Workers fight the miners

IT'S A MINORITY LABOUR GOVERNMENT!
NOW CASH, TORTURE POLICIES!

3p
No. 46. March 2
1974.

Support the Miners

THIS IS OUR POWER!

At last the slogan of every major working class demonstration of recent years, “Heath out”, looks like being made reality. It is being made reality thanks to the miners and their elected Labour Party leaders. It was the miners’ action which pushed the Tory Party to the point where they felt they could get away with it. Without the miners’ action, the Tories might have salvaged Phase 3 and won themselves a better election situation. It was the miners’ struggle in Phase 1 and 2 that brought the conflict of the working class struggle since then, which has stopped the Tories reducing us to a cowed mass who would dare even mark a ballot box against the government.

But the Labour leaders constantly ran away from the issues of the election.

On wages — Not even the miners got an unconditional ‘Pay them the money’ pledge. Instead of a clear support for a working-class struggle to defend our wages and conditions, placing the responsibility with profit-seekers and speculators, we had the preposterous invention of a mysterious ‘north-south split’. Less clear: but he, too, promised ‘no coalitions’.

Programme

That is what Labour must do. Its programme as it stands is the palest reflection of the urgent demand of millions of workers to reverse Tory policies. Labour is not elected to become the hostages of the Liberals. Labour politicians are accustomed enough to juggling promises before the election to make the extra excuse of “we can’t afford to offend the Liberals”.

But now we must press for urgent demands on Labour.

1. No wage freeze. The trucking of the miners through as a ‘special case’ and then imposing an ‘austerity package’ mustn’t be allowed to work. Labour must grant an immediate 33% increase in wages and equal pay for women now.

2. Strict price control was Wilson’s policy. The Labour government can and must be made reality by having every trade union support the nationalised committees of workers and housewives to monitor prices and organise action to stop any increases. If the big food companies and others start squeezing, they should be nationalised, as a start compensation and workers’ control. The “wide extension of public ownership” should start right there.

3. Repeal the Industrial Relations Act and the Housing Finance Act — and then end all government regulation of the trade unions. Free industrial action with a policy of bargaining, strikes and picketing.

4. Work or full pay.

5. Repeal all racist laws, and an end to racist police and defence forces.

6. Unconditionally withdraw British from Ireland.

A government fighting for that programme, and stymied by the Liberals and Tories, could win new elections overwhelmingly.

But while pressing for these demands, we must never relax on the government. To hold back on our demands in order to “protect a minority Labour government” would do us no good.

On the contrary, we should press ahead with all our demands. We cannot take responsibility for the fact that working-class demands are being ignored. It is up to us to make sure that Labour government is genuinely a working-class government. To do that would be to take responsibility for a government which is fundamentally a capitalist government.

Shrewsbury 24: support March 20th

demonstration

The last ten years of the North Wales miners’ strike have been a lesson on how to get a big mandate for union-bashing almost coincides with an important test case for them.

Chargers of conspiracy, unlawful assembly, and making an affray, the use of photos of peaceful picketers to prove otherwise, and the arrest of pickets on false reports that the miners had attacked the police. All this is only because minor damage was done.

Yates and Bardsley are in jail. The families of the 24 are being prosecuted as criminals. The families of the 24 are allowed only one visitor per month. The wifes are not even informed of the trial. The judges’ husbands’ whereabouts by the authorities. The miners have been arrested. Murray, Ticket, Piers, and Tom Williams, and all in jail. Tom Williams are likely to be moved this week, but their families have no idea where they are going. That is the threat of the police blacklisting for all 24 is all the more real in an area which is difficult to organise like North Wales.

Whoever wins the election, it is necessary to act to get the six released and the charges dropped.

The Appeal Court in London was forced to change its case when the appeal of the six was not upheld on 18th February. There will be a national demonstration in London on 20th March. Some preparation is going ahead for this. Liverpool Trades Council has already booked a train.

But as yet there is not enough being done in the way of active campaigning for support. If the action is seen as a one-off protest, tailored to getting the half-hearted support of the official trade union leadership, then it will not mobilise enthusiasm.

We must support the 20 March demonstration while stressing the need for a serious campaign towards extending industrial action to free the jailed men. Call meetings to organise action on 20th March. Arrange transport. Demands: active support from the Labour Party for 20th March and to get the charges dropped if elected. Send money to the Defence Fund [Wales] [Yorkshire] [Okean] [Flower] [Pratt, Okean, Williams, Hay, Carnell, Holwell, Huttman, Tipton].

Cynthia Aldry

Miners crack phase 3

As we write, just before election day, almost universal opinion has it that the miners’ strike will be successfully settled soon after the election of a new government.

Some miners’ leaders, such as Ashley and Davey, have come out openly against the idea of a ‘special case’. The miners, they insist, don’t wish everyone else to remain walled in by Phase 3 while they are kindly allowed out through the gate – they want to knock the wall down.

But in the fact that all parties are now talking of paying the miners, even after only three weeks of strike and a very quiet level of struggle so far, shows that the miners have not been left behind. If a deal comes, some T&G predecessors have received no instructions not to cross picket lines. Solidarity committees have been set up as in Harrogate. In Sunderland, two Solidarity committees have already considered two resolutions calling for a boycott of the miners’ strike and the withdrawal of British from Ireland.

But the general confusion about the strike, the possible government of a Labour Party, and the apparent hesitation of the miners will be able to get on their wages. Let alone on other demands, such as an end to NUM officials’ statement that they won’t go back until the miners are paid. However, the key point is that if we see any victory that the miners win as a signal to rush the ramparts of Phase 3, rather than a compensation for the rest of us backing under.

D.R. 27.2.74
PUTTING ON A FALSE FRONT

IN Workers' Fight no. 44 we called on militants to fight to pledge the Labour Party, if elected, to free the jailed Shrewsbury pickets. One year later they are still in jail — a dead-end for the Shrewsbury campaign. This raises the whole question of how socialists relate to the Labour Party.

IT IS very satisfying to write a satirical article about one’s own organisation, and “Alice Carroll”, whoever she be, is a laughing stock in the WRP. I see no harm in the WRP’s calling for action. But is there a working class organisation which is an “excessively serious business” these days? Not the WRP. And so, we are told.

Does it mean that on February 18th, the “Alice Carroll” is on your vinyl screen? No! Does it mean that, then, that I got round to writing this article? Does it mean that there is any correspondence in my condition on the vote in favour of any “pledge”?

Pickets

Armed with reason and respect for the English language, I read right at the top of the page: “Labour pickets are the ‘people’s police’, ‘class war’ etc.” Now, as a worker who is generally worried about the Labour Party, may I ask myself “What does it say?”

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Defeat

Nowhere in WRP is there a clearly stated idea about what we are to do and what we are actually doing. We are not to picket, we are not even to protest. We are to let the Labour Party be what it is and not cause them to do what we expect. And yet, we are to believe that we are not to picket. How is it that we are not to picket but let the Labour Party be what it is?

The next lines of the WRP except for the word and sort of language are: “There is no time to call a general strike.” That is the “Carriean Dream”. Such a dream and strategy can only lead millions into defeat and without consequences. So all your WF members should not occupy your own house, not even your own front door, but let the Labour Party be. And yet, we are to believe that we are not to picket but let the Labour Party be in the same way. And yet, we are to believe that we are not to picket but let the Labour Party be.

What about the pledge?

This is the WRP’s latest attempt to avoid the question of class struggle, to avoid the question of what the working class are to do when they are under attack. It is the WRP’s attempt to avoid the question of what the working class are to do when they are under attack.

The Housing Finance Act is just one of many examples. When trade unionists are concerned about the Industrial Relations Act, workers face large-scale redundancies when they are under attack, they are under attack. The question of the nationalisation of the power, they look to the Labour Party to play a role. Not because they expect that the Labour Party will do anything, but because they know that what happens in Parliament and in local councils is important, is unimportant. If the Labour Party is not to act, we can replace Parliament and the Labour Party with a new organisation of working men and women.

NEIL DUFFIELD, Boston

Waste paper

THOUGH the current Labour government has one year left to carry out its election pledges, a report by the Trades Union Congress showed yesterday that the majority of them had not been achieved. The report, which was presented to the TUC Congress in Liverpool, said that the government had not fulfilled its promise to bring forward industrial relations legislation.

The report, which was presented to the TUC Congress in Liverpool, said that the government had not fulfilled its promise to bring forward industrial relations legislation. It pointed out that the government had failed to bring forward a law to protect workers from redundancy and that the law on minimum wage rates had not been implemented.

The report also noted that the government had not met its commitment to reduce the cost of living and that it had not met its promise to increase the minimum wage rate.

Despite these failures, the report praised the government for its achievements in other areas, such as the introduction of a new local government system and the establishment of a new national park.

The report concluded that the government had failed to meet its election promises and that it had failed to deliver the change that people expected.
As every insect knows, it is dangerous to make the wrong enemy of one’s fellow insects, as ladybirds do. And so it is with the Lib Dems. Their virtual parliamentary extinction for nearly 50 years has driven them to a position where they have no idea what the Liberals stand for.

We could answer in a single word: The Social Contract. The Liberal Party talks about work, democracy, and the Counter-Inflation Bill. But the Social Contract is what they really stand for, and they are simply Tories – or Labour without much business backing.

Speaking in Parliament in January 1760, John Stuart, 1st Lord of the Treasury, said, “The power of the crown is the greatest support of the Social Contract.”

And so it is with the Social Contract. The Liberal Party has no idea what the Liberals stand for, but they are simply Tories – or Labour without much business backing.

The Social Contract

Jeremy Thorpe – speculator and Liberal leader

Chairman, was for a few years also the chairman of the board of directors of British Steel. He was also a director of the Tate & Lyle subsidiary, Tate & Lyle Holdings, which owns the sugar refining company, Tate & Lyle.

What aspect of their platform you look at, you find the same thing, a ploy to try to act like Tories with a human face. It is a sad commentary on the main parties, has no organic relations to the fundamentally social class of British society. Its ideas derive from British society, and almost by chance, without really realising it, the Liberals are actually in the last century when they really did express the ideas of the British bourgeois.

In its very distant from these fundamental social classes that the Liberals have tried to find a common point. The party of no backers has got the great mass of people, with no masters. In reality, its freedom from any large social block is a reflection of its irrelevance to society.

And in the same way, voting Liberal often signifies escape, and a vain desire to make the individual vote count rather than a meaningful choice in a block.

When many workers vote Liberal rather than Labour, does the break from a traditional class allegiance mean a step backwards? If the answer is ‘no’, the break may be seen as a step backwards not purely utilitarian but form a different social movement, a genuine movement against the present society. (Source: Jack Price)


As a graphic reminder of that Sunday afternoon the 30th January 1972 when 13 civil rights men were killed in cold blood by the British Army, ‘Blood on the Streets’ is well worth having. (From Blasé Free Press. O.R.)

Every opportunity — every narrowest of intercessions for developing self-confidence. ‘Join the Labour Party and work for left policies inside’ to Neil, ‘sounds like a bit of CP advice’ to Jim. There is more than one way of working for left policies inside the Labour Party. There are, indeed, ‘those who, like Tribune’, who can be quite left at times, but always jump back into line when the Labour Party top leadership cracks the whip. There are, like the Militant, who push left policies with a belief and a certain optimism about reaction, and are those who carry a clear fight for an active and principle policy and are not prepared to script their principles with the top Labour Party officials. These last, we believe, have a real social contract to act.

Liberal: how are the fallen mighty?

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...AND THE BEEF JUMPED OVER THE MOON

Any government which wants to control prices must face up to the problem of controlling the price of their own bread. Inorganising the economy in a different way from the present privatized-basin thing would how a real socialist transformation of the private-agriculture, and one which would control the price of food every week when they do control prices.

When big food companies and supermarket chains started to profit from their food monopoly, the government would promptly nationalize them without compensation under workers’ control. For the Food Workers Alliance, this would give the government full control of this vital part of the public-owned industry while being paid a good wage.

CONTROL

The Tories claim that price increases in the shops are due to the world price increases, and therefore beyond the control of government policy (they claim that they’re not in the least interested in going to war if it makes wages rise). The Liberal government, if encroached by this, would have to increase wage increases on imports! It would bring in large subsidies to keep the small profit margins, and labour also talks about food prices, not because of the workers’ living conditions, but for the benefit of rich farmers.

Parity issue at Massey-Ferguson

OVER the last two years there has been a severe attack on the relations of the smaller workers in the British steel industry. The employers’ victory in the Sheffield Toolroom Rant, and the closing of the mass picketing which previously had the highest basic rate in the area, means that every wage fight in the Coventry District is crucial. The MF workers are trying to keep the wages and conditions of this area up and the parity they have established elsewhere is at risk.

PARITY ISSUES AT MASESSY-FERGUSON

MEETINGS

SHREWSBURY 24 conference, organised jointly by UCATT and T&GWU, 16 March, Friends Meeting House, 75 Mount Street, London, W1. From 2-6 pm, £1.50 members, £2.50 non-members. T&GWU 16 March, Friends Meeting House, 75 Mount Street, London, W1. From 2-6 pm, £1.50 members, £2.50 non-members. T&GWU 16 March, Friends Meeting House, 75 Mount Street, London, W1. From 2-6 pm, £1.50 members, £2.50 non-members.

LIVERPOOL Workers’ Rights—Justice at the Elections’ Team, Wednesday 6 April, 7pm, 200 King Street, Liverpool. For information, contact the Elections’ Team on 0151-229 2194.

MANCHESTER Workers’ Rights—Justice at the Elections’ Team, Wednesday 6 April, 7pm, 200 King Street, Liverpool. For information, contact the Elections’ Team on 0151-229 2194.

RACIALISM AND SOVERSION PRODUCED to help in the campaign against the National Front. In Liverpool 6th March. In Manchester 8th March. Many Way.”

Heffer fails to nail fascist vote

Heffer’s campaign failed to win back the seat. It was a narrow win for John Baker, the Labour candidate. The trouble is, some of the Anti-Fascist Committee’s tactics have been accused of being too aggressive. There have been complaints of harassment and intimidation. It seems that the campaign was too effective, driving the fascists into a corner. The Labour Party had to respond quickly to these challenges and ensure that the local government was not seen as weak or ineffective.

Police thugs stepped up in Art Castings strike

Police thugs stepped up in Art Castings strike

ON 22nd February two more pickets were beaten up at Art Castings, the most recent pickets in this strike. The police did not act to stop the police brutality. The latest incident occurred on Tuesday, after a series of other attacks on the picket line.

The pickets report that they were beaten up by plain-clothes police, who behaved very aggressively. The police have been using police dogs and테크스트라의 내용을 보고, 어떤 문제가 발생했는지, 어떤 해결책을 제시할 수 있는지에 대해 논의할 수 있습니다. 문제를 해결하기 위한 구체적인 조치를 제안해 주시면 감사하겠습니다. 이는 우리의 목표로입니다.