

NALGO ACTION

NALGO ACTION

VOL.1 NO.2

EDITORIAL BOARD

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SIGNED ARTICLES ARE NOT NECESSARILY THE VIEWS OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD,

editorial

The first issue of NALGO ACTION was a complete success. All the copies have now been sold and anyone with unwanted copies should return them to us.

This second issue we hope will be a bigger success. We include the second part of our feature on job evaluation in which two London Boroughs are examined. We also have the continuation of Geoff Woolfe's article on democracy in Nalgo. A regular column begins in this issue dealing with the non-local government services included in Nalgo's sphere of influence. We hope to expand this aspect of our work in future issues. An article examining the handiwork of some of the Tories in charge of local councils rounds off the main features of NALGO ACTION.

It may be noticed that this issue has a definite London bias. This is not because we want it to be like that but mainly because all those militants in the Midlands and North West who promised articles somehow forgot.

☆☆☆

The recent industrial disputes involving local government manual workers and later the electricity supply workers pinpointed how ludicrous Nalgo's organization has become. In both cases, Nalgo sent out instructions to its members not to do any extra work during the disputes but in both cases there were still some members willing to do strike-breaking in order "to keep essential services running" or "to minimize inconvenience to the public". The gutter press lived up to its name in producing stories of sewage in drinking water, and old age pensioners dying of cold. They never seem to get so worked up when our atmosphere and food is polluted every day of the year or when our old people die of cold every single winter regardless of strikes.

Many Nalgo members, like members of the public, fell for these sob stories and scabbed on the strike. We feel that until the barriers between manual and non-manual workers are broken down within local government and the public services, this sort of situation will continue to exist. Many white-collar workers identify themselves more with their employers than with their fellow manual workers.

The only remedy for this is the forming of one union for local government and one union for each of the public services. As workers in the public sector find themselves more and more in the firing line this demand will become more and more urgent.

☆☆☆

It is a little disturbing to see that the local government claim examined in our last issue has already been diluted. The demand for better overtime payments has somehow got left out while the claim for long-service increments and the 35-hour-week is just going to be stuck back where we originally put it - in the salary claim. The employers have agreed with the staff side that the next salary claim can include these two items that the employers rejected last year. How very generous of them! By some incredible act of charity, they have allowed discussion on extra annual leave to continue. Wonders will never cease.



UNCLE BOB'S BILL

Our readers will not be surprised when we affirm our total opposition to the Government's Industrial Relations Bill. The Bill is a direct attack on the trade union movement, and that means us. (Glyn Phillips' words, not ours!) We haven't the space to detail all the points in the Bill, but just consider the following proposals:

- i) All collective agreements will be legally enforceable - the employers will have a veto even if the union objects.
- i) "Unfair" actions will be reported by the employers to the proposed Industrial Relations Court. These include:
 - a) it will be unfair for any person or organisation other than a registered trade union to induce or threaten to induce others to break their individual contracts of employment in an industrial dispute.
 - b) it will be "unfair" to take "sympathy" action in support of another unfair action; this includes blacking of work.
 - c) it will be "unfair" to threaten or take industrial action in order to break a legally binding agreement.

If these proposals were law in 1969 and 1970, Nalgo members could have been fined for:

- i) Calling special group meetings to force our negotiators to break an agreement if the rank and file object to the agreement.
- ii) Calling on members not to undertake election duties in support of the 15% local government salary claim.
- iii) Taking time off work to lobby negotiators and employers during a salary claim.
- iv) Publishing articles, leaflets or pamphlets calling for strikes in support of a salary claim.
- v) Refusing to carry out extra duties in support of the dustmen's strikes.

Nalgo's strike at Leeds Cleansing Dept would have been illegal. The Emergency Committee could have been prosecuted.

In addition all unions will have to register with the Registrar, and union rules will be inspected. The Government will have power to order a 60-day "cooling off" period and a compulsory strike ballot in the "national interest".

The Bill has been rejected outright by the National Executive Committee. We welcome the position taken by all but four members of the NEC. We hope that HQ's publicity machine is well-oiled so that the message gets across to EVERY Nalgo member. It is a measure of the progress made by the union in the last few years that we are seen to be a part of the wider trade union movement in its opposition to the Bill.

However, we feel that certain comments are necessary to put the NEC's stand in perspective. Firstly Nalgo policy exactly matches TUC policy. We should be quite clear what this means. Vic Feather has stated that he is opposed to any industrial action to beat the Bill. We would ask, how else can it be done? At the time of writing, the second reading of the Bill was passed with a majority of 44. Neither will the Bill be defeated by speech-making by ex-Ministers

criticizing what they themselves were saying six months ago! Nalgo, the TUC and the whole trade union movement needs a more militant policy than this.

Nalgo should make it clear that we will

- i) Refuse to register with the Registrar
- ii) Refuse to make any agreements legally binding
- iii) Refuse to co-operate with any Government body set up under the Bill
- iv) Immediately give 60 days notice of strike action over the next salary claims
- v) Support any industrial action taken by other trade unionists against the Bill.

Refusal to co-operate will make the Bill unworkable. If we are not prepared to take this kind of action we may as well accept the Bill. We have already seen that some members of the NEC like Fred Jex and Jim Gardner are not opposed to the Bill in principle. We hope that others, like T. Waterhouse, P. Morgan and Glyn Phillips, will support any member who finds himself up against the law.

If the Bill becomes law, the rank and file can be sold down the river time and time again: and we will not be able to do anything about it - legally. If our negotiators backslide on service conditions claims, or accept paltry salary offers, we will have to fight the law. This is the major object of the Bill, to strengthen the backsliders like Mr Jex and Mr Gardner, and to weaken the rank and file who are prepared to act in support of a claim. This is why the Bill must be fought and defeated.

DEMOCRACY- NALGO STYLE PART TWO



A SENIOR OFFICER'S UNION

Perhaps it is pertinent to ask why so many NEC members have been perturbed by the rise in militancy in the union. If we examine the type of jobs so many of the top NALGO men perform we can see why. Since it is not possible to find out the salaries paid to NEC members by their employers, one can only guess. But are Assistant Town Clerks and Assistant Treasurers

on Clerical Grades? It is obvious to anyone with ears, eyes and a thin wallet that the interests of the lower-paid tend to be neglected by the union. How else can one explain the perpetuation of the Local Government Miscellaneous scales? Or the low holidays for the low-paid and the second-class citizenship of those below the bar on the Trainee grade?

The inescapable fact is that NALGO is a union for the whole staff in any establishment. If a similar situation existed in ICI or Fords, we would expect to find the works manager in the same union as the men who sweep the floor. The reason why NALGO has for years fought shy of becoming a proper trade union is that there are too many men from upper and middle management running the union. How easily, for instance, can a typist in an entertainments office pursue a case if her NALGO rep is the entertainments manager.

The purpose of NALGO, as any other trade union, is to act in the interests of its members, both individually and collectively. It is a useful exercise to see how difficult it is for the individual rank and file members to have a say at all in NALGO. Take the average local branch ...

THE NALGO BRANCH

In any department in a local authority, for instance, there will be at least one departmental representative. Assuming there are no vacancies, how can any other member play an active part in union affairs? In most NALGO branches, that means once a year at the AGM. Most AGM's are a farce. The officers will report on the year's work, there may be a resolution or two about which the majority know very little, there may be a speech from an NEC member (or "personality") and a little grumbling from the usual "moaners". Is it surprising that so few rank and file members turn up to AGM's. In some branches, the most heated discussion may revolve around whether or not to resurface a snooker table! In these

circumstances, it is no wonder that the NALGO branch seems remote or unconcerned, not to say ineffectual, to a large number of members. All NALGO branch meetings should be open to all members. If they become too large, departmental meetings should be held prior to branch executive meetings so that the representative is fully briefed and knows what the feeling is in his section on any particular issue. If necessary, branch rules will need to be changed to allow greater participation in the union at local level.

DISTRICT COUNCILS - THE VITAL LINK

It is also important that rank and file members have more control of their respective District Councils. How many District Council members are elected? Are they just delegated by Branch executives year after year? District Council members ought to be elected by the whole of a Branch. Candidates should state, verbally at a meeting or in writing, why they are standing. Too often, the persons elected are those who have held branch offices for years and it is considered a privilege or a sinecure to be a District Council member. Very often, it is the District Councils which are the most backward bodies in the Union. How many resolutions did the Metropolitan District submit to annual conference in 1970, for instance? Too often, long-standing members of District Councils see themselves as "responsible" men, rather than as trade unionists. The longer one sits on a committee, and the higher the status of that committee, the less likely the "good, responsible committee man" is to remember that he is a trade unionist and not an "old pal" of the employers. The District Council members in NALGO tend to become part of the "establishment". The District Council is the ladder to "promotion" in the Union; the stepping-stone to the local Whitley Council, the NEC or the

National Service Committees. It is a question of power and responsibility. As the link between the national committees of NALGO and the branches, the Districts are vital as regards democracy. It is essential that they do not remain the charges of so-called "responsible" men. They should be the tools of the branches in the fight for better salaries, better service conditions; they should be our ally. Too often, it seems, they and their paid officers are on the same side of the fence as the employer.

MORE PARTICIPATION - NOT LESS

If our Union is to become more responsive to the rank and file, all negotiating bodies should be elected by the membership as a whole, once a year. The National Local Government Committee, for example, ought to stand for election once a year. If it continues to be elected by district council members only, it will remain a self-perpetuating clique. Likewise, the staff side of the NJC should be elected by the membership as a whole.

It is amazing to consider that at the recent annual conference, East Midlands District moved a motion taking away the only voting right of the ordinary member, the election of the NEC. Even more amazing is that the card vote produced 88,784 for the motion. The present method of voting will continue, but remains far from satisfactory. Instead of a list of committees on which candidates have sat (and, judging by some lists, the poor fellows must have sore backsides!), the attachment to the ballot papers should include a short written statement by the candidates of their proposals, should they be elected; their position and salary, and age. We would then know who we were voting for, and, more important, why.

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SPECIAL CONFERENCES

If there has appeared to be more participation by the rank and file in NALGO in the past two years, it is only because we have taken advantage of special conferences and group meetings. Conference 1970 rejected a motion to make these gatherings obligatory when there were any pay or service conditions negotiations. The NALGO Action Group believes the motion was rejected only because of the feeling of euphoria following recent salary agreements. Six months ago, this proposal would have been passed unanimously. Many other large trade unions always report back to the membership on important issues (e.g. T&GWU).

OTHER UNIONS - HOW TO BE UNDEMOCRATIC

I believe we can learn lessons from other trade unions when it comes to democracy and participation in union affairs. We can learn what not to do from the National Union of General and Municipal Workers. This Union is losing members steadily. And no wonder. All union posts above branch level are full-time. The General Secretary is appointed for life. Branch organisers are appointed for life (they receive 10% of all union dues). Their rules include the following:

"No member shall be eligible for election to any national office unless the National Executive Committee are satisfied that he or she is capable of discharging efficiently the duties of the office."

A member can be expelled if he "makes or in any way associates himself with any defamatory, scurrilous or abusive attacks, whether in any journal, magazine or pamphlet, or by word of mouth, on any official of the Union or Committee of the Union." In addition,

"No member shall associate with, or cooperate with, or in any manner support any person or body

of persons or any organisations whatsoever which the NEC or District Committee has declared to be acting prejudicially to the Union or its policy whether industrial or political..."

At the recent Pilkingtons Glassworks strike in St Helens, 4,000 NUGMW workers left the Union because it wouldn't support them. They realised they had little hope of changing the Union, with its lack of democracy.

CHANGE

If NALGO is to go forward in the 1970s, we must elect all our officials, including the General Secretary, for a specified period. We don't want to finish up like the NUGMW. The NUGMW still have not learned that it is the members that make the union, not the officials and full-time committee men who lord it over the sub-payers. (Lords Cooper and Williamson have both recently been General Secretaries of the NUGMW). There are also committee men in NALGO who have the same approach. It's up to us to change it.

- G.J.WOOLFE

WATTS, THERMS, NURSES.

As I write, the manual workers in the electricity supply industry are, it seems, face to face with no less than the Tory Cabinet at the negotiating table.

The emotions whipped up among the public by the millionaire press are proving to be of danger to workers in all parts of the industry, many of whom are Nalgo members, who are being attacked physically or otherwise by enraged but misguided citizens. Their wrath should be directed at the Government and their willing lackeys on the employers' side of the negotiating body. In support of this phrase may I quote the Tory MP, Angus Maude, writing in the Sunday Express on 13 December:

"Of course, the Government is not the electricity workers' employer. It is the Electricity Council that must act as our champion in this fight."

Nalgo's instruction to electricity staffs, not to break the work-to-rule came commendably soon, but in an inadequate form: a single letter to each branch secretary - no posters.

At a recent branch AGM, Jack Lockwood, Nalgo Electricity Organiser, admitted that the clerical and administrative staffs in the industry would end up with exactly the same percentage settlement as the manual workers, as usual - another black mark to go with the union's complacent attitude to the contemptuous treatment accorded to their recent conditions of service claim.

Over at the CEGB, representations from Nalgo and other unions involved have altered the Generating Board's reorganization plans not one

iota. The occurrence was predictable, considering the past history of the Board's steamroller attitude to management-staff relations. So the third major upheaval in 10 years for some staff is to go ahead, with last-minute militant action by Nalgo ruled out, it seems.

Both gas and electricity show room staff must be fearful of the outcome of the possible handing over of the showrooms to private enterprise. The Government must be shown strong opposition to such plans, which have been greedily welcomed by the present retail chains, which have tiny profit margins in comparison. "Consultation, please" has been Nalgo's only cry so far - the Nalgo Action Group hereby expresses its outright opposition to such a sell-out. Control over the industries' future markets would be lost, and to cope with planning difficulties "hire and fire" manpower control methods might be introduced.

A nurse I know has recently become the first at her hospital to join Nalgo. I am sure that many readers will be acquainted with nurses who are not union members - a fact which is not unconnected with their exploited position in society. Now is the time to join Shonan's "Enrol a nurse in 1971" campaign and sign them up for Nalgo.

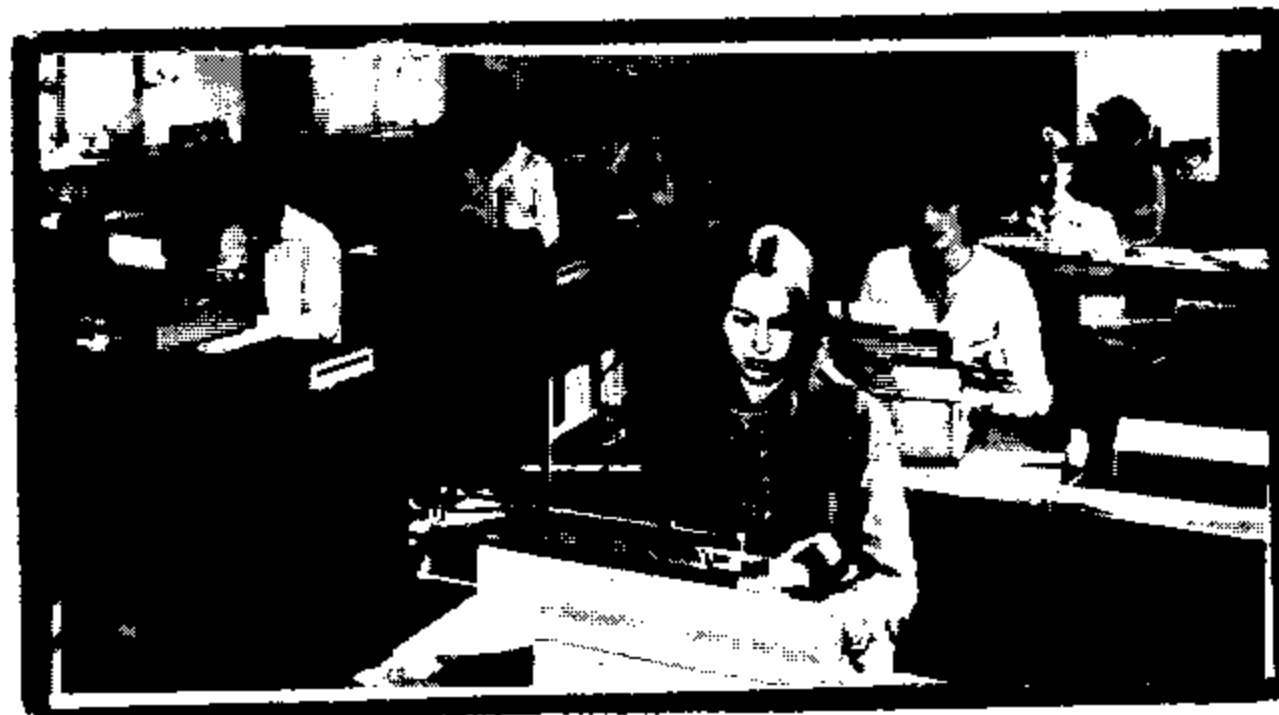
Don't forget, of course, to show them this proof of the Action Group's concern for them.

Thanks are due to Jeffrey Spooner for his excellent coverage of the North Western District Young Members Conference (see December "Public Service"). Note the contributions of Nalgo Action Group supporters Hill and Hartley. Many more attended an Action Group meeting during the conference.

Look out for further news from more of the 12 non-local government services in the next issue of NALGO ACTION.

R.P. SHONAN

job evaluation



IN GREENWICH & HAMMERSMITH L.B.S

The London Borough of Greenwich has been using job evaluation techniques for over a year now. A job evaluation exercise is carried out for every new post, every application for regrading and all vacant posts. It appears likely that job evaluation will be eventually carried out on every member of staff. When the scheme was first introduced, the branch executive committee decided to not participate but advised members to co-operate in completing the necessary forms whilst retaining the normal rights of appeal.

SECRET MEETINGS

At present if you ask to be regraded you are asked to complete a job description form listing all your duties. This list of duties has to be agreed between yourself and your chief officer. This form is sent to the Establishment Section who send one of their job evaluation team along to see you and you are expected to expand on the agreed list of duties. After this meeting which takes place at your desk, the job evaluator confers with your group or section leader in a private meeting. Between them, they secretly decide your job's responsibility levels etc. The discussion at this stage can be quite prolonged but it depends on how much interest your group leader takes in your particular case. However you are not involved in these discussions and are not told

the outcome. The evaluator then departs and allocates points to the levels and arrives at a grade for your job.

CAST IRON

The results produced during the past year have not been particularly startling one way or the other, but there has been an unprecedented number of appeals this year and there have been long delays. It does appear that only cast-iron regrading requests are successful and that the use of job evaluation produces less upgradings not more. It has also been clear that the piecemeal way that J.E. has been applied in Greenwich is not good. For it to have any pretence of fairness, it must be applied to the whole staff and there must be a common operative date.

UNBIASED?

Job evaluation should enable unbiased comparisons to be made between say engineers and treasurers, public health inspectors and town clerks - but this cannot effectively take place when the scheme is operated piecemeal, nor when weightings are attached to attract staff in a particular section where there is a shortage.

In Greenwich, technical and other professional staff are becoming increasingly convinced of the inapplicability of J.E. to their jobs, and that J.E. can only work favourably for clerical jobs, particularly as long as people are evaluated for the work they are actually doing, not the work they are capable of doing.

NALGO ON THE FENCE

Not only does the job evaluation exercise involve discussions about your job from which you are excluded; you can not even try to evaluate yourself as you are also excluded from knowing anything about the points that are allocated to the levels. Certain select members of the branch and Met. District establishment have copies of the points system, but the rank and file member is not to be trusted with such classified information, no matter how important it is to him!

This is because the staff side of the Greater London Whitley Council has adopted a traditional Nalگو sitting-on-the-fence attitude - we co-operate with the scheme but do not agree to the points system. Nalگو keeps the membership in the dark but encourages them to appeal when the system gives the wrong result. This policy has been closely adhered to by the Greenwich Nalگو executive.

EXPOSE AND SMASH!

This official fatalistic attitude adopted by the Nalگو hierarchy means that it is up to every member to keep a close watch on job evaluation exercises as they are applied in their workplaces; to encourage everyone to appeal against bad results; to expose the so-called impartial and scientific job evaluation for what it really is, a load of —!

ALAN WEST

Amidst a mammoth reorganization started by the Tory Council in 1968 and 1969, the London Boroughs Management Services Unit undertook a job evaluation scheme in Hammer-smith. We were the "guinea pigs". The employers persistently refused any joint consultation on all aspects of reorganization and such basic questions as redundancy until late in 1969 under threat of black-listing. The first job evaluation scheme was already two-thirds completed. Members of the staff side were complaining that they had had little or no guidance from either Nalگو HQ or from Metropolitan District Office, save for an "academic" document. Consequently, the staff side were unprepared to tackle job evaluation, bearing in mind its long-term implications.

Over 800 posts were evaluated out of a total staff of around 1500. Most of those concerned were interviewed by the assessors, but some evaluations were made on the basis of reports from senior or chief officers. The assessors often hadn't the vaguest idea what a particular job entailed even

after an hour's interview. In some cases, evaluations were made of jobs which have since been "phased out" as a result of reorganization within a department.

When the final report was published, the staff side were given only ten days in which to make comments. No details of the scheme were given to the unions involved (NALGO, NUPE, NUGMW). The calculations have never been officially revealed. Sufficient was known, however, for the staff side to express the view that the weightings in the scheme were so low as to result in unreasonable or unfair gradings. This opinion was shown in a resolution passed by the Nalgo branch on 12th May 1970, and sent to the General Secretary. The resolution also drew attention to the Met. District's partial acceptance of the LBMSU scheme and felt that the weightings should have been subject to mutual agreement before implementation. The branch requested



the staff side of the Greater London Whitley Council to press for an agreed settlement. Since then, a modified scheme has been agreed but it remains to be seen how much has been altered in favour of the staff's objections. It is obviously essential that branches know all the details before they can pass comment.

In the first scheme, 836 posts were evaluated, 576 were unaltered, 137 were upgraded and 127 downgraded. Of those upgraded, some were as a result of pressure from chief officers and comparison with other departments. This resulted in some staff being upgraded, while others doing identical

jobs remained on the same grade! Some have even been "upgraded" but remain on the same salary. All those downgraded remain on the same salary on a personal basis, but this effectively prevents future rises without a successful appeal. Some staff have appealed under paragraph 80 of the Charter against downgrading, others have a right of local hearing as "aggrieved" persons (those whose salary remains the same). This was considered a "concession" by the employers. So far there have been over 70 appeals or aggrieved cases. It is doubtful if they will succeed without strong union action.

Since 1969 further evaluations have been carried out, presumably under the new scheme (again we have not been told). It seems job evaluation is to be a continuous process. The Council must think it worthwhile to save (save?) money at the expense of the staff. The LBMSU scheme has been revealed to many as a ludicrous exercise at great cost to the ratepayers and the staff alike. Those who have applied for salary reviews have been told "Wait for job evaluation", only to find that they might be worse off as a result!

It is hoped that we will not be "conned" into similar schemes, in Hammersmith or anywhere else.

G.J. WOOLFE

As you may have gathered from the previous two articles, the authors are somewhat sceptical of job evaluation schemes and so we believe should everyone be. We ought to demand the following when faced with such schemes:-

- i) full details of the scheme to be made available to the staff as a whole before implementation.
- ii) no loss of establishment or redundancy.
- iii) no downgradings.
- iv) evaluations subject to negotiation by the union.

v) comparability to remain an essential principle.

If the employers argue that this is incompatible with a job evaluation scheme and that they intend to operate it in any case, our reply ought to be one of non-cooperation.

This policy will of course require strong unions locally and expert knowledge. We must all educate ourselves in management techniques, otherwise Nalگو members will be conned time and time again.

RECOMMENDED READING:-

"The Employers' Offensive" by Tony Cliff.

Price 6s. from Pluto Press, 6 Cottons Gardens, London, E2.

FAIR COMMENT

"For the bosses, armed with the collective wisdom of the leaders of Britain's fastest growing industry, the management consultants, have been running rings round the unions."


Vincent Hanna -
Industrial Correspondent
"Sunday Times" 19.7.70.

NATIONAL MEETING

DIGBETH CIVIC HALL,
BIRMINGHAM.

Sat 6th February
12 noon - 5pm.

Details from John Phillips,
66 Longland Court, Avondale
Square, London, S.E.1.




TORIES DO THEIR OWN THING!!



When Edward Heath stepped over the threshold of Number 10 Downing Street as Prime Minister last June, he made a speech which reiterated Disraeli's slogan of creating "One Nation". When the Tories were campaigning in the local elections last time their war cry was "War on Waste" - cut down needless expenditure. Coupled with their other slogans "Set the People Free", "Tory Freedom Works" etc. etc. their whole philosophy has revolved around a policy of laissez-faire, dog-eat-dog, survival of the fittest politics. In practice, this has meant that those people at the top of the social scale have done very well while those at the bottom are worse off. From a local point of view, where Tory councillors are even more reactionary than their Westminster colleagues, the effect of this policy has been disastrous. Cutting public expenditure has been their main plank regardless of public need.

In the London Borough of Westminster, the richest one in London, which has a rateable value of £110 million, the Tory Council demolished only 28 houses and built only 173 council dwellings in the first nine months of 1970. This is despite the fact that within the borough lies the slum areas of Paddington where Rachman built his empire.

In Kensington and Chelsea which includes the area of North Kensington and Notting Hill, famous for its appalling slums, the local Tories have cleared only 26 houses and completed 117 council dwellings during this same period.

Soon after the General Election, Environment Minister Peter Walker declared that he was shocked at the slums in Lambeth which he was seeing for the first time. However, this did not deter the valiant leaders of Lambeth Council from demolishing only 17 of these slums during the first 9 months of last year!

Rents, of course, are another important factor in the Tories' policy. The 200,000 tenants of the Greater London Council face rent increases which will total up to 15s. a week each year for some families. By the end of 1973, some rents will be over £8. Raising rents, slashing council building, cutting services, are all quite conscious policies of the Tories. Public service is being sacrificed at the altar of public expenditure.

Nothing is allowed to avoid the axe. In one London Borough, some local Tories even demanded that the pocket money given to children in care should be cut. Scrooge would have been delighted in these public-spirited citizens.

However, the Nalگو Action Group's Garland of Honour for the Saving of Public Money must go to the London Borough of Waltham Forest. Their Tory leaders, in their first year of office, spent almost £500,000 less than their own revised estimates. Among the noble deeds performed by these gentlemen were the reducing of home help services to the elderly by one eighth in order to save £21,000;

deferring a clean air programme to save £1,500; increasing day nursery charges from 11/6d. a day to the maximum 28/-; increasing the cost of meals-on-wheels by 3d; threatening to close a cervical smear clinic to save £600; cut the chiropody service to save £3,000; abolishing an Extra Nourishment Service (help for the sick) to save £1,000, reducing the school dental service by one-third; reducing by one-third holidays for old people and cripples which saved £1,880; and restricting free entertainment for mentally handicapped children to one party annually, at Christmas. Oh yes, Tory Freedom Works all right! Well done you Tories of Waltham Forest.

What is so sickening about this is that Nalگو members have to operate these heartless policies. We can soften the blows but we cannot stop them coming. By short-sighted cuts in expenditure, the Tories - our employers - have put intolerable strains on their staff. It is time that Nalگو came off the political fence and hammered these Tory policies. This does not mean support for the Labour Party as there are many Tory-minded Labour Councils, but it does mean that we come out in favour of an increase in public expenditure and an expansion of the public services. This is what politics is all about.

Up the Tories! (Right up and twist!)

BARRY BURKE



IS THE LIGHT DAWNING IN HIGH PLACES?

"Any member who still believes that NALGO is, or can be, non-political - as distinct from non-party political - should consider what impact the recent change of government is going to have. The involvement of modern government in industry, particularly the public services, is such that NALGO cannot avoid being caught up in politics..... NALGO, it is clear, while continuing to avoid involvement in party politics, cannot escape making decisions and submissions on political issues, even if it wished to."

PUBLIC SERVICE Editorial,
July/August 1970.



"Townspople and visitors will be glad to learn that repairs to the Town Clerk are completed and the Borough Surveyor, Mr. D.H.Cowles, reported that the fitters would be assembling the parts this week" - Cambrian News.

"£750,000 splashed by Council on new baths" - Headline in South London Press.

"Ex-Alderman Dies - One of eight axed by Tories" - Headline in Coventry Evening Telegraph.

"Twenty teenage girls from St Germain-en-Laye, Doncaster's twin town, were promised "a strenuous but fascinating time" when the Mayor of Doncaster (Counc.S.C.Holbrook) met them at the Mansion House today." - Yorkshire Evening Post.

IS COMPARABILITY USELESS?

"Vespa" in June 1970 PUBLIC SERVICE stated that he couldn't agree with the NALGO Action Group in its support for the principle of comparability in pay negotiations, because (he says) it means you cannot get a rise until somebody else does. He argues that comparability wouldn't help us to be nearer the front of the queue instead of at the back. How does he explain the manual workers' achieving a higher London weighting than ourselves? By using parity with the Civil Service and private industry and by being prepared to take action.

Incidentally, "Vespa" needs reminding that at the 1969 TUC Conference NALGO moved a resolution emphasising "the need to ensure that fair comparisons must be an efficient element in any assessment of claims made on behalf of the service occupations." The resolution was passed by the TUC.

Watch this space for further discussion of this question!

33 Fawcett Estate
Clapton Common
London E.5.

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your first publication of the Action Group journal. I am pleased to comment that this first of many publications is I am sure bound to be a success if this standard is kept.

Yours faithfully,

STEPHEN J. BURTON



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