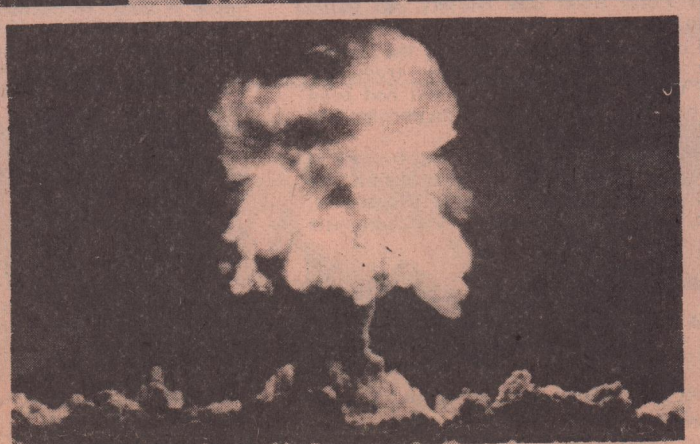


woman worker

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IS CARTER PLUNGING WORLD INTO WAR?

Desperate people can be dangerous people. And American President Jimmy Carter is certainly desperate.

The world over, things are falling apart for him, for the profit-hungry American bosses he represents, and for their whole system of exploitation, which keeps two-thirds of the earth's population below the poverty line.

Defeated in Vietnam and Cambodia in 1975; defeated in Angola in 1976; defeated by the fall of the Shah in Iran in 1979; defeated by the fall of General Somoza in Nicaragua in 1979; humiliated by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1980, and made a laughing stock by his own military fiasco in Iran in April 1980, Carter and the US military leaders are nearing the end of their tether.

All round the world, vicious US-backed governments are facing the anger of workers and peasants struggling to defend and improve their meagre living standards, to win the most elementary democratic rights, and to break the bonds of exploitation and national and sexual oppression.

The huge explosion of anger by the workers and students of South Korea is simply the latest challenge to an American puppet dictatorship.

LOBBY

As things go from bad to worse, a growing lobby of generals and strategists stand at Carter's shoulder, pressing him to use the huge armoury at his disposal for punitive military action against those that dare to defy the might of US imperialism.

At home in the USA, too, things are just as desperate. In a last-ditch attempt to control runaway 20% inflation, Carter has been forced in election year to unleash a massive slump that has already sent unemployment rocketing upwards. He has slashed welfare spending and public services - but at the same time increased the military budget.

Hoping to divert attention from these problems and to create a climate for a cold-war witch-hunt of militant workers at home, Carter has already exploited to the full the patriotic fervour whipped up by the press around the holding of the US embassy hostages in Iran.

The American press has been filled with anti-Iranian and anti-Arab propaganda, as petrol and oil prices soar, slashing the value of workers' pay packets.

All this has been supplemented by outright anti-communist hysteria in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Yet Carter's main target is *not* the USSR: nor is he really interested in Afghanistan.

His objective is to restore US control over the Middle East, and if possible over Iran, a vital strategic base with vast oilfields.

It is not possible for US imperialism alone to invade Iran. The country is too large, and too far from US bases. It borders on the Soviet Union, and elements in the Iranian regime could well call for Russian assistance to ward off a US invasion.

But this does not mean that there is no danger of a war over Iran.

On the one hand, Carter is being pressed by his more extreme generals to let them use nuclear weapons to "turn Iran into a parking lot" - slaughtering Iranian men women and children by the tens of thousand in order to restore US military prestige. Such an attack would dwarf even the carnage of the Vietnam war.

On the other hand, Carter has been straining every muscle in his efforts to drag his European and Japanese allies into the US-Iran confrontation - so far only at the level of imposing economic sanctions.

But there is no doubt that these sanctions will fail to bring the Iranian regime to heel. Every week sees massive anti-American marches in the streets of Tehran. The central government is not able simply to strike a deal with Carter.

So what can Carter do next? He must turn to demand military support from his NATO allies in

some form of action against Iran.

Thatcher has been at the forefront of the NATO leaders cheering on Carter's cold war offensive against the Soviet Union, and applauding his actions against Iran.

There is no doubt that a Tory government in Britain could easily find itself dragged alongside US imperialism into a military adventure in Iran that could rapidly get out of hand and lead to a Third World War.

As a party of bankers and employers, the Tories, like Carter and the American bosses, are forced to seek out ways of crushing and defeating the struggles of workers throughout the world - if necessary by military force. At this very moment British troops are engaged in the brutal repression of the Irish people in the six counties of Northern Ireland.

That is why the only guarantee that there will be no World War 3 lies in the struggle that we wage for action to bring down the Thatcher government, to remove the right wing Labour leaders who support imperialist policies, and establish a workers' government that will pull out of NATO, the EEC, and every other imperialist and anti-working class alliance.

Already in the USA Carter is registering young people - men and women - preparatory to conscription. The war threat looms over us all.

Women workers in Britain must join with the struggle of socialists and internationalists in every country to halt these moves.

* Hands off Iran! No sanctions; no intervention!

* Not one person, not one penny to the imperialist war effort!

* No to the Cold War! Defend the Soviet Union and deformed workers' states against imperialist attack!

* Prepare to bring down the Tories! For a workers' government!

Support Kleins strike

The workers at Klein Bros, Liverpool Street, Salford have been on strike for twelve weeks. 70 of the total workforce of 120, mostly women, walked out when management refused to recognise their union, the National Union of Tailor and Garment Workers.

Most of the women have never been in a union before or had little to do with one. They had a couple of meetings with the union official, elected stewards and then asked the management for union recognition.

When Mr. Klein, the managing director, refused, the women went on strike and started to picket the factory. Mr Klein has given them all the sack and says they can only come back without the union and under much tougher conditions of employment.

The women have elected a strike committee of eight which organises the strike and mass meetings to decide on tactics. Members of the strike committee have been going round other factories and speaking at union meetings asking for financial donations and support for the picket line.

Their union official visits the picket line most days but the women don't seem to have a lot of confidence in him. He took the dispute to ACAS

Continued on back page

Leicester cuts fight

In March the Tory controlled Leicester-shire County Council announced a total of 1,800 redundancies as part of their 'savings' on education spending. This included 40 nursery assistants (NNEB's) as well as class room ancillaries, lollypop ladies and canteen staff. All but ten were women.

Following this announcement it emerged that in addition to these cuts, from the end of April no new entrants were being allowed into nursery schools. No public statement has ever been made on this, and to date no explanation of the decision has been offered.

It was against this background of fears and uncertainties that a West Leicester Nursery Campaign was launched in April to lead a fight on the whole question of nursery provision, both in the schools and the Social Services Day Nurseries.

A public meeting was arranged jointly with the Trades Council's Women's Sub-Committee to begin the campaign by drawing on the experiences of other areas like Oxford and Nottingham. On the day of the meeting, however, the first effects of the initial leaflets issued came out in a statement in the local paper by the Director of Social Services, Dorothy Edwards. Clearly under pressure, she admitted that the Fosse Road Day Nursery was to be closed to make way for a new Family Centre.

This came as quite a surprise to the nursery staff at Fosse Road who had been trying for months to get this information and had been assured only five days earlier that no decision had yet been taken!

The public meeting, therefore, became a focus for a series of direct questions to the NALGO speaker present. With over 70 parents, teachers, nursery nurses and other trade unionists

present, NALGO blithely admitted that they had taken no steps to oppose the redundancies which they regarded as still 'in the air'. Instead they were seeking consultations with the County Council over the terms of any redundancy payments and the possibilities for redeployment.

When it was pointed out that in Nottingham redeployment for nursery nurses had meant jobs as cleaners and ancillaries, and that 90 were still unemployed, NALGO made clear that those were the kind of jobs being offered in Leicester, but with the addition of gardening to the list!

This craven refusal by NALGO to take up any fight in defence of its own members or the public services involved stands in stark contrast to the ruthless determination of the Tory councillors.

THREATS

Rumours, apparently emanating from the Labour Group on the Council, suggest that the plan is to phase out ALL nursery education within two years along with a variety of other services. Furthermore, with regard to the threatened Fosse Road Day Nursery the situation is already critical.

Staffing provision at Fosse Road is dangerously inadequate at present, with one post frozen and another vacant following the departure of a nursery officer at 24 hours notice. This has been made worse by the decision to replace the present full time Matron with a part-time appointment.

Both the nursery staff and parents in Leicestershire have already made clear their determination to fight. At a second public meeting of the nursery Campaign over 60 were present, and were clearly angered by the failure of the local Labour County Councillors to show up.

Now, an open letter has been sent to the County Council demanding to know their plans for both Nursery Education and the Fosse Road Day Nursery. To give this added weight, an occupation of County Hall by mums and kids is planned to coincide with the presentation of a mass petition in support of nursery provision on May 21st.

And at Fosse Road, the staff have voted not to accept the new part-time Matron, on the grounds that she already has responsibility for another city nursery and cannot possibly do two jobs at once—even with the incentive of added pay.

As a result, Social Services Department, following discussions at the Fosse Road Nursery with the staff—which became the focus for a large lobby by the Nursery Campaign—have now conceded the need to advertise for a new Matron and for additional staff.

What is crucial now is the mobilisation of both staff throughout the nursery sector and parents, not just against the right wing County Council. They must direct the struggle also against the cynical, backpeddling leadership of NALGO who have totally failed to take up any fight against redundancies and cuts in services. Only in such a struggle to build a fighting leadership throughout the working class can Day Care and nursery education be defended and expanded.

Angered by this thoroughly patronising attitude members of the local women's group then proceeded to do the only other thing possible: tear the poster down. Spectators nodded approval as the offending object disappeared in shreds.

"SLUTS"

Faced with this challenge to their 'authority' the Labour members on the stall then proceeded to openly express their sexist views, and the two women concerned were denounced as 'a pair of sluts'. They were, however, taken aback when, in a matter of minutes, 13 organisations joined together to declare their support for the women concerned. The stall was cleared and they departed in haste.

Labour's sexism is a stab in the back to working class unity. Like racism it serves to divide at the very time when the building of mass opposition to Tory policies and the right wing leadership in the Labour Party on the basis of the independent interests of the working class demands the winning of women workers to the struggle for socialism. That can only be done when the struggle for a revolutionary political programme is allied to the most consistent and ruthless fight against sexism in the labour movement.

The male chauvinists of the reformist Labour Party may well whine about 'their' rights, but as Caesar said to Brutus "Et tu Brute?" Too true brother if its the choice between you and the mass movement.

NURSERIES

REVIEW

A book published in March and written collectively by six authors, entitled *Nurseries Now* is likely to be purchased by many parents, nursery workers and supporters of provision for the Under 5s.

More and more people are seeking answers to the deliberate Tory attempts to dismantle the grossly inadequate nursery facilities that exist at present.

Nurseries Now is a comprehensive 250-page book that examines the needs of mothers and children and the fascinating but dreadful statistical evidence of the effects of depression on mothers with children under five.

The book stresses the class distinctions: 16% of middle class mothers of pre-school age children suffered depression, compared with a staggering 48% of working class mothers. Overall, 23% of all mothers of pre-school age children are prescribed tranquilisers in the year preceding the children's entry to school.

Although half of all mothers of pre-school children work for some of the time, two thirds of non-working mothers were dissatisfied with being at home. Interestingly, the depression and frustration felt by these women is greater than that of workers on assembly lines in factories.

The Office of Population Census and Surveys conducted an investigation six years ago, and found that 96% of women wanted nursery places for their children, and 46% wanted places for children of under 3 years of age.

The same study showed that 48% of pre-school children had no garden or outdoor play-space — obviously adding further pressures onto mothers.

The word 'nursery' is used loosely in the book to cover different types of provision, from playgroups and childminders, to day nurseries, schools and classes, both in the public and private sectors.

Out of the seven types of facilities for the Under-5s in England and Wales, only 16% of children are provided for by local authorities, 22% are covered by voluntary or private groups, and 62% of children had no provision at all in 1977.

As well as providing such useful statistics, the book goes on to answer opponents of care for the Under-5s. It examines the inadequacies of the present system, in particular the division of day and educational nurseries, and the restrictions on the ages of children who can attend them.

It outlines some ideas for future provision and new approaches to provision for the Under-5s — giving in particular a description of the Thomas Coran Children's Centre, where the authors have worked and where the integration of care and education seems to have been fairly successful.

The authors stress that nursery provision is a political issue, and that the question is not whether extra money can be found to provide more nurseries, but whether it should be:

"The relationship between the powerlessness of mothers and children and the inadequacy of service for them is most clearly seen in the response — or the lack of it — by successive governments to the needs of working mothers."

They point out that when governments require extra pools of female labour they provide nurseries — as during World War 2, when there was a massive increase in nursery facilities, and in the 1960s, when the state needed more nurses and teachers, and campaigned for mothers to use nurseries to return to these jobs.



PLEASE
DON'T SACK
MY TEACHER



Leicester anti-cuts lobby

FIGHTING SEXISM IN LABOUR PARTY

The annual May Day Carnival in Leicester was the fitting setting for an open assault on the sexist line the Labour Party and its supporters have taken recently in the fight against the Thatcher government.

Using slogans like 'Ditch the Bitch' and 'Milk the Cow' sections of the Labour Party—including the grossly misnamed 'militant' group—have slithered into the most backward, non political campaign against the Tories imaginable.

Instead of taking up the urgent political questions facing the working class like jobs and trade union rights or issues like Day Care and Welfare cuts which hit directly at working class women, they have carefully steered their campaign into one against Mrs. Thatcher with the emphasis on the Mrs. In contrast, our objection to Thatcher is that she is a Tory.

MAY DAY

On May Day, however, they found that socialists are no longer prepared to tolerate open sexism and male chauvinism in the labour movement. When a stall was set up for throwing darts at 'Plunder Woman'—Thatcher complete with handbag, in a grotesquely inflated bra and bikini briefs—there were immediate protests. Women members of the Trades Council, youth from NUSS and the Socialist Youth League, and other local militants demanded it be taken down.

Despite the complaints the Labour Party members concerned insisted that the question of sexism was 'just a matter of opinions', and refused to take it down.



Wandsworth nursery occupation

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WHY WO

Woman Worker is a revolutionary working class newspaper which takes up the struggles of women against their economic and political exploitation at work and at home, and fights for these problems to be taken up as part of the struggle to build the international revolutionary party to take the whole working class forward to a planned socialist society.

Women have a necessary role to play in the struggle against capitalism. Socialism will never come about without the involvement of 50% of the population.

The past decade has seen the limited democratic gains of the Equal Pay and the Sex Discrimination Acts threatened by cuts in jobs, hospitals, wages and the worst unemployment since the 1930s. Not only have women had to face the organised threat from the Tory government and the employers but also within their own ranks in the unions there is much work to be done in bringing questions which affect women to the fore.

NOW

Ann McKinley reviews *Nurseries Now: A Fair Deal for Parents and Children*, published by Pelican, £1.95.



Ealing under-5s campaign

But the authors make the mistake of arguing that nursery education is seen as a low priority because political power is predominantly held by men.

This, under conditions where Margaret Thatcher is spearheading the demolition of nursery provision, can be seen as a quite laughable argument.

It is not men, but the capitalist class that require the destruction of nursery care.

The authors go on to look at campaigns that have been set up – like the London Nursery Campaign – to struggle for the expansion of nursery facilities. They refer fleetingly to the growing interest in the needs of working mothers and the Under 5s within the trade union movement and the TUC. But this interest is important; it offers a tangible way in which the problems of working class women in the home can find expression in the struggles of the organised labour movement, which alone has the power to confront the employers and the Tory government.

Indeed, while providing useful information for campaigners, this book offers no practical road forward in the fight for nursery facilities.

Nobody should follow the fond illusions of one reviewer who imagined that anyone with axe poised over nursery provision might be jolted

into a more sensible attitude simply by reading the book!

What is needed is rather a book entitled 'Save our Nurseries Now', in which basic material arguing the case for nurseries is brought together with the lessons, and experiences of struggles so far, and with tactics for future struggles.

Petitions and letters of protest, lobbies and general propaganda can play a limited role in fighting closures. But *direct action* – as seen two years ago in the South Oxford nursery occupation and the recent Wandsworth nursery occupation – offers the only real resistance to closures.

BACKING

But experience has shown that even this in isolation is not enough: the council is left free to use the courts unless there is the firm backing of the local labour movement in supporting strike action to defend the occupation against eviction.

Women are increasingly taking to the streets to protest at the cuts in provision for the Under fives. Though powerless alone, they are strong and determined to fight.

What is needed now is not simply arguments for nurseries, but a political leadership to mobilise the necessary fight against the Tory government.

Women's TUC

In March I went to represent the Leeds Trades Council at the TUC Women's Conference at Brighton. The relationship between the main TUC and the Women's Conference is briefly that the Women's Conference elects the Womens Advisory Committee which presents a report which is voted on by the Womens Conference and then passes to the main TUC for acceptance. It was via this route that the TUC adopted its present policy on abortion and the Corrie Amendment Bill – of which more later.

This year's was the 50th Womens' Conference and to commemorate this a rally was held the afternoon preceding the start of the Conference. The most enjoyable part of this was a presentation by a group of Equity members including Bill Owen and Eleanor Bron, consisting of readings from contemporary accounts of strikes involving women from the Matchgirls Strike of the 1880's to Grunwicks and Chix. These vivid extracts illustrated most clearly that the thread of womens oppression runs clearly through the whole history of the working class and is as much in evidence today as it was over 100 years ago.

SOLIDARITY

In the debates on the motions an immense solidarity of purpose was displayed by the delegates in the face of the joint forces of the Tory cuts and the general oppression of women in all walks of life. The election of a woman Prime Minister and the attacks on women's rights that she is implementing has done much to damage the image of feminism – if indeed it even penetrates very far into the consciousness of working class women trade unionists.

The election of the Tories, however, gave the opportunity for a sustained hymn of hate against the 'Tory cuts' and provoked a rose-tinted nostalgia for the Labour regime. There were few calls for pressure to be put on Labour councillors and MPs to mount a principled challenge to the Tory cuts or the Labour leadership.

CONTRAST

There was a clear contrast between the sharp awareness of the Conference of the appalling discrimination against women in education and training – especially in technical and scientific subjects, and in areas of health and safety, and the horrendous reformist talk of 'trading off' free school milk against child benefits and 'positive discrimination' programmes in industry.

The problem with the Women's TUC is that it is bureaucratically linked to the TUC and it is thus impossible to put forward independent demands or programme. The only outlet for the delegates protests were May 14 and the campaign for Social and Economic Awareness – the inadequacies of which were criticised with justification by the Chairman of the Welsh TUC.

During the Conference the Corrie Bill came in for its third reading. The Conference responded immediately by despatching a telegram to Parliament stating the TUC's position on abortion and the opposition of working women to restriction in the existing provision. This was read out in the House of Commons and well received. Model letters were sent to 60 or so MPs and anti Corrie MPs argued to attend the debate. I believe that the Womens TUC had a role in the demise of the Corrie Bill, and that if it is allowed to take positive, independent steps to achieve women's rights it is a valuable weapon in the struggle against women's oppression.

Wendy Frankland



Tory women at conference

Howe's budget: charges up, benefits down

The Tory budget, distinguished only by the blatancy of its savage attack on the working class and unemployed, was described by Len Murray as destined to lead Britain "back to the thirties with a vengeance". He argued that it would give an incentive to trade unionists "to give massive support" for the TUC's day of action against government policies on May 14th.

Perhaps wishing to forget that the working class have suffered continued cuts in their living standards under successive Labour as well as Tory government, the TUC's response to the budget hardly reflected the real effect that it will have and the certainty of organized working class opposition that it will bring.

Raising the prescription charges to £1, introducing charges for 16-21 year olds for dental and optical treatment was just the beginning: budget day revealed plans in the White paper on public spending to reduce capital expenditure on local authority housing to £1,915 M for the year 1980-81 (in 1974-5 it was £4,461M). The effect of this massive cut will mean, in most areas, the freezing of council house building and modernization programmes.

Forced onto the private market, tenants can expect high rents and with the passing of the Housing Bill, loss of protection and rights, an increased harassment from landlords. The long term effect of freezing housing programmes will almost certainly be the demise of densely populated, slum housing of inner city areas; remaining unimproved and unmodernised.

Working class and immigrant families, in particular, will suffer the effects of land planned for housing being re-zoned and sold by councils for, more profitable, industrial use.

Along with this were announced plans to tax unemployment, sickness and other short term benefits; to scrap Earnings Related Supplement and to end the index-linking of short term benefits in order to effect a 5% cut in real terms. The increases in benefits – to take effect from November '80 – have been deliberately designed to widen the gap between the unemployed and workers in a farcical attempt to dissuade 'scroungers' from taking advantage of the social security system and persuade them to find jobs instead!

These measly increases, along with plans to further attack benefits for strikers' families and the new provisions in the social security bill (that under the guise of 'simplification' will mean in practice less money), make increased poverty, of an unprecedented scale, a certainty amongst the unemployed. And with unemployment soaring over the 1½M mark, more and more workers will be forced into this situation.

For workers the future seems no better; with a mere 75p increase in child benefit and an increasing burden in taxes, the low paid can look forward only to the fear of massive food bills and the threat of eviction and disconnection of their fuel supply as the cost of living rockets. Faced with redundancy, lay offs or sickness, workers will feel the effects of the reduced value of their national insurance contribution and the totally inadequate protection that it gives as an insurance against loss of pay.

WOMAN WORKER ?

The bankrupt policies of the labour and trade union bureaucrats has serious implications for women's fight against oppression. Forced to stifle the struggle for policies which will actually win disputes and begin to challenge capitalism, the bureaucracy has pushed womens' rights questions into the background.

In some cases the forcing of women out of employment and back into the home has been fostered by trade union leaders as a solution to their male members own problems.

Woman Worker is published by the Workers Socialist League as part of the fight to mobilise women together with the working class in the international fight against capitalism. As Trotskyists we are fighting to reconstruct the Fourth International – the world party of socialist revolution – to lead the struggles of the working class.

Our programme, based on the Transitional Programme, is directed towards linking women's struggles for democratic rights and against economic oppression, with the need to overthrow capitalism.

*Women to take on positions of leadership within the unions in order to fight for these policies.

*Joint price committees of trade unionists and housewives to organise the fight against inflation.

*For a sliding scale of wages on top of flat rate increases: for wages to be linked to price increases as assessed by elected price committees.

*For strike action and occupations to defend the health, education and social services and threatened factories.

*For open-the-books committees to discover the real financial state of the social services, and private companies threatening closure.

*For nationalisation under workers' management without compensation of firms that declare themselves bankrupt.

*Against all anti-abortion legislation – for free abortion and contraception on demand and workers and consumers control of the health service.

*Solidarity with struggles of women internationally against oppression by international imperialism or by the Stalinist bureaucracies in the deformed workers states.

woman worker

May 14th-what next?

May 14—the long awaited TUC Day of Action—has come and gone, leaving the trade union leadership searching for further diversions from the task of a real fight against the Tory government and its job-cutting, wage-cutting policies.

In spite of the virulent press campaign orchestrated by the Tory front bench and its friends among the editors in Fleet Street the one day protest on May 14 actually saw more than 250,000 workers participating in 130 demonstrations throughout the country. Instead of the lunchtime meetings and badge wearing protests called for by the trade union leaders many thousands of men and women workers took strike action against the Tory government.

Since May 14 inflation and unemployment have continued to soar and further cuts in local government and health service spending have been announced. But rather than organise a real fight to bring down the Tory government by calling a general strike the TUC is now wooing Thatcher and Josephs over a new social contract deal!

Chapple of the EETPU is prepared to talk with the government on any terms while Murray, Basnett and Fisher hold out on pay talks—arguing

that they will not discuss “pay in isolation”, and clearly seeking an all-round framework of collaboration with the Tories.

Meanwhile in the Labour Party the May 31 Special Conference has passed the joint resolution drawn up by the left on the NEC and endorsed eagerly by Callaghan. This resolution, calling for price controls and import controls among other things, totally ignores the lessons of the last Labour government and completely lets the Callaghan-Healey leadership off the hook. It gives no guidance whatsoever to local Labour controlled councils as to how to lead a campaign against the cuts and in fact has no perspective whatsoever for bringing the Tory government down except through the ballot box in four years time.

Woman Worker calls upon these ‘left’ leaders in the Labour Party and the trade unions to mobilise the anger and hostility to Thatcher’s policies that exists among all sections of the working class—in workplaces and in the home—and to adopt policies such as opposition to all cuts and rent and rate rises, the defence of wages and benefits against inflation by a sliding scale of wages and defence of jobs through worksharing on full pay. A lead on these policies would bring about the determined confrontation necessary to bring about the downfall of Thatcher and her cronies.

Notts nursery conference links struggles

Since the Tories took office a large number of nursery campaigns have sprung up all over the country to defend the threatened provision for the under fives.

The May 17 Nurseries Action Conference called through the Save Our Nurseries Campaign in Nottingham was an extremely important initiative in bringing these fighting campaigns together to discuss the nuts and bolts of how we fight the cuts in nursery provision.

The majority of the sixty delegates and observers who attended the Nottingham conference were actively involved in struggles and shared the same experience in defending their local nurseries against either closure or cuts in staffing.

There were strong delegations from the Nottingham, Leicester, Birmingham and Oxford campaigns and in particular from the Wandsworth Nightingale Lane Nursery occupation.

LESSONS

Ann McKinley spoke from the Oxford City Nursery Campaign and the lessons learnt from their occupation of a nursery class over 2 years ago during the last Labour government’s public spending cuts. She said that occupations were doomed to eviction, despite strong community support, with the forces of the state (the courts, bailiffs, and police) being brought in to remove any independent organisation of the working class. The only way to protect such occupations was through supporting strike action against the moves of the state by local workers in defence of their social facilities. Ann pointed out that while not trying to put organisations today off from occupying threatened facilities, that the use of the SAS in the Iranian Embassy siege, shows how determined Thatcher’s war mongering government is today.

Helen Flack spoke from the Nursery Campaign in Leicester where a day nursery is threatened with closure and where staff are leaving without replacements, leaving a ratio of 1-30 children. NALGO had until the campaign was formed in April been waiting on the side lines to negotiate the best terms for redeployment and redundancy of 40 nursery nurses.

The first meeting of the Campaign showed NALGO officials what the members wanted and are now about to ballot them on industrial action.

Peter Hamilton outlined the occupation in Wandsworth of a day nursery which is still await-

ing eviction and there was a question and answer session on how one goes about occupying which was amongst one of the most useful exchanges of ideas and experiences of the conference.

The main theme that came out however whether it was Yorkshire, Birmingham, Oxford, Nottingham, Leicester or London was the role of the trade union leadership in cuts struggles. In Oxford’s occupation the leadership in NUPE stated that they would bring out members on strike against the eviction but this never materialised and in Wandsworth’s Nursery occupation two years later the GMWU official assured the parents occupying that gas services would not be disconnected yet when it came to it the official could not be bothered to leave his office—ten minutes away from the occupation—to speak and instruct his members not to disconnect.

Noticeably the trade union bureaucracy boycotted the conference with the exception of Nottingham NUPE official John McGuigan.

McGuigan, who had himself called on the people of Nottingham to get down on their knees and pray for the education of their children threatened by cuts, predictably defended the role of the union bureaucracy by blaming the union membership for being unwilling to fight.

It was pointed out that not one single union had organised any action against nursery cuts apart from Nottingham NUT’s strikes in defence of suspended teacher Eileen Crosbie—and even they had been forced into this action by mass pressure from their membership and have spent all their time since seeking excuses for avoiding spreading the action further. Despite the fact that over 200 schools were prepared to strike before Eileen was sacked, the NUT have deliberately had 3-day strikes in selective schools which leads to demoralisation instead of an all-out strike.

RESOLUTION

A resolution was passed on the action needed to stop redundancies rundown of posts and hours of nurseries and the policy of occupying nurseries threatened with closure by occupation and supporting strike action.

An organising committee was set up to discuss the immediate production of a booklet coordinating the various campaigns and setting out the much needed information from joint experience on such questions as how to establish a campaign, plan an occupation, getting trade union support and how to fight for strike action to defend threatened occupations.



Oxford Pensioners' Action Committee on May 14th demonstration

The coordinating committee will be meeting in Oxford on 8 June and the aim is to produce the booklet for the conference on 5 July being called by the London Nursery Campaign to form a National Childcare Campaign.

An emergency resolution was passed by the Conference to demand the reinstatement of Eileen Crosbie (the sacked NUT Nottingham nursery teacher) along with adequate nursery nurses staffing and calling on the NUT to organise all out strike action in her defence and the cuts nationally.

The conference ended with a speech from nine-year old Frankie Hamilton, whose brother attended the occupied Wandsworth nursery, who has been involved in the occupation herself and actually climbed in through an open window to let her parents in. She stated why she felt it necessary to occupy the nursery and that she hoped there would be more occupations all over the country. While the Tories are in control and threaten much needed facilities with closure every day, Frankie can rest assured that there will be campaigns and occupations all over the country to defend them. However a new leadership in the working class is needed if they are not to end in defeat like the Oxford and Wandsworth occupations. Linking the struggles nationally and learning from these experiences is one way to help bring about the fight for a new leadership that will not compromise with the Tories but is prepared to fight for the independence and interests of the working class.

Klein cont.

from page one

but they have no illusions that ACAS can solve anything. Mr Klein has said that he won't abide by the ACAS ruling if it doesn't suit him and he won't talk to the strike committee or the union official, in fact he will have nothing to do with the union and says he will never have a union in his factory.

The picket line has stopped all lorries and the goods made by the factory, men's casual wear, are blacked at the Co-op, the main outlet. The Salford Trades Council have helped with picketing and put the strikers in touch with some other unions locally. They have also helped to collect finance.

To win the dispute the picketing must be stepped up and stop the boss driving his van in and out of the factory. He carries workers, cloth, finished articles and rubbish across the picket line.

The strikers are asking for help on the picket line. They want the goods, marketed under the name of Bendyk to be blacked and for financial donations to be sent to: Klein Bros. Dispute Fund, c/o John Catterall, "VOSCOP", 39 Fir St., Cadishead, Manchester.