

CHARTIST

LABOUR'S REVOLUTIONARY VOICE No. 11 September 1973 5p

T.U.C. — PREPARE FOR CONFRONTATION QUIT TALKS NOW!

WHILE TORY preparations to tie down our living standards to the Phase 3 provisions continue unchecked, the TUC leaders persist in time-wasting talks at Chequers with Heath and Barber. The "forceful and determined talking" of Feather and Jones is nothing but a smokescreen to blind us to the real dangers we face this autumn.

With new pay claims in from many sections of the trade union movement, headed by the miners, and with many workers dissatisfied with the £1 and 4% they received after all the bitter struggles of the spring, opposition to Phase 2 and 3 wage-cutting is mounting. The scene is set for the massive confrontation which Hugh Scanlon (AUEW leader) and Lawrence Daly (NUM chief) predicted in June.

But instead of harnessing and organising hostility to the Tory government into a campaign to remove them and open the road to power, the TUC are still chinwagging at Chequers. For a whole year now, Vic Feather and his friends have continuously flaunted the 1972 Congress decision against talks and continued with almost religious fervour their cap in hand pilgrimages to Heath to ask for concessions. But the Tories have nothing to give. As long as capitalism's crisis continues to



ABOVE: Feather and his successor Len Murray

deepen, the Tory government will be forced to give us more of the same — wage-cutting, sky-rocketing price inflation, and rent and mortgage increases.

The only road open to the labour movement is the road of organised

struggle to remove this government. This means an immediate end to talks with Heath and the start of preparations for a general strike and the political tasks of taking power which will be posed before us.

BOMBS PROVIDE COVER FOR REPRESSION

by Socialist Charter National Secretary

FOLLOWING THE RECENT spate of letter bombs in London, the air is now heavy with repression. There is every danger that the Tory government will utilise the situation for a massive clampdown on the Irish Republican movement and the left organisations in this country.

And this could be just a beginning. Faced with an ever deepening economic crisis, the government is attempting to solve the problems of British capitalism on the backs of the working class. As

a matter of life and death, the British ruling class has no choice but to take on the trade union movement, in order to break its power.

It is in this situation that the aftermath of the London bombings could have such sinister implications. In the name of "national unity" and "security" against the bombers, the Tories will launch a witch-hunt against the left, and attack the democratic rights of the

working class,

Already in the recent period we have seen

- The attacks on the right to picket
- The formation of specially trained police anti-picket squads
- The establishment of special 'shoot-to-kill' units of police
- Vast increases and improvement in spying techniques and wire-tapping

■ Continued page 2

INSIDE: MINERS — SPECIAL FEATURE

Defend Shrewsbury 24!

TWENTY FOUR building workers, arrested last February on trumped-up charges of 'conspiracy' and 'intimidation', are due to appear for trial in Shrewsbury Crown court on 3rd October.

The 24 were charged following incidents occurring during last years' long and historic strike. The seriousness of the charges, which could carry lengthy prison sentences, when coupled with the arbitrariness of the pickets' selection six months after the strike, indicates the Tories blind determination to remove our democratic rights.

The Defence Committee, encouraged by the verdicts of 'not guilty' of 'affray' and 'intimidation' on eleven of the 24, is calling for stoppages and a demonstration the day the trial begins.

Already Ipswich and Norwich Trades Councils have sent money to the Defence Committee and Edinburgh,

Brighton, Coventry, and Middlesborough Trades Councils have also voted support.

The Scotland, North-East and North-West Regional Councils of the building workers' union UCATT have called on the union to support the 24. It is a shameful fact that UCATT has not yet followed the T&GWU—the other main union involved—in declaring its support. But declarations are not enough, action is needed.

The key to a successful defence of the 24 pickets, and ultimately of our movement's right to effective picketing, lies in the mass mobilisation of working class forces by the leaders of the TUC and Labour Party. It is vital that our leaders break from the Tory enemy and immediately integrate the defence of the Shrewsbury 24 into a general offensive strategy to remove the Tories.

THE CHARTIST

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LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

ALL SET FOR CLASH WITH WILSON

THE BURNING ANGER felt throughout the movement at the activities of our so-called leaders is reflected in this year's Labour Party conference agenda. In particular there is a growing determination that the decisions we take at Blackpool will not be ignored and abused as they have always been in the past.

A whole number of resolutions declare that the Parliamentary Labour Party and a future Labour Government must be bound by conference decisions. The resolution from Shipley CLP, for example, notes with alarm "the continued failure of the Parliamentary party and in particular the Shadow Cabinet to campaign for the decisions on public ownership adopted by annual conference"

It will be on the question of nationalisation that the main clash will come. There are over 60 resolutions on this issue, mostly in support of the NEC's 'Programme for Britain'—calling for the nationalisation of 25 monopolies. And some go further calling for the nationalisation under workers' control of the 300 leading monopolies as well as the land the banks and insurance companies.

These resolutions are a challenge that Wilson cannot relish. For the one thing he does not want is to be tied down to anything specific. That is the reason why he was so quick to disown the NEC's programme. And that is why CHARTISTS, for all their criticisms of that programme, insist that the conference stands firm behind the NEC's commitment to take over the 25, insist on its inclusion in the manifesto, and above all demand that the necessary steps are

taken to implement the programme, leading the struggle to bring down the government.

Fortunately for Wilson even the best resolutions fail to pinpoint the revolutionary measures that must be taken against the capitalist state if the nationalisation proposals are to be implemented, and no doubt he will try to use these shortcomings to get off the hook.

The amendments from Tunbridge Wells and Brent East CLPs provide a further challenge to the leaders over the Common Market.

If Harold and his friends seem set for a tough time next month we can be sure they will get more than a little help from some of the Tribune "lefts" whose ardent socialist talk is matched only by their treacherous actions. At last year's conference we saw Frank Allaun doing the NEC's dirty work over the Housing Finance Act. Ian Mikardo opposing the delegates over nationalisation. Michael Foot, "darling of the left", advising against attacking the MPs who voted with the Tories for the Common Market.

Since then the spectacle of Foot and Mikardo opposing the NEC's proposals for nationalising 25 monopolies has added to this sorry story. These gentlemen don't want to be 'dogmatic' about the issue, you see.

● Once again the Socialist Charter will be producing the Daily BRIEFING service for conference delegates.

NOT ELIGIBLE

JUST AS the Labour Party is finally getting round to ending the bans and proscriptions on the Communist Party and Socialist Labour League, the well-known hack bureaucrat Reg Underhill has chosen to try and put the clock back. He told enquirers from the High Peak area of Derbyshire that members of the centrist International Socialism group (I.S.) are not eligible for party membership, even though I.S. is not an officially banned organisation!

Such restrictions can only hamper and weaken unity against the Tories. Chartists have consistently demanded that the Labour Party be open to all working class political tendencies to join, affiliate and campaign for their views as the Fabians, Tribune and Militant groups have done for years.

■ BOMBS Continued from page 1

- The establishment of a permanent joint military, police, secret service and civil service 'security committee'—whose principal aim will be the co-ordination of police, army, and blacklegs in defeating any future General Strike
- The increased attacks on immigrants, in particular, the recent House of Lords decision, making the 1971 Immigration Act retrospective.

The outlawing of the Ligue Communiste by the French government is a grim foretaste of things to come as the Tories prepare to make full use of the present wave of hysteria.

All this makes the CHARTIST extremely suspicious as to who was behind these incidents. The bombing activities are totally reactionary, playing completely into the hands of the Tory gov-

ernment. This is the method of individual terror, the antithesis of the methods of the class struggle and the revolutionary challenge for power by the working class. Given the utter political bankruptcy of the Provisional IRA, it is possible that break-away elements from it were responsible.

But there is another more serious explanation. In view of the explicit denial from the Provisionals, and in view of the revelations of the Littlejohn affair, there is every likelihood of Brit-

ish Intelligence being involved. British Intelligence has been involved in such activities before, and these incidents solely benefit the ruling class.

Whatever the truth, the trade union movement must be on its guard. Every measure against the Republican Movement, every measure to tighten 'national security' must be opposed to the full. 'Unity in action' must be the keyword as each and every trade unionist, every picket, and every socialist political group comes under attack.

vietnam

Stalinism v Revolutionary Socialism

A history of the Vietnamese Revolution

by Richard Stephenson

4p

CENTRISM IN CRISIS

The Militant and the general strike

by Chris Knight

4p

The Soldier's Charter

Written by serving soldiers. Essential reading for all militants—whether in or out of uniform. Order from CHARTIST Publications, 10p.

CRUNCH COMING ON RAIL FUTURE

ANY day now the long term future for many thousands of jobs on the railways will be decided. The government is due in the near future to make the decisions on its general policy for British Rail, having considered two reports, one by the rail board itself and another by a Rail Policy Review Committee which has been sitting in Whitehall over a period of 18 months.

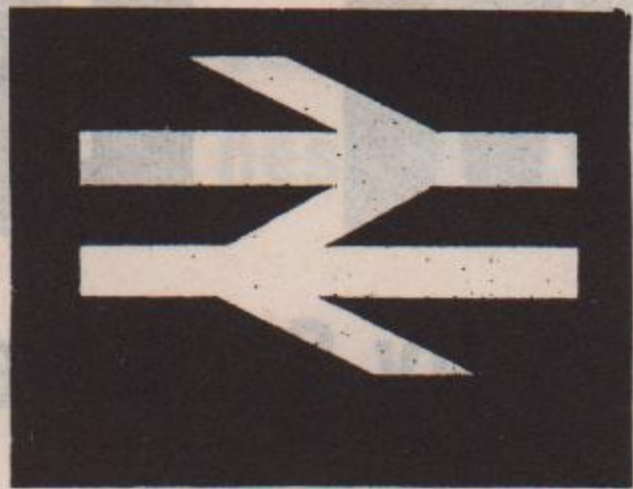
Civil servants are thought to be pushing for a reduction in the network from 11,000 miles of track to 7,000, sacking thousands of railmen; but while this may fall in line with the Tories' attitude towards nationalised industries, three factors must be deterring them:

● The cost, not only in the short term with redundancy payments, but also in the future, when a decline in traffic on the remaining network would increase the burden of unshared overheads like track and signalling.

● The unpopularity which the government might provoke through

bringing more traffic onto the roads, even from their own voters.

● The prospect of big clashes with the railway unions.



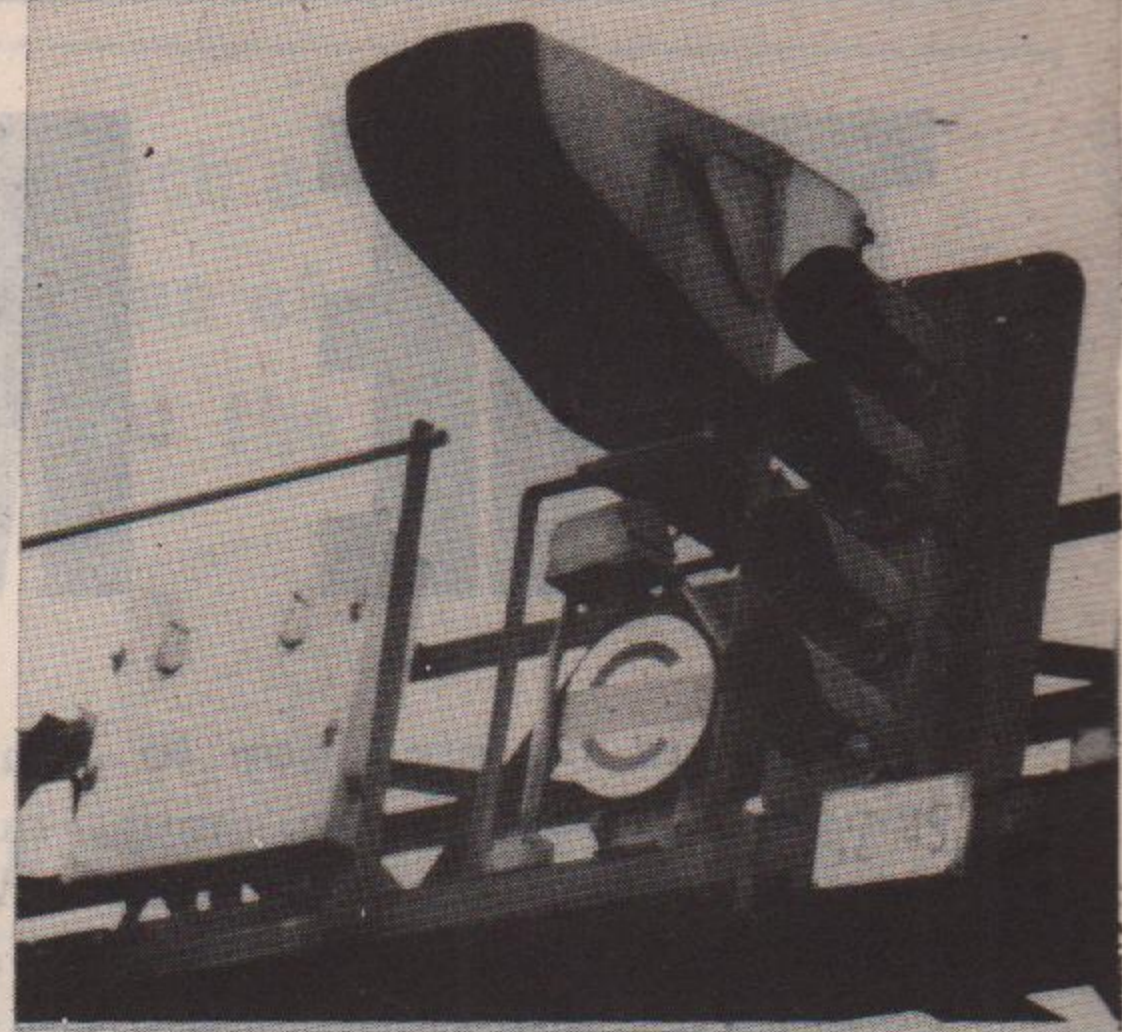
The Rail Board's report on the other hand aims to keep the track at 11,000 miles. Its attraction to the Tories must be that it foresees a reduction in staff from 230,000 in 1971 to 109,000 by 1981, a continuation of previous measures (staff were cut from 439,000 in 1961, mainly by the Beeching axe). The cuts will affect all grades of railmen. Independent experts (so-called) reckon that one third of the 43,000 drivers, guards and secondmen could be chopped without further capital investment. There are about 7,000 secondmen

waiting for jobs as drivers.

ASLEF insists on secondmen for all trains doing over 100 mph; this is bound to come under review, as well as the need for guards on fully braked goods trains and many commuter services.

There are 1,600 manned level crossings which could be automated and likewise many signalmen could be made redundant. Over half of British Rail's freight is now in trainloads, but the minimum economical trainload is 600 tons and fewer customers can fill a whole train. A trade union agreement to one man trains would reduce the minimum trainload size.

Reactions from the trade union leaders to the Rail Board's plan amounted to an acceptance of the general approach. Sir Sidney Greene of the NUR had the nerve to say it was "better than we had expected". And if any rail workers are expecting help from the Labour Party leaders they are mistaken.



The essence of Labour's plan for rail is contained in these two sentences of the new "Programme for Britain":

"The government, however, has clearly been contemplating a reduction in railway route mileage. The next Labour government will halt this process."

Not one word about halting the cuts in staff!

Paul Moore

'SPORT AND LEISURE'

THE NEW Labour Greater London councillors, elected on April 12th, weren't slow to celebrate their victory in style. Sir Reg Goodwin and his gang, notorious in the Party for their right-wing politics, wasted no time in displaying their striking similarity to the Tories by organising a little do at our expense (the menu is reprinted below). For a mere £11,000 (the most conservative estimate), the 2,000 guests, mostly with very posh accents, had the run of the Royal Festival Hall to eat, drink, dance, and see an exhibition entitled, appropriately, "Sport and Leisure for Londoners". And if they knocked back too much wine or scotch in one of the several bars, they had only to look at their programme for help. At the end it said:

FIRST AID

If assistance is required please ask one of the uniformed attendants.

A selection of Pates - Country Style/Duck/Liver
Chilled Melon
Egg and Anchovy Mayonnaise

Cold Roast Sirloin of Beef
Cold Boned Saddle of Lamb in Tarragon Aspic
Dressed Ox Tongue in Aspic
Cold Roast Pork and Apple Sauce
Ham "Virginia" Style with Pickled Peaches
Decorated Cold Roast Turkey
Scotch Salmon en Bellevue

Salads:

Potato and Chive, Mushroom, Coleslaw, Tomato and Cucumber, Russian

Fruit Salad and Cream
Lemon Possett - Maids of Honour
Strawberries and Cream
Croque en Bouche
Gateau au Kirsch - Millefeuille
Cassata Festival

Coffee

Cheese and Wine Buffet

A Selection of Canapes

'EYE' EXPOSES POULSON LINKS

Martin Cook reviews 'Private Eye Extra: A Guide to the Poulson Case' by Martin Tomkinson. 10 pence.

WHAT do the Ronan Point explosion tragedy, the Cannon Street station development and a mining project in Portuguese Angola have in common with leading members of the Labour Party? Yes, you've guessed it - all were tied in to the gruesome operations of the John Poulson organisation. This 'Private Eye' special enquiry came out just before the arrest of Poulson and some of his associates put a legal black-out on press comment on the affair. Although 'Private Eye' is infamous for its lying attacks on the IRA and the British working class, in this case it does a first rate muck-raking job.

John G L Poulson was never even a qualified architect, only a businessman who employed others to design projects he had got the contracts for. Much of the stuff he put up was jerry-built, like flats at Felling in Durham made almost uninhabitable by water leakage. A lot of his success in the '60s was based on SYSTEM BUILDING i.e. using prefabricated components without proper structural supports to hold the building together safely. After the Ronan Point disaster, hundreds of thousands of pounds had to be spent by local councils (at public expense) to strengthen Poulson-built blocks of flats.

To make sure of contracts and build up a colossal architectural practice with a turnover of more than £1 million per annum, Poulson cultivated acquaintances such as British Rail estates manager Graham Tunbridge and top Scottish civil servant George Pottinger (both now facing trial) and leading members of local public authorities like the Coal Board, Hospital Boards, Water Board etc. This enabled him to land dozens of big building projects especially in Yorkshire and Co Durham.

But much more important from



T. Dan Smith

our point of view are the links Poulson built up with top Labour Party men to further his plans. Such as:

1) T DAN SMITH Ex-mayor of Newcastle and political buddy of George Brown, who has kept out of the nick only by the skin of his teeth. Poulson paid him at least £155,000 for using his Labour party contacts to get work from local councils from Wandsworth to Sunderland.

2) ANDREW CUNNINGHAM top official for the General & Municipal Workers Union and Labour Party national executive member. He was chairman of a whole string of bodies such as

Durham Police authority (!), Felling council and Newcastle Airport (a G&M closed shop). His local connections in the Tyne and Durham area make the Cosa Nostra look like amateurs.

3) ALBERT ROBERTS MP for Normanton and ex-miner. This Grade A scab acts as a public relations man for the fascist regimes of Spain and Portugal and as a "fixer" for people wanting to do business with them. He helped Poulson get contracts for a mine complex at Mossamedes in Angola - part of the Portuguese imperialists' looting of their African territories - which they subjugate by the crude barbarity lately revealed in Mozambique.

CORRUPTION

We can be sure the dung-heap exposed here is only the tip of the iceberg as regards graft and corruption in local government. No doubt the Tories and Liberals are just as bent. The point is, how can we expect to fight off the attacks of the Tory government when our 'generals' are types like these who spend their time feathering their own nests and hobnobbing with Tory businessmen like Poulson? These Cunninghams and Roberts' are just the people who always tell us that local councils have to put up the rents because "it's the law"! We are not worried about councillors' morals. What CHARTISTS aim for is to get the party rank and file to throw out this garbage (since the national leadership doesn't seem prepared to) and elect councillors who represent IN ACTION the workers who vote for them.

THE MARKHAM DISASTER

A Comment by Graeme Atkinson

Death is no stranger to Johnny Miner. They have met many times, and in many places: West Stanley, Hulton, Sengenydd, Gresford, Markham, Whitehaven William Pit, Easington, the Cambrian colliery, Lofthouse, Seafield, Cynheidre, to name but a few. And on Monday 30th July 1973 at 6.23 a.m. they met again. Seventeen men...bodies torn and mangled among the twisted steel of the wrecked cage at Markham No. 2 pit near Chesterfield. Another thirteen who were fortunate to survive face the prospect of being crippled for life.

For several days after the disaster shifts at the colliery were not fully attended, the miners doubting the truth of the N.C.B's fulsome assurances that the cage winding system - with its 14 built-in safety devices - was now 'safe'. Understandably, they were reluctant to take the NCB officials on trust. After all, a total of 17 men had up to then died in what an 'expert' called 'the safest form of transport'.

Naturally, the Tory government called immediately for a public enquiry into the disaster. However if the remarks of the NCB officials are anything to go by, all the enquiry will produce will be a blank sheet of paper! NCB chief Derek Ezra put the accident down to 'fate', whatever that is.

Local official Norman Siddall said the disaster was due to 'something entirely unforeseen'. An act of God, perhaps?

PRODUCTION

Yet once Ezra had gathered his composure his attitude was somewhat different and unintentionally cast some light on the fundamental cause of the disaster. "Safety precautions will be doubled and redoubled" he emphasised and then added, "everything that could have been done has been done at the pit on which the board has spent a very great amount of money and which is expected to build up to a production of more than two million tons a year, mainly for power stations in the Midlands". To Ezra and his Tory bosses what really counts is increased production all round. And hasn't this happened? Hasn't output per man shift in the coal industry rocketed as fast as the labour force has been reduced? Hasn't it reached the new record of 48.6 cwt per man shift compared with last year's 41.9 cwt? And, Mr. Ezra, hasn't there been an increase in another area of the industry; one you omitted to

mention? Namely, the increase in deaths and serious injuries (1971/2 58 deaths - 1972/3 78 deaths).

Significantly, Ezra does not mention this. Nor do the hordes of vultures from the capitalist press who swooped down on Markham to gorge themselves on the 'news'.

To the whole filthy crew - Tories so-called Labour leaders, Fleet Street scavengers - all that matters is that coal is got 'economically' so that private enterprise is provided with cheap fuel. The human price - the smashed bodies, the crushed limbs, the dust-coated lungs - does not concern the ruling class. It never has done and never will. Their real opinion of miners was reflected by the unbending hatred they showed during the miners' strike. They are worthy descendants of the coal barons who ruled the coalfield with a rod of iron. Capitalism maintains its rule with violence. The massacre at Markham was an expression of that violence. 17 men were murdered viciously by the greed of capital!

At Markham output runs up to around 70cwt of coal per man shift. The pit is to be linked up with the two other pits there so that Ezra's 2 million ton output target can be achieved by a 'more disciplined' workforce. If, as

Ezra says, "everything...has been done" how long will it be before there is even more carnage?

Nor does this drive for 'economy' end there! It goes forward with indecent haste and tramples on the dead. On August 3rd, nine of the dead were buried. 2,300 miners stayed away from work to mourn their dead comrades. The day's closure of the pit cost the Coal Board £14,000. To repay this loss the miners must work on New Year's Day! This is the measure of regard which the overpaid bureaucrats of the National Coal Board have for miners, dead or alive.

REDISCOVERY

Anger at the rising death toll in the pits is mounting. The great strike of 1972 eliminated any meek acceptance of closures and rock bottom wages. The miners are rediscovering their true traditions. A new £8-£13 pay claim is to be submitted. Ezra, at the N.U.M. Inverness conference, called for a 'new productivity surge'. If he gets his way the safety situation will deteriorate even faster. Everything will be sacrificed to the 'god' of productivity. Wage increases are useless to dead men.

1953	Etherley Colliery Rough Lea " West Hunwick " Dowden Close " New Brancepeth "	1961	Gordon House Colliery Langley Park Cokeworks Browney Colliery Moorhill Drift Malton Colliery Spen "	1964	Princess Street Colliery Tamfield Lee " Wooley " Watergate " Phoenix Drift Derwent " Hole-in-the-Wall " Stanley Burn " East Tanfield Lambton " Pelton " Tudhoe Hill "	1967	Leasingthorne Colliery Bowburn " Brancepeth " West Auckland " Staindrop Field House " Chester South Moor " Kimblesworth " Hamsterley " Byermoor " Ravensworth Park " Trimdon Grange " Handon Hold "
1954	Hamsteel Colliery Esh Hill Top " Cornsay " Railey Fell " Dunston "	1962	Ravensworth Shop Pit Esperley Drift Cockfield Colliery Randolph Hutton Drift South Moor No. 2 Colliery Stella Gill " Trimdon Grange Cokeworks South Moor No. 1 Colliery Victoria Garesfield " Eddon Drift Wingate " Beemish Second " Hetton Lyons " Littleburn " Chophill "	1965	Morrison " Harraton " Sherburn Hill " New Shildon " Bradley Drift West Thornley " Witton " Dean And Chapter " Lumley 6th North Tees " Clara Vale " Beamish Mary "	1968	Brandon Pit House " Burnhope " Washington 'F' Pit Emma " Wheatley Hill " Stanley Cottage " Brusselton " Whitburn " Esh " Burnopefield "
1955	Wear Valley "	1963	Addison " Aldridge D Pit South Medomsley Drift Newfield " Ramshaw Colliery Westerton " Fenhall Drift Neworth Colliery Stargate " Axwell " Roddymoor/Wooley Colliery	1966	Barcus Close " Greenside " Waterhouses " Middridge " Chopwell (Little Moscow) " Ryhope " Thrislington " Deaf Hill "	1969	Towneley " Wardley " Crag Head " Tudhoe Park " Harton " Thornley "
1956	Black Boy " Blaydon Burn Bessie Colliery Etherley Dene "					1970	Ushaw moor "
1957	Rowlands Gill "					1971	Silksworth "
1958	Finchdale " Twizwell Burn "						
1959	Ouston E " East Hedley Hope " Shildon " Philadelphia " Woodlands "						
1960	White House " New Hargill Hill " South Garesfield " North Hetton "						



"In the whole British Empire there is no occupation in which a man may meet his end as in this one. The coal mine is the scene of the most terrifying calamities and these come directly from the selfishness of the bourgeoisie"

Frederick Engels:

"The Condition of the Working Class in England" 1844.

Yet the miners' leaders talk 'productivity' with the N.C.B. instead of linking the wages issue to the struggle for improved safety. Miners must demand as immediate measures:

- * Election of a miners' inspectorate at all collieries for every shift to supervise all aspects of working conditions.
- * Election of rank and file complaints committees to see that all complaints are investigated.
- * Withdrawal of the NUM from the current productivity talks - no increased exploitation.
- * An immediate ban on overtime in preparation for the coming wages fight. Mass meetings to discuss this.
- * Preparation by NUM and TUC leaders for a general strike to support the pay claim and bring down the Tories. Mass meetings to decide tactics and elect strike committees.

Only through a revolutionary struggle can miners control their industry. Only when the working class takes the power and production is for need and not profit, only then will there be no blood on the coal'.



Right: Miners from Wardley Colliery, with their banner

HOW MODERATION MURDERED DURHAM'S GOAL

by Dave Douglass

ON SATURDAY July 21st the Durham miners held their 90th "big meeting". Looking down from a hill top at the meeting ground, it was hard to believe that this was the same gathering which took place twenty years earlier. Then, sitting on my father's shoulders I would watch a sea of waving branch banners; now the joke among the Durham miners is "If ya gannin ti the meetin', gaan early, and divint blink!" So great has been the number of closures and the decimation of the Durham coal industry that a long blink of the

eyes would mean missing a good portion of the parade.

Wardley Colliery, where I worked in Durham like my father and grandfather before me, was one of many on the north east of the coalfield. Even ten years ago we had Wardley, Heworth, Boldon, Usworth, Washington, Fanny Pit, Washington Glebe Pit, and a coal drawing shaft at Follonsby. Now only Usworth and Boldon remain. The rest are gone, their coal reserves still intact and workable with virgin areas just waiting for the taking. But the pits are closed. The mines are destroyed by water

and decay. Countless miners have been flung far afield — to Yorkshire, Nottingham, Staffordshire. Those too old to travel but too young for redundancy are thrown on the scrapheap. Whole communities have been destroyed and families broken up, and the young men move like nomads to collieries further and further south. The men who stayed in the coalfield more often than not face a journey of over 30 miles to work, and the return trip at the end of the shift. The N.C.B. proudly boasts that between 1961 and 1971, some 15,000 Durham miners were transferred away from the friends, relations and districts they loved... all in order to feed "the rationalisation process", by which the N.C.B. and successive capitalist governments sought to slash the labour force and doubly exploit those who are left.

The question has often been asked: against such a background could the miners ask for more wages? "The industry's bankrupt. Finished. Strike? Never. If you strike, they'll close the pit down." This was the crack of the union leaders in those days — not so long ago either — and, for a long while, faced with the mammoth closure programme Durham miners were victim to this blackmail. This was, and to an extent still is, why they have lagged behind in militancy, why they have voted against strike action. There are still many who believe that militancy closes pits, and that the coal industry is near to collapse, needing only another pay demand

The pits that Durham lost

■ CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

Littlejohn: ruthless face of British capitalism

DESPITE ALL attempts by the capitalist press to play down the issue, the following facts have clearly emerged from the 'Littlejohn Affair'.

Defence Secretary, Lord Carrington authorised his then Army minister, Geoffrey Johnson-Smith to meet Kenneth Littlejohn who was wanted by the police for his part in a £38,000 wage snatch. From this meeting, Kenneth Littlejohn and his brother Keith, himself a convicted thief, were hired by MI6 and given full immunity for all crimes they had committed and were about to commit. They were actively encouraged to carry out robberies, bombings and the like, with the clear intention of discrediting the IRA.

The Dublin bombing of the head office of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union,

killing two workers and injuring 73 others, was carried out by British intelligence. As a result of this incident, amendments to the Offences Against the State Act (which provided for further measures against the IRA) were stamped through the Irish Parliament later that night.

WARNING

And this is only the tip of the iceberg, a momentary glimpse into the regular activities of British Intelligence. With the democratic facade covering the activities of the British ruling class wearing thinner and thinner, these revelations must act as a clear warning. The ruling class is in a desperate situation and will be prepared to use any and every method to clamp down on its

enemies - on the republican and trade union movement in Ireland and above all, on the British working class. Spying, wire-tapping, the use of criminals, the cold-blooded murder of innocents (as revealed by the coroner's verdict on the Derry Massacre) - this is the real ruthless face of British capitalism and all else is mere window-dressing. And things will get worse. In the north of Ireland, the completion of the £1.5 million, 1,000 prisoner capacity concentration camp at Magilligan Co. Derry is the clearest indication of the steps the Tory Government intend in the next period.

WRETCHED

But the worst aspect of the Irish crisis has been the wretched

role played by the Labour leaders in this country. Wilson and Co. have consistently stuck to their 'bipartisan policy' - which means complete support for the Tories' attempts to 'stabilise' the situation in the north and clamp down on the IRA. By backing the onslaught on the IRA, Wilson paves the way for ever greater attacks on the British working class. But this is not blindness on his part, nor is it stupidity. It is conscious betrayal.

The trade union movement must make its position clear, whatever its leaders may say or do. It is a matter of self interest, we must:

- Stand unconditionally with the IRA against the British army.
- Declare for the right of self-determination for the Irish people.
- And for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Irish soil.

DURHAM'S COAL continued

to bring it crashing down. But just look at the tables which detail the closures in Durham and the increased exploitation of miners. Then, think of all those men and their families who were transferred and it can be seen clearly why they have feared strikes.

Nationally, the pattern was much the same. Robens launched the big productivity surge and thousands were driven out of the industry. Between 1961 and 1971, the National Union of Mineworkers lost about 410,000 members!

The bulk of Durham's militants moved to other collieries and therefore from Durham. So when the big upheavals came in the industry they were to show their strength not in Durham but in Yorkshire, particularly Doncaster.

STRIKES

The big bubble of falsehood was sure to burst, and burst it did... The great reign of 'kidology' was over with strike waves that came at the end of the sixties

and beginning of the seventies. THE MINERWORKER, a rank and file paper built around Doncaster, played no small part in this, reflecting part of a new combative spirit in the mines.

The Durham miners hadn't been alone in their idea, fostered by the union leaders, that the pits would close if we pushed too hard - in the main most areas believed this. But now their conception was "if the pits are to stay open one day longer, then we demand a decent wage and decent hours. OK, you'll close them, but you've closed them anyway so close the bloody lot - or else pay us wages!" Two unofficial strike waves, coupled with the constitutional battle to reduce the majority vote needed for strike action from two thirds to 55%, and the stage was set for the official strike of 1972.

Is Durham moved by all this? Of course she is. At last the lodges have learnt the lesson, and for the first time they are determined to fight further closure, not colliery by colliery, but as an area. And yet Durham

is still fighting uphill. The growth in militancy and political consciousness has been marked in other areas by the election of left Labour, Communist Party, and revolutionary leaders. In Durham the bureaucracy, in the face of crying opposition sits tight and takes the road of collaboration.

For over 100 years the bureaucrats of the Durham Miners' Association have actively fought the Durham militants, pleading 'moderation' and moaning about 'red ragers'.

ADDRESS

So what do we find in the four page forward to the D.M.A. programme this year? An address to the miners written by Walter Malt along well established lines:

"A large majority of the rank and file are opposed to industrial action... I see no reason why the miners should become the storm troops of the TUC... we must not think we can do a 1972 every time we take industrial action, that was a once and for all effort... I do not favour a Tory government... but all governments seem to me to be a coalition of people with wide ranging opinions, and

although this lot may remain ignorant of some aspects of the industrial front I think they are learning... On strike action... I have no doubt that the union which formed in 1869 and is today would have foundered had not a moderate and sensible attitude to strikes been generated and fostered by the leaders..."

If this 'leader' had had it all his own way the miners' living standards would have completely foundered thanks to his 'moderate and sensible attitude'!

The Durham miners, however, are turning back to the leadership of their past militants...

- Thornley Lodge, which, in common with Hebburn, fought a non stop battle with the DMA leaders for nearly 100 years
- Chopwell Lodge, whose miners carried out the politicisation of the area
- Wardley Lodge, who marched with a banner bearing the faces of A J Cook (1926 miners' leader) Lenin and James Connolly, as well as the hammer and sickle.

This is the true tradition of the Miners' Gala, the true spirit of the Durham miner.

	PRODUCTION (million tons)	NO. OF PITS	MEN	OUTPUT PER MAN SHIFT
DURHAM				
1966/7	18.00	59	55,000	30.1 (North) 29.8 (South)
1970/1	12.07	34	33,000	34.1 (North) 35.1 (South)
NATIONAL				
1966/7	164.8	438	419,000	36.6
1970/1	133.4	293	287,000	44.2

THE AUTHOR

DAVE DOUGLASS is a coal face ripper at Hatfield colliery, Doncaster. Like many other young and not so young Geordie miners, he was transferred away from the Durham coalfield after his colliery (Wardley) was closed. He is the author of a history workshop pamphlet PIT LIFE IN COUNTY DURHAM, in which he traces the reactionary role of the "Durham Miners' Association" leadership. Despite our political differences with Dave (he is a member of the RWP) we are pleased to publish this article.

WIN OVER THE ARMY RANKS!

by **Graham Bash & Peter Clement**



The Army in N. Ireland — how long before troops are used against us?

As the Labour movement once again prepares for battle against the Tory Government, all seems set for a collision that could make the events of the past two years seem mild in comparison. In the not too distant future, there is every danger that the Government will rely on its troops — fresh trained from Ireland — to force the trade unions into submission. The question is not *whether* the Government will use the Army against us, but *when*.

PREPARATIONS

In any such showdown, the attitude of

the Army ranks — whether they will allow themselves to be used against us — will acquire ominous significance. So it is vital we start our preparations now. The whole Labour movement must as a matter of elementary self-defence mount an all out campaign to get troops organized into a trade union.

'WORKERS IN UNIFORM'

Virtually all the 'other ranks' would support a trade union if they were allowed to do so. The Privates and the Corporals are nothing less than young workers who enlisted only to escape the monotony of unemployment or

bad working conditions. Most of them come from depressed areas, largely in the North of England, and in Scotland. They are 'workers in uniform', who are the natural allies of our Movement IF only we make a conscious effort to win them to our side.

THE CHARTIST has given its full support to the 'Soldiers' Trade Union Rights Movement' — a small group within the Army ranks fighting for

trade union rights. But the soldiers require more help than we can give, above all from the Labour Party and the TUC. If only these organizations were to use their strength to secure trade union rights for soldiers, whole sections of the Army ranks would be won over to our side, and in a confrontation with the Government we should be confident of victory.

AGITATION AMONGST THE ARMED FORCES — A BRIEF HISTORY

Agitation within the Army ranks for elementary democratic rights is no new thing. At the time of the Miners' Strike in 1912, the 'Syndicalist', paper of the Industrial Syndicalist Education League, reprinted an 'Open Letter to British Soldiers', which had previously appeared in the 'Irish Worker'. It began:

Men! Comrades! Brothers! You are in the Army. So are we. You, in the army of Destruction. We, in the industrial, or army of Construction.

We work at mine, mill, forge, factory or dock etc., producing and transporting all the goods, clothing, stuffs, etc., which make it possible for people to live.

You are Workingmen's Sons.

When We go on strike to better Our lot, which is the lot also of your Fathers, Mothers, Brothers and Sisters, you are called upon by your officers to murder us.

Don't do it.

You know how it happens. Always has happened.

We stand out as long as we can. Then one of our (and your) irresponsible Brothers goaded by the sight and thought of his and his loved one's misery and hunger commits a crime on property. Immediately you are ordered to murder US, as you did at Michelstown, at Featherstone, at Belfast.

Don't you know that when you are out of the Colours, and become a 'civvy' again, that you like us, may be on strike, and you like us, are liable to be murdered by other soldiers.

Boys, don't do it. . . .

Having read the 'Open Letter', a fireman, Fred Crowsley, decided to get copies printed in the form of a leaflet, and visited Aldershot and personally

distributed them among the soldiers.

ARRESTED

He was arrested and sentenced to four months in prison. The Editor of the 'Syndicalist', Guy Bowman, was sentenced to nine months imprisonment, and the printers of the paper to six months.

Tom Mann, Chairman of the Industrial Syndicalist Education League, after declaring his support for the Letter, was charged with incitement to mutiny and also served six months in prison, though such was the strength of the protests within the Labour movement he was released after seven weeks.

THE CALAIS MUTINY 1918

An occasion when a real movement developed *within* the Armed Forces was the 'Calais Mutiny of 1918', which occurred at the Valdelievre camp and workshop at Calais, the main supply base for the expeditionary forces in France in the First World War.

Class consciousness

Apart from a small hardcore of professional soldiers, the main contingent were the 'specially enlisted tradesmen' — gunsmiths, tinsmiths, carpenters, saddlers, shoemakers and the like. It was these elements who brought with them into the Forces a very strong class consciousness. There was continual conflict over questions of pay, and conditions of work and food,

And throughout the period, the meaning and purpose of the war was under constant debate. By 1918, with the whole Army suffering from extreme war weariness there the seeds were developing of an explosive situation.

One Sunday afternoon, one of the Valdelievre boys was making a visit to a neighbouring camp to do a spot of propaganda. He was seized by the military police, and put in the old Bastille prison in Calais. This sparked the whole thing off.

Strike

An emergency meeting was called, and the officers quarters were surrounded. A strike was decided on to commence the next morning and to cover the whole Calais area, and all units. Under the control of the strike committee, 'The Calais Area Soldiers and Sailors Association, the strike was soon complete over the whole area. One of the members of the committee, Pte. A. Killick, wrote an account of the whole affair.

'In the matter of organization we were greatly influenced by the Soviet method. It was strictly democratic, each hut or group of tents to the same number, elected a delegate to the camp committee, and these committees then likewise elected delegates to the central area committee.'

The committee issued the daily orders instead of the camp officers, and occupied the headquarters offices. Pickets were organized and the strike remained solid. The Army Command sent in the 5th Army Corps under General Bing to suppress the revolt — but the men of the 5th Army joined

the revolt instead.

Not prepared

At the same time, there was a massive strikewave on the Clyde, and in the words of Killick, 'A really revolutionary situation was developing for which we were not really prepared. And with a lack of communication with events on the Clyde, the chance was let slip, negotiations were started in Calais and authority was gradually re-established.

COMMUNIST LEADERS ARRESTED

The next important developments occurred in the mid-twenties.

On July 25 1924, in preparation for the 'Anti-war Week', Harry Pollitt's 'Open Letter to the Fighting Forces' was published in the 'Worker's Weekly', paper of the Communist Party. In ringing words, it called on the ranks of the forces:

Neither in the class war nor a military war, will you turn your guns on your fellow workers, but instead will line up with your fellow workers in an attack upon the exploiters and capitalists, and will use your arms on the side of your own class.

Form committees in every barracks, aerodrome and ship. Refuse to shoot down your fellow workers. Refuse to fight for profits. Turn your weapons against your oppressors

(Continued overleaf)

young socialist NEWS

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WHAT'S ON

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61 Selsdon Road SE27

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6 Mount Ephraim Lane SW16

Vauxhall: Brynley Heaven
68 Brook Drive SE11

Woolwich: Phil Elliott
82 Woodhill SE18

Rotherham: John Connelly
22 Bradgate Rd Rotherham
Yorkshire

SUPPORT

FOR

SUSPENDED

YOUNG SOCIALIST

THE NORTH WEST London Trade Union and Political Staffs branch of the white collar union, APEX, has come out strongly against the suspension of Dave Douglass from Goole Labour Party. Dave, who was suspended on account of his revolutionary ideas, will have his appeal against suspension considered by Labour's National Executive in September.

CLAY CROSS REBEL AT LAMBETH RALLY

AS THE OCTOBER deadline for the second wave of council rent increases ordered under the Tories' Housing Finance Act approaches, several Labour councils including Hackney (London) have joined Clay Cross (Derbyshire) and Bedwas and Machen (South Wales) in refusing to put the rents up. We hope they won't be frightened into stepping back into line again by the cowardice of most Labour councillors, the scorn from the papers and TV and the treacherous disinterest shown by Wilson and Co.

In solidarity with the 11

rebel councillors from Clay Cross, Norwood Labour Party - which itself lead the fight for non-implementation in Lambeth - has organised a Town Hall meeting to build support for the defence of Clay Cross and for further resistance to Tory policies in Lambeth itself. Among the speakers supporting David Skinner from Clay Cross will be Young Socialist, Paul Moore. The calling of this meeting implies a challenge to Lambeth council to ignore the Pay Board and grant large wage increases to their manual employees as Clay Cross has done.

'LIFT BAN' SAYS STREATHAM WARD

STREATHAM Labour Party's management committee is faced this month with a resolution in defence of the Ligue Communiste, the French Trotskyist grouping outlawed in the latest wave of Gaullist repression. The resolution, submitted by Wells ward, is designed to draw attention to the dangers in front of the entire working class

movement if such a ban is not vigorously fought.

Bernard Misrahi, who initiated the resolution, told Young Socialist News that such gestures of solidarity were particularly vital at a time when sections of the Tory party were advocating the banning of the IRA and its supporting organisations in this country.

NORWOOD C.L.P.

Public Meeting:
Defend Clay Cross council!
Make Labour fight!

Thursday September 20th
Lambeth Town Hall

Speakers will include:

Coun. David Skinner

(Clay Cross)

Coun. Ken Livingstone

(Greater London Council)

Paul Moore

(Norwood LPYS)

DONCASTER The Red Star Folk Club meets every Friday 8.30pm at 'The Spread Eagle' Profits go to the socialist cause and Young Socialist singers are regularly featured.

BLACKPOOL Labour Party Conference. Socialist Charter Public Meeting. Thursday 4th October at the AUEW premises. Speakers include Ernie Roberts and Bert Monks.

LAMBETH Labour Party Young Socialists. Mixed Hockey. Sunday September 9th. 2.30pm Brockwell Park. Fun fun coach trip to Devil's Dyke on September 16th. Disco dynamite on October 20th at St. Anselm's Hall.

Entries for the 'What's On' column should be sent to the editor in good time.

WIN OVER THE ARMY RANKS continued

At the beginning of August, J. R. Campbell Editor of 'Workers' Weekly', was arrested on a charge of incitement to mutiny when plain clothes police raided the King Street premises. Resolutions of protest from every section of the Labour movement forced the Labour Government to get the case against Campbell dropped. It was this that resulted in the vote of no-confidence in the Government and its resignation.

Police raids

But this was the period leading up to the General Strike and it was not long before Communist Party leaders were

back in prison. On October 14, 1925, the police raided the offices of the Communist Party, arresting eight leading officials, including Albert Inkpin, the Party secretary, and Harry Pollitt, secretary of the Minority Movement. A few days later, four more were arrested, and all twelve charged with seditious libel and incitement to mutiny. All were found guilty, and five, including Inkpin and Pollitt, were sentenced to a year in gaol.

The judge in his summing up, said, 'In the documents before them, the jury would find passage after passage which referred to the necessity of inculcating Communistic principles into the soldiers. It is not uninteresting when reading the documents to find

that the revolution in Russia began with the Army.'

THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Finally, during the Second World War, the Revolutionary Communist Party (R.C.P.) supported the demand for Soldiers' Rights in the pages of 'Socialist Appeal'. The programme of the R.C.P. supported the election of officers, and the establishment of special Officer Training Camps to be controlled by the T.U.C.

The May 1944 Edition of 'Socialist Appeal' contained a petition sent to the Home Secretary by 82 soldiers of the Royal Engineers in the 8th Army in Egypt. This was in protest against the arrest of Roy Tarse, Heaton Lee and Ann Keen, leaders of the R.C.P., under the 1927 Trade Disputes Act, for supporting the Tyne Apprentices strike which was directed against the

conscription of apprentices in to the mines.

The petition included the following:

We soldiers are also workers. We do not want to come back to a life where living conditions have been driven to intolerable levels. We consider the miners' fight as a struggle to maintain these rights. We condemn all talk of the miners (as well as Tarse, Lee and Keen) stabbing the soldiers in the back. It is not they who are betraying us, but those who refuse to support the miners.

An interesting insight into the mood at the time can be seen by the letter which appeared in the October 1943 issue of 'Socialist Appeal', from an R.C.P. member, Andy Scott

'Often it is said in fun, and often the men are half afraid of the idea, but the fact that it is voiced day after day, and in connection with every conceivable sort of incident, is proof enough that workers in the Army take the idea of a soldiers' organization seriously.'