



BULLETIN
OF THE YOUNG CHARTISTS

THE CHARTIST

VOLUME 1 5p NUMBER 6



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YOUNG CHARTIST BRANCHES

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EDITORIAL

The reason for the gap of only three weeks between this issue and the last one is due to objective factors - not a sudden revolutionary zeal on our part.

Since issue No 5 the "Soldiers Charter" has burst into prominence in the national press, the whole of the Indian sub-continent has erupted into flames with the struggle of the Bangla Desh masses at one corner and with the "J.V.P." uprisings in Ceylon at the other, and the scandal of the Harrow Tories has reached national proportions. Consequently this issue will deal with matters of immediate topicality and a few, more general, articles have been held over.

When the "Leeds University Labour Society" approached us with the "Soldiers Charter" we recognised it as a really historic document whose repercussions were bound to be widely felt. Though they themselves had been given it by the "SOLDIERS TRADES UNION RIGHTS MOVEMENT" and had publicised it in Leeds, we undertook to publicise it nationally and the article from one of our Leeds comrades is a step towards this. It must be stressed that this is written by serving soldiers and represents a suppressed but deep-seated feeling in the ranks at present.

We have been fortunate in this issue in being able to call on comrade whose knowledge of the Ceylon Labour and Marxist movements is second to none. Most of the information in this article is unpublished in English previously and was supplied, at great personal risk, by a contact of ours in Ceylon to the author of this article.

On the home scene, the growing unemployment figures and the galvanisation of whole sections of the trades-unions make it almost certain that the Labour Party will be swept back into office in dozens of Town Halls all over Britain, particularly in London. In view of this, it is somewhat strange to find the total passivity of both the Labour Party and Trades Unions leadership. Far from calling for mass demonstrations and industrial action Feather is quite prepared to put it down to a "low growth rate" and carry on blissfully as if nothing has happened. In the next period we are bound to see this idiotic complacency flattened - however the time to fight is now and the place is already determined. Only mass industrial action will Kill The Bill - that much is already clear. However the fate of the Bill is linked to the question of the Tory Government. Any leader of our movement who is not prepared to advocate the destruction of the Tory government NOW should pick up his pipe and slippers and retire - and leave the job to those of us who do!

MILITANT, THE LPYS AND THE TRANSPORT HOUSE MAFIA.

The tenth LPYS Conference at Skegness marked a further stage in the growth of the movement. Conference, which had already adopted in previous years a full Socialist Programme of expropriating the major monopolists, financiers, and land-sharks, filled this out in more detail with an unprecedented large number of resolutions. Of special importance was the composite on international relations, which laid down a clear and principled position of defence of the workers states against imperialism, and of support for national liberation movements.

The internal life of conference was also more highly developed than before. The Young Chartists produced an excellent series of three daily "Briefings" that put our line on issues as they came up. The "Militant" comrades produced their own bulletin, and even the right-wingers displayed enough nerve to liven up the debates.

Unfortunately, it was pretty clear that certain Labour Party full-timers had been working overtime to throw together an unholy alliance of Tribunites, careerists and assorted left-liberals in an attempt to smear and undermine the elected officials of the YS. This was shown by comrade Underhill jotting down the names of 'Young Hopefuls' as they spoke. Similarly, the compositing and conference schedule was deliberately mismanaged to create the impression that the NC was cutting down discussion time, and to try and lay the blame for all the messups on them.

A further step in this campaign was the publication in "Tribune" (April 16) of a disgusting attack on the LPYS, and specifically the 'Militant' tendency, by a couple of sycophants called Key and Walsh. Firstly, it tried the tired old trick of 'proving' that Marxism is 'out of date' with a torrent of half-baked, bourgeois social science of a Fabian tinge - 'managerial revolution' and 'pluralist society' - trying to show our demands for nationalisation under workers control are 'old hat' and irrelevant. They went on to accuse the 'Militant' comrades of sharp practice (ridiculous - all the present NC were elected quite democratically) and invite the Transport House Mafia to do a hatchet job on so-called 'extremist and fringe elements'. This fits in very well with something comrade Neil Vann let slip at a North London YS meeting, ie a plan to 'kick Militant out of the YS' by some undisclosed means.

The Young Chartists unconditionally support our brothers and sisters on the left against the McCarthyite trend.

Nevertheless at Skegness we found many important differences with the 'Militant'. These particularly came out in the debates and evening meetings when the questions of the General Strike and Taking Power

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came up. We contend that our programme, correct and necessary though it is, in order to link the everyday struggles and needs of workers to the socialist solution, is incomplete unless it includes a clear outline of what practical action is required to IMPLEMENT it. This means a General Strike to defeat the anti-union Bill and lead to the taking of power by the threefold arms of organised labour, as comrades Kevin Knight and Graham Bash said during the debates.

The 'Militant' replies were woefully inadequate. Their speakers seemed unable to distinguish power from governmental office, and continually either misunderstood or misrepresented our arguments. They said that the Tories would like to force a General Strike to crush our movement - very well then, the best way to avert this is to show we mean business, not to go about trumpeting our 'weakness' as an excuse for mere protest. They seem to be thinking in terms of a period of defeat, rather than one when the working class is more strong, united, and combative than ever before and the growing vanguard section is pressing the demand for a general strike.

Furthermore, they say, "we cannot demand a General Strike till our leaders have adopted our programme, or else they will sellout!". It is precisely our strategy of placing the demand for power on the Labour Party and Trade Union leaders that will prevent any such sellout. They accuse us of being adventurous and irresponsible in our propaganda (in fact we are foremost in stressing the gravity of the situation), yet contradict themselves by saying that the defeat of a General Strike wouldn't matter too much anyway. The central issue is; we cannot wait for the next Labour government to adopt the Socialist Programme, while our movement is being clobbered by the Tory attacks.

The other occasions when our comrades intervened were mainly discussions of international matters. Vietnam aroused most controversy of all. Young Chartist Keith Veness representing Harrow West (YS) proposed a resolution giving unconditional support to the Victory of the NLF forces in South Vietnam while criticising their "narrow nationalism" and attempts to compromise with imperialism. Newcastle moved a disgraceful amendment that substituted an abstract support for the "workers and peasants movement" accusing us of making the YS a "mouthpiece for Stalinism" (!!). As on other issues, it seemed to us, that the 'Militant' are unwilling to follow through the logic of their own politics.

Similarly on the Middle East, they again failed in the principled socialist duty of giving support to the struggles of an oppressed people (the Arabs). Instead they backed a wishy-washy motion on the lines of "Jewish and Arab Workers unite for Socialism" - an absence from the real, immediate problem. Again in the debate on Ireland, they signally failed to deal with the problem of the border and of new political forces like the Social Democratic and Labour Party, concentrating exclusively on the semi bankrupt Northern Ireland Labour Party, whereas we stress the need for a United Irish Labour movement.

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In general, we were encouraged both by the amount of support we got from the "uncommitted left" and the large extent of common ground we found with the 'Militant' comrades. Also there was a general feeling of purpose and resolution, and the right-wing again found little support for their ideas. The YS is going forward, something it would never be able to do on a programme of a return to the utopian, piecemeal reformism of 1964.

The great potential of 'Left', the 'Charter For Young Workers', and the 'Fighting Programme' must not be allowed to evaporate. It is not enough to just hold our own YS meetings (though this is very necessary). YS members must go out into all spheres of the labour movement - not only T.U. youth sections but the Co-op Young Members Organisations, the Workers Control movement, the "Youth T.U.C.", and the Soldiers T.U. Rights Movement. We must take the lead in the struggle to defend the trade unions from the current onslaught and throw out the Tories for good.

P.S. Young Chartists have challenged " Militant " to a public debate. We eagerly await their reply.

Martin Cook - Canterbury Young Chartists

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Due to popular requests from many of our readers - comrade Cook will from now on be contributing a regular column in the Chartist. Look out for Cookie's column next issue.

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FOR SALE - FOR SALE - FOR SALE

Copies of our "Briefing " put out at Labour Party Y.S. Conference are available at 10p per set (postage paid). These three issues make a compact bulletin which explains our politics and our principled differences with the " Militant " and " right-wing " tendencies at Conference.

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GENOCIDE IN NAGALAND - THE FULL TRUTH.

Whilst the attention of the world is rivetted on Pakistan and the struggles of the people of Bangla Desh for their right of seccession, it is now perhaps worthwhile reflecting on the hypocrisy of those leaders of " Congress " in India who purport to be in favour of " self-determination " for East Bengal but ignore the sufferings of millions of their fellow countrymen and blatantly suppress the national minorities inside their own frontiers. One of the smallest national minorities in India has been the victim of a conscious policy of mass-genocide since the Congress Party ~~has ruled~~ India. These people are the sixteen tribes of the Nagaland Hills in Assam, often called, somewhat incorrectly, the Nagas.

The Nagas are closely related to the Tibetans of China, and more distantly to the Burmese and Malays. They have no cultural, historical or even religious ties with either India or Pakistan but are nonetheless under the brutal hand of the Delhi government. When the British Imperialists conquered India, they made no attempt to conquer Nagaland for a whole period, preferring to leave the densely wooded-valleys and thin-soiled hills to the sixteen tribes who are living there, still under a system of primitive communism and under the rule of their democratically elected tribal committees. Finally, after the Sepoys mutiny in Northern India, the British Army occupied Nagaland in 1862, after a bitter but unequal struggle against the Naga armies equipped with the most primitive of weapons.

What followed was the usual story of colonial misrule, cheating and suppression of the natives and the partial breakdown of the old societies. During the Second World War, Nagaland became the centre of a bloody conflict as the Japanese and British armies rolled back and forwards over it. Kohima, its main town, was flattened and thousands of Nagas slaughtered. After the war, the British Armies were forced to leave India but the regime of Nehru continued the job of decimating thousands of the Naga peoples. Now Indira Gandhi's government is following this bloody tradition. Belatedly, the tribes have formed a " Nagaland Liberation Front " to fight the Indian troops. With most of their old leaders either dead or imprisoned, the younger Nagas have turned from a purely nationalist outlook and have become sympathetic to the ideas of Socialism. Many of the cadres of the " front " have been trained in China, and even some of their arms are of Chinese manufacture - though they still lack many of the modern weapons they vitally need. Incensed at this resistance, and their inability to find one Quisling Naga politician, the Delhi government has unleashed a policy of mass-genocide. Swaran Singh, the Defence Minister, made it clear in a speech in the " LOK SABHA " (Indian Parliament) that the Indian Army has a free hand in doing what it likes to smash the Nagas.

The only solution to this unequal struggle is ultimately the creation of a communist government in India, which would free all its national minorities and set up a socialist federation of the Indian sub-continent. Until then socialists in Britain and throughout the

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world have a duty to support the Nagas and blast the Indian government for its policy of mass-extermination!

(If any of our readers would like more information, please contact:-
Ray Hutchinson, British-Naga Association, 261 Long Elmes, Harrow,
Middx.)

Keith Veness - West Middx Young Chartists

" THE HARROW COUNCIL SCANDAL "

Most socialists are aware of the fact that local government politics provide a lucrative breeding-ground for all sorts of careerists, opportunists and self-seekers, particularly small businessmen of the Tory variety: although, of course there is not exactly a paucity of such parasites amongst our party's ranks. Whilst we may recognise that local government power is inherently susceptible, and indeed specifically geared to these type of "practices", it is only on occasions that corruption rears its ugly head for the whole world to see. Mal-practice has often been exposed by the actions of a few dedicated socialists, e.g. The Wandsworth Affair. However the recent revelations in the "Sunday Times" about, "the no-tender secret of the Harrow Council contract plan" have emanated from a group of young Powellite councillors carrying out the proverbial "stab in the back" with special regard to a couple of "elder statesmen": Aldermen Mote and Buckle. This is hardly surprising on a council consisting of sixty-five tory aldermen and councillors and only one Labour representative (an ex-tradeunion official who owes his seat to the **magnanimous** invitation of Tories concerned about preserving "democracy"). Given the unwillingness of this knight of Labour to carry out any real struggle - it has been left to the trades council, the rank and file in the wards and the Young Chartists to launch a serious fight against the cryptic machinations of the Tory "group".

The essence of the "Sunday Times" allegations are to be found, "between the lines", they insinuate the existance of a price-ring whereby a group of two aldermen (Mote and Buckle) and one councillor (Sellers) attempted to give "William Old Ltd" (a firm in dispute with the council over what were considered structural **deficienciés** in a housing estat they had erected), a £10 million development contract for the new civic centre. Although this figure was inflated: "The scheme was such that the council would have been paying rents on the development which would have been so high as to be equivalent to a staggering interest rate", the developer felt it to be insufficient and a bonus including a "first bite at the reconstruction of no fewer than 1,000 acres" was proposed.

Needless to say, the question of public or private tendering was

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conveniently ignored. Furthermore, "at no time was the project fully discussed in council or even in any committee", and "when one council committee did try to examine the deal it was forbidden to do so". Eventually the right-wing splinter group got wind of these "dealings", leaked them to "Insight", and instigated proceedings to censure the triumvirate; not because they were horrified by the sight of naked private enterprise, nor because they were on the point of joining the Labour Party - as one naive comrade suggested, but mainly because they were afraid the Tory party would be exposed as the bunch of profiteering land-sharks they are.

This process was crystalised on the 20th of April when an emergency council meeting was called. At this "20th Congress", Messrs Buckle and Co were given what started out as a slap in the face and ended up as a knife in the ribs. Despite Buckle's oration, consisting of a series of meaningless euphemisms, "who can believe I'm in local government for personal gain" (who indeed); his ambiguous motion calling for a "public enquiry or otherwise" was finally bludgeoned into the demand for a full-blooded investigation. Alderman Mote told us what a hotbed of bolshevik intrigue the Sunday Times is. Then councillor Nicholai (a biblethumping backwoodsman, informed us of the international conspiracy of pornography, the Sunday Times and socialism to undermine "ordinary decent conservative people".

The Young Chartists feel that this sordid business is merely the tip of an iceberg. Until the labour movement in every locality is prepared to thoroughly expose this type of "politics", -- not leave it to the "honest" right-wing Tories - similar scandals will occur with ever greater frequency.

Peter McLintock - W. London Young Chartists

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WHO SAID IT ?

1. Who called who a "dessicated calculating machine" ?
2. Who said "last year we led the movement with our policy of "wait-and-see" ?
3. "Labour to Power on a Socialist Programme". Who says this ?
4. "This marks the end of this pernicious doctrine of workers control" Who said this and when ?
5. Who said "You chop off one head today, one tomorrow, one more the day after - what in the end will become of the Party?"
6. Who called who "The ogre of Europe". ?
7. Who said "The Soviet citizen knows that when he has spoken, the authorities will take action to see he is dealt with". ?
8. Bertie Russell made his mistakes but then so did Stalin". Who dared to say this ?

ANSWERS: 1. Bevan on Gaitskell. 2. Ted Graham - 1971 Coop Party Conference. 3. No prizes for this one! 4. Beatrice Webb 1927 (after the General Strike). 5. J. Stalin 1925. 6. Churchill on Trotsky -- Wasn't he dead right! 7. Pat Sloan in 1937. 8. Bill Jones 1970 (Russell Memorial Meeting).

YOUNG CHARTISTS "BURROWINGS"

Early last month the "Young Chartists" received an invitation to discuss with the "Spartacus League", the organisation that publishes "RED MOLE". The invitation was couched in terms of a serious discussion on joint work to aid the NLF in Vietnam. Consequently, we elected a delegation of four to discuss with them and fixed a Tuesday night, at their headquarters. Arriving punctually, we rapped on the door, a face appeared through the letter flap and promptly disappeared again. After repeating this twice we finally gained admission, only to find no-one was expecting us. We eventually contacted one fellow, who apologised profusely and said he didn't know we were coming until ten minutes before we arrived! We were then shown to a smoky cellar, which was plastered with posters of various kinds, one of which had the theme that Labour and Tory were basically the same. Attempting a discussion led to the following hilarious results:-

1. We were asked what our position was.
2. We told them.
3. They looked horrified, told us Ho Chi Minh was an unconscious Trotskyist and said they welcomed the Paris Peace Talks.
4. They asked us to support their demonstration.
5. We agreed and asked for a speaker.
6. They told us they were not, after all, organising it.
7. We said we would have to report back.

They then asked for a public debate. We agreed wholeheartedly. Then they asked if the LFYS and YCL could be invited to make it a four-sided debate. We, again, willingly agreed. Just before we left, one of our delegation had a worrying thought, so we asked them who else they were inviting. Back came the reply - "Oh the Young Liberals and one or two others". Now it was our turn to be horrified! We pointed out the Liberals were an openly capitalist party - sworn enemy of the Labour and trades union movements and avowedly anti-socialist. We said they could debate the Libs or us, take their choice. They then showed us the door, and we left wondering what the movement is coming to. Seriously though, this is not a laughing matter - supporters of "RED MOLE" should look closely at what they support!

Charlie Marks - West London Young Chartists.

THE SOLDIERS STRUGGLE - HERE ARE THE FACTS

In our last issue we reported on the formation of the Soldiers' Trade Union Rights Movement. This received some publicity in the national press which, while of course welcome, was not in all respects accurate.

The Movement is not based at Catterick, although several supporters have either been through Catterick or are there now. The "Soldiers Charter" was not produced there - the "Daily Telegraph" report that "unit commanders at Catterick were making enquiries to try to find out who was responsible" and that "chief clerks in unit offices and orderly rooms were asked if unauthorised use had been made of Army typewriters, stationary and duplicating equipment" caused some merriment among all of us and particularly our soldier friends. The unit commanders can stop looking because there is nothing to find. Apologies to the Catterick ranks for the trouble caused!

The "Daily Telegraph" report was obviously based on the previous day's "Guardian" report, which itself announced "a murmur in the ranks" at Catterick presumably because our "Soldiers Charter" was first published by the Union Labour Society at Leeds University. Naturally we were glad to find from the "Telegraph" report just how much support we have at Catterick, even if it was the first we knew of it! It shows how far the new-born and still-tiny Soldiers' Trade Union Rights Movement has to grow.

The Young Chartists have always stressed that - the question of the armed power of the state - is the root question to be faced by the labour movement in the period ahead. In that sense it may seem fitting that it is the Young Chartists who have taken the lead in supporting and publicizing the efforts of the Soldiers' Trade Union Rights Movement from the very start. However we would like to make clear here what is our position in relation to S.T.U.R.M. Our involvement with it has been in a sense the result of a coincidence - a chance meeting between one of our members and a group of soldiers. These soldiers impressed our comrade with their class-consciousness and anti-Toryism, and put us in touch with some other soldiers - among them some ardent and very left-wing supporters of the Labour Party - who at that time (just after Christmas 1970) had started compiling anecdotes with a view to writing a "manifesto" listing some of their demands.

They had not got very far, had no idea how to get their material published, told us that someone outside the Army would have to assist them and asked us to announce the formation of a soldiers trade union rights movement as soon as possible. The result readers will be aware of already. Throughout, we have tried merely to do as we were asked by the soldiers themselves, giving advice sometimes but leaving the movement itself in their hands.

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To tell **the** truth we were at first astonished at the determination the soldiers showed, and were glad simply to be able to help. We have absolute confidence in them and their movement, and absolute confidence that in the long run the army ranks as a whole will be behind them and with the trade union and labour movement. Conditions within the army itself will guarantee this - provided, of course, we in the labour movement are prepared to act in time and to accept the army ranks' fight as our own.

Clive Pullinger - Leeds Young Chartists.

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World in action takes lid off Navy DQ's

World In Action on Monday April 26 was devoted to an expose of Navy detention centres - DQ's. There couldn't have been a better example of the need for the armed forces Charter.

Most men sentenced to the DQ's have been sent there for minor offences, offences which wouldn't occur in civilian life; not saluting an officer or just those ratings which the Navy cannot 'knock into shape'. In most cases they are sentenced by military court, without the right to appeal.

The conditions in DQ's would appear from the television programme to be at very least definable as inhuman. The men are cooped up in tiny cells, given inadequate exercise, a starvation ration and subject to regular periods in the most extreme solitary confinement. The programme suggested that conditions are so appalling that suicides or attempted suicides are frequent.

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It would appear that the majority of the men put in DQ's are willing to go through these unspeakable conditions just for the chance of getting out of the Navy, which illustrates what a con the recruiting slogans of 'Join the Navy and see the World' really are !

The Young Chartists have been campaigning for a Soldiers' Charter, in co-operation with the Soldiers Trade Union Rights Movement. That Charter should, of course, be extended throughout the Armed Forces.

The World In Action programme showed one aspect of Navy life, that trade union rights in that service are shown to be so essential. No worker in industry would put up with the sort of employer dictatorship which exists within the Navy.

THE QUITTERS

Important new developments are taking place in Vietnam. Reports are coming in daily of the increasing number of American troops, who, thoroughly demoralised, have given up the fight. As a report in the 'Sunday Telegraph' said "They constitute more of a threat to the security of South Vietnam than do the Vietcong. In very truth, they are the enemy within".

News of drug-taking and 'fraggin' - throwing hand-grenades at officers - reflect the cracking-up of discipline and morale, and this in turn reflects the major defeats for American Imperialism in recent months. The US invasion of Laos has turned out to be a military catastrophe. The liberation forces have won a decisive victory.

In this situation, all sections of the Labour Movement must express their unconditional support for the Vietnamese workers and peasants fighting under the leadership of the NLF, and must further demand that this leadership of the NLF stops trying to sell out the movement at the Paris Peace talks.

Thin red line-up

AFTER WOMEN'S Lib and Gay Lib, Khaki Lib? A small murmur in the ranks. A group calling itself the Soldiers' Trade Union Rights Movement has broken surface at Catterick. It recently produced a manifesto for distribution in barracks and recruiting centres throughout the country.

The soldiers' demands include the right to belong to a union and to elect shop stewards to represent them in complaints over fatigues and disciplinary charges. The manifesto also calls for the abolition of the mess system and officers' batmen. "The private," it concludes, "is fed up with being messed about. We live only for beer at night and the next leave." A meeting is planned for May Day in Leeds.

John Cousins of the Transport and General and Clive Jenkins's all-purpose white-collar brigade have both nibbled before at army recruitment. Soldiers in West Germany and Scandinavia offer a precedent which Labour and Conservative Governments here have spurned. But the benefits are not all one way. Last month Swedish army officers were threatened with a lockout in retaliation for a strike by other public servants belonging to the same union.

ARMY INQUIRY INTO SOLDIERS' CALL FOR UNION

By R. BARRY O'BRIEN

A DEMAND for soldiers to be given the right to belong to a trade union has been made by a group formed at Catterick Camp, Yorkshire, following a membership drive by trade union officials among the camp's 800 civilian employees.

The demand comes after unsuccessful requests by the Transport and General Workers' Union to be allowed to organise trade union membership in the Services.

A group called the Soldiers' Trade Union Rights Movement has issued a "manifesto" calling for soldiers to have the right to union membership and to elect shop stewards to represent them in complaints over fatigues and disciplinary charges.

Dismissed as "hoax"

Members of the movement have not identified themselves. A Northern Command spokesman at York yesterday dismissed the manifesto as "a hoax."

But unit commanders at Catterick were making inquiries to try to find out who was responsible.

Chief clerks in unit offices and

orderly rooms were asked if unauthorised use had been made of Army typewriters, stationery and duplicating equipment.

Trade union officials in Darlington confirmed that soldiers at Catterick were showing an interest in trade unionism.

Mr Robert Stephenson, Darlington-based district officer of the Transport and General Workers' Union, said: "We had several inquiries from military personnel when we were holding organisation meetings for civilian employees at the camp."

Mess hall meetings

Many soldiers attended the meetings, he said. Mr Albert Green, Darlington-based district officer of the General and Municipal Workers' Union, held in canteens and mess halls on the camp.

"Military personnel were present at all the meetings, and some of them said: 'It's about time we joined a union.' I said jokingly: 'I have the application forms.'"

"Of course, it was only a joke on my part, because soldiers are not allowed to belong to a trade union."

The meetings were held last month for civilian personnel such as cooks, batmen, cleaners and drivers to explain proposals for a productivity deal following a work study by a management services unit at the camp.

Catterick is the second biggest Army camp, after Aldershot. It has 7,000 soldiers, many of them young trainees. Units based there include the Royal Signals Training Brigade and the Royal Ordnance Corps Training Regiment.

Question in Commons

In the Commons in February last year, Mr Gwilym Roberts, Labour M.P. for Bedfordshire South, asked if Queen's Regulations could be amended to allow members of the Armed Forces to take part in the trade union movement.

Mr Roy Hattersley, then Minister of Defence, Administration, replied that Servicemen were not forbidden to belong to trade unions provided that their obligations were limited to payment of subscriptions.

THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

People's Army

HOW the imagination leaps at the news that pockets of trade union agitation are disturbing the Army's serried ranks at Catterick!

Downing rifles and "all out" at harsh words from the drill sergeant; the barrack-room lawyer given new official status as shop (or rather platoon) steward; calls for "danger money" at the first hint of action; regimental colours displaced by the union banner, blazoned not with battle honours like Albuera or Salamanca but Tolpuddle and Dagenham . . .

Old soldiers could be forgiven for not fading away. They might well die laughing.

THE CO-OP CAMPAIGN CONTINUES

Although at a slow pace, politics are finally being forced on to the agenda of the "left" 1960 Committee and the London Co-op in general. The April meeting of the 1960 Committee witnessed another stage in this struggle to politicise and revitalise the L.C.S., when the Young Chartists once again attempted to raise the question of Labour Party affiliation. Many comrades in the audience grasped the significance of this move and the Committee was pressurised into conceding a full discussion of the question at its next quarterly meeting! By the time this issue of the "Chartist" is published the LCS board elections will have taken place and there is little doubt that the 1960 committee candidates will be victorious. Their sole antagonists, the right wing CMA (Co-operative Members Association), completely discredited itself recently when, after having claimed for years that it is the true defender of Labour Party interests and opinion in the LCS, many of its members voted AGAINST affiliation to that party. As a result of this contradictory manoeuvre, a substantial section of the CMA membership have at last realised the bankrupt nature of their own organisation, an organisation which is little more than a platform for careerists, petty bureaucrats and the extreme right wing "revisionists" of our movement.

At the centre of 1960's rather non-political election campaign stands a completely meaningless resolution by Stan Newens. All Co-op members in London have had the "opportunity" to vote for this gem of socialist wisdom, which offers a "wide appeal" by combining a maximum rhetoric with minimum commitment. Whilst it correctly analyses the present Tory attacks on the movement, it provides no clear perspective on how the counter-struggle should be waged. In reality this Tory government will only be defeated by the labour movement taking power itself. We must take POWER not office.

Fortunately politics has its light-hearted moments. Yes, even Co-op politics! Here is a story which should bring a laugh to our readers! We are informed that members of the CMA, in their latest bid to defeat LCS affiliation to the Labour Party, are saying that it is a Communist Party plot. If they keep coming out with statements like that we can look forward to their complete political annihilation within the coming months.

Keith Whelan - South London Young Chartists

SLAUGHTER IN CEYLON - CHARTIST EXCLUSIVE

Less than a year ago the present "left" coalition government of Mrs Sirimavo Bandaranaike came into office in Ceylon amid wild scenes of popular enthusiasm. The last two weeks have seen this same government asserting its authority at gun-point in the rural areas, at terrible cost in lives and suffering. Those who are now being hunted along the length and breadth of the island were once the government's keenest supporters. What has happened to produce this result ?

The present administration is a bloc consisting of a "left" nationalist party, the "Sri Lanka (Holy Ceylon) Freedom Party", a self-styled "Trotskyist" Party, the "Lanka Sama Samaja (Ceylonese Equality) Party", and a Moscow - line "Communist" Party. It promised the earth during its election campaign : "people's committees" were to enforce popular control in the countryside, and "workers' councils" were to have the same function in the factories. The hated right - wing press was to be taken over and the worst foreign - owned investments were to be nationalised.

None of this was overdue, but prominent amongst our island's grievances was the plight of its 2½ million youth. Educational facilities easily available had turned out several tens of thousands of educated young people, many of them from the villages, with no jobs in which to employ their hard - won talents. Painstaking work carried out among these people over the last four to five years resulted in the growth of the organization now so much in the news : the "Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna" (Popular Liberation Front). Led by an ex - member of both the Moscow, and Peking - line Communist Parties named Rohan Wijeweera, it is organised around two very simple slogans of an "anti - imperialist" character, which tend to lead its enemies to call it "Guevarist".

Hostilities actually began before the elections when the right - wing "United National Party" government arrested and jailed J.V.P. militants on a trumped - up charge of plotting an attack on the ballot-boxes. This only inflamed them with more zeal for the victory of the coalition, from whose "Communist" and "Trotskyist" wings in particular they expected much.

With a careful eye on the present world climate and the history of Ceylon in recent times (there have been two military plots already), they maintained their organisation to see that no right-wing coup reversed the popular victory.

Things did, in fact go wrong, and very wrong at that. After a spell with his cap in hand before the World Bank, L.S.S.P. Finance Minister N.M. Perera returned to Ceylon to announce "austerity" policies for the working class, and a further cut in the standard of living for our

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Islands' poor. Another "Trotskyist", Plantations Minister Colvin R. de Silva, outbid him in servility by declaring his readiness to honour a racist pact for deporting many workers of Tamil descent back to India. Naturally expecting trouble, the government cynically increased the police force by 55% and denounced demands for nationalisation as the work of provocateurs backed by the C.I.A.

Realising that it must deal with the population one sector at a time, the administration turned its attention to the J.V.P. A crude provocation was engineered in March by an attack on the American Embassy with Molotov cocktails on behalf of an organisation calling itself the "Mao Liberation Front", hitherto (and since) untraceable. This was the signal for a monstrous campaign of intimidation against the J.V.P. involving emergency regulations and hundreds of arrests of members and sympathizers. House to house searches began, and it soon became all too clear that the government was bent on liquidating the movement by armed force. If the J.V.P. was to survive at all, it had to obtain weapons.

The only small arms within reach were kept at the local police stations. An attack upon one of them at a remote spot called Wellawaya was the signal for an all-round co-ordinated attack on 25 others the next day, situated all over the island. The only other onslaughts were upon the hated provincial administration centres (Kachcheris) left over from British rule. Far from being "terrorist", there have been incidents where the personnel of plantations have had their cars commandeered but have been given receipts promising their return. The J.V.P. simply settled down in control of a wide rural area, concentrating on holding the roads and communications networks. It looked as if both Colombo and Trincomalee would be cut off and isolated.

The Bandaranaike government though slow with its promised reforms, was not slow with its armed forces. A curfew was imposed, six military districts were organised to cover the trouble spots, and naval (from India) and air (from the U.S.S.R.) support arrived from abroad. Leaving foreign troops to police the ports, the Ceylonese Army turned inland with its armour and high fire-power against the small arms of the J.V.P.

Though unequal, the fight promises to be long, drawn-out and nasty. Several young girls have been captured and questioned with brutality, but have revealed nothing about the movements' dispositions. Reports have already come in of summary execution, and large-scale wanton destruction (apparently involving the obliteration of whole villages). On its side the government has received unstinting support in arms shipments from the U.S.A., Australia, Pakistan, Yugoslavia and Britain!

On their side, the J.V.P. can only rely on popular support, particularly the enthusiastic backing of their elders in the villages. The large-

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scale education of rural youth to such a level has reversed the normal structure of authority in the countryside, resulting in parents genuinely looking up to their children from whose advancement they had hoped so much.

The working class parties remain uneasily in the government, spreading a mist of propaganda over their complicity. The most despicable role of all has been that played by Pieter Keuneman, cabinet spokesman for the Communist Party, who tried to isolate further the J.V.P. from the working class by calling for trade union defence guards to protect the factories from "terrorism". The best thing us Ceylonese revolutionaries can do if this happens is to get in them and turn them instead against the employers.

Meanwhile, you in Britain should remember that this bloody repression is being carried on to protect the plantations and other investments of your own capitalist class in Ceylon. Frank Allaun, Sid Bidwell and Arthur Latham have already sent telegrams of protest. Your trade union leaders must mobilise to stop the arms shipments now. You can do your share by affiliating to the Ceylon Solidarity Campaign, 647, Davidson Road, Croydon, LRO 6DW.

W. A. Wickremasinghe (Colombo)

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LIASON COMMITTEE AT THE CROSSROADS

Some 3-400 delegates representing many thousands of trade unionists attended the conference on April 24th and watched the process of backing down over the Industrial Relations Bill begun by the Coopers and followed by the Scanlons and Jones and now taken up by the Liason Committee. There was an air of defeatism with speaker after speaker saying that the Bill would become law and that the only thing that we, the working class, can do now is to make the law unworkable. So much for the fighting talk of the earlier days.

When various delegates criticised Scanlon and Jones they were rebuked by the platform. Apparently our "left" leaders are above criticism. "Unity of the movement" was quoted again and again. But what kind of unity? - perhaps the kind shown at Croydon where the right-wing leaders threatened to break ranks unless the "left" leaders dropped their demands. Unity we need yes - but a fighting unity to smash the bosses and seize power! Not the unity of compromised principles.

As Eddie Marsden, General Secretary of the Constructural Section AUEW, said, the present economic system is "rotten ripe for change"

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and it was only our leaders holding us back. He went on to say that defeating the Industrial Relations Bill was not enough, what was needed was for the bosses to be smashed, and the state to be under the control of the working class. He quite correctly called upon the rank and file trade unionists to force their leaders to fight. But then he called upon the conference to support the decisions of the Special T.U.C. where the "left" leaders compromised their principles and prepared together with the right-wing to sell out our movement.

A document was presented to the conference which lacked any perspective for further mass industrial action. When various delegates attempted to amend the document to call for a national one day strike on the day the Bill becomes law, they were told by Bill Jones to refer it to the standing orders committee. When asked how the committee had been elected, Bill Jones admitted that it "might have been appointed". In fact it didn't exist. Jim Hiles of the Liason Committee said that there could be no amendments to the document, and no resolutions either. When asked who drew up the document, the delegates were told that it was drawn up by the National Committee. Who was on this "National Committee"? Why, delegates from various shop stewards' committees we were told, without telling us the names of these "delegates" to the National Committee.

So this mysterious National Committee presented the conference with a document which the conference could not amend, and could not offer alternative documents to. Many delegates were appalled by the documents' apparent support for the notorious Bridlington agreement and several other bad aspects. Despite attempts of the Young Chartists delegates to intervene, no-one else made the point that the Committee and all the delegates face enormous responsibilities in the period ahead. Come a general strike, it could count its supporters in literally millions and could play a leading role in the seizing of power. The spoken opposition to the CP platform came from the syndicalist wing of the IS group. These delegates raised the perspective of building and strengthening councils of action, but said they didn't understand the Labour Movement at all. How infantile to form new organisations outside of the existing Labour Movement! These militants should be concentrating upon seizing the reins of the existing organisations that the working class have built in the course of their struggles, and leading the whole class against the bosses, not just a few sections of the class.

In fact the comrade who made the best contribution was the delegate from the British Leyland Shop Stewards who pointed out that the greatest crisis facing our class is the crisis of leadership! He went on to demand that the conference take up the demand for a general strike to kick out the Tories. Unfortunately he then went on to say that after the General Strike we must have simply a Labour Government with Socialist Policies. But surely, when we kick the Tories

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out by means of the General Strike we want a Labour Government, pledged to taking real power over the economy. Comrades, when we smash the Tory Government by using the full strength of our movement, we want our leaders to actually **take** control away from the bosses and place it in the hands of the movement so that we can found a workers state and begin to build socialism. Though this now sounds slightly unreal, in the next period all our ideas will be vindicated. This is a measure of the responsibility on all of us.

Phil Elliot (NATSOPA delegate to the Conference E. London Y. Chartist)

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BOOK REVIEWS

"Defend Democracy" by Ken Coates (Russell Foundation - 5p)

This newly-published "SPOKESMAN" pamphlet provides yet another well-documented and useful analysis of the "Bill" and its Tory creators. However it doesn't really suggest any meaningful action except vague calls for "vast, mass action" and for a new general election.

In noting the need to remove the Tories it is streets ahead of certain pamphlets produced lately, but lacks any raising of the question of power - the power of the state - which is the crucial issue facing trades-unionists today. These sort of analyses are quickly becoming irrelevant. We know what is wrong with the Tories - the question is how to get **shit** of them.

"The Heaviest Burdens" by the L.C.S. Political Committee
(Co-op Party 5p)

This pamphlet puts the case for direct taxation as being socially just compared to the elitist concepts of indirect taxation and value-added tax. Whilst all this is formally correct, the pamphlet itself is couched in completely utopian terms. Its policies are geared as fraternal advice to a future Labour government trying to run the same lousy economic system as this Tory government is so busy struggling with. The ideas for a wealth tax, for no value-added taxation and for an increase in direct taxation are all good ideas. A campaign to force the implementation of these would meet with our wholehearted approval, and indeed we would try to be in the forefront of this campaign. However, only a Labour Government committed to taking power, collectivising the economy and instituting a real state plan under workers' control could really use these ideas in this pamphlet - to expect "Grocer Heath" and his pals to do this is pitiful.

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"WHO KILLED HANRATTY?" by Paul Foot
(Jonathan Cape - £2.50p)

Paul Foot breaks new ground after his two previous books on Harold Wilson and Enoch Powell by taking up the case of James Hanratty, who was alleged to have committed the famous "A6" murder and was executed on April 4th, 1962. Paul Foot, without using all the vast evidence accumulated by Lord Russell, still succeeds in casting overwhelming doubt on the verdict.

Peter-Louise Alphon, the son of a Scotland Yard official, was the other suspect, and Foot finds many things about this person so strange and provokes many doubts concerning police statements about Alphon. Particularly interesting are the statements of a certain "Jean Justice", who related a confession of Alphon's among other things. Finally, Foot shows the incompetence of the police involved and shows the need for a new enquiry. Undoubtedly, one day James Hanratty will - like Timothy Evans - be pardoned and "insufficient evidence" advanced.

However, what this whole sordid business shows is the folly of allowing this rotten system the privilege of hanging people on dubious grounds. What is needed is a totally different series of priorities. Whilst the thugs in silk hats on the stock exchange and in Parliament cheerfully consign the populations of Biafra, Vietnam and countless other places to a mass funeral, our main concern will be with a different and much worse bunch of murderers. The "A6" case is typical of our class justice.

"THE SOCIALIST MYTH" by Peregrine Worsthorne
(Cassell - £2.75)

This book, by a hack right-wing journalist, should be read by all revolutionary socialists. Our analysis of office, power and the state are brilliantly vindicated, from "the other side", so to speak, by this book. Without more ado we reprint on the next page the excellent "Sunday Telegraph" review.

Drop us a line about this if you have any views of interest.

Why Labour cannot succeed

By PEREGRINE WORSTHORNE

An extract from his book "The Socialist Myth,"
to be published on Monday (Cassell, £2.75)

BECAUSE of the high and widespread hopes that accompanied Labour's rise to power in 1964, the subsequent record of relative failure was all the more disillusioning. Needless to say, there is no shortage of explanations. It is not my intention to augment their number.

For I am not at all sure that the Labour Government did so badly, if by doing badly is meant doing worse than might reasonably be expected.

Indeed, what fascinates me about the years 1964-1970 is not that the Labour Government did so badly but that it avoided doing very much worse. These six years have not shown that this particular Labour Government failed. They have shown something far more significant and profound: that Labour government itself cannot succeed.

What is meant by "Labour government cannot succeed"? Very broadly, that Labour, while it can arouse electoral enthusiasm — that is to say, win votes — has yet to prove that it can sustain a public response that allows for effective administration once it is in power. It is not enough for a party simply to be able to win elections. It must also be able to produce a Government capable of getting the best, or at any rate something pretty good, out of the country once it is in power. The years 1964-70 suggest that this is precisely what a Labour Government cannot do.

In the first place, it obviously cannot rely on the ardent co-operation of the existing governing class, whose power it is pledged to destroy. In practice, of course, it comes to terms with the capitalist order, but it would be unrealistic not to recognise that the relationship is at best uneasy and distrustful. Industry and the City are obviously not going to give of their best under Labour.

Yet it is equally obvious that, since operating a mixed economy involves Labour in coming to terms with the capitalist order, it cannot adopt policies likely to arouse the enthusiasm of the working class. Indeed, it is pretty well certain to disappoint the working class, since the gap between what it promises at the election and what it can deliver in office is bound to be embarrassingly wide.

It has to be assumed, therefore, that a Labour Government will have to operate within a context of a governing class that has been threatened and frightened but not destroyed and replaced and a working class whose expectations have been awakened but not satisfied — within a context, that is, which allows it neither to fall back on the weight of tradition nor to move forward behind the momentum of revolution. Left-wing euphoria and Right-wing habit, both these primitive but formidable forces are denied it.

The very act of winning office, of occupying the seats of power, of assuming the mantle of authority, and of doing what is necessary just to administer the country — the very act, that is, of being Her Majesty's Government — deprives Labour of its principal dynamic, which is the freedom to challenge authority and the Establishment.

It was always assumed, of course, that Labour in power would be able to arouse passionate support because of all the benefits it would introduce. Working-class attitudes to the State would be transformed, with suspicion turned into gratitude. This has not happened, and each new experience of Labour in power makes it ever more clear that it is never going to happen.

If Labour's last six years made anything clear, it was surely that a Labour Government cannot so transform society as to bring about a new working-class attitude to the State, and is forced instead to do many things which actually increase rather than decreasing working-class suspicion.

New kind of State

It is idle to go on pretending, therefore, that a Labour Government can create a new dynamic, arising from what it does in office to take the place of the old dynamic which arose from what its members said in opposition. But this is what the success of British democratic socialism depends on: the ability of Labour in power to create a new social context which would justify the working class in trusting the State, in identifying with it.

For socialist policies to prove acceptable, trust of the State is a prime necessity. Yet a Labour Government, in practice, can never do as much to create that confidence in office as it has done to undermine it in opposition.

As a result, a Labour Government on taking office finds itself seeking to promote policies that increase the power of the State in a

society which has been successfully taught to distrust all the institutions of State. Labour wins power only by successfully exacerbating dissatisfaction with existing society. Yet socialism, in practice, requires a degree of trust and goodwill which the Labour party has made certain does not exist.

In fact, Labour Governments are really a contradiction in terms. In so far as they are Labour they are not Governments, and in so far as they are Governments they are not Labour.

A Labour Opposition makes perfect sense, since the British working class, or a very sizeable part of it, is still deeply suspicious of the State. In the act of opposing, Labour is doing what comes naturally.

A strong Government needs a governing class to do its will. This is the trouble with Labour. It has not got one, and the more it makes do with the help and co-operation of the old governing class the less enthusiasm it arouses among those who expected to comprise the new one. But it has to make do with the old governing class. There is no one else.

Not being a revolutionary party Labour inherits a going concern, an existing society, which it wants to change but not subvert. No new governing class bursts upon the scene when Labour comes to power.

The spread of social justice is far too gradual, far too piecemeal, and far too precarious to bring about the radical change in the whole nature of society which socialism requires. Increasingly, therefore, the truth is becoming inescapable: democratic socialism cannot bank on the creation of the willing worker, on the transformation of human nature.

POSTSCRIPT

The Soldiers' Trade Union Rights Movement will launch its campaign in the Labour Movement on May 1st - International Labour Day. Just as Barbara Castles' "In Place of Strife" was buried on May Day 1969, so this May Day will witness another historic event with this action. The Young Chartists will be backing this to the hilt and will join with other tendencies of the left to ensure its success.

The miserly small businessman's character of this Government is borne out by the decision for Foulness as the 3rd airport for London. Rather than pick Wing, and offend their farmer friends and flatten a few old churches, all the workers at Southend and in the lower Thames Valley are going to have the constant drone of the Jumbos and SST's over their heads. Even in ecological terms the choice of Foulness is a disaster. In fact, the Government, of course, was always going to build at Foulness. Stanstead and Cublington were named to allow rival pressure groups of a deep blue character to be formed so Heath and Walker could appear to give in to public pressure. What a miserable fraud !

Returning to the question of the Army, the USA has been shaken in recent weeks by the amazing actions of its war veterans. These people have openly come out against the Vietnam War in their thousands. Now rumour has it that troops in combat in Vietnam have again mutinied and refused to fight in this dirty war. This is a real inspiration, not only to us, but also to our Army supporters here.
