

Jack Ashwell

Foreword by Bill Jones

**FOUR STEPS
FOR
PROGRESS**

**The operation of a
Municipal Transport System
with Workers' Control**

Institute for Workers' Control

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FOUR STEPS FOR PROGRESS

TRANSPORT AND WORKERS' CONTROL IN HULL

by Jack Ashwell

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- Page 1 Preface to 2nd (1969) Edition: Tony Topham
- Page 4 FOREWORD to 2nd Edition: Bill Jones
- Page 6 Preface by Janet Blackman (Hull Workers' Control study group) and Tony Topham (Editorial Board, Humberside Voice) to the original edition.
- Page 8 Section I The Present Set-up for Workers' Participation.
- Page 11 Section II Hull's Transport Problem and the Solution.
- Page 17 Section III The Busmen's Conditions and the Transition to Workers' Management.
- Page 20 Section IV Workers' Management of Hull's Buses.
- Page 26 Appendix (to 2nd Edition):
London Transport and Workers' Control. (re-printed from I.W.C. Monthly Digest, and 'Bus-Stop')
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Preface to 2nd Edition, 1969.

Jack Ashwell's pamphlet, "Four Steps for Progress", originally published in 1965, has been an important trail-blazer in the workers' control movement. It was the basis of discussions in busmen's seminars at national conferences in both 1966 and 1967, out of which has arisen a strong demand for, and some practical progress towards, workers' control in London Passenger Transport, and amongst municipal busmen. The demand for workers' representation on the new nationalised Boards created by the 1968 Transport Act was raised, though unsuccessfully, by Trade Union M.P.s during the passage of the legislation through the Commons. And the whole workers' control movement, in which the busmen's campaign was a pioneer, has advanced enormously in the wider trade union and labour movement, and has been vigorously sponsored not only by the busmen's union in London and the provinces, but by whole Regions of the T&GWU, and by important other trade groups in transport, such as the dockers and seamen, as well as in manufacturing and service industries generally.

But perhaps the most important reason for re-issuing the pamphlet, - now out of print in its original edition, but still in strong demand - is that its basic argument is even more relevant in 1969 than when it was first advanced. The busmen, and particularly the municipal section, have been one of the chief victims of the government's irrational, arbitrary, and socially unjust "incomes policy". Basic pay increases for municipal busmen have been frozen four times in the past two years, with the result that they have received only one general wage increase between 1966 and the end of 1968 - from January 1967 to December 1968 the basic wage for municipal conductors was compulsorily held at the basic Official union pressure which fell short of a direct conflict on this issue, has been treated with contempt by the Government.

This grotesque and malignant treatment has been accompanied by continuous pressure upon the busmen to accept "productivity" agreements. In one Report after another, the Prices and Incomes Board has presented the same "choice" to the busmen, - workers in an industry which is

grossly understaffed, which has low base wages, which works absurdly long hours, and which is suffering economically from all the consequences of private affluence (the motor car) amidst public squalor (the starving of public services and the absence of social accountability in urban growth which have led to congestion in our towns). The choice for busmen as presented, in P.I.B. Reports 16, 50, and 63, has been to accept new methods of working, or remain at their present wage levels.

There is no space here to list the P.I.B.'s "new methods" in detail, but taken together, its demands for ~~limitless~~ extension of One Man Operation, and for the almost total abandonment of union and local depot safeguards against excessive management powers to schedule work as thinks fit, would amount to an unthinkable retreat towards industrial servility on the part of the busmen.

The Government and employers hope that, if the pressure is sustained for long enough, the weaker sections of the busmen will settle for some or all of these terms, bringing down with them the standards and union controls which exist in the more effective branches and towns, so that the collective will of the workers is effectively reduced, and amenable to the rationalising zeal which is to be unleashed under the new Transport Act.

So far, whilst the union and the men have failed to concert a head-on challenge to this strategy, and have suffered the wage freeze with only fragmentary opposition, there has been no total break-through towards the establishment of a fully flexible and servile labour force. In town after town, busmen still obstinately insist upon negotiating safeguards - against redundancies, speed-up, the break-up of union rules on hours of work, schedules, spread-overs, the employment of part-time workers, etc. But they are fighting a fragmented battle; faced with a powerfully co-ordinated attack by Government, P.I.B., and employers, who have between them shown scant regard for the rights and dignities of busmen, they have lacked a counter-strategy which had an equivalent power to unite all busmen, and which expressed the positive nature of the busmen's aspirations.

Jack Ashwell anticipated the dilemma in which the busmen now find themselves. He shows, first of all, that busmen are entirely competent to analyse and comprehend the social and economic problem of the public transport industry. He demonstrates clearly that the new technology of passenger vehicle construction, combined with social control over urban traffic and road planning, could transform the transport problem of the towns. And, in the name of social accountability, he rejects the handing over of unilateral powers to the present bureaucratic managements. In short, he argues, as we said in our original "Preface", that busmen can only accept responsibility for new methods, if they have power. His programme and plans for the transition to workers' management follow logically - it is a programme which increasing numbers of busmen are going to take up, no doubt to modify in the light of local and regional circumstances, and to demand with ever greater urgency in the near future. It is a programme which will make increasing sense to wider and wider sections of the working population, as each in turn feels the stultifying weight of the current drive for servility at work imposed upon it, disguised as "productivity agreement." This pamphlet reveals part of the enormous potential creativity which lies in our mature, intelligent working class - a creativity the more frustrated and dammed back into apathy and indifference, the longer our industrial autocrats continue to suppress it. Productivity is no problem for free men: workers who are coerced into productivity will hit back, either to establish new defensive rules of their own, to preserve some control over their lives, or to break out of the vicious circle for good.

The London busmen have already taken the first steps. We show, in a new Appendix, some of the progress they have made, and some of the problems which arise along the way. And we are delighted that the break-out of this programme from its origins in the third port, to the metropolis, is further symbolized by the Foreword contributed by London's veteran busmen's leader, Bill Jones who, as chairman of successive national conferences of the workers' control movement, has been in the forefront of the fight for industrial democracy.

TONY TOPHAM

FOREWORD to New Edition.

I welcome the opportunity to write the foreword to this new edition of Jack Ashwell's booklet, which I first read in 1965.

Since the booklet was first written, many important steps along the road to the establishment of workers' control have been taken.

Firstly, the N.E.C. of the Labour Party have issued their pamphlet setting out their conception and/or interpretation of what workers' control can mean.

Jack Jones, the General Secretary elect of the Transport & General Workers' Union, moved the resolution on Workers' control at last year's T.U.C. in a powerful, reasoned speech.

In very many sections of the Labour and trade union movement the question of workers' control is now firmly on the agenda for both discussion and action.

The London busmen certainly now understand what the first, initial steps to workers' control can mean for, arising from the London Transport Re-Shaping Plan with its' introduction of new services and one-man bus operation, the Board have accepted the proposition that two members of the London Central Bus Committee shall be members of the Planning Committee.

This, of course, is only a beginning, but it means that the eight drivers and conductors who make up the London Central Bus Committee, and who are elected by the ballot vote of the members, have put a foot firmly in the door of "what is good for the bus passengers can be good for the drivers and conductors." It means that, instead of being told after the L.T.B. experts have worked out and introduced any new service or services, they are in from the beginning, and are part and parcel of the planning team.

The struggle for the understanding by active trade unionists of what workers' control can mean for their wages and

conditions is only beginning; many hard and difficult journeys have yet to be made.

The role and winning of the fight for workers' control in the struggle for Socialism has still a good way to go. But it is an issue that can no longer be dodged, and I am confident that, in the period ahead, the demands will be louder and stronger.

In an open letter I addressed to the Chairman of the London Transport Board I said, among other things: "With the greatest possible respect, but being absolutely blunt (and vulgar), they - your planners - couldn't plan a piss-up in a brewery. I also said: "I don't expect you to accept the theory of workers' control, an issue debated and accepted at the recent Trades Union Congress and at the Labour Party Conference. But, if ever a case was made for it, it has been made as the result of our experiences from the first taste of the Re-Shaping Plan. I could let you have the names of six practical busmen, whose living depends upon a well-run and thriving industry, that you could make part of your planning team for the next stage."

The words underlined are part of what workers' control means. We, on London buses, have taken a step in its direction, as I have indicated.

I wish the booklet every success, and the sale it deserves.

BILL JONES. 1969

WORKERS' MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN HULL.

Preface to Original Edition

This pamphlet has been written by the Chairman of the T&GWU's Busmen's branch in Hull. It is the outcome of serious study of the problem of democratic government in industry, and represents a highly practical application of the objects of both the Transport and General Workers' Union, and of the Labour Party. These objects are clearly stated in the following clauses:-

RULE 2(2) (a) of the T&GWU reads in part:

"The objects of the Union shall further include:-
..... the obtaining and maintaining of just and proper hours of work, rates of wages, and to endeavour by all means in their power to control the industries in which the members are engaged."

CLAUSE IV(4) of the Labour Party's Constitution reads:
"to secure for the workers by hand and by brain the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible, upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production distribution and exchange, and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service."

These objects have frequently been neglected by the Labour movement, or regarded as impractical. To-day's circumstances in Hull Transport Department (as elsewhere in industry) make it urgent, desirable, and practical, to raise the question of industrial democracy as an immediate policy issue. The proposals made in these pages overcome the old objection that industrial democracy is impractical. They affirm the principles which govern the Labour Party (the majority Party in Hull's Municipal Government) and the objects of the Union to which the busmen belong.

In recent months, the chief spokesmen for the T&GWU (Harry Nicholas and Jack Jones) have been in the

forefront of the demand that workers - through elected representatives on industrial committees - should have the power to investigate management policies and to report inefficiencies which they find. They have argued that if workers are to accept new methods, and increase productivity, they must be given this sort of power. They have said that workers should have access to the hitherto secret financial information upon which employers base their powers of uncontrolled decision-making. Throughout industry, government and employers are making far-reaching new demands, that workers should accept new methods, and suffer wage restraint, without their having any share in the power to run industry. This pamphlet argues (in Section II) that a major change in the methods of operation in Hull Transport are socially and economically desirable. However, it shows (in Section I) that the present structure of negotiating and consultation machinery leaves the worker with a quite inadequate control over the processes by which change would be introduced. It then proposes (in Section III) that if the busmen are to say "Yes" to new methods, they must have certain pre-conditions guaranteed. These conditions include questions of wages and security. The final condition, which is developed as a plan for self-management in the last Section, is that if busmen are to experience a major alteration of the transport system, they can accept no RESPONSIBILITY for this, WITHOUT POWER.

If the Labour Party in the town responds positively to these practical and imaginative proposals, and if the Union puts its weight behind them, we can embark upon a local experiment in industrial democracy.

1965

1. THE PRESENT SET-UP FOR WORKERS' PARTICIPATION.

The graph (see next page) explains the method by which normal consultations and discussions are carried out by the management and the trade union representatives of the drivers, conductors, cleaners and the storemen within the department.

As far as possible, day to day complaints whether by one member or more, are dealt with by the Road Representative and/or the Chairman.

Where decisions are not accepted, then the complaint or request are pursued upwards by the Secretary and the deput-ation.

There is another procedure for suggestions and complaints and that is via the Traffic Works Committee. The practice is to try and get satisfaction on complaints through the use of the Secretary and the lay representatives and keep to a minimum point for the Traffic Works Committee. This committee is used by the trade union side mainly for suggestions as we have no voting rights on it.

Canteen and other welfare matters of that nature are dealt with on an Advisory Canteen Committee. Again no voting rights.

The present system for negotiation and discussion gives the trade union representatives access to managerial levels but does not give any participation in decision-making affecting the policies of the department. Matters presented by the trade union side are not dealt with in the manner one would expect. It would be as well to illustrate by some examples delays and the frustration felt not only by the men's representatives but also by the men themselves.

Last year after meetings with the management over the introduction of a new method of operation in East Hull and re-adjustment of the duties, a Dispute Committee from the National Joint Industrial Council met to consider the men's rejection on seven points, the introduction of the proposal.

Following this there were further meetings with the management which terminated in a one day's un-official strike. Following this action, the points made by the men were met in part, and the new method of operation started as from the 27th July. It had been stressed many times by the management that after a trial period any alterations necessary would be put into effect. Apart from minor adjustments to specials at the evening peak, no alterations have yet taken place, yet we have proven what we said would happen has.

Some months ago the trade union side submitted a proposal regarding holiday rotation. Various enquiries established that no action had taken place on this because one of the senior officials was leaving to take up another post. It had to wait while another official was appointed to replace the first, then it could be examined. This type of delay causes the men needless frustration.

Traffic Works Committee: A suggestion to this committee can and does take months to process and then in finality, it can be refused. This committee meets once every three months.

Transport Committee: Meetings between this committee and the trade union side are very few in number, concerning matters on major policy decisions of the department, such as the Xmas Day issue. Only once has the trade union side won their case before the Transport Committee and that was years ago, over Saturday day off, on a late turn duty, once every twelve weeks.

Consultation is a poor substitution for Workers' Self Management. We call on the City Party to rectify this situation as soon as possible on the following lines.

II. HULL'S TRANSPORT PROBLEM AND THE SOLUTION.

Planning changes in this city have affected transport more than any other thing. By repopulating, that is, new housing estates, the distance between home and work has been altered.

There have been changes in the social life, television, the five day week, the inclusion of convenient shopping centres in new housing estates, the partial return of people to live in blocks of flats in or near the city centre.

In addition, households whose members make more than the average number of journeys are the families that tend to use their car instead of a bus.

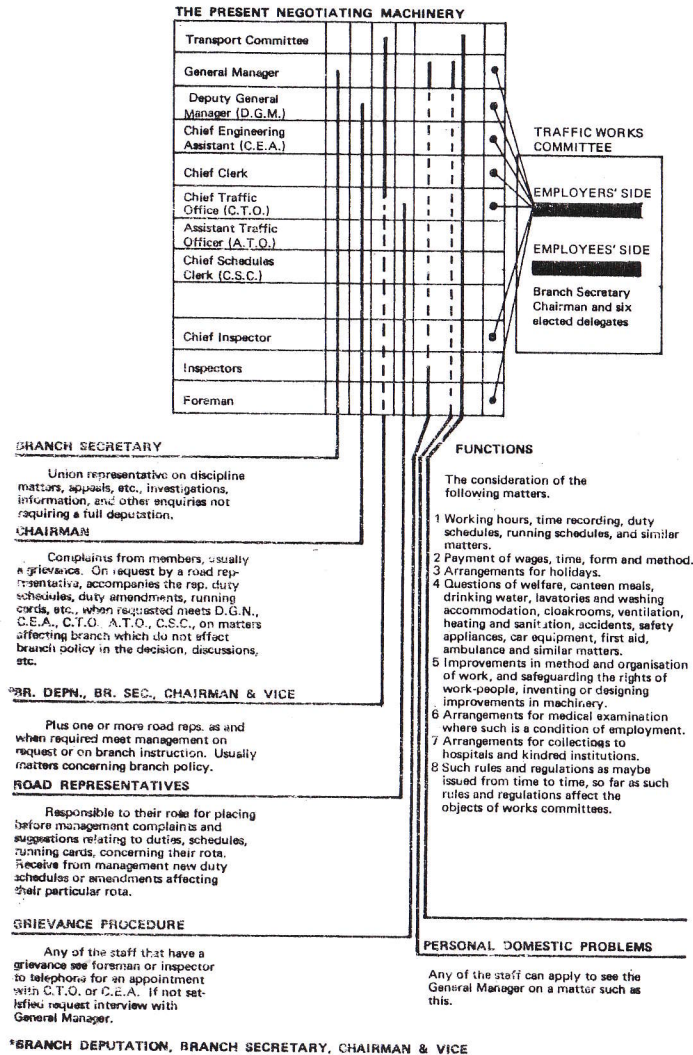
60% of journeys by car between 5 to 15 minutes in duration which would certainly have been by bus except that a car is so much more convenient.

Obviously there is room and need for a great deal of further investigation into the reasons for the loss of passengers in this town and into their requirements if they are to be persuaded to continue to use our services.

It is time a full scale investigation was carried out into the problem to really find out from the public what they do want.

Flexibility of the Bus.

Up to the present time, planning paid little regard to public transport. The flexibility of the bus to operate on any reasonable road was sufficient during the years from the 1920's up to recent times when there was plenty of road space. Services grew up on certain roads with little or no planning necessary for their operation. The town was more or less compact and the population was in consequence housed in an area surrounding the city centre or close to the place of work.



In recent times, the city has extended out of all proportion to what it was. The density of population in or near the city centre has been removed, and also the younger people living with their parents, on marrying sooner or later qualify for a house, and move out to the new estates, which of course, are on the outskirts of the city.

The effect has been two-fold, (1) that the services as operated before the war have been extended to cover these new estates, which in itself was a major financial cost to the department and (2) that even with the extra mileage passengers per mile have dropped. In effect, we are not even getting an economic fare from those that do travel to the estates. This increased distance to travel created the reason for the use of the family car for these journeys. But this has not been the answer to the transportation problem for there still remains the young, the old, the infirm and those others who for one reason or another cannot or will not use the family car.

The young, the old, the infirm are not an economic proposition where public transport is concerned, for after all it is easy to quote that as a social service these should be carried at reduced rate. To date no real financial assistance is provided for their carriage.

We have the important need within this city to encourage the use of public transport by those who could be regular users as well as optional users. Not just from the financial point of view, but for the benefit of the city as a whole.

Bus services must be an essential planning item in this city to overcome the problem now facing us.

Traffic Congestion

Traffic congestion in this city by slowing down the traffic affects the reliability and speed of public transport. It has been emphasised by leading authorities that traffic congestion is mainly caused by the increased use of the private car, that it is going to get worse, and that it could paralyse our city centre in the next ten to fifteen years.

We must plan now to give an attractive alternative which must at least compare to the car, both in reliability and speed. To do this, plans must be made and then introduced to ensure a rapid transit of people especially to the outlying estates, not only from the city centre, but from the places of work. It has been suggested elsewhere that this could be achieved by giving public transport partial or full segregation from other traffic.

Express services, limited stops, etc., are the methods that should be explored, to offer the alternative to the car. Let us not forget also in this city that a large number of potential passengers are not car owners, but use mopeds and cycles. These present a special problem because they tend to use the present transport services only during bad weather or at the time of mechanical breakdown of their machine. Observe any major road at peak times to see the potential there.

The bus is the most flexible of all forms of public transport and is capable of meeting all demands more effectively than the alternative types, except perhaps in a few special cases, but it will be necessary to make drastic changes from the present practices in this city.

Basic Public Needs

The most important requirements of the public in regard to public transport are as follows:-

Reliability
Convenience
Reasonable Cost
Speed

By reliability is meant running time without failure and with safety and with room available for all intending passengers.

Convenience involves a good frequency with as near door-to-door service as possible, since passengers are concerned with time taken from door-to-door. This not only depends on

speed of the carrying vehicle but also on such things as frequency and distance to walk, so that convenience in the broad sense includes speed and reliability. An ancillary facility is covered waiting accommodation at the stops, together with provision for left luggage and possible light refreshments at the Coach Station.

Reasonable Cost. The passenger expects the cost of his journey to be reasonably low. Revenue on this basis would be insufficient to cover operating costs, so therefore, the public transport in this city should become a charge for any deficit, on the rates. To operate under our present conditions carrying the young, the old, the infirm warrants this, for after all we operate to all intents and purposes as a social service for these classes of passengers.

By speed is meant door-to-door time - not just while on the vehicle. Journeys are rarely an end in themselves and are frequently regarded as a waste of time. While reliability may be slightly more important, there is no doubt that speed to many would be placed first. In fact, improved reliability would result if suitable facilities were provided and up-to-date methods were used to enable high speeds to be attained. The most important contribution which can be made to the faster flow of traffic including buses is the use of bus lanes. The major advantage of bus lanes is that they can be used by buses which operate on ordinary roads and which can be fed into and out of the lanes as required.

It cannot be stressed too strongly that on any road where the bus services carry 2,000 people or more per hour there is a case for consideration of a separate bus lane. In most cases, the reserved lane would be only needed during peak hours.

All main roads in an out of the city including the present one-way traffic flow, should have separate bus lanes.

Fare System

The fare system at present operated is far too complicated and no time should be lost in revising its structure. A 3d unit

on which to base the fare charged for the journey seems ideal.

With any major introduction of O.M.O., pre-boarding sale of tickets must be considered to achieve minimum boarding delays at the density pick-up points, e.g. the city centre.

Included in uniformity of fares should be the payment by the responsible committees for the carriage of the young, the old, and other forms of passes.

Taking children first, it has long been the practice to carry these at half fares, yet they require the same facilities as a full fare. It is not any cheaper to carry them because they are children, yet the undertaking is saddled with an increasing number of this class of passenger, not only on the ordinary services but on the special services which have to be run for them. The school leaving age has gone up from 14 to 15 years and in the near future it will go up to 16 years. This extension, brings no gain to the department.

Old age passes: In this area we have in the region of 10,000 holders of old age passes. The revenue we receive from these is only a nominal sum, yet we still have to carry them. As a social service, the community should pay in full for the actual journeys these people take.

Routes.

Not only will there be possible re-routing due to the needs of the public but also, if 36 foot single deckers are used, sharp corners plus the road widths taken up to negotiate corners plus the fact that reversing will have to be eliminated, will necessitate the alteration of routes. It is essential that a route be planned to achieve the maximum safety of operation not only for the passenger, but for the driver as well.

Planning.

This city has now reached the critical point. There is no doubt that our undertakings can make the most important contribution in the transportation of the community within the limits of the city boundary, and if we are to avoid costly

public works to solve traffic congestion, then surely the cheapest alternative is to provide a reliable, speedy method of transportation, that is, public transport.

It is essential in planning that some, if not all, of the following be included:-

- (a) Buses to be able to use all major roads with suitable lay-bys or reservations for stops where necessary.
- (b) Stops to be provided at an average distance down a route not too near - not too far.
- (c) All routes to be given straight and direct roads as far as possible and in no case to include any type of restrictive feature.
- (d) Such routes to be suitably spaced out and to give convenient access to all passengers.
- (e) The provision of separate bus lanes with the flow of traffic in one-way roads.
- (f) If necessary due to change in traffic patterns, the privilege for buses to turn right when other traffic is debarred from doing so.
- (g) The privilege for buses to move first at traffic lights, particularly when turning right.
- (h) Exclusive use by buses of selected roads or section of a road.
- (i) Where bus lay-bys are made, some effective means whereby buses can emerge safely and without delay.

If the authorities in this city really desire to encourage the use of public transport, it is essential that steps are taken immediately to give effect to these points and although there are difficulties with existing roads, much can be done given the will to do so.

Apart from these suggestions which will improve Hull's system of public transport for the consumer, there are also very important points in the new scheme for operating the buses as already proposed by the management which must be negotiated from the busmen's point of view. This is dealt with in the next section.

III. THE BUSMEN'S CONDITIONS AND THE TRANSITION TO WORKERS' MANAGEMENT.

There are two proposals by the management already under consideration which are intended to improve the public transport service but which will also affect the busmen's working conditions. They are:-

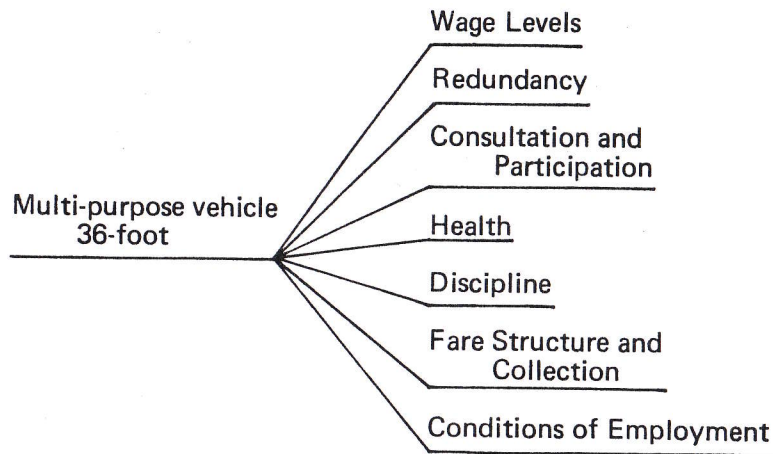
1. One Man Operation (referred to hereafter as O.M.O.) It is not impossible to use double deck buses with O.M.O., but this is not the answer to the transportation problem either from the public's point of view or that of the staff.

It has been suggested that O.M.O. should be developed as rapidly as possible for the services in this city. It has greater potential than any other suggestion to date, and productivity per man-hour. If productivity is measured in vehicle-miles per hour then for the same manpower nearly double the service can be given.

2. The Introduction of the Single Deck 36-foot Bus. The scope of the larger capacity double deck vehicle is declining due to the falling number of passengers. Therefore, single deck operation giving a far better frequency seems to be the answer, operating off peak O.M.O., and manned at peaks with a full crew.

Before the busmen can accept such far-reaching alterations to their working conditions, there are certain matters which must be negotiated and certain conditions safeguarded. But above all, the whole question of the busmen's role in making such proposals for new operating methods, must be re-examined and resolved so as to give the busmen a more effective say in the management of their concern.

The busmen's acceptance of O.M.O. plus the working of the 36-foot vehicle should be conditional on the present management's acceptance of the following proposals:-



Wage Levels.

The first essential is that to the basic wage rate to be added to with a negotiated rate for the new type of operation.

The 15% O.M.O. rate to be paid for all driving time, including whole or part O.M.O. operation, i.e. Atlantean or single decker using full crew or part crew.

Payment of % increase on carrying capacity above the norm agreed for normal carrying capacity on service operation (Standee type operation).

Redundancy.

There is to be no redundancy of staff. Reduction must be by normal wastage, retirement, etc. Any recruitment of future staff to be by mutual agreement.

Drivers to be promoted only from conductors.

Consultation and Participation.

Management and workers must be constantly engaged in consultation and participation regarding the introduction and operation of the new type single decker. And similarly

with any changeover to the new form of transportation now being promoted by various authorities.

Carrying capacity routes and modification to the present routes and other related matters concerning the operation of these vehicles comes under this heading.

During the transitional stages to widespread operation, policy and method of operation of the present fleet to be a matter for consultation and participation to formulate and execute by mutual agreement.

Responsibility in policy formation to be based on equal representation of workers and management. The composition of the present Traffic Works Committee could form the basis for such a committee as an interim step to assume the required official standing for consultation and participation, including the right to form sub-committees to consider particular problems relating to the transformation from the present form of operation to the new.

After one year of this transitional method negotiations for the establishment of workers management must be opened.

Health.

There are various medical reasons that can be quoted that could warrant a driver reverting back to conductor for a period. Therefore, it is important that safeguards are taken now to ensure that no driver loses his job on the undertaking, due to health reasons that are not of a permanent nature. Alternative employment must be provided.

Discipline.

The problem is similar to health. What will be the form of punishment to take the place of being put back conducting? This must also be settled at this stage.

Union representation is required at all levels regarding discipline.

Fare Structure and Collection.

Consultation relating to both factors. The Passimeter and the use of a common coin instead of a token.

The possibility of pre-boarding payment at high density boarding points.

On the new 36-foot vehicle, the conductor will be seated.

Conditions of Employment.

Local agreements to be reviewed and as required altered to fit the new circumstances.

A 5 day week to be introduced as soon as possible. With conductors it is possible to introduce a 5 day week Monday to Friday on days only. In any case, a 5 day week would mean a long week-end off every six weeks instead as of now, twelve.

Spells of work to be reduced to a minimum and the possibility of crews obtaining light refreshments during spells of work to be established.

Travelling time, reserve time and payment of the same, and other related matters to be settled before the operation of the new vehicles and any new operating methods.

IV. WORKERS' MANAGEMENT OF HULL'S BUSES.

Democratic Management.

The major organs of democratic management and their powers and functions should be as follows:

Workers' Committees.

There should be committees for each type of worker clearly defined for which section it represents. They should be elected by secret ballot, with all employees eligible to vote

and stand as candidates. Nominations and elections should be organised by the trade unions. One third of the members should retire each year. No one to serve more than two consecutive terms. The Chief Traffic Officer, Assistant Traffic Officer, Chief Engineering Assistant, and the Chief Clerk should sit in on these committees ex-officio with no voting rights. The committees should have the powers:-

- to appoint supervisors
- to organise the staff in their sections
- to decide on welfare, safety and education matters.

Workers' Council.

There should be a Council for the undertaking. It should be composed of 50% of delegates from the Workers' Committees, and 50% from the union branches, by electoral methods as for the Workers' Committees.

In particular, the Unions should nominate candidates for the direct seats. The General Manager and other specialist Heads of Departments should attend the meetings without voting rights.

The necessary changes could be achieved by amending the present constitution of the Traffic Works Committee.

The Council should have the powers:

1) to consider monthly returns on revenue, manpower and plant utilisation programmes, utilisation of the depreciation fund, economic savings and the utilisation of labour, occupational safety and health measures, and the safeguarding and efficient use of assets (vehicles plant etc.) of the undertaking.

2) to be empowered to promote opinions and proposals on all matters affecting the transport department to higher authorities including:-

- (a) the basic plan of operation of the department and everything connected with it;

- (b) the workers' claim concerning pay scales;
 - (c) appointments to executive posts in the department and any changes in their occupancy;
 - (d) changes affecting the organisation of the department;
 - (e) changes affecting job classification;
 - (f) the sale or disposal of capital goods used by the department.
 - (g) the paid holiday programme;
- 3) to receive for discussion and delivery of a preliminary opinion from a higher authority;
- (a) draft rules of the undertaking;
 - (b) draft scales of pay;
 - (c) the undertaking's plan of operation;
 - (d) rules concerning workers' councils at department level, their standing orders, etc.
- 4) to appoint their representatives on the Board of Management.

Board of Management.

There should be a Board for the undertaking. It should be composed of equal numbers of the department's Workers Council and representatives of the City Council.

The Board should have the following powers:-

- a) to determine the undertaking's investment plan,
- a) in the light of the over-all transport plan for the city.
- b) the Board should negotiate with the unions over bonus schemes, merit pay, etc.

City Council.

The City Council to determine the over-all transport plan of the city.

The City Council to be responsible for bargaining with the Unions over Standard rates of pay and conditions of work.

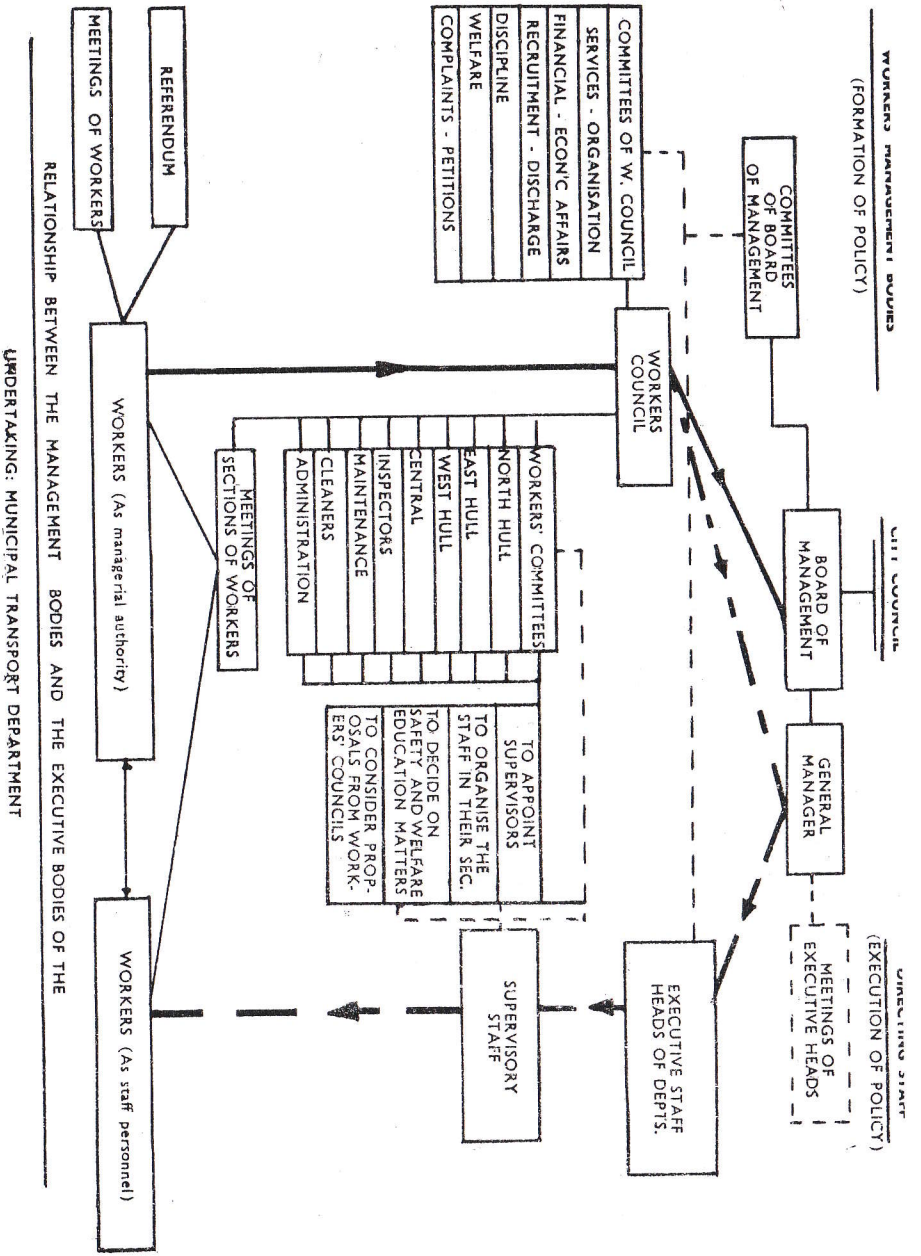
Role of the Trade Unions.

To fulfil their widened role as envisaged above, the Unions should seek to create forms of closer associations between each other. They should establish joint trade union committees including craft and platform staff:-

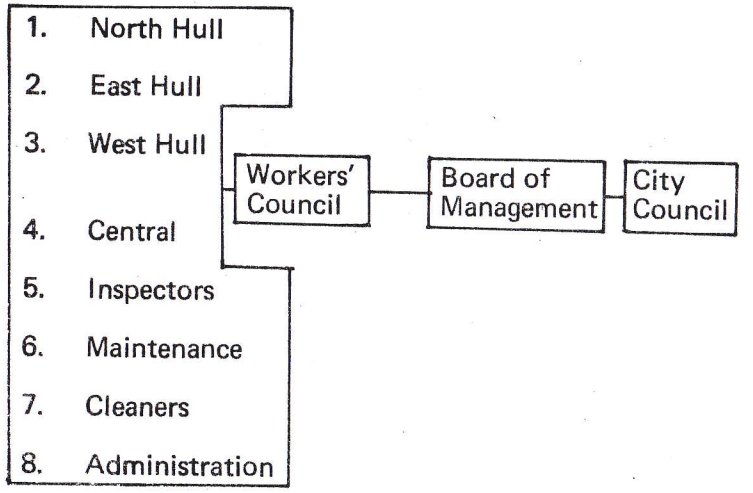
Their functions:-

- (a) at shop floor level, to conduct elections for Workers' Committees and Workers' Council. The filling of Road Representatives and branch officials offices should be kept separate from membership of the Committees and Council. They should operate a grievance procedure, representing their members before the Workers' Committees and Workers' Council. They should "police" the implementations of working agreements, conditions, etc. at these levels;
- (b) they should negotiate with the Board of Management over bonusschemes, merit pay, etc;
- (c) they should negotiate at national level for the whole industry the basic rates of pay and conditions;
- (d) they should immediately drive for a greatly extended programme of "education for self management" for their members.

This plan for the management of Hull's buses can be summed up in the following diagram:-



Workers' Committees.



DEMOCRACY ON THE BUSES

Taken from 'Bus Stop' December, 1968.

The news that the L.T.B. have accepted that two lay members of the Central Bus Committee shall be made part of the planning team of London Transport for the Re-Shaping Plan is certainly the most important step forward yet made in the long history of the Bus Section.

The members are R. Fittall and S. Sinclair, in company with Charlie Young, London District Secretary, and Terry Allen, the Schedules Officer.

When the Bus Delegate Conference carried the resolution which demanded the right to be represented in the future plans of the L.T.B. or else they would ban any future training on O.M.O. buses, did they, we wonder, appreciate the gravity of the step they were taking?

Did they understand that, in the future, they might be rejecting some proposal some plan or part of a plan, to which their own representatives had agreed?

What would they propose to do in such circumstances?

Did they see the need to avoid the danger of being accused by the L.T.B. of bad faith if, in fact, they reject any scheme jointly agreed?

We cannot shout our heads off about the claim of Managerial Responsibility being a thing of the past, being a thing out of line with modern thought and experience, and then reject the opportunity, when obtained, of making our contribution to what is best for the industry.

Our four people are there to make a contribution, to put forward ideas, suggestions and alternatives; they have also to prove to the management representatives that their proposals are better, and more in line with what they think the bus passengers require, at the same time seeing that the conditions in which their members will have to operate are right. So, they

have a responsibility that no other four bus leaders have probably ever had: they will get the bouquets and they will get the brick-bats: they will be blamed, they will be congratulated.

We have only a few words of advice for those who have been appointed to do this job. If it does not work, get out and get out quick, and let the Conference return to the old method of opposing anything the L.T.B. does which harms the interests of our members, by industrial action.

In the meantime, we wish them luck and wisdom - they will need both.

Since the above editorial was written, we have heard the story of the way in which the Eastern Divisional Operating Manager handled the dispute between the Poplar Branch, due to operate O.M.O. service 108, and himself.

The branch was asking what, in our view, were reasonable suggestions in the interests of the staff; one was the question of one stop, the other was the matter of the terminal working at Bromley-by-Bow.

We know that both the Union Divisional Officer, Len Hanks, and the Poplar delegate Fred Walton, both of whom for our money cannot in any way be described as wild men, worked their fingers off to reach a settlement and to avoid a strike decided on by the Branch. At the very last moment a solution was found in spite of the Divisional Operating Manager.

This story, which we know to be absolutely true, frankly frightens the life out of us, for this is the same division which was responsible for the Walthamstow scheme.

We make no apology to anybody when we suggest that if Mr. Maurice Holmes and the whole of his Board want the goodwill of our members to smooth the passage of the Re-Shaping Plan, they must, - and we repeat, must - institute an enquiry into the ghastly mistakes of the Walthamstow scheme, and the role of the Divisional Operating Manager who, apparently, was

quite prepared to face a stoppage rather than meet two reasonable requests in the case of the Poplar episode.

Unless this is done, speaking for ourselves, we propose to go on exposing those responsible, and - where we can - we will encourage branches and members not to operate new O.M.O. routes or schemes until (1) they are themselves certain that they can be operated both to the satisfaction of the operating staff and the public; (2) that Divisional Managers and all the others responsible for those plans, schemes and services, pay some respect to our views, based on our practical experiences.

* * * * *

AN OPEN LETTER to Mr. M. Holmes, Chairman of the London Transport Executive.

Dear Mr. Holmes,

On the occasions when I have met you I have been left with the impression that you are nobody's Charley when it comes to transport, that it would be difficult - if not impossible - for anyone to kid you, and that you would be the last person to stand for the three-card trick (excuse the vernacular).

But, yet - and this is the reason for this letter - you have stood for the three-card trick, you have been kidded, and you look a proper Charley in the eyes of the bus passengers of Waltham Forest.

Let us begin the comedy from the beginning. We know, for example, that while your Executive and yourself worked out and agreed London Transport's Re-Shaping Plan, you depended for its details and implementation upon your planners and advisers.

Just in case it is held that the information upon which my criticism is built is second-hand, and that I would not know a good bus service from a bad one, permit me to inform our readers - something you already know - first, I've been in the game for 43 years; second, I have lived in Waltham Forest for thirty-odd years, travel all over London on trade union

business, am without a car and, therefore, a 100% public transport user.

If you have any difficulty in accepting my criticism that the first stage of your Re-Shaping Plan (that part of it, that is, for the Waltham Forest area) is without question the very worst piece of bus service planning I have yet seen, may I suggest that you pay a visit to the Leyton and Walthamstow garages? It would be of advantage to take with you Charlie Young, London District Secretary of the Central Bus Section, Transport and General Workers' Union.

It should be possible for the Branch Secretaries of these garages to arrange meetings with the lads there for you and Charlie.

I have spoken to them: what is more important, I have used all the new services, including the new Underground, and here are some of the questions I would put to the planners (God forgive the misnomer), not necessarily in order of priority.

(1) What bright genius decided that the bulk of the buses in the area should be routed into Walthamstow Central Station? Don't people travel anywhere else?

(2) Were they routed there so that people could change for the new Walthamstow-Victoria line? If so, the Chairman should be informed how many people, in fact, are using the line? (Don't tell me, I've used the line), both at Walthamstow Central and Blackhorse Lane Stations - there were more workmen putting in the finishing touches than there were passengers).

(3) Why was it necessary to route all services going beyond Walthamstow Central into the Station yard when, for over 30 years to my personal knowledge, we have fed the station for British Railways passengers without any difficulty? Why do we now have to give passengers a short tour of the back streets, and then cross the main road twice with traffic lights when travelling west?

(4) What master mind routed the 262 service? (Even I fell

for that one. Having reached the main road - Lea Bridge, expecting to turn left to the "Green Man", I found myself back in the road again after crossing it and making a short tour of the back streets (I readily admit - I should have known better).

(5) What future Chief Operating Manager thought it necessary to replace Service 35 from Whipps Cross to London Bridge, with a new Service - No. 48 - traversing exactly the same line of route? Did nobody tell you that Service 35 is one of the oldest services in London, which many passengers have known for a lifetime? What particular transport theory or economics accounts for that? (This is an old service which really has been murdered).

(6) Almost the same could be said for Service 38; what transport magician substituted Service 20, from Loughton to Walthamstow Central? Let us be generous and say that there might be some value in the change, although even that is open to doubt, when the new Underground goes to Victoria. Didn't anyone tell them that the Line at present only goes to Highbury, which has got a large laundry and very little else? (It's also near to the ground of the leaders of the First Division, but we surely don't build an Underground for Saturdays only)?

(7) Would not Service 20 have been better suited for O.M.O. rather than the new Service 235?

(8) What expert timed Service 235? You know that the timing is wrong, and that the lads are murdering them even attempting to maintain it - why have you not immediately amended it? (I should know: it took me, with the wait, exactly 55 minutes from Fulbourne Road - Wood Street junction to Leytonstone Station; like the others, I am learning. It will never take me that time again, for I've used it for the first and last time).

(9) What raving economist decided the headways and changes of route for services 69 and 123? (At least, you know something about the latter, for the Walthamstow lads drew your attention to it by a short strike).

(10) The Manor House is a very convenient interchange point for both the Piccadilly Line and buses but, on Sundays, the planners decided that nobody wants to go there from Tottenham Hale. (Rumour has it that they had also left Tottenham Hale to Manor House uncovered from Monday to Friday, and on Saturday, and a last-minute reminder resulted in the re-routing of Service 241 to remedy this omission.

(11) Why should it be necessary for me, and for all those, who work at either Dalston or Hackney garages, to make - with luck - three changes or - without luck - four changes?

That Mr. Chairman, is - as I see it - the Waltham Forest part of the Re-Shaping Plan. With the greatest possible respect, but being absolutely blunt (and vulgar) they - your planners - couldn't plan a piss-up in a brewery.

Just one or two further points:

(a) The chaos of Waltham Forest has done tremendous harm to the new agreement on productivity and O.M.O. operation. If you find this difficult to accept, try as I have tried, to get the lads to understand that there is no connection between the agreement that was signed with the L.T.E. by the Union, and the claim over the years that the provision of service is, a managerial right and function. I would advise you, now; February, 1969, is going to be tough. We will not accept doses of Waltham Forest from your advisers.

(b) After a good deal of trial and tribulation I have now found the best way from my home to Victoria. A W21 from Fulbourne Road to Walthamstow Central, then by British Railways from Walthamstow Central to Liverpool Street, at a cost of 2s., then on to the Underground - Circle Line - to Victoria, using my free pass.

I'm not begging, but is there any chance at all of exchanging my present free bus and underground pass for a railway pass?

I don't expect you to accept the theory of workers' control, an issue debated and accepted at the recent Trades Union Congress and at the Labour Party Conference. But, if ever a

case was made for it, it has been made as the result of our experiences from the first taste of the Re-Shaping Plan. I could let you have the names of six practical busmen, whose living depends upon a well run and thriving industry, that you could make part of your planning team for the next stage.

Thanks for your patience.

BILL JONES
(Chairman, Central Bus Committee).