

COMMUNISM is

the *science* of people's struggle and of man's advance. It shapes to-morrow by leadership to-day. That is why the Communist Party is part of the people and has no interests which are not theirs. That is why we Communists were first in the field with our plan for A.R.P. in Nottingham, which the authorities are slowly being forced to approve. We want Nottingham to be worthy of Nottingham people and that is why we now offer this *municipal* pamphlet. Our paper, "The DAILY WORKER" is the paper for the man in the street—the man on the job. And if you want peace, a full life, a future for your children, if you want them bad enough to *work* for them—then the Communist Party is the place for you. It's only

COMMON SENSE!

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Let's be proud of our City

ONE PENNY

Nottingham to-day and to-morrow

WE believe that the people living in Nottingham can so change our city that it will really *deserve* the name "Queen of the Midlands."

Even now we can feel proud of certain things—new schools and housing estates for instance. But we are ashamed to see the crammed hospitals, the shocking infantile death rate, the ancient schools, the rising unemployment. For all the time a few rich men are getting richer.

Big business men have made their fortunes out of us. They get the profits. We do the work. *Their* scramble for money has landed *our* city into difficulties. And it will need the strength of the people to put things straight. With a united Labour movement leading them, the men and women of Nottingham can *make* the city. Can enjoy happy, healthy, useful lives. Can *live*!

The Tories will laugh at this. Let them. We ordinary people who work in their factories, who go to the football-match—we have a great fighting tradition. And united we have the power. The Communist Party works for that united Labour movement, for those strong trade unions which will be the driving force of a *Labour Council*. A Labour Council ready to carry out the *people's* wishes—to make Nottingham a city to be proud of. *It can be done*. In these pages, we Communists shew you how the Nottingham of to-morrow must be built.

Signed for Nottingham Communist Party.

R. DEWEY.

E. W. CANT.

★ Home

While Nottingham has fine new housing estates such as Bestwood and Aspley, its dark streets still hide stagnant slums. Here are the figures:—

HOUSES.

Occupied, yet "totally unfit for human habitation"	279
Occupied, yet "not in every respect fit for human habitation"	10,279

PEOPLE.

Living in "condemned" houses	5,653
Living in "overcrowded" houses	5,735
Waiting for houses	1,500

This is bad. Blocks of modern flats must be built on the old slum sites in the centre of the City. They must be planned not only to save the housewife drudgery, but also to provide a large garden round each block.

At the same time the outside housing estates must be extended for those who like to live away from the City; but it is important that the people moved out to them should have what they need. Not only must the houses be well designed and attractive—real *homes*—but people in the new neighbourhoods must no longer feel that they have been dumped miles from anywhere. They must have within reach a modern school, a public library, a welfare clinic, a recreation ground with swimming pool, a children's playing field, a social centre.

Re-decorating and repairs of all Council houses and flats should go on throughout the year. In this way deterioration can be prevented and the buildings kept decent.

Both flats and houses *must* be let at rents which leave the family enough for food and clothing (and special provision must be made for old-age pensioners). Present rents of 11/- to 14/- mean that most families are left with only about 18/-, which is not sufficient. *Doctors* are particularly emphatic on this point. And so are we.

★ Fitness

Last year 358 Nottingham babies died without reaching their first birthday. Our infantile death-rate is greatly above the average for *the whole of England*.⁽¹⁾ More mothers die here yearly than in Liverpool, Leeds or Hull.⁽²⁾ A third of the deaths are due to *puerperal sepsis*. *Yet not a hundred beds in the City are available for normal childbirth*. For puerperal sepsis there is not one special ward.

"There has not been up to now any special building in connection with any hospital in the city or county dealing with maternity cases, where the segregation and special attention which these cases need, if the lives of the mothers are to be spared, can be given."—(*Nottingham Evening Post*, 10/3/38).

This was part of an appeal for funds by the Voluntary Women's Hospital. But such things are not a matter for private charity. Until our city provides for its mothers we cannot hope for healthy children. *Nottingham must have a Municipal Maternity Hospital*.

But proper attention at childbirth will not be enough. Of the babies who die in the first year, most succumb to what doctors call *poverty diseases*.⁽³⁾ Experiments made by scientists in the distressed areas shew that mothers who are fed with the right food, including vitamins and mineral salts, before childbirth, survive it better (and are *not* so likely to contract puerperal sepsis).

Yet in Nottingham now only *one out of every seven* of our expectant and nursing mothers even gets milk free.

All mothers must have free milk. All mothers must have, *free*, enough *vitamins*, enough food rich in *mineral salts*. To distribute these necessary foods there must be built in all districts a three-fold clinic—pre-natal, post-natal and infant welfare. They must have whole-time staffs; and to get the full benefit from them, a campaign of maternal education must be organized, bringing knowledge into every home.

The work of these clinics will be: supervision *before* birth to build up the expectant mother's health and strength, supervision *after* birth to make recovery sure and to rid working-class mothers of that chronic ill-health which so often comes to them when they have to take up housework.

1.—England and Wales, 58 per 1000 births; Nottingham, 80 per 1000 (M.O.H. 1937, Report).

2.—M.O.H., 1937 Report.

3.—Pneumonia, 44.8%; Diarrhoea and Enteritis, 20%; Bronchitis, 5%; Wasting, 5%.—(M.O.H., 1937 Report).

again at once, supervision of the *babies and toddlers* to see that a good start is carried on.

A word about T.B. Rich people do not often suffer from it. Poor people do. As the 1936 Ministry of Health Report points out "it is a disease of environment." Its prevention is fundamentally a matter of better housing and more recreation, of better food (especially fats) and healthier conditions of work. In Nottingham the death rate from tuberculosis is higher than for Wales, mainly a distressed area.⁽¹⁾ Why—when housing and food conditions in Nottingham are better than in Wales?

What is the reason?

What are Nottingham's unhealthy *industries*?

Is there an industry which breeds T.B.?

An official enquiry should be made to find out.

Bulwell Hall (where children in a delicate state of health go to be treated and to have their resistance built up) is excellent. But it needs extension. In 1937, "the fifty available beds were kept practically full throughout the year." Nor is the present sanatorium for the actual treatment of tuberculosis nearly big enough.

"During several months of the past year we have encountered a waiting list of patients for admission to the sanatorium..... In modern times a waiting list is an abomination which cannot be tolerated."—(Tuberculosis Officers' 1937 Report).

Plans for a new sanatorium are being discussed, but *Something Is Holding Them Up*. The delay is a source of dissatisfaction to the Medical Officer of Health. It is infuriating the Tuberculosis Officers. You can see that from their report.

These men must be supported in their demand for adequate funds and equipment to deal with the disease. *A new sanatorium must be built at once.*

Finally, we urge that the 40-hour week be introduced *now* for all nurses and hospital staffs. Their calling is a noble one, their work exhausting. In Nottingham they must carry on under great difficulties because of the Conservative Council's mean attitude to health. The City Mental Hospital, for instance, is meant to hold no more than 862 patients. Yet throughout 1937 the staff had to crowd in an average of 978! Our fine City Hospital also is held back in its excellent work:—

"When the total number of beds is given as 981, and the maximum number of beds occupied in any one day (February 20th) is given as 968, it may appear that the hospital was never over-

1.—Tuberculosis rate per 100,000: Wales, 86; Nottingham, 99.—(M.O.H., 1937 Report and Ministry of Health).

crowded—until one reminds oneself that male patients cannot be put in female wards, that a rush of pneumonia cases cannot be put among acute surgical patients, and that empty beds in a venereal ward are not suitable for normal midwifery purposes. *Actually, considerable overcrowding did occur at times.*"—(M.O.H. 1937 Report).

Insufficient space. And insufficient money. The 1937 Hospitals Handbook gives these figures for a list of towns:—

Average weekly cost per patient . . £2 9 6

Average ditto for Nottingham . . £1 19 6

There are forty hospitals in the list. Only seven spend less.

★ School

Buildings like the William Crane and the Jesse Boot Schools, largely the fine work of our Education Committee's Labour Chairman, have given Nottingham a name for educational advance.

But there are not enough of them! Over fifty Nottingham schools have been standing more than half a century. We must have new schools for *all* our children. We must fight the stonewalling of Conservative Councillors who oppose attempts to build them. These men despise learning—for us.⁽¹⁾ Although they deny *our* children education, they send their own to expensive public schools.

In these public schools and in the so-called "preparatory" schools, pupils have almost individual attention. Classes never number more than 25; often no more than 10. But in Nottingham there are over five hundred classes of *more than 40*. Yet the teachers are there—unemployed. A limit of 25 *to a class* can and must be set.

Boys of 14-15 at public schools are also taller, fitter, better built than *our* children of the same age.⁽²⁾ Out of every fifty schoolchildren in the City, *seven* are in some way undernourished, *one* badly. Only three are in what you might call excellent health.⁽³⁾ And these figures are reached after only short inspections, not after the careful and exhaustive tests which doctors now find necessary, if they are really to detect malnutrition.

To raise our children to the public school standard, we not only need more school clinics, properly planned classrooms, better playing fields. We must also demand for every child, every day, a free meal and free milk.

1.—"We are spending too much money on education. It is education gone mad."—(The Lord Mayor, during Bestwood Schools Debate).

2.—Sir John Orr, "Food, Health and Income," 1937.

3.—M.O.H. Report, 1937.

The rich man's sons and daughters do not have their education interrupted. Yet when *our* children win their way to secondary schools, it often means the family having to scrape more than ever in order to make ends meet—and clever children have actually been *refused entry* to secondary schools because their fathers were unemployed. Maintenance grants of at least 5/- a week must therefore be made available for every child whose parents cannot afford to keep it during schooling.

Maintenance grants must also be used to counteract the "exemptions" clause when the new Act (raising the school-leaving age to 15) comes into force. *No exemptions* for "beneficial employment" must be granted by our Education Committee unless the child is going to start *training for a trade*. "Beneficial" does not mean blind-alley.

★ Dead End

Blind-alley, dead-end jobs are as plentiful in Nottingham as in the rest of England. Skilled workers and young men with prospects get fewer and fewer—because youth is being forced into blind-alley employment. This is especially so in light engineering, and in the printing, warehousing and distributive trades. As a result, *unemployment* is increasing in two ways:—

1. Older people are kept out of jobs.
2. Unwanted young men are thrown on to the labour market untrained at the dead end of their apprenticeship.

In May, 1938:

There were 36 men after every job at Nottm. Exchange.

" " 57 " " " " " " Arnold Exchange.

" " 83 " " " " " " Basford Exchange.

Whereas for *boys* the corresponding figures were:—

6 at Nottingham Exchange

2 " Arnold " "

0 " Basford " "

On an average, from November, 1937, to June, 1938, there have been each month in Nottingham and district—

2134 *more unemployed*

as compared with the corresponding month of the previous year.

A few jobs are offered which "they hope will be permanent."
The jobs?

Ice-cream tricycles.

Potato-picking in Jersey.

And for the young people forced to go on the P.A.C. :—

Rag-gathering in Nottingham.

There *is* a Juvenile Instruction Centre, but it is not large enough; the staff is not given a fair chance by the authorities.

No wonder there is a shortage of skilled workers.

Old people on the P.A.C. are no better treated. From Bilborough for instance, they must travel long distances and spend some of their miserable allowances on unnecessary bus fares. For there is no reason why P.A.C. a centre should not be set up *locally*.

A Municipality cannot yet force employers to reduce unemployment by, say, starting the 40-hour week, or by providing adequate training for youth in the factories. But it can:—

1. Employ the workless in building bomb-proof shelters (*not* just trenches) for the protection of the people. (Our pamphlet "A.R.P." shows how this should be done).
2. Move the municipal Juvenile Instruction Centre to new and cheaper premises, preferably of the hutment type. This should be frequently inspected. New centres, adequate in number, personnel and equipment must be built.

There is no need to wait.

★ Convenience

Although our transport service is a good one, several obvious improvements should be made. Workmen's tickets must be available until 9 o'clock in the morning, so that office workers may benefit. Season tickets should be issued at reduced rates. Within the City's limits you should never have to pay *more than 2d.* This would mean proper "transfers,"—so that you could get from Mapperley to Trent Bridge and pay your 2d. only once.

But you don't always go by bus. Many Nottingham people ride bicycles for instance; and everyone who does so would like to see the streets better surfaced, to see in particular the end of cobbles. Everyone who walks to nightshift would like to see our City better lighted. Better surfaces and better lights mean "Safety First"!

The yearly profits of the Gas and Electricity undertakings are now used to reduce the rates. These departments, however, exist for *our convenience* and not to make money out of us. Their excess profits should not go into the City's funds. They *should* be used to make the services cheaper and more efficient. Paying dearly for light and

heat to "relieve the rates," means that the rich ratepayer benefits at the small householder's expense. Instead, the rich might pay.

★ Cash

Unfortunately, a local authority has not yet the power to raise its money from the rich. All over England, Labour Councils elected by the people are finding their work held back because the business men's National Government holds the purse strings tight. Our fight on the spot for a better Nottingham is part of a wider battle *for a better England*.

One step a Labour Council *could* take. It could use the Assessment Committee for *fairer rating*. At present, the heaviest rate burden falls not on the industrial magnates, not on the big landlords of the town—but on the small shopkeeper and the wage-earner. This burden can and must be shifted. Instead of the rich man being rated at perhaps only *half* his rent, while the small householder pays *two-thirds* of his rent in rates, the opposite should be the case. The houses of the rich must be rated to the limit. More radical measures would be:—

1.—*To tax land-site values*. Our wealthy landowners would then pay rates for the land on which their houses were built, *whether they were tenanted or not*.

2. *To end the De-rating Act*. Our industrialists would then have to *pay* the three-quarters of their rates they are at present excused. The Government subsidy which is supposed to make up this loss could then also be used to swell the City's funds.

3. *To start a Municipal Income Tax*. Then people who make huge incomes in tiny offices would have to pay rates and help the City according to the wealth they enjoy and not according to the holes they inhabit.

4. *To take a levy from local industrial profits*. Local firms now sweating money out of Nottingham men and women would have to pay a proportion (say 10%) towards our schooling, health and comfort.

But these radical measures need the permission of Parliament. And we can *get* that permission. We *can* get the money for decency and dignity. We must wake up and defend our heritage against Chamberlain and his yes-men here in Nottingham. We must unite behind the Labour movement. We must elect a Labour Council and fight beside it to wrest our City from the grip of business men. To build a new City.

A City we can be proud of.