

FEATHERSTONE (S.)

THE ROLE OF NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS IN

THE RE-PRODUCTION OF COMMUNITY

(VOLUME TWO)

A P P E N D I C E S

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APPENDIX ONE

This appendix is the appendix to chapter two.

THE SUN SAYSS7

- S7:1 Nice one, Willie
- S7:2 THANK HEAVEN that Home Secretary Willie Whitelaw has had the guts to demand that the law should be enforced against steel strike pickets who go too far.
- S7:3 He promised that the police would ensure that all who wanted to work would be allowed to do so.
- S7:4 They will crack down hard against violence and threats on the picket lines.
- S7:5 Just contrast Willie's firm stand for law and order with the wishy-washy excuses offered a year ago by Labour Prime Minister Jim Callaghan when lorry drivers mounted an unchecked blockade on British business.
- S7:6 Not for Mr. Whitelaw the weak-kneed reliance on a voluntary code of conduct which even union bosses couldn't guarantee.
- S7:7 He isn't afraid of creating false martyrs with his tough support of the law.
- S7:8 He knows it is vital for Britain's interests that people who want to live and work in peace should be protected from the bully boys.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE2

- E2:1 The right choice, Sir Charles
- E2:2 THE PROPOSED elimination of 52,000 jobs in the steel industry is a shocker. It will affect all the major steelmaking centres in the country, especially South Wales, where bitter memories of the grim 1930s are already being revived.
- E2:3 Nor is this the end of the story. Sir Charles Villiers is thinking in terms of a further 20,000 redundancies. Obviously Bill Sirs, whose Iron and Steel Trades Confederation will bear the brunt of the redundancies, has got to fight his corner.
- E2:4 But what, in fact, can he do? What are the alternatives? There is certainly a case for the view that British Steel management has been bad and short-sighted over the years. The industry is in a mess. It is losing £800,000 a day.
- E2:5 There is too much obsolescent plant which will never be profitable again, even given miracles of productivity. If the industry is to be in future viable, then all this has to be cut out.
- E2:6 In short, what we have is a hard and ruthless operation designed to make our steel industry internationally competitive. Even with these painful changes, productivity per man will rise only to the present level in France, and will be some way behind that in Germany.
- E2:7 The tragedy is that these changes should have been made gradually during the 1960s and 1970s. But as happens all too often in British industry, necessary changes are not made until they have to be put through in a desperate rush and in the worst possible economic conditions. However, we cannot go back in time and start again.
- E2:8 Sir Charles Villiers is right to concentrate production and investment in only the most modern plants, with strictly rational manning levels. Strike action over the 2 per cent pay offer- or days of protest- can make no difference. And the story of British Steel will be the story of other British industries in the next few years.

APPENDIX TWO

This is the appendix to chapter three.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINION

E1

- E1:1 This winter's bumpy ride
- E1:2 LAST WEEK saw us jumping out of the miners' frying pan into the steelworkers' fire.
- E1:3 The short-lived euphoria over the miners' settlement despite the fact that it was at a dangerously high 20 per cent- has been followed by anxiety over a possible steel strike that would paralyse much of British industry.
- E1:4 But the steel dispute is not as bad as it might first appear. The management's initial low offer, not amounting to more than 12 per cent including a productivity bonus, and the advance union threat of industrial action, is no more than routine foreplay before negotiating begins in earnest.
- E1:5 A CBI survey may say that seven out of ten workers are willing to lower pay claims to prevent their company's liquidation and their own redundancy. But what most workers are actually doing is different from what they are saying to market researchers.
- E1:6 For as the Chancellor has said, the present 18 per cent average of pay settlements can only lead to hundreds of bankruptcies and hundreds of thousands unemployed.
- E1:7 The Government has always known that it would have to keep its seat belts tightly fastened during this winter's bumpy ride of wage claims. But the additional pressure of public spending and monetary growth still much higher than they should be is not helping.
- E1:8 A National Westminster Bank review rightly sees this winter as decisive, perhaps even determining economic prospects for the next few years.
- E1:9 But if our economic performance is to improve significantly within the next six months, it is crucial not only that pay rises moderate but that public spending and monetary growth are brought under control now.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE3

- E3:1 The season of goodwill
- E3:2 CHRISTMAS gives us a chance to express with sincerity good wishes to people for whom, normally, our feelings are anything but warm.
- E3:3 The Ayatollah Khomeini, for example. We genuinely hope that this grim figure has a pleasant Christmas- it is impossible to imagine him as merry- and we also hope that some of the spirit of Jesus- whom Islam acknowledges as a great prophet- will influence his actions in the New Year.
- E3:4 Christmas is a time of hope, when even the most battered and world weary can open themselves to the spirit of renewal.
- E3:5 So many of us will be thinking of the people of Rhodesia. Will this be the last Christmas lived under threatened by the gun?
- E3:6 The next few months will tell. But because there is now real hope there, the traditional greeting "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" can be given with added warmth and emotion.
- E3:7 Today, Christmas Eve, Len Murray, Bill Sirs and other union leaders will be talking to see if there is any way to avoid a steel strike in the New Year.
- E3:8 Certainly the prospect of beginning another New Year with another crippling industrial dispute can dent the spirit of even the most invincible optimist.
- E3:9 So we fervently hope that by Christmas Day light will have entered Congress House. If Bill Sirs can truly relax and smile over the holiday, we will all smile with him.
- E3:10 More whimsically at the end of what has been the year of the mole, may we wish a Merry Christmas to all those men and women in our diplomatic service who, over the years, have actually been working for Britain rather than the Soviet Union.
- E3:11 They get little publicity but they deserve some acknowledgement.

- E3:12 We wish a Merry Christmas to Sir Michael Edwardes in Japan. We hope that a deal with Honda will bring dividends in the new year for British Leyland.
- E3:13 Peace on earth and good will among men may at times seem a forlorn hope.
- E3:14 At Christmas we remember the message of Jesus, that the peace and good will must begin in our own hearts, and must be first expressed in our dealings with our neighbour.
- E3:15 We cannot change the world easily; but we can be good to our neighbour and build up our own areas of peace and good will.
- E3:16 A Merry Christmas, then, to you all.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE4

- E4:1 The money isn't there
- E4:2 TODAY Britain could begin the 1980s with the most disastrous industrial dispute since the coal strikes of 1974.
- E4:3 A long drawn out steel strike could cripple British industry if it is accompanied by action from the train drivers to stop the movement of state steel, and by dockers to stop handling imported steel.
- E4:4 There will, however, be one important difference between a steel strike and the coal strike, not to mention the "winter of discontent" of last year. There will be no General Election this year. The Government will not fall.
- E4:5 Nor will it give in. In many ways the steel dispute is a test of the Government's nerve. The steel industry is losing around £1 million a day, yet the steelworkers are demanding a wage increase of around 17 per cent- which is the going rate of inflation.
- E4:6 The money is not there. Only if the Government printed more money, or raided the taxpayer, could more cash be produced.
- E4:7 It will not happen. Why should it? Most people's wages are limited by what their firm or industry can actually earn. Why should steelworkers occupy a privileged position?
- E4:8 Of course it is easy to understand how they feel about a prospective reduction in their living standard. It would be rough for anybody. Yet the assumption that their living standard should be maintained- as some sort of God-given right- irrespective of the real economic value of what they produce, is wholly unreal.
- E4:9 The world is not like that. And Britain has got to learn the lesson if it is ever to pull itself up again.
- E4:10 A long strike would not only damage British industry in general. It will hit the long term future of the steel industry. Some plants that close may never re-open.

E4:11 And the steelworkers? Many recent industrial disputes have shown how long it takes for workers to make up again the wages that were lost.

E4:12 In short, everybody will lose. Is it too late for rationality to come in and take over.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE5

- E5:1 The day of the picket
- E5:2 WE HAVE been promised "a long and bitter" dispute in the steel industry following the breakdown of talks. And certainly the pickets are now stopping the movement of steel wherever they can.
- E5:3 There is no moral justification for pickets stopping the movement of imported steel, or the supply of steel from private steel makers who are not involved in the dispute.
- E5:4 Indeed, there is no justification for pickets interfering with anybody going about his lawful business. But the law as it stands gives protection to those who do, if it is in furtherance of a trade dispute.
- E5:5 This curious state of affairs has to wait for the enactment of the Government's Employment Bill before picketing can be subject to reasonable restriction- namely to the striker's own place of work.
- E5:6 In the meantime, we can expect to see picketing employed ruthlessly in support of the steelworkers' industrial action.
- E5:7 Yet it seems certain that they are on to a loser. The Government, which could easily step in to provide more cash, appears to be determined to sit it out whatever the cost.
- E5:8 Bear in mind the fact that the Government has a substantial majority, and that there will be no General Election for several years, and it is clear that Mrs. Thatcher and Sir Keith Joseph can hold out for longer than can the steelworkers- provided they keep their nerve.
- E5:9 What will happen to a virtually bankrupt steel industry in the meantime is another matter.
- E5:10 How many jobs will be left when all this is over? Productivity in the steel industry may not be as low as has been made out, because the French and the Germans do the sums on a different basis from us.

E5:11 Even so, the £1,000,000-a-day losses of the British Steel Corporation show that the industry is simply not earning the money to pay the wages that are being demanded.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE8

- E8:1 Time to change the law
- E8:2 THE LAW of England is what the House of Lords says it is- it is the highest court in the country, and it has the last word.
- E8:3 But if it is lawful for the steel unions to create a strike in the private sector, where there is no real dispute, and if it is right for the unions acting in collaboration with the steel union to stop the movement of steel through the ports and across the country, then all we can say is that the law is wrong.
- E8:4 By this we do not mean that it should be disobeyed. The Daily Express recommends trade unions to obey legal rulings which go against them. We accept rulings which go against what we believe.
- E8:5 It is, however, quite consistent with obedience to the law to argue that the law should be changed in a constitutional manner.
- E8:6 The trouble is that the Government Bill which is before the House makes scarcely a dent in the vast immunities which trade unions enjoy. Nothing in the Bill will make a criminal offence the kind of obstruction which the House of Lords judges to be perfectly legal.
- E8:7 As things stand, the unions could, perfectly lawfully, mount a blockade against the country's economic life far more severe than anything imagined, let alone carried out, by Hitler's U-boats in the Second World War.
- E8:8 The brutal truth is this. To stop intimidatory picketing, secondary picketing, or blacking, requires being willing to bring trade unionists before the courts if they do not obey the law.
- E8:9 Which in turn means being willing to face a general strike.
- E8:10 All talk about "trades union reform" comes down to this. It is, in fact, the big question in our national life.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE6

- E6:1 Striking back on steel
- E6:2 THE STEEL strike seems bound to escalate with the British Steel Corporation's decision to reduce the workforce dramatically in South Wales.
- E6:3 We now face the probable involvement of the miners and other non-steel unions.
- E6:4 What started as a dispute over pay- with a settlement very nearly reached on a modest rise linked to productivity- has now widened to include the whole question of shutdowns and redundancies.
- E6:5 The Iron and Steel Confederation's original challenge to the BSC over its wage demand has developed into a TUC confrontation with the Government on its whole industrial and employment policy.
- E6:6 By agreeing to let Sir Keith Joseph and Mr. Prior hold talks with Mr. Sirs, Mrs. Thatcher has not performed a Heath-type U turn.
- E6:7 It is not so much that the Government has moved to intervene as that trade unions have widened the dispute, to include the Government.
- E6:8 Through the increasing confusion and complication of the dispute, one thing stands like a stone.
- E6:9 Because of the dramatic collapse of the world steel market and its resultant inability to pay off its debts, the Steel Corporation is, to all intents and purposes, bankrupt.
- E6:10 It simply has not got the money to pay its employees more if they do not earn their pay rises by increased productivity.
- E6:11 Nor can the Government afford to keep on subsidising industries that do not break even or make a profit.
- E6:12 The unions are surely capable of understanding the fundamental economic sense of this- and so of ending a strike that is a gift to our foreign competitors while crippling further our declining industries, like steel.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE2

- E2:1 The right choice, Sir Charles
- E2:2 THE PROPOSED elimination of 52,000 jobs in the steel industry is a shocker. It will affect all the major steel-making centres in the country, especially South Wales, where bitter memories of the grim 1930s are already being revived.
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DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA1

- MA1:1 Cold realism and hot steel
- MA1:2 THE threat of a national steel strike is folly born of despair.
- MA1:3 You have to have a balance sheet, instead of a heart, not to feel some sympathy for the men who work in this industry.
- MA1:4 No sooner had they become resigned to the disappearance of 20,000 jobs, than they are having to face the prospect of losing 32,000 more.
- MA1:5 Sometimes it must seem to them that British Steel is suffering from an especially cruel and irreversible form of the slimmers' disease anorexia nervosa.
- MA1:6 Even worse, the pay rise they are being offered is a mere 2 p.c.
- MA1:7 So Mr. Bill Sirs, the moderate leader of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, feels driven to stand and make a fight of it.
- MA1:8 But the poor chap and his 85,000 members are not even fighting with their backs to the wall. Behind them is nothing except the abyss.
- MA1:9 It is suicide. Sheer suicide.
- MA1:10 If they do succeed in shutting down the industry, losses currently running at £1 million a day will become even more cataclysmic. That, in turn, must mean even more redundancies.
- MA1:11 And what if a strike were to produce a substantial improvement in basic pay- what would be the end product of that?
- MA1:12 The same again. One steel man's pay rise would be another steel man's one-way ticket to the dole queue. They can't win.
- MA1:13 Indeed, it is by no means certain that most of Bill Sirs' members have the stomach to start so pathetic a battle. No ballot has been held.
- MA1:14 In the Blast Furnacemen's Union, where a ballot was held on whether or not there should be industrial action to protest against the partial closure of the Corby steelworks, the result was five-to-one

against.

- MA1:15 Significant also, maybe, that Mr. Moss Evans- not exactly a paragon of restraint- shows no inclination to commit his tens of thousands of men in steel to a hopeless strike.
- MA1:16 The hard truth is that there is only one way forward for British Steel: fewer men, many fewer men working more productively, far more productively.
- MA1:17 In Britain, the average steelworker produces 108 tons a year. In Germany, the figure is 200 tons, in France 180 tons.
- MA1:18 That is why the steel corporation in this country is offering its workers next to nothing on basic pay, but up to 10 p.c. extra for those who can and will work more efficiently.
- MA1:19 It would be utterly dishonest, however, not to concede that improved productivity will also create yet more redundancies in this benighted industry.
- MA1:20 For the world is in recession and already cluttered up with surplus steel nobody wants to buy.
- MA1:21 Because, when times were not so bad, successive Governments could not summon up the courage to back the tough measures required to make British Steel viable and competitive, the painful changes are having to be pushed through now, when the economic weather is foul.
- MA1:22 A national steel strike will not avert these changes. It can only render them more traumatic.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA2

MA2:1 Last chance for steel

MA2:2 UNLESS there is some last-minute agreement arrived at when they meet Sir Charles Villiers, the BSC chairman, today, the steelworkers are now committed to strike in the new year.

MA2:3 Their grievance is that British Steel's offer of a 2 p.c. rise in pay is 'unrealistic'.

MA2:4 They are quite right, but not in the sense they mean.

MA2:5 For, given the hopeless productivity of the British steelworkers, and the fact that the corporation is losing a million pounds a day, what is surely unrealistic is to offer any wage increase at all.

MA2:6 But that apart, what possible purpose will a strike in January serve? It can only result in reduced orders and, therefore, less jobs at a time when customers are few, and world steel capacity far exceeds the demand.

MA2:7 The awful truth is that nobody owes the British Steel workers a living.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA3

- MA3:1 Once more on to the cold lino
- MA3:2 HAPPY NEW YEAR? What's so happy about it, you may well ask.
- MA3:3 The immediate prospect is as enticing as cold linoleum to a bare foot.
- MA3:4 When asked to christen the infant 1980, gloomy Jim Callaghan- scarce bothering to conceal the relish of one, who now Leader of the Opposition, hopes to make political mud-pies in the rain- could think of no term more apt than 'the year of recession'.
- MA3:5 That economic prediction sounds fairly safe. And, as if to put it beyond even unreasonable doubt, along come jogging Bill Sirs and his steelmen first-footing it into New Year news bulletins with the first national steel strike since the General Strike of 1926.
- MA3:6 Already, before most men and women return to factories and offices after the long Christmas lie-in, the steel furnaces are being banked down and vast tracts of British industry are ringing the weeks on the calendar that could lead to crisis and closure by early February.
- MA3:7 There is a wintry sense of deja vu... of, 'Oh God, here we go again'.
- MA3:8 What reason have we to think that the steelmen and other desperate and determined groups of trade unionists in the early 80s will not bury Mrs. Thatcher and her hopes of regenerating Britain as surely as the miners and the local authority workers saw off Ted Heath and Jim Callaghan in the 70s?
- MA3:9 That is the question you will not find in any seasonal quiz. For there is no sure answer to it.
- MA3:10 The Daily Mail has a hunch, however, that this lady is not for burning.
- MA3:11 Her will and her nerve are of the finest. As the respected West German newspaper Die Welt says, in naming her woman of the year:-

- MA3:12 'There has never been the slightest doubt about the unswerving resolution and certain direction of this woman.'
- MA3:13 The messages she is trying to put across are neither complicated nor novel. She believes that high wages have to be earned by higher productivity; that the State should spend less, borrow less and interfere less.
- MA3:14 Most people would agree.
- MA3:15 The problem, as with New Year resolutions to drink less or to take more exercise, is not the making of them, but the keeping of them.
- MA3:16 Yet it is not unknown for men and women to go on a modest diet and to lose weight. To cut down, even give up smoking!
- MA3:17 The decisions, the discipline, the sacrifices involved for the average family in working a little harder and expecting a little less from the Welfare State are no more epic nor severe than many unremarkable alterations we make in our daily routine.
- MA3:18 Such resolution as Britain needs to make the most of the 1980s is there for the mobilising.
- MA3:19 Attitudes to all kinds of things- morals, education, women- can and do change. There is no reason why attitudes to work and welfare should not change, too.
- MA3:20 So let's drink to the 80s. They're bound to be better than they look from beneath the bedclothes tomorrow morning.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA4

- MA4:1 Champions of the downhill race
- MA4:2 HUSTLE, bustle- what a busy, busy time it is for this country's scurrying trade union leaders.
- MA4:3 Mr. Len Murray, lugubrious and self-important is here, there and everywhere.
- MA4:4 Liaison committees are being set up.
- MA4:5 Guidelines agreed.
- MA4:6 International brotherhood invoked.
- MA4:7 Savour the moment. For this is one of those rare occasions when you can witness the Great British trade union movement acting with a sense of national purpose and a will to achieve a common goal... an 'own-goal'.
- MA4:8 The wrecking of the economy.
- MA4:9 Now, in the immortal words of Prince Phillip, the brothers are 'pulling their fingers out'. They really do feel involved in the steel strike. They respond to the challenge of closing down furnaces and foundaries; of fighting to preserve unproductive jobs.
- MA4:10 Here mobilised, is a truly impressive display of that force for negative action which has the hallmark throughout the world of organised British labour. United they fail.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA11

- MA11:1 Victims crying out for justice
- MA11:2 ONE private steel firm has been driven to breaking point.
- MA11:3 Shut down by secondary strike action, Hadfields of Sheffield is losing £½ million a week. Now chairman Derek Norton says that while this crippling dispute lasts he will refuse to pay taxes and insurance to the Government worth £2 million a month.
- MA11:4 The law which smiled on the strikers would if it were put to the test almost certainly scowl on Mr. Norton.
- MA11:5 Yet no less than the innocent passer-by who is mugged, Mr. Norton and his firm are victims crying out for justice.
- MA11:6 Not only are they victims but they are also the breadwinners for the nation.
- MA11:7 It is they and their like who support the State, subsidise its welfare needs and foot the bill for its follies.
- MA11:8 Yes, it is the money squeezed out of what wealth can still be created by such private enterprise which pays for schools, hospitals, debt-ridden nationalised industries and even handouts to the families of strikers.
- MA11:9 The banners behind which our unions march still proclaim the brotherhood of man.
- MA11:10 Some brotherhood when the only solidarity they can show is to bite the hand that feeds them.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA13

- MA13:1 Steel strike widens
- MA13:2 IN an apparently desperate move to cripple the British Steel Corporation and force Sir Charles Villiers and the Government to go back to the negotiating table, the steel unions are to start picketing the customers.
- MA13:3 In addition, Mr. Moss Evans has instructed his TGWU lorry-drivers not to cross picket lines.
- MA13:4 This escalation of the strike was evidently cooked up by the TUC chiefs who are worried that the Thatcher policy of no surrender may be paying off, and that if it does, it may have a ripple effect throughout industry, reducing both their bargaining power and prestige.
- MA13:5 They have now pushed Mr. Bill Sirs- always a reluctant strike leader- on to a dangerous course.
- MA13:6 The strike, so far; has been remarkably ineffective.
- MA13:7 Is it not likely that the ingenuity which has avoided major shortages so far will continue to do so?
- MA13:8 In which case Mr. Sirs will have converted defeat into disaster. Yet, in anything but the shortest term, success for the strike could prove even more catastrophic.
- MA13:9 The more steel-users are ruined, the less demand there will be for steel when the strike is over.
- MA13:10 Those customers who survive will look around for substitutes or alternative supplies which are more reliable, so the market for British steel will be permanently reduced and more jobs will be on the scrapheap.
- MA13:11 As for Mr. Moss Evans, it is typical of his blundering incompetence to put his union in the firing-line in a venture of such doubtful outcome.
- MA13:12 Will his own drivers obey him- they have to eat too- or are there enough independent lorry owner-drivers for it not to make much difference whether they do or not?

- MA13:13 Almost without realising what they are about the TUC chiefs are now embarked on a mini-general strike from which members have almost nothing to gain and much to lose.
- MA13:14 We must hope that despite this raising of the temperature of the strike, the steel bosses and Tory Ministers alike will keep their cool and their nerve.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA5

- MA5:1 At last Sir Keith is put to the test
- MA5:2 THE Government will not intervene in the steel strike. And yesterday, with Parliament back in business, Sir Keith Joseph explained why there are to be no beer and sandwiches this side of the industrial grave.
- MA5:3 His arguments were bleak and convincing.
- MA5:4 At present, other British workers, through their taxes, are providing £1,800 in subsidy a year for every steelworker in employment. This simply cannot go on.
- MA5:5 The Steel Corporation are now effectively offering 12 p.c. plus in increased pay tied to improvements in productivity.
- MA5:6 Sir Keith Joseph is not saying that this is a final offer or an offer that cannot be juggled or jiggled or stretched. What he is saying is that The Government is not going to promote the juggling, jiggling or stretching.
- MA5:7 So there must be no 'independent inquiry' set up by the Government. No reference to the Clegg Commission on pay comparability. No discreet undermining of Sir Charles Villiers.
- MA5:8 For many years, Sir Keith has preached. Now he must practice the most exquisite form of torturing self-discipline known to modern British political man.
- MA5:9 He must sit on his hands immobile hour after hour, day after day, week after week and, it may be, month after month, while the industrial crisis grinds on. What he must on no account do- and nobody understands it more profoundly than the anguished guru of Mrs. Thatcher's Government- is plunge his hands into the public purse to buy off the strikers.
- MA5:10 The phoney skirmishing is over. The real test of will between the unions and this new Government, which happens to be Tory, has begun.

MIRROR COMMENTMR1

- MR1:1 Men of steel
- MR1:2 IT's not just a two per cent wage rise the steel-workers are being offered. With today's price increases it's also a 15 per cent cut in their standard of living.
- MR1:3 And that's for those lucky enough to keep their jobs.
- MR1:4 Communities dependent upon steel are being devastated by closures. Corby, Shotton, Scunthorpe, Cleveland, Consett, Port Talbot and Llanwern fear mass unemployment.
- MR1:5 The Steel Corporation chairman, Sir Charles Villiers- who doesn't have a redundancy problem-says: "It is not possible to protect trade unionists from reality".
- MR1:6 Maybe not. But for 50,000 men whose jobs are going that sounds like the skipper saying: "The ship's sinking. Throw some more men overboard."
- MR1:7 They see Sir Charles agreeing with the Government to end a £300 million a year loss within a few months- and doing it at their expense.
- MR1:8 They see another loss-making industry, coal, offering miners 20 per cent more. They see derisory cuts in the Civil Service which mean that no one will actually lose a job.
- MR1:9 They see the Cabinet pursuing irrelevant changes in trade union law while production falls unhindered and unemployment rises unchecked.
- MR1:10 They see it and they think it unfair. Despite their fears about the future they regard a two per cent wage offer as a final insult.
- MR1:11 That's why we're faced with the threat of a national steel strike from January 2.

MIRROR COMMENTMR2

- MR2:1 Duty calls, Sir Charles
- MR2:2 THE British Steel Corporation plan for survival will mean disaster for a third of its workforce and the communities in which they live.
- MR2:3 The decision to sack 53,000 men within eight months instead of two years will make it impossible for most of them to find alternative work.
- MR2:4 Parts of South Wales, the North-East and Scotland will know unemployment at levels not seen since the 1930s.
- MR2:5 The sackings and closures will cost the Corporation £250 million. With luck, it will save the Corporation a loss of £300 million a year.

Critical

- MR2:6 But the cost of keeping men in employment will be transferred to social security, to keep them in unemployment.
- MR2:7 Sir Charles Villiers, the Corporation's chairman, said yesterday that the industry faces a critical situation, its "grimmiest moment". He had to "do his duty".
- MR2:8 Duty to whom? To the industry, which has gone from bad to terrible under his chairmanship? To the workers, whom he is abandoning? To the taxpayers, who will still foot the bill in the end? Or to the Government, which has told him what to do?
- MR2:9 When Sir Charles is doing his duty, shouldn't he consider including himself among the 53,000 who are going to lose their jobs? Or is that too much to expect?

MIRROR COMMENTMR3

- MR3:1 Time to talk
- MR3:2 THE steel strike which nobody wants and which the country can't afford will have to be settled around the negotiating table sooner or later.
- MR3:3 Sooner is better.
- MR3:4 Sir Charles Villiers, who has chaired British Steel deeper and deeper into disaster, is at least right about that.
- MR3:5 The dispute began because the workers were offered a two per cent rise. That was it. Final. No more.
- MR3:6 Then two per cent became five, with conditions. Then six with a hint of seven. PLUS another 10. or 11 per cent through local productivity deals.
- MR3:7 Suddenly two per cent looks like 16 or 17 per cent.
- MR3:8 If that is what it is- and especially if British Steel offers something on account for higher productivity- then it IS worth talking about. The unions should ask to see Sir Charles today.
- MR3:9 With 52,000 jobs being lost in steel this year the unions will want to know how many more men must go to pay for the rises of those who stay. Then they must decide whether the price is too high.
- MR3:10 For its part, the Government must come clean about its policy for loss-making state-owned industries. Because in the end the decisions on pay are its decisions.
- MR3:11 If two per cent was the original limit for the steel men why were the miners offered 20 per cent?
- MR3:12 And what about the railways? Like coal and steel they lose money. How much is British Rail going to be allowed to offer the engine drivers?

MIRROR COMMENTMR5

- MR5:1 So why pick on steel?
- MR5:2 THE worst is happening in steel. The Government won't do anything to end the strike and the management and unions are settling down to make it a long one.
- MR5:3 Sir Keith Joseph said yesterday that if the Steel Corporation offered more money without more productivity, "workers in other industries would have to go on subsidising workers in steel".
- MR5:4 The logic is undoubtedly right. Higher wages without higher productivity means higher prices or higher taxation.
- MR5:5 But why single out steel?
- MR5:6 Was the miner's 20 per cent rise paid for out of higher productivity? Or the local government workers' 13 per cent? Will the offer of 14 per cent to the civil servants be paid for by cutting costs.
- MR5:7 At the start of this dispute the steelworkers would have settled for any of those rises. Instead, they had an offer raised in dribs and drabs. Two per cent here, three per cent there, plus another one or two and then a further four. All on strict conditions.
- MR5:8 The Government says it isn't intervening in the steel strike. But by cutting off the Corporation's money it prevented a settlement. That's intervening.
- MR5:9 It didn't do the same to the Coal Board or the local councils. It isn't doing the same for its own workers.
- MR5:10 Its policy can't always be right. Or even always wrong. But at least it ought to be consistent.

MIRROR COMMENTMR4

MR4:1 Blunder bosses

MR4:2 THE steel strike will have to be settled eventually on terms not much different from those which are "unacceptable" today.

MR4:3 The Steel Corporation may be compelled to add a bit more to its "final" offer. The unions may have to retreat another step beyond their last ditch.

MR4:4 But whatever the concessions and whoever makes them, they won't compensate for the damage that a prolonged strike will do.

MR4:5 The Corporation has so far blundered at every step. First, with its two per cent wage offer, coming immediately after the announcement that 52,000 men were to lose their jobs.

Sensible

MR4:6 Finally, in rejecting the TUC promise to monitor the new productivity deals and to send in teams to straighten out any that weren't working.

MR4:7 That offer was unique. Had it succeeded it would have been a triumph for British industry. Had it failed, the blame would have rested with the TUC.

MR4:8 It was a sensible way out. But the Corporation didn't see it and so it didn't make it.

MR4:9 But it is still a way out. Still worth discussing. The talking ought not to stop.

MR4:10 Because the only alternative is a battle which will do more harm to Britain than a complacent Government imagines.

MR4:11 Harm much greater than the benefits to anyone.

THE SUN SAYSS1

- S1:1 Call it off
- S1:2 A NEW survey shows that seven out of ten British workers would think twice about making huge pay claims if they thought their companies would suffer badly.
- S1:3 More and more people are learning that in many cases big wage demands mean fewer jobs.
- S1:4 So why are the steel union leaders so hell-bent on calling out their 90,000 members?
- S1:5 This national steel strike threatened for the New Year- the first since 1926- is in support of a pay claim of 20 per cent.
- S1:6 It would add £240 million more to the wages bill.
- S1:7 Yet the state-owned British Steel Corporation already expects losses of more than £300 million this year.
- S1:8 And because of dwindling markets and the need to streamline the industry, there are plans to axe 50,000 jobs and close several plants.
- S1:9 So while steel workers' are disgruntled because the miners are getting 20 per cent, their own 2 per cent is not as bad as it seems.
- S1:10 Productivity bonuses of up to 10 per cent are available to steel workers in many areas.

Vital

- S1:11 Higher productivity is vital, since Britain's steel men produce only about half as much per man as workers in the Germany steel industry.
- S1:12 Let the union chiefs get back to the negotiating table without delay.
- S1:13 A prolonged strike would do massive harm to British industry generally.
- S1:14 It would be fatal to the job prospects of the steel workers.

THE SUN SAYSS2

S2:1 Off the rails

S2:2 BRITAIN'S railmen threaten to black steel imports if our own steelmen go on strike.

S2:3 OF COURSE, there is sympathy for the 50,000 steelworkers who are to lose their jobs.

S2:4 OF COURSE, it is understandable that a two per cent increase should be regarded as derisory when inflation is above 17 per cent.

S2:5 But the fact is that the steel industry cannot afford even one per cent. It is already £300 million in the red.

Appalling

S2:6 This has happened partly because there is a world recession in steel.

S2:7 But also for the far more important reason that the performance of the steelworkers is appalling.

S2:8 Despite a massive programme of investment, each British steelworker produces only about half the output of a French or German worker.

S2:9 Japanese workers produce THREE TIMES as much steel per man-hour as our own.

S2:10 And the blame falls chiefly on the steel unions, with their restrictive practices and their stubborn insistence on massive over-manning.

Realism

S2:11 Sooner or later, realism will have to dawn in our steel industry.

S2:12 It makes no sense at all for the railmen to help postpone the inevitable day of reckoning.

S2:13 In the past, the National Union of Railwaymen, under Mr. Sidney Weighell, has often shown moderation and responsibility in its own demands.

S2:14 Do these sensible, moderate men really want to go to the wall in defence of the indefensible?

THE SUN SAYSS4

S4:1 Earn it first

S4:2 STEEL UNION chief Mr. Bill Sirs is being even dafter than usual to suggest that his workers might call off the strike if they received their "productivity" money NOW.

S4:3 Christmas is over. Santa Claus has returned to the North Pole for another year.

S4:4 If words are to mean anything at all, productivity bonuses have to be EARNED- by higher productivity.

S4:5 Industry Secretary Sir Keith Joseph has expressed the belief that the British steelworkers are as good as any in the world.

S4:6 There is previous little evidence to support his view.

S4:7 Despite higher investment than in almost any other country- £4,000 million over six years- our steelmen still produce per man only half the output of their Japanese, German and American rivals.

S4:8 Mr. Sirs should send his men back to work to EARN their bonuses. And to prove that Sir Keith's faith is justified.

THE SUN SAYSS3

- S3:1 Stop this madness
- S3:2 THE SUN has an urgent message to the steel unions before they plunge Britain into industrial chaos.
- S3:3 Stop this madness and start talking.
- S3:4 THE LAST thing we want is government intervention, as labour MPs demand.
- S3:5 That really means printing money. An extravagant step for an industry approaching bankruptcy.
- S3:6 And WE all know where THAT leads.
- S3:7 To higher INFLATION, fewer JOBS, greater TAXATION.
- S3:8 Instead the unions must start talking about how best to take the limited amount of cash the British Steel Corporation can offer.
- S3:9 It isn't much.
- S3:10 How could it be when the productivity of British steel workers is so much worse than that of steelmen abroad?
- S3:11 There is ample room for a dramatic improvement in the industry's performance.
- S3:12 Its equipment is as technologically advanced as any in Europe.
- S3:13 There is no valid reason why British steel workers should not raise their output to the level of our overseas competitors.
- S3:14 That way, they can boost their wage packets and save some of the thousands of jobs that would be lost in the wake of a prolonged strike.
- S3:15 But if the strike does go ahead the unions must be clear about one thing.

Challenge

- S3:16 While the country cannot afford this dispute, it can afford EVEN LESS to use taxpayers' money to meet their unrealistic demands.

- S3:17 This will be the first big challenge to Mrs. Thatcher's government from powerful trade unions in a state industry.
- S3:18 Ministers must mean it when they say that it is up to the employers and the workforce to solve their own problems.
- S3:19 Let them show that the bad old days of buying off strikes with bags of unearned money have gone for ever.

THE SUN SAYSS14

S14:1 Diamond Jim

S14:2 THROUGHOUT the steel strike Her Majesty's Opposition have been downright unhelpful.

S14:3 That applies especially to their titular leader, Jim Callaghan.

S14:4 Last month he suggested that he could end the dispute in days. He did not say how. But we all guessed. He would have handed a bagful of gold to the strikers.

S14:5 Now he confirms those suspicions.

S14:6 What matter, he asks, if we DO add another £20 million or so to the national debt?

S14:7 It would be a mere drop in the ocean.

S14:8 And how did we get this ocean in the first place? It is made up of drops. Drops dribbled out by Diamond Jim and his cronies.

S14:9 It was Callaghan and Co. who dug a pit for Britain by granting enormous, inflationary pay awards to win favour with the unions- or to buy off blackmail- while mouthing platitudes about pay policy.

S14:10 It was because he spent OUR money like a drunken sailor that Mr. Callaghan was turfed out of office.

S14:11 Like the Bourbons, he has clearly learned nothing from his fall.

THE SUN SAYSS13

S13:1 Steel sense

S13:2 THE LATEST idea for ending the steel dispute is to set up a court of inquiry.

S13:3 We can see nothing to be gained from such a course.

S13:4 A court of inquiry would be just another way of taking decisions away from the people who should be making them: the steel bosses and the unions.

S13:5 The Government- in particular the Prime Minister and Sir Keith Joseph- are insisting on no intervention.

S13:6 Gone, they say, are the days when Whitehall was willing to play fairy godmother to the workers, forcing employers to grant settlements they could not afford.

S13:7 A court of inquiry would be simply intervention by the back-door, with some Left-wing professor indulging his pet financial theories and sociological aims.

S13:8 On past performance, the strikers would be handed all they wanted. Maybe more.

S13:9 And the Government's whole industrial strategy would be in ruins.

THE SUN SAYSS8

- S8:1 The only way
- S8:2 SOMETIMES the public utterances of Industry Secretary Sir Keith Joseph are more noteworthy for their sincerity than for their clarity.
- S8:3 But his message on the steel strike has been clear and consistent.
- S8:4 There are only two ways in which the steelmen can get more money.
- S8:5 EITHER they fund the rises themselves, by increased productivity.
- S8:6 OR the taxpayer coughs up yet more money.
- S8:7 Note, the taxpayer. Us, that is. NOT the Government. The Government has no money.
- S8:8 In the current financial year the steel industry will swallow £324,000,000 of OUR money.
- S8:9 Or, to put it another way, the rest of us are already paying a subsidy of £1,800 a year, or £35 a week, to every man employed in the industry.
- S8:10 Yet steelmen already earn £10 a week more than the national average. The productivity deals now on offer would raise their average earnings to a sizeable £124.
- S8:11 True, they DID increase productivity by eight per cent in 1978. But that was LESS than the increase in France or West Germany- where it was twice as high to begin with.
- S8:12 Of course, everyone wants a speedy settlement to a strike which is inflicting great and growing damage on the nation.
- S8:13 But not at any price.
- S8:14 The widespread delusion- shared, apparently, by Jim Callaghan- that we can solve every problem by paying up is a dangerous nonsense.
- S8:15 Fortunately, more and more people are beginning to recognise that it is necessary for us to EARN our living. That printing money is no solution.

S8:16 The steel strike, traumatic as it is, seems as good a place as any from which to begin the journey back to sanity.

THE SUN SAYSS5

S5:1 Steel tragedy

S5:2 THE FAILURE of the steel talks is a tragedy. For the steelmen. For the industry. For Britain.

S5:3 It is difficult not to have sympathy with both sides in the dispute- though neither can escape its share of the blame.

S5:4 THE STEELMEN have seen their position in the wages league being gradually eroded.

S5:5 They have seen state-subsidised miners win 20 per cent increases.

S5:6 And they have been told that only a wholly self-financing wages deal is open to them.

S5:7 They must see that their demand for guaranteed "production" bonuses in advance is absurd.

S5:8 Yet it is easy to understand their resentment.

S5:9 THE STEEL CORPORATION, on the other hand, have an even stronger case- though it has been put with monumental ineptitude.

Waffling

S5:10 First they offered two per cent. Then six. Then eight. Then eight plus four for three months, while local deals were being negotiated.

S5:11 Yesterday, Sir Charles Villiers, the Corporation's chairman, was waffling on about a new "minimum" rate of £122.

S5:12 If all these options were open, why on earth were they not put to the men weeks ago?

S5:13 But no amount of official ineptitude can disguise the brutal facts...

S5:14 The industry is losing money at the rate of something like a million pounds A DAY.

S5:15 On the very day the talks break down, devastating figures are produced showing that productivity in two Japanese steel plants last year was up to SIX TIMES greater than in Britain.

- S5:16 The British industry has not lacked for investment.
- S5:17 In the past six years £4,000 million of state cash-
OUR CASH- has flowed into it.
- S5:18 If we accept- as The Sun DOES accept- that
British steelworkers are not all bone-idle, there
are only two possible explanations for the current
state of the industry:
- S5:19 ONE: That far too many people are employed in it,
and
- S5:20 TWO: That there are far too many restrictive
practices.
- S5:21 Putting up the price of steel is no solution. The
world is awash with the stuff.
- S5:22 In the end, the unions will have to move out of
Never-Never Land...
- S5:23 TO ACCEPT that it is no longer sensible to live now
and pay later.
- S5:24 TO RECOGNISE that increased prosperity for the
industry and the nation can come only through drastic
pruning and drastic reforms.

Damage

- S5:25 Sooner or later they will be FORCED to accept these
things.
- S5:26 Meanwhile, they are losing money, customers and
valuable goodwill.
- S5:27 They are further damaging their capacity to compete
and their own long-term employment prospects, and
further delaying the day when the industry at last
becomes viable.

APPENDIX THREE

This is the appendix to chapter four.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE12

- E12:1 THIS WAS the scene at Hadfield yesterday where 1,200 pickets, many led by Yorkshire miner's leader Arthur Scargill, frightened the workforce of Britain's largest steelworks back on strike.
- E12:2 Mr. Dan Norton, Chairman of the Sheffield firm, said: "Intimidation and anarchy have won a total victory".
- E12:3 A Hadfield's convener said: "Loss of life has nothing to do with the trade union movement. But after all we have been through today it became obvious lives may be lost".

PROTECTION

- E12:4 "We were determined to continue working. But we were told that if we did there would be 2,000 pickets tomorrow. I would challenge anyone to go through that picket line and face what we went through today."
- E12:5 His experience, Mr. Pussyfoot Prior, is why the people of this country voted you and your party into office. They want protection. They want a law to defend them against intimidation... from flying pickets like these.
- E12:6 You have the mandate to act. Unless you listen to the people who put you in office, your whole Government may become obsolete.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE13

- E13:1 The power of the pickets
- E13:2 OBVIOUSLY frustrated by the fact that the miners voted for a settlement rather than a strike this year, Arthur Scargill and now Mick McGahey are keen to satisfy their thirst for industrial action by getting into the steel strike.
- E13:3 The flying pickets which were successful at Hadfield's last Thursday, this week threaten to descend on the Sheerness Steel Company in Kent, Manchester Steel and the Bidston plant in Birkenhead.
- E13:4 And the name of the game is bullying and intimidation. The function of the police, apart from catching wrongdoers, is to enable law-abiding citizens to go about their business in peace.
- E13:5 Are we to accept that when it comes to industrial disputes none of this applies?
- E13:6 The Tory Government, among other things, was elected to maintain law and order.
- E13:7 Nor is it any use Mr. Prior talking about laws against secondary picketing which will be on the Statute Book by the summer.
- E13:8 Massive intimidatory picketing blatantly violates the law as it already stands.
- E13:9 The only legal right pickets have is to inform and persuade peacefully.
- E13:10 Nobody pretends that this is what is going on now.
- E13:11 If necessary, chief constables should be told that they are expected to carry out this basic police duty, as did the Metropolitan Police in the case of Grunwick.
- E13:12 If necessary, the Public Order Act can be toughened up, or, as Mr. Jon Gorst has suggested, the law which forbids people to hold demonstrations outside polling stations at General Elections can be applied to industrial disputes.

DAILY EXPRESS. OPINIONE14

- E14:1 LORD HAILSHAM has made it clear that mobs who stand outside factory gates calling themselves pickets but behaving like gangsters are in violation of the existing law.
- E14:2 There is no immunity for them. None of the laws which bestow such wide-ranging immunities upon trade unions give a licence for thuggery.
- E14:3 So if the criminal law is being blatantly violated in the context of an industrial dispute, the duty of the police is to enforce the law—no more and no less than in any other situation.
- E14:4 Violence or intimidation aside, where at least the law is clear, the question remains about the usefulness of Mr. Prior's Employment Bill when it comes to secondary picketing.
- E14:5 He has rejected criminal sanctions. Was that really as wise and statesmanlike as he likes to think? In our view he has made the wrong choice and his policy will fail unless it is drastically strengthened.
- E14:6 Certainly the idea of suing actual pickets, or seeking injunctions against them, is frankly ludicrous. The boss would have to find out their names and addresses:
- E14:7 "Excuse me sir, can you give me your name and address so that I might seek an injunction against you in the High Court?"
- E14:8 "I'm the Duke of Wellington gov. You can get me at the House of Lords."
- E14:9 Of course, even if you get an injunction one picket can be replaced by another. No, the employer will sue the union organiser. And there you come up against a would be martyr.
- E14:10 Moreover, union organisers in general could well issue orders for secondary picketing to cease only to have their orders defied by the militants.
- E14:11 Then you are back to talking to the 'Duke of Wellington' or the 'Prince of Wales'.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE10

- E10:1 Stop pussyfooting. Mr. Prior, time is running out
- E10:2 HOW CAN the Tory Government hope to make Britain great if it cannot make it work?
- E10:3 It's about time that they realised that they have a mandate for tough, direct action to solve the jungle of industrial relations- and to stop pussyfooting around with meek and mild policies.
- E10:4 They must show that they are prepared to do the job the country asked them to do.
- E10:5 It is no good Sir Keith Joseph saying that the management and the unions should get together and settle their differences. How can they when the management faces an unequal battle against union strength?
- E10:6 It is no good when he blocks a pay offer to the steelmen that would have averted a strike because, he claims, it would have increased inflation.
- E10:7 What has he got now? 17 per cent bank rate and a national steel strike that is going to cost each and everyone of us a damn sight more.
- E10:8 Jim Prior, afraid to take the firm steps that would strengthen the hand of the law, refuses to outlaw secondary picketing.
- E10:9 This was a battle fought by this newspaper last year. And, as we said in 1977, the Government must give the management the right to manage and the workers the right to work.
- E10:10 The Government came to power nine months ago with radical ideas for changing our fortunes. They have accomplished very little. A tight-money, free enterprise policy is the right one but it won't work unless the industrial relations problem has been dealt with.
- E10:11 The mistake the Tories made was to embark on a monetary policy before tackling industrial relations.
- E10:12 Look at their record. Public expenditure and borrowing have not been cut. They have increased. So has the rate of inflation. So has the interest rate.

Don't squander the chance

- E10:13 We do not ask Mrs. Thatcher to weaken because we cannot take the heat. We will take a lot more heat if we feel the Government is really getting to grips with things and is prepared to ride a great storm if necessary. We will join the ride.
- E10:14 The deep and real fear among many who supported the Tories at the last election is that the first precious two years of office- the time for ruthless actions- will be squandered by the softly, softly approach in practice, together with tough sounding speeches which mean nothing.
- E10:15 During the war Churchill would put on top of urgent memos the words "action this day". He was not interested in excuses of people who would not be hurried.
- E10:16 Well, Britain is fighting a war now- against trade union power, against inflation, against restrictive practices, against low productivity and ill discipline, against decline.
- E10:17 There is a need for urgency and dispatch at the top. Why are we waiting?

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE8

- E8:1 Time to change the law
- E8:2 THE LAW of England is what the House of Lords says it is- it is the highest court in the country, and it has the last word.
- E8:3 But if it is lawful for the steel unions to create a strike in the private sector, where there is no real dispute, and if it is right for the unions acting in collaboration with the steel union to stop the movement of steel through the ports and across the country, then all we can say is that the law is wrong.
- E8:4 By this we do not mean that it should be disobeyed. The Daily Express recommends trade unions to obey legal rulings which go against them. We accept rulings which go against what we believe.
- E8:5 It is, however, quite consistent with obedience to the law to argue that the law should be changed in a constitutional manner.
- E8:6 The trouble is that the Government Bill which is before the House makes scarcely a dent in the vast immunities which trade unions enjoy. Nothing in the Bill will make a criminal offence the kind of obstruction which the House of Lords judges to be perfectly legal.
- E8:7 As things stand, the unions could, perfectly lawfully, mount a blockade against the country's economic life far more severe than anything imagined, let alone carried out, by Hitler's U-boats in the Second World War.
- E8:8 The brutal truth is this. To stop intimidatory picketing, secondary picketing, or blacking, requires being willing to bring trade unionists before the courts if they do not obey the law.
- E8:9 Which in turn means being willing to face a general strike.
- E8:10 All talk about "trades union reform" comes down to this. It is, in fact, the big question in our national life.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE7

E7:1 Law and strikers

E7:2 IN a confused legal situation the latest ruling has to be accepted as the authoritative one.

E7:3 So unless the House of Lords overrules Lord Denning's Court of Appeal, the court's ruling on the steel strike must be accepted. Which means the steel unions must call off strike action in the private sector, and the trade union ban on the movement of steel must be lifted.

E7:4 Of course, the present situation was tailor-made for Arthur Scargill, the Yorkshire miners' leader. This desperately ambitious man, with his thirst for personal publicity, can hardly be expected to neglect an opportunity to cast himself in the role of trade union hero- even martyr.

E7:5 So he places himself on the rhetorical barricades, demanding defiance of the Court of Appeal. He asserts that workers should pay more attention to their trade union than to the court.

E7:6 No other country in the world entertains such a curious doctrine. We may be sure that if he were in charge of Britain "King" Arthur would take a dim view of anybody who defied his rulings.

E7:7 The real point is that if individuals, or organisations such as trade unions or companies are going to decide what laws to obey and what not, then we will live in a state of anarchy.

E7:8 The law is there to be obeyed until or unless it is changed in a proper constitutional manner.

E7:9 It would be helpful if the Leader of the Opposition, James Callaghan, were to throw his own weight behind the law. Or will Labour out of office connive at lawlessness as it has done before?

E7:10 What is most important is that the Government's own legislation should be strengthened, clarified, and pushed through without delay.

E7:11 So that the Denning version of the law is laid down in black and white, unambiguously, on the Statute Book.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE9

- E9:1 Freedom vs the unions
- E9:2 AS THE steel strike drags on and involves more and more people, it is starkly obvious that the Government's present plans are pathetically inadequate to deal with the situation.
- E9:3 The Bill going through the Commons would make no difference to the ability of the steel unions to extend the dispute to the private sector, it would not stop other unions from stopping the movement of foreign steel into and across the country.
- E9:4 Perhaps the amendments which the Government will put forward this week will do something about these points.
- E9:5 We hope so, although it must be said that Mr. Jim Prior in his anxiety to play the role of conciliator, holds out no great hopes.
- E9:6 Yet if the Government fails to find a way to curb the abuse of trade union power it will have failed on one of the fundamental issues upon which it was elected, and upon which it has the support of the overwhelming majority in the country.
- E9:7 In these circumstances, there can be no excuses. The work has got to be done on the immunities that trade unions enjoy.
- E9:8 As things stand they can do virtually anything they like if, in their opinion, it is "in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute".
- E9:9 Lord Denning has tried to make some inroads into this principle, but the Lords have overruled him.
- E9:10 And all the Government is proposing to do is to remove immunities from secondary picketing without doing anything serious about intimidatory secondary picketing, provide public money for secret ballots, which will not be compulsory, by the way, and to give greater compensation to victims of the closed shop without abolishing it.
- E9:11 It is peanuts. As with public spending the Government will be getting all the brickbats from the vested interests they are assaulting, but without the benefits from having done a thorough job.
- E9:12 It is not too late to think again. It will be soon.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE4

- E4:1 The money isn't there
- E4:2 TODAY Britain could begin the 1980s with the most disastrous industrial dispute since the coal strikes of 1974.
- E4:3 A long drawn out steel strike could cripple British industry if it is accompanied by action from the train drivers to stop the movement of state steel, and by dockers to stop handling imported steel.
- E4:4 There will, however, be one important difference between a steel strike and the coal strike, not to mention the "winter of discontent" of last year. There will be no General Election this year. The Government will not fall.
- E4:5 Nor will it give in. In many ways the steel dispute is a test of the Government's nerve. The steel industry is losing around £1 million a day, yet the steelworkers are demanding a wage increase of around 17 per cent- which is the going rate of inflation.
- E4:6 The money is not there. Only if the Government printed more money, or raided the taxpayer, could more cash be produced.
- E4:7 It will not happen. Why should it? Most people's wages are limited by what their firm or industry can actually earn. Why should steelworkers occupy a privileged position?
- E4:8 Of course it is easy to understand how they feel about a prospective reduction in their living standard. It would be rough for anybody. Yet the assumption that their living standard should be maintained- as some sort of God-given right- irrespective of the real economic value of what they produce, is wholly unreal.
- E4:9 The world is not like that. And Britain has got to learn the lesson if it is ever to pull itself up again.
- E4:10 A long strike would not only damage British industry in general. It will hit the long term future of the steel industry. Some plants that close may never re-open.

E4:11 And the steelworkers? Many recent industrial
disputes have shown how long it takes for
workers to make up again the wages that were
lost.

E4:12 In short, everybody will lose. Is it too late
for rationality to come in and take over.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE5

- E5:1 The day of the picket
- E5:2 WE HAVE been promised "a long and bitter" dispute in the steel industry following the breakdown of talks. And certainly the pickets are now stopping the movement of steel wherever they can.
- E5:3 There is no moral justification for pickets stopping the movement of imported steel, or the supply of steel from private steel makers who are not involved in the dispute.
- E5:4 Indeed, there is no justification for pickets interfering with anybody going about his lawful business. But the law as it stands gives protection to those who do, if it is in furtherance of a trade dispute.
- E5:5 This curious state of affairs has to wait for the enactment of the Government's Employment Bill before picketing can be subject to reasonable restriction- namely to the striker's own place of work.
- E5:6 In the meantime, we can expect to see picketing employed ruthlessly in support of the steelworkers' industrial action.
- E5:7 Yet it seems certain that they are on to a loser. The Government, which could easily step in to provide more cash, appears to be determined to sit it out whatever the cost.
- E5:8 Bear in mind the fact that the Government has a substantial majority, and that there will be no General Election for several years, and it is clear that Mrs. Thatcher and Sir Keith Joseph can hold out for longer than can the steelworkers- provided they keep their nerve.
- E5:9 What will happen to a virtually bankrupt steel industry in the meantime is another matter.
- E5:10 How many jobs will be left when all this is over? Productivity in the steel industry may not be as low as has been made out, because the French and the Germans do the sums on a different basis from us.

E5:11 Even so, the £1,000,000-a-day losses of the British Steel Corporation show that the industry is simply not earning the money to pay the wages that are being demanded.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE15

- E15:1 How to get nowhere
- E15:2 "SOFTLY Softly catchee monkey" may be a good motto if, in the end, you catch something, but Pussyfoot Prior is catching nobody or nothing in his consultative paper".
- E15:3 What a pathetic show. He proposes to narrow union immunities "with regard to secondary action", but not when it comes to "first suppliers or customers" of the firms in the dispute.
- E15:4 Feeling confused? So are we. What it boils down to is that when secondary industrial action is "remote" from the original action (in the opinion of whom?) then an employer will be able to seek an injunction or damages from the people who are doing it.
- E15:5 So the employer will be able to sue the union will he? Well no, he will be able to sue named individuals.
- E15:6 What is more, the type of secondary action we have seen in the steel dispute will be for the most part O.K. in law so far as Mr. Prior is concerned.
- E15:7 Despite overwhelming public demand for an end to the do-as-we- please union arrogance and tyranny, despite the fact that the Tories gained office last May to a large extent on the promise to do something effective about the abuse of union power, as the Americans say: "We've got plenty of nothin".
- E15:8 Why? It is clear that Mr. Prior does not want to do anything about the unions. If he did, he would remove legal immunity for action in favour of a closed shop, he would make the unions themselves and their funds liable at law in cases of secondary picketing. And he would remove immunities for all secondary action.
- E15:9 Again why? Because Mr. Prior is afraid that anything effective would provoke the unions into a General Strike. And he does not know how to deal with that.
- E15:10 In truth, counsels of fear or timidity are never a good guide to action. If there must be a showdown with the unions, then the sooner we face it the better.

E15:11 Mr. Prior's petty blows will annoy them without hurting them. Which is a recipe for defeat and disgrace.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA6

- MA6:1 These laws are as clear as mud
- MA6:2 LORD DENNING is a very great lawyer. But his leading Appeal Court judgment on the steel strike shows that there is a limit to the good sense that even he can extract from bad law.
- MA6:3 With his views, as such, we have no quarrel. They are a splendid embodiment of the popular will. Secondary picketing is a thoroughly nasty practice. The overwhelming majority of men and women, in and out of trade unions, do detest it and want to see it outlawed.
- MA6:4 The extension of the steel strike to workers in the private steel firms is an excessive and authoritarian abuse of union power. These men have no quarrel with their own employers. They are not party to any dispute with the British Steel Corporation. Most of them do not want to strike. And there has been no union attempt to ballot their opinions.
- MA6:5 The jump, however, from condemnation to legal judgment does appear to be one of the most audacious the Master of the Rolls has ever made.
- MA6:6 Tory plans to make secondary picketing illegal have not yet reached the statute book.
- MA6:7 Lord Denning's judgment on when is a trade dispute not a trade dispute sounds to be in flat contradiction to the majority ruling of the Law Lords only a month or so back.
- MA6:8 His supporting argument that the steel unions have gone beyond the terms of a simple trade dispute by striking at the Government would be more compelling if it were not the Government which ultimately controls the purse strings of this debt-ridden nationalised industry.
- MA6:9 For the moment, what Lord Denning and his two fellow Appeal Court judges have declared to be the law is, indeed, the law. Until and unless the Lords find otherwise, it must be obeyed by all the citizens in the land.

- MA6:10 For the future, this Tory Government must both strengthen and more speedily implement plans for responsible union reform.
- MA6:11 They can't leave it all to Lord Denning. However tireless his efforts, the existing laws, on which he seeks to ground limits to overweening trade union power, have the solidity of quicksand and the clarity of activated sludge.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA7

MA7:1 Intimidation

MA7:2 INTIMIDATION has triumphed, however temporarily, at Hadfields. You can no more convince most men and women in this country that Arthur Scargill and his irregulars were peaceful pickets than you could persuade them that Hitler's stormtroopers were a butch contingent of the Salvation Army.

MA7:3 Public opinion is outraged by such scenes.

MA7:4 Prior's law must be strong enough to defend the liberties of both workers and management at beleaguered firms like Hadfields.

MA7:5 If the Tories now place anything less on the statute book in 1980 they will be abdicating their responsibilities.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA8

- MA8:1 Mobsters at the factory gates
- MA8:2 MORE trade union thuggery is planned for this week.
- MA8:3 Mass assaults are threatened against those private steel companies and their independent-minded employees, who are still refusing to come to heel.
- MA8:4 This is not picketing. It is gangsterism.
- MA8:5 It is a deliberate attempt to terrorise men, who want to work, into joining the strike.
- MA8:6 Hadfields of Sheffield was not closed down last week by peaceful persuasion, nor by an appeal for union solidarity.
- MA8:7 It was battered into surrender by blatant intimidation.
- MA8:8 The scenes outside Hadfields were sinister, ugly and criminal.
- MA8:9 In as clear an invitation to arrest and prosecute that any Lord Chancellor could give to chief constables, Lord Hailsham yesterday uttered these trenchant and timely words:-
- MA8:10 'Let no one suppose that intimidation is legal. Let no one suppose that what we have seen on television again and again is legal under the existing law. These are breaches of the criminal law. Intimidation is unlawful and violence can amount to an affray.'
- MA8:11 Even in 'furtherance of a trade dispute', intimidation is intimidation and enjoys no immunity under existing English law.
- MA8:12 It is not as if we were dealing here with riots fuelled by spontaneous fury.
- MA8:13 Stormtrooper miners from Yorkshire, for example (and what an example), are scarcely men crazed by hardship or driven to extremes by empty bellies.
- MA8:14 They are well-heeled and well-fed.

- MA8:15 While they take time off work down the pits to do a little intimidating, they draw meal allowance and money in lieu of wages.
- MA8:16 And where does the money come from? Union funds.
- MA8:17 Flying pickets of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation are also given pocket money from union funds. Yet the ISTC is not providing strike pay as such. Oh no, it is the taxpayers who are having to find millions of pounds to support the families of striking steelworkers.
- MA8:18 Is it not the most nauseating humbug, then, for union leaders to beat their humanitarian breasts and say how cruel it would be for Mrs. Thatcher to take the food out of the mouths of the children of strikers by cutting supplementary benefit to them?
- MA8:19 Unions are responsible for official strikes. They should be forced to meet at least a proportion of the cost. Let the executive of the ISTC decide whether to give beer money to bully boys or milk allowance to the babies of strikers. Let them choose and bear the odium.
- MA8:20 Why should Britain's Welfare State be softer on strikers than that of almost any other industrialised nation in the free world. Why should the police turn a blind eye to Marxist publicity-seekers who stand dictator like at the head of their union heavies and deny to law-abiding men and women that most cherished of rights, the right to work?
- MA8:21 The mobsters are at the factory gates.
- MA8:22 They trample on the rule of law and rob innocent citizens of their liberty.
- MA8:23 The Lord Chancellor has sounded the alarm. And not before time.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA10

- MA10:1 A tale of two trade unionists
- MA10:2 WRONG-HEADED he may be. But it is not easy to dislike Mr. Bill Sirs.
- MA10:3 He is a trade unionist pure and simple. Trying to do what he can for his members.
- MA10:4 Understandably, he is critical of the Denning judgment. Wryly, he concedes that he could conceivably end up in prison.
- MA10:5 Instinctively, however, he is law-abiding. Martyrdom may be thrust upon him. But he hasn't gone around looking for it.
- MA10:6 What a contrast to Arthur Scargill, champion bandwagon jumper from South Yorkshire.
- MA10:7 Nobody can get in on a militant trade union act with such indecent haste as this charmer with the carefully groomed Marxist quiff.
- MA10:8 There he was yesterday in time for the lunch-time news bulletins and the early editions of the evening newspapers urging trade unionists to thumb their noses at the law and to carry on picketing and striking in flagrant defiance of the Appeal Court.
- MA10:9 Wouldn't he love to be 'done' for contempt?
- MA10:10 He'd adore the publicity.
- MA10:11 The steel strike is not his dispute. He's muscled in on it. Like he barged his way into prominence at Grunwick. In spitting defiance at the law he draws attention to himself. Punk politics at its most stomach-turning.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA11

- MA11:1 Victims crying out for justice
- MA11:2 ONE private steel firm has been driven to breaking point.
- MA11:3 Shut down by secondary strike action, Hadfields of Sheffield is losing £½ million a week. Now chairman Derek Norton says that while this crippling dispute lasts he will refuse to pay taxes and insurance to the Government worth £2 million a month.
- MA11:4 The law which smiled on the strikers would if it were put to the test almost certainly scowl on Mr. Norton.
- MA11:5 Yet no less than the innocent passer-by who is mugged, Mr. Norton and his firm are victims crying out for justice.
- MA11:6 Not only are they victims but they are also the breadwinners for the nation.
- MA11:7 It is they and their like who support the State, subsidise its welfare needs and foot the bill for its follies.
- MA11:8 Yes, it is the money squeezed out of what wealth can still be created by such private enterprise which pays for schools, hospitals, debt-ridden nationalised industries and even handouts to the families of strikers.
- MA11:9 The banners behind which our unions march still proclaim the brotherhood of man.
- MA11:10 Some brotherhood when the only solidarity they can show is to bite the hand that feeds them.

MIRROR COMMENTMR12

- MR12:1 THE COST OF SAVING FACE
- MR12:2 THE strike which should never have started was looking as if it would never end. That's why the steel unions decided to make it much rougher.
- MR12:3 Their picketing of every customer of British Steel will be legal and devastating- if it is successful.
- MR12:4 Industry has got by for nine weeks without the Steel Corporation. Stocks are high and so are imports. Manufacturers and Government have almost become complacent.

Agreed

- MR12:5 But if they have half forgotten the strike the steelmen haven't. Each has lost close on £1,000 in wages. Their desperation has made their leaders get tough.
- MR12:6 The difference between prolonging the strike and ending it hasn't been much for some time.
- MR12:7 The workers have agreed to almost everything the corporation has asked for: Local productivity deals which pay for themselves; international manning levels; abolition of overtime; less absenteeism and fewer disputes.
- MR12:8 In return, they demand a 20 per cent wage increase, though everyone involved knows they'll settle for less. What they won't accept is what they've been offered.

Concerned

- MR12:9 But the corporation says it hasn't got any more money. The Government says it won't give any more because it is the taxpayers' money.

MR12:10 The cost of the strike, however, is already greater than the cost of ending it. The Government could break the deadlock now- if it were not more concerned with saving face than subsidies.

MIRROR COMMENTMR6

- MR6:1 Steel: Denning's deadlock
- MR6:2 THE steel strike is drifting, in anger and legal confusion, towards a wider industrial disaster.
- MR6:3 Yesterday thousands of private steel sector workers defied Lord Denning's Appeal Court ruling and stopped work.
- MR6:4 Today 100,000 Welsh trade unionists are due to strike in support of the steel workers.
- MR6:5 The legacy of this dispute will be sour and long-lasting. And Lord Denning's extraordinary judgments will make it worse.
- MR6:6 His decisions- about spreading the strike and on secondary picketing- mean that the law is different from what many lawyers thought it was. And from what the House of Lords said it was only a few weeks ago.
- Foolish
- MR6:7 Nevertheless the steel union leaders, rightly, will abide by them. People like Martin Flannery, MP for Hillsborough, who hoped the workers wouldn't take notice of Lord Denning, are foolish, wrong and dangerous.
- MR6:8 But there's a risk that by tying up the official leaders Lord Denning will set loose the unofficial ones. He has given provocation to those wanting and waiting to be provoked.
- MR6:9 This strike could have been prevented. Once started, it could have been stopped. Now it is in its fifth week.
- MR6:10 The Government meets both sides only to say it won't intervene, as though it was a private scrap between the unions and the employers.
- MR6:11 But it isn't. It affects us all. And it's time the Government moved to break the deadlock.

MIRROR COMMENTMR7

- MR7:1 King Arthur and the court of law
- MR7:2 "Trade unionists... have a simple choice to make. They either accept the decision of three men in wigs sitting in a remote part of London or accept the advice and instruction of their trade union."
- Mr. Arthur Scargill, Yorkshire miner's leader, speaking at a rally in support of the steelworkers.
- MR7:3 MR. SCARGILL is a martyr in search of a strike, and he trails his opinions from one strike meeting to another in the hope of finding it.
- MR7:4 The fact that three judges of the Appeal Court wore wigs (a fate that threatens Mr. Scargill) is irrelevant to their decisions.
- MR7:5 So is the fact that they met in a part of London which is remote to Mr. Scargill.

Anarchy

- MR7:6 If they sat on the end of Southend pier wearing "Kiss Me, Sailor" hats their rulings would still have to be accepted. Otherwise a democratic society would slip into anarchy.
- MR7:7 Mr. Scargill is perfectly free to disagree with the judges. The Daily Mirror does.
- MR7:8 But unless and until it is overturned, their verdict is the law. Neither Mr. Scargill nor anyone else is free to incite disobedience to it.
- MR7:9 After all, if a worker can flout the law, why shouldn't an employer? If a Marxist can defy it, what's to stop a Fascist doing the same.
- MR7:10 There is no system of government known to man - except, possibly, Iran's - where the leader of a regional area of a miner's union could be exalted above the law.
- MR7:11 The argument against prosecuting Mr. Scargill is that that is what he wants to happen. It is a strong one. But if the law is to be applied impartially, he ought to be granted his wish.

THE SUN SAYSS6S6:1 Rule of lawS6:2 AN OLD menace returns to the industrial scene: bullying, threatening and sometimes violent secondary pickets.

S6:3 At Sheffield, lorries trying to get into a private steelworks find their way blocked by 100 angry men.

S6:4 At Corby, a woman office worker is punched in the mouth as she tries to cross a picket line.

Pathetic

S6:5 Such ugly, shameful scenes are all too familiar. They recall the "flying pickets" of the two coal strikes.

S6:6 Significantly, Arthur Scargill, who is supposed to have invented secondary picketing is said to be "advising" the strikers.

S6:7 Their nominal leader, the pathetic Bill Sirs, wrings his hands and says he is "very worried".

S6:8 Tory speakers declare that the events are demonstrating the need for tougher laws against picketing, which they promised at the last Election.

S6:9 Of course, these are needed, And soon.

S6:10 But we do not have to wait for new Acts of Parliament to appear like the Seventh Cavalry to save us.

S6:11 There are already laws against intimidation. Against violence.

S6:12 It is every bit as illegal to use force in an industrial dispute as it is in a robbery.

S6:13 No one has the right to stop workers who want to work. There is nothing sacred about a picket line.

S6:14 The police should not hesitate to use their full powers. And the Government should back them with its full authority.

THE SUN SAYSS7

S7:1 Nice one, Willie

S7:2 THANK HEAVEN that Home Secretary Willie Whitelaw has had the guts to demand that the law should be enforced against steel strike pickets who go too far.

S7:3 He promised that the police would ensure that all who wanted to work would be allowed to do so.

S7:4 They will crack down hard against violence and threats on the picket lines.

S7:5 Just contrast Willie's firm stand for law and order with the wishy-washy excuses offered a year ago by Labour Prime Minister Jim Callaghan when lorry drivers mounted an unchecked blockade on British business.

S7:6 Not for Mr. Whitelaw the weak-kneed reliance on a voluntary code of conduct which even union bosses couldn't guarantee.

S7:7 He isn't afraid of creating false martyrs with his tough support of the law.

S7:8 He knows it is vital for Britain's interests that people who want to live and work in peace should be protected from the bully boys.

THE SUN SAYSS9

S9:1 Cross the line

S9:2 ENGINEER'S union chiefs have appealed to steel pickets to stop blockading factories not using British Steel products.

S9:3 They are worried about possible lay-offs.

S9:4 We sympathise with them. But we do not understand their difficulty.

Order

S9:5 Why not simply order their members to cross the picket lines? And to call the police if they are impeded.

S9:6 The engineers do not need to beg another union to allow them to work.

S9:7 It is their RIGHT.

S9:8 In the same way, steel union chief Mr. Bill Sirs, who pretends to be worried about his pickets getting out of control, has the remedy in his own hands.

S9:9 If the men disobeyed orders to strike, they would be speedily expelled from the union.

S9:10 If pickets disobey instructions, Mr. Sirs should withdraw their union cards, too. But he won't.

THE SUN SAYSS16

S16:1 Above the law

S16:2 BILL SIRS, leader of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, says that 600 Sheerness steelworkers are to be expelled from the union.

S16:3 He complains that they defied union discipline by refusing to join the strike.

S16:4 But what about the pickets at Sheerness and Sheffield?

S16:5 The union ordered that the dispute should be peaceful at all times.

S16:6 But the pickets intimidated other workers. They threatened to storm Hadfields. They committed acts of violence.

S16:7 How come that not a single one of them has been expelled for defying union discipline? Or punished in any way?

THE SUN SAYSS10

S10:1 Go home, brothers

S10:2 A GROUP of German steel workers have come to Britain to help Yorkshire pickets in the steel strike.

S10:3 Cynics might say that it is in the Fatherland's interests to inflict as much damage as possible on our industry.

S10:4 But even if the Germans have come in the cause of international brotherhood, it is still an outrageous intervention in an argument which is none of their business.

S10:5 It is difficult to understand how they got into the country in the first place.

S10:6 Maybe they persuaded the immigration authorities that they simply wanted to sample the delights of Rotherham in winter?

Purpose

S10:7 Or to kneel at the throne of "King" Arthur Scargill, who seems to be running the strike.

S10:8 Either way, now that their true purpose is known, is there any good reason why they should not be deported?

THE SUN SAYSS12

S12:1 Bad law

S12:2 THE HOUSE OF LORDS overturns Lord Denning's decision and declares that the steel unions can, after all, call out the men in private industry.

S12:3 Most people expected this decision. Albeit with the best of motives, Lord Denning seemed to many of us to be creating law instead of interpreting it.

Damage

S12:4 But the law as it stands is BAD law.

S12:5 Workers in the private steel industry have no quarrel with their employers, no part in the dispute.

S12:6 The unions have sought to involve them as a piece of blackmail.

S12:7 They want to inflict so much wilful damage to the economy that the Government will grant them increases they have not earned and which the country cannot afford.

S12:8 The law allows them to do so.

S12:9 When is this absurd law to be changed? When is the scandal to be ended?

S12:10 The nation is still waiting to hear from Employment Minister James Prior.

S12:11 Speak up, Jim !

APPENDIX FOUR

This is the first of the two appendices to chapter five.

THE SUN SAYSS2

S2:1 Off the rails

S2:2 BRITAIN'S railmen threaten to block steel imports if our own steelmen go on strike.

S2:3 OF COURSE, there is sympathy for the 50,000 steelworkers who are to lose their jobs.

S2:4 OF COURSE, it is understandable that a two per cent increase should be regarded as derisory when inflation is above 17 per cent.

S2:5 But the fact is that the steel industry cannot afford even one per cent. It is already £300 million in the red.

Appalling

S2:6 This has happened partly because there is a world recession in steel.

S2:7 But also for the far more important reason that the performance of the steelworkers is appalling.

S2:8 Despite a massive programme of investment, each British steelworker produces only about half the output of a French or German worker.

S2:9 Japanese workers produce THREE TIMES as much steel per man-hour as our own.

S2:10 And the blame falls chiefly on the steel unions, with their restrictive practices and their stubborn insistence on massive over-manning.

Realism

S2:11 Sooner or later, realism will have to dawn in our steel industry.

S2:12 It makes no sense at all for the railmen to help postpone the inevitable day of reckoning.

S2:13 In the past, the National Union of Railwaymen, under Mr. Sidney Weighell, has often shown moderation and responsibility in its own demands.

S2:14 Do these sensible, moderate men really want to go to the wall in defence of the indefensible?

THE SUN SAYSS5

S5:1 Steel tragedy

S5:2 THE FAILURE of the steel talks is a tragedy. For the steelmen. For the industry. For Britain.

S5:3 It is difficult not to have sympathy with both sides in the dispute- though neither can escape its share of the blame.

S5:4 THE STEELMEN have seen their position in the wages league being gradually eroded.

S5:5 They have seen state-subsidised miners win 20 per cent increases.

S5:6 And they have been told that only a wholly self-financing wages deal is open to them.

S5:7 They must see that their demand for guaranteed "production" bonuses in advance is absurd.

S5:8 Yet it is easy to understand their resentment.

S5:9 THE STEEL CORPORATION, on the other hand, have an even stronger case- though it has been put with monumental ineptitude.

Waffling

S5:10 First they offered two per cent. Then six. Then eight. Then eight plus four for three months, while local deals were being negotiated.

S5:11 Yesterday, Sir Charles Villiers, the Corporation's chairman, was waffling on about a new "minimum" rate of £122.

S5:12 If all these options were open, why on earth were they not put to the men weeks ago?

S5:13 But no amount of official ineptitude can disguise the brutal facts...

S5:14 The industry is losing money at the rate of something like a million pounds A DAY.

S5:15 On the very day the talks break down, devastating figures are produced showing that productivity in two Japanese steel plants last year was up to SIX TIMES greater than in Britain.

- S5:16 The British industry has not lacked for investment.
- S5:17 In the past six years £4,000 million of state cash-
OUR CASH- has flowed into it.
- S5:18 If we accept- as The Sun DOES accept- that
British steelworkers are not all bone-idle, there
are only two possible explanations for the current
state of the industry:
- S5:19 ONE: That far too many people are employed in it,
and
- S5:20 TWO: That there are far too many restrictive
practices.
- S5:21 Putting up the price of steel is no solution. The
world is awash with the stuff.
- S5:22 In the end, the unions will have to move out of
Never-Never Land...
- S5:23 TO ACCEPT that it is no longer sensible to live now
and pay later.
- S5:24 TO RECOGNISE that increased prosperity for the
industry and the nation can come only through drastic
pruning and drastic reforms.

Damage

- S5:25 Sooner or later they will be FORCED to accept these
things.
- S5:26 Meanwhile, they are losing money, customers and
valuable goodwill.
- S5:27 They are further damaging their capacity to compete,
and their own long-term employment prospects, and
further delaying the day when the industry at last
becomes viable.

MIRROR COMMENTMR1

- MR1:1 Men of steel
- MR1:2 IT's not just a two per cent wage rise the steel-workers are being offered. With today's price increases it's also a 15 per cent cut in their standard of living.
- MR1:3 And that's for those lucky enough to keep their jobs.
- MR1:4 Communities dependent upon steel are being devastated by closures. Corby, Shotton, Scunthorpe, Cleveland, Consett, Port Talbot and Llanwern fear mass unemployment.
- MR1:5 The Steel Corporation chairman, Sir Charles Villiers- who doesn't have a redundancy problem- says: "It is not possible to protect trade unionists from reality".
- MR1:6 Maybe not. But for 50,000 men whose jobs are going that sounds like the skipper saying: "The ship's sinking. Throw some more men overboard."
- MR1:7 They see Sir Charles agreeing with the Government to end a £300 million a year loss within a few months- and doing it at their expense.
- MR1:8 They see another loss-making industry, coal, offering miners 20 per cent more. They see derisory cuts in the Civil Service which mean that no one will actually lose a job.
- MR1:9 They see the Cabinet pursuing irrelevant changes in trade union law while production falls unhindered and unemployment rises unchecked.
- MR1:10 They see it and they think it unfair. Despite their fears about the future they regard a two per cent wage offer as a final insult.
- MR1:11 That's why we're faced with the threat of a national steel strike from January 2.

MIRROR COMMENTMR5

MR5:1 So why pick on steel?

MR5:2 THE worst is happening in steel. The Government won't do anything to end the strike and the management and unions are settling down to make it a long one.

MR5:3 Sir Keith Joseph said yesterday that if the Steel Corporation offered more money without more productivity, "workers in other industries would have to go on subsidising workers in steel".

MR5:4 The logic is undoubtedly right. Higher wages without higher productivity means higher prices or higher taxation.

MR5:5 But why single out steel?

MR5:6 Was the miner's 20 per cent rise paid for out of higher productivity? Or the local government workers' 13 per cent? Will the offer of 14 per cent to the civil servants be paid for by cutting costs.

MR5:7 At the start of this dispute the steelworkers would have settled for any of those rises. Instead, they had an offer raised in dribs and drabs. Two per cent here, three per cent there, plus another one or two and then a further four. All on strict conditions.

MR5:8 The Government says it isn't intervening in the steel strike. But by cutting off the Corporation's money it prevented a settlement. That's intervening.

MR5:9 It didn't do the same to the Coal Board or the local councils. It isn't doing the same for its own workers.

MR5:10 Its policy can't always be right. Or even always wrong. But at least it ought to be consistent.

MIRROR COMMENTMR3

- MR3:1 Time to talk
- MR3:2 THE steel strike which nobody wants and which the country can't afford will have to be settled around the negotiating table sooner or later.
- MR3:3 Sooner is better.
- MR3:4 Sir Charles Villiers, who has chaired British Steel deeper and deeper into disaster, is at least right about that.
- MR3:5 The dispute began because the workers were offered a two per cent rise. That was it. Final. No more.
- MR3:6 Then two per cent became five, with conditions. Then six with a hint of seven. PLUS another 10 or 11 per cent through local productivity deals.
- MR3:7 Suddenly two per cent looks like 16 or 17 per cent.
- MR3:8 If that is what it is- and especially if British Steel offers something on account for higher productivity- then it IS worth talking about.. The unions should ask to see Sir Charles today.
- MR3:9 With 52,000 jobs being lost in steel this year the unions will want to know how many more men must go to pay for the rises of those who stay. Then they must decide whether the price is too high.
- MR3:10 For its part, the Government must come clean about its policy for loss-making state-owned industries. Because in the end the decisions on pay are its decisions.
- MR3:11 If two per cent was the original limit for the steel men why were the miners offered 20 per cent?
- MR3:12 And what about the railways? Like coal and steel they lose money. How much is British Rail going to be allowed to offer the engine drivers?

MIRROR COMMENTMR2

MR2:1 Duty calls, Sir Charles

MR2:2 THE British Steel Corporation plan for survival will mean disaster for a third of its workforce and the communities in which they live.

MR2:3 The decision to sack 53,000 men within eight months instead of two years will make it impossible for most of them to find alternative work.

MR2:4 Parts of South Wales, the North-East and Scotland will know unemployment at levels not seen since the 1930s.

MR2:5 The sackings and closures will cost the Corporation £250 million. With luck, it will save the Corporation a loss of £300 million a year.

Critical

MR2:6 But the cost of keeping men in employment will be transferred to social security, to keep them in unemployment.

MR2:7 Sir Charles Villiers, the Corporation's chairman, said yesterday that the industry faces a critical situation, its "grimmiest moment". He had to "do his duty".

MR2:8 Duty to whom? To the industry, which has gone from bad to terrible under his chairmanship? To the workers, whom he is abandoning? To the taxpayers, who will still foot the bill in the end? Or to the Government, which has told him what to do?

MR2:9 When Sir Charles is doing his duty, shouldn't he consider including himself among the 53,000 who are going to lose their jobs? Or is that too much to expect?

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE4

- E4:1 The money isn't there
- E4:2 TODAY Britain could begin the 1980s with the most disastrous industrial dispute since the coal strikes of 1974.
- E4:3 A long drawn out steel strike could cripple British industry if it is accompanied by action from the train drivers to stop the movement of state steel, and by dockers to stop handling imported steel.
- E4:4 There will, however, be one important difference between a steel strike and the coal strike, not to mention the "winter of discontent" of last year. There will be no General Election this year. The Government will not fall.
- E4:5 Nor will it give in. In many ways the steel dispute is a test of the Government's nerve. The steel industry is losing around £1 million a day, yet the steelworkers are demanding a wage increase of around 17 per cent- which is the going rate of inflation.
- E4:6 The money is not there. Only if the Government printed more money, or raided the taxpayer, could more cash be produced.
- E4:7 It will not happen. Why should it? Most people's wages are limited by what their firm or industry can actually earn. Why should steelworkers occupy a privileged position?
- E4:8 Of course it is easy to understand how they feel about a prospective reduction in their living standard. It would be rough for anybody. Yet the assumption that their living standard should be maintained- as some sort of God-given right- irrespective of the real economic value of what they produce, is wholly unreal.
- E4:9 The world is not like that. And Britain has got to learn the lesson if it is ever to pull itself up again.
- E4:10 A long strike would not only damage British industry in general. It will hit the long term future of the steel industry. Some plants that close may never re-open.

E4:11 And the steelworkers? Many recent industrial disputes have shown how long it takes for workers to make up again the wages that were lost.

E4:12 In short, everybody will lose. Is it too late for rationality to come in and take over.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA1

- MA1:1 Cold realism and hot steel
- MA1:2 THE threat of a national steel strike is folly born of despair.
- MA1:3 You have to have a balance sheet, instead of a heart, not to feel some sympathy for the men who work in this industry.
- MA1:4 No sooner had they become resigned to the disappearance of 20,000 jobs, than they are having to face the prospect of losing 32,000 more.
- MA1:5 Sometimes it must seem to them that British Steel is suffering from an especially cruel and irreversible form of the slimmers' disease anorexia nervosa.
- MA1:6 Even worse, the pay rise they are being offered is a mere 2 p.c.
- MA1:7 So Mr. Bill Sirs, the moderate leader of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, feels driven to stand and make a fight of it.
- MA1:8 But the poor chap and his 85,000 members are not even fighting with their backs to the wall. Behind them is nothing except the abyss.
- MA1:9 It is suicide. Sheer suicide.
- MA1:10 If they do succeed in shutting down the industry, losses currently running at £1 million a day will become even more cataclysmic. That, in turn, must mean even more redundancies.
- MA1:11 And what if a strike were to produce a substantial improvement in basic pay- what would be the end product of that?
- MA1:12 The same again. One steel man's pay rise would be another steel man's one-way ticket to the dole queue. They can't win.
- MA1:13 Indeed, it is by no means certain that most of Bill Sirs' members have the stomach to start so pathetic a battle. No battle has been held.
- MA1:14 In the Blast Furnacemen's Union, where a ballot was held on whether or not there should be

industrial action to protest against the partial closure of the Corby steelworks, the result was five-to-one against.

- MA1:15 Significant also, maybe, that Mr. Moss Evans- not exactly a paragon of restraint- shows no inclination to commit his tens of thousands of men in steel to a hopeless strike.
- MA1:16 The hard truth is that there is only one way forward for British Steel: fewer men, many fewer men working more productively, far more productively.
- MA1:17 In Britain, the average steelworker produces 108 tons a year. In Germany, the figure is 200 tons, in France 180 tons.
- MA1:18 That is why the steel corporation in this country is offering its workers next to nothing on basic pay, but up to 10 p.c. extra for those who can and will work more efficiently.
- MA1:19 It would be utterly dishonest, however, not to concede that improved productivity will also create yet more redundancies in this benighted industry.
- MA1:20 For the world is in recession and already cluttered up with surplus steel nobody wants to buy.
- MA1:21 Because, when times were not so bad, successive Governments could not summon up the courage to back the tough measures required to make British Steel viable and competitive, the painful changes are having to be pushed through now, when the economic weather is foul.
- MA1:22 A national steel strike will not avert these changes. It can only render them more traumatic.

APPENDIX FIVE

This is the second of the two appendices to chapter five.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE7

- E7:1 Law and strikers
- E7:2 IN a confused legal situation the latest ruling has to be accepted as the authoritative one.
- E7:3 So unless the House of Lords overrules Lord Denning's Court of Appeal, the court's ruling on the steel strike must be accepted. Which means the steel unions must call off strike action in the private sector, and the trade union ban on the movement of steel must be lifted.
- E7:4 Of course, the present situation was tailor-made for Arthur Scargill, the Yorkshire miners' leader. This desperately ambitious man, with his thirst for personal publicity, can hardly be expected to neglect an opportunity to cast himself in the role of trade union hero- even martyr.
- E7:5 So he places himself on the rhetorical barricades, demanding defiance of the Court of Appeal. He asserts that workers should pay more attention to their trade union than to the court.
- E7:6 No other country in the world entertains such a curious doctrine. We may be sure that if he were in charge of Britain "King" Arthur would take a dim view of anybody who defied his rulings.
- E7:7 The real point is that if individuals, or organisations such as trade unions or companies are going to decide what laws to obey and what not, then we will live in a state of anarchy.
- E7:8 The law is there to be obeyed until or unless it is changed in a proper constitutional manner.
- E7:9 It would be helpful if the Leader of the Opposition, James Callaghan, were to throw his own weight behind the law. Or will Labour out of office connive at lawlessness as it has done before?
- E7:10 What is most important is that the Government's own legislation should be strengthened, clarified, and pushed through without delay.
- E7:11 So that the Denning version of the law is laid down in black and white, unambiguously, on the Statute Book.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE8

- E8:1 Time to change the law
- E8:2 THE LAW of England is what the House of Lords says it is- it is the highest court in the country, and it has the last word.
- E8:3 But if it is lawful for the steel unions to create a strike in the private sector, where there is no real dispute, and if it is right for the unions acting in collaboration with the steel union to stop the movement of steel through the ports and across the country, then all we can say is that the law is wrong.
- E8:4 By this we do not mean that it should be disobeyed. The Daily Express recommends trade unions to obey legal rulings which go against them. We accept rulings which go against what we believe.
- E8:5 It is, however, quite consistent with obedience to the law to argue that the law should be changed in a constitutional manner.
- E8:6 The trouble is that the Government Bill which is before the House makes scarcely a dent in the vast immunities which trade unions enjoy. Nothing in the Bill will make a criminal offence the kind of obstruction which the House of Lords judges to be perfectly legal.
- E8:7 As things stand, the unions could, perfectly lawfully, mount a blockade against the country's economic life far more severe than anything imagined, let alone carried out, by Hitler's U-boats in the Second World War.
- E8:8 The brutal truth is this. To stop intimidatory picketing, secondary picketing, or blacking, requires being willing to bring trade unionists before the courts if they do not obey the law.
- E8:9 Which in turn means being willing to face a general strike.
- E8:10 All talk about "trades union reform" comes down to this. It is, in fact, the big question in our national life.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA6

- MA6:1 These laws are as clear as mud
- MA6:2 LORD DENNING is a very great lawyer. But his leading Appeal Court judgment on the steel strike shows that there is a limit to the good sense that even he can extract from bad law.
- MA6:3 With his views, as such, we have no quarrel. They are a splendid embodiment of the popular will. Secondary picketing is a thoroughly nasty practice. The overwhelming majority of men and women, in and out of trade unions, do detest it and want to see it outlawed.
- MA6:4 The extension of the steel strike to workers in the private steel firms is an excessive and authoritarian abuse of union power. These men have no quarrel with their own employers. They are not party to any dispute with the British Steel Corporation. Most of them do not want to strike. And there has been no union attempt to ballot their opinions.
- MA6:5 The jump, however, from condemnation to legal judgment does appear to be one of the most audacious the Master of the Rolls has ever made.
- MA6:6 Tory plans to make secondary picketing illegal have not yet reached the statute book.
- MA6:7 Lord Denning's judgment on when is a trade dispute not a trade dispute sounds to be in flat contradiction to the majority ruling of the Law Lords only a month or so back.
- MA6:8 His supporting argument that the steel unions have gone beyond the terms of a simple trade dispute by striking at the Government would be more compelling if it were not the Government which ultimately controls the purse strings of this debt-ridden nationalised industry.
- MA6:9 For the moment, what Lord Denning and his two fellow Appeal Court judges have declared to be the law is, indeed, the law. Until and unless the Lords find otherwise, it must be obeyed by all the citizens in the land.

- MA6:10 For the future, this Tory Government must both strengthen and more speedily implement plans for responsible union reform.
- MA6:11 They can't leave it all to Lord Denning. However tireless his efforts, the existing laws, on which he seeks to ground limits to overweening trade union power, have the solidity of quicksand and the clarity of activated sludge.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA10

- MA10:1 A tale of two trade unionists
- MA10:2 WRONG-HEADED he may be. But it is not easy to dislike Mr. Bill Sirs.
- MA10:3 He is a trade unionist pure and simple. Trying to do what he can for his members.
- MA10:4 Understandably, he is critical of the Denning judgment. Wryly, he concedes that he could conceivably end up in prison.
- MA10:5 Instinctively, however, he is law-abiding. Martyrdom may be thrust upon him. But he hasn't gone around looking for it.
- MA10:6 What a contrast to Arthur Scargill, champion bandwagon jumper from South Yorkshire.
- MA10:7 Nobody can get in on a militant trade union act with such indecent haste as this charmer with the carefully groomed Marxist quiff.
- MA10:8 There he was yesterday in time for the lunch-time news bulletins and the early editions of the evening newspapers urging trade unionists to thumb their noses at the law and to carry on picketing and striking in flagrant defiance of the Appeal Court.
- MA10:9 Wouldn't he love to be 'done' for contempt?
- MA10:10 He'd adore the publicity.
- MA10:11 The steel strike is not his dispute. He's muscled in on it. Like he barged his way into prominence at Grunwick. In spitting defiance at the law he draws attention to himself. Punk politics at its most stomach-turning.

MIRROR COMMENTMR6

- MR6:1 Steel: Denning's deadlock
- MR6:2 THE steel strike is drifting, in anger and legal confusion, towards a wider industrial disaster.
- MR6:3 Yesterday thousands of private steel sector workers defied Lord Denning's Appeal Court ruling and stopped work.
- MR6:4 Today 100,000 Welsh trade unionists are due to strike in support of the steel workers.
- MR6:5 The legacy of this dispute will be sour and long-lasting. And Lord Denning's extraordinary judgments will make it worse.
- MR6:6 His decisions- about spreading the strike and on secondary picketing- mean that the law is different from what many lawyers thought it was. And from what the House of Lords said it was only a few weeks ago.

Foolish

- MR6:7 Nevertheless the steel union leaders, rightly, will abide by them. People like Martin Flannery, MP for Hillsborough, who hoped the workers wouldn't take notice of Lord Denning, are foolish wrong and dangerous.
- MR6:8 But there's a risk that by tying up the official leaders Lord Denning will set loose the unofficial ones. He has given provocation to those wanting and waiting to be provoked.
- MR6:9 This strike could have been prevented. Once started, it could have been stopped. Now it is in its fifth week.
- MR6:10 The Government meets both sides only to say it won't intervene, as though it was a private scrap between the unions and the employers.
- MR6:11 But it isn't. It affects us all. And it's time the Government moved to break the deadlock.

MIRROR COMMENTMR7

- MR7:1 King Arthur and the court of law
- MR7:2 "Trade unionists... have a simple choice to make. They either accept the decision of three men in wigs sitting in a remote part of London or accept the advice and instruction of their trade union."
- Mr. Arthur Scargill, Yorkshire miner's leader, speaking at a rally in support of the steelworkers.
- MR7:3 MR. SCARGILL is a martyr in search of a strike, and he trails his opinions from one strike meeting to another in the hope of finding it.
- MR7:4 The fact that three judges of the Appeal Court wore wigs (a fate that threatens Mr. Scargill) is irrelevant to their decisions.
- MR7:5 So is the fact that they met in a part of London which is remote to Mr. Scargill.

Anarchy

- MR7:6 If they sat on the end of Southend pier wearing "Kiss Me, Sailor" hats their rulings would still have to be accepted. Otherwise a democratic society would slip into anarchy.
- MR7:7 Mr. Scargill is perfectly free to disagree with the judges. The Daily Mirror does.
- MR7:8 But unless and until it is overturned, their verdict is the law. Neither Mr. Scargill nor anyone else is free to incite disobedience to it.
- MR7:9 After all, if a worker can flout the law, why shouldn't an employer? If a Marxist can defy it, what's to stop a Fascist doing the same.
- MR7:10 There is no system of government known to man - except, possibly, Iran's - where the leader of a regional area of a miner's union could be exalted above the law.
- MR7:11 The argument against prosecuting Mr. Scargill is that that is what he wants to happen. It is a strong one. But if the law is to be applied impartially, he ought to be granted his wish.

THE SUN SAYSS12

S12:1 Bad law

S12:2 THE HOUSE OF LORDS overturns Lord Denning's decision and declares that the steel unions can, after all, call out the men in private industry.

S12:3 Most people expected this decision. Albeit with the best of motives, Lord Denning seemed to many of us to be creating law instead of interpreting it.

Damage

S12:4 But the law as it stands is BAD law.

S12:5 Workers in the private steel industry have no quarrel with their employers, no part in the dispute.

S12:6 The unions have sought to involve them as a piece of blackmail.

S12:7 They want to inflict so much wilful damage to the economy that the Government will grant them increases they have not earned and which the country cannot afford.

S12:8 The law allows them to do so.

S12:9 When is this absurd law to be changed? When is the scandal to be ended?

S12:10 The nation is still waiting to hear from Employment Minister James Prior.

S12:11 Speak up, Jim !

APPENDIX SIX

This is the appendix to chapter six.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE18

- E18:1 Now it must be settled!
- E18:2 THE 10-week-old steel strike must surely now come to an end. Mr. Bill Sirs, the leader of the main steel union, has been totally discredited by the turnout- and vote- in British Steel's ballot on whether there should be a union ballot on the 14.4 per cent pay offer.
- E18:3 A massive 65 per cent of workers have defied his instructions not to participate in the British Steel ballot- and of those 65 per cent, 69 per cent have voted for a union pay ballot.
- E18:4 This was a double slap in the face for Mr. Sirs on the eve of today's talks with the British Steel Corporation.
- E18:5 Its effect can only be a knockout blow for the unions proposal to increase the present 14.4 per cent offer.
- E18:6 The workers' defiance comes as no surprise considering that the strike has so far lost each of them £1,000.
- E18:7 A democratic postal ballot has once again demonstrated how unrepresentative union leaders are of their own members.
- E18:8 Mr. Sirs goes into today's talks with his position totally undermined by his own workers. On the other hand, British Steel management will be enormously strengthened in their resolve not to offer any more money unless it is self-financed by productivity deals.
- E18:9 A quick settlement must now be in the interests of everybody- of the industry which may have lost 20 per cent of its market; of the workers who have already lost so much money; and of the union leaders who have lost so much credibility.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE17

- E17:1 Undemocratic striking
- E17:2 THE steelworkers of Consett never wanted to strike and now they want to return to work- that is the unequivocal message they have given to the Daily Express.
- E17:3 But the steel union demanded their support- or else it would not help them get redundancy pay. So the steelworkers were blackmailed into striking and are now being blackmailed into staying out.
- E17:4 The union never gave them the chance to vote on whether or not they wanted to strike. And now Mr. Bill Sirs has ordered them to ignore the postal ballot being paid for by the British Steel Corporation.
- E17:5 For the introduction of such democracy would instantly expose how unrepresentative our union leaders can be. So often they speak not for their members- just for their own egos or extreme political views.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE11

- E11:1 Leading the steel men
- E11:2 THE LABOUR force at Hadfields, one of Britain's biggest steel firms, return to work today.
- E11:3 By ending their "reluctant" support for the dispute at State-Owned British Steel, they are not only defying their union and its intimidatory pickets; they are also giving a dramatic lead which the rest of the private steel sector would do well to follow.
- E11:4 The decision to go back is, of course, a personal triumph for "Desperate Dan" Norton, a man who exemplifies the best in British management- and whom his employees rightly regard not so much as a boss, more as a leader.
- E11:5 But it is also a triumph for the common sense of the British worker, a common sense which we hope will rapidly infect Her Majesty's ministers- and induce them to outlaw, with all haste and effectiveness, both secondary picketing and blacking.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE19

- E19:1 Who's for a strike?
- E19:2 BEFORE Christmas there was a general fear that the steel strike would bring British industry to its knees early in the New Year. Indeed, this was the objective of Bill Sirs' strategy.
- E19:3 Yet, after 12 weeks, the strike drags on and British industry is nowhere near a state of collapse. No doubt there are difficulties. Of course there must be shortages. But life goes on without the contribution of the steelworkers in the nationalised corporation.
- E19:4 As a strong weapon that was to coerce the Steel Corporation and the Government, the strike has failed.
- E19:5 Some time back another example was afforded by the firemen. There was a strike which was billed to have even more horrendous consequences. But the troops coped.
- E19:6 For years the strike was held to be an irresistible weapon. And some workers, such as the miners and the power workers, do have the capacity to bring the economy grinding to a halt.
- E19:7 But they are a minority. More important is the prevailing climate of tight money. Nationalised firms and private firms have limited amounts of cash.
- E19:8 In this climate strikers risk putting themselves on the dole queue because some plants and factories will not re-open. Then there are the lost wages - in the case of the steelworkers these amount to well over £1,200 in many cases.
- E19:9 All the more important then to give the workers themselves a more direct say in whether they go on strike - through the secret ballot.
- E19:10 The Government should strengthen its Bill so as to make strike ballots compulsory to give more power to the workers whose jobs and living standards are placed in the firing line by ambitious union leaders.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE16

- E16:1 SIR CHARLES VILLIERS is, at the moment, Chairman of British Steel whether Mr. James Prior likes it or not.
- E16:2 It may well be true that he has already undermined his credibility by bungling the talks right from the beginning.
- E16:3 But for a senior Government minister to suggest that Sir Charles might therefore be prematurely retired is to stab him in the back and undermine his authority even more. That can only further delay a strike settlement.
- E16:4 He should not interfere in matters which are not his departmental responsibility.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA12

MA12:1 The road to Sheerness

MA12:2 WITH imperious petulance, the executive of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation seeks to impose on the rebels of Sheerness the most awesome punishment known to unionised man.

MA12:3 They are to be excommunicated: To lose their union cards. What heinous offence have these workers committed?

MA12:4 They have refused to join a steel strike in which they see themselves as having no part.

MA12:5 Do not these men have justice on their side? Most people in Britain- union members or not- will be inclined to think that they do.

MA12:6 They are well paid, productive, and work for a profitable private steel firm. They have no dispute with their employers. They have withstood mass picketing. They have not been balloted by their union.

MA12:7 Surely, they have earned the freedom to determine their own industrial destiny.

MA12:8 If ever this country is once again to have a prosperous future it is men like these working for firms like these who are going to make it possible.

MA12:9 Yet the thwarted Luddites of the ISTC lash out in their fury and frustration and do their damndest to deny to the Sheerness 400 the right to work.

MA12:10 If the ISTC executive had its way, the Sheerness 400 would all be flung on the dole. No steel-works nor any other firm where a union writ ran strong would employ them.

MA12:11 Fortunately, the feudal tyranny of the union barons in Britain has never been complete and shows increasing signs of breaking down.

MA12:12 The robust and independent-minded workforce at Sheerness, together with their cool employers, are not to be intimidated. And there are more and more men and women in Britain who are coming to resent being treated as union serfs.

- MA12:13 That same union card, which should be the badge of brotherhood, is all too often assuming the appearance in modern times of a passport to subservience.
- MA12:14 A century and a half ago, a small band of farm hands from a village near Dorchester were sentenced to transportation for combining together. They were martyrs to the union cause.
- MA12:15 The martyrs of today are those who stand out against the unions.
- MA12:16 From Tolpuddle to Sheerness is a long and winding road. But all those who have trudged defiantly down it arm in arm- be they agricultural workers in their smocks or private steel workers in their donkey jackets- march under the same banner:
- MA12:17 Freedom from oppression.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA11

- MA11:1 Victims crying out for justice
- MA11:2 ONE private steel firm has been driven to breaking point:
- MA11:3 Shut down by secondary strike action, Hadfields of Sheffield is losing £½ million a week. Now chairman Derek Norton says that while this crippling dispute lasts he will refuse to pay taxes and insurance to the Government worth £2 million a month.
- MA11:4 The law which smiled on the strikers would if it were put to the test almost certainly scowl on Mr. Norton:
- MA11:5 Yet no less than the innocent passer-by who is mugged, Mr. Norton and his firm are victims crying out for justice.
- MA11:6 Not only are they victims but they are also the breadwinners for the nation.
- MA11:7 It is they and their like who support the State, subsidise its welfare needs and foot the bill for its follies.
- MA11:8 Yes, it is the money squeezed out of what wealth can still be created by such private enterprise which pays for schools, hospitals, debt-ridden nationalised industries and even handouts to the families of strikers.
- MA11:9 The banners behind which our unions march still proclaim the brotherhood of man.
- MA11:10 Some brotherhood when the only solidarity they can show is to bite the hand that feeds them.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA14

- MA14:1 See the forces of reaction march by
- MA14:2 THE oomph-pah-pah of the bands and the banners fluttering in the early spring sunshine made quite a brave show. Very televisual, certainly.
- MA14:3 Yet how many actually turned out for this great feudal show of strength by the unions yesterday in London?
- MA14:4 The TUC organisers talked hopefully of 100,000. The real figure was probably closer to 50,000.
- MA14:5 More impressive, to our way of thinking, were the 58,000 steel men, who voted for the chance to hold a ballot on the corporation's 14.4 p.c. pay offer.
- MA14:6 Their unions wanted them to have nothing to do with this ballot about a ballot promoted by the British Steel Corporation.
- MA14:7 How dare the bosses try to inject even the mildest dose of industrial democracy into a strike that was union property!
- MA14:8 Steel men were told by their union leaders to boycott this ballot and so invalidate its result or to vote 'No'.
- MA14:9 Of the 132,000 ballot papers sent out by the electoral reform society, more than 85,000 were completed and returned. And the vote was an uncowed seven-to-three in favour of having the pay ballot.
- MA14:10 The number of steel men who demonstrated their democratic virility yesterday would have more than filled those special trains and coaches provided to transport the forces of union reaction to London.
- MA14:11 They are fed up with being taken for granted. They want to be heard... consulted... not treated as cannon fodder in some grandiose war between the union barons and a Tory Prime Minister.
- MA14:12 Len and Moss and David and Alan talk about the trade union movement as if they own it. But what do they really know or even want to know about

the opinions of the millions they claim to represent?

MA14:13 While the TUC blimps strut and preen, the poor bloody union infantry are in no mood for industrial war games.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA9

- MA9:1 Suicide is ceasing to be fashionable
- MA9:2 A NEW spirit of dour realism seems to be gaining ground at last in Britain.
- MA9:3 Faced with the warning that their firm could well go out of business, the men at the private steel firm of Hadfields have yet again nerved themselves to return to work. They have done so in defiance of the official instruction of the steel unions and with the memory of mass intimidatory picketing fresh and bruising.
- MA9:4 In Wales, the miners have rejected by a five-to-one majority the advice of their local union leaders to strike in support of the steel workers. Their bitter calculation is that such action could only accelerate the pace of pit closures.
- MA9:5 At British Leyland, the work-force has refused to come out in protest strike against the dismissal of Derek Robinson.
- MA9:6 They know that the future of BL's Longbridge works hangs by a thread.
- MA9:7 These are hard lessons learned the hard way. This is the restraint of men edging back from the precipice, despite the blind union pressure still coming from behind.
- MA9:8 Industrial suicide is becoming less fashionable with British workers. That is something. The real breakthrough will come when our union leaders also wake up to economic reality.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA8

- MA8:1 Mobsters at the factory gates
- MA8:2 MORE trade union thuggery is planned for this week.
- MA8:3 Mass assaults are threatened against those private steel companies and their independent-minded employees, who are still refusing to come to heel.
- MA8:4 This is not picketing. It is gangsterism.
- MA8:5 It is a deliberate attempt to terrorise men, who want to work, into joining the strike.
- MA8:6 Hadfields of Sheffield was not closed down last week by peaceful persuasion, nor by an appeal for union solidarity.
- MA8:7 It was battered into surrender by blatant intimidation.
- MA8:8 The scenes outside Hadfields were sinister, ugly and criminal.
- MA8:9 In as clear an invitation to arrest and prosecute that any Lord Chancellor could give to chief constables, Lord Hailsham yesterday uttered these trenchant and timely words:-
- MA8:10 'Let no one suppose that intimidation is legal. Let no one suppose that what we have seen on television again and again is legal under the existing law. These are breaches of the criminal law. Intimidation is unlawful and violence can amount to an affray.'
- MA8:11 Even in 'furtherance of a trade dispute', intimidation is intimidation and enjoys no immunity under existing English law.
- MA8:12 It is not as if we were dealing here with riots fuelled by spontaneous fury.
- MA8:13 Stormtrooper miners from Yorkshire, for example (and what an example), are scarcely men crazed by hardship or driven to extremes by empty bellies.
- MA8:14 They are well-heeled and well-fed.

- MA8:15 While they take time off work down the pits to do a little intimidating; they draw meal allowance and money in lieu of wages.
- MA8:16 And where does the money come from? Union funds.
- MA8:17 Flying pickets of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation are also given pocket money from union funds. Yet the ISTC is not providing strike pay as such. Oh no, it is the taxpayers who are having to find millions of pounds to support the families of striking steelworkers.
- MA8:18 Is it the most nauseating humbug, then, for union leaders to beat their humanitarian breasts and say how cruel it would be for Mrs. Thatcher to take the food out of the mouths of the children of strikers by cutting supplementary benefit to them?
- MA8:19 Unions are responsible for official strikes. They should be forced to meet at least a proportion of the cost. Let the executive of the ISTC decide whether to give beer money to bully boys or milk allowance to the babies of strikers. Let them choose and bear the odium.
- MA8:20 Why should Britain's Welfare State be softer on strikers than that of almost any other industrialised nation in the free world. Why should the police turn a blind eye to Marxist publicity-seekers who stand dictator-like at the head of their union heavies and deny to law-abiding men and women that most cherished of rights, the right to work?
- MA8:21 The mobsters are at the factory gates.
- MA8:22 They trample on the rule of law and rob innocent citizens of their liberty.
- MA8:23 The Lord Chancellor has sounded the alarm. And not before time.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA7

MA7:1 Intimidation

MA7:2 INTIMIDATION has triumphed, however temporarily, at Hadfields. You can no more convince most men and women in this country that Arthur Scargill and his irregulars were peaceful pickets than you could persuade them that Hitler's storm-troopers were a butch contingent of the Salvation Army.

MA7:3 Public opinion is outraged by such scenes.

MA7:4 Prior's law must be strong enough to defend the liberties of both workers and management at beleaguered firms like Hadfields.

MA7:5 If the Tories now place anything less on the statute book in 1980 they will be abdicating their responsibilities.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA10

- MA10:1 A tale of two trade unionists
- MA10:2 WRONG-HEADED he may be. But it is not easy to dislike Mr. Bill Sirs.
- MA10:3 He is a trade unionist pure and simple. Trying to do what he can for his members.
- MA10:4 Understandably, he is critical of the Denning judgment. Wryly, he concedes that he could conceivably end up in prison.
- MA10:5 Instinctively, however, he is law-abiding. Martyrdom may be thrust upon him. But he hasn't gone around looking for it.
- MA10:6 What a contrast to Arthur Scargill, champion bandwagon jumper from South Yorkshire.
- MA10:7 Nobody can get in on a militant trade union act with such indecent haste as this charmer with the carefully groomed Marxist quiff.
- MA10:8 There he was yesterday in time for the lunch-time news bulletins and the early editions of the evening newspapers urging trade unionists to thumb their noses at the law and to carry on picketing and striking in flagrant defiance of the Appeal Court.
- MA10:9 Wouldn't he love to be 'done' for contempt?
- MA10:10 He'd adore the publicity.
- MA10:11 The steel strike is not his dispute. He's muscled in on it. Like he barged his way into prominence at Grunwick. In spitting defiance at the law he draws attention to himself. Punk politics at its most stomach-turning.

MIRROR COMMENTMR8

- MR8:1 Desperation stakes
- MR8:2 THE Government started the steel strike and it is now about time that they stopped it.
- MR8:3 Mrs. Thatcher said yesterday that she would have no truck with people who strike for more money.
- MR8:4 But it is now clear that Government intervention to REDUCE the money available provoked the strike.
- MR8:5 Documents leaked to World In Action prove that the Steel Corporation intended to offer its workers up to 13 per cent until the Government stepped in to prevent them.
- MR8:6 Ministers who ducked the challenge from the miners were ready to take on the steel men instead. It was a crucial mistake.
- MR8:7 As a result of instructions from Sir Keith Joseph, the Corporation was only able to offer a "zero increase". That's official jargon for an Irishman's rise. Nothing.
- Reckless
- MR8:8 BSC executives knew they were asking for trouble. They were right. And they got it.
- MR8:9 The inevitable strike is now in its sixth week and growing more reckless every day.
- MR8:10 In South Yorkshire the men are threatening to withdraw safety cover from the steel plants. It's a suicidal step and they shouldn't take it.
- MR8:11 The bosses of Hadfield's, the big private steel firm, threaten to withhold taxes. That's stupid and they shouldn't do it.
- MR8:12 But both men and management are acting from desperation.
- MR8:13 The issue is not whether the Government should "win" the strike, but that it should be ended.
- MR8:14 It has already cost the taxpayer dear. More than a settlement would have done.

MR8:15 Now it looms as a threat to the jobs of thousands in other industries. It is not a fight to save the economy. Only to save the Government's face.

MR8:16 And for that it has become expensive.

MIRROR COMMENTMR9

- MR9:1 THE INVISIBLE MAN
- MR9:2 SIR KEITH JOSEPH isn't interfering in the steel strike in the same way as the Russians aren't interfering in Afghanistan.
- MR9:3 There's hardly a platform or a studio from which he isn't heard or seen broadcasting his policy of non-intervention.
- MR9:4 He non-intervenes by insisting that the Steel Corporation can't have any more money to end the strike.
- MR9:5 He non-intervenes by saying that because of the strike the steel industry will be smaller and employ even fewer men.
- MR9:6 Wouldn't it be more sensible if the size of the industry depended on future demand rather than past disputes?
- MR9:7 He non-intervenes by declaring that assets of the Steel Corporation should be sold off to private investors.
- MR9:8 But won't that make the losses of what's left even higher? If the assets are worth the private sector's buying, aren't they worth the public sector's keeping?
- MR9:9 It's obvious the steel strike is now caught up in another battle. The one between Left and Right in the Cabinet about new laws to curb the trade unions.
- MR9:10 That should be resolved at leisure. Steel is more urgent.
- MR9:11 After six weeks, the Corporation and the main unions aren't talking to each other and, apparently, can't even write to each other in English plain enough to be understood.
- MR9:12 Perhaps the only way now to break the deadlock would be for Sir Keith to set up a court of inquiry into the dispute and into the future of the steel industry.

MR9:13 . It being understood, of course, that in so doing he was not interfering. Merely pulling the strings, as usual.

MIRROR COMMENTMR10

MR10:1 Four-way split

MR10:2 THERE are now four sides in the steel strike, The Corporation, the unions and the two halves of the Cabinet.

MR10:3 One of those halves is desperate to settle. The other is determined to fight on. The Steel Corporation- and the men- must be utterly confused.

MR10:4 Last week, Mr. Jim Prior was speculating privately about what sportsmen call an early bath for the Corporation's boss, Sir Charles Villiers, and was publicly repudiated by Mrs. Thatcher for doing so.

MR10:5 That must have hurt her. She probably agrees with Mr. Prior.

Gloomy

MR10:6 On Friday, every newspaper reported Cabinet optimism about a swift end to the strike. Their informant was promptly repudiated by Sir Keith Joseph, who was as gloomy as ever.

MR10:7 None of this has helped a solution to the strike, which starts its ninth week on Wednesday.

MR10:8 So far, the Government has rejected every proposal from a court of inquiry to a straight "Give 'em the money"- to take action to end it.

MR10:9 Its dilemma is that if it moves to settle the strike it will look like surrender to the unions: the one thing it was elected NOT to do.

MR10:10 But if it waits instead for the unions to surrender, a critical industrial and economic situation will get worse.

MR10:11 Either way the Government loses. But the stark truth is that the country would be better off if the strike were over, even if the Government suffered.

MIRROR COMMENTMR13

MR13:1 Time to give and give

MR13:2 THE steel strike might end now if both sides gave a little, because it looks as if a little would be enough.

MR13:3 Despite the glee of Sir Charles Villiers, the result of the Corporation's ballot about a ballot isn't a victory for him, even if it is a defeat for the union's leaders.

MR13:4 With only 44 per cent of the men voting for another ballot on pay, there's no guarantee that a further vote would show they were willing to accept the Corporation's terms.

MR13:5 And rejection would prolong the strike, not shorten it.

Deep

MR13:6 The trouble is that both sides have dug their trenches so deep they can't see over the top of them.

MR13:7 There's no doubt that the Corporation can stick it out longer. It doesn't have a wife and family to feed.

MR13:8 But it's not in its interests for work to restart with a sullen and defeated labour force, driven back by poverty.

Solution

MR13:9 Independent examination of the industry by a court of inquiry would be the best solution, because there's a lot more wrong with steel than the wages it pays. But the Government won't have that.

MR13:10 The next best would be a more informal mediation by someone able to see both sides of the question.

MR13:11 His intervention might mean the unions accepting less than they want. It might mean the Government and the Corporation paying out more than they intended.

MR13:12 But an honourable compromise now might prevent more trouble in the future.

MIRROR COMMENTMR14

- MR14:1 Getting out of a mess
- MR14:2 THE inquiry into the steelworkers' wage claim may bring an end to the present strike but it won't do much to prevent the next one.
- MR14:3 That will be up to the Government.
- MR14:4 The British steel industry is in a mess. An embittered and exhausted workforce is ranged against a defeatist and incompetent management.
- MR14:5 After the most disastrous stoppage in its history- starting its thirteenth week today- the industry now faces its most calamitous sackings.
- Peril
- MR14:6 Over 50,000 men- a third of the workers- are due to lose their jobs later this year as the Steel Corporation plans a future production which many experts say will be below Britain's needs.
- MR14:7 The policy puts whole communities at peril- in Consett, Corby, Shotton, Port Talbot, Lannwern and the like. It adds to the destruction of Britain as an industrial nation.
- MR14:8 As soon as the pay inquiry is over the Government should appoint a powerful court of inquiry which can examine every aspect of the industry, future, present and past.
- MR14:9 The chairman of the corporation, Sir Charles Villiers, will retire by September. The Government isn't finding it easy to appoint a man willing to take over a broken-down and bankrupt industry.
- MR14:10 But a new inquiry would help a new chairman to make a new start. It could give the men new hope. And, with luck, it could give the industry a new future.

MIRROR COMMENTMR11

- MR11:1 Punish and be damned
- MR11:2 THE MAIN steel union threatens to expel 600 men working in the private steel plant at Sheerness because they won't strike to support the public sectors workers.
- MR11:3 It is a decision taken in anger. And like most such decisions, it is wrong.
- MR11:4 The steel strikers have a good case. But they'll spoil it by punishing fellow union members who have no direct part in the dispute.
- MR11:5 The union knows that the men in the private sector are on the spot. If they disobey instructions to strike they're accused of betraying work-mates who have been out now for the past eight weeks.
- MR11:6 Yet if they obey, they risk putting themselves out of a job permanently.
- MR11:7 The leader of the Iron and Steel Trade Confederation, Mr. Bill Sirs is known to be unhappy about the threat of expulsions. His instincts are right.
- MR11:8 Sheerness is not alone in refusing to strike. In Sheffield, Hadfields and Firth Brown are returning to work.
- MR11:9 So are men in Manchester and the West Midlands. They can't all be expelled.
- MR11:10 There's a lot of public support for the steel strikers.
- MR11:11 People recognise it was provoked by a rigid Government and an incompetent Corporation.
- MR11:12 But expulsions won't help the strikers' cause. Only throw away the public's goodwill.

STAR COMMENTST2

- ST2:1 Time to come off the fence
- ST2:2 HOPES of peace in the steel strike go from bad to worse. And still the Government sits defiantly on the fence.
- ST2:3 Talks between the unions and BSC have collapsed. Both sides admit they are further apart than ever. Flying pickets are out. Other unions are helping to tighten the screws.
- ST2:4 And what is the word from Industry Secretary Sir Keith Joseph? Nothing.
- ST2:5 The Tories insist that industries have to sort out their own problems. But what is that going to cost the rest of the economy?
- ST2:6 THE MOTOR TRADE has warned that if the strike lasts four weeks foreign firms could grab 75 per cent of the British car market by April.
- ST2:7 THE SHIPBUILDERS have only two weeks' supply of steel.
- ST2:8 Both face a loss of business from which they may never recover. Meanwhile, Britain's rivals jostle to snatch that business.
- ST2:9 The situation is serious. . . Soon it will be critical. . . The Government should step in now - before it becomes fatal.

STAR COMMENTST5

- ST5:1 Recipe for disaster
- ST5:2 NOBODY can accuse Sir Keith Joseph of being inconsistent. The steel strike has now dragged on to its sixth disastrous week, and the Industry Secretary still insists that the Government will do nothing to try to end it.
- ST5:3 All along he has stuck by his aim to force unions and management to reach a settlement. The result has been to force them further apart.
- ST5:4 The unions are now threatening to halt vital maintenance work on furnaces worth millions of pounds.
- ST5:5 Private steel firms are threatening to halt payments of income tax, VAT and National Insurance.
- ST5:6 Their customers are already laying off thousands of workers and the CBI has warned that several firms face bankruptcy.
- ST5:7 How much worse must things get before the Government decides to act? How much longer will they deny all responsibility for the present situation?
- ST5:8 It was Sir Keith's decision to impose strict cash limits on the British Steel Corporation which sparked off the dispute. It is now his duty to deal with the consequences.
- ST5:9 The first positive sign of Government intervention was the announcement of £48 million of aid to ease the impact of redundancies in South Wales- a move urged by the Daily Star on December 13. But much more needs to be done.
- ST5:10 Consistency among Government Ministers is often a virtue. But blind obedience to policies that are obviously not working is a recipe for disaster.

STAR COMMENTST6

- ST6:1 Three reasons to cheer
- ST6:2 THE peace deal thrashed out by the three-man inquiry into the steel strike offers the first real hope that it will soon be over. For that, the whole country owes them three hearty cheers.
- ST6:3 FIRSTLY for finding a compromise which both sides seem willing to accept.
- ST6:4 SECONDLY for achieving it in just two days- something that unions and management found impossible in 13 weeks.
- ST6:5 THIRDLY, and most important of all, for making their report unanimous- giving neither side any excuse for continuing the fight.
- ST6:6 The recommendation of a 16 per cent pay rise is slightly less than the unions wanted- and much more than management's original offer.
- ST6:7 But it is the best offer either side will get. After the longest official strike since the war there can be no winners- only losers.
- ST6:8 BSC workers have lost about £1,500 each in wages, on top of a third of their jobs. Management says it has lost orders worth hundreds of millions of pounds. But the biggest loser, once again, is the British economy.
- ST6:9 The real lesson of the past three months is that we must never let it happen again.

STAR COMMENTST3

ST3:1 Maggie: What a good move!

ST3:2 AS the steel strike drags on, Mrs. Thatcher is expected to meet the union leaders involved. A wise decision.

ST3:3 No miracles can be expected from such a meeting. But it will at least show that the Prime Minister is prepared to be less hidebound than some of her diehard supporters wish.

ST3:4 It is fashionable to sneer at Labour's midnight "beer and sandwiches" strike-settling dramas.

ST3:5 But there are times when the workers' leaders must be allowed to go right to the top.

STAR COMMENTST1

ST1:1 Costly hangover

ST1:2 WITH the holidays ending, the steel strikes starting, and rising prices, icy roads and earthquakes to contend with, it's hardly surprising that Britain came bottom of the poll in a 23-nation survey on optimism.

ST1:3 Worse still- prices expert Colin Mitchell predicts that beer could reach 60p a pint by June. Enjoy that cut-price hangover!

STAR COMMENTST4

- ST4:1 The British art of picketing
- ST4:2 THE DAYS when Britain was known as the workshop of the world are long gone. But we can still teach our industrial rivals a thing or two.
- ST4:3 When the steel strike began, messages of solidarity flooded in from trades unions throughout Europe and America. Now, steelworkers and dockers from Germany are offering more practical help- by joining their English comrades on the picket lines.
- ST4:4 "They decided they would come over here to learn how things are done", says Yorkshire strike co-ordinator Keith Jones. "They believe we have useful lessons to teach them."
- ST4:5 If more foreign workers take advantage of this specialised education, their "skills" could be adapted for a new version of Jeux Sans Frontieres- with Jim Prior taking over from Eddie Waring as the host of It's a Lockout.

THE SUN SAYSS11

- S11:1 A dead horse?
- S11:2 THE Iron and Steel Trades Confederation is one of the richest trade unions.
- S11:3 It has investments of £9,000,000, giving it an annual income of £1,000,000- on top of income from members' dues.
- S11:4 It has plenty of money for pickets and for the miners and students who are joining the line.
- S11:5 But the confederation is not providing a penny in strike pay.
- S11:6 The members have been told to go cap in hand to the state for family benefits.
- S11:7 And already more than £1,000,000 has been paid out.
- S11:8 Isn't this incredible?
- S11:9 The steel men have every right to strike. But they have no right at all to expect the rest of us to pick up the bill.
- S11:10 At the last election, the Tories declared that unions must be made to bear a fair share of the cost of supporting strikers.
- S11:11 That was the promise. Where is the fulfilment?
- S11:12 Alas, we are still waiting for Employment Secretary Jim Prior to gallop to the rescue.
- S11:13 Someone seems to have shot his horse.

THE SUN SAYSS15

S15:1 Keeping faith

S15:2 SINCE the steel strike began, around £2,750,000 has been paid out in Social Security benefits to the families of steel workers.

S15:3 Unions have given not a penny to the strikers or their families.

S15:4 Yet Bill Sir's union alone is sitting on £11,000,000.

S15:5 In their manifesto at the last Election the Tories pledged that they would ensure that unions, not the taxpayers, would bear the cost of strikes.

S15:6 Now we learn that the Social Security authorities are finding it "difficult" to implement the pledge.

S15:7 In heaven's name, why?

S15:8 It is nine months since the Election.

Promises

S15:9 Before that the Tories had FOUR YEARS, not merely to produce promises but to discover how they could best be honoured.

S15:10 What is so difficult about honouring this one?

THE SUN SAYSS17

S17:1 Why not vote?

S17:2 THE COLLAPSE of the steel talks is grave news.

S17:3 Grave for the country. Grave for the industry.
But especially grave for the workers.

S17:4 They are suffering most. One steelworker has written to The Sun, saying that he has already lost £1,000, and, even if the unions' claim were met in full, it would take him SEVEN YEARS to recoup that money.

S17:5 The mood of disenchantment was certainly reflected in the recent poll in which steelmen voted two-to-one in favour of a ballot on the latest pay offer.

S17:6 Union chief Bill Sirs has refused to accept the result of the poll. He says it was "indecisive" because 35 per cent did not vote.

S17:7 In that case, why do not the unions organise their own ballot?

S17:8 If Mr. Sirs is RIGHT about the mood of his men, such a poll could serve only to strengthen his hand.

S17:9 Could it be that he is resisting the idea because of a secret fear that he might be WRONG?

THE SUN SAYSS18

S18:1 True or false?

S18:2 ARE THE bosses of the Steel Corporation really seeking increases of 40 per cent, or £250 a week?

S18:3 One of them, Mr. Bob Scholey, has said the reports are nonsense.

S18:4 We believe him. But Bill Sirs and other union leaders apparently do not.

S18:5 It would be tragic if suspicion damaged whatever prospects there are of ending the steel strike.

S18:6 The Government are the bosses! paymasters. They must nail the lie.

APPENDIX SEVEN

This appendix contains copies of all the editorials in the sample.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE1

- E1:1 This winter's bumpy ride
- E1:2 LAST WEEK saw us jumping out of the miners' frying pan into the steelworkers' fire.
- E1:3 The short-lived euphoria over the miners' settlement despite the fact that it was at a dangerously high 20 per cent- has been followed by anxiety over a possible steel strike that would paralyse much of British industry.
- E1:4 But the steel dispute is not as bad as it might first appear. The management's initial low offer, not amounting to more than 12 per cent including a productivity bonus, and the advance union threat of industrial action, is no more than routine foreplay before negotiating begins in earnest.
- E1:5 A CBI survey may say that seven out of ten workers are willing to lower pay claims to prevent their company's liquidation and their own redundancy. But what most workers are actually doing is different from what they are saying to market researchers.
- E1:6 For as the Chancellor has said, the present 18 per cent average of pay settlements can only lead to hundreds of bankruptcies and hundreds of thousands unemployed.
- E1:7 The Government has always known that it would have to keep its seat belts tightly fastened during this winter's bumpy ride of wage claims. But the additional pressure of public spending and monetary growth still much higher than they should be is not helping.
- E1:8 A National Westminster Bank review rightly sees this winter as decisive, perhaps even determining economic prospects for the next few years.
- E1:9 But if our economic performance is to improve significantly within the next six months, it is crucial not only that pay rises moderate but that public spending and monetary growth are brought under control now.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE2

- E2:1 The right choice, Sir Charles
- E2:2 THE PROPOSED elimination of 52,000 jobs in the steel industry is a shocker. It will affect all the major steelmaking centres in the country, especially South Wales, where bitter memories of the grim 1930s are already being revived.
- E2:3 Nor is this the end of the story. Sir Charles Villiers is thinking in terms of a further 20,000 redundancies. Obviously Bill Sirs, whose Iron and Steel Trades Confederation will bear the brunt of the redundancies, has got to fight his corner.
- E2:4 But what, in fact, can he do? What are the alternatives? There is certainly a case for the view that British Steel management has been bad and short-sighted over the years. The industry is in a mess. It is losing £800,000 a day.
- E2:5 There is too much obsolescent plant which will never be profitable again, even given miracles of productivity. If the industry is to be in future viable, then all this has to be cut out.
- E2:6 In short, what we have is a hard and ruthless operation designed to make our steel industry internationally competitive. Even with these painful changes, productivity per man will rise only to the present level in France, and will be some way behind that in Germany.
- E2:7 The tragedy is that these changes should have been made gradually during the 1960s and 1970s. But as happens all too often in British industry, necessary changes are not made until they have to be put through in a desperate rush and in the worst possible economic conditions. However, we cannot go back in time and start again.
- E2:8 Sir Charles Villiers is right to concentrate production and investment in only the most modern plants, with strictly rational manning levels. Strike action over the 2 per cent pay offer- or days of protest- can make no difference. And the story of British Steel will be the story of other British industries in the next few years.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE3

- E3:1 The season of goodwill.
- E3:2 CHRISTMAS gives us a chance to express with sincerity good wishes to people for whom, normally, our feelings are anything but warm.
- E3:3 The Ayatollah Khomeini, for example. We genuinely hope that this grim figure has a pleasant Christmas- it is impossible to imagine him as merry- and we also hope that some of the spirit of Jesus- whom Islam acknowledges as a great prophet- will influence his actions in the New Year.
- E3:4 Christmas is a time of hope, when even the most battered and world weary can open themselves to the spirit of renewal.
- E3:5 So many of us will be thinking of the people of Rhodesia. Will this be the last Christmas lived under threatened by the gun?
- E3:6 The next few months will tell. But because there is now real hope there, the traditional greeting "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" can be given with added warmth and emotion.
- E3:7 Today, Christmas Eve, Len Murray, Bill Sirs and other union leaders will be talking to see if there is any way to avoid a steel strike in the New Year.
- E3:8 Certainly the prospect of beginning another New Year with another crippling industrial dispute can dent the spirit of even the most invincible optimist.
- E3:9 So we fervently hope that by Christmas Day light will have entered Congress House. If Bill Sirs can truly relax and smile over the holiday, we will all smile with him.
- E3:10 More whimsically at the end of what has been the year of the mole, may we wish a Merry Christmas to all those men and women in our diplomatic service who, over the years, have actually been working for Britain rather than the Soviet Union.
- E3:11 They get little publicity but they deserve some acknowledgement.

- E3:12 We wish a Merry Christmas to Sir Michael Edwardes in Japan. We hope that a deal with Honda will bring dividends in the new year for British Leyland.
- E3:13 Peace on earth and good will among men may at times seem a forlorn hope.
- E3:14 At Christmas we remember the message of Jesus, that the peace and good will must begin in our own hearts, and must be first expressed in our dealings with our neighbour.
- E3:15 We cannot change the world easily, but we can be good to our neighbour and build up our own areas of peace and good will.
- E3:16 A Merry Christmas, then, to you all.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE4

- E4:1 The money isn't there
- E4:2 TODAY Britain could begin the 1980s with the most disastrous industrial dispute since the coal strikes of 1974.
- E4:3 A long drawn out steel strike could cripple British industry if it is accompanied by action from the train drivers to stop the movement of state steel, and by dockers to stop handling imported steel.
- E4:4 There will, however, be one important difference between a steel strike and the coal strike, not to mention the "winter of discontent" of last year. There will be no General Election this year. The Government will not fall.
- E4:5 Nor will it give in. In many ways the steel dispute is a test of the Government's nerve. The steel industry is losing around £1 million a day, yet the steelworkers are demanding a wage increase of around 17 per cent- which is the going rate of inflation.
- E4:6 The money is not there. Only if the Government printed more money, or raided the taxpayer, could more cash be produced.
- E4:7 It will not happen. Why should it? Most people's wages are limited by what their firm or industry can actually earn. Why should steelworkers occupy a privileged position?
- E4:8 Of course it is easy to understand how they feel about a prospective reduction in their living standard. It would be rough for anybody. Yet the assumption that their living standard should be maintained- as some sort of God-given right- irrespective of the real economic value of what they produce, is wholly unreal.
- E4:9 The world is not like that. And Britain has got to learn the lesson if it is ever to pull itself up again.
- E4:10 A long strike would not only damage British industry in general. It will hit the long term future of the steel industry. Some plants that close may never re-open.

E4:11 And the steelworkers? Many recent industrial disputes have shown how long it takes for workers to make up again the wages that were lost.

E4:12 In short, everybody will lose. Is it too late for rationality to come in and take over.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE5

- E5:1 The day of the picket
- E5:2 WE HAVE been promised "a long and bitter" dispute in the steel industry following the breakdown of talks. And certainly the pickets are now stopping the movement of steel wherever they can.
- E5:3 There is no moral justification for pickets stopping the movement of imported steel, or the supply of steel from private steel makers who are not involved in the dispute.
- E5:4 Indeed, there is no justification for pickets interfering with anybody going about his lawful business. But the law as it stands gives protection to those who do, if it is in furtherance of a trade dispute.
- E5:5 This curious state of affairs has to wait for the enactment of the Government's Employment Bill before picketing can be subject to reasonable restriction- namely to the striker's own place of work.
- E5:6 In the meantime, we can expect to see picketing employed ruthlessly in support of the steelworkers' industrial action.
- E5:7 Yet it seems certain that they are on to a loser. The Government, which could easily step in to provide more cash, appears to be determined to sit it out whatever the cost.
- E5:8 Bear in mind the fact that the Government has a substantial majority, and that there will be no General Election for several years, and it is clear that Mrs. Thatcher and Sir Keith Joseph can hold out for longer than can the steelworkers- provided they keep their nerve.
- E5:9 What will happen to a virtually bankrupt steel industry in the meantime is another matter.
- E5:10 How many jobs will be left when all this is over? Productivity in the steel industry may not be as low as has been made out, because the French and the Germans do the sums on a different basis from us.

E5:11 Even so, the £1,000,000-a-day losses of the British Steel Corporation show that the industry is simply not earning the money to pay the wages that are being demanded.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE6

- E6:1 Striking back on steel
- E6:2 THE STEEL strike seems bound to escalate with the British Steel Corporation's decision to reduce the workforce dramatically in South Wales.
- E6:3 We now face the probable involvement of the miners and other non-steel unions.
- E6:4 What started as a dispute over pay- with a settlement very nearly reached on a modest rise linked to productivity- has now widened to include the whole question of shutdowns and redundancies.
- E6:5 The Iron and Steel Confederation's original challenge to the BSC over its wage demand has developed into a TUC confrontation with the Government on its whole industrial and employment policy.
- E6:6 By agreeing to let Sir Keith Joseph and Mr. Prior hold talks with Mr. Sirs, Mrs. Thatcher has not performed a Heath-type U turn.
- E6:7 It is not so much that the Government has moved to intervene as that trade unions have widened the dispute, to include the Government.
- E6:8 Through the increasing confusion and complication of the dispute, one thing stands like a stone.
- E6:9 Because of the dramatic collapse of the world steel market and its resultant inability to pay off its debts, the Steel Corporation is, to all intents and purposes, bankrupt.
- E6:10 It simply has not got the money to pay its employees more if they do not earn their pay rises by increased productivity.
- E6:11 Nor can the Government afford to keep on subsidising industries that do not break even or make a profit.
- E6:12 The unions are surely capable of understanding the fundamental economic sense of this- and so of ending a strike that is a gift to our foreign competitors while crippling further our declining industries, like steel.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE7

- E7:1 Law and strikers
- E7:2 IN a confused legal situation the latest ruling has to be accepted as the authoritative one.
- E7:3 So unless the House of Lords overrules Lord Denning's Court of Appeal, the court's ruling on the steel strike must be accepted. Which means the steel unions must call off strike action in the private sector, and the trade union ban on the movement of steel must be lifted.
- E7:4 Of course, the present situation was tailor-made for Arthur Scargill, the Yorkshire miners' leader. This desperately ambitious man, with his thirst for personal publicity, can hardly be expected to neglect an opportunity to cast himself in the role of trade union hero- even martyr.
- E7:5 So he places himself on the rhetorical barricades, demanding defiance of the Court of Appeal. He asserts that workers should pay more attention to their trade union than to the court.
- E7:6 No other country in the world entertains such a virious doctrine. We may be sure that if he were in charge of Britain "King" Arthur would take a dim view of anybody who defied his rulings.
- E7:7 The real point is that if individuals, or organisations such as trade unions or companies are going to decide what laws to obey and what not, then we will live in a state of anarchy.
- E7:8 The law is there to be obeyed until or unless it is changed in a proper constitutional manner.
- E7:9 It would be helpful if the Leader of the Opposition, James Callaghan, were to throw his own weight behind the law. Or will Labour out of office connive at lawlessness as it has done before?
- E7:10 What is most important is that the Government's own legislation should be strengthened, clarified, and pushed through without delay.
- E7:11 So that the Denning version of the law is laid down in black and white, unambiguously, on the Statute Book.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE8

- E8:1 Time to change the law
- E8:2 THE LAW of England is what the House of Lords says it is- it is the highest court in the country, and it has the last word.
- E8:3 But if it is lawful for the steel unions to create a strike in the private sector, where there is no real dispute, and if it is right for the unions acting in collaboration with the steel union to stop the movement of steel through the ports and across the country, then all we can say is that the law is wrong.
- E8:4 By this we do not mean that it should be disobeyed. The Daily Express recommends trade unions to obey legal rulings which go against them. We accept rulings which go against what we believe.
- E8:5 It is, however, quite consistent with obedience to the law to argue that the law should be changed in a constitutional manner.
- E8:6 The trouble is that the Government Bill which is before the House makes scarcely a dent in the vast immunities which trade unions enjoy. Nothing in the Bill will make a criminal offence the kind of obstruction which the House of Lords judges to be perfectly legal.
- E8:7 As things stand, the unions could, perfectly lawfully, mount a blockade against the country's economic life far more severe than anything imagined, let alone carried out, by Hitler's U-boats in the Second World War.
- E8:8 The brutal truth is this. To stop intimidatory picketing, secondary picketing, or blacking, requires being willing to bring trade unionists before the courts if they do not obey the law.
- E8:9 Which in turn means being willing to face a general strike.
- E8:10 All talk about "trades union reform" comes down to this. It is, in fact, the big question in our national life.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE9

- E9:1 Freedom vs the unions
- E9:2 AS THE steel strike drags on and involves more and more people, it is starkly obvious that the Government's present plans are pathetically inadequate to deal with the situation.
- E9:3 The Bill going through the Commons would make no difference to the ability of the steel unions to extend the dispute to the private sector, it would not stop other unions from stopping the movement of foreign steel into and across the country.
- E9:4 Perhaps the amendments which the Government will put forward this week will do something about these points.
- E9:5 We hope so, although it must be said that Mr. Jim Prior in his anxiety to play the role of conciliator, holds out no great hopes.
- E9:6 Yet if the Government fails to find a way to curb the abuse of trade union power it will have failed on one of the fundamental issues upon which it was elected, and upon which it has the support of the overwhelming majority in the country.
- E9:7 In these circumstances, there can be no excuses. The work has got to be done on the immunities that trade unions enjoy.
- E9:8 As things stand they can do virtually anything they like if, in their opinion, it is "in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute".
- E9:9 Lord Denning has tried to make some inroads into this principle, but the Lords have overruled him.
- E9:10 And all the Government is proposing to do is to remove immunities from secondary picketing without doing anything serious about intimidatory secondary picketing, provide public money for secret ballots, which will not be compulsory, by the way, and to give greater compensation to victims of the closed shop without abolishing it.
- E9:11 It is peanuts. As with public spending the Government will be getting all the brickbats from the vested interests they are assaulting, but without the benefits from having done a thorough job.
- E9:12 It is not too late to think again. It will be soon.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE10

- E10:1 Stop pussyfooting Mr. Prior, time is running out
- E10:2 HOW CAN the Tory Government hope to make Britain great if it cannot make it work?
- E10:3 It's about time that they realised that they have a mandate for tough, direct action to solve the jungle of industrial relations- and to stop pussy-fotting around with meek and mild policies.
- E10:4 They must show that they are prepared to do the job the country asked them to do.
- E10:5 It is no good Sir Keith Joesph saying that the management and the unions should get together and settle their differences. How can they when the management faces an unequal battle against union strength?
- E10:6 It is no good when he blocks a pay offer to the steelmen that would have averted a strike because, he claims, it would have increased inflation.
- E10:7 What has he got now? 17 per cent bank rate and a national steel strike that is going to cost each and everyone of us a damn sight more.
- E10:8 Jim Prior, afraid to take the firm steps that would strengthen the hand of the law, refuses to outlaw secondary picketing.
- E10:9 This was a battle fought by this newspaper last year. And, as we said in 1977, the Government must give the management the right to manage and the workers the right to work.
- E10:10 The Government came to power nine months ago with radical ideas for changing our fortunes. They have accomplished very little. A tight-money, free enterprise policy is the right one but it won't work unless the industrial relations problem has been dealt with.
- E10:11 The mistake the Tories made was to embark on a monetary policy before tackling industrial relations.
- E10:12 Look at their record. Public expenditure and borrowing have not been cut. They have increased. So has the rate of inflation. So has the interest rate.

Don't squander the chance

- E10:13 We do not ask Mrs. Thatcher to weaken because we cannot take the heat. We will take a lot more heat if we feel the Government is really getting to grips with things and is prepared to ride a great storm if necessary. We will join the ride.
- E10:14 The deep and real fear among many who supported the Tories at the last election is that the first precious two years of office- the time for ruthless actions- will be squandered by the softly, softly approach in practice, together with tough sounding speeches which mean nothing.
- E10:15 During the war Churchill would put on top of urgent memos the words "action this day". He was not interested in excuses of people who would not be hurried.
- E10:16 Well, Britain is fighting a war now- against trade union power, against inflation, against restrictive practices, against low productivity and ill discipline, against decline.
- E10:17 There is a need for urgency and dispatch at the top. Why are we waiting?

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE11

- E11:1 Leading the steel men
- E11:2 THE LABOUR force at Hadfields, one of Britain's biggest steel firms, return to work today.
- E11:3 By ending their "reluctant" support for the dispute at State-Owned British Steel, they are not only defying their union and its intimidatory pickets; they are also giving a dramatic lead which the rest of the private steel sector would do well to follow.
- E11:4 The decision to go back is, of course, a personal triumph for "Desperate Dan" Norton, a man who exemplifies the best in British management- and whom his employees rightly regard not so much as a boss, more as a leader.
- E11:5 But it is also a triumph for the common sense of the British worker, a common sense which we hope will rapidly infect Her Majesty's ministers- and induce them to outlaw, with all haste and effectiveness, both secondary picketing and blacking.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE12

- E12:1 THIS WAS the scene at Hadfield yesterday where 1,200 pickets, many led by Yorkshire miner's leader Arthur Scargill, frightened the workforce of Britain's largest steelworks back on strike.
- E12:2 Mr. Dan Norton, Chairman of the Sheffield firm, said: "Intimidation and anarchy have won a total victory".
- E12:3 A Hadfield's convener said: "Loss of life has nothing to do with the trade union movement. But after all we have been through today it became obvious lives may be lost".

PROTECTION

- E12:4 "We were determined to continue working. But we were told that if we did there would be 2,000 pickets tomorrow. I would challenge anyone to go through that picket line and face what we went through today."
- E12:5 His experience, Mr. Pussyfoot Prior, is why the people of this country voted you and your party into office. They want protection. They want a law to defend them against intimidation... from flying pickets like these.
- E12:6 You have the mandate to act. Unless you listen to the people who put you in office, your whole Government may become obsolete.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE13

- E13:1 The power of the pickets
- E13:2 OBVIOUSLY frustrated by the fact that the miners voted for a settlement rather than a strike this year, Arthur Scargill and now Mick McGahey are keen to satisfy their thirst for industrial action by getting into the steel strike.
- E13:3 The flying pickets which were successful at Hadfield's last Thursday, this week threaten to descend on the Sheerness Steel Company in Kent, Manchester Steel and the Bidston plant in Birkenhead.
- E13:4 And the name of the game is bullying and intimidation. The function of the police, apart from catching wrongdoers, is to enable law-abiding citizens to go about their business in peace.
- E13:5 Are we to accept that when it comes to industrial disputes none of this applies?
- E13:6 The Tory Government, among other things, was elected to maintain law and order.
- E13:7 Nor is it any use Mr. Prior talking about laws against secondary picketing which will be on the Statute Book by the summer.
- E13:8 Massive intimidatory picketing blatantly violates the law as it already stands.
- E13:9 The only legal right pickets have is to inform and persuade peacefully.
- E13:10 Nobody pretends that this is what is going on now.
- E13:11 If necessary, chief constables should be told that they are expected to carry out this basic police duty, as did the Metropolitan Police in the case of Grunwick.
- E13:12 If necessary, the Public Order Act can be toughened up, or, as Mr. Jon Gorst has suggested, the law which forbids people to hold demonstrations outside polling stations at General Elections can be applied to industrial disputes.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE14

- E14:1 LORD HAILSHAM has made it clear that mobs who stand outside factory gates calling themselves pickets but behaving like gangsters are in violation of the existing law.
- E14:2 There is no immunity for them. None of the laws which bestow such wide-ranging immunities upon trade unions give a licence for thuggery.
- E14:3 So if the criminal law is being blatantly violated in the context of an industrial dispute, the duty of the police is to enforce the law- no more and no less than in any other situation.
- E14:4 Violence or intimidation aside, where at least the law is clear, the question remains about the usefulness of Mr. Prior's Employment Bill when it comes to secondary picketing.
- E14:5 He has rejected criminal sanctions. Was that really as wise and statesmanlike as he likes to think? In our view he has made the wrong choice and his policy will fail unless it is drastically strengthened.
- E14:6 Certainly the idea of suing actual pickets, or seeking injunctions against them, is frankly ludicrous. The boss would have to find out their names and addresses:
- E14:7 "Excuse me sir, can you give me your name and address so that I might seek an injunction against you in the High Court?"
- E14:8 "I'm the Duke of Wellington 'guv. You can get me at the House of Lords."
- E14:9 Of course, even if you get an injunction one picket can be replaced by another. No, the employer will sue the union organiser. And there you come up against a would be martyr.
- E14:10 Moreover, union organisers in general could well issue orders for secondary picketing to cease only to have their orders defied by the militants.
- E14:11 Then you are back to talking to the 'Duke of Wellington' or the 'Prince of Wales'.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE15

- E15:1 How to get nowhere .
- E15:2 "SOFTLY Softly catchee monkey" may be a good motto if, in the end, you catch something, but Pussyfoot Prior is catching nobody or nothing in his "consultative paper".
- E15:3 What a pathetic show. He proposes to narrow union immunities "with regard to secondary action", but not when it comes to "first suppliers or customers" of the firms in the dispute.
- E15:4 Feeling confused? So are we. What it boils down to is that when secondary industrial action is "remote" from the original action (in the opinion of whom?) then an employer will be able to seek an injunction or damages from the people who are doing it.
- E15:5 So the employer will be able to sue the union will he? Well no, he will be able to sue named individuals.
- E15:6 What is more, the type of secondary action we have seen in the steel dispute will be for the most part O.K. in law so far as Mr. Prior is concerned.
- E15:7 Despite overwhelming public demand for an end to the do-as-we- please union arrogance and tyranny, despite the fact that the Tories gained office last May to a large extent on the promise to do something effective about the abuse of union power, as the Americans say: "We've got plenty of nothin".
- E15:8 Why? It is clear that Mr. Prior does not want to do anything about the unions. If he did, he would remove legal immunity for action in favour of a closed shop, he would make the unions themselves and their funds liable at law in cases of secondary picketing. And he would remove immunities for all secondary action.
- E15:9 Again why? Because Mr. Prior is afraid that anything effective would provoke the unions into a General Strike. And he does not know how to deal with that.
- E15:10 In truth, counsels of fear or timidity are never a good guide to action. If there must be a showdown with the unions, then the sooner we face it the better.

E15:11 Mr. Prior's petty blows will annoy them without hurting them. Which is a recipe for defeat and disgrace.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE16

- E16:1 SIR CHARLES VILLIERS is, at the moment, Chairman of British Steel whether Mr. James Prior likes it or not.
- E16:2 It may well be true that he has already undermined his credibility by bungling the talks right from the beginning.
- E16:3 But for a senior Government minister to suggest that Sir Charles might therefore be prematurely retired is to stab him in the back and undermine his authority even more. That can only further delay a strike settlement.
- E16:4 He should not interfere in matters which are not his departmental responsibility.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE17

E17:1 Undemocratic striking

E17:2 THE steelworkers of Consett never wanted to strike and now they want to return to work- that is the unequivocal message they have given to the Daily Express.

E17:3 But the steel union demanded their support- or else it would not help them get redundancy pay. So the steelworkers were blackmailed into striking and are now being blackmailed into staying out.

E17:4 The union never gave them the chance to vote on whether or not they wanted to strike. And now Mr. Bill Sirs has ordered them to ignore the postal ballot being paid for by the British Steel Corporation.

E17:5 For the introduction of such democracy would instantly expose how unrepresentative our union leaders can be. So often they speak not for their members- just for their own egos or extreme political views.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE18

- E18:1 Now it must be settled!
- E18:2 THE 10-week-old steel strike must surely now come to an end. Mr. Bill Sirs, the leader of the main steel union, has been totally discredited by the turnout- and vote- in British Steel's ballot on whether there should be a union ballot on the 14.4 per cent pay offer.
- E18:3 A massive 65 per cent of workers have defied his instructions not to participate in the British Steel ballot- and of those 65 per cent, 69 per cent have voted for a union pay ballot.
- E18:4 This was a double slap in the face for Mr. Sirs on the eve of today's talks with the British Steel Corporation.
- E18:5 Its effect can only be a knockout blow for the unions proposal to increase the present 14.4 per cent offer.
- E18:6 The workers' defiance comes as no surprise considering that the strike has so far lost each of them £1,000.
- E18:7 A democratic postal ballot has once again demonstrated how unrepresentative union leaders are of their own members.
- E18:8 Mr. Sirs goes into today's talks with his position totally undermined by his own workers. On the other hand, British Steel management will be enormously strengthened in their resolve not to offer any more money unless it is self-financed by productivity deals.
- E18:9 A quick settlement must now be in the interests of everybody- of the industry which may have lost 20 per cent of its market; of the workers who have already lost so much money; and of the union leaders who have lost so much credibility.

DAILY EXPRESS OPINIONE19

- E19:1 Who's for a strike?
- E19:2 BEFORE Christmas there was a general fear that the steel strike would bring British industry to its knees early in the New Year. Indeed, this was the objective of Bill Sirs' strategy.
- E19:3 Yet, after 12 weeks, the strike drags on and British industry is nowhere near a state of collapse. No doubt there are difficulties. Of course there must be shortages. But life goes on without the contribution of the steelworkers in the nationalised corporation.
- E19:4 As a strong weapon that was to coerce the Steel Corporation and the Government, the strike has failed.
- E19:5 Some time back another example was afforded by the firemen. There was a strike which was billed to have even more horrendous consequences. But the troops coped.
- E19:6 For years the strike was held to be an irresistible weapon. And some workers, such as the miners and the power workers, do have the capacity to bring the economy grinding to a halt.
- E19:7 But they are a minority. More important is the prevailing climate of tight money. Nationalised firms and private firms have limited amounts of cash.
- E19:8 In this climate strikers risk putting themselves on the dole queue because some plants and factories will not re-open. Then there are the lost wages- in the case of the steelworkers these amount to well over £1,200 in many cases.
- E19:9 All the more important then to give the workers themselves a more direct say in whether they go on strike- through the secret ballot.
- E19:10 The Government should strengthen its Bill so as to make strike ballots compulsory to give more power to the workers whose jobs and living standards are placed in the firing line by ambitious union leaders.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA1

- MA1:1 Cold realism and hot steel
- MA1:2 THE threat of a national steel strike is folly born of despair.
- MA1:3 You have to have a balance sheet, instead of a heart, not to feel some sympathy for the men who work in this industry.
- MA1:4 No sooner had they become resigned to the disappearance of 20,000 jobs, than they are having to face the prospect of losing 32,000 more.
- MA1:5 Sometimes it must seem to them that British Steel is suffering from an especially cruel and irreversible form of the slimmers' disease anorexia nervosa.
- MA1:6 Even worse, the pay rise they are being offered is a mere 2 p.c.
- MA1:7 So Mr. Bill Sirs, the moderate leader of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, feels driven to stand and make a fight of it.
- MA1:8 But the poor chap and his 85,000 members are not even fighting with their backs to the wall. Behind them is nothing except the abyss.
- MA1:9 It is suicide. Sheer suicide.
- MA1:10 If they do succeed in shutting down the industry, losses currently running at £1 million a day will become even more cataclysmic. That, in turn, must mean even more redundancies.
- MA1:11 And what if a strike were to produce a substantial improvement in basic pay- what would be the end product of that?
- MA1:12 The same again. One steel man's pay rise would be another steel man's one-way ticket to the dole queue. They can't win.
- MA1:13 Indeed, it is by no means certain that most of Bill Sirs' members have the stomach to start so pathetic a battle. No battle has been held.

- MA1:14 In the Blast Furnacemen's Union, where a ballot was held on whether or not there should be industrial action to protest against the partial closure of the Corby steelworks, the result was five-to-one against.
- MA1:15 Significant also, maybe, that Mr. Moss Evans - not exactly a paragon of restraint - shows no inclination to commit his tens of thousands of men in steel to a hopeless strike.
- MA1:16 The hard truth is that there is only one way forward for British Steel: fewer men, many fewer men working more productively, far more productively.
- MA1:17 In Britain, the average steelworker produces 108 tons a year. In Germany, the figure is 200 tons, in France 180 tons.
- MA1:18 That is why the steel corporation in this country is offering its workers next to nothing on basic pay, but up to 10 p.c. extra for those who can and will work more efficiently.
- MA1:19 It would be utterly dishonest, however, not to concede that improved productivity will also create yet more redundancies in this benighted industry.
- MA1:20 For the world is in recession and already cluttered up with surplus steel nobody wants to buy.
- MA1:21 Because, when times were not so bad, successive Governments could not summon up the courage to back the tough measures required to make British Steel viable and competitive, the painful changes are having to be pushed through now, when the economic weather is foul.
- MA1:22 A national steel strike will not avert these changes. It can only render them more traumatic.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA2

- MA2:1 Last chance for steel
- MA2:2 UNLESS there is some last-minute agreement arrived at when they meet Sir Charles Villiers, the BSC chairman, today, the steelworkers are now committed to strike in the new year.
- MA2:3 Their grievance is that British Steel's offer of a 2 p.c. rise in pay is 'unrealistic'.
- MA2:4 They are quite right, but not in the sense they mean.
- MA2:5 For, given the hopeless productivity of the British steelworkers, and the fact that the corporation is losing a million pounds a day, what is surely unrealistic is to offer any wage increase at all.
- MA2:6 But that apart, what possible purpose will a strike in January serve? It can only result in reduced orders and, therefore, less jobs at a time when customers are few, and world steel capacity far exceeds the demand.
- MA2:7 The awful truth is that nobody owes the British Steel workers a living.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA3

- MA3:1 Once more on to the cold lino .
- MA3:2 HAPPY NEW YEAR? What's so happy about it, you may well ask.
- MA3:3 The immediate prospect is as enticing as cold linoleum to a bare foot.
- MA3:4 When asked to christen the infant 1980, gloomy Jim Callaghan- scarce bothering to conceal the relish of one, who now Leader of the Opposition, hopes to make political mud-pies in the rain- could think of no term more apt than 'the year of recession'.
- MA3:5 That economic prediction sounds fairly safe. And, as if to put it beyond even unreasonable doubt, along come jogging Bill Sirs and his steelmen first-footing it into New Year news bulletins with the first national steel strike since the General Strike of 1926.
- MA3:6 Already, before most men and women return to factories and offices after the long Christmas lie-in, the steel furnaces are being banked down and vast tracts of British industry are ringing the weeks on the calendar that could lead to crisis and closure by early February.
- MA3:7 There is a wintry sense of deja vu... of, 'Oh God, here we go again'.
- MA3:8 What reason have we to think that the steelmen and other desperate and determined groups of trade unionists in the early 80s will not bury Mrs. Thatcher and her hopes of regenerating Britain as surely as the miners and the local authority workers saw off Ted Heath and Jim Callaghan in the 70s?
- MA3:9 That is the question you will not find in any seasonal quiz. For there is no sure answer to it.
- MA3:10 The Daily Mail has a hunch, however, that this lady is not for burning.
- MA3:11 Her will and her nerve are of the finest. As the respected West German newspaper Die Welt says, in naming her woman of the year:-

- MA3:12 'There has never been the slightest doubt about the unswerving resolution and certain direction of this woman.'
- MA3:13 The messages she is trying to put across are neither complicated nor novel. She believes that high wages have to be earned by higher productivity; that the State should spend less, borrow less and interfere less.
- MA3:14 Most people would agree.
- MA3:15 The problem, as with New Year resolutions to drink less or to take more exercise, is not the making of them, but the keeping of them.
- MA3:16 Yet it is not unknown for men and women to go on a modest diet and to lose weight. To cut down, even give up smoking!
- MA3:17 The decisions, the discipline, the sacrifices involved for the average family in working a little harder and expecting a little less from the Welfare State are no more epic nor severe than many unremarkable alterations we make in our daily routine.
- MA3:18 Such resolution as Britain needs to make the most of the 1980s is there for the mobilising.
- MA3:19 Attitudes to all kinds of things- morals, education, women- can and do change. There is no reason why attitudes to work and welfare should not change, too.
- MA3:20 So let's drink to the 80s. They're bound to be better than they look from beneath the bedclothes tomorrow morning.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA4

- MA4:1 Champions of the downhill race
- MA4:2 HUSTLE, bustle- what a busy, busy time it is for this country's scurrying trade union leaders.
- MA4:3 Mr. Len Murray, lugubrious and self-important is here, there and everywhere.
- MA4:4 Liaison committees are being set up.
- MA4:5 Guidelines agreed.
- MA4:6 International brotherhood invoked.
- MA4:7 Savour the moment. For this is one of those rare occasions when you can witness the Great British trade union movement acting with a sense of national purpose and a will to achieve a common goal... an 'own-goal'.
- MA4:8 The wrecking of the economy.
- MA4:9 Now, in the immortal words of Prince Phillip, the brothers are 'pulling their fingers out'. They really do feel involved in the steel strike. They respond to the challenge of closing down furnaces and foundaries; of fighting to preserve unproductive jobs.
- MA4:10 Here mobilised, is a truly impressive display of that force for negative action which has the hallmark throughout the world of organised British labour. United they fail.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA5

- MA5:1 At last Sir Keith is put to the test
- MA5:2 THE Government will not intervene in the steel strike. And yesterday, with Parliament back in business, Sir Keith Joseph explained why there are to be no beer and sandwiches this side of the industrial grave.
- MA5:3 His arguments were bleak and convincing.
- MA5:4 At present, other British workers, through their taxes, are providing £1,800 in subsidy a year for every steelworker in employment. This simply cannot go on.
- MA5:5 The Steel Corporation are now effectively offering 12 p.c. plus in increased pay tied to improvements in productivity.
- MA5:6 Sir Keith Joseph is not saying that this is a final offer or an offer that cannot be juggled or jiggled or stretched. What he is saying is that the Government is not going to promote the juggling, jiggling or stretching.
- MA5:7 So there must be no 'independent inquiry' set up by the Government. No reference to the Clegg Commission on pay comparability. . No discreet undermining of Sir Charles Villiers.
- MA5:8 For many years, Sir Keith has preached. Now he must practice the most exquisite form of torturing self-discipline known to modern British political man.
- MA5:9 He must sit on his hands immobile hour after hour, day after day, week after week and, it may be, month after month, while the industrial crisis grinds on. What he must on no account do- and nobody understands it more profoundly than the anguished guru of Mrs. Thatcher's Government- is plunge his hands into the public purse to buy off the strikers.
- MA5:10 The phoney skirmishing is over. The real test of will between the unions and this new Government, which happens to be Tory, has begun.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA6

- MA6:1 These laws are as clear as mud
- MA6:2 LORD DENNING is a very great lawyer. But his leading Appeal Court judgment on the steel strike shows that there is a limit to the good sense that even he can extract from bad law.
- MA6:3 With his views, as such, we have no quarrel. They are a splendid embodiment of the popular will. Secondary picketing is a thoroughly nasty practice. The overwhelming majority of men and women, in and out of trade unions, do detest it and want to see it outlawed.
- MA6:4 The extension of the steel strike to workers in the private steel firms is an excessive and authoritarian abuse of union power. These men have no quarrel with their own employers. They are not party to any dispute with the British Steel Corporation. Most of them do not want to strike. And there has been no union attempt to ballot their opinions.
- MA6:5 The jump, however, from condemnation to legal judgment does appear to be one of the most audacious the Master of the Rolls has ever made.
- MA6:6 Tory plans to make secondary picketing illegal have not yet reached the statute book.
- MA6:7 Lord Denning's judgment on when is a trade dispute not a trade dispute sounds to be in flat contradiction to the majority ruling of the Law Lords only a month or so back.
- MA6:8 His supporting argument that the steel unions have gone beyond the terms of a simple trade dispute by striking at the Government would be more compelling if it were not the Government which ultimately controls the purse strings of this debt-ridden nationalised industry.
- MA6:9 For the moment, what Lord Denning and his two fellow Appeal Court judges have declared to be the law is, indeed, the law. Until and unless the Lords find otherwise, it must be obeyed by all the citizens in the land.

MA6:10 For the future, this Tory Government must both strengthen and more speedily implement plans for responsible union reform.

MA6:11 They can't leave it all to Lord Denning. However tireless his efforts, the existing laws, on which he seeks to ground limits to overweening trade union power, have the solidity of quicksand and the clarity of activated sludge.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA7

MA7:1 Intimidation

MA7:2 INTIMIDATION has triumphed, however temporarily, at Hadfields. You can no more convince most men and women in this country that Arthur Scargill and his irregulars were peaceful pickets than you could persuade them that Hitler's stormtroopers were a butch contingent of the Salvation Army.

MA7:3 Public opinion is outraged by such scenes.

MA7:4 Prior's law must be strong enough to defend the liberties of both workers and management at beleaguered firms like Hadfields.

MA7:5 If the Tories now place anything less on the statute book in 1980 they will be abdicating their responsibilities.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA8

- MA8:1 Mobsters at the factory gates
- MA8:2 MORE trade union thuggery is planned for this week.
- MA8:3 Mass assaults are threatened against those private steel companies and their independent-minded employees, who are still refusing to come to heel.
- MA8:4 This is not picketing. It is gangsterism.
- MA8:5 It is a deliberate attempt to terrorise men, who want to work, into joining the strike.
- MA8:6 Hadfields of Sheffield was not closed down last week by peaceful persuasion, nor by an appeal for union solidarity.
- MA8:7 It was battered into surrender by blatant intimidation.
- MA8:8 The scenes outside Hadfields were sinister, ugly and criminal.
- MA8:9 In as clear an invitation to arrest and prosecute that any Lord Chancellor could give to chief constables, Lord Hailsham yesterday uttered these trenchant and timely words:-
- MA8:10 'Let no one suppose that intimidation is legal. Let no one suppose that what we have seen on television again and again is legal under the existing law. These are breaches of the criminal law. Intimidation is unlawful and violence can amount to an affray.'
- MA8:11 Even in 'furtherance of a trade dispute', intimidation is intimidation and enjoys no immunity under existing English law.
- MA8:12 It is not as if we were dealing here with riots fuelled by spontaneous fury.
- MA8:13 Stormtrooper miners from Yorkshire, for example (and what an example), are scarcely men crazed by hardship or driven to extremes by empty bellies.
- MA8:14 They are well-heeled and well-fed.

- MA8:15 While they take time off work down the pits to do a little intimidating, they draw meal allowance and money in lieu of wages.
- MA8:16 And where does the money come from? Union funds.
- MA8:17 Flying pickets of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation are also given pocket money from union funds. Yet the ISTC is not providing strike pay as such. Oh no, it is the taxpayers who are having to find millions of pounds to support the families of striking steelworkers.
- MA8:18 Is it not the most nauseating humbug, then, for union leaders to beat their humanitarian breasts and say how cruel it would be for Mrs. Thatcher to take the food out of the mouths of the children of strikers by cutting supplementary benefit to them?
- MA8:19 Unions are responsible for official strikes. They should be forced to meet at least a proportion of the cost. Let the executive of the ISTC decide whether to give beer money to bully boys or milk allowance to the babies of strikers. Let them choose and bear the odium.
- MA8:20 Why should Britain's Welfare State be softer on strikers than that of almost any other industrialised nation in the free world. Why should the police turn a blind eye to Marxist publicity-seekers who stand dictator-like at the head of their union heavies and deny to law-abiding men and women that most cherished of rights, the right to work?
- MA8:11 The mobsters are at the factory gates.
- MA8:22 They trample on the rule of law and rob innocent citizens of their liberty.
- MA8:23 The Lord Choncellor has sounded the alarm. And not before time.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA9

- MA9:1 Suicide is ceasing to be fashionable
- MA9:2 A NEW spirit of dour realism seems to be gaining ground at last in Britain.
- MA9:3 Faced with the warning that their firm could well go out of business, the men at the private steel firm of Hadfields have yet again nerved themselves to return to work. They have done so in defiance of the official instruction of the steel unions and with the memory of mass intimidatory picketing fresh and bruising.
- MA9:4 In Wales, the miners have rejected by a five-to-one majority the advice of their local union leaders to strike in support of the steel workers. Their bitter calculation is that such action could only accelerate the pace of pit closures.
- MA9:5 At British Leyland, the work-force has refused to come out in protest strike against the dismissal of Derek Robinson.
- MA9:6 They know that the future of BL's Longbridge works hangs by a thread.
- MA9:7 These are hard lessons learned the hard way. This is the restraint of men edging back from the precipice, despite the blind union pressure still coming from behind.
- MA9:8 Industrial suicide is becoming less fashionable with British workers. That is something. The real breakthrough will come when our union leaders also wake up to economic reality.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA10

- MA10:1 A tale of two trade unionists
- MA10:2 WRONG-HEADED he may be. But it is not easy to dislike Mr. Bill Sirs.
- MA10:3 He is a trade unionist pure and simple. Trying to do what he can for his members.
- MA10:4 Understandably, he is critical of the Denning judgment. Wryly, he concedes that he could conceivably end up in prison.
- MA10:5 Instinctively, however, he is law-abiding. Martyrdom may be thrust upon him. But he hasn't gone around looking for it.
- MA10:6 What a contrast to Arthur Scargill, champion bandwagon jumper from South Yorkshire.
- MA10:7 Nobody can get in on a militant trade union act with such indecent haste as this charmer with the carefully groomed Marxist quiff.
- MA10:8 There he was yesterday in time for the lunch-time news bulletins and the early editions of the evening newspapers urging trade unionists to thumb their noses at the law and to carry on picketing and striking in flagrant defiance of the Appeal Court.
- MA10:9 Wouldn't he love to be 'done' for contempt?
- MA10:10 He'd adore the publicity.
- MA10:11 The steel strike is not his dispute. He's muscled in on it. Like he barged his way into prominence at Grunwick. In spitting defiance at the law he draws attention to himself. Punk politics at its most stomach-turning.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA11

- MA11:1 Victims crying out for justice
- MA11:2 ONE private steel firm has been driven to breaking point.
- MA11:3 Shut down by secondary strike action, Hadfields of Sheffield is losing £½ million a week. Now chairman Derek Norton says that while this crippling dispute lasts he will refuse to pay taxes and insurance to the Government worth £2 million a month.
- MA11:4 The law which smiled on the strikers would if it were put to the test almost certainly scowl on Mr. Norton.
- MA11:5 Yet no less than the innocent passer-by who is mugged, Mr. Norton and his firm are victims crying out for justice.
- MA11:6 Not only are they victims but they are also the breadwinners for the nation.
- MA11:7 It is they and their like who support the State, subsidise its welfare needs and foot the bill for its follies.
- MA11:8 Yes, it is the money squeezed out of what wealth can still be created by such private enterprise which pays for schools, hospitals, debt-ridden nationalised industries and even handouts to the families of strikers.
- MA11:9 The banners behind which our unions march still proclaim the brotherhood of man.
- MA11:10 Some brotherhood when the only solidarity they can show is to bite the hand that feeds them.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA12

- MA12:1 The road to Sheerness
- MA12:2 WITH imperious petulance, the executive of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation seeks to impose on the rebels of Sheerness the most awesome punishment known to unionised man.
- MA12:3 They are to be excommunicated: To lose their union cards. What heinous offence have these workers committed?
- MA12:4 They have refused to join a steel strike in which they see themselves as having no part.
- MA12:5 Do not these men have justice on their side? Most people in Britain- union members or not- will be inclined to think that they do.
- MA12:6 They are well paid, productive, and work for a profitable private steel firm. They have no dispute with their employers. They have withstood mass picketing. They have not been balloted by their union.
- MA12:7 Surely, they have earned the freedom to determine their own industrial destiny.
- MA12:8 If ever this country is once again to have a prosperous future it is men like these working for firms like these who are going to make it possible.
- MA12:9 Yet the thwarted Luddites of the ISTC lash out in their fury and frustration and do their damndest to deny to the Sheerness 400 the right to work.
- MA12:10 If the ISTC executive had its way, the Sheerness 400 would all be flung on the dole. No steel-works nor any other firm where a union writ ran strong would employ them.
- MA12:11 Fortunately, the feudal tyranny of the union barons in Britain has never been complete and shows increasing signs of breaking down.
- MA12:12 The robust and independent-minded workforce at Sheerness, together with their cool employers, are not to be intimidated. And there are more and more men and women in Britain who are coming to resent being treated as union serfs.

- MA12:13 That same union card, which should be the badge of brotherhood, is all too often assuming the appearance in modern times of a passport to subservience.
- MA12:14 A century and a half ago, a small band of farm hands from a village near Dorchester were sentenced to transportation for combining together. They were martyrs to the union cause.
- MA12:15 The martyrs of today are those who stand out against the unions.
- MA12:16 From Tolpuddle to Sheerness is a long and winding road. But all those who have trudged defiantly down it arm in arm- be they agricultural workers in their smocks or private steel workers in their donkey jackets- march under the same banner:
- MA12:17 Freedom from oppression.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA13

- MA13:1 Steel strike widens
- MA13:2 IN an apparently desperate move to cripple the British Steel Corporation and force Sir Charles Villiers and the Government to go back to the negotiating table, the steel unions are to start picketing the customers.
- MA13:3 In addition, Mr. Moss Evans has instructed his TGWU lorry-drivers not to cross picket lines.
- MA13:4 This escalation of the strike was evidently cooked up by the TUC chiefs who are worried that the Thatcher policy of no surrender may be paying off, and that if it does, it may have a ripple effect throughout industry, reducing both their bargaining power and prestige.
- MA13:5 They have now pushed Mr. Bill Sirs- always a reluctant strike leader- on to a dangerous course.
- MA13:6 The strike, so far, has been remarkably ineffective.
- MA13:7 Is it not likely that the ingenuity which has avoided major shortages so far will continue to do so?
- MA13:8 In which case Mr. Sirs will have converted defeat into disaster. Yet, in anything but the shortest term, success for the strike could prove even more catastrophic.
- MA13:9 The more steel-users are ruined, the less demand there will be for steel when the strike is over.
- MA13:10 Those customers who survive will look around for substitutes or alternative supplies which are more reliable, so the market for British steel will be permanently reduced and more jobs will be on the scrapheap.
- MA13:11 As for Mr. Moss Evans, it is typical of his blundering incompetence to put his union in the firing-line in a venture of such doubtful outcome.
- MA13:12 Will his own drivers obey him- they have to eat too- or are there enough independent lorry owner-drivers for it not to make much difference whether they do or not?

MA13:13 Almost without realising what they are about the TUC chiefs are now embarked on a mini-general strike from which members have almost nothing to gain and much to lose.

MA13:14 We must hope that despite this raising of the temperature of the strike, the steel bosses and Tory Ministers alike will keep their cool and their nerve.

DAILY MAIL COMMENTMA14

- MA14:1 See the forces of reaction march by
- MA14:2 THE oomph-pah-pah of the bands and the banners fluttering in the early spring sunshine made quite a brave show. Very televisual, certainly.
- MA14:3 Yet how many actually turned out for this great feudal show of strength by the unions yesterday in London?
- MA14:4 The TUC organisers talked hopefully of 100,000. The real figure was probably closer to 50,000.
- MA14:5 More impressive, to our way of thinking, were the 58,000 steel men, who voted for the chance to hold a ballot on the corporation's 14.4 p.c. pay offer.
- MA14:6 Their unions wanted them to have nothing to do with this ballot about a ballot promoted by the British Steel Corporation.
- MA14:7 How dare the bosses try to inject even the mildest dose of industrial democracy into a strike that was union property!
- MA14:8 Steel men were told by their union leaders to boycott this ballot and so invalidate its result or to vote 'No'.
- MA14:9 Of the 132,000 ballot papers sent out by the electoral reform society, more than 85,000 were completed and returned. And the vote was an uncowed seven-to-three in favour of having the pay ballot.
- MA14:10 The number of steel men who demonstrated their democratic virility yesterday would have more than filled those special trains and coaches provided to transport the forces of union reaction to London.
- MA14:11 They are fed up with being taken for granted. They want to be heard... consulted... not treated as cannon fodder in some grandiose war between the union barons and a Tory Prime Minister.
- MA14:12 Len and Moss and David and Alan talk about the trade union movement as if they own it. But what do they really know or even want to know about

the opinions of the millions they claim to represent?

MA14:13 While the TUC blimps strut and preen, the poor bloody union infantry are in no mood for industrial war games.

MIRROR COMMENTMR1

- MR1:1 Men of steel
- MR1:2 IT's not just a two per cent wage rise the steel-workers are being offered. With today's price increases it's also a 15 per cent cut in their standard of living.
- MR1:3 And that's for those lucky enough to keep their jobs.
- MR1:4 Communities dependent upon steel are being devastated by closures. Corby, Shotton, Scunthorpe, Cleveland, Consett, Port Talbot and Llanwern fear mass unemployment.
- MR1:5 The Steel Corporation chairman, Sir Charles Villiers- who doesn't have a redundancy problem- says: "It is not possible to protect trade unionists from reality".
- MR1:6 Maybe not. But for 50,000 men whose jobs are going that sounds like the skipper saying: "The ship's sinking. Throw some more men overboard."
- MR1:7 They see Sir Charles agreeing with the Government to end a £300 million a year loss within a few months- and doing it at their expense.
- MR1:8 They see another loss-making industry, coal, offering miners 20 per cent more. They see derisory cuts in the Civil Service which mean that no one will actually lose a job.
- MR1:9 They see the Cabinet pursuing irrelevant changes in trade union law while production falls unhindered and unemployment rises unchecked.
- MR1:10 They see it and they think it unfair. Despite their fears about the future they regard a two per cent wage offer as a final insult.
- MR1:11 That's why we're faced with the threat of a national steel strike from January 2.

MIRROR COMMENTMR2

MR2:1 Duty calls, Sir Charles

MR2:2 THE British Steel Corporation plan for survival will mean disaster for a third of its workforce and the communities in which they live.

MR2:3 The decision to sack 53,000 men within eight months instead of two years will make it impossible for most of them to find alternative work.

MR2:4 Parts of South Wales, the North-East and Scotland will know unemployment at levels not seen since the 1930s.

MR2:5 The sackings and closures will cost the Corporation £250 million. With luck, it will save the Corporation a loss of £300 million a year.

Critical

MR2:6 But the cost of keeping men in employment will be transferred to social security, to keep them in unemployment.

MR2:7 Sir Charles Villiers, the Corporation's chairman, said yesterday that the industry faces a critical situation, its "grimmiest moment". He had to "do his duty".

MR2:8 Duty to whom? To the industry, which has gone from bad to terrible under his chairmanship? To the workers, whom he is abandoning? To the taxpayers, who will still foot the bill in the end? Or to the Government, which has told him what to do?

MR2:9 When Sir Charles is doing his duty, shouldn't he consider including himself among the 53,000 who are going to lose their jobs? Or is that too much to expect?

MIRROR COMMENTMR3

- MR3:1 Time to talk
- MR3:2 THE steel strike which nobody wants and which the country can't afford will have to be settled around the negotiating table sooner or later.
- MR3:3 Sooner is better.
- MR3:4 Sir Charles Villiers, who has chaired British Steel deeper and deeper into disaster, is at least right about that.
- MR3:5 The dispute began because the workers were offered a two per cent rise. That was it. Final. No more.
- MR3:6 Then two per cent became five, with conditions. Then six with a hint of seven. PLUS another 10 or 11 per cent through local productivity deals.
- MR3:7 Suddenly two per cent looks like 16 or 17 per cent.
- MR3:8 If that is what it is- and especially if British Steel offers something on account for higher productivity- then it IS worth talking about. The unions should ask to see Sir Charles today.
- MR3:9 With 52,000 jobs being lost in steel this year the unions will want to know how many more men must go to pay for the rises of those who stay. Then they must decide whether the price is too high.
- MR3:10 For its part, the Government must come clean about its policy for loss-making state-owned industries. Because in the end the decisions on pay are its decisions.
- MR3:11 If two per cent was the original limit for the steel men why were the miners offered 20 per cent?
- MR3:12 And what about the railways? Like coal and steel they lose money. How much is British Rail going to be allowed to offer the engine drivers?

MIRROR COMMENTMR4

MR4:1 Blunder bosses

MR4:2 THE steel strike will have to be settled eventually on terms not much different from those which are "unacceptable" today.

MR4:3 The Steel Corporation may be compelled to add a bit more to its "final" offer. The unions may have to retreat another step beyond their last ditch.

MR4:4 But whatever the concessions and whoever makes them, they won't compensate for the damage that a prolonged strike will do.

MR4:5 The Corporation has so far blundered at every step. First, with its two per cent wage offer, coming immediately after the announcement that 52,000 men were to lose their jobs.

Sensible

MR4:6 Finally, in rejecting the TUC promise to monitor the new productivity deals and to send in teams to straighten out any that weren't working.

MR4:7 That offer was unique. Had it succeeded it would have been a triumph for British industry. Had it failed, the blame would have rested with the TUC.

MR4:8 It was a sensible way out. But the Corporation didn't see it and so it didn't make it.

MR4:9 But it is still a way out. Still worth discussing. The talking ought not to stop.

MR4:10 Because the only alternative is a battle which will do more harm to Britain than a complacent Government imagines.

MR4:11 Harm much greater than the benefits to anyone.

MIRROR COMMENTMR5

- MR5:1 So why pick on steel?
- MR5:2 THE worst is happening in steel. The Government won't do anything to end the strike and the management and unions are settling down to make it a long one.
- MR5:3 Sir Keith Joseph said yesterday that if the Steel Corporation offered more money without more productivity, "workers in other industries would have to go on subsidising workers in steel".
- MR5:4 The logic is undoubtedly right. Higher wages without higher productivity means higher prices or higher taxation.
- MR5:5 But why single out steel?
- MR5:6 Was the miner's 20 per cent rise paid for out of higher productivity? Or the local government workers' 13 per cent? Will the offer of 14 per cent to the civil servants be paid for by cutting costs.
- MR5:7 At the start of this dispute the steelworkers would have settled for any of those rises. Instead, they had an offer raised in dribs and drabs. Two per cent here, three per cent there, plus another one or two and then a further four. All on strict conditions.
- MR5:8 The Government says it isn't intervening in the steel strike. But by cutting off the Corporation's money it prevented a settlement. That's intervening.
- MR5:9 It didn't do the same to the Coal Board or the local councils. It isn't doing the same for its own workers.
- MR5:10 Its policy can't always be right. Or even always wrong. But at least it ought to be consistent.

MIRROR COMMENTMR6

- MR6:1 Steel: Denning's deadlock
- MR6:2 THE steel strike is drifting, in anger and legal confusion, towards a wider industrial disaster.
- MR6:3 Yesterday thousands of private steel sector workers defied Lord Denning's Appeal Court ruling and stopped work.
- MR6:4 Today 100,000 Welsh trade unionists are due to strike in support of the steel workers.
- MR6:5 The legacy of this dispute will be sour and long-lasting. And Lord Denning's extraordinary judgments will make it worse.
- MR6:6 His decisions- about spreading the strike and on secondary picketing- mean that the law is different from what many lawyers thought it was. And from what the House of Lords said it was only a few weeks ago.
- Foolish
- MR6:7 Nevertheless the steel union leaders, rightly, will abide by them. People like Martin Flannery, MP for Hillsborough, who hoped the workers wouldn't take notice of Lord Denning, are foolish, wrong and dangerous.
- MR6:8 But there's a risk that by tying up the official leaders Lord Denning will set loose the unofficial ones. He has given provocation to those wanting and waiting to be provoked.
- MR6:9 This strike could have been prevented. Once started, it could have been stopped. Now it is in its fifth week.
- MR6:10 The Government meets both sides only to say it won't intervene, as though it was a private scrap between the unions and the employers.
- MR6:11 But it isn't. It affects us all. And it's time the Government moved to break the deadlock.

MIRROR COMMENTMR7

MR7:1 King Arthur and the court of law

MR7:2 "Trade unionists... have a simple choice to make. They either accept the decision of three men in wigs sitting in a remote part of London or accept the advice and instruction of their trade union."

-Mr. Arthur Scargill, Yorkshire miner's leader, speaking at a rally in support of the steelworkers.

MR7:3 MR. SCARGILL is a martyr in search of a strike, and he trails his opinions from one strike meeting to another in the hope of finding it.

MR7:4 The fact that three judges of the Appeal Court wore wigs (a fate that threatens Mr. Scargill) is irrelevant to their decisions.

MR7:5 So is the fact that they met in a part of London which is remote to Mr. Scargill.

Anarchy

MR7:6 If they sat on the end of Southend pier wearing "Kiss Me, Sailor" hats their rulings would still have to be accepted. Otherwise a democratic society would slip into anarchy.

MR7:7 Mr. Scargill is perfectly free to disagree with the judges. The Daily Mirror does.

MR7:8 But unless and until it is overturned, their verdict is the law. Neither Mr. Scargill nor anyone else is free to incite disobedience to it.

MR7:9 After all, if a worker can flout the law, why shouldn't an employer? If a Marxist can defy it, what's to stop a Fascist doing the same.

MR7:10 There is no system of government known to man-except, possibly, Iran's- where the leader of a regional area of a miner's union could be exalted above the law.

MR7:11 The argument against prosecuting Mr. Scargill is that that is what he wants to happen. It is a strong one. But if the law is to be applied impartially, he ought to be granted his wish.

MIRROR COMMENTMR8

MR8:1 Desperation stakes

MR8:2 THE Government started the steel strike and it is now about time that they stopped it.

MR8:3 Mrs. Thatcher said yesterday that she would have no truck with people who strike for more money.

MR8:4 But it is now clear that Government intervention to REDUCE the money available provoked the strike.

MR8:5 Documents leaked to World In Action prove that the Steel Corporation intended to offer its workers up to 13 per cent until the Government stepped in to prevent them.

MR8:6 Ministers who ducked the challenge from the miners were ready to take on the steel men instead. It was a crucial mistake.

MR8:7 As a result of instructions from Sir Keith Joseph, the Corporation was only able to offer a "zero increase". That's official jargon for an Irishman's rise. Nothing.

Reckless

MR8:8 BSC executives knew they were asking for trouble. They were right. And they got it.

MR8:9 The inevitable strike is now in its sixth week and growing more reckless every day.

MR8:10 In South Yorkshire the men are threatening to withdraw safety cover from the steel plants. It's a suicidal step and they shouldn't take it.

MR8:11 The bosses of Hadfield's, the big private steel firm, threaten to withhold taxes. That's stupid and they shouldn't do it.

MR8:12 But both men and management are acting from desperation.

MR8:13 The issue is not whether the Government should "win" the strike, but that it should be ended.

MR8:14 It has already cost the taxpayer dear. More than a settlement would have done.

MR8:15 Now it looms as a threat to the jobs of thousands in other industries. It is not a fight to save the economy. Only to save the Government's face.

MR8:16 And for that it has become expensive.

MIRROR COMMENTMR9

- MR9:1 THE INVISIBLE MAN
- MR9:2 SIR KEITH JOSEPH isn't interfering in the steel strike in the same way as the Russians aren't interfering in Afghanistan.
- MR9:3 There's hardly a platform or a studio from which he isn't heard or seen broadcasting his policy of non-intervention.
- MR9:4 He non-intervenes by insisting that the Steel Corporation can't have any more money to end the strike.
- MR9:5 He non-intervenes by saying that because of the strike the steel industry will be smaller and employ even fewer men.
- MR9:6 Wouldn't it be more sensible if the size of the industry depended on future demand rather than past disputes?
- MR9:7 He non-intervenes by declaring that assets of the Steel Corporation should be sold off to private investors.
- MR9:8 But won't that make the losses of what's left even higher? If the assets are worth the private sector's buying, aren't they worth the public sector's keeping?
- MR9:9 It's obvious the steel strike is now caught up in another battle. The one between Left and Right in the Cabinet about new laws to curb the trade unions.
- MR9:10 That should be resolved at leisure. Steel is more urgent.
- MR9:11 After six weeks, the Corporation and the main unions aren't talking to each other and, apparently, can't even write to each other in English plain enough to be understood.
- MR9:12 Perhaps the only way now to break the deadlock would be for Sir Keith to set up a court of inquiry into the dispute and into the future of the steel industry.

MR9:13 It being understood, of course, that in so doing he was not interfering. Merely pulling the strings, as usual.

MIRROR COMMENTMR10

MR10:1 Four-way split

MR10:2 THERE are now four sides in the steel strike. The Corporation, the unions and the two halves of the Cabinet.

MR10:3 One of those halves is desperate to settle. The other is determined to fight on. The Steel Corporation- and the men- must be utterly confused.

MR10:4 Last week, Mr. Jim Prior was speculating privately about what sportsmen call an early bath for the Corporation's boss, Sir Charles Villiers, and was publicly repudiated by Mrs. Thatcher for doing so.

MR10:5 That must have hurt her. She probably agrees with Mr. Prior.

Gloomy

MR10:6 On Friday, every newspaper reported Cabinet optimism about a swift end to the strike. Their informant was promptly repudiated by Sir Keith Joseph, who was as gloomy as ever.

MR10:7 None of this has helped a solution to the strike, which starts its ninth week on Wednesday.

MR10:8 So far, the Government has rejected every proposal- from a court of inquiry to a straight "Give 'em the money"- to take action to end it.

MR10:9 Its dilemma is that if it moves to settle the strike it will look like surrender to the unions: the one thing it was elected NOT to do.

MR10:10 But if it waits instead for the unions to surrender, a critical industrial and economic situation will get worse.

MR10:11 Either way the Government loses. But the stark truth is that the country would be better off if the strike were over, even if the Government suffered.

MIRROR COMMENTMR11

- MR11:1 Punish and be damned
- MR11:2 THE MAIN steel union threatens to expel 600 men working in the private steel plant at Sheerness because they won't strike to support the public sectors workers.
- MR11:3 It is a decision taken in anger. And like most such decisions, it is wrong.
- MR11:4 The steel strikers have a good case. But they'll spoil it by punishing fellow union members who have no direct part in the dispute.
- MR11:5 The union knows that the men in the private sector are on the spot. If they disobey instructions to strike they're accused of betraying work-mates who have been out now for the past eight weeks.
- MR11:6 Yet if they obey, they risk putting themselves out of a job permanently.
- MR11:7 The leader of the Iron and Steel Trade Confederation, Mr. Bill Sirs is known to be unhappy about the threat of expulsions. His instincts are right.
- MR11:8 Sheerness is not alone in refusing to strike. In Sheffield, Hadfields and Firth Brown are returning to work.
- MR11:9 So are men in Manchester and the West Midlands. They can't all be expelled.
- MR11:10 There's a lot of public support for the steel strikers.
- MR11:11 People recognise it was provoked by a rigid Government and an incompetent Corporation.
- MR11:12 But expulsions won't help the strikers' cause. Only throw away the public's goodwill.

MIRROR COMMENTMR12

MR12:1 THE COST OF SAVING FACE

MR12:2 THE strike which should never have started was looking as if it would never end. That's why the steel unions decided to make it much rougher.

MR12:3 Their picketing of every customer of British Steel will be legal and devastating- if it is successful.

MR12:4 Industry has got by for nine weeks without the Steel Corporation. Stocks are high and so are imports. Manufacturers and Government have almost become complacent.

Agreed

MR12:5 But if they have half forgotten the strike the steelmen haven't. Each has lost close on £1,000 in wages. Their desperation has made their leaders get tough.

MR12:6 The difference between prolonging the strike and ending it hasn't been much for some time.

MR12:7 The workers have agreed to almost everything the corporation has asked for: Local productivity deals which pay for themselves; international manning levels; abolition of overtime; less absenteeism and fewer disputes.

MR12:8 In return, they demand a 20 per cent wage increase, though everyone involved knows they'll settle for less. What they won't accept is what they've been offered.

Concerned

MR12:9 But the corporation says it hasn't got any more money. The Government says it won't give any more because it is the taxpayers' money.

MR12:10 The cost of the strike, however, is already greater than the cost of ending it. The Government could break the deadlock now- if it were not more concerned with saving face than subsidies.

MIRROR COMMENTMR13

MR13:1 Time to give and give

MR13:2 THE steel strike might end now if both sides gave a little, because it looks as if a little would be enough.

MR13:3 Despite the glee of Sir Charles Villiers, the result of the Corporation's ballot about a ballot isn't a victory for him, even if it is a defeat for the union's leaders.

MR13:4 With only 44 per cent of the men voting for another ballot on pay, there's no guarantee that a further vote would show they were willing to accept the Corporation's terms.

MR13:5 And rejection would prolong the strike, not shorten it.

Deep

MR13:6 The trouble is that both sides have dug their trenches so deep they can't see over the top of them.

MR13:7 There's no doubt that the Corporation can stick it out longer. It doesn't have a wife and family to feed.

MR13:8 But it's not in its interests for work to restart with a sullen and defeated labour force, driven back by poverty.

Solution

MR13:9 Independent examination of the industry by a court of inquiry would be the best solution, because there's a lot more wrong with steel than the wages it pays. But the Government won't have that.

MR13:10 The next best would be a more informal mediation by someone able to see both sides of the question.

MR13:11 His intervention might mean the unions accepting less than they want. It might mean the Government and the Corporation paying out more than they intended.

MR13:12 But an honourable compromise now might prevent more trouble in the future.

MIRROR COMMENTMR14

- MR14:1 Getting out of a mess
- MR14:2 THE inquiry into the steelworkers' wage claim may bring an end to the present strike but it won't do much to prevent the next one.
- MR14:3 That will be up to the Government.
- MR14:4 The British steel industry is in a mess. An embittered and exhausted workforce is ranged against a defeatist and incompetent management.
- MR14:5 After the most disastrous stoppage in its history- starting its thirteenth week today- the industry now faces its most calamitous sackings.

Peril

- MR14:6 Over 50,000 men- a third of the workers- are due to lose their jobs later this year as the Steel Corporation plans a future production which many experts say will be below Britain's needs.
- MR14:7 The policy puts whole communities at peril- in Consett, Corby, Shotton, Port Talbot, Lannwern and the like. It adds to the destruction of Britain as an industrial nation.
- MR14:8 As soon as the pay inquiry is over the Government should appoint a powerful court of inquiry which can examine every aspect of the industry, future, present and past.
- MR14:9 The chairman of the corporation, Sir Charles Villiers, will retire by September. The Government isn't finding it easy to appoint a man willing to take over a broken-down and bankrupt industry.
- MR14:10 But a new inquiry would help a new chairman to make a new start. It could give the men new hope. And, with luck, it could give the industry a new future.

STAR COMMENTST1

ST1:1 Costly hangover

ST1:2 WITH the holidays ending, the steel strikes starting, and rising prices, icy roads and earthquakes to contend with, it's hardly surprising that Britain came bottom of the poll in a 23-nation survey on optimism.

ST1:3 Worse still- prices expert Colin Mitchell predicts that beer could reach 60p a pint by June. Enjoy that cut-price hangover!

STAR COMMENTST2

- ST2:1 Time to come off the fence
- ST2:2 HOPES of peace in the steel strike go from bad to worse. And still the Government sits defiantly on the fence.
- ST2:3 Talks between the unions and BSC have collapsed. Both sides admit they are further apart than ever. Flying pickets are out. Other unions are helping to tighten the screws.
- ST2:4 And what is the word from Industry Secretary Sir Keith Joseph? Nothing.
- ST2:5 The Tories insist that industries have to sort out their own problems. But what is that going to cost the rest of the economy?
- ST2:6 THE MOTOR TRADE has warned that if the strike lasts four weeks foreign firms could grab 75 per cent of the British car market by April.
- ST2:7 THE SHIPBUILDERS have only two weeks' supply of steel.
- ST2:8 Both face a loss of business from which they may never recover. Meanwhile, Britain's rivals jostle to snatch that business.
- ST2:9 The situation is serious. Soon it will be critical. The Government should step in now - before it becomes fatal.

STAR COMMENTST3

- ST3:1 Maggie: What a good move!
- ST3:2 AS the steel strike drags on, Mrs. Thatcher is expected to meet the union leaders involved. A wise decision.
- ST3:3 No miracles can be expected from such a meeting. But it will at least show that the Prime Minister is prepared to be less hidebound than some of her diehard supporters wish.
- ST3:4 It is fashionable to sneer at Labour's midnight "beer and sandwiches" strike-settling dramas.
- ST3:5 But there are times when the workers' leaders must be allowed to go right to the top.

STAR COMMENTST4

- ST4:1 The British art of picketing
- ST4:2 THE DAYS when Britain was known as the workshop of the world are long gone. But we can still teach our industrial rivals a thing or two.
- ST4:3 When the steel strike began, messages of solidarity flooded in from trades unions throughout Europe and America. Now, steelworkers and dockers from Germany are offering more practical help- by joining their English comrades on the picket lines.
- ST4:4 "They decided they would come over here to learn how things are done", says Yorkshire strike coordinator Keith Jones. "They believe we have useful lessons to teach them."
- ST4:5 If more foreign workers take advantage of this specialised education, their "skills" could be adapted for a new version of Jeux Sans Frontieres- with Jim Prior taking over from Eddie Waring as the host of It's a Lockout.

STAR COMMENTST5

ST5:1 Recipe for disaster.

ST5:2 NOBODY can accuse Sir Keith Joseph of being inconsistent. The steel strike has now dragged on to its sixth disastrous week, and the Industry Secretary still insists that the Government will do nothing to try to end it.

ST5:3 All along he has stuck by his aim to force unions and management to reach a settlement. The result has been to force them further apart.

ST5:4 The unions are now threatening to halt vital maintenance work on furnaces worth millions of pounds.

ST5:5 Private steel firms are threatening to halt payments of income tax, VAT and National Insurance.

ST5:6 Their customers are already laying off thousands of workers and the CBI has warned that several firms face bankruptcy.

ST5:7 How much worse must things get before the Government decides to act? How much longer will they deny all responsibility for the present situation?

ST5:8 It was Sir Keith's decision to impose strict cash limits on the British Steel Corporation which sparked off the dispute. It is now his duty to deal with the consequences.

ST5:9 The first positive sign of Government intervention was the announcement of £48 million of aid to ease the impact of redundancies in South Wales- a move urged by the Daily Star on December 13. But much more needs to be done.

ST5:10 Consistency among Government Ministers is often a virtue. But blind obedience to policies that are obviously not working is a recipe for disaster.

STAR COMMENTST6

- ST6:1 Three reasons to cheer
- ST6:2 THE peace deal thrashed out by the three-man inquiry into the steel strike offers the first real hope that it will soon be over. For that, the whole country owes them three hearty cheers.
- ST6:3 FIRSTLY for finding a compromise which both sides seem willing to accept.
- ST6:4 SECONDLY for achieving it in just two days- something that unions and management found impossible in 13 weeks.
- ST6:5 THIRDLY, and most important of all, for making their report unanimous- giving neither side any excuse for continuing the fight.
- ST6:6 The recommendation of a 16 per cent pay rise is slightly less than the unions wanted- and much more than management's original offer.
- ST6:7 But it is the best offer either side will get. After the longest official strike since the war there can be no winners- only losers.
- ST6:8 BSC workers have lost about £1,500 each in wages, on top of a third of their jobs. Management says it has lost orders worth hundreds of millions of pounds. But the biggest loser, once again, is the British economy.
- ST6:9 The real lesson of the past three months is that we must never let it happen again.

THE SUN SAYSS1

S1:1 Call it off

S1:2 A NEW survey shows that seven out of ten British workers would think twice about making huge pay claims if they thought their companies would suffer badly.

S1:3 More and more people are learning that in many cases big wage demands mean fewer jobs.

S1:4 So why are the steel union leaders so hell-bent on calling out their 90,000 members?

S1:5 This national steel strike threatened for the New Year- the first since 1926- is in support of a pay claim of 20 per cent.

S1:6 It would add £240 million more to the wages bill.

S1:7 Yet the state-owned British Steel Corporation already expects losses of more than £300 million this year.

S1:8 And because of dwindling markets and the need to streamline the industry, there are plans to axe 50,000 jobs and close several plants.

S1:9 So while steel workers are disgruntled because the miners are getting 20 per cent, their own 2 per cent is not as bad as it seems.

S1:10 Productivity bonuses of up to 10 per cent are available to steel workers in many areas.

Vital

S1:11 Higher productivity is vital, since Britain's steel men produce only about half as much per man as workers in the Germany steel industry.

S1:12 Let the union chiefs get back to the negotiating table without delay.

S1:13 A prolonged strike would do massive harm to British industry generally.

S1:14 It would be fatal to the job prospects of the steel workers.

THE SUN SAYSS2

S2:1 Off the rails

S2:2 BRITAIN'S railmen threaten to black steel imports if our own steelmen go on strike.

S2:3 OF COURSE, there is sympathy for the 50,000 steelworkers who are to lose their jobs.

S2:4 OF COURSE, it is understandable that a two per cent increase should be regarded as derisory when inflation is above 17 per cent.

S2:5 But the fact is that the steel industry cannot afford even one per cent. It is already £300 million in the red.

Appalling

S2:6 This has happened partly because there is a world recession in steel.

S2:7 But also for the far more important reason that the performance of the steelworkers is appalling.

S2:8 Despite a massive programme of investment, each British steelworker produces only about half the output of a French or German worker.

S2:9 Japanese workers produce THREE TIMES as much steel per man-hour as our own.

S2:10 And the blame falls chiefly on the steel unions, with their restrictive practices and their stubborn insistence on massive over-manning.

Realism

S2:11 Sooner or later, realism will have to dawn in our steel industry.

S2:12 It makes no sense at all for the railmen to help postpone the inevitable day of reckoning.

S2:13 In the past, the National Union of Railwaymen, under Mr. Sidney Weighell, has often shown moderation and responsibility in its own demands.

S2:14 Do these sensible, moderate men really want to go to the wall in defence of the indefensible?

THE SUN SAYSS3S3:1 Stop this madnessS3:2 THE SUN has an urgent message to the steel unions before they plunge Britain into industrial chaos.

S3:3 Stop this madness and start talking.

S3:4 THE LAST thing we want is government intervention, as labour MPs demand.

S3:5 That really means printing money. An extravagant step for an industry approaching bankruptcy.

S3:6 And WE all know where THAT leads.

S3:7 To higher TAXATION, fewer JOBS, greater TAXATION.

S3:8 Instead the unions must start talking about how best to take the limited amount of cash the British Steel Corporation can offer.

S3:9 It isn't much.

S3:10 How could it be when the productivity of British steel workers is so much worse than that of steelmen abroad?

S3:11 There is ample room for a dramatic improvement in the industry's performance.

S3:12 Its equipment is as technologically advanced as any in Europe.

S3:13 There is no valid reason why British steel workers should not raise their output to the level of our overseas competitors.

S3:14 That way, they can boost their wage packets and save some of the thousands of jobs that would be lost in the wake of a prolonged strike.

S3:15 But if the strike does go ahead the unions must be clear about one thing.

Challenge

S3:16 While the country cannot afford this dispute, it can afford EVEN LESS to use taxpayers' money to meet their unrealistic demands.

- S3:17 This will be the first big challenge to Mrs. Thatcher's government from powerful trade unions in a state industry.
- S3:18 Ministers must mean it when they say that it is up to the employers and the workforce to solve their own problems.
- S3:19 Let them show that the bad old days of buying off strikes with bags of unearned money have gone for ever.

THE SUN SAYSS4

S4:1 Earn it first

S4:2 STEEL UNION chief Mr. Bill Sirs is being even dafter than usual to suggest that his workers might call off the strike if they received their "productivity" money NOW.

S4:3 Christmas is over. Santa Claus has returned to the North Pole for another year.

S4:4 If words are to mean anything at all, productivity bonuses have to be EARNED- by higher productivity.

S4:5 Industry Secretary Sir Keith Joseph has expressed the belief that the British steelworkers are as good as any in the world.

S4:6 There is previous little evidence to support his view.

S4:7 Despite higher investment than in almost any other country- £4,000 million over six years- our steelmen still produce per man only half the output of their Japanese, German and American rivals.

S4:8 Mr. Sirs should send his men back to work to EARN their bonuses. And to prove that Sir Keith's faith is justified.

THE SUN SAYSS5S5:1 Steel tragedyS5:2 THE FAILURE of the steel talks is a tragedy. For the steelmen. For the industry. For Britain.

S5:3 It is difficult not to have sympathy with both sides in the dispute- though neither can escape its share of the blame.

S5:4 THE STEELMEN have seen their position in the wages league being gradually eroded.

S5:5 They have seen state-subsidised miners win 20 per cent increases.

S5:6 And they have been told that only a wholly self-financing wages deal is open to them.

S5:7 They must see that their demand for guaranteed "production" bonuses in advance is absurd.

S5:8 Yet it is easy to understand their resentment.

S5:9 THE STEEL CORPORATION, on the other hand, have an even stronger case- though it has been put with monumental ineptitude.

Waffling

S5:10 First they offered two per cent. Then six. Then eight. Then eight plus four for three months, while local deals were being negotiated.

S5:11 Yesterday, Sir Charles Villiers, the Corporation's chairman, was waffling on about a new "minimum" rate of £122.

S5:12 If all these options were open, why on earth were they not put to the men weeks ago?

S5:13 But no amount of official ineptitude can disguise the brutal facts...

S5:14 The industry is losing money at the rate of something like a million pounds A DAY.

S5:15 On the very day the talks break down, devastating figures are produced showing that productivity in two Japanese steel plants last year was up to SIX TIMES greater than in Britain.

- S5:16 The British industry has not lacked for investment.
- S5:17 In the past six years £4,000 million of state cash-
OUR CASH- has flowed into it.
- S5:18 If we accept- as The Sun DOES accept- that
British steelworkers are not all bone-idle, there
are only two possible explanations for the current
state of the industry:
- S5:19 ONE: That far too many people are employed in it,
and
- S5:20 TWO: That there are far too many restrictive
practices.
- S5:21 Putting up the price of steel is no solution. The
world is awash with the stuff.
- S5:22 In the end, the unions will have to move out of
Never-Never Land...
- S5:23 TO ACCEPT that it is no longer sensible to live now
and pay later.
- S5:24 TO RECOGNISE that increased prosperity for the
industry and the nation can come only through
drastic pruning and drastic reforms.

Damage

- S5:25 Sooner or later they will be FORCED to accept these
things.
- S5:26 Meanwhile, they are losing money, customers and
valuable goodwill.
- S5:27 They are further damaging their capacity to compete,
and their own long-term employment prospects, and
further delaying the day when the industry at last
becomes viable.

THE SUN SAYSS6S6:1 Rule of lawS6:2 AN OLD menace returns to the industrial scene: bullying, threatening and sometimes violent secondary pickets.

S6:3 At Sheffield, lorries trying to get into a private steelworks find their way blocked by 100 angry men.

S6:4 At Corby, a woman office worker is punched in the mouth as she tries to cross a picket line.

Pathetic

S6:5 Such ugly, shameful scenes are all too familiar. They recall the "flying pickets" of the two coal strikes.

S6:6 Significantly, Arthur Scargill, who is supposed to have invented secondary picketing is said to be "advising" the strikers.

S6:7 Their nominal leader, the pathetic Bill Sirs, wrings his hands and says he is "very worried".

S6:8 Tory speakers declare that the events are demonstrating the need for tougher laws against picketing, which they promised at the last Election.

S6:9 Of course, these are needed. And soon.

S6:10 But we do not have to wait for new Acts of Parliament to appear like the Seventh Cavalry to save us.

S6:11 There are already laws against intimidation. Against violence.

S6:12 It is every bit as illegal to use force in an industrial dispute as it is in a robbery.

S6:13 No one has the right to stop workers who want to work. There is nothing sacred about a picket line.

S6:14 The police should not hesitate to use their full powers. And the Government should back them with its full authority.

THE SUN SAYSS7

- S7:1 Nice one, Willie
- S7:2 THANK HEAVEN that Home Secretary Willie Whitelaw has had the guts to demand that the law should be enforced against steel strike pickets who go too far.
- S7:3 He promised that the police would ensure that all who wanted to work would be allowed to do so.
- S7:4 They will crack down hard against violence and threats on the picket lines.
- S7:5 Just contrast Willie's firm stand for law and order with the wishy-washy excuses offered a year ago by Labour Prime Minister Jim Callaghan when lorry drivers mounted an unchecked blockade on British business.
- S7:6 Not for Mr. Whitelaw the weak-kneed reliance on a voluntary code of conduct which even union bosses couldn't guarantee.
- S7:7 He isn't afraid of creating false martyrs with his tough support of the law.
- S7:8 He knows it is vital for Britain's interests that people who want to live and work in peace should be protected from the bully boys.

THE SUN SAYSS8

S8:1 The only way

S8:2 SOMETIMES the public utterances of Industry Secretary Sir Keith Joseph are more noteworthy for their sincerity than for their clarity.

S8:3 But his message on the steel strike has been clear and consistent.

S8:4 There are only two ways in which the steelmen can get more money.

S8:5 EITHER they fund the rises themselves, by increased productivity.

S8:6 OR the taxpayer coughs up yet more money.

S8:7 Note, the taxpayer. Us, that is. NOT the Government. The Government has no money.

S8:8 In the current financial year the steel industry will swallow £324,000,000 of OUR money.

S8:9 Or, to put it another way, the rest of us are already paying a subsidy of £1,800 a year, or £35 a week, to every man employed in the industry.

S8:10 Yet steelmen already earn £10 a week more than the national average. The productivity deals now on offer would raise their average earnings to a sizeable £124.

S8:11 True, they DID increase productivity by eight per cent in 1978. But that was LESS than the increase in France or West Germany- where it was twice as high to begin with.

S8:12 Of course, everyone wants a speedy settlement to a strike which is inflicting great and growing damage on the nation.

S8:13 But not at any price.

S8:14 The widespread delusion- shared, apparently, by Jim Callaghan- that we can solve every problem by paying up is a dangerous nonsense.

S8:15 Fortunately, more and more people are beginning to recognise that it is necessary for us to EARN our living. That printing money is no solution.

S8:16 The steel strike, traumatic as it is, seems as good a place as any from which to begin the journey back to sanity.

THE SUN SAYSS9S9:1 Cross the lineS9:2 ENGINEER'S union chiefs have appealed to steel pickets to stop blockading factories not using British Steel products.

S9:3 They are worried about possible lay-offs.

S9:4 We sympathise with them. But we do not understand their difficulty.

Order

S9:5 Why not simply order their members to cross the picket lines? And to call the police if they are impeded.

S9:6 The engineers do not need to beg another union to allow them to work.

S9:7 It is their RIGHT.

S9:8 In the same way, steel union chief Mr. Bill Sirs, who pretends to be worried about his pickets getting out of control, has the remedy in his own hands.

S9:9 If the men disobeyed orders to strike, they would be speedily expelled from the union.

S9:10 If pickets disobey instructions, Mr. Sirs should withdraw their union cards, too. But he won't.

THE SUN SAYSS10

S10:1 Go home, brothers

S10:2 A GROUP of German steel workers have come to Britain to help Yorkshire pickets in the steel strike.

S10:3 Cynics might say that it is in the Fatherland's interests to inflict as much damage as possible on our industry.

S10:4 But even if the Germans have come in the cause of international brotherhood, it is still an outrageous intervention in an argument which is none of their business.

S10:5 It is difficult to understand how they got into the country in the first place.

S10:6 Maybe they persuaded the immigration authorities that they simply wanted to sample the delights of Rotherham in winter?

Purpose

S10:7 Or to kneel at the throne of "King" Arthur Scargill, who seems to be running the strike.

S10:8 Either way, now that their true purpose is known, is there any good reason why they should not be deported?

THE SUN SAYSS11

S11:1 A dead horse?

S11:2 THE Iron and Steel Trades Confederation is one of the richest trade unions.

S11:3 It has investments of £9,000,000, giving it an annual income of £1,000,000- on top of income from members' dues.

S11:4 It has plenty of money for pickets and for the miners and students who are joining the line.

S11:5 But the confederation is not providing a penny in strike pay.

S11:6 The members have been told to go cap in hand to the state for family benefits.

S11:7 And already more than £1,000,000 has been paid out.

S11:8 Isn't this incredible?

S11:9 The steel men have every right to strike. But they have no right at all to expect the rest of us to pick up the bill.

S11:10 At the last election, the Tories declared that unions must be made to bear a fair share of the cost of supporting strikers.

S11:11 That was the promise. Where is the fulfilment?

S11:12 Alas, we are still waiting for Employment Secretary Jim Prior to gallop to the rescue.

S11:13 Someone seems to have shot his horse.

THE SUN SAYSS12

- S12:1 Bad law
- S12:2 THE HOUSE OF LORDS overturns Lord Denning's decision and declares that the steel unions can, after all, call out the men in private industry.
- S12:3 Most people expected this decision. Albeit with the best of motives, Lord Denning seemed to many of us to be creating law instead of interpreting it.
- Damage
- S12:4 But the law as it stands is BAD law.
- S12:5 Workers in the private steel industry have no quarrel with their employers, no part in the dispute.
- S12:6 The unions have sought to involve them as a piece of blackmail.
- S12:7 They want to inflict so much wilful damage to the economy that the Government will grant them increases they have not earned and which the country cannot afford.
- S12:8 The law allows them to do so.
- S12:9 When is this absurd law to be changed? When is the scandal to be ended?
- S12:10 The nation is still waiting to hear from Employment Minister James Prior.
- S12:11 Speak up, Jim !

THE SUN SAYSS13

S13:1 Steel sense

S13:2 THE LATEST idea for ending the steel dispute is to set up a court of inquiry.

S13:3 We can see nothing to be gained from such a course.

S13:4 A court of inquiry would be just another way of taking decisions away from the people who should be making them: the steel bosses and the unions.

S13:5 The Government- in particular the Prime Minister and Sir Keith Joseph- are insisting on no intervention.

S13:6 Gone, they say, are the days when Whitehall was willing to play fairy godmother to the workers; forcing employers to grant settlements they could not afford.

S13:7 A court of inquiry would be simply intervention by the back-door, with some Left-wing professor indulging his pet financial theories and sociological aims.

S13:8 On past performance, the strikers would be handed all they wanted. Maybe more.

S13:9 And the Government's whole industrial strategy would be in ruins.

THE SUN SAYSS14

S14:1 Diamond Jim

S14:2 THROUGHOUT the steel strike Her Majesty's Opposition have been downright unhelpful.

S14:3 That applies especially to their titular leader, Jim Callaghan.

S14:4 Last month he suggested that he could end the dispute in days. He did not say how. But we all guessed. He would have handed a bagful of gold to the strikers.

S14:5 Now he confirms those suspicions.

S14:6 What matter, he asks, if we DO add another £20 million or so to the national debt?

S14:7 It would be a mere drop in the ocean.

S14:8 And how did we get this ocean in the first place? It is made up of drops. Drops dribbled out by Diamond Jim and his cronies.

S14:9 It was Callaghan and Co. who dug a pit for Britain by granting enormous, inflationary pay awards to win favour with the unions- or to buy off blackmail- while mouthing platitudes about pay policy.

S14:10 It was because he spent OUR money like a drunken sailor that Mr. Callaghan was turfed out of office.

S14:11 Like the Bourbons, he has clearly learned nothing from his fall.

THE SUN SAYSS15

S15:1 Keeping faith

S15:2 SINCE the steel strike began, around £2,750,000 has been paid out in Social Security benefits to the families of steel workers.

S15:3 Unions have given not a penny to the strikers or their families.

S15:4 Yet Bill Sir's union alone is sitting on £11,000,000.

S15:5 In their manifesto at the last Election the Tories pledged that they would ensure that unions, not the taxpayers, would bear the cost of strikes.

S15:6 Now we learn that the Social Security authorities are finding it "difficult" to implement the pledge.

S15:7 In heaven's name, why?

S15:8 It is nine months since the Election.

Promises

S15:9 Before that the Tories had FOUR YEARS not merely to produce promises but to discover how they could best be honoured.

S15:10 What is so difficult about honouring this one?

THE SUN SAYSS16

S16:1 Above the law

S16:2 BILL SIRS, leader of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, says that 600 Sheerness steelworkers are to be expelled from the union.

S16:3 He complains that they defied union discipline by refusing to join the strike.

S16:4 But what about the pickets at Sheerness and Sheffield?

S16:5 The union ordered that the dispute should be peaceful at all times.

S16:6 But the pickets intimidated other workers. They threatened to storm Hadfields. They committed acts of violence.

S16:7 How come that not a single one of them has been expelled for defying union discipline? Or punished in any way?

THE SUN SAYSS17

- S17:1 Why not vote?
- S17:2 THE COLLAPSE of the steel talks is grave news.
- S17:3 Grave for the country. Grave for the industry. But especially grave for the workers.
- S17:4 They are suffering most. One steelworker has written to The Sun, saying that he has already lost £1,000, and, even if the unions' claims were met in full, it would take him SEVEN YEARS to recoup that money.
- S17:5 The mood of disenchantment was certainly reflected in the recent poll in which steelmen voted two-to-one in favour of a ballot on the latest pay offer.
- S17:6 Union chief Bill Sirs has refused to accept the result of the poll. He says it was "indecisive" because 35 per cent did not vote.
- S17:7 In that case, why do not the unions organise their own ballot?
- S17:8 If Mr. Sirs is RIGHT about the mood of his men, such a poll could serve only to strengthen his hand.
- S17:9 Could it be that he is resisting the idea because of a secret fear that he might be WRONG?

THE SUN SAYSS18

S18:1 True or false?

S18:2 ARE THE bosses of the Steel Corporation really seeking increases of 40 per cent, or £250 a week?

S18:3 One of them, Mr. Bob Scholey, has said the reports are nonsense.

S18:4 We believe him. But Bill Sirs and other union leaders apparently do not.

S18:5 It would be tragic if suspicion damaged whatever prospects there are of ending the steel strike.

S18:6 The Government are the bosses' paymasters. They must nail the lie.