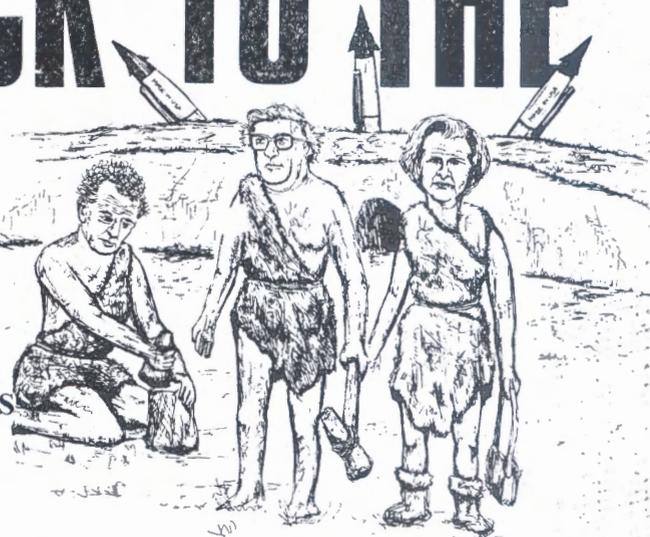




# NOW IT'S BACK TO THE STONE AGE!



THE GREATEST threat to world peace today comes from the criminal policies of the Thatcher government and its NATO allies.

They demand that 572 Pershing and Cruise missiles from the US be based in Europe to kill Russians. Britain's quota is to be at least 160.

Thatcher's spokesman Pym boasts that Britain is "top of the league" in arms spending, wasting more than any other country in Europe on weapons of destruction - 4.2 per cent of the gross national product.

Pym on reaching office pushed for all NATO countries to increase defence spending by 3 per cent in real terms. He now berates all those, his partners in other governments, who have more sense than to follow him and sacrifice every humanitarian thing - schools, hospitals, industry as a whole - to Moloch.

This Hitlerite government is not content with the NATO 3 per cent growth rate in arms expenditure. While other governments moderate arms expenditure or fail to come up to the mark (West Germany, Portugal among others), Britain is already expanding one per cent over and above the NATO quota for expansion. British military expenditure is growing at a faster rate than any other country in NATO - including the United States.

Thus Carter has taken his lead from Thatcher, and doubtless it will be his downfall. He has submitted a 1981 budget for £78,000 million on armaments. "This," he said, "is a real growth of more than 5 per cent over 1980."

### Scrap Polaris not the NHS!



Thatcher's policy is more stupid even than Hitler's "guns not butter". It is an attempt to instigate war (and will it necessarily be against the USSR?) without a Krupp or a Messerschmitt, a war with foreign weapons, missiles and planes - those of the US which don't seem able to stay in the air - a war when the very sinews of the economy, let alone a war economy, are being broken with the projected destruction of steel-making and every other form of industrial production in Britain.

## Strike call to defend Britain's steel industry

THE ALL OUT steel strike in the New Year goes ahead. The emergency conference of the Transport and General Workers Union steelmen in Wales called for similar action to protect threatened plant, as well as for the resignation of the British Steel chairman Villiers and his team.

The 53,000 projected loss in jobs would effectively mean 200,000 jobs lost in associated industries, said the TUC Economic Committee. In towns such as Consett it will mean one man in two out of work. Other unions, notably the railwaymen, have pledged support.

Even the manufacturing employers see that these proposals in their stupidity mean the return of Britain to a pre-industrial era.

### Massive job loss

In South Wales - where 10,000 jobs, in addition to 12,000 already lost this year, are threatened with the inclusion of Port Talbot and Llanwern in the options for closure - the response of workers must be taken up nationally.

The immediate reaction of workers at both plants was to have nothing at all to do with the plan. Its repercussions, however, spread further than the immediate loss of 10,000 steel jobs. Llanwern takes 88,000 tonnes of coking coal from the South Wales coalfield. Its closure, according to P. Weekes, area director of the National Coal Board, will mean the closure of 11 pits and up to 8000 redundancies in the coalfield.

PAGE 4

The next issue of *The Worker* will be No. 1 of 1980, appearing on January 3. We wish all our readers a pleasant Christmas and success in their struggles in the coming year.

PAGE 4

US generals threatened to bomb Vietnam back into the Stone Age. It is Thatcher, with her destruction of industry and planting on British soil of US nuclear weapons, who is taking Britain back to the Stone Age.

During the last Labour administration 311 hospitals were condemned to closure. By September this year a further 2,153 beds were cut. Hospital waiting lists were up to 750,000 by the end of March. Yet the Thatcher government's Consultative Document on the National Health Service, "Patients First", published last week, blames all the problems not on the cuts in the National Health Service, but on the administration.

## New health report calls for the dismantling of the NHS

"OUR APPROACH stems from a profound belief that the needs of patients must be paramount." Such is the hypocrisy in the introduction to the Consultative Document. The real problems of the Health Service, and of the patients it serves, are not touched on, nor were they ever meant to be. It is a document intended solely to confuse, confound and destroy the service yet further.

Up to March 31 this year 311 hospitals were closed, or due for closure - a total of 2,363 beds lost. By the end of September the Health Minister, Jenkin, had presided over proposals for closing yet a further 2,153 beds, not including so called 'temporary closures'. 381 hospital beds were closed during November alone. Hospital waiting lists are probably close to the million mark.

Yet that first sentence of the Consultative Paper goes on to say, "... and we have reached the firm conclusion that the structure and management arrangements of the Service introduced in 1974 do not provide the best

framework for the effective delivery of care to patients." The patient, detailed work of the Royal Commission, and the many thoughtful proposals they made are firmly snubbed.

The siren calls of simplifying the structure, sacking the administrators and turning responsibility back to hospital level are nothing less than the Thatcher government's determination to take us back to that epitome of 'local' health care under capitalism, the parish - and the parish workhouse.

The plans for destroying jobs and skills in this paper must be opposed. But the key issue is now the very survival of the health service. The nurses and other staff who have taken over Etwall Hospital near Derby, because Derbyshire Area Health Authority wants to close it to save money are thumbing their noses at Thatcher's government and all the 'consultative documents' it may produce.

Save Health - Save Britain

## The Week

THE YEAR'S end sees two highly unpopular pantomime characters of the past, who foolish people thought were dead, once more strutting about on the world's stage. The proconsular figure of British imperialism inspects a security force of murderers in Salisbury to the plaudits of the US Government; and the blustering figure of the US world gendarme raises a large force of marines to "deal with" trouble anywhere - to the plaudits of the British Government.

AMONGST others, two members of the National Union of Students on their way to Blackpool from northern Ireland for the NUS Conference were detained for 48 hours under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Any trade unionist can be held under this Act alone - and further legislation against trade unionists is already in the Parliamentary pipeline!

IT IS interesting that Thatcher, who is so keen on the unions voting by secret ballot every time they want to elect officers or take industrial action and who talked so much before her own election about holding a referendum every so often, is NOT considering a referendum by the British people on whether they want to delegate to a foreign government the decision of whether British is going to be destroyed in a nuclear war or not. That is exactly what is implied by the stationing of US-controlled missiles on British soil pointed at Moscow. Perhaps this isn't considered an important enough issue to be worth voting about.

IN SOCIALIST China life was sacred. Not so in capitalist China, where the death penalty is not only restored, but glorified in the press. Recently Chinese television went so far as to screen the execution by shooting of a rapist. By contrast, after the revolution in Nicaragua, where thousands of the ex-dictator Somoza's supporters are on trial, and where the demand for retribution runs justifiably high, the maximum penalty is 30 years' imprisonment.

SPEAKING in Newcastle about the steel crisis, Silkin said that this government, in its attack on trade unionism, is prepared to destroy the British steel industry and ruin Britain's future as an industrial nation. That is perfectly correct. But will any Labour Party spokesman have the political nous to realise that, without repudiating capitalism, Labour policy could also tend in no other direction than that in which Thatcher has embarked pell-mell?

NOT CONTENT with the deaths of their own staff, the government's Porton Down Chemical Defence Establishment is to run the first simulated chemical warfare battle on 3000 acres nearby. The exercises, in which NATO as well as British troops will be involved, will test the effectiveness of new protective gear against what we are told will be water sprays and simulants from jet planes. Quite how you can test the effectiveness of apparatus against chemicals without actually spraying the chemicals themselves, has not been explained. Ministry of

## Historic Notes

"WE HAVE only to kick in the door and the whole rotten structure will come crashing down," boasted Hitler in anticipation of his new Eastern empire. But, just to make sure, Operation Barbarossa was the biggest war operation ever mounted. Three million troops from Germany, Austria, Italy, Hungary, Rumania and Finland attacked the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941.

The now well-practised Wehrmacht struck with catastrophic effect. Within two months they had advanced 400 miles. The Soviet airforce was practically destroyed, whole armies were wiped out, figures of one million killed or captured seem inconceivable. Yet Hitler's plan had failed.

German strategy was to destroy the Russian ability to resist, yet to their bewilderment resistance continued. Thus a new stratagem was forced, a drive on Moscow whose capture would surely do the trick (shades of Bonaparte!).

Early on, Stalin was made Supreme Commander in Chief. For the next four years, for up to eighteen hours a day, he per-

## 'Many sided and gifted' - Stalin during the war

sonally supervised the Soviet military effort. Marshal Zhukov, who became Deputy Supreme Commander, describes in his memoirs how Stalin's study was the place where Headquarters decisions were made.

"Often sharp arguments arose at the Committee meetings. Views were expressed in definite and sharp terms. Stalin would usually walk up and down past the table, carefully listening to those who argued. He himself was short spoken and would often

radio for the first time. All those who heard the speech remember its effect. The ability of the Bolshevik Party, with Stalin at its head, to mobilise all the people immediately is one that only a genuine leadership can possess.

By early December 1941 German troops were in the suburbs of Moscow, but there the advance ground to a halt. The entire adult population of Moscow had been mobilised. Historians quote the dramatic effects of the Russian

the centre was crucial.

"It was only once I saw him somewhat depressed. That was at the dawn of June 22, 1941, when his hopes that war could be avoided were shattered."

Zhukov leaves us with these further descriptions: "Though slight in stature and undistinguished in outward appearance, Stalin was nevertheless an imposing figure. Free of affectation and mannerisms, he won the heart of everyone he talked with. His visitors were invariably struck by his candour and his uninhibited manner of speaking, and impressed by his ability to express his thoughts clearly, his inborn analytical turn of mind..."

"One seldom saw him laughing, and when he laughed he did so quietly, as though to himself. But he had a sense of humour, and appreciated sharp wit and a good joke.

"His tremendous capacity for work, his ability quickly to grasp the meaning of a book, his tenacious memory - all these enabled him to master, during one day, a tremendous amount of factual data, which could be coped with only by a very gifted man.

"Many-sided and gifted as Stalin was, his disposition could not be called even. He was a man of strong will, reserved, fervent and impetuous."

Less than four years after the full might of the German army rolled into Russia, the tables were turned. The Russian army and people, never at any time facing less than 70 per cent of the Nazi forces, had triumphed. Hitler lay dead in the ruins of Berlin, and the whole world had been saved from fascism.

Finally at the end of the war, Zhukov took the salute at the victory parade. Stalin told him, "I am too old to review parades. You do it, you are younger."

This article is the last in the current series written to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of Stalin's birth.

stop others with remarks like, 'Come to the point'. He opened the sittings without any preliminaries and spoke in a quiet voice and only on the main points. If no agreement was reached at the sitting, a commission would be formed of representatives of the two sides to report back. This happened only when Stalin himself had not arrived at a definite decision."

As the crisis deepened, he addressed the Soviet people by

distances and weather, the Russian troops also suffered from these conditions. At 40 degrees below freezing a counter attack drove the Germans back, demonstrated Russian resilience and showed the ultimate fate of the Wehrmacht.

The areas lost had contained 40 per cent of the population and had produced a third of the National Product, but factories had been moved wholesale behind the Urals. Those left were destroyed. Partisan units were an integral part of Soviet tactics. By 1945 Soviet war production exceeded Germany's. During that time 20,000,000 Soviet citizens were killed. Victory was achieved by unstinting sacrifice. Defence did not mean retiring to a prepared position. It meant unceasing counter attacks with what ever forces were available. In this way the fascist forces were halted, allowing the strategic offensives to begin. Most of Stalin's conflicts with his General Staff arose out of his continued insistence on attacks. His faith in the ability and willingness of people to make the necessary sacrifice; the steel-like determination to victory at



Stalin photographed as a young man by the Russian police.

## BRITISH TROOPS OUT OF ZIMBABWE NOW!

HOWEVER this Government tries to dress up its action over Zimbabwe, it is nothing but British imperialism in the threadbare cloak of neo-colonialism. Now they send in the troops. Out with them! The situation is no more changed by the Lancaster House negotiations and the pomp of installing Soames a great proconsul above the fray, than the country where white minority rule held sway for so long becomes a different country simply by changing the name from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe.

The re-assertion of the British colonial rule could have taken place any time during the last 15 years: but as long as Smith's racist regime was firmly in the saddle there was no real challenge. Even the sanctions agreed in the UN were applied by successive British governments in such a way as to cause no real hardship to the white dictatorship.

It was only when liberation forces began to score victories against the security forces and Smith's regime was beginning to totter that the British Government organised first the Muzorewa "black wash" and then began to work for what could be passed off to the world as free elections. The sanctions, which never worked and which Thatcher had already threatened to lift without any

Soames arrived in Salisbury to the strains of God Save the Queen.

The Patriotic Front under pressure from Kaunda and the leaders of other so-called front line countries might decide that their best tactics now are to accept what they have so far forced the British Government to concede. Only those actually doing the fighting have the right to decide such questions. But we can have no illusions that this Government is prepared to give real freedom to anybody -- in Africa or Britain.

This Government hopes, under cover of a neo-colonial settlement to go on doing business as usual in this ex-colony. Soames has already said that in certain circumstances he might have to make use of the security forces - the forces including white mercenaries and South African troops in Rhodesian uniforms which have been massacring black people in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mozambique. In addition, British troops are being sent out as part of a monitoring force. This is justified on the grounds that there are not enough of them to act in a "peace keeping" capacity -- as if more could not be sent as soon as the US Hercules transports could lift them out!

If genuine independence were being granted to the people of Zimbabwe, there would be no need for any troops from outside.

## South Pole threatened by mineral discoveries

## Asset strippers eager to exploit the Antarctic's riches

In a previous Worker, Britain was described as a desert of wealth; it's wealth being it's working class. On the other hand, Antarctica is 5.5 million square miles of mineral rich territory - already discovered are oil, coal, iron, manganese, copper, nickel, silver, diamonds, uranium, thorium and plutonium.

The 21 nations at present in the Antarctica have signed a treaty saying that the continent 'shall forever be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and shall not become the scene or object of international discord'. In accordance with the treaty, the US is busy with 'peaceful research' into the way the Antarctica ice sheets have a big effect on the weather of the whole of the Southern Hemisphere. Very kind.

At the same time, they are spending 52 million on commercial exploitation of uranium, thorium and plutonium. This sounds just as 'peaceful' as the Soviet Union's recent establishment of a rocket launching ground as one if its many bases in Antarctica.

The US and Soviet Union have made no claims on any territory in the Antarctica, and recognise no-one else's claims. This leaves them free to claim the whole territory and to wage war to hold it. Military, naval and air forces

of those capitalist powers are constantly poised to destroy that natural wealth in a world war.

One New Zealand capitalist, employed by the US supplies motor mowers to break the ice sheets. The ecological results of an ocean floor littered with motor mowers has implications for the whole of the Southern Hemisphere!

The question of whether the vast natural wealth of the Antarctica is developed for the benefit of the world's people or exploited at huge profit for the few rests with the international working class. The New Zealand ruling class, using the country's position as a logical staging post to Antarctica, has prostituted itself to the US in the hope of rich droppings. The New Zealand people, seeing themselves being made cannon-fodder for a third world war are tackling their rulers and the task of booting out the US bases which clutter her coasts.

Fortunately, our ability to oppose the squandering of the wealth of Antarctica does not depend on our proximity to that land. The complete dependence of any imperialist power on the exploitation of its own working class in order to finance and man its 'peaceful research programme' mean that the fight for the resources of Antarctica begins on our own doorstep.

## Editorial

IF CAPITALISM cannot afford a steel industry in Britain when steel has to be the hard core on an industrial society, it does not mean that there is something wrong with the British steel industry but that there is something wrong with capitalism.

If capitalism cannot afford education, health and housing for the people of Britain, is there something wrong with the people for expecting to have these things for themselves and their children?

If the defence of the profit system requires those same British people to surrender the sovereignty of their land to the nuclear force of a third country which has demonstrated its incapacity for humane or rational action at Hiroshima and in Korea and in Vietnam, can capitalism be worth defending?

At the same time that the steel industry is being destroyed in Britain and, as yet less precipitately in the USA and Western Europe, West Germany wins a huge contract to build a vast steel rolling mill in China and the US, which with West Germany and the Soviet Union, built a steel industry in India, raises a tariff barrier to keep out Indian steel which the Indian people themselves desperately need anyhow! It all seems absolutely lunatic - but that is because we are still naive enough to think of production in terms of making things to meet people's needs.

Capitalism has nothing to do with that. It is not concerned with producing goods for the many but profits for the few. It will therefore always seem a completely illogical system to the many and only make sense to the few. The grim irony is that even the few can be engulfed in the war capitalism inevitably produces as the ultimate way of dealing with the problems of 'over-production' of things or people. 'Over production' is capitalism's name for things or people when there are more of them than can be sold or exploited profitably.

It's like steel again. Steel production in Britain has to be cut back by more than a third not because there is a shortage of people needing steel products, not because there is a shortage of skilled workers to produce steel, but because there is a shortage of profit in steel.

At the end of 1979 with capitalist inhumanity and irrationality glaringly apparent, let us take the simple resolution not to go without all the good and necessary things we are told we must not have, but to do without capitalism. Let us begin to take the steps here in Britain of restoring humanity and reason to our world by getting rid of capitalism. And let us start by uniting to throw out Thatcher through whose shrill, badgering voice, at this season which is supposed to be one of peace and goodwill, capitalism speaks its message of hate, greed, selfishness and unreason.

## Diabetic blindness - a suitable case for treatment

FEW SITUATIONS can be more distressing for patient and doctor alike than when the present state of medical knowledge is unable to cure a worsening disease or condition. Perhaps the only situation that is worse is when both know that there are means available to prevent the pain and suffering, but not the money.

This is what is happening with the treatment of blindness caused by diabetes, now the major cause of blindness in the middle aged in this country. And yet, if diagnosed and treated early enough, it can be completely cured.

The treatment is carried out with specialised laser equipment. Precisely-directed beams seal the extra blood vessels that develop in diabetics' eyes. Full sight can be restored to 70 per cent of the people who develop serious eye disease if they have suffered from diabetes for thirty years or more.

The cost-effectiveness of the treatment is dramatic, even allowing for the initial cost of the machine - £22,000 - its ancillary equipment and the staff to operate it, and of the follow-up visits necessary for patients. The annual cost for such preventive treatment - which takes minutes rather than hours - is £107 per patient.

The sum, in various allowances and benefits, paid out by the DHSS each year to a blind person, is on average £1700. Yet although roughly 3 per cent of the population are diabetic,

giving an enormous pool of people needing treatment, at the last count there were only 20 such laser machines in NHS hospitals in the whole country. In the North West Thames Region, treatment can be given to only 20 per cent of the patients who require it, and that is probably better than in other areas of the country.

Ophthalmology is an area of surgery where new instruments such as the laser have completely revolutionised surgical techniques during the last 20 years. A new machine with a specialised 'drilling needle' means that cataract operation no longer need a long recovery period. Once again this machine is not widely available in the NHS.

For those whose sight is lost when it could have been saved, the cost cannot be measured - they suffer in every area of their life and work. For the staff who have the skills and the expertise and only want the finances for the necessary treatment to be carried out with the right equipment and with adequate staff, the frustration is immense.

A system and government that, even in crude cost-effective terms, would rather use our money to pay a paltry 'allowance' to the blind, than invest in the prevention of blindness cannot be allowed to continue. Their failure to fund this particular form of treatment, and so many others, is deliberate and criminal. This Thatcher government would have the people of Britain go blind.

## Fight against destruction of education

THIS THATCHER GOVERNMENT has declared war on education; on today's youth and tomorrow's future. It cannot afford education yet squanders millions of pounds on so-called national defence. What are they defending if they will not defend basic public services? Never before has the need for union action to save education been greater but, tragically, as yet many teachers seem not to be sufficiently prepared to take on the battle.

### The national attack

From throughout the country come horror stories of the proposed devastation from nursery to university level. The cuts proposed in Devon mirror the national situation. Already-inadequate nursery provision is to be axed; hundreds of teaching jobs are threatened; free transport is to go; school meal prices are to increase and evening classes are being shut down.

Where teachers and parents have been made clearly aware of the severity of the attack, the response has been superb; thus magnificent rallies and marches for education have been seen in many areas.

From such widespread areas as Devon, Medway, Wandsworth and Humberside has come an acute awareness of the need for parents to support teachers in this battle. It is now more vital than ever that parent-teacher associations go beyond their traditional money-raising role that has provided extra facilities for individual schools and take up the fight to defend the very fabric of the whole education service. Every local council must be inundated by demands to stop education cuts so that the councils will stand by the preservation of all local services and not be pressurised by this government into decimating and then further decimating them.

### Union threatened

And lessons can equally be learnt from where the Government thinks opposition is weak; for then those who would defend education are viciously attacked. Thus in Warwickshire a headmaster has been suspended for carrying out the

National Union of Teachers "no-cover" action which necessitates sending classes home if the local authority fails to maintain adequate provision of supply teachers to cover the lessons of absent teachers.

The local authority feels it can attack the union because teachers in Warwickshire have been notoriously slow in fighting in the past. Now they are learning the hard way. This issue has crystallized the political nature of the attack. A feeling of anger has swept through the schools and the union's action has been accelerated. It has become obvious that we are not only fighting to save education but to save the union; to defend our right to organise against those who would destroy us and education.

Such an awareness of the gravity of the situation facing us is apparent both in the propaganda accompanying the ballot for strike action in Warwickshire and in the memoranda 'Education Under Attack' which, on December 8th, was presented to an emergency Conference of the NUT called precisely because of the severity of the attack.

Response inadequate

Sadly the union as a whole is not yet willing to match its awareness of the severity of the attack with policy and action that is adequate to repel that attack.

The threat of redundancy has made some teachers follow the take-the-money-and-run road - where "good" redundancy terms are all that is looked for and basic union principles are lost in the eagerness to grasp the limp Midas hand.

To its credit the NUT Confer-

ence emphatically rejected such a selfish approach by unanimously committing itself to defend any member threatened with redundancy and to use strike action should this prove necessary. Yet this means that we are only committed to fight against redundancy for serving teachers, not to fight for the education service as a whole. This would include fighting to maintain the total number of teaching jobs. If we do not fight for this, "natural wastage", that euphemism for redundancy, will be used to cut back the teaching force as teachers leave the service.

What cowardice! If no union will stand its ground and declare, "what we have we hold", then where will be the jobs for youth leaving schools and colleges? And teachers have the added responsibility of defending the whole education service for today's youth and for generations to come.

Conference was told that the fight for all teaching jobs was not realistic, and, unfortunately, took the easier road of just fighting redundancy.

Teachers must move forward from this conference determined to make their fellow teachers not only aware of the gravity of the situation but also of the need for a national response to defend the whole education service. Then we must unite with parents and the working class as a whole to form a massive national campaign to save education - or the reality will be the destruction of education.

Never before has education faced such danger. Never before have we seen such a destructive government. We must declare war on Thatcher's Government and defend education!



Angry students in Devon march to oppose education cuts.

Photo: The Worker

## University workers in Devon discuss cuts

RECENTLY, an open meeting for all university workers in Exeter, attended by about 2000, discussed the financial problems facing the university as a result of the cuts.

Certainly the very scale of the cuts seemed to stun many at the meeting and few seemed to offer any suggestion as to what should be done. The vice-chancellor declared that he would go ahead and implement the cuts even though he knew the harm they would do. Students expressed their anger by voting at a general meeting to occupy in the near future. The threat produced results - the

university senate produced a set of proposals which although limited were a step in the right direction and students decided to call off their occupation. Lecturers too seemed to have considered just what damage could result from inaction and the AUT has produced its own set of proposals which are being followed up.

What has been clear for some time is that students are determined to oppose all cuts in education. Yet in the beginning there was often a great deal of frustration and anger at the slowness of

others to respond. Now there is a growing realisation that the real task is to set about building a united and effective campaign involving all campus workers. Already steps have been taken to move towards a one-day strike.

A joint statement on behalf of staff and students states: 'It is completely against sound managerial practice for educational institutions to be plunged into such financial uncertainty when they should be striving to maintain the standard of education for the expanding 18 plus age group over the first years of the 1980's.'

# Belgian general strike against nuclear missiles

IN BELGIUM on December 7 and 8 a general strike, supported by all unions, was called in support of a shorter working week, better working conditions and rejection of Government proposals for higher Social Insurance contributions. In Brussels it could be seen that the strike was total. There was no transport in or out and every shop and supermarket was picketed.

This was followed the next day by a two mile long demonstration in the teeming rain round Brussels to Parliament, the Palace, and around Government buildings. The whole was to oppose the American plan to deploy Pershing II and Cruise missiles. There was not a policeman to be seen and the demonstration carried on without let or hindrance. In the march were contingents from many European countries, including the Dutch, who are battling in their own country against the siting of missiles

in Holland, and from Spain and Luxembourg. There was perfect discipline and no interference by the police, the people were too sure and too determined. In the more select quarters of the city some adverse criticisms were met with. These were answered by well-aimed eggs, which make



splendid missiles. An international meeting of the metal workers abandoned their conference to march in the demonstration and in support of the strike. The Dutch and Belgian people are battling to save Europe and us. They have memories of German occupation in two world wars. Are our memories so short?

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

No return to the Stone Age!

must be countered by over 500 such in Europe. Disarmament negotiations can begin again, provided only that the USA withdraws 13000 troops and the Soviet Union - 30,000. NATO are the true warmongers.

The withdrawal of 20,000 Soviet troops and 1000 tanks is greeted with cries of anger, branded as a provocative act. The Soviets are, they say, basely calculating to inflame public opinion in the West against the further deployment of nuclear weaponry. And why for peace sake should they not?

With their stepping up of war expenditure and the open admission that they seek military superiority before negotiating disarmament - and these are their own words - how can they expect the Soviet Union, threatened by such maniacs, to disarm? Yet when the Soviet Union does withdraw troops, this is hysterically proposed as a devious plot!

This hysteria betrays their fear of the might and rea-

## NO missiles! No bombs!

No to Thatcher!

sonableness of public opinion. Only a government as stupid as Thatcher's could gamble on accepting on British soil more weapons than any other country, so courting the outcry which must follow.

The people in the Low Countries, who have been twice so bitterly overrun by war in this century, and are now so rightly wedded to the cause of disarmament, have given us the lead. They have shown how fragile is the unity of NATO. If ever a colossus had feet of clay, it is the midget Pym seeking to impersonate the NATO giant bes-triding Europe.

That mood of anger against war and nuclear destruction so powerful at the time of the CND in the sixties has been fanned by Thatcher's senseless actions. Every school, every hospital, every factory we keep open is necessary to us in the cause of peace, of defiance of her wicked plans, of true defence against these schemes of war and death. NO TO THATCHER'S DESTRUCTION OF BRITAIN!

## FROM PAGE 1

# Steel destroyed

Miners in the area are well aware of this latest threat not only to their own jobs but to the whole of South Wales.

The backing of the Maria Lemos has earned a temporary respite whereby equal amounts of local coking coal are to be bought to match imports until a national settlement is agreed.

100 per cent support action in defence of any dockers who lost his job over the Maria Lemos, has now been extended to strike action in defence of Llanwern.

"If the steelworkers decide to strike to save jobs they will get our full backing. We are behind them 100 per cent, and that includes strike action if necessary."

The legacy of the Maria Lemos has brought closer liaison between the unions concerned and the official support of the Wales TUC. This is a battle South Wales, and the whole nation, cannot afford to lose.

# The destruction of our textile industry

THE IDEA of Britain being virtually unable to produce its own woollen carpets, its own cloths and worsteds, its own woollens seems to verge on the ridiculous. Yet the rate of decline in the woollen textiles trade is so rapid that such a prospect is now on the cards. The industry has been declining and contracting in West Yorkshire for decades; but now we would appear to have entered a fundamentally different phase of extinction.

Throughout the 70s a good deal of workers' money was fed by governments, both Labour and Conservative, in the form of industrial and regional aid, into recapitalising an industry out of which private capital was rapidly fleeing. Thousands of jobs were lost in these 'rationalisations', as companies merged, production fell and plant was modernised. Meanwhile, for some, profits rose: but evidently not enough, for now we are witnessing the wholesale closure of these very self same new plants.

The Thatcher government, too, has abandoned the industry. Regional aid at least paid lip-service to the idea of the industry remaining in some form or another. Joseph's decision to axe £233 million from regional aid and the attitude displayed toward the textile industry by various junior ministers recently, show only too clearly how willing they are to see the EEC and US-inspired measures complete the work started by British capital.

Examples of closures, redundancies and short-time working this year are too numerous to mention: 136 of the 400 firms in the trade have been affected. Take as one example the recently announced closure of Associated Weavers' tufted and printed carpet mill in Bradford, AW are to close the works with the subsequent loss of 1000 jobs. Yet it is

only a few years ago that the multi-million pound investment that AW and others made in new German machinery to produce tufted/printed carpets, to replace their traditional woven carpets, was heralded as the breakthrough British carpets needed.

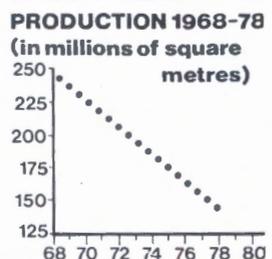
AW's closure is also significant in that it is the American owners of the firm, Champion International, who

defence of our industries in the same way as we are taking up the defence of our services. They are ours, for we built them and we have need of them even if capitalism does not. Workers in the industry have begun to fight back, even if it is not yet enough.

The National Union of Dyers, Bleachers and Textile Workers is calling for the

## The Decline of Textiles

Some facts and figures



- IMPORTS**
- Polyester fibre imports up 500 per cent between 1978 and 1979.
  - During the same period, US textile imports into Britain went up by 20 per cent; EEC-made imports went up by 40 per cent.
  - Imports of woollen and worsted fabrics went up from 13.5 million square metres in 1976, to 23.5 million in 1978.

**THIS YEAR**  
Out of 400 firms in West Yorkshire, 136 have either closed, made workers redundant, or put them on short time.

have made the closure decision. One must assume that Bradford does not fit in the global strategy, for production is to be switched to their Belgian plant. And then where?

The closure will mean the loss of some 12 per cent of total British tufted carpet production, the gap no doubt to be filled by more imports from the EEC or the States. We must take up the

imposition of import controls, little enough to ask for, and the new mood abroad was expressed by the General Secretary of the Union when on TV recently. He said of job loss: "And what good has it done us quite frankly? For it's not the dark satanic mills that are closing, it's those that have been reorganised with both government and private capital that are going."

# Problems remain as Post Office workers face struggle ahead

POST OFFICE workers in SCPS and CPSA who took part in the industrial action over pay last summer found an employer ruthless in the determination not to concede regrading targets. Behind the PO stood Thatcher and Joseph (aptly pictured in the Worker stringing up Buzby).

By the end of last summer's action, members had decided that an orderly retreat was necessary: some gains made, some mistakes, some sapping of morale in the computer sections which bore the brunt.

Now members discuss the next step. Some advocate an early strike to take advantage of the backlog in telephone billing. As branches discuss the possibilities in the run-up to a special conference, it is time one thing was made clear: the PO's line was not an

aberration.

It is no use saying the employer cheated and hid in Thatcher's skirts: there is no referee to enforce the rules. The truth is they will always throw what they can at us, witness ministers' speeches claiming that 80 computer operators brought the economy to its knees.

The members need time to recover after last summer before we are forced into action. We need a broader base than just key computer and supplies branches. We have to work out a strategy to involve all members and win should such strengths fail to force the employer's hand in negotiations.

A death or glory struggle against PO management and this government in their present mood would certainly be seen as their chance to smash us.

## Bookshops

**Bellman Bookshop** 155 Fortess Road, London NW5  
**Brighton Workers Bookshop** 37 Gloucester Road, Brighton  
**Clarion Books 5** The Precinct, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex  
**Main Trend Books** 17 Midland Road, St. Philips, Bristol  
**Northern Star Bookshop** 18A Leighton Street, Leeds  
**Basildon Bookstall** Tues, Fri, Sat Marketplace  
**Hull Bookstall** Old Town Market, Saturdays  
**Liverpool Bookstall** every Thursday Liverpool University

## Books

Available now at bookshops:

When Britain Invaded Soviet Russia: The Consul Who Rebelled. by Andrew Rothstein £2.75

Morals and Politics: The Ethics of Revolution by William Ash £2.95

Congress '79: Document of the most recent Congress of The Communist Party of Britain (M-L.) 30p

---

## The Worker

Subscriptions:  
 155 Fortess Road, London NW5

NAME ..... 6 months £2.50 (inc. postage)  
 ADDRESS ..... 1 year £5.00 (inc. postage)  
 ..... £6 from Jan 1980, £3.75  
 ..... and £7.50 respectively.