

London Workers' BROADSHEET.

Issued by the ISLINGTON WORKERS' COMMITTEE.

JIM STRONG, Correspondence Secretary,

115 Huddleston Road, London.N.7.

3d.

Vol-1:No.7.

EDITORIAL.

HARD TIMES

The 'Labour' Government's deflationary, anti-working class measures are beginning to bite. The Prices and Incomes Bill has been pushed through parliament & now the WAGE FREEZE has been applied, bulldozing through agreements and through negotiations-procedure etc. built up over years of struggle. Over $3\frac{1}{2}$ million workers have been affected already. They have been told:- "If you don't volunteer for the freeze, then you'll be compelled to accept it!" Crossman, ex-'left winger', has once again proved that 'left labourites' in office are the most ruthless agents of capitalism - in the tradition of Strachey, Cripps, Bevan & Greenwood. Crossman asserted recently that in effect, the wage freeze will persist for longer than 6 months. Meanwhile the "New Statesman", which has posed as a 'socialist' journal for too long, says in an editorial (Sept 16th), that the wage freeze is a form of 'socialist planning' !!

Meanwhile prices continue to rise, as expected. The Birmingham Council blazed a trail by increasing council rents by up to 10/- p.w. The 'Grocer' in the 2nd. week in September, noted increases in another 30 items of food. The official 'cost of living index' (fiddled as it is) rose over 5 points in the past 12 months.

What does the 'Labour' government say to this? Mr. Stewart advises housewives to keep an eye on prices and write to him if they have complaints! Why is there no prices freeze? Mr. Stewart & co. mumble about 'seasonal factors' - but in reality, the whole idea is 'to cut working class living standards and so boost profit margins. Moreover, by improving their 'competitive position' in the world markets, the British monopolists hope to be

EDITORIAL (continued from page 1)

able to continue and even step up their export of capital to the colonies and neo-colonies where fantastic profits can be looted from cheap labour and plentiful raw materials.

To pay its debts and provide it with capital, the ruling class of monopolists realise that they have to get British workers to foot the bill. They try baffling us with talk about a 'national' crisis & they hit us with the wage freeze - but the real struggle is to come when they try to smash our shop stewards' movement. To get us to produce more and consume less, the bosses must smash our own organisations.

As a start, the 'Labour' government is disciplining us with a sharp spell of deflation and unemployment. They hope that this will take the steam out of the pressure for higher wages to meet rises in the cost of living. Already the car industry has been hit by redundancy and short time working. B.M.C. are laying off 5,000 men at Longbridge, Cowley etc and 800 in West Lothian: 30,000 are to go on short time (in some cases 2 days a week). Aston Martin (Newport Pagnell), Jaguars (Coventry), Standard-Triumph, Vauxhall (Luton-Dunstable) are putting over 10,000 workers on short time between them. Various car component-manufacturing firms are threatening short-time and laying men off - Awson Motor Carriage works (Coventry) are laying off 450; Pressed Steel (Oxford) are threatening short time; even Richard Thomas & Baldwin, the state-owned steel firm are threatening jobs in Llanwern & Ebbw Vale. As forecast in the last 'Broadsheet' the 1,500 workers at ENV have been told that the firm will close down later this year. All this redundancy hits at the militant engineers & car workers shop stewards' movement - as was no doubt intended.

There have been sackings & short-time notices given to other workers. Thus a short while ago ICI sacked 1,000 workers in the North West; EMI sacked 700 at its Astrak works in Dundee; Blyth shipyard closed down, putting 1,200 men out of work. So the process goes on and with the recession in the building industry it seems likely that a million men could be out of work this win-

EDITORIAL (continued from page 2)

ter. We are in for a hard time.

Of course we are not taking the government and monopolists' attacks lying down and already the car workers are fighting back. 2,000 men stopped work at BMC's Washwood Heath plant in protest against the sackings and said that redundancy must be absorbed by short time working for all. Later, 1,000 workers at SU Carburettors (BMC subsidiary) stopped work for a day in protest against the sackings. The BMC unofficial Joint Shop Stewards Cttee. under Brother Etheridge are planning a national strike against the BMC sackings, affecting 110,000 workers in 20 plants throughout the country. The stewards have demanded official backing for the strike.

Although some T.U. officials are opposing the Wage Freeze and deflation, e.g. the ASSET, NALGO, DATA & FGS WU executives, nevertheless the majority of these full time officials supported the 'Labour' government at the recent TUC conference. This served to demonstrate quite irrefutably that they are traitors to the rank and file union members who support these careerists in style with their contributions. If these Union leaders drew the same pay as their members would they be so keen on the wage freeze? Look at Sir William Carron! He's even on the board of directors of the Bank of England!

We would be foolish to expect anything to happen at the Labour Party Conference in the near future. Of course the 'Tribune' types will voice criticism - but they are afraid of bringing the government down! Why? It is only 'Labour' in name: to fool us. Mr. Wilson hasn't been 'blown off course': he's going along the route both he and the ruling class think necessary. The Left Labourites, along with the CPGB continue to support the Wilson government, although it is critical support. The correct line is complete opposition to the 'Labour' government - the outright tool of the bosses!

End.

~ STEEL NATIONALISATION ~

The Left-wing of the "Labour" Party and the "Communist" Party of Great Britain have been clamouring for Mr. Wilson and the "Labour" government to follow "socialist" policies - including the nationalisation of steel. The "Labour" Government is planning to do this in the near future. In spite of what the steel "barons", the "Daily Express", Mr. Wilson etc, etc., say - this has nothing to do with socialism. This is CAPITALIST nationalisation - as happened with the Bank of England, the Coal, Gas, Electric and Railway industries under Atlee. None of these ventures have helped the workers. But these basic industries, recapitalised at the workers' expense (in government subsidies etc.), continue to underwrite "private" big business by providing essential services (fuel, power & transport), while the workers concerned find the capitalist state a harder task master than even private bosses.

So with Steel, the big chemical, engineering and banking chiefs want the steel industry efficient: it is a basic industry. It needs recapitalising and reorganising. "Private" monopolists are not up to the task. But in spite of the objectives of the steel "barons", there is to be a state "takeover" and streamlining. Wilson and Co. will pass it off as "Socialism" - to confuse militant workers. But the key question is:- who will run the nationalised steel industry?

If it was to be socialist nationalisation, the workers and their shop-floor representatives would control and direct the industry. But this is not to happen with "Labour" nationalisation.

"The Times" announced on Sept 24th 1966 that Lord Melchett is to be the new "overlord" for the nationalised steel industry. Lord Melchett, 42, of Merchant Bankers Hill-Samuel, is an old Estonian and the grandson of Alfred Mond (founder of I.C.I.). He is a member of the Advisory Council of Export Credits Guarantee Department and part time member of the British Transport Docks Board and he holds directorships in Shipping. One of his partners in Hill-Samuel, Mr. K. Keith holds a post on N.S.D.C. and another, Mr. D. Palmer is a special industrial adviser to the Department of Economic Affairs. (cont'd on p 9)

~ VERWOERD'S DEATH ~

Dr. Verwoerd has finally been assassinated. He was an evil man. Like Hitler he was a fascist and a racist. He 'excused' the murder, exploitation and degradation of millions of working men, women & children, simply because these people have pigmented skins. Like Hitler before him, Verwoerd claimed to represent 'civilisation' but in fact he stood for cruelty, repression & greed.

In the future when a truly socialist society covers the entire world, historians will look back on Verwoerd & others like him as barbarians & monsters.

Future historians will also point out the economic base of racialism in South Africa and Africa generally.

Although the Boers are trying to build up local capitalism under the auspices of state-supported enterprise, the bulk of investment in South Africa is from Western imperialist sources. According to the South African Reserve Bank Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, in 1960, British investment stood at book value £886 mn US investment at £312½mn., W. German £234½mn. Japanese, Dutch etc £6½mn. In 1962 British investments were at £1,000 mn. book value about 2/3 of total investments, remitting disclosed profits of 12½% p.a.

The biggest British firm is Anglo-American Corporation which is 2/3 to 4/5 British in capital and which controls all diamond sales and production in 'free' world (through De Beers), most of the gold, and copper, coal, iron, titanium, uranium production in S. Africa, Zambia, Swaziland, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Tanzania etc. Also Katanga! I.C.I. is also very active in South Africa, in chemicals, synthetic fibres, fertilisers & plastics. With De Beers, ICI control 'African Explosives & Chemical Industries' the largest producer of mining explosives in the world. It also produces munitions for the South African government.

Tube Investments, Paton & Baldwins, Babcock & Wilcox, Cyril Lord, Shell etc etc are all active in South Africa. The British imperialists are supporting the South African White-racist regime. That is why they are all upset by Verwoerd's death.

~ LETTER from CHINA ~

Dear Jim,

Pekin Sept. '66.

Your hair must be standing on end at the reports in the British press on present events in China. "Swarming teenagers", "rampaging", "mob violence" so go the highly emotive words. One can imagine hordes of screaming youngsters tearing along, brandishing portraits of Mao Tse-tung, while evryone else cowers with heads bowed, and foreigners not daring to step outside.

I went for a stroll in a main shopping street today as I have done everyday for the past week. Lots of people about - great numbers of Red Guards and other young people; buses crammed full. A few purposeful Red Guards striding along but everyone else ambling as usual. Crowds grouped round the thousands of posters stuck up everywhere - groups having a discussion or argument (I haven't seen one noisy one) in the middle of the pavement - an air of excitement - almost festivity - otherwise things are as usual.

This is really a revolution - and it is most exciting. Some foreigners are afraid - even those who call themselves revolutionaries. They don't like the young people being given their heads. They think it should all be directed and controlled by the Party. They only believe in 'to the masses', not in 'from the masses'. They beleive in a mass movement where the masses are told 'don't do this', 'you mustn't do that', 'go so far and no further'.

Of course there have been excesses of revolutionary zeal. Some of the thousands of suggestions and demands that have been put up on posters and given out in handbills advocate extreme equalitarianism & are impractical at present. Others are so puritanical as to make us 'middle-aged cynics' smile gently. But the energy & enthusiasm to do away with privilege, big-heads, bad old feudal & capitalist habits - to go 20 years in a single day - is a marvellous thing.

(continued p.7)

LETTER FROM CHINA (continued from page 6)

Many of the recent posters have been quite self-critical - urging proper behaviour - and pointing out mistakes. Now, students from all parts of China, are beginning to pour into Peking to exchange experiences and discuss problems. All college students will come during the next few months and representatives from every middle school in the country. Meanwhile many Peking students are going out to other places to make contacts with students.

It is a great shake up, this Cultural Revolution. Many things have been uncovered. People wanted for crimes in other places have been found hidden in the cities. Ex-landlords and others have been found to possess guns explosives, gold bars and land title-deeds. These facts are not reported in the foreign press! But we are asked to weep over nuns who are put to do menial tasks, big-shots who have been abusing their privileges - obliged to wear signs for a few days to show people what they are!

Didn't the revisionist leaders and their henchmen in Russia howl when the Red Guards changed the name of the street where their Embassy is, to 'Struggle Against Revisionism Street'? They are afraid too - their reaction shows it. They don't like the masses: they don't like revolution.

Best wishes,
Andy.

Footnote by Editor: Like their masters in Moscow, the British revisionists in the CPGB have feverishly attacked the cultural revolution gripping the working masses in China. Gollan and the political scum around him hate the revolutionary people of China under the leadership of Comrade Mao Tse-tung & the C.P.C. This is because they are reactionaries who long ago discarded the working class principle of international proletarianism, in just the same way as they have discarded the aim of revolution in this country. They are the 'radical' wing of the British establishment, whose job is to mislead and corrupt militants and waste their time in reformist politics.

End.

~ MODERN INDENTURED-LABOUR ~

Recently the Caribbean Newspapers have been expressing delight that plans have been finalised for the recruitment of Jamaicans in Jamaica, to work on buses in London. Such a scheme already exists in Barbados and the newspapers have stated that similar proposals will be effected in Trinidad.

The newspapers and Caribbean political leaders are joyful at the success of their encouragement of a MODERN DAY INDENTURED LABOUR SYSTEM.

Caribbeans in England themselves are mounting a serious campaign ^{against} this modern day indentured-labour scheme and British Workers are being called upon to give them every assistance to make this campaign a success. We do not believe this reactionary proposal is in the interest of ourselves or the British working class.

- CONDITIONS OF THIS REACTIONARY SCHEME. -

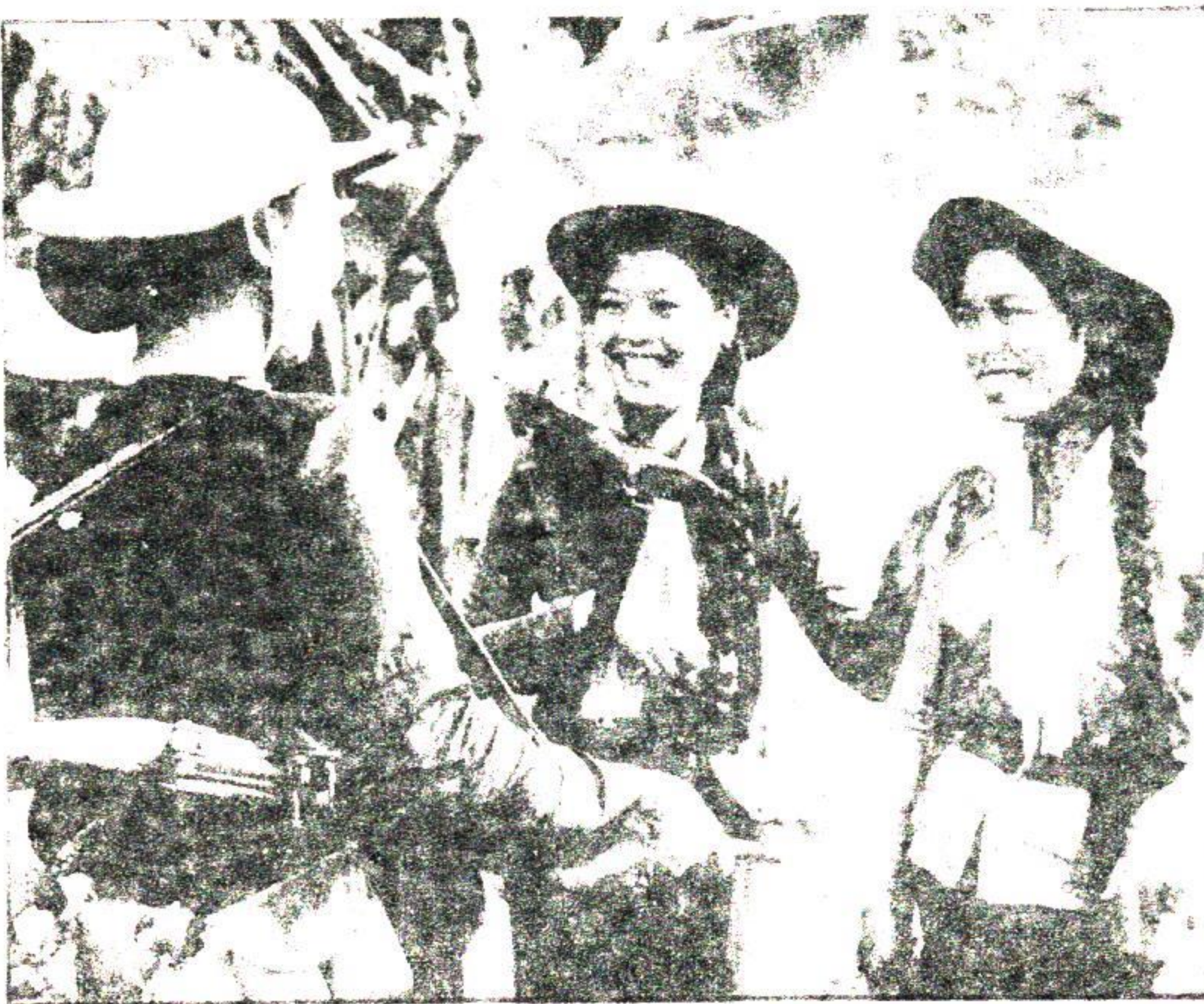
All Caribbeans, British and other Commonwealth workers know that the "colour bar immigration laws", prevent non-white Commonwealth and other people from coming to England to seek employment of their own choice and even to get further education. But this reactionary scheme which has the full blessing of the --- British "Labour" Govt. and the present day so-called "leaders" of the Caribbean people is expected " to provide for the recruitment of approximately 30-40 men monthly for employment as Bus Conductors....also hoped that the scheme will be extended later to include other categories...." "Persons to be selected must have attained a good educational standard and will be required to take a test in English and Arithmetic. Single men are preferred but consideration will be given to married men 20-35 years old who have no children. Persons selected will be required to pay their fare to England and to work with the London Passenger Transport Board for at least two years."

This sort of semi-slavery must be denounced and fought by all working people in England and in the Caribbean. Workers must be permitted to come here freely and to seek jobs of their own choice at wages and conditions equal to their fellow British workers. If we - British, Caribbean and other working people, here in England permit this scheme to go ahead it will (1) make all recruits under this reactionary scheme third-class citizens and (2) open dangerous avenues for undercutting wages.

It all clicks nicely into place !

How much more evidence do we need that this "Labour" Government is a capitalist Government; that nationalisation by a "Labour" Government is capitalist nationalisation. Nationalisation can only be SOCIALIST when the workers have State Power in this country. It is useless to "criticise" Wilson and the "Labour" government. We must oppose them; we must fight for workers' power and workers' democracy.

=====



VIETNAM

All freedom loving people the world over salute the heroic Vietnamese people in their (and our) valiant struggle against U.S. aggression and British "Labour" government's complicity.

Although in Vietnam there are over 311,000 U.S. troops and a "war machinery" comparable to the forces used again

st the Germans in Europe: the Vietnamese people are defending the North (the D.R.V.) having shot down over 1,400 U.S. Aircrafts and liberating the South -4/5 of the South has been liberated. The Vietnamese Women have been taking part militantly both in the fighting and in production. WE SALUTE OUR VIETNAMESE SISTERS !

Appeal: ~ LET'S WORK TOGETHER ~

The time has come to begin seriously organising working people as part of the process of building a revolutionary, socialist Workers' Party on a national basis. We must step up the work at local, grass roots level. There are no short cuts. We must go DIRECT to working people in our places of work, in our neighbourhoods. We can also work in trade union branches, Young Socialist, Young Communist League, CPGB, CARD, MCF, Peace and anti-imperialist committee branches. We must work where working people are in action for their economic, democratic & political rights.

The revolutionary working class movement is very fragmented at present and our work must be coordinated to be effective. It must be organised around agitational and theoretical organs of propaganda which must have an informative and educational role. We must learn to talk to the working masses in a language that is relevant and we must learn to listen to working men and women if we are to do this.

The main issues around which our work can be organised at present would seem to be:

1. Against the ruling class attacks on our living standards in the form of the wage freeze; and against their attacks on our right to organise and strike.
2. Against inadequate housing, high rents, bad landlords.
3. Against racialism, discrimination & fascism.
4. Against imperialist aggression & exploitation throughout the world, including the British govt.'s support of the US imperialists' aggression in Vietnam; and British govt's aggression in Middle & Far East, and its protection & support of S.African & Rhodesian racists'.

If you want to help in this work to build a true working class organisation, get in touch with one of the following addresses:

FUNNELL-ARCHWAY. 115 Huddleston Road N.7.

ISINGTON 139 Hemingford Road N.1.

ADDRESSES (continued)

3 HACKNEY-STOKE NEWINGTON: 30, Ayresome Road N.16.
4 or, 91 Stoke Newington High Street N.16.

[CAMDEN : 5 22 Arkwright Mansions, Finchley Rd. NW 3.
or, 6 Flat 2, 4 Frognal, NW3.]

BRIXTON: 7 15, St. Martin's Road, SW 9.

CENTRAL LONDON: 8 Flat A, 54 St. Gile's High Street WC 2.

TOOTING-MERTON: 9 32 Park Road SW 19.

o Political Education o

In October this year the 'London Workers' Broadsheet' Group & their friends are going to begin a series of EDUCATION-DISCUSSION meetings which will take place over the following months. A syllabus will be published later and 'discussion notes' circulated to all participants prior to each meeting.

Anyone interested in attending the course should get in touch with:

Jim Strong, 115 Huddleston Rd. N.7.

So far it has been agreed by the 'Broadsheet' committee that the course will include:-

1. History of the British working class.
2. Imperialism.
3. Classes and the State in modern Britain.
4. The National Question in Britain.
5. What is Socialism? How will it apply to Britain?
6. The Way Forward.

Some of these subjects may take more than one discussion-class. More detailed information about the course will be published later.

NOTE: With forthcoming issues of 'Broadsheet', theoretical supplements will be published, including "Peaceful Coexistence in the Era of National Liberation Struggle" & "The Crisis of British Imperialism & Our Tasks".

~ KILBURN C.A.R.D. ~

The Kilburn branch of the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD) was set up at the meeting held on August 23rd. at the Church Hall in Iverson Rd. Hundreds of visits had earlier been made to people in the area and 70 names and addresses of people who were interested had been collected. 20 people came to the meeting and there were messages of support from many more.

Ian MacDonald, a member of Islington CARD spoke to the meeting about the struggles & successes of that branch, uniting English & immigrant workers against bad housing & bad landlords. Their members had got big rent reductions; and they had stood together in preventing the landlords' efforts to frighten them.

There was general agreement that in Kilburn too, housing conditions and rents were a big problem. Some of those at the meeting complained of walls rotting with damp, of uncovered water tanks & high rents (in 1 case mentioned £9 for 2 rooms). There were other problems too, such as the lack of any nursery school in the area. Individual complaining would not help, but the strength of united action would win.

It was decided to hold advisory service sessions to discuss individual cases every 2 weeks. A lawyer would be present. These sessions would be followed by general meetings of the CARD branch. Canvassing would be carried out on Thursdays when new and old contacts would be systematically visited.

It was agreed that racialism and hate between neighbours grow up as a false explanation for poor housing, bad schools, low wages. Brotherhood & friendship will grow in the common action against these evils.

A. Frank was elected chairman of the branch; John Vickers - Vice-chairman; Constance Lever - secretary - her address is: 22 Arkwright Mansions, Finchley Rd. NW3. SW1 6716.

Advisory sessions & meetings occur 7.30pm every 1st & 3rd Tuesday every month at 78 Shoot-Up Hill NW2. The branch has affiliated to Camden United Tenants Assn.