
London RSSF

Stuff Your Tribunal

Say Bateson and Blackburn

First Published: Revolution 3, 1969 [Journal of Revolutionary Students and Workers, London RSSF]

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Sociology lecturer Robin Blackburn (left) arrives at the London School of Economics (LSE), where students are holding a boycott of classes held to protest against the suspension of Blackburn and fellow lecturer Nick Bateson

10 POLICE
SHUT LSE
AFTER RIOT

Students smash gates
with pickaxes

By DAVID FLETCHER, Education Staff

MORE than 100 police, called in by the authorities at the London School of Economics last night, closed the school after students ran riot inside with pickaxes and crowbars.

Militant students ripped out seven sets of protective gates installed last week to seal off parts of the building in the event of a sit-in. The gates were described as "anti-student and anti-freedom."

Led by a lecturer crying "This way comrades," the students swarmed through the building to smash the gates. Dr. Walter Adams, the director, called in the police, who sealed off the Aldwych area.

A group of about 200 students hurled insults at the police cordon and threatened to charge them unless they moved.

About 25 demonstrators were taken in police vans to Bow Street police station where they were being questioned.

Bow Street march

When other demonstrators heard what had happened, groups of them decided to "march on the police station" and set off in the direction of Bow Street. Extra police were called to "protect" Bow Street.

More than 200 LSE students sat down outside Bow Street police station chanting: "Release our colleague." Police four deep ringed the station.

J. TELEGRAPH
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STUFF YOUR TRIBUNAL, SAY BATESON AND BLACKBURN

Having failed to quash the LSE students militant opposition to the sacking of Nick Bateson and Robin Blackburn, Adams and Robbins came up with the idea of an "independent tribunal" in an attempt to hold back the tremendous wave of opposition and condemnation not only from students all over Britain, but also from several Trade Unions and Trade Union branches. The following is the text of the letter that the two dismissed lecturers sent to Adams answering his latest manoeuvre.

Dear Adams,

We are in receipt of your insolent letter of 1st May. We knew the contents of it before we received it because you had seen fit to release it to the press before you took the trouble to send it to us.

This reveals very clearly the insincerity and dishonesty of your promised "independent tribunal to hear an appeal". If you were sincerely concerned that justice should be done, you would have consulted with us before announcing plans for an appeal board. As you know very well, the contract between the LSE and ourselves which you have arbitrarily revoked makes no provision for an appeal in the event of dismissal. Therefore, for the LSE authorities unilaterally to prepare for an appeal board is as arbitrary and authoritarian as their decision to ignore Article 28 of the Articles of Association of the School, which guarantees staff members freedom to express their opinions.

It is obvious to everyone why you have made this move. Your own job and that of Lord Robbins, indeed the position of the entire clique of self-appointed capitalist manipulators on the LSE court of governors, is in grave danger. The students have been enraged at the attempt to victimise some of the individuals who supported the Union decision to remove the gates that you so arbitrarily erected. You hoped to cow them into submission. In fact they showed great courage and fortitude in standing by their principles, perhaps at the expense of future comfortable careers. Staff members also have taken a stand against the dismissals,

recognising that if Article 28 can be abandoned once it may be abandoned again. From all over the country trade unionists and students have been condemning the victimisations.

In a desperate attempt to stem this tide of public opposition you have now begun scheming for an "independent board" whose function in fact will be to ratify the decisions the authorities have already made. In this way you hope to place a veneer of "legality" and "impartiality" upon what was too open a hatchet job done by your own little kangaroo court. You hope also, by delaying a decision for three months, to carry out your victimisations during the summer vacation when there will be no students around to protest.

Indeed it is now public knowledge that the whole idea of the "independent review" was hastily concocted few hours before the last meeting of the Academic Board in order to forestall the vote of censure which it would otherwise have passed. In clear violation of the motion passed at that meeting the School authorities have refused to discuss the setting up of the reviewing body, either with our representatives or with the representatives of students, staff and workers at the School.

Let us make it very clear to you that we have seen through your tricks and that we will have nothing to do with the Tribunal which you appear to envisage - namely, one unilaterally and arbitrarily
(continued page 15)

LSE: RULING-CLASS DUAL TACTICS

During May the LSE struggle slackened off and at time of writing most students are involved in exams and there is little prospect of another mass movement until October. The authorities, therefore, for the time being have succeeded in getting away with their victimizations of students and staff, and the demands of the students have not been met.

One lesson that LSE students have been taught in the last month is that the ruling class uses flexible tactics. Students must learn from their enemies the importance of strategic consistency combined with tactical flexibility. Until recently the ruling class employed almost exclusively a hard-line tactical approach--embodied in the gates, the brutal new code of discipline, the closure of the School, the use of police, the High Court injunctions, the sackings of lecturers, the threatened disciplinary proceedings against students, etc. In May, however, no doubt partly because they found the hard line was failing to cow the students, they switched to a tactical soft line. First it was announced that there would be an "appeal board" to rehear the Bateson and Blackburn cases. Then the twelve students and lecturers charged with damaging the gates were either let off or given ridiculously small punishments. Then the High Court throw out an application by the School to have some students jailed for breach of the injunctions. Finally students who were up for discipline charges connected with the strike in April were either let off or given very minor suspensions. All this served to confuse the mass of students who, encouraged by the LSE liberals, were willing to believe that the authorities had changed their strategic goal of preserving the status quo and dismissing those student and staff who have dared to challenge them. In fact, of course, their strategy has not changed, as was made very clear by Robbins in an interview published in The Times on May 12th.

Ruling classes throughout the ages have used dual tactics to preserve their rule. The stick and the carrot, the hawk and the dove, the hangman and the priest, the rapist and the seducer--the many different images for the dual tactics of violence and deception show an apparent contradiction but an underlying dialectical unity. The strategy is the same--only the tactics vary. If this lesson is taken to heart, not only at LSE but elsewhere, May will not have been a barren month.

BATESON-BLACKBURN LETTER continued.

established by the standing committee without any consultation with either ourselves or the LSE students and staff. If you want LSE to return to normal and if you want to hold your own position as Director, we strongly advise you to revoke the dismissals and to call off all the other disciplinary actions in connection with the gates.

Yours Sincerely,

Nicholas Bateson
Robin Blackburn

May 6, 1969.
