will be. Yet again, Lavender Hill School, Battersea, faces closure and the ILEA have accepted a scheme to merge three purpose-built comprehensives in Westminster into a triple-site comprehensive, which is merely a cover up for school closure. The fight to save these schools is just beginning.

We say all schools should stay open and all should share the benefits of falling rolls.

## THE MACHINERY OF WAR CAN BE JAMMED BY WORKERS

THE LULWORTH crabfishermen are not the only ones to have put the war preparations of the bourgeoisie out of joint.

TGWU dockworkers at Ports-mouth, as part of an ongoing dispute over pay, refused to work cranes. The Navy were made to look fools as they found alternative ways ashore for themselves and the foreign officers they were trying to impress on war exercises in the Channel.

Production of military helicopters at the Westland works, Yeovil, is under threat. Management attempting to introduce 'measured day work in place of over-expensive' piece-work are faced with strike or other action.

The Labour government still has not been able to stop the AUEW or TGWU blacking of 4 Rolls-Royce aero engines, which are still at East Kilbride, and have been since 1973. Pressure for their export by the Chilean government has been fruitless.

### The cost of unemployment

Eighty-one people at a cost of £1 million per annum are employed monitoring the pay policy, according to the government. A waste of human labour, of course. But this is nothing compared to the waste represented by the unemployment of 2 million workers. This is the deliberate and most important creation of the government, in order to weaken our class and try to hinder our fight against this Labour government and its wage restraint.

The North London Teacher's Association has opposed the neutron bomb, as has an Essex Association of the NUT which notes that "the production of the neutron bomb has been deferred as a result of public and trade union agitation in several countries" and resolves "to press via all channels open to it for the government to withdraw support for this heinous weapon."

The TUC itself has pressed for the expansion of the peaceful uses of nuclear power. It is up to us in the labour movement to outlaw completely the capitalist misuse of nuclear power for war.

Hundreds of people demonstrated for disarmament at the massive exhibition of British Army equipment at Aldershot, 10,000 more or less lethal items were on display. The bourgeoisie may well vaunt its projected sales of £900 million, and boast that they are "ahead of the US in sophisticated radar and communication

equipment", but it will avail them nothing if the working class refuse to make or man these murderous toys.

Most recently, on June 30th, 500 AUEW members held a one-day strike, affecting Chieftain tank production, in a dispute about wages. If workers wish to they can directly halt capitalist production anywhere. Lucas aerospace workers, faced with mass redundancies, have pointed to the need for socially useful kidney machines and transport machinery, if their employers can think of no alternative to military production. It encroaches on the divine right of management to manage, and they have refused to keep skilled workers on.

However much capitalists may huff and puff about the need for rearmament and war, behind it all is their great (and well-founded) fear that the British working class will not back them.

## Bookshops

Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, London NW5  
Main Trend Books, 17 Midland Road, St. Philips, Bristol  
Brighton Workers Bookshop, 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton  
Northern Star Bookshop, 18A Leighton Street, Leeds  
Basildon bookstall Tues Fri Sat Marketplace  
Liverpool bookstall - every Saturday at Paddies  
Market, Great Homer Street, Liverpool

### 'The Worker'

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

NAME.....  
ADDRESS.....