

CHARTIST

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DEVALUATION MEANS ALL-OUT CLASS WAR:

Prepare for the General Strike!

BRING THE GOVERNMENT DOWN!

THE GOVERNMENT CAN NOW be brought down. Since the miners' strike it has suffered disaster upon disaster. The railmen's victory was followed by the most shattering political blow delivered any Government by our movement since the war—the avalanche of solidarity and the threatened General Strike which met the Industrial Court's attempt to imprison dock-pickets Bernie Steer, Vic Turner and Alan Williams. At the moment of truth—when the Official Solicitor was rushed in to get the arrest warrants quashed and the Government drew back before the threat of a revolutionary situation—the speculators began to panic.

On that very Friday—June 16—sterling plummeted. By Tuesday, support for the rate was costing \$1,000 m a day. Within the week the pound had collapsed, plunging the entire capitalist monetary system still deeper into the vortex of its insoluble crisis. For our class-enemies throughout the world, this is a disaster which it would be hard to overestimate. For the Tories it is the beginning of the end.

But though in Britain we have all but brought our Government to its knees, there can be absolutely no complacency. The recent furore in Parliament over the army's training in strike-breaking (see p.3) gives us a glimpse of what lies in store. If allowed to regain the initiative (aided by the TUC's treacherous collaboration plans) the Tories will fight back with the fury of despair. Now is the time for a supreme effort to BRING THIS GOVERNMENT DOWN.

SINCE THIS YEAR BEGAN, with the onslaught of the miners, our movement has, almost without realizing it, been teetering on the brink of an all-out challenge to the Constitution and a naked struggle for power. If in this period we have been able to extract "concessions" from the Tories—it is because they have been "buying time". They have not yet completed their increasingly frantic preparations for a General Strike:

- the build-up of the territorials;
- the training of troops in crowd-control and strike-breaking;
- the temporary shelving of the "Irish Problem" to enable all efforts to be directed against the British working class;

- the closer integration of the police and armed forces;
- tighter censorship of press and television.

But this un-preparedness cannot last much longer. "Saving the currency" on a capitalist basis—not to mention saving what's left of the international monetary system itself—depends in very large measure on the Tory Government's ability to crush our trade unions' bargaining power in Britain.

Their backs to the wall, their international creditors howling for a 'curb on inflationary wage-claims', the Tories are desperately having to get ready for a show-down with our whole movement. They know the day of final reckoning can scarcely longer be postponed.

SO OUR SIDE MUST ACT FAST.

The situation is quite unlike 1926, which represented the last fling of a defeated revolutionary upsurge whose high-point had been the years 1918-1920. This time our class-confidence is rock-hard, our organizations are stronger than they have ever been, and the students, white-collar workers and rank-and-file soldiers will sympathize with our side (as they did during the miners' strike) if we show ourselves powerful enough to win.

The slogan "Prepare for the General Strike!", first put forward in Britain by the Chartists, has now been taken up by significant sections of the labour movement.

TUC "inner-cabinet" member Richard Briginshaw had the right idea when he called last month (at NATSOPA's annual Conference) for a General Strike and the complete breaking of the Industrial Relations Act.

But most significant of all was his warning: "it means that you have to face up to what you are doing—and you are embarking on a challenge for power". For once this man (undoubtedly reflecting the swelling anger of print workers at the TUC's betrayals) really hit the nail on the head! But what practical action must be taken in conclusion? Here, unfortunately, we can expect no help from even our most "left-wing" TUC leaders. The conclusion is—however 'frightening' it

may seem—that we must prepare for the seizure of state power ourselves. If the coming General Strike is to be won, we will have to use our full industrial and organizational strength in order physically to break up the apparatus of repression which will be hurled against us and supplant the existing state machine with our own people, our own class-organs of power, our own Labour Government based on our own class-rule.

Is the Labour Party capable of this? Obviously not. Or rather, it has the objective means to conquer power if it really wanted to—but it doesn't. Its leading elements consciously uphold the capitalist system and the Party wholly lacks the discipline and the ideology which it would need. So we must act ourselves. Not by separating ourselves from the Labour Party but by fighting alongside it and within it to capture the leadership ourselves.

But above all we must create for our class a revolutionary instrument, a disciplined party (if possible affiliated to the Labour Party as was the old I.L.P.) which is capable not only of mobilizing the entire working class

for a full-scale General Strike but also of carrying it through to the end.

Even now we must beware of over-confidence. The miners won. The railmen won. The dockers won. But all these were still only partial victories. Prices, unemployment and rents still continue to rise. Now the Tories have no way out but to launch a savage counter-attack of which the pound's 'floating' (in fact a devaluation which will make living costs soar) forms only a part. We repeat our warning made in the last Chartist:

"Unless a party can be formed which will lead the working-class to power, the objective mighty assets of the British labour movement in this struggle—its organizational unity within the framework of the Labour Party, its confidence and militancy at shop-floor level etc.—will be of no avail. Without a leadership matching—in its strategy, its class-consciousness, its centralization and its ruthlessness—the Government and state apparatus of the ruling class, all will be lost."

Ireland: the Cease-fire.

IN IRELAND, WILLY WHITE LAW'S attempts to do so were clearly leading (as the Officials correctly pointed out) down the slippery path of down-right counter-revolutionary attacks on Tory Government while it prepares for a show-down with the British working class.

The complete political bankruptcy of Republicanism has been confirmed nowhere more starkly than in the eagerness of its leaders' response to the merest suggestion of a deal with British imperialism.

The capitulation of the Provisionals (the reformist Officials are scarcely better) was inevitable from the very start of their campaign. Since they substituted terrorism for revolutionary politics, since they failed to mobilize any reliable mass social power behind them, the "peace" manoeuvres were able to rob them suddenly of the possibility of continuing the campaign at all. Their initial

Meanwhile the root causes of the sectarian divide—in unemployment, poverty, wretched housing and the resulting tragic competition in crumbs from the capitalists' table—fester on. Those who believe peace has been brought to Ireland are sadly wrong.

THE CHARTIST

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Republicans Call for Revolutionary Party

THE OFFICIAL IRA's call for the formation of a revolutionary party marks an important new stage in the development of sections of the Irish Republican movement towards the ideas of Lenin and Trotsky. The call was made by Sean Garland, a senior member of the Executive of Sinn Fein, at the movement's annual celebration at the grave of Wolfe Tone, protestant leader of the "United Irishmen's" rising in Bodinstown, Co Kildare in 1798.

The revolutionary party, said Sean Garland, should include not only Republicans, but disaffected members of the Irish Labour Party, Socialists and representatives of the Protestant working class.

The official Republican movement, he said, was prepared to use violence but

only when all other means of achieving 'democratic change' had been exhausted. He specifically condemned 'elitist violence' which took no account of the demands of the majority of the working class.

Terrorism, he said, was not a weapon anyone genuinely concerned for the revolutionary organization of the working class would employ. It was counter-revolutionary and only alienated large sections of the population.

He said Republicans had been seriously in error in the past when they had tried to achieve by force demands which did not have the backing of the majority of the people.

"We must avoid the danger of becoming separated from the mass of working people of Ireland", he warned.

McGovern: U.S. Liberalism's Last Gasp?

A PINCH OF SALT should be taken with the news that share-prices on Wall Street are falling in proportion to the rise in popularity of Senator George McGovern (now assured of the Democratic Party Presidential nomination).

This 'radical' challenger to President Nixon has at heart Wall Street's best interests when he calls for:

1. An immediate end to the economically disastrous Vietnam war;
2. A \$ 32,000m cut in defence expenditure by 1975;
3. Full employment (through Government investment of \$ 10,000m in jobs in housing, transport, "the environment" and the public services);
4. A "tax-the-rich" policy to iron out some of the more flagrant injustices and inequalities in American society.

These proposals are McGovern's recipe for saving capitalism from disaster in America, where the Vietnam war, the massive inflation and unemployment have begun driving considerable sections of American youth and working class towards a total rejection of "the system" as a whole. As the TIMES correspondent Louis Heren puts it, in a comment on the Senator's spectacular Democratic Primary victories:

"His unexpected genius was to sense that these problems were pushing many Americans towards what other countries could have been a revolutionary situation".

Precisely. It is to save America from revolution that McGovern has sprung on the scene.

But while this is true, the accusations of "socialism", and the perverse reactions of Wall Street are not purely "irrational". It is of the olies and the "Establishment" politicians of both parties are more than a little afraid. It is of the forces which are building up behind him. Can they be kept under McGovern's control?

When "poor whites" (in

significant numbers) abandon their old racist spokesmen and switch to the new populist bandwagon of McGovern—and when, with all their pent-up anger and frustrations, these people mingle in McGovern rallies with radicalized students and blacks, united only in their confused opposition to "the system", to the central Government, the liberal bureaucratic establishment of both parties and to the idle and wealthy—then indeed is an explosive mixture to be feared.

For his campaign-managers, the much-vaunted "sincerity" of McGovern has solid value—if he can occasionally deceive even himself with his own promises, he will be that much better at deceiving others. But what when the dreams eventually pop? In the context of the present world crisis of capitalism, McGovern could not keep any of his promises to the poor, the black or the unemployed without undermining the system he is pledged to defend. But so much energy and so many illusions (not only of radicalized middle-class youth, but also of blacks, Mexicans and blue-collar workers in a leftward movement un-precedented since the war) have gone into the production of the McGovern myth, that when it explodes, it will be with no ordinary bang. Nixon's winning the election (the most likely result on present trends) would only delay matters a while. McGovern as President, on the other hand, would from the start be happy to solve capitalism's crisis at their expense. Instead of getting better, the massive problems pin-pointed by McGovern would get worse. The force of the anger of millions of America's oppressed would destroy the Democratic Party, burst asunder the fetters of the two-party system altogether and clear the way for the establishment of an in-vincible revolutionary socialist movement and the mightiest Labour Party the world has known.

'Marxists' Oppose Preparation for General Strike

AT BRENT EAST LABOUR PARTY General Management Committee on June 22, a resolution for Annual Conference proposed by the LPYS and urging Labour's NEC "to ensure that before a General Strike situation has developed the whole Labour Movement has been politically prepared" for the taking of power, was spoken and voted against by a member of the 'Militant' tendency, Brian Johnson.

Moving deletion of any reference to the question of a General Strike (to murmurs of approval from the right wing delegates present) he said:

"We've got to learn the lessons of 1926: if there's a General Strike, we'll lose it."

The resolution was defeated. The 'Militant' can be proud of this modest achievement.

Crucial Step for Socialist Charter

BELOW IS A SUMMARY OF OUR POLITICAL POSITION, on which we will base our proposals at the coming Socialist Charter Convention:

1. WHO ARE THE

We CHARTISTS are Communists in the sense intended by Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto. Like them "we do not form a separate party opposed to other working-class parties". We are all trade unionists and/or members of the Labour Party. We "do not set up any sectarian principles" of our own, by which to "shape and mould the proletarian movement". We work simply in accordance with the existing principles of trade unionism, and in pursuance of the objective of the Labour Party as set out in its own Constitution:

"To secure for the workers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange, and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service".

In the generations-old loyalty of workers to the Labour Party we find not an obstacle to the achievement of our aims, but our most valuable source of support. We are distinguished from the rest of the Labour Party fundamentally in this:

(1) Unlike the present leadership, we are interested not in tinkering with the system of capitalism but in a fundamental class-transfer of all property and power

(2) We point out the Labour Party's community of interest with the Socialist and Communist parties of Italy, France and the other countries of Europe and the world, and with the so-called "Communist" states.

We attach little importance to the rivalries and panaceas of the various revolutionary sects. In contrast with the radical petit-bourgeois groupings, we in no way attempt to counterpose our own "principles" or "programme" to the ex-

2. ACTION ON HO

THE FOLLOWING IS A SHORTENED VERSION of a detailed policy-statement on the Housing Question to be submitted to the Convention:

"Good dwellings are so expensive that it is absolutely greater part of the workers to make use of them. Big of investing in houses for the working class, and as a classes and their housing needs mostly fall prey to the

WHERE HAVE YOU HEARD THAT before? Perhaps a SHELTER report, or possibly a recent speech by some politician?

In fact, if you thought that, you could not be much further wrong. It is actually from a report on housing in London written in 1872!

So there you have it. Everything appears to have changed and yet nothing really has. In fact, if it weren't for council-housing and some limited rent control, most of us would still be living in slums, or on the streets. But cheap housing and limited rent control—two results of terrific battles by tenants and the labour movement in the past—are precisely the things which the Tories' 'Fair Deal on Housing' proposals are aiming to kick out from under us.

If we look at housing, we can see especially clearly the lunacy of the whole system we live under. Consider the following figures:

TOTAL UNEMPLOYED IN BUILDING TRADES: 100,000

TOTAL BRICKS IN STOCK: enough for 5 million houses.

TOTAL WAITING LIST in London alone: 284,000 families.

The men to build and the materials needed are both lying idle. A crash house-building programme could re-house all the families on the waiting lists. And yet NO government, NO council and NO private firms can even begin to reduce the housing shortage.

The reasons for this are quite plain. It has always been government policy that whatever else was nationalized, the building industry must be left alone. "Profit is Paramount" was the housing slogan of every post-war government. Firms like Taylor Woodrow, Wimpeys, William Olds and Laings have waxed fat on the misery of an acute shortage of houses. Many of these firms cleaned up

a packet out of the so-called "ground-nuts scheme" after the war, and with this nest-egg (care of us as tax-payers) behind them, they have never looked back. Recently the scale of profits they derive from shortages was brought home sharply by the ridiculous queues for flats costing £35,000 at Regents Park.

The whole hopeless spiral is actually compounded by the un-precedented rise in land-prices. This is surely the ultimate in absurdity. Stop and think about it a minute.

Land is actually a fixed asset. You can't remove it, and it was there long before any of us were. Yet a small knot of land-sharks, speculators and tycoons can buy and sell land in the metropolis for millions of pounds an acre! If they could, they'd buy, sell and rent the very air we breathe! With soaring prices and a huge demand, no building firm or landlord need bother one iota about the selling or renting of his property.

So why isn't something done? The answer is plain. For any government to attempt a solution would require immediately taking over, without compensation, the banks, the building societies and the construction giants which at present cream off all the monster profits. Yet if a government did this we can be sure it would bring crashing down upon its head the furious opposition of the whole property-owning class. Armed with the TV, the Press and all their other allies, the City of London and the speculators would scream blue murder. Only a mobilization of the whole weight of the labour movement could really smash this sort of opposition. It is fear of provoking this sort of response that has held our Labour leaders back. And yet what have they really to fear? The millions of tenants in slums (estimated by Shelter to number 5,000,000), the mass of unemployed building workers and the

THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF the Socialist Charter movement is to be held at John Marshall Hall (Blackfriars Road) on September 9.

In the teeth of tenacious opposition from Tribune MPs Ian Mikado, John Mendelsohn and most of the other 'big names' who 'signed the Charter' in 1968, the National Organizing Committee majority are recommending a new Charter and a series of policy-proposals whose acceptance by the Convention would finally and irrevocably split the movement from the

CHARTISTS?

existing mighty structure and power of the Labour Movement. We in no way pit ourselves against the invincible potential at the disposal of the Parliamentary Labour Party, the NEC, the Trades Union Congress and Labour's other organs. On the contrary, we identify with this growing structure and power, we draw attention to its potential, and with all the means of propaganda at our disposal we urge that it be mobilized and used for the movement's own purposes.

Our immediate aim is simple:

(a) the breaking of the Parliamentary Labour Party from the institutions of capitalism and subordination of it to Conference and the working class;

(b) the seizure, by the Labour Movement, of the industrial and financial power of this country.

Our slogan, to be understood in that revolutionary sense, is

LABOUR—TAKE THE POWER!

DUSING!

possible for the Capital is shy result these speculators."

whole working class would rally as one man to support such a programme.

In London recently, moves at "improvement" made by the Government and the GLC have only accentuated the problem. Most lunatic of all have been the steps towards the proposed Motorway Box, a series of ring-ways built around London to enable cars to have easy access to the centre of the city. The effect of this will be far worse even than the results of the Westway—which was itself an environmental disaster. The resulting noise and pollution (problems which the middle-class 'ecologists' have been focusing on up to now) represent only some of the smaller disasters associated with this scheme. The "Box" will actually flatten thousands of good houses, thereby forcing the GLC and the local councils to divert resources needed for the rehousing of thousands of families on the waiting list.

If you are one of the ones near to the new motorway box your community will be split into two—as has happened at Ladbrooke Grove and North Kensington as a result of Westway. You will have the endless rumble of lorries, which will get larger and have fewer safety precautions if this government succeeds in dragging us into the Common Market. The chaos resulting from the completion of Westway was rightly described by the residents of Acklam Road as a "Hell-hole".

But this brings us to the whole question of transport itself. Why are there so many cars on the roads in the first place? At the root of this problem is the idea of a fare-paying public transport system. It is proving a disaster.

It is the ever-rising public-transport fares which are forcing more and more cars onto the roads. This and the resulting drop in service frequencies (leading to still higher fares) all point to

methods and politics of Tribune and set it on a course of working class struggle for power. At the last NOC meeting on May 7, Stan Newens (ex-MP and Tribune supporter) accused the majority of setting out to construct a revolutionary party. The CHARTIST can say on their behalf as was said at the time: yes, we are doing just that. That is the sum and substance of our plans for the Socialist Charter and of all our political work.

We urge all CHARTIST readers to attend the Convention.

We work for the purpose of raising without delay, in an organised way, the demand that the leaders of the Labour Movement use their strength to bring down this Tory Government and take the entire economic wealth and state power of this country into their own hands and the hands of the millions of workers who support them.

Once the mass of workers have been shown in their own experience that their leaders in the trade unions and in Parliament are really afraid of preparing seriously to take power from the employers and bankers, then they will begin to say to themselves, as we said to ourselves when forming the CHARTISTS: If the power is to be taken, we must take it ourselves. On that basis, with Labour rank-and-file behind us, we will build up a disciplined revolutionary party—fighting for its affiliation to the Labour Party—to enable us to do just that.



"Any chance of a ballot on it?" (T&GWU "Record")

one thing—a passenger transport system which is free. Already the London Labour Party Conference has gone on record as demanding this for London. Yet to implement the scheme, with the costs paid by the government, would offend not just the construction firms who want to carve up our cities but also the motor manufacturers who finish the job off for them.

The questions of housing and of transport are so integrally linked that it is impossible to solve either independently of the other. Yet to implement the free transport scheme would involve a fight against the Fords, the Chryslers, the British Leylands and their like. A Labour Government which wanted to bring in the scheme would have to nationalize such firms from the start.

Thus the need for a clear, concise programme for our movement becomes obvious. All attempts to solve the mounting problems of a big city like London "a bit at a time" are quite physically impossible. We must organize to break out of the capitalist system altogether and seize the wealth and resources of Britain into our own hands as a class. Along that road alone can we hope to run housing and transport as social services and make our cities fit for human beings to live in.

Senior Army officers concerned about 'subversive forces'

As the world role of the British Army comes increasingly into question, its high-ranking officers appear to centre more and more of their professional attention on domestic affairs. Heavy involvement in Ulster is an important cause of the change, but by no means the only one.

Here at the newly built headquarters of the UK land forces there is much talk about "subversive forces" and "growing pressures" on British society which does not refer to either movement of the IRA. Anarchy is a word used often and taken quite seriously.

Many of those blamed for trying to engineer it are thought to have allies in the mass media, especially the BBC, which is regarded with great suspicion. Over mouthfuls of melon cocktail in the officers' mess one brigadier told me of his absolute conviction that two-thirds of the corporation's intake of graduate trainees were "known Marxists".

The evidence points to a growing consensus among senior ranks that the Army will devote more attention towards countering subversion of one form and another. On this there is widespread agreement with the ideas of Brigadier Frank Kitson, soon to take over as head of the influential School of Infantry at Warminster.

"The more discerning of us are extremely depressed about the way

things are going. We seem nearer and nearer to anarchy all the time", the Major-General Administration, Ronald Buckland, said. "Now, with schoolchildren on the streets of London, we have reached an all-time low."

His views were echoed more strongly by the Brigadier General Staff, Brian Watkins. "We are very concerned with the growing number of people in Britain dedicated to the erosion of authority. Unfortunately television is their natural ally."

Events such as the miners' strike were scrutinized closely here, with the possibility always in the back of soldiers' minds that the Army might be called on to deal with the breaking up of pickets.

Brigadier Watkins told me:

"The whole period of the miners' strike made us realize that the present size of the police force is too small. It is based on the fundamental philosophy that we are a law-abiding country, but things have now got to the stage where there are not enough resources to deal with the increasing numbers who are not prepared to respect the law."

"But while you may think that we chaps at Wilton were just itching to go in and sort out the miners, that is the last thing we wanted to do. We know it would have provoked a general strike."

THE SACKING of some allegedly 'political' Army officers by the Minister of Defence has been suggested by TRIBUNE MP Hugh Jenkins, speaking in a recent interview on the BBC's "World This Week-End" programme.

On June 11, he accused a number of officers at the head-quarters of UK land forces, Wilton, Wiltshire, of meddling in politics by publishing their views on a variety of topics in interviews with a reporter from the TIMES.

More recently (June 23) the whole issue exploded in Parliament as Labour MPs took up the attack. John Morris MP spoke of "the fear of the House of the political soldier who has not been seen in this island since Cromwell". Frank Allaun boldly called on the Defence Minister to dismiss the officers "to discourage further incidents by the top brass". And Norman Atkinson declared "there are suspicions that the British Army are being specially trained to undertake tasks as strike breakers and that they are being trained in the handling of dock equipment so that more troops than have previously had this expertise can be used to break industrial disputes in the docks and railways."

One Down—68 to go!

AS THE POUND'S DEVALUATION paves the way for yet fiercer attacks on the living standards of us all, the struggle to control our own organizations and break the "independence" of the Parliamentary Labour Party assumes fresh urgency. The whole trade union movement must support the Constitutional changes proposed by the TRIBUNE group:

1. That the leader of the Party be chosen (like the Treasurer) not by the Parliamentarians but by the whole of Conference;
2. That the NEC be more representative of the rank-and-file;
3. That prospective MPs be made to sign an undertaking to abide by Conference decisions.

In addition, the historic 75-50 vote not to re-adopt Dick Taverne as Parliamentary candidate at the next election must be the signal for an aval-

anche of similar attacks. There are 68 other CLPs whose MPs voted with the Tories last October on the Common Market vote. Until every one of these middle-class political parasites in the Parliamentary Party have been cleared out and replaced with trade-unionists prepared to represent their class, we cannot abandon the campaign. As Ralph Wadsworth, the leader of the labour group on Lincoln council said at the GMC: "Council tenants, shop stewards, and the working class have no reason to thank those 69 Labour MPs who voted with the Tories and kept this hated government in office. If Taverne wants to vote Tory then he should be honest about it and join the Tories". Under no circumstances must the NEC be allowed to reverse this decision. On the contrary, it must in loyalty to Conference and the Lincoln comrades publicly endorse it and make it "One down—68 to go!"

Rents Struggle:

Brent Decides to Implement

by **Graham Bash** (Brent East C.L.P.)

BRENT COUNCIL HAVE THROWN IN THE TOWEL. In the report back meeting of the Labour Group on June 23, Alderman Hartley made it quite clear they would implement the Tories' Housing Finance Bill. "This will be in the best interests of the tenants", he said. With almost every Labour Party speaker from the floor voicing strongest opposition, Hartley was clearly worried about his future standing in the Party locally.

"When I first read the Bill, I felt sure it would cause a lot of embarrassment and misunderstanding", he lamented. When asked whether the Council would evict tenants who refused to pay the increases, Hartley replied: "We haven't decided yet, but we would show the utmost tolerance". This is more than the Chartists, the tenants and the local labour movement will show him. Over the recent period, the labour movement in Brent has not been silent. Far from it. At three successive GMCs, Brent East Labour Party has called on the Councillors to refuse to implement. At the last meeting it demanded that they fulfil their responsibilities in linking the fight of the tenants to that of the rest of the labour movement in the struggle to bring down the Tory Government. The Party has been frequently attacked in the front page of the Kilburn Times 'for openly advocating disobedience to the law' and 'striking at the very basis on which the constitution of this country is built'.

Playing a leading role in this campaign have been Brent East Young Socialists. We organized a meeting at Tollgate Community Centre and managed to get almost 50 tenants along to hear Bill Deacon and Keith Veness attack the cowardly retreats of the Councillors. As Comrade Deacon said, 'There are no limits to the lengths these panic-stricken leaders will go to avoid battle—even to the extent of adopting the proposals of the Tory Council in Birmingham.'

This meeting provided a springboard for mobilizing tenant support for a rally and lobby of Councillors at Brent Town Hall organized by the Brent Federation of Tenants' Associations. About 200 tenants turned up for the meeting outside the hall and for a lively demonstration in a Committee room inside where the Labour-controlled Council was still hesitating over its attitude to the Bill.

All this of course is a modest beginning. But even if slowly, the tenants' and labour organizations are moving in to fight. The right-wing Labour Councillors are getting worried. But if there is one friend these Councillors can rely on, it is the Kilburn Times:

"Any organization which advocates open rebellion is acting in a totally irresponsible manner. If Brent Labour organizations cannot see this, thank goodness the Labour Borough Council can. It opposes the Bill as strongly as anyone, yet it has the sense to see that if the Bill becomes law, it must be put into effect."

To these Councillors the Chartist says once again: "You have the majority—use it. Stand up and fight, or make way for those who will!"



ABOVE: Tenants' demonstration outside Brent Town Hall, June 14.

"Irresponsible" says Labour Rebel

BRENT COUNCILLOR KELLY has stood out publicly against the majority of his Labour Group on the rents question—as this interview (given on the eve of the decision to implement) shows:

CHARTIST: You have publicly criticized the leadership of your Labour group for failing to take the initiative against implementing the Housing Finance Bill. Why did you think this necessary?

COUNCILLOR KELLY: They've known about this Bill for some time now. It's an irresponsible Council that hedges for so long.

Q: Has your criticism had any effect?

A: One or two members have now thrown off their shackles and decided to oppose implementation. The tenants cannot fight this alone. We on the Council have our responsibilities to them. What with rising prices and everything, the working people are losing out all along the line. But the miners and railmen—and now the

dockers—have beaten back the Tories. Let's see the tenants do the same—and show that the labour movement can govern the Council.

Q: How far are you prepared to go?

A: All the way—to prison if need be. But if we can get united action—with the Labour Councils refusing to implement and the tenants refusing to pay—then what can the Tories do? Can they evict every tenant and imprison every councillor? Let them go ahead. I don't fear them.

Let's be clear about this. This is only a part of the Tory attack on the working class. We're in a class-struggle that we must win. If we fail now, we doom ourselves and our kids to the workhouses. This much is

clear from the threats against the unions.

Q: How do you consider Brent East Labour Party to have acted?

A: Every Constituency Party with any conscience must involve itself. The resolutions from Brent East have been socialist and brought the movement forward. If more CLPs were like that we would soon have this Government on the run.

Q: What do you think will happen?

A: Well, if we do implement the Bill it will be a sorry day for the people of this area. The next Labour Government must get rid of the Housing Finance Act at once and repay the rents to the tenants. We must make it clear that we in the Labour Party are not here to do the Tories' work for them.

4-DAY WEEK

(WITHOUT LOSS OF PAY)

THIS DEMAND, NOW BEING RAISED BY THE TRANSPORT AND General Workers' Union, could be the key to an invincible campaign against unemployment and this Tory Government. A four-day week, plus an extra week's holiday per year, would provide annually 300 million extra work-days. More than enough to 'soak up' the 'unemployment problem' altogether! And this in addition to easing the burden and drudgery of work for the millions of those already employed. What better way to unite the employed and unemployed against this bosses' Government and their system?

Already the print unions (among others) have resisted redundancies on a similar basis, inasmuch as it is they and their stewards rather than the management who have determined the total numbers employed and the hours worked in their industry. Extend this principle of embryonic workers' control to the economy as a whole—and managements could be forced to employ the entire present 'pool of unemployed'.

Or at least, such is the idea of the Transport Workers' campaign. But could managements be "forced" to that point? Do not the world currency crisis, devaluation and the threat of massive bankruptcies mean the Government would resist with all its might?

To that there can only be one answer. If the system cannot afford us jobs, then we cannot afford the system. Firms which claim they face bankruptcy must be told to open their books. If their finances really are that bad, they must be expropriated and transferred to the community for operation under workers' control and management.

For the Chartists at any rate, the impracticality of the T & G's demands under capitalism is not a reason for retreating on them. On the contrary, it is a good reason for pressing them harder still and, on that basis, preparing ourselves and our supporters for the working-class conquest of power and the establishment of a Labour Government based on social ownership, representing the real interests and strengths of organized labour in this country and guaranteeing decent wages and full employment for all.

Liaison Committee Gives No Lead *Valerie Veness* (NATSOPA delegate).

ONCE AGAIN the stalinist organisers refused to allow resolutions at the Liaison Committee Emergency Conference held at Central Hall, Westminster on June 11. As a result the well-attended meeting (of 1,200 delegates representing 350 union branches, 90 trades councils, 50 shop-stewards' committees and 30 district committees) was limited to discussing a statement circulated by the organisers beforehand. This made only two concrete proposals: (a) that the trade union movement "ignore" the Industrial Relations Act and (b) that a "day of industrial action" be staged

on September 5. The meeting duly endorsed these, but their inadequacy must have been clear to most delegates.

In the discussion Brother D. Full-ick (the ASLEF member interviewed in the last CHARTIST) hit the nail on the head in stating that the Industrial Relations Act could be smashed only in the course of a struggle "using all the means at our disposal to bring this Tory Government down".

But the nearest anyone came to the question of a General Strike was when David Bolton, stalinist vice-President of the Scottish NUM,

said "The Tories gave in to the miners not because of what they were doing, but because of what the situation might have led to."

Bernie Steer (of the "Blue Union") made no mention of a General Strike at all despite the docks situation. He announced that he had been served with an Industrial Court Injunction on his way to Conference but that he would ignore it and go to prison rather than stop picketing at Chobham Farm as ordered. "We will repeat the old formula of the waterside", he warned: "One in the Dock—All Out of the Docks!"

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