

# CHARTIST

LABOUR'S REVOLUTIONARY VOICE No. 6 MARCH 1973 4p

**LABOUR, TAKE THE POWER!**

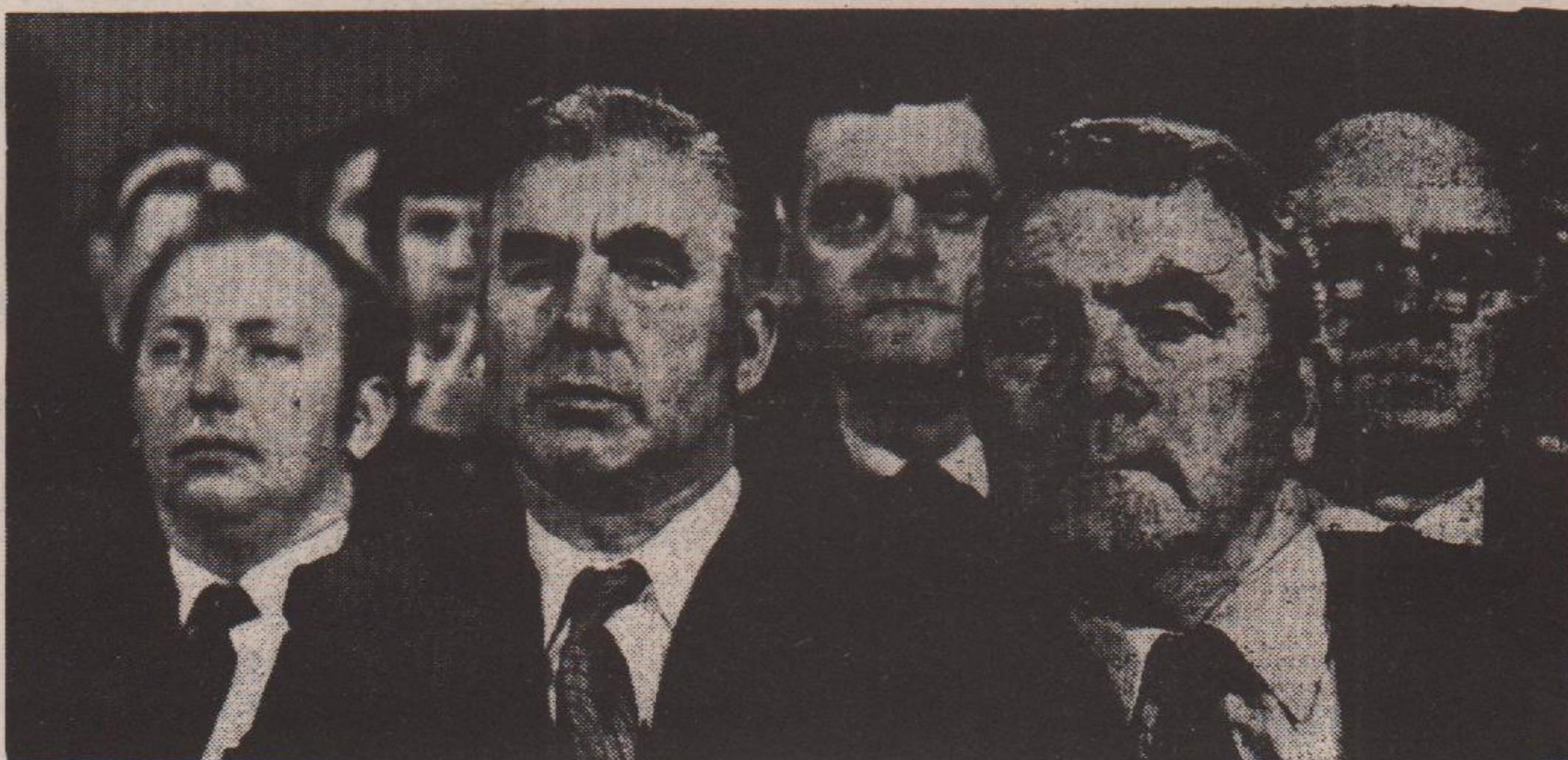
# BRING THE GOVERNMENT DOWN!

“The solution to our problems and the only way in which our opposition to the Government policies can be determined is by ensuring that the whole of the movement remains completely solid in order that dedication can be achieved to change either the political thinking of the present Government or by ensuring that we have a political chance to change the government.

“This will not be done by activities of one union acting of its own accord. It will not be done, in my opinion, either by a spate of one-day strikes or protest marches or anything of that kind. It needs

a complete determination on behalf of the whole of the movement to take total industrial action.

“I know we have many among us who have sour memories of the 1926 General Strike, but people have got to learn that the trade union movement today is a completely different animal from what it was in 1926. Different circumstances are prevalent and therefore different attitudes that have been apparent over the last few years also must be accepted. It is therefore on these grounds that the miners' union asks that conference be allowed to discuss a definite action resolution.”



WITH THIS RINGING declaration, Joe Gormley overturned more than he might have thought at the Special Congress of the TUC. We are now heading directly not for a "day of protest", not for a "24-hour stoppage"—but for an unprecedented, all-out and indefinite General Strike which will paralyse the Tory Government and the whole apparatus of class-rule in Britain to its very roots.

## TO THE FINISH

It's not a question of what people want. It's a question of the conflict itself, which has a logic of its own.

● The GAS-WORKERS' action has at last begun to bite.

● The 250,000 HOSPITAL workers—many earning a mere £15 per week—are gaining increasing public support.

● CIVIL SERVANTS, RAIL DRIVERS and STUDENTS are all intensifying their action.

● The MINERS seem certain to reject the Coal Board's "Phase II" offer. Anger at the noisy inactivity of Joe Gormley and his friends is mounting—particularly in Yorkshire—and the demand is growing for a fight for minimum surface, ground and loading rates of £30, £32 and £40 per week.

If the miners should indeed come out—it will be a fight to the finish.

It has to be said in all seriousness. Unless the Government caves in on its "£1 plus 4 per cent"—

which would be seen as a disaster for the capitalist system not just in Britain but on a global scale—there will have arisen in this country, within a matter of weeks, a full-scale Constitutional crisis. A General Strike under present circumstances—when a growing number of unions are on indefinite strike anyway and the confrontation is still to come to a head—simply could not be confined to one day. To be able to control our movement now, the TUC would have to command a confidence and a respect which it simply does not have. IF the TUC were genuinely struggling for power, IF it had a fully worked-out programme and strategy, and IF the coming one-day strike was integrated into that strategy as a component for all to see—then the leading sections of the working class would heed the call for restraint. They would understand. They would believe it when told that their leaders needed time to prepare.

## BETRAYAL

But as things are they can see quite clearly that the TUC leadership wants only one thing: to avoid a struggle. They will regard the limitation of the strike to 24 hours as a betrayal. And they will be right.

## DANGER

But if we are heading for an all-out General Strike, then the most terrible dangers face us all. The

CHARTIST is "for" such a strike as the only answer to the problems of our class, but for the following reason. It paralyzes the state, strengthens ourselves beyond normal bounds, enables us to seize control of our factories and places of work, creates a profound crisis within even the armed forces themselves—and removes all objective obstacles to our conquering power and forming a Government based on the rule of our class.

## ELECTIONS?

The question, however, is this. Are we prepared? It's no use saying—with Joe Gormley—that all we want is an election. You can't control a General Strike with a conductor's stick. It has a life of its own—and leads on inevitably to a revolutionary clash. In a situation where we were defying the Constitution, taking over our factories, administering whole towns, defending ourselves, winning over troops to our side, creating our own forms of democracy and supplanting Parliament altogether—it would be absurd to suggest calling everything off because Heath had promised a General Election! If Heath DID manage to save himself by such an offer—if the movement was split by it, if the militants were outnumbered and eventually forced back to work; and if our last positions were finally surrendered—then the jubilation of the ruling class would know no bounds. Having had the fright of

their lives, they would heave great sighs of relief and take revenge at once. Exhausted and demoralized, the militants would be hounded down and isolated. "Law and Order!" would everywhere be the cry. With both parties competing for the "law and order" vote, the outcome of the General Election would be a foregone conclusion. An all-out General Strike means this: we either conquer power, or we suffer a severe defeat.

We must ask ourselves seriously. Are we ready—both organizationally and in our consciousness—for the actual seizure of power? If we are not, then we'd better get moving fast—or stop talking of a General Strike.

Once the battle has been forced on us, there can be no holding back. And, we repeat, there will be no objective reason why we shouldn't win. But what will force the Tories to resign is not the mere "calling" of the General Strike in itself. It is their fear that they might lose it. The more openly, the more efficiently and the more boldly we prepare for the physical conquest of the state—the more confident can we be that the developing General Strike will win by the threat alone, that the gas-men, hospital workers and others will knock the Tory pay-law for six and that this Government will make way for a Labour Government in a situation where our class can dictate its will.



# THE CHARTIST

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Monthly Journal of the Socialist Charter Movement.

## T.U.C.—PREPARE FOR THE GENERAL STRIKE! LABOUR, TAKE THE POWER!

### MOBILIZE THE WORKING-CLASS.

Mount an immediate national campaign for a £30 national minimum wage; equal pay for women; a freeze on rents and prices; a crash house-building programme; repeal of the Industrial Relations Act; repudiation of all E.E.C. agreements and the breaking off of further negotiations with European capitalists; an immediate General Election.

These demands to be pressed with the full weight of the T.U.C. and Labour Party and backed up by one-day 'general strikes' aimed at forcing concessions where possible and rallying support for the indefinite General Strike.

**CAMPAIGN ON A SOCIALIST PROGRAMME.** Make clear that the next Labour Government, whatever the manner by which it comes to power will gain the means to implement the above demands by nationalizing all major industries without compensation and under workers' control.

**DEMOCRATIZE THE LABOUR MOVEMENT.** Away with bureaucracy: Subject ALL officials to immediate right of recall. No official to receive more than a skilled workers' wage.

### BEFORE ANY INDEFINITE STRIKE IS CALLED:

1. **CONVENE IN ALL LOCALITIES** joint meetings of Trades Councils and Labour Party G.M.C.s to discuss the aims of the strike. An emergency joint Conference of the Labour Party and T.U.C. to be held on the eve of the strike itself.

2. Draw up plans for alternative machinery for distribution of food and maintenance of essential services under the direction of the labour movement.

3. Prepare leaflets for distribution by pickets to troops. Secure official backing now for the Servicemen's Trade Union Rights Movement.

### IN THE EVENT OF A GENERAL STRIKE SITUATION ARISING:

No return to work in exchange for the offer of elections—any elections must be held DURING THE STRIKE, AND UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT.

Establish workers' defence units based on the trade unions for the purpose of maintaining order in place of the official police, who

are under the exclusive control of the ruling class.

All policy to be based on the clear understanding that not reform but power is in dispute. Victory will require:

● Extension of strike to include (a) the occupation of factories and (b)—as soon as conditions permit—a full return to work under the control of the labour movement.

● Working class take over of communications: give full backing and protection to trade unionists in (a) refusing to allow the dissemination of ruling-class propaganda and (b) making the mass media available to all sections of the working class for the free expression of views.

● **THE T.U.C. AND LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCES, MEETING IN PERMANENT SESSION, TO ASSUME—AS CONDITIONS PERMIT—THE FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT, AND ENSURE THAT THE OLD RULING BODIES AND THEIR SYMBOLS—THE STOCK EXCHANGE, HOUSE OF LORDS, CROWN, LAW COURTS, CIVIL SERVICE, ARMY AND POLICE HIERARCHIES ETC.—ARE EFFECTIVELY SUPPRESSED AND THEIR BUILDINGS TAKEN OVER.**

## A Message to the 'Revolutionary Left'

THE DEFEAT OF THE 1926 General Strike was a disaster for the British trade union movement. Trade union membership fell from five and a half million to five million in a year. In the same time, the accumulated funds of all unions fell from £12½ million to £8½ million. In the four years before the General Strike, the number of workers on strike per year had varied from 400,000 to 600,000. In 1927 and 1928, the figures were little over 100,000.

The strike defeat completely transformed the class-correlation of forces in favour of the ruling class. Thus the 1927 Trades Disputes Act was able to cripple trade-unionism for almost two decades. Movements for workers' control, for rent-strikes, for the defence of jobs—all these disappeared or were largely reduced to the level of pleas for charity from the ruling class. The 'Hunger Marches' were an example.

To this day, the scars of the 1926 trauma remain embedded in the flesh of our movement. The older generation of workers will not plump lightly for a new General Strike. They are right to be wary of those who chant "General Strike!" without knowledge of the issues

which are involved.

We must be clear in our minds what the General Strike involves. By using our strength in this way, we paralyse the state, multiply the strength and self-confidence of our own movement a thousandfold almost overnight, infect the civil service, the mass-media workers, even the troops—and call into question the very existence of the old order of society. Of all the forms of the class struggle, nothing can be on a higher plane—except for the armed insurrection itself. The history of our movement proves that every General Strike, no matter what its declared aims, has an internal tendency to overflow into an open revolutionary clash, into a direct struggle for power. And once that stage has been reached, there can be no turning back. There can be no recourse to elections—or to any other form of Constitutional struggle as a means of deciding the outcome. Victory can be won only by carrying through the struggle to the end.

To win a General Strike means to occupy not mere individual factories but whole industrial areas and streets. It means to defend these, to erect barricades, to repel the

troops, to win some of them over, to seize key public buildings and communications points, to begin re-opening essential services in our own areas, to form an alternative government and quickly to extend its reach throughout the country, wrenching the entire industrial, financial and state power from the hands of the ruling class.

And so, if we are not ready for all this, we are not ready for the General Strike—and are pure charlatans if we go about calling for one.

Anyone in the present situation who calls for an immediate General Strike should be confronted with the following question: "How, Brother, do you propose that we win it? Should we follow you, how do you propose leading us to the armed conquest of power?" The question of the Armed Forces in particular must be raised. If no satisfactory answer is forthcoming, the fellow should be exposed for the phrasemongering clown he is.

But to renounce the General Strike—or to replace it with the idea of one day "protest" strikes—is to renounce all struggle against the Tories. The general marxist maxim, "reforms are only the by-products of the struggle for

power" has today the most immediate and burning significance. The Tories have themselves made abundantly clear that they now have "no room for manoeuvre". With the post-war international trading system collapsing around their ears, they can concede not one inch of ground to the British working class. They can concede nothing to us—unless they are threatened with the loss of everything.

The task now is not to "call" for the General Strike. It is to prepare for it. That means doing practical work in the Armed Forces (which is much easier than most people suppose), and practical work in our factories, offices and so on in integrating the perspective of the coming General Strike into all our day-to-day agitation and work. Above all, it means—for those of us who are serious about the social revolution—challenging our existing Labour and Trade Union leaders (at the cost of no matter what "unpopularity") on precisely the issue of state power. Those who oppose taking power are against us. Those who are for it (seriously, and in action) are with us. It's as simple as that. There's no point defeating or replacing our existing leaders in the movement on any other basis.





The private property system lies at the root of all London's problems. Left: Briant Colour Printers on the march to save their jobs. Centre: Joe Levy's Euston Centre—more profitable than housing. Right: the fight against Labour's rents sell-out.

# WHICH WAY LONDON LABOUR?

"IT'S WAR on the landlords!" In these words the press summed up London Labour's election manifesto. But is it really war?

If you're a private tenant in London you'll no doubt be glad your landlord is under the axe. If Labour were to win control, ALL privately rented accommodation would be municipalized, in a policy aimed at "removing the scourge of the private landlord from our city". GLC leader Desmond Plummer charged "the socialists want to turn the whole of London into one huge Council Estate under the dictatorship of the working class".

We are also promised:

- a halt to the office-building plague
- a plan for saving Covent Garden (and similar threatened areas) from the developers
- a massive housing programme (particularly to make use of the 5,500 acres of London's old dockland)
- an assault on the private car in central London
- the scrapping of the Tories' disastrous ring-way proposals
- maintenance of British Rail's Suburban services (such as the Broad Street to Richmond line), and the increased use of London's neglected canal network as steps to ease road congestion
- establishment of a flat-fare as a step towards a free public transport system in London
- an immediate rents freeze—with increases and rent-levels in future to be based only on land, building and maintenance costs.

But are the authors of the manifesto serious? Unfortunately, they are not. They show few signs of knowing even what the real problems are.

London's problems boil down to one. Private ownership of land and property. The depopulation of Inner London, the spate of factory-closures, the desperate housing crisis,

the congestion on the roads—all the tensions and growing torment of life in London for ordinary people are connected one way or another with the spiralling prices of land and the office-building mania which are now making fortunes for those who own land and property in the city.

Labour's remedies are pitiful. Let's just take the question of the housing and land shortage. Labour proposes to "buy out" those responsible for it. But it's no use saying Labour will "buy" land for housing, or "buy out" the private landlords. For a start, where will we get the money from? And in any case, even were we to find the money, wouldn't giving it all to the developers and landlords only add to their power over us even if they exert it in a different way? Already the ten largest property companies control assets approaching £3,000 million, larger than the entire gold and dollar reserves of the United Kingdom. Virtually this entire fortune has been made out of the escalating land and property prices—above all in London—within the last ten years.

Already we are up to our necks in debt to insurance companies like the Prudential (which owns £250 million worth of property in London alone). Thus GLC interest repayments in 1970-71 took almost 90 per cent of the total income from rents. Already Camden Council is actually going backwards—in each year from 1970 interest repayments have taken around 30 per cent MORE than the total income from rents! And these insurance companies which are bleeding us dry are the very people who provide the bulk of finance for the property-developers who are ravaging London, destroying whole communities and erecting offices which are kept empty to raise rent potential still higher and multiply their owners' capital gains still more! More and more thousands of Londoners are being made homeless to make way for these tycoons—and Labour suggests buttressing their riches with payments for their property at the

ludicrous prices their system has produced!

If Labour is going to pay for the land and property it needs to house the million Londoners homeless or living in slums, it will mean raising huge loans from the banks and insurance companies—i.e. from the very same parasites who are behind the inflated property-costs and the housing crisis in the first place. And that will mean an even greater proportion of the rents council tenants pay going into these peoples' hands. So the Councils will have even less money left over to build homes or maintain existing ones without raising rents.

Labour in London must spell it out. We would have every tenant and trade unionist in London on our side if we resolved to CONFISCATE the property of the hoarders, developers and loan sharks. There's

no need to "wait" for a Labour Government to nationalize the lot. That way, nothing will ever happen at all. If Labour Councils collectively broke the law by (1) refusing point blank to pay interest charges any more, (2) demanding Compulsory Purchase Orders on all the property they needed with nominal payments made, and (3) using industrial action, rent strikes and physical mass occupations of sites, office blocks etc. to enforce their way—then the response from the working class would be terrific. The force generated would help set the country alight and, combined with the escalating campaign of the trade unions to bring this Government down, would enable our movement under a strong Labour Government to take the power and smash the landlords, the loan-sharks and the property speculators for good.

## TENANTS BETRAYED

SOLD DOWN THE RIVER. That's how every tenants' leader felt after the London Labour Party Conference this year.

Housing was the crucial issue on the agenda. That, no doubt, was why the Standing Orders Committee pushed the debate right back to the end of Conference, perhaps hoping that by that time delegates would have had enough. They were not quite right. Almost every delegate who spoke was for defying the Tories' Housing Finance Act. Ken Livingstone—standing for the GLC in Norwood—set an example to all Labour candidates by declaring that his election manifesto committed him not to vote in Council for any rent increase under the Act. He said he might have sympathy for other candidates who felt unable to make such a stand. "But if they can't do so", he declared, "they should stand down in favour of those who can".

But despite this and similar

speeches, the Executive had their way. Replying to the debate, Ron Pepper devoted his time to an attack on Composite "F", which called for all that the "non-implementers" had been asking for. He claimed that to force candidates to publicly pledge non-implementation of the Act would split and weaken the movement. The Councillors, he said, had to "have some room for manoeuvre". Anyway, it was too late to change the Labour Party's election manifesto! (the Composite demanded re-writing of the section dealing with the Housing Finance Act). The leadership got their way, by 384 votes to 644. In view of the "extreme" nature of the resolution, however, and the fact that to have voted for non-implementation would have meant much more this year than it did last (when "defiance" could still be confined to hot air), it was the respectable size of the vote for the Composite which was the real surprise.

Graham Bash

# LONDONERS: VOTE LABOUR ON APRIL 12!



Council of Action 1920:

# WHEN LABOUR USED ITS POWER

FORMED IN FEBRUARY 1900 as the result of a Trades Union Congress resolution the previous year, the British Labour Party (before 1906 the 'Labour Representation Committee') is unique among working class parties in Western Europe. Only in Britain did the whole trade union movement (under the stimulus of anti-union rulings in the House of Lords, and through the initiative of socialist militants) give rise to a single working class party seeking representation in Parliament for Labour. Only in Britain has the labour movement such a centralized structure, such a powerful organization and such structural unity between the industrial and political wings. The trade union 'political levy', the overwhelming trade union strength at Labour's Annual Conference, and the traditional links between Labour Governments and the TUC are all expressions of this. A Labour Parliamentary majority in this country has at its disposal a tremendous reservoir of industrial power. The paradox is that this power has never been used. For no country has had labour leaders more fanatically opposed to the slightest use of "extra-Parliamentary" action than Britain.

## COUNCIL OF ACTION

Only once has the Parliamentary Labour Party mobilized its industrial strength for political ends. That was in August 1920. In protest against Churchill's preparations for war on the side of Poland against revolutionary Russia, and spurred on by the initiative of the London dockers' famous refusal to load the JOLLY GEORGE with ammunition and other supplies for Poland, Arthur Henderson, Party Secretary, sent out telegrams to all affiliated local Labour Parties and Trades Councils urging them to

organize 'citizen demonstrations' on Sunday 8 August.

The appeal, according to a subsequent National Executive Committee report, 'met with an unparalleled response' and mass demonstrations were held throughout the country. On the following day, a joint meeting of the Parliamentary Committee of the TUC, the Executive Committee of the Labour Party and the members of the Parliamentary Labour Party was held at the House of Commons. It agreed, virtually unanimously, to challenge the Coalition Government using "the whole industrial power of the organized workers" (in the words of the resolution adopted). It was further agreed "that the Executive Committees of affiliated organizations throughout the country be summoned to hold themselves ready to proceed immediately to London for a National Conference; that they be advised to instruct their members to "down tools" on instruction from that Conference; and that a Council of Action be immediately constituted to take such steps as may be necessary to carry the above decision into effect." When the National Conference was held, Lloyd George had already decided against sending troops to Poland—realizing full well that to have gone along with Churchill's plans might have provoked a revolution! Even the Labour Party Chairman of the time, A G Cameron—a hardened right-winger—

was forced at the Conference to declare that unless Labour's demands were met, "we will be compelled, even against all constitutions, to chance whether we cannot do something to take the country into our own hands for our own people."

## LABOUR TODAY

It is along these lines—and a beginning was made last July when Labour's NEC backed the TUC's General Strike call to "free the Pentonville Five"—that Chartist trade unionists and Labour Party members are preparing to act today. We demand the use of "the whole industrial power of the organized workers" in order "to take the country into our own hands for our own people". In the Labour Party we have the strength to do this. It is about time this strength was used.

To date the Labour Party has never even seriously considered taking power, except in the meaningless sense of obtaining a Parliamentary majority whilst leaving all real power in the hands of our capitalist industrial opponents. The result has been that even when "in Government"—we've had to put up with policies which were disastrous, and which weren't our own.

Throughout the labour movement at the present time there is a growing awareness of the impotence of the ballot box (unless accompanied by other means) as a method of gaining power. No doubt the ballot-

Opposition to British intervention in the Polish War against Soviet Russia. Left: Robert Smillie, miners' leader who signed an appeal and helped organize strikes.



box "should" work—but the ruling classes just don't give up everything when the vote goes against them. They carry on running the country—dictating to the Labour Ministers—as if nothing or very little had changed.

It's not just a "few revolutionary extremists" who feel this way. There is now a widespread disenchantment with Parliament and increasing turn towards the use of industrial strength instead.

It may seem surprising to the Fabians in the Labour Party, but in point of fact it is power rather than charity that working people really want. All of us want the power to run our own lives, to determine our own working conditions, to make our own decisions as to what is, and what is not, in our best interests. The most revolutionary idea in the working class movement is in fact just that: "We should be the management! We should be the boss! We should be the Government!" It's as simple as that.

For our part, in the Labour Party, we are supposed to be leaders of the working class movement. As workers increasingly take up not mere economic but power demands, it's our job to show how the power can be taken. We CHARTISTS are committed to that task. If the existing Labour leaders can't match up to their historic responsibilities, they must make way for others who can.



THE INTERNATIONAL monetary system is fast disintegrating. The new run on the dollar, only a fortnight after the 10 per cent devaluation announced on February 12, has set the experts talking of a new "1929". The headlong rush of speculators into gold, silver or almost any raw material reflects something much more serious than a mere "exchange rate imbalance". Increasingly, it is not this, that or the other currency which speculators are losing confidence in. It is the whole edifice of paper money itself. If the present chaos were to continue for the next few weeks it could bring on the biggest crash since the 'thirties and the collapse of the world trading system on which the post-war "boom" has been based.

Last month's dollar devaluation was caused by the USA's chronic balance of payments deficit, both on her capital account (the export and import of capital for investment) which has failed to balance for over twenty years, and more recently on her current account (the export and import of goods and services).

This deficit has built up owing to (1) the USA's vast expendit-

ure on the "containment" of communism (2) massive overseas investment of capital (because of the declining rate of profit in the USA itself) and (3) a fall in US productivity resulting from the failure to invest at home. This last has led to the US being undercut by rivals such as Japan even on the American home market.

After World War II—with Europe and Japan in ruins—the USA was able to establish a massive international monetary and banking structure upon which the Bretton Woods monetary agreement and the subsequent international trading boom depended. All currencies were convertible into the dollar at fixed rates, and the dollar was convertible into gold (at 35 dollars an ounce). For a long time after 1950 (when the US balance of payments went into deficit) most holders didn't worry too much that the dollars they held were being printed in excess of the US reserves of gold. America was economically and politically strong enough to force the central banks of her "allies" to hold vast dollar stocks, maintaining confidence in their

value and at the same time financing the US deficit.

But with the erosion of this political dominance—as West Germany, Japan and other nations have become powerful trading rivals—the whole system began to shake loose. The knowledge that sooner or later, the US would have to rectify her widening trade deficit led to increasing fears of a dollar devaluation. Holders began to demand gold. From 1965 onwards there has been a succession of monetary crises culminating in the abrogation of the dollar's convertibility for gold on August 15 1971. Since then the US Government has made amply clear its intention of making the rest of the world pay to right its deficit.

Britain, the most delapidated of the capitalist powers, will be especially hard hit by the latest devaluation and trade-war measures announced. And EEC membership will not help. While world trade was expanding, it was possible for member states to resolve their conflicting interests and take united action. But with the onset of crisis, their interests become increasingly irreconcilable.

While in principle committed to a unified monetary system and a joint float against the dollar, in practice the Common Market countries are further than ever from monetary union. During the present crisis, it has been Italy and Britain which have refused to toe the line. Both the lira and sterling have been allowed to float. If a common monetary policy were introduced, both would have to fix the parity of their currencies to those of their "partners". This would effectively lead to an upvaluation of their currencies against the dollar and a further massive strain on their respective balance of payments.

The discarding of all pretence at collaboration between the capitalist powers and the descent into open trade war will lead inexorably to a seizing up of world trade. In each country of the industrialized "West", the ruling class will attempt desperately to slash living standards and trade union power in order to survive. The question of power will confront the working class ever more directly on a global scale. The crisis makes the creation of a new International for our movement a matter of life and death.

Keith Veness.

## U.M.W. 'Clean up' Victory

CHARTISTS send congratulations to the UNITED MINEWORKERS of the U.S.A., who have just dumped their incumbent President, Tony Boyle.

Boyle, elected in 1963, has been notorious even by U.S. trade-union standards. He is at present facing a Federal law suit on a charge of embezzling union funds to give to the Democratic Party in 1968. He is also at present a director of the BANK OF WASHINGTON, into which he sunk 75 per cent of his union's share capital.

Boyle and his clique were deeply implicated in the murder of Jock Yablonski, the previous "reform" candidate who ran against him in 1969. The miners at the time replied to this gangsterism by staging mass walk-outs all over the country.

Unlike Yablonski, the man who

defeated Boyle this time was not a union official. He is Arnold Miller, who was a working miner up to 1969, when he caught psillicosis ("black lung") and has since lived on disability benefits. Miller's election figure was 70,373—compared to Boyle's 56,334. The margin would have been much greater but for the votes of retired miners, whom Boyle told would lose their pensions if he wasn't elected! (Unlike most British unions, many American ones allow retired members to vote—about a third of the UMW are retired!).

Miners under the age of 30 apparently voted 35:1 in favour of Miller.

Despite his obvious deficiencies, (a penchant for persistent anti-communist statements among them) Miller's election represents

a giant leap forward for trade unionism in the United States. The American working class have announced that they are to take back for themselves their own

movement—for so long a happy hunting ground for the MAFIA and the CIA. The days of the Meanys, Woodcocks and Wurfs are numbered.

## 'Let The Train Take The Strain'

THE LATEST "hiving off" being contemplated by the Tory Government is the idea of forcing the G.P.O. to transfer its parcel delivery service from British Rail to private road hauliers.

The immediate advantages of this plan to all of us are clear: more lorries on the roads, more accidents, pollution and congestion. Other, more long term advantages include the need for yet more motorways (knocking down houses in the process), and the closing of yet more railway lines made "uneconomic"—forcing yet more folks into buying cars.

To the Tories' friends in the haulage and car-production business, these social implications of "free private enterprise" are doubtless of secondary importance. But irate ASLEF and NUR members have been asking for action from their Executives. Crewe South branch of the NUR are now demanding that their national officers organize joint action with the Union of Post Office Workers (who will also suffer redundancies under the scheme). Whether Sir Sydney Greene and Tom Jackson do so remains to be seen.

## STUDENTS STRIKE

Bernard Misrahi (Kingston Polytechnic).

ALONG WITH the gas-workers, hospital workers, teachers and others spearheading the assault on the Tory Government's pay-policy, Britain's students are now in the midst of the biggest grants struggle they have ever mounted.

The National Union of Students are campaigning to:

- Abolish discretionary grants
- Give full grants to married students and those living at home
- Abolish parental contributions
- Raise the basic full grant of £445 a year to £510 and give it to all students
- Subject the grant to an annual review so that it rises in line with the cost of living.

With soaring costs particularly in rents, food and fares, the students have been hit especially hard by the inflation of the past few years. A student can live on his grant, how-

ever...provided he doesn't travel by buses or trains, eat properly, and provided he steals all the books he needs for study and shares his bedroom with at least nine other people.

Local student unions have organized rent strikes, petitions, canteen boycotts and similar activities on an unprecedented scale this year.

On February 21, about sixty thousand students marched in nine cities. When NUS leaders met Norman St John Stevas MP at the Department of Education and Science on March 1, he said he doubted "whether I can persuade the Government to meet your demands". The all-out one-day strike of March 14 was called by the NUS in reply. Student demands for links with the trade unions and trades councils in each area are growing. But can we win?

The Tories have made clear their intention to cut income tax by squeezing the social service and education budgets. Some Tories are even talking of replacing grants by loans.

The NUS leaders agree that our claim is affected by the general economic situation. They recognize that the Tories will not willingly back down. But they obscure the real issues. Digby Jacks (NUS President) misleads us when he suggests that massive demonstrations will "limit the Tories' freedom of manoeuvre". He creates false hopes by his constant appeals to College authorities, MPs and other public figures for sympathy. Almost all these people tell us how much they "sympathise". Scarcely one of them dares deny the strength of our case. But their economic crisis means that the Tories can afford no tears. The weakest must go to the wall.

There is only one force that can break the Government's will. And

that is the united power of the trade unions. One of the Tories' worst fears is that the mass of students will swing behind the working class and place their energies, talents and time at the disposal of those fighting to bring the government down. Now, as the students' grants struggle merges with that of other workers in a situation slowly heading for a General Strike, the Tories must see their worst fears beginning to come true. We must confirm these fears! Bringing down the Tories is not just a matter for talk by a few "politicos" in the college canteen. The most elementary living needs of all students—to eat, to move, to have somewhere to sleep—are now at stake. The NUS must base itself on this fact. The only perspective for our campaign is as part of the struggle to defeat this Government and destroy the whole system on which it is based.



COME TO THE LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS CONFERENCE, SKEGNESS, EASTER 1973

- BUILD a movement to clear out the traitors in the trade union and labour movement who refuse to fight the Tories!
- BUILD a movement which will prepare for the seizure of state power, in order to carry out the Labour Party programme of nationalizing the monopolies!

### TIMETABLE

CRUISE up the motorway to Skegness on Friday afternoon April 20th.

ENJOY three days full board with all facilities at Derbyshire Miners' Holiday Camp.

CONFERENCE opens Saturday morning and continues over Sunday and Monday morning.

DANCE on Saturday night.

FOOTBALL matches being arranged.

RETURN on Monday afternoon, April 23rd.

FULL BOARD / CONFERENCE / DANCE : £8.25.

RETURN COACH FARE £3-00.



ABOVE: "The Union that Gets Things Done". But not in this case. These young workers have been picketing the Grunwick film processing laboratories in Willesden for six weeks. When two of them tried organizing the 120-strong labour force into the T&G, the management sacked them. The 25 newly-recruited union members walked out in sympathy. Support from the neighbouring Rolls-Royce body workers has been magnificent—refreshments for the pickets, a weekly collection of around £40, and numbers for a weekly march on the management's office. Support from the union has been nil. The strike still hasn't been made official.

## LONDON Y.S. REJECTS CAMPAIGN AGAINST TAVERNE

THIS YEAR'S London Young Socialists Conference met just four weeks before the by-election in Lincoln.

The delegate from Norwood YS reported that his branch had sent resolutions to the Regional and National LPYS Committees demanding a campaign against Taverne, including a demonstration in Lincoln on the Saturday before polling day. "This issue", he said, "should now be taken up at this Conference". On the floor was Norwood's resolution for a campaign to "Expel the Labour Traitors".

The Regional Committee were "against" Taverne, but also against taking any action to boot out the

Jenkinsites from the Party or put the full strength of the LPYS into action in Lincoln itself. They rejected the slogan "Expel the Labour Traitors" in favour of the all-purpose slogan "Labour to Power on a Socialist Programme". And they said it was all a question of ideas, the matter of expulsions being an "organizational diversion". The resolution was defeated.

It was not surprising that the whole Conference lacked any sense of enthusiasm or urgency. Delegates were told by Youth Officer Neil Vann how, at a time of mounting mass struggle against the Tories, the membership of the YS was declining, with four fewer branches in London this year than last.

### Football defeat for Lambeth

THE ALL-STAR LAMBETH YS football team which had been unbeaten this season came under heavy fire from a team representing 'Tribune', the 'left' reformist paper, on February 11th.

The game was neck and neck, and near the end the Lambeth team

was winning 2-1, but some devious play put them on top at the final whistle. The score: Tribune 3; Lambeth YS 2.

The next match is against an 'International Socialists' group team.

### Your YS Branch

NORTH WEST CROYDON YS meets every Thursday at 124, Whitehorse Road, Croydon at 8 pm.

STREATHAM YS meets every Tuesday at 298 Streatham High Rd., (behind photo studio near St. Leonard's Church) at 8pm.

BRENT EAST YS meets every other Wednesday at 7 Park View, Olive Rd., NW2 at 8 pm.

VAUXHALL YS meets every Wednesday at 179 Kennington Road at 8 pm.

NORWOOD YS meets every Thursday at 264, Rosendale Rd., S.E.24

## NURSES FIGHT FOR A UNION

AS HOSPITAL ANCILLARY WORKERS step up their fight, a campaign is being launched this month to join up nurses to a trade union. The movement aims to build a strong NALGO membership which can compete with the Royal College of Nursing. Young Socialists in South London have promised full support and will be leafleting the younger nurses at teaching hospitals in the area. We interviewed one of those who began the campaign...

QUESTION: What are your hours and conditions of work?

ANSWER: We work forty hours a week. For all overtime we're paid the flat rate, except after midday Saturday and all day Sunday when it's time and a quarter.

Conditions vary a lot from hospital to hospital. At mine, all shifts are straight shifts, but often our off-duty periods are not known long enough in advance for us to arrange social events. There is a severe shortage of nursing staff, which of course puts an extra strain on those of us who are available.

Agency staff are recruited from private nursing agencies at much higher rates than those offered to hospital staff nurses.

There are restrictions on the private lives of resident nurses; the food provided is poor and relatively expensive, and cooking facilities are limited. Male visitors are not allowed after 11pm.

Night duty is compulsory for student nurses, who are not always adequately covered by senior nursing staff at night.

Nurses are badly paid. A claim for a 25 per cent increase and re-valuation of nurses' salaries was submitted by the staff side of the Whitley Council in January 1972. In April 1972 the government offered 8½ per cent which was accepted without protest and nurses were told this was to be considered an "interim award". NO further negotiation has taken place on basic salary levels and the present freeze means no further negotiating will take place in the coming months.

In April 1972 when 8½ per cent pay increases became effective, the award was not back-dated. Immed-

ately, the cost of hospital accommodation and the price of hospital food was raised.

QUESTION: How do you intend fighting?

ANSWER: Well, first we must stop relying on the Royal College of Nurses to act for us. They're a professional organization, concerned mainly with "status", who've consistently let their nursing members down. We need strong trade union representation and increased awareness among us to participate in more militant protests against the way we're used and exploited.

QUESTION: What's your opinion of the "hiving off" of National Health facilities to the private sector?

ANSWER: Private practice within the Health Service is increasing. More theatre time is being devoted to private practice, more nurses diverted into the private sector, more part time hospital consultants making their fortunes.

QUESTION: How do you think the problems of the National Health Service can be solved?

ANSWER: A lot more government money should be spent on providing a service which is free and comprehensive to everyone. A lot of money and resources are wasted in providing separate facilities for the wealthy. Drug companies should be nationalized and all doctors employed on a whole-time basis, to help achieve these aims. Ordinary people should be made aware that the Health Service at this moment is being destroyed.