

**NOTTINGHAM
WORKER**

Solidarity Forever!

ISSUE 3

**THE
HOUSING
PROBLEM
IN
NOTT'M.**

5p

EDITORIAL

In the previous issues of Nottingham Worker we have had call to mention the attitude taken by the official trade union apparatus to the problems of workers who are in struggle with the employers. The sell-out at Bentleys is one example and the inaction of the T and GWU in the face of the recognition dispute at Crepe Sizes is another. In this issue the defeat at Jones, Stroud and the problems that may face local building workers given the national decisions of the UCATT leadership again bring this question to the fore. Inactivity, if not downright betrayal, by trade union bureaucrats is readily explainable and has to be understood and fought by militants. Full time officials are, of course, divorced from the actual conditions which give rise to struggles on the shop floor or at the site and as a result they do not have the same degree of interest in resolving disputes satisfactorily as do the workers themselves. Rather, the union official is in continual contact with the employers and their representatives and under continual pressure from the orchestrated pressure of 'public opinion' in the press. Officials are therefore under a continual pressure to ignore or actually to obstruct militancy so that they can have a quiet life and maintain fairly harmonious relations with those with whom they have to negotiate.

What can militants do about this? One kind of reaction must be ruled out from the start - and that is to leave the union in disgust. Though it would be quite understandable if workers, such as those at Jones, Stroud, were to drop out of the union because it has done nothing for them - yet this will not solve any problems. The organisation and the strength of the trade unions is essential to defend and advance the workers interest and in the last few years workers have shown that they can use the trade unions to push up wages fairly rapidly and put the employers onto the defensive. Locally the Crepe Sizes dispute has shown that it is possible to win if the workers refuse to be pushed around and morale is kept up. On the other hand if disillusioned workers do drop out then nothing will please the officials that were willing to sell them out more than this. Under pressure from the employers the unions would then become - not means to advance the interests of the workers - but means to control the workers in the interests of the employers. This is, of course, just what the employers want and is the reasoning behind the Industrial Relations Act, which seeks to channel all rank and file militancy through official channels. Once in these official channels the government and the employers can bring pressure to bear upon the bureaucrats who, in the interests of a quiet life will try to cool down the struggle.

Rather than dropping out the only solution in the interests of the workers is for the militants to ensure that the trade unions are fully democratised and thus turned into fighting organisations. Full time officials should be elected and subject to immediate recall by those they represent. If the wage of the official is tied such that it cannot be more than the average of those that he represents - then this will give him an incentive to push wages up. It goes without saying that the union should have no truck with the dictates of the state over how it should be run or how it should fight.

Of course, in the long term measures such as these will not be enough either unless they are linked to a struggle to wrest the power out of the hands of the employers altogether. The employers will retain their power for as long as they own the factories and the mills in which people have to work and for as long as successive governments - Tory or Labour - run things in the 'national interest' which is really the employers interest because they own the economy of the nation. Democratization of the trade unions is essential but what is also necessary is an economy and society which the workers run in accordance with their own needs and aspirations.

By Brian Tyler.

Why Be A Slum Dweller?

Recent articles in the Nottingham Evening Post have graphically described the appalling housing conditions which exist in the older parts of our city. Residents of areas like the Meadows have complained about chronic dampness, crumbling masonry and rat infestation. It is by no means the first time that attention has been drawn to such a situation. Residents themselves, an I.T.V. film and University researchers have frequently spoken out.

After decades of neglect, the City of Nottingham Corporation took some action with regard to the major part of the St. Annes area. However, the demolition of the St. Annes area has in no way solved Nottingham's housing problem. The reasons why are not difficult to grasp. People do not live in areas like St. Annes because they particularly like the local scenery or the general tone of the neighbourhood. They live in such areas because the rents are relatively low and because their incomes and family commitments are such that they would find it extremely difficult if not impossible to pay the rents demanded in pleasanter parts of the city. Unless they are desperately poor, so poor that they qualify for large rent rebates, they often find that the rents charged for most council house property is beyond their means. So, by simply knocking down the houses in which they are living, the Corporation forces them to go looking for cheap houses elsewhere. Elsewhere means districts like the Meadows. These latter districts become more overcrowded, with greater strains being placed on the already inadequate schools and other welfare services. As the demand for the ever diminishing supply of 'cheap' houses grows, so landlords have greater opportunities for increasing the rents charged.

Poor houses, decaying, overcrowded schools - these are not the only problems that people in the poorer housing districts face. Although, Nottingham Corporation would officially deny it, the City's Public Health Dept. treat them with complete contempt. The dustbins are not emptied so often; the streets are not swept so regularly. In spite of residents showing clear evidence of rat infestation, Corporation officials tell them they are imagining things or exaggerating. People apply to the Corporation for improvement grants and don't get them because their houses are too old and decrepid.

Thus thousands of working class people remain trapped by economic circumstances - a combination of low wages, absence of job opportunities, rising rents and spiralling house prices - in a squalor, which far from being alleviated is becoming ever more acute.

Living in Council Houses or Flats.

Many people do of course make the break and end up in the Council districts. What sort of paradise do they move into. First of all, paradise is usually expensive. Depending on age of property, area, size and type of dwelling, provision of central heating, etc. rents vary from £4 a week to £22 a week. These rents go up annually and will, in the vast majority of cases, receive the boost of all time, if the Government's 'Fair' Rents Act is implemented.

Paradise comes in a variety of forms. There is the Clifton Estate type of paradise. Most of the houses look alike. True, the doors are painted different colours - there is Corporation Red, Corporation Green, Corporation Yellow, Corporation Brown and other delectable Corporation shades. Then, there are the regulations about what tenants can and cannot do - all designed to keep people in their place and to remind them that they should be grateful for being allowed to live in one of

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their houses. Clifton Estate is four or five miles away from the city centre, but, although they have improved over the years, local shops are inadequate. There is a shortage of pubs and once again, the pubs that do exist there, tend to look the same. Although 40,000 people live at Clifton, there is no cinema. Entertainment and recreation facilities for youth are appalling. There is one Youth Centre serving the entire district and consequently capable of accommodating only a tiny minority. Our local magistrates, gentry, social workers and other assorted undesirables and do gooders constantly express surprise and horror about vandalism and violence on the estate - telephone boxes being kicked in, bus shelters being wrecked, windows being broken, fences being ripped down, punch ups between rival gangs. Yet, what else can they expect? Whilst this violence is aimless and has the effect of making already lack lustre living conditions worse for Clifton people - what this violence expresses is chronic boredom, absence of opportunity, and above all an UP YOURS attitude to authority and the economic and social forces, which have created the desolation which surrounds them.

If you don't fancy Clifton or other similar estates, what about the Council flats? These are usually nearer the city centre. Therefore, there isn't the same absence of local amenities. Whether you go to the Denman St. development (Hyson Green) or the Willoughby St. flats (near the Savoy cinema) or the flats off Wells Rd. or other areas, the same vista meets the eye - a cross between a Players bonded warehouse, a hospital and a prison. Someone in the Corporation bureaucracy must have pretty set tastes when it comes to architecture. For description purposes, let us settle on Denman St. This development consists of concrete maisonettes on three or so floors. Each concrete block is joined to a similar concrete block by huge concrete bridges or concrete ramps. One advantage of living here is that you are not cut off from your neighbours. Sound proofing between dwellings is virtually non-existent. The sound of your neighbours flushing toilet comes over particularly strong. The complex is favoured by a communal central heating system. Heat emanates from a central tower, similar in appearance to a mill chimney. The principle upon which each dwelling is heated is unique. Hot air enters the room through vents located high on the walls. Therefore, because hot air rises, you get blistering hot ceilings and a cold room below.

The Denman St. flats were completed around 1966. About one year after construction the grey concrete blocks were showing signs of decay. Cracks were appearing in the walls, amongst other structural faults. Like similar housing developments in the city, Denman St. looks like and is a thoroughly botched building job. These are dwellings which are crammed together with the maximum economy and the minimum regard for comfort, privacy or taste, built on the principle that anything will do for the working man.

Buying Your Own Home!

In our society, things are stacked heavily in favour of the owner occupier. Absence of regulations, the income tax system, pleasanter surroundings, even rampant inflation - all these factors work in favour of those who already own their own house, relative to those who pay rent. Yet, for working people, moving into the 'property owning democracy' is becoming ever more difficult. Inside 2 years, the price of private houses has risen by roughly one third, completely outstripping wage rises in the vast majority of industries. Very few young working people or working class families not already owning houses can possibly hope to even keep pace with rising prices, through saving. For the majority of people living in the poorer districts on low incomes, and the majority of council tenants paying higher and higher rents, buying a house will remain a dream.

The causes of the housing problem in Nottingham are roughly the same as those which produce similar problems in other cities. They are rooted in the fact that the bulk of the property is owned by a tiny minority of people. This tiny minority thrive on land speculation and spiralling land prices, on a system which puts ornate and unnecessary office blocks before houses for people. Another cause is the system of local government financing. In this article, legitimate criticisms have been made concerning the high handed and anti working class behaviour of corporation bureaucrats. This is not a major factor, however. The fact is that the Government provides local councils with only a fraction of the cash necessary for a real attack on slum housing conditions to be made. Therefore local councils have to borrow. By the time the money lenders have been paid off, the interest charges have multiplied the material costs of constructing council house dwellings many times. Then, the big building firms get their rake off, as an article in the last issue of Nottingham Worker showed.

There is no law of nature which explains the present crisis in housing. Within the city boundaries there are many unused open spaces, which landowners hold on to, waiting for prices to rise, so they can make huge fortunes by selling to property developers at a later date. There is the Park Estate and others like it, containing mansions and massive gardens. Areas like these could be compulsorily purchased and redeveloped as cheap but attractive council estates. There would be no need for vindictiveness against residents of the Park. They could be offered council flats, like the people of St. Annes were when their area was redeveloped.

A Programme for Action.

The housing crisis is created by people - the land speculators, the property developers, the money lenders, the Tory Government and an ineffectual local council. These people must be fought, if genuine progress is to be made. We should:

1. Fight tooth and nail against the implementation of the 'Fair' Rents Act. Don't rely on the Labour Council - they will only attack the Act with words. Tenants who refuse to pay the new rents should be supported by the entire working class.
2. Harrass Corporation bureaucrats for adequate services to be provided for your area. Ring them up; demonstrate at their offices. Kick up a stink and give them no rest.
3. Demand provision of adequate council houses and an elimination of the slums now. Demand of the Council that they pay no more interest to money lenders. Demand of the Government that they make cash available now.
4. Demand the right for communities being rehoused to plan their new areas, with any necessary professional advice being made available to them. Let there be an end to control by bureaucrats.
5. Demand an end to corporation regulations for council tenants. Let council tenants control their own estates.

The above demands, if gained would considerably improve housing conditions for the working class. In the long run, however, the housing problem is inseparable from the problems of our society in general. The fight for decent housing is inseparable from the fight for higher wages and is ultimately inseparable from the fight for a genuine redistribution of wealth, which is only conceivable in a society without property owners, where the land is owned by the people and where housing is provided on the basis of need and not according to the dictates of the profit motive.

Several weeks ago Nottingham bus crews held a one day strike. The demand for a strike originated in the Sherwood depot, where the effects of 'rationalization' were being felt in the form of inadequate rest breaks. The Sherwood depot extended their own action to the whole city, when the local TGWU branch called for the one day strike for more general demands of better pay and conditions, following a management refusal to negotiate on all their demands- especially the £7 a week local claim (above the nationally negotiated agreement)

The strike was nearly 100% at the Sherwood and Parliament Street Depots though the Bilborough and Bulwell depots failed to turn out in such force. The main reason for this was the split felt between one man operating and two man operating crews. The Sherwood depot is all one-man, while the Bilborough and Bulwell depots are all two-man crews. The split has developed since the two-man crews feel that the one-man operators somehow are responsible for the increasing insecurity of their position. The real problem is elsewhere, as the men at the Parliament Street depot learned.

This depot is a mixed one, of one-man and two-man, and strikers on the picket line told "Nottingham Worker" that they hoped that other depots would follow their opinion that all bus crews should stick together. It is not the one-man crews that are to be blamed, but increasing rationalization imposed by the employers with no thought of the consequences, besides that of increasing profits.

The strikes were called off a week later when their threat had forced the management to negotiate. But the struggle is a long way from being over and on Friday 9th Sept the workers at the Sherwood depot decided to strike again the following day. Rationalization, in the form of one-man operated buses, or containerization in the docks, or productivity deals is being introduced throughout British industry continually. While it is introduced by the employers its effect is to increase profits by cutting labour cost and intensifying work. (one-man operators have found this to their cost). Clearly, workers have to fight against this process. Greater efficiency and rationalization are not in themselves wrong, but they are used by the employers, with the open encouragement of the government, to get more from the worker for less and less. (Don't let the initial bonuses fool you- in a few years the overall cuts are obvious). Also in a period of high unemployment, rationalization will only weaken the bargaining strength of the working class by still further increasing the level of unemployment. (The employer who argues that 'natural' losses will suffice conveniently forgets the increasingly high level of unemployment among schoolleavers - the workers children).

The lesson is that when dockers or busmen strike against rationalization and its effects then all workers, affected already or not just yet, must give them full support. The labour movement cannot allow the workers to suffer for the sake of increasing the employers profits.

Rog Tanner

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BUILDING STRIKE **

After the initial stoppages at the Lenton Hospital, Victoria Centre, and Mitchell's sites the building workers strike has escalated throughout the Nottingham area so that all the main sites and nearly all of the smaller ones are now out on strike. The strike is in support of a national wage claim of £30 for 35 hours for craftsmen (at present they get £20 for 40 hours) and a pro rata increase for labourers (who at present get £17 for 40 hours). The latest offer of the employers was a guaranteed minimum wage of £25 rising to £29. The UCATT executive who wanted to accept this offer were forced to reject it by a meeting of regional officials.

The reason for this rejection was that the 'guaranteed' minimum included £2 and £3 bonuses at each increase. One thing that building workers are fed up

** This article was written and typed before the end of the strike.

with is the bonus system which has contributed to the present appalling basic wage in the industry. The most important way that the employers have been able to keep profits high in the industry is by buying off the well organised and militant sites with high bonuses and keeping the basic wage low. In areas that are less well organised - like Nottingham - wages are, in this way, kept down. Building workers have learned that the bonus system is a weapon in the hands of the employers and many have come to the realisation that it is necessary to use national strength to get a higher basic rate and use the stronger sites to help the weaker.

With this in mind recent national developments could have a bad effect on the strike in the Nottingham area. Union organisation in Nottingham was much weaker, in general, than in other parts of the country before the strike and many men have only just joined the union. The strike could therefore be hit by the national decision of the UCATT and TGWU leaders to allow men who have reached a settlement with individual companies to return to work. Individual settlements for the full claim are a good sign as long as the men stay out to maintain solidarity with the weaker sites. However, in some cases workers are going back for a basic rate of £25 for 40 hours. Such a start of a gradual return to work could be the end of the strike. Individual settlements also enable big firms (like Taylor Woodrow who are the contractors on the Lenton Hospital and Victoria Centre sites) with huge financial resources to hold out much longer.

Another weakness in the Nottingham area is the lack of a strong and organised rank and file movement such as the Charter group (although a local action committee has functioned effectively during the strike). It must be said as a criticism of the Charter group that it has made no attempt to win members or supporters in Nottingham.

An interesting aspect of the strike in Nottingham has been the attitude of the Social Security to the strikers. Single building workers have had a great deal of trouble getting any money from the Social Security. It must come as a great shock to many that have tried to claim at Shakespeare street and other S.S. offices that, according to a spokesman of the Dept. of Health and Social Security (D.H.S.S.) "an unmarried striker who is able to convince a social security (SS) officer that he was 'on beam ends' is entitled to £5.80 a week. In addition the strikers rent and rates will be paid by the Dept". They will also be shocked by the statement of a local spokesman for the S.S. to the charge that S.S. officers had been playing down the entitlement of single strikers. The spokesman said "This is nonsense. Each case is considered on its merits". It is a fact, however, that single building workers while on strike have been told point blank that they could receive nothing from the S.S.

Because of all this some building workers contacted the Claimant Union and ten workers and two representatives from the Claimant's Union went to the Shakespeare Street office. Single strikers were first of all told they could get nothing and there was no attempt to interview them so as to "consider each case on its merits". However, the strikers refused to be put off and were then told that they could only get money from the S.S. after they had been out for as long as three weeks. Where this rule was dug up from nobody knows, it is in none of the Social Security Acts so presumably it is one of the Social Security's secret rules. The strikers, however, demanded to see the manager and meanwhile blocked up all the enquiry booths in the S.S. offices. At this stage the S.S. officials began to get angry so one of the strikers called the police in and at this point the manager agreed to see a deputation of strikers. Following a long consultation he agreed to consider the strikers claims.

What conclusions are to be drawn from this incident? Firstly it appears that counter clerks have been told to refuse payment to single strikers probably on orders from higher up. This will now be more difficult for them to do after the statement from the D.H.S.S. about what single strikers

are entitled to. However it will be clear to workers that have tried to claim their LEGAL rights that the D.H.S.S. does its best to break strikes. The statement made by the D.H.S.S. about the entitlement of single strikers was forced upon them by the actions of strikers and Clairant's Unions all over the country who went to the S.S. offices and refused to take "no" for an answer.

Strikers have every right to live off the state while on strike. They pay tax and National Insurance like everyone else and when the greed of the employers means that they have to go on strike to get a decent wage then they should get full benefit from the D.H.S.S.

Doug Knott.

WHO ARE THE REAL ENEMIES ?

The coming of the Ugandan Asians has been greeted with nationwide demonstrations in many towns, and widespread anger among many sections of the working class. There aren't enough houses to go round, a million unemployed, and the country is in an economic crisis, and now thousands of Asians are coming into the country from Uganda! But to see the Asians as the real enemy is to ignore all the facts.

Aren't there enough houses? But in London alone, according to G.L.C. figures, there are 130,000 perfectly good houses which are empty because the rich can afford two places to live in, or are kept empty by speculators to increase their profits by sitting on their backsides. And who causes unemployment, the Asians? But it is the government and the bosses who are closing the dockyards, pits and steelworks, and refuse to allow a shorter working week with no wage cuts.

The racist hysteria of the past few weeks has been built up by extreme right wing groups (with leaders well known for a long history of fascist activities). These groups have no sympathy for the working class, and the only result of following their lead is to go up a blind alley. At a time when the inability of capitalism to solve the problems of the economy or social expenditure is becoming increasingly obvious, and when the working class is fighting against the attacks of the government and employers (the IR Act, unemployment, and closures), to turn against the Asians would be to play into their hands.

The problems facing the working class can only be overcome by uniting with the Asians, and all other immigrant groups, to face the employers and government. They must be forced to provide adequate housing for all, to end unemployment, and end attacks on the trade unions.

In Nottingham, the Pakistani workers at Crepe Sizes showed how they are willing to fight for the rights of all workers; a decent living wage, shorter hours, and the right to organize. Trade union officials must be forced to organise immigrant workers and help them to fight for their rights, alongside white workers. It is only if this is not done, if the Trade union leaders are left to compromise with the employers, that immigrants can be a danger to the working class, with every other unorganised worker. The work of the Solidarity Committee in Nottingham must be extended to show immigrant workers that they do not stand alone against the employers.

It is not enough to talk of the legal points involved in the Ugandan Asians situation, or to moralize while refusing practical help (as the Labour councillors in Leicester have done). The only solution to the real problems is to fight against the class who are their cause. We must stand up to the fascists and the Monday Club and reject their lies. Their demonstrations must be met by counter demonstrations (as on Saturday 16th September in London), and the labour movement must force its leaders to turn on the real enemies.

L.Askow.

Plans by the Tory controlled local council to site their new offices on the Bridgford Road playing fields, West Bridgford, brought forth firm opposition from local residents. The protests resulted in a 400 strong public meeting on Sept. 14th - the first of its kind in this area.

The South Notts District Joint Committee has the task of uniting the present district councils of West Bridgford, Bingham and South Basford as part of the local gov't reorganisation scheme. In January of this year it was realised that this Committee was applying for permission to build on the local grounds. Community reaction was sharp and immediate. Local churches, ratepayers' associations and the Labour Party circulated petitions, wrote and phoned, made statements to press and radio.

The issues were these 1) that the proposed new offices would take away playing space for school children 2) that increased traffic would become a hazard for pedestrians in the other half of the park (WB has highest proportion of over-60s in the county) 3) that the authority had moved in a bureaucratic and insensitive way.

It brought to a head, long standing grievances over the lack of amenities in W.B. Local residents have been collecting money for years for a fund to build a swimming pool which was to have been built on this site. Every year children are drowned trying to swim in the Trent. The majority of WB schools were built in the last century and have no space for organised games, they have to cross main arterial roads to get to available grounds. The 40 or so people who spoke strongly about the question amply illustrated the lack of concern of the council with open space amenities - part of the general environmental question.

The Chairman of a new ad hoc group gave a detailed expose of the conditions. He pointed out that WB is short of open space, that the Trent fields were only accessible by a stile. This prevented the incurably ill old people in the Cheshire Homes who can see the fields from their windows from getting in. When he approached the Council about a ramp entrance it was refused. More examples were given. He stated that his ad hoc group was considering making itself into a permanent federation of voluntary groups to fight on environmental issues in West Bridgford.

The Labour Party produced a pamphlet (5p from BUX or WB LP) which gives a useful presentation of the issues.

This meeting was sponsored by the Council in order to hear the "peoples point of view". The councillors on the platform (gentlemen farmers, business men and functionaries) gave platitudes on their concern for amenities and congratulated themselves on their democratic behaviour in calling the meeting. - they fooled no one. It was obvious that they had been surprised and aggrieved at the opposition to their plans and were forced into this meeting. WB residents have never united in such a way before.

Both platform and audience referred to a "new day coming" (although with differing expectations). Residents are not going to sit back passively and let the "experts" do what is expedient for the "experts" but will insist that their wishes be taken into account. The chairman of the WBUDC said in his closing remarks that "it would seem a mistake has been made". This is quite true, of course the Tories could proceed and may still do so, but they have set new wheels in motion which are not easily stopped. The coming election in June will certainly have the environment question high on the list of issues.

By Antonia Gorton.

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Perhaps the most famous view of Nottingham, thanks to the services of John Player, is that of Nottingham Castle. It is a comparatively new building and the destruction of the old castle forms an interesting incident in the history of the Nottingham working class.

In the early part of the nineteenth century very few people had the vote and scarcely any workers. The new class of industrialists wished to extend the right to vote and launched the Reform movement, trying to get a Reform Bill through the Houses of Parliament. The workers supported this struggle and even had illusions that this new democracy might apply to them. They were to learn in the course of this campaign that the new industrialist class was as opposed to the fundamental needs of the working class as had been the Aristocracy before them.

In the autumn of 1831, the Reform Bill was the main topic of interest in Nottingham. On the Saturday of Goose Fair, news was received that the Bill had been rejected by the Lords. The incoming stage coaches were met to find out more news and the crowd cheered when they were told that "in London the reformers were beating to arms". The following day the Riot Act was read as the crowds went from house to house of prominent reactionaries and stoned them. The Hussars were brought in. The Mayor and other respectable reformers spoke in the Market Square to reassure the workers that he was for the Bill but that they should vote for resolutions and after that go home and stay home. Neither cavalry or cant sent the crowd home.

One section of the crowd made its way to Wheeler-gate and here the cry went up "To the castle". The workers went to the Castle Lodge and started smashing the gates so that they could deal a blow against the hated Duke of Newcastle. Another group forced a hole in the wall near Standard Hill. Some twenty men got inside and, imitating the Goose Fair showmen, called the others in "Walk forward, positively the last night!" The Castle was soon burning. The Yeomanry came in and fired on the crowd near the "Sir John Borlase Warren". Prisoners were taken and, during an attempt to release them, a Hussar officer shot down a worker in the Market Place.

The last stand took place in the Meadows where the workers were formed into two divisions and were armed with pistols, iron rails, clubs and stones. One of the crowd urged them to disperse, "they scarcely knew each other, very few were armed, they had no influential leaders, and it would be the height of madness to run the hazard of their lives without being able to effect their object". There were cries of "What's the use of dispersing- we may as well die where we are, as go home and be starved". But the crowd took the advice and did get away in the darkness. In the morning the sun rose over the ruins of Nottingham Castle but it also rose over the ruins of the strategy to ally the working class to the capitalist class.

A. Jenkins.

SET BACK FOR TENANT'S STRUGGLE

The strategy of putting pressure on Labour Councillors to oppose implementation of the Housing Finance Act that local tenant associations have taken has been made redundant by the decisions of Nottingham City Council on this question. Consequently the meeting that was to be organised by the tenants associations (see Nottingham Worker No.2) has not taken place. While many tenants associations are now showing that they are willing to put themselves out on a limb by recommending non-cooperation with the administration of the Act (eg Strelley) the Labour Councillors' militancy extended no further than calling for a Housing Commissioner to do the 'dirty work' of the Act in Nottingham rather than the Councillors having to do it themselves. It is consequently now clear that the only way forward left that has any chance of success is through militant non cooperation that is co-ordinated as much as possible throughout the country. The Labour Party has simply proved its bankruptcy once again. N. Rothschild.

As the Building Workers strike has since ended, the article on it in this issue of Nottingham Worker is now out of date. However, we decided to go ahead and print it, since it clearly describes how the strike was gaining in momentum, at the time that the U.C.A.T.T. leaders came to their compromise deal with the Building Employers Federation.

The figures eventually agreed to are now widely known. They fall short of what the men were demanding and what they would have won had not the Union leadership sold them out. What is particularly disquieting is the fact that the Union leadership accepted the offer of the management, without consulting the workers they were supposed to be representing, pointing once again to the need for a democratisation of the structure of our trade unions, so that officials are made completely accountable to the membership.

JONES STROUD STRIKE IS DEFEATED. By Brian Simister.

Since my last article in Nottingham Worker was written, the strike of workers at Jones Stroud, Long Eaton has collapsed, without the victimised shop steward, Mahmood Ahmed, being reinstated.

In my earlier article I stressed the key importance of the strike being made official by the T. & G.W.U. Had this been done, the strike could have been extended to the other plants of the Jones Stroud Company. Also, the company would have lost its main customer - the Co-op, who cannot, according to their rules, purchase goods from a firm refusing to give proper trade union recognition. This is additional to the fact that the men had been on strike for about a month, and were by that time in urgent need of financial support. Whilst aid from the Solidarity Committee and the services of the Claimants' Union were valuable, it could only be anticipated that they would do so much.

The strike ended in a particularly sad fashion. First, the management leaked the news that Mahmood Ahmed had contacted them privately, which annoyed his fellow workers. Then, a few days afterwards, the men received notices threatening dismissal from the management. By this time, the men had lost all hope of their Union honouring its obligations to back them and it was at this point that the strike caved in. It would be unfair to criticise the men for this defeat, or Bro. Mahmood for that matter. They placed trust, too much trust in the officials of their Union and when it came to the crunch the latter were found wanting.

This was a strike by workers for basic trade union rights, a defensive struggle against victimisation, against a particularly vicious and unscrupulous management. It would have been in the interests of the T. and G.W.U. as well as in the interests of the workers had it been won.

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