

## Good Health is Shared Business

As part of the Health and Safety Executives "Good Health is Good Business" campaign, the TUC are organising a series of Health and Safety seminars throughout 1997, funded by the HSE.

The TUC believes that the management of occupational health risks is a shared responsibility. Employees may be legally responsible, but only by involving workers and their representatives can the risks be controlled.

Employees have a shared role with managers in:

- identifying hazards at work and assessing the risks involved
- planning the action needed to control these risks, and
- putting effective preventative measures into practice.

The TUC campaign for Better Safety Standards at work aims to ensure that Safety Reps make a positive contribution to risks assessment and risk management, and to encourage individual trade union members to play their part in following safety procedures.

The pilot seminar will be in Mansfield on 17th February 1997. Each seminar will cater for 25 Safety Reps and 25 Managers and will feature workshops on particular hazards i.e. Noise, Dermatitis, Asbestos, Muscle-skeletal disorders, Asthma etc as well as speakers from the TUC, HSE, and lawyers.

If you are interested in attending, or knowing more about the Mansfield seminar, (the only one in the East Midlands), please contact Notts Trade Union Safety Committee, %MUWC, 2 Beech Avenue, Mansfield, Notts, NG18 1EY. Tel 01623 424720.

### CONTACTS LIST

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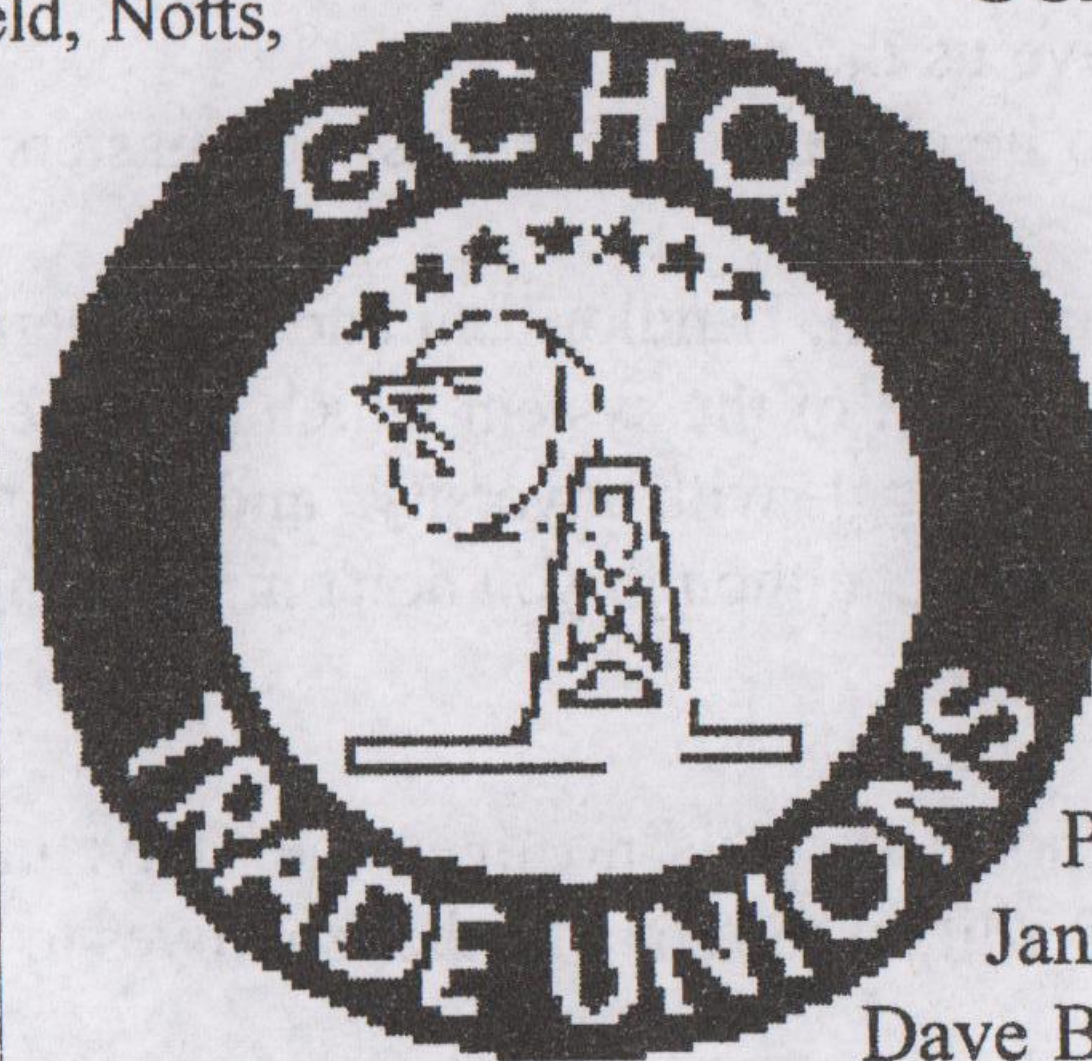
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MUWC 2 Beech Avenue Mansfield NG18 1EY (01623) 424720  
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### GCHQ TRADE UNIONS ANNUAL MARCH & RALLY CHELTENHAM

This could be your last opportunity to attend this event. Buses are running from Nottingham (The Salutation Maid Marion Way) 9:00am and Derby Bus Station Excursion Platform 9:30am on Saturday 25th January 1997. To book a seat, contact Dave Baxter 0115 971 2239

### GOOD HEALTH IS SHARED BUSINESS

TUC/HSE seminar in Mansfield Monday 17th February 1997 1pm - 5pm.

Venue Civic Centre Chesterfield Road South

For further details contact Tony Ridgeway of Jon O'Neill (01623) 424722/424720.

Supported by Notts Trade Union Safety Committee, TUC HSE, MDC and North Notts TEC

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For more information contact:

MSF East Midlands Region  
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We offer **FREE** testing for Hearing, Vibration White Finger, Lung Function and can offer advice on compensation claims and Health and Safety information.

Call us at 2 Beech Avenue Mansfield (01623) 424720 and ask for Tony



"Aiming to keep you safe"

# NOTTS TU NEWS

ISSUE 9  
Free or Donation  
Jan/Feb 1997

Published by the Nottinghamshire Association of Trades Union Councils

## NUM - FIGHTING FOR THE BASICS

The National Union of Mineworkers decision to ballot its members for selective 24 hour strikes to obtain better terms and conditions, has been declared by some as ill timed and a major blow to the industry leading up to coal contract talks with the power generators in 1998.

We are told that an industry in dispute would have adverse effects in negotiating new contracts.

Why are we in this situation - All the NUM have asked for is a basic pay award and the right to negotiate a conciliation agreement that is acceptable to the workforce. It is not a draconian request. Many, many workers throughout Britain have these basic rights.

On the first point of a basic pay award, I believe that the miners have been very patient indeed when you consider that we have had one 3.2% pay award in the last 5 years and an increase to the top paid miners of £1.34p.

The industry has been outstripping production targets over the last two years so much so, that the company RJB mining has been able to repay a very large slice of debt incurred when purchasing the industry, way ahead of schedule. I would have thought RJB mining would have rewarded its workforce

with a basic pay rise that benefits pensions, sick pay and holiday payments. Instead we are expected to accept PRP and shares as reward. Hardly somewhat enterprising when PRP is being phased out and the share price was dropped considerably last month. The question on conciliation - The Notts NUM have already had disagreements over the existing scheme being used by RJB mining especially the disciplinary code. Disciplinary measures have been taken against our members by management, the union have not agreed with the decisions and have used the next stage by appealing. The only problem is that the appeal is heard by someone higher up the management ladder. Hardly someone you would expect to reverse the decision made by one of his colleagues.

All the NUM asked for was the right to negotiate a conciliation agreement that was fair and acceptable to the workforce. This included a disciplinary code that allowed the use of an independent umpire if the company and the union were in dispute over a disciplinary decision. The umpires decision would be binding. If his decision went against the union then we would respect that decision. We would however expect the company to do likewise if his decision favoured the union. Again we are not asking for something out of this world. I cannot see what is so wrong with our requests. I do not believe that bosses of Power Gen and National Power would



consider it a risk to do business with a coal company that had acceptable terms and conditions with its workforce. However I do believe they would consider it much more of a risk dealing with a company that had an unhappy workforce because of impositions and bad terms. Whilst ever there are impositions there are bound to be objections and opposition. So I don't believe that it is the NUM that have ill-timed its decision to take industrial action, I believe the fault must lie with the company and the fact that it refused to discuss terms and conditions with the unions.

**ALL WE WANT IS FAIRNESS**

Keith Stanley  
Notts NUM Area President.

## VWF

The recent decision in the courts regarding miners and Vibration White Finger (VWF) has been welcomed by all those campaigning for some form of justice.

However owing to the 1975 ruling, it is unfortunate that there still are a vast number of ex-miners who will not be eligible for compensation, even though over many years they had worked with specific tools and machines that were known to be a cause of VWF.

Nevertheless, the decision goes a little way to giving miners past and present the recognition they deserve.

What was thought to be VWF had been recognised in America in the early 1900s, by Physicians examining quarry workers who had been suffering from this complaint. In the UK other industries have recognised VWF, and unions have been successful in obtaining compensation for workers for many years.

I fail to understand why it has taken British Coal and the Tory Government so long to act and finally come to a decision.

No, I lied, of course I understand why they have ignored it. It doesn't take a genius to work that one out. If you think you may have VWF or you have suffered any work related illness or injury, then your union rep must be informed immediately. Alternatively, contact the Trade Union Safety Committee.

% MUWC, 2 Beech Avenue, Mansfield, Notts. NG18 1EY. Tel 01623 424720. Fax 01623 424723.



## Editorial

Due to our expert time management and planning, we are back to 8 pages with this issue. Actually it is a total fluke.

In this issue, we carry an article by Notts NUM, as well as featuring the campaign to 'Stop Project Work'. After reading the article, please sign and return the statement on Page 6 and return it to Nottingham and District TUC.

We have also managed to publish the first part of a two part article by John Hannam on the Nottingham Young Peoples Benefits Campaign. The second part will be in Issue 10.

Finally, many thanks to MSF, Nottingham Health Service, Branch No 9214 for their donation to NTUN, as well as MSF, UNISON and Mansfield and District TUC for their advertisements.

The deadline for Issue 10 is Monday 24th February.

Notts TU News, Box N, % MUWC, 2 Beech Avenue, Mansfield, Notts. NG18 1EY. Tel (01623) 424720.

## How to Fight "Project Work" Extension

The Tories decision to extend the Workfare scheme 'Project Work', has come as no surprise to trade unionists in the pilot areas of Hull and Kent. Gillian Shephard's initial announcement of the extension was made at the Conservative Party conference. Even The Economist pointed out it was 'bad politics' to extend a pilot before that pilot had been properly evaluated. But the Tories' concern has always been to use the unemployed as a political weapon in the run-up to the election.

The Tories understand clearly that Project Work is an attack on both the employed and the unemployed. The attack on the unemployed is clear but the attack on the employed is equally important. The Tories wish to create a reserve army of cheap labour which will undermine the battle for decent pay and conditions in unionised workplaces. The fight against Project Work should therefore involve every active trade unionist not just those who are unemployed or work in particular sectors. Project Work forces the long-term unemployed to work for £10 a week plus benefit or to give up their benefit. The details of Project Work and the need for

opposition have been outlined in previous issues of this bulletin. The purpose of this article is to suggest some lessons for other areas, from our campaign against the Pilot Scheme in North Humberside.

Once an area has been identified for Project Work, opposition to the scheme has to be mobilised very quickly and needs to involve a range of tactics. In Hull, we combined high profile public campaigning e.g. a demonstration, with persuading organisations not to be involved. As early as possible, a number of people should sit down and try to think of every possible organisation that might be approached to be involved. Some are obvious, others are not. Internal organisation is often complicated e.g. we were assured by local members that the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers were not to be involved at the same time as their regional office was advertising for staff to run Project Work! Hull City Council boycotted the scheme but an individual school got involved, and had to be reminded of the council policy.

Your local council will be approached early on to be involved either as a

provider or as a source of placements. It is vital that they oppose. Winning over Labour groups is the key here. National Labour Party policy is to oppose Project Work. Labour groups have to be won over through activities such as getting Labour Parties on record against the schemes, using affiliated union branches to put resolutions through local Parties and individual discussions with the more sympathetic councillors. Every time a councillor hears the arguments it helps to persuade him/her to vote appropriately in the group and council. Whatever differences active trade unionists might have with their councils on other issues, it is essential that approaches are made early in the process. Far, far better to be in a united front with your Labour council against the Tories, rather than condemning them afterwards for making a bad decision. In areas with Liberal Democrat councillors, they need to be argued with. It was an alliance of the Liberals and the Tories that got the East Riding of Yorkshire Council to offer placements for Project Work. Getting the council to oppose is important for a number of related reasons:

- it reduces the number of placements and providers which is vital and slows everything down
  - it raises doubts with others who might get involved, especially organisations that might want a council grant at some point e.g. charities
  - it helps build up an image of Project Work as being unfair, and opposition as being the accepted position within unions and the voluntary sector. It helps destroy the myth that the scheme helps the unemployed.
  - it assists with media coverage
  - the council is often represented on other bodies which will consider involvement e.g. local colleges and the voluntary sector.
- Union opposition has to be central, not only for those directly involved, such as civil servants in unions like the CPSA and PTC, but also unions representing areas where Project Work placements might take place e.g. the NUT and UNISON in schools. Most councils will formally consult unions about any proposed involvement in Project Work. All council unions need to be lobbied. The sad reality is that councils will not only consult the NUT and NASUWT for teachers' views, they will also consult organisations that represent sectional and reactionary interests, such as the Secondary Heads Association and the scab Professional Association of Teachers. Unions like the CYWU have adopted excellent national conference policies following initiatives from Humberside members. This should

help in every area facing Project Work.

Sections of the voluntary sector such as charities, are often well unionised, so speakers should address their union branches and office meetings. Vital information about approaches to charities can be acquired here. Such workers could be in any one of a range of unions e.g. TGWU (ACTS). Further education is also a vital battleground. The involvement of a large college can result in many placements. Again talk to all unions. One tactic that we floated was union withdrawal from Investor in People working parties if management got involved in Project Work.

The role of the unemployed is obviously important both in terms of publicity and action. After all, Project Work is supposed to be about helping unemployed people. We know it's a lie, we need to persuade everyone else of that view. Local unemployed centres and groups should be able to play a key role here. The lack of an unemployed workers centre certainly didn't help us in Hull. One weakness of our campaign was the relatively small on-going involvement of those actually on the scheme. One area we didn't get round to, was recruiting people on Project Work to unions. Other areas could certainly try this.

Project Work attracts a lot of local and national media attention. Be bold with your press releases and activities. Lobbies, pickets, stunts all have a role to play. The national media are interested, so include them when issuing press releases. Finally, never forget that the Tories don't give a damn about the unemployed. As sure as night follows day, stories will be planted in the media about "benefit cheats" etc. Ensure immediate responses from unions and advice centres. Indeed, the Tories increasingly focus on benefit savings as being proof of Project Work's success. Be ready with instant rebuttals with individual cases. The media like the human angle, the more unemployed people who are willing to speak out, the better will be the coverage. Get a friendly civil service trade unionist to go through exactly how the (un)employment figures are fiddled. Get your brain round the statistics and how they are manipulated, they do matter. Become an 'expert' on all the reasons why people sign off the dole. Employment Service management will try to create the impression that those signing off the dole are either a) going into jobs or b) "fiddling" the social security system. Always try to keep the focus on the lack of any real jobs

being created, and the need for full employment and a national minimum wage.

Hull Trades Council are willing to help other areas where possible. We can provide contact with Labour councillors, voluntary sector activists, CPSA Employment Service and DSS trade unionists who have been involved in the campaign in North Humberside.

### Contacts:

**Hull Trades Council** 01482 802050 (phone evenings/week-end)

**Tom McVie** Hull Labour Councillor CPSA member 01482 797393

**Hull CPSA activists** % Hull Trades Council

**Campaign against Workfare** Tel (0115) 9162231

**Nottingham Campaign against JSA**

% PO Box 192, Nottingham NG1 1FJ

**Nottingham & District TUC**

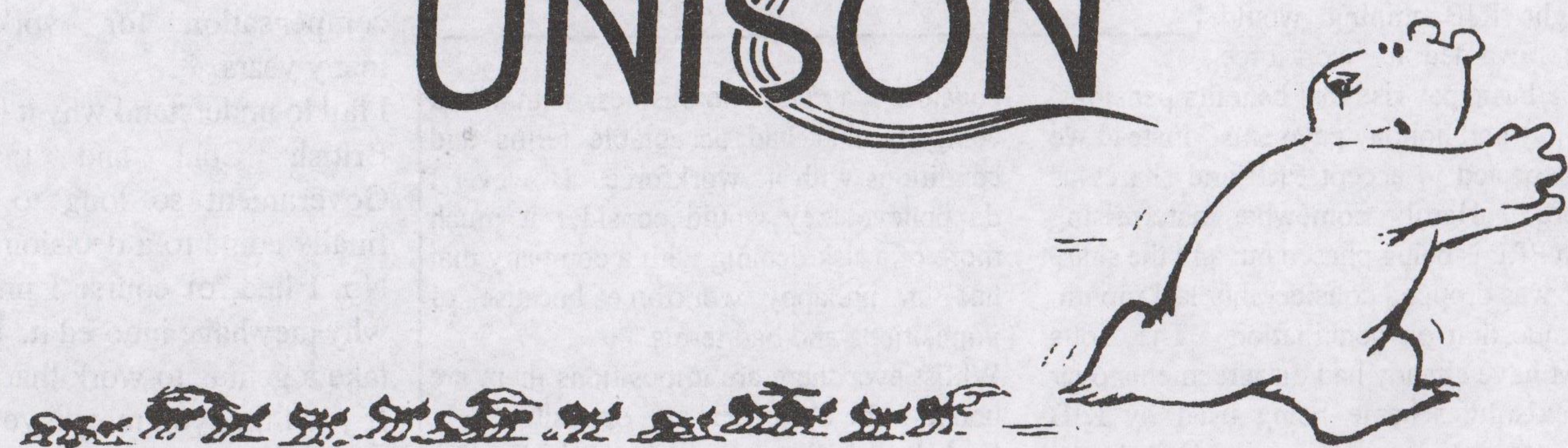
%118 Workshop, 118 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3HL

**Notts Jobs not JSA**

% MUWC, 2 Beech Avenue, Mansfield, Notts NG18 1EY

If you want to be heard — speak in

UNISON

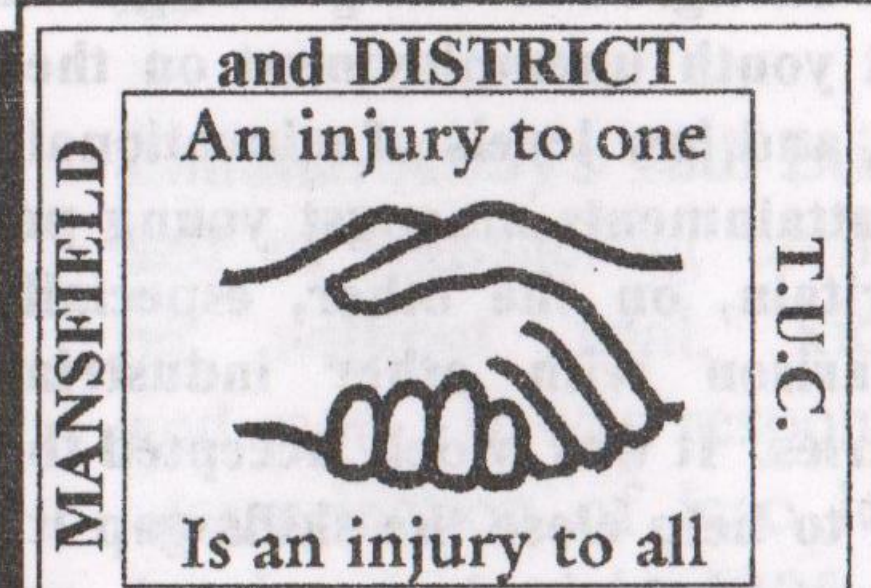


**Regional Secretary**  
**Nick Wright**

**Regional Convenor**  
**Janet Hardstaff**

**UNISON East Midlands Region**

15, Castle Gate, Nottingham, NG1 6BY. Tel. 0115 956 7200



**Sends Solidarity to  
all who enter 1997  
in struggle.**

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**1897 - 1960**

This island is made mainly  
of coal and surrounded by  
fish

Only an organizing genius  
could produce a shortage of  
coal and fish at the same  
time.

Blackpool 1945



## YOUNG PEOPLE, BENEFITS AND TRAINING

Below we start a 2 part article on Young People, Benefits and Training contributed by John Hannam of the Nottingham Young Peoples Benefit Campaign.

### The Legislative Background

The 1988 Social Security Act withdrew entitlement to Income Support for most 16 and 17 year olds. In return, every young person was guaranteed a place on a Youth Training Scheme and payment of a Training Allowance if they decided not to stay on at school or were unable to find a job. In exceptional circumstances the young person would receive a Severe Hardship Payment of Income Support.

The 1986 Social Security Act, implemented in 1988, effectively raised the age of majority in social security terms to 25, by introducing a lower benefit rate for single people without children aged between 18 and 24. From now on, benefit entitlements for this group were to be determined by age, not by reference to whether the claimant was or was not a householder.

There appear to have been several motivations behind the introduction of these policies. An important part of the policy background was growing concern about youth unemployment on the one hand, and low levels of educational and skill attainments amongst young people in Britain, on the other, especially in comparison with other industrialised countries. It was widely accepted that in order to help close the skills gap it was important that more young people should stay on at school, or acquire the skills through post-16 training which industry and commerce needed.

The Government's social security policy was also informed by the declared objectives of improving work incentives; targeting benefits more effectively at those in need; reducing public spending; and the promotion of self-reliance and independence from the state.

In 1988 the idea of withdrawing income support from 16 and 17 year olds not in school or education, who choose not to take advantage of training opportunities, was legitimised by the notion that this would help prevent young people from becoming part of a "dependency culture". The hope was also expressed that this policy would help to encourage young people's entry into the world of work.

The Social Impact and The Failure of the Youth Training Guarantee.

One key problem is clearly the fact that many young people are unable to find an

appropriate Youth Training placement. This shortage of training placements is in turn largely due to the low level of economic activity in Britain over the last few years. In these circumstances the youth training guarantee cannot be fully met, 'yet one side of the training benefits bargain - no entitlement to Income Support for 16 and 17 year olds, except in special situations, remains'.

There are no official statistics concerning unemployed 16 and 17 year olds, because since the right to income support to this age group was withdrawn, they fail to meet the criteria used for compiling the official unemployment statistics of 'unemployed and receiving benefits'. However, successful Severe Hardship claims by 16 and 17 year olds, originally designed as a stop-gap for a very small number, increased from 940 in December 1988 to nearly 15,386 for January 1996 (Severe Hardship Benefits Unit). This is the only group of unemployed 16 and 17 year olds about which official statistics are presently gathered. Severe Hardship is discretionary; requires young people to visit three different offices in order to complete a claim; and is payable in eight weekly periods, after which it must be re-applied for. Severe Hardship is clearly not a sufficient safety net to vulnerable 16 and 17 year olds who are not on Youth Training.

Youthaid, a charity concerned about young people, estimated that in October 1995 there were 180,000 16 and 17 year olds in Britain who were unemployed, and not on Youth Training or in education.

Youthaid further estimated that 89% of these unemployed 16 and 17 year olds were not receiving benefits and therefore had no visible means of support of any kind. Against this background, it is not surprising that the 1992 Report of the Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC) states:

"The Youth Training Guarantee is not being delivered in full, and without such a guarantee, the absence of a right to continuing entitlement to Income Support can leave very vulnerable young people with no visible, legal means of support..... ..if the general exclusion of 16 and 17 year olds from Income Support were removed, those in genuine need would be able to access Income Support quickly, in the normal way."

### Age related Benefits

If the failure of the Youth Training guarantee is one major problem, the low level of benefit entitlement and training allowances paid to young people on the basis of age rather than need, is clearly

another.

In May 1996 the weekly amounts payable to young single people aged 16 and 17, without children, and not in full-time education were as follows:

In April 1996 the Income Support rate for young single, people aged 18 to 24 was £37.90 per week; the full adult rate for those aged 25+ was £47.90 per week.

About this issue the 1992 SSAC Report says:

"It cannot be right to decrease the level of benefit due to this group (of 16 and 17 year olds) if the rate is based on basic 'needs'. We can see no sensible reason for this and have received no evidence to justify it. Food, clothing and housing are no cheaper for a person aged (under 25) than for someone aged 25 or over."

The Assumption that Young People Should Stay at Home Unfairly Penalises those with No Home To Go To.

The clear expectation is that young people who are unemployed should remain living with their families until they become financially independent, but as many studies have shown (including the 1991 MORI study on Severe Hardship payments) this is not a viable option for many young people, who simply have no home to go to.

Almost two in three of those living independently in that study had left home because they had been told to leave by their families, and almost one in ten because of abuse. Fewer than one in ten had left of their own accord.

Many of the 9,000 young people a year who leave care have no family home to go to.

The Effect of High Youth Unemployment  
The number of unemployed 16 and 17 year olds has remained almost unchanged over the last 4 years. The unemployment rate for young people aged 16 and 17 in Britain in June - August 1995 was estimated to be just over 23 per cent.

The policy objective of more young people remaining at school or college is being achieved, in that 66 per cent of 16 and 17 year olds stayed on in full-time education in 1993, compared with 37 per cent in 1985. This is welcome, but is explained to a great extent by the collapse in employment opportunities for this age group: the proportion of the 16 year old population in work fell by 49 per cent between 1989 and 1991, and from 18 per cent to 10 per cent of the age group (Career Service 1991).

The Nottingham Young Peoples Benefits Campaign can be contacted at John Hannam (0115) 9823823 (ext 4019) and Una Mulrenan on (0115) 9856777.

## LIONEL JACOBS 1912 - 1996

Lionel Jacobs (born London October 7th, 1912, died Nottingham December 5th 1996, aged 84)

Lionel Jacobs was one of the many thousands of East End working class Jews who turned to Marx rather than religion. His father, Morris, had been an early member of the Communist Party and an official in the - effectively Jewish - East London branch of the National Amalgamated Furniture Trades Association, and Lionel and his two brothers Julius (known as Julie) and Isadore both followed him into the Communist Party. Julie was to become well known in the Jewish Peoples Council before the war and later as full time secretary of the London Trades Council.

Having been actively involved in the fight against fascism, including the Battle of Cable Street, Lionel was one of over 200 Jews from Britain to fight in Spain. He was captured in spring 1938 by Franco's troops and was imprisoned for many

months in the dreadful prison of San Pedro de Cardena.

Following service with the British Army, Lionel joined his mother and sister who had moved to Nottingham to escape the blitz, and he returned to his trade, tailoring, firstly in a lace factory and later in his own workshop. Lionel was one of the key activists in Nottingham Trades Council for over two decades, holding the positions of President and Vice President in alternate years. For ten years he was also a member of the national executive of his union, now the MSF. Within the Labour Movement he was known as a fierce debater and was a regular public speaker for the Trades Council.

Lionel was proud of his skill as a tailor. Frank Ellis, one of now only two local survivors of the International Brigade, remembers Lionel making him a pair of trousers out of scraps in Spain - long before patchwork was fashionable. He also made a suit for the Nottingham District Secretary of the Communist

Party, as he felt that such an official should dress well in front of the workers! Lionel's funeral was attended by representatives of Nottingham Trades Council, MSF and veterans of the Communist Party. Tributes were given by Nottingham City Councillor John Peck and fellow Spanish Civil War veteran Walter Gregory. Messages were received from Dennis Pettit of Notts County Council and Mel Read MEP, both of whom worked with Lionel in the MSF. He is survived by his wife Marjorie, sister Beatrice and two stepchildren.

The last time I saw him alive, in Miriam Kaplowitch House, Nottingham's Jewish old people's home, he bade me goodbye with a clenched fist salute - saying Salud! - the greeting of the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War. Lionel never lost his Communist beliefs and was proud of his service to the anti-fascist and labour movements.

Ross Bradshaw.

## COLOMBIA BP MURDERS FOR OIL

A report leaked to Richard Howitt MEP reveals that BP has been collaborating with military death squads in Colombia. Amnesty International has called for an investigation into BP's involvement. In the report 6 local campaigners against BP are named. Each one of them was abducted by the military and later found murdered. BP's operations in Colombia have caused wanton destruction of the environment.

Why is this happening?

Five years ago the world's largest oil field was discovered in the Colombians region of Casanare. The oil multinational British Petroleum has been working there since, to secure its profit base well into the next century.

BP have used the military to break strikes by workers in the industry. In the town of Barrancabermeja, workers from the local refinery have had their union smashed and driven underground. Thirty members of the

union Sindical Obrero have been assassinated and 200 forced into exile. BP's Security Officer, Steve Devine, is a former member of the British Army's Special Forces. It was on evidence from Devine that environmental activist Humberto Castaneda was falsely identified as a guerrilla leader and jailed.

The International Centre for Trade Union Rights reports that contrary to popular mythology, the main killers in Colombia are not the drug barons or leftist guerrillas, but the state forces. Over 52% of cases of political violence are attributed to the army and police, and 20% to paramilitaries in collusion with the state.

BP funds the Colombian military to the tune of millions. It claims that it is required to do so by Colombian law. Yet this year the company signed an agreement to provide an additional sum of £39 million, to establish a new 650 crack military unit to defend its interests.

The Colombian Army's 16th Brigade is accused of massacring civilians, execution without trial, kidnap, torture and rape. It was responsible for the assassination of Icao leader Carlos Mesias Arrigui in 1995. BP has paid £375,00 specifically to the 16th Brigade. Violent repression of trade unionists is commonplace in Colombia. In May this year paramilitaries with close links to the army opened fire on Abella Esquivel, former Secretary General of CUT Trade union federation. In August, Ramon Alberto Diaz, a leading CUT member in Yumbo, was assassinated by paramilitaries.

BP is an anti-union employer in Britain as well. It has acted to prevent union recognition for workers in the North Sea and has been derecognising unions at refineries around the country.

P&P Coalition against BP in Colombia, BCM 7750 WC1N 3XX.



## TRADES UNION COUNCILS PROGRAMME OF WORK (1996-1997)

### TRADE UNIONS IN THE COMMUNITY

This was approved by the TUC General Council on 24th July, and continues with the three core elements of the 1995-96 programme - which is just as well seeing as it's only just gone out.

What follows is a headline summary:-

- 1) Campaign For Full Employment  
Opposition to Workfare  
Promotion of Employment through Public Investment  
National Minimum Wage  
Support for TUC Campaign Against JSA  
Affiliated Unions should Retain Unwaged Workers  
Support TUC Centres for the Unemployed
- 2) Defence of the Welfare State/Campaigning Priorities  
Organising Regional Demonstrations  
Promoting Campaigns to Unite Suppliers & Users of Health Care  
Working for Decent Living Standards for Pensioners  
Campaigning with Parents, Governors and Education Trade Unionists in Demanding Proper State Funding for Education  
Exposing Attempts by Government to make Local Authorities the Scapegoats for national Government policies
- 3) Combatting Racism and Fascism  
Broad-based Campaigning v Asylum & Immigration Bill  
Affiliation to local Anti-Racist/Fascist Organisations  
Support local Anti-Deportation Campaigns  
Joint discussions with local Labour Party on Anti-Racism

Create links with local Ethnic Minority Groups

Support Local/National Demonstrations  
Promoting Maximum Unity in Anti-Racist Struggles

Support for the TUC's RESPECT Campaign

Additionally, the Trades Council Conference in Kettering in May recognised the need to support the General Council's emphasis on recruiting Young Workers into Trade Unions - or more relevantly, recruiting Young Workers into Trade Unions - and seeking proper employment protection for Young People; and also resolved to include activities on workplace health and safety and the environment in the Programme of Work.

To achieve an ambitious Programme like the above needs dedication, commitment and participation by local trade union members. At the very least, it required the simple act of affiliation to Trade Union Councils by - the objective that dare not speak its name - ALL local Trade Union Branches.

Trades Union Councils, along with their offsprings in the TUC Unemployed Centres, provide a unique mechanism for uniting trade union and community issues. The importance of making trade unionism relevant to the community is a message which Councils have been putting forward for Yonks, and which trade union branches need to wise up on. In the last analysis, trade unionism will only survive at the grass roots (Compare with Labour Party rose stems), and if these have withered - well, you don't need it spelling out, do you?

Ian Juniper

Happy New Year

### Anti-Fascist Fund Launched

Following the announcement by the BNP that Steven Belshaw will be standing in the Ashfield constituency at the next General Election, Mansfield and District TUC have launched an Anti-Fascist appeal. The aim is to ensure that there are sufficient funds available to anti-fascists to counter any BNP candidates in the area.

Although nobody expects the BNP to do well in Ashfield seat, there is still a need to ensure that their bigoted and prejudiced propaganda is effectively countered prior to the election. Even BNP spokesman Michael Brookes admitted in the local paper that their candidate did not stand a chance. Even more bizarrely, he then tried to play down their candidates convictions.

Steven Belshaw was convicted for an attack on trade unionists in 1994, and has since been investigated for further violent attacks, as well as possession of racist literature. Fortunately for him, the Crown Prosecution Service were not at their best.

Mansfield and District Trades Union Council, is keen to see a united and co-ordinated response to the BNP, and will be meeting with anti-fascists early in 1997 to help facilitate this.

If you can help out, or can send a donation the "Anti-Fascist Fund," please contact Mansfield and District TUC % Box M, MUWC, 2 Beech Avenue, Mansfield Notts NG18 1EY.

## A PHILANTHROPIST'S GUIDE TO SOCIALISM in easy parts

Extracts from *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* by Robert Tressell

### PART II The causes of poverty - Employers of labour

"Do you mean to say that if I'm out of work and a master gives me a job, that he's doing me an injury?" asked the wit of the group.

"No. Of course not", replied Owen

"Well what the bloody hell do you mean then?"

"I mean this: supposing that the owner of a house wishes to have it repainted. What does he usually do?"

"As a rule,, he goes to three or four master painters and asks them to give him a price for the job."

"Yes; and those master painters are so eager to get the work that they cut the price down to what they think is the lowest possible points, and the lowest usually gets the job. The successful tenderer has usually cut the price so fine that to make it pay he has to scamp the work, pay low wages, and drive and sweat the men whom he employs. He wants them to do two days' work for one days' pay. The result is that a job which if done properly would employ twenty men for two months, is rushed and scamped in half that time with half the number of men."

"We can't help ourselves. If one man won't do it, there's twenty others ready to take his place."

"We could help ourselves to a certain extent if we would stand by each other. If, for instance, we all belonged to the Society, said Owen." [The Society is the local name for a Trades Union ED]

"I don't believe in the Society. I can't see as it's right that an inferior man should have the same wages as me."

"They're a drunken lot of beer-swillers. That's why they always have their meetings in public houses."

"What good has the Society ever done here? None that I ever heard of."

"It might be able to do some good if most of us belonged to it; but after all, that's another matter. Whether we could help ourselves of not, the fact remains that we don't. But you must admit that his competition of the employers is one of the causes of unemployment and poverty. Competing employers are the upper and nether millstones which grind the workers between them."

"I suppose you think there oughtn't to be no employers at all? Or perhaps you think the masters ought to do all the bloody work themselves and give us the money?"

"I don't see how it's going to be altered. There must be masters, and someone has to take charge of the work and do the thinking."

"Whether it can be altered or not, said Owen, Landlordism and Competing Employers are two of the causes of poverty. But of course, they're only a small part of the system which produces luxury, refinement and culture for a few, and condemns the majority to a lifelong struggle with adversity,, and many thousands to degradation, hunger and rags. This is the system you all uphold and defend, although you don't mind admitting that it has made the world into a hell. Money is the principal cause of poverty."

Nowadays, you are lucky to get £2.50 an hour; there is no overtime pay: unscrupulous employers expect their employees to receive a top-up from Family Credit; or the state further connives to place you with an employer and pay you benefits plus £10.

Is it any wonder that the black economy thrives at the expense of good employment practices? Is it any wonder that people on income support either refuse such non-jobs, or work and claim. Not just for the pittance extra, but because any change in their claim will cause weeks if not months of incorrect benefits.

## ACTION REQUIRED STOP PROJECT WORK

The following statement is being circulated by Nottingham and District Trades Union Council, who are liaising with other local organisations to oppose the implementation of this scheme.

They are asking that TU branches. shop stewards, committees etc. put their name to the statement, which will then be published when it has attracted sufficient endorsements.

Please also raise the issue with your employer/employers to seek to ensure that they do not participate in "Project Work". For information, to report on any successes, or to confirm support of the statement, contact

Ian Juniper, Secretary, Nottingham and District TUC, c/o 118 WORKSHOP, 118 Mansfield Road, Nottingham. NG1 3HL or telephone (0115) 958 2369.

### The Statement

*"Project Work" is a Government scheme that is about to be introduced in Nottingham. People who are unfortunate enough to be unemployed for two years or more will be forced to work for their benefits plus £10. A refusal will result in a severe cut in their benefit. There will be no guarantee of any job at the end of the compulsory 26 week course.*

*We will not participate in Project Work and call on other employers, voluntary organisations and local authorities to join us.*

*Signed.....*

### REPORT FROM NOTTINGHAM AND DISTRICT TUC

Solidarity with the Liverpool Dockers at Xmas saw £300 raised at the Xmas Social and in all, a cheque for £800 was passed over to them on the Monday before Xmas, including collections made by local SWP members, with a number of donations of kids' presents. The Xmas Appeal also got prominent publicity in the local press. A delegation also went on the Demo in London on the 14th December.

The launch of the Campaign Against Project Work also attracted publicity from

Radio Nottingham; and a Statement of Opposition has been circulated to local Union Branches in conjunction with the Nottingham Campaign against JSA, to begin our attempts in the New Year to make sure that this further attack on the unemployed doesn't get off the ground in Nottingham.

Brendan McKenna, from the Garvaghy Road Residents Assn in Portadown spoke at a meeting in November on the Orange marching season of last year. A report of this meeting will hopefully appear in more detail in a future edition of Notts TUN.

Finally, an Exhibition is being mounted in the County Library on Angel Row during the w/c 28th April, 1997 as part of the City of Nottingham Centenary Celebration on trade unionism in the City of Nottingham. This will dovetail with the planned May Day Celebration of 1997 which will have the theme of Full Employment and a March and Rally is planned for Saturday 3rd May, 1997. If anyone is interested in getting involved in the organisation of these, then please phone the Secretary Ian Juniper, on 0115 958 2369.

Ian Juniper

Secretary.