

THE NEWSLETTER

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NEW BLOWS IN NO-SACKINGS STRUGGLE

CLASS struggle is in the air in Britain this week. The employers are hitting hard at jobs and at shop stewards. And the workers are fighting back, more and more consciously, in defence of their livelihood and in defence of militants.

Here in ready-reference form are some of this week's blows and counter-blows in the class struggle:

1) Two CRAWLEY stewards, Brothers V. G. Lawton and T. V. Kirrage, have been issued with a writ for alleged conspiracy by the management of the strike-bound Universal Pattern Co. (this page).

2) STEVENAGE building workers are on strike for the reinstatement of labourers' stewards Brother Bill Sullivan (this page).

3) The Miner, the rank-and-file paper published by the Bradford (Lancs.) branch of the National Union of Mineworkers, is calling a rank-and-file conference of

pitmen in March to discuss the closures and the sackings.

4) MANCHESTER building workers are demanding action in support of the claim for 4d. an hour and the 40-hour week. (page 19).

5) HENDON building workers have come out strongly against the witch-hunt in the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers, calling for the reinstatement of expelled militants (this page).

6) The HARLAND AND WOLFF strike against sackings is in its sixth week (page 19).

7) In Liverpool, Wigan, Sheffield, Leeds, London, Manchester, Hull, Mansfield, Nottingham, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Birmingham and Coventry preparations are going ahead for meetings, called by The Newsletter, to discuss the Charter of Workers' Demands and the possibility of setting up an organization of rank-and-file trade unionists.

'... AND THE SAME TO YOU?' WAS CRAWLEY STRIKERS' ANSWER

From Our Industrial Correspondent

FOLLOWING the sacking of eighty-three workers who took strike action against redundancy, the management of the Universal Pattern Co., Crawley (Sussex), has slapped a writ on two of the Amalgamated Engineering Union stewards.

(Continued on back page)

'TAKE BACK BILL SULLIVAN' IS STEVENAGE WORKERS' DEMAND

By Brian Behan

FEELING is running high among building workers at Stevenage against the victimization of Brother Bill Sullivan, leading labourers' steward on the Harry Neal contract.

Last Friday Neals, who are building the New Town centre, (Continued on page 19)

Building Workers Slap Down Witch-hunters

The following resolution has been passed by Hendon branch of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers:

'WE, the members of Hendon branch AUBTW, are very disturbed by the action taken by our EC against Brian Behan and the other members indicated in circular 21/58.

'The charges against those members do not in our opinion justify the measures taken: expulsions and suspensions.

THEY WERE 'UNOFFICIAL'. 'On the question of unofficial activities, practically all our active membership, including members who are now paid officials (from our president down to our local organizers) have at one time or another led or participated in unofficial activities.

'We have no grievance against anybody on this score, as in our opinion unofficial activity is frequently neces-

sary to defend job organization, prevent victimization of stewards and militants etc.

'The charge of allegiance to the Newsletter group we consider to be ridiculous. Here again practically all our active membership, including paid officials and EC members, have connexions with political groupings, some Left and some not so Left.

'In this connexion we consider a member's political opinions are his own business, and as long as a member is a good trade unionist we are not prepared to tolerate discrimination against him on this account.

THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE. 'Regarding criticism of officials, we believe our officials must be prepared to put up with criticism if it is justified, and, should it not be, they have the opportunity of refuting it.

'We therefore demand that our EC reverse its decision and that expelled or suspended members be restored to their rightful place in our organization.'

COMMENTARY

CLASS AND COEXISTENCE

EVEN the most virulent of witch-hunting news-sheets on both side of the Atlantic have grudgingly admitted that Mikoyan has made an impression in the USA, on both business men and government officials. At the same time, however, the Federal Bureau of Investigation is preparing new trials of members of the U.S. Communist Party. The witch-hunt against trade union militants continues with little abatement. The campaign to prevent the education of Negro children continues in the South.

Mikoyan has maintained a resolute silence about all these things. He has preferred to spend his time hobnobbing with business men and film stars, being kissed by clowns and appearing on television (in between advertisements for beer, dog food and carpets). His silence is understandable. It underlines what 'peaceful coexistence' really means: an agreement between the leaders of States, to which the struggle against capitalism in the USA is completely subordinated. The Soviet bureaucracy is not interested in the struggles of the American working class. The Kremlin prefers friendship with Wall Street to solidarity with those whom Wall Street exploits—at a time when the number of unemployed in the USA has just risen by 275,000 to 4,108,000 and new struggles are in the offing.

The real reason why American big business has extended a cautious welcome to Mikoyan is that it realizes from past experience of Stalinist foreign policy that it has nothing to fear from the Soviet bureaucracy—that Russia's rulers will remain silent while attempts are made to crush the struggles of the American workers.

Look at what is happening in the Middle East. The Soviet Union has a trade agreement with President Nasser of Egypt to supply military equipment and help with the Aswan dam project. Nasser is making use of the guns and the ammunition to round up Communist Party militants in Syria and Egypt. Over 300 arrests have been made in Syria alone and fourteen out of nineteen daily newspapers have ceased publication under the new Press law. In Cairo some sixty-eight arrests were made over the New Year. Three publishing houses have been closed down and a printing press seized.

Not a single Soviet official or Soviet newspaper has protested against these crimes. The Daily Worker remains silent, although in Algeria the illegal Communist Party has protested, to its credit. But J. R. Campbell, the editor of the Daily Worker, remembers his Stalinist training too well to break his silence (a silence he also preserved when the leaders of the Polish Communist Party were murdered during Stalin's purges in the late thirties; when Rose Cohen, a British communist, disappeared in Russia; when his own correspondent in Budapest, Dr Edith Bone, was imprisoned for seven years).

Khrushchev has an agreement with Nasser, who represents the Egyptian landlords and capitalists. Khrushchev cares as little as Mikoyan what happens to the Communist Parties in the USA and the Middle East. The Soviet attitude to repression in the Middle East and Mikoyan's silence in the USA are not unconnected. One of Wall Street's leading representatives, Eugene Black, has just negotiated a deal between British imperialism and Nasser. British stockholders are to get

compensation from Nasser, who is busily jailing communists. This does not worry the Soviet leaders. 'Peaceful coexistence' has nothing to do with preventing war. It means 'peace' between the classes. But what Khrushchev and Mikoyan have forgotten is that this cannot be achieved in a capitalist society, no matter how much the reformists and Stalinists may try. Their efforts to damp down the class struggle, if not checked, could lead only to the defeat of the international working class.

THE CHARTER CAMPAIGN

PREPARATIONS are now going ahead in key industrial centres all over Britain for a series of meetings at which the closer association of militant trade unionists under a socialist banner will be discussed. These meetings, the first of which takes place in Liverpool on February 1, are an important sequel to last November's national industrial rank-and-file Conference.

The Charter of Workers' Demands cannot be allowed to remain on paper. It will fail in its effect if it does not become the property and the weapon of every industrial militant. Not a week has gone by since the Conference without the need for such a weapon being brought home to us. Sackings are continuing; many firms are taking advantage of the recession to get rid of stewards; the miners in particular are being left without effective leadership at a critical time. The initiative shown by the Miner in calling a rank-and-file conference of mine-workers in March 'to enable rank-and-file miners from all areas to meet, discuss and thrash out the problems that confront us today' is a splendid example of what needs to be done in every industry. The basis is being laid for a co-ordinated strategy of rank-and-file resistance to the employers' offensive.

That is why it is so vital to make the Newsletter meetings into gatherings really representative of rank-and-file sentiment in the localities. It is not just a question of filling the halls. The point is to fill them with stewards and militants from major factories, pits, docks and building sites, so that the discussion will get down to bed-rock. These are not ordinary propaganda meetings. The Newsletter wants a consultation with its readers, and with trade unionists who are not yet regular readers, but who see the need to fight the boss in the most effective way. This consultation will not only help us improve our paper—it will make sure that whatever organization emerges from these meetings will have firm foundations, clear aims and a workmanlike plan of campaign.

The distribution of leaflets at places of work; advertisements in the local Press; slides on local cinema screens; the use of sticky-backs; letters to trade union branches and Labour Parties: these and similar ways of ensuring successful meetings will be used to the full. Most important of all, however, is personal contact. Supporters of The Newsletter in each area should carefully draw up a list of workers who were delegates or visitors to the November 16 Conference, and of other stewards and militants, and visit them systematically to sell tickets and discuss the aims of the meetings. If this work is done in a planned way, each comrade being allocated a specific task, a time-table being drawn up and a regular check made, then these meetings will reach thousands of workers who are waiting for a lead. If the same energy and devotion is put into the meetings that was put into the Conference, these workers can be assembled into a formidable fighting force.

STEVENAGE (Continued from front page)

presented a redundancy list of forty names, including all the labourers' stewards.

The stewards' committee accepted the redundancy list, except for Bro. Sullivan, who has been on the contract for almost three years. But the management refused to reinstate him.

All the labourers on the site downed tools immediately. On Monday they were joined by another Stevenage contract, Marriott's, where some militants had also been sacked, including Bro. Cunningham, acting Federation steward.

On Monday the men from these two contracts, together with workers from Turriff's, Minn's and Carlton's contracts, who downed tools, staged a demonstration to the Stevenage Corporation offices.

They sent in a deputation led by the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers divisional secretary, Bro. Miller, and the district official, Bro. Coleman, to protest to the Corporation against the sackings.

The eighty men who are on strike on the Neal contract are receiving official support from the local officers of the AUBTW. They intend to stay out until Bro. Sullivan is reinstated.

The men feel that the sacking of nearly 600 men on the Birmingham motorway on the ground of bad weather conditions has encouraged the Stevenage employers to take advantage of the weather to get rid of militants and stewards.

MANCHESTER BUILDING WORKERS ARE IN MILITANT MOOD

From Our Industrial Correspondent

'WILL this claim end up as in all previous years? We claim 4d. or 6d. and the union ends up accepting a measly penny. When are we going to stop talking and do something?'

This question was typical of the feeling of the 150 building workers who attended a meeting called by the Manchester National Federation of Building Trades Operatives last Thursday in support of the 4d. an hour claim and the 40-hour week.

The meeting heard three full-time officials, Bros. Coughlin, May and Duffy, outline the case for the 4d. and the need for the 40 hours, and castigate the Tory Government.

But the meat of the meeting was the lively questions and speeches from the floor, which showed how fed up the members are becoming.

The first to get up was a weather-beaten worker who said:

'The platform have put up a wonderful case. But the real question is—what is going to happen when the 4d. claim is turned down? Is it going to be put off to ad hoc committee no. 1 and then referred to ad hoc committee no. 2 and so on?'

'Or are we going to use our strength? If not, all the resolutions and speeches are a waste of time.'

'Playing around with it'

Another building worker complained: 'The 40-hour week claim was put in twelve months ago and an ad hoc committee is still playing around with it.'

Bro. Duffy tried to explain the delays, pointing out that the unions were bound by constitutional rules to go to arbitration. But this did not at all satisfy the meeting.

The resolution circulated by the platform was criticized as not being strong enough. One amendment moved from the floor and adopted demanded 'a time limit to be set for the satisfaction of the 40-hour claim and action taken to enforce it'.

One speaker from the floor criticized the resolution for saying 'we pledge ourselves to support any action taken by the NFBTO'.

'We know what "any action" means,' he said. 'We have

already been told it means referring the claim to a further series of committees. The resolution should call for specific and definite action.'

Mass demonstration urged

Proposing the organization of a mass demonstration another worker, Bro. Taylor, argued:

'Wage increases are not won around the table. The best way to convince the employers we are behind this claim is to go on to the streets.'

'The two biggest increases we won since the war were those on which we organized demonstrations. Certain quarters frown on unofficial movements but it is this sort of rank-and-file activity that is needed.'

'How can action in support of an official claim be "unofficial"? The Manchester NFBTO must start a campaign on the sites and in the branches, ending up in a big demonstration.'

Jeff Morris (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers) declared: 'The ultimate solution is the social ownership of industry. Building workers must take up the fight in the Labour Party for the nationalization of their industry.'

A deputation was elected to go to London and lobby on the 4d. claim to express the feeling of the meeting.

LAMBETH AUBTW TO DISCUSS EXPULSIONS

A SPECIAL meeting of Lambeth and Borough branch of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers is being held next Friday to consider the expulsions and suspensions of members of the union.

'This branch is alarmed and disturbed at actions of our executive council, and wishes to give an opportunity to the London membership to hear the views of those members who have had proceedings brought against them,' says a statement by the branch committee.

The discussion will be opened by Mick Gammon, a suspended member of the London divisional council and a member of the branch. The meeting will be held in the Manor Place Baths, Manor Place, Walworth Road.

The general secretary of the AUBTW has sent a circular to all branches instructing them that Brian Behan is not to be allowed to speak to branches, since he has been expelled from the union and has broken union rules.

HARLAND FITTERS, OUT NOW FOR 6 WEEKS, CRY: 'WORK-SHARING, NOT DOLE-SHARING'

From Our Industrial Correspondent

'WORK-SHARING, not dole-sharing' is the slogan under which the eighty-three fitters at Harland and Wolff, Scotstoun (Glasgow) are continuing their strike, now in its sixth week.

Their fight against redundancy and the victimization of a shop steward is receiving widespread support in a town which is feeling the effects of a high unemployment figure.

Support is also coming in from workers in other parts of Scotland, and in England.

Inside the factory the management is facing big difficulties as the bottle-necks get worse. Union officials have been asked by the strike committee to stop the use of apprentices to do 'black' work.

A meeting of the Harland combine shop stewards is being held to discuss what steps can be taken to give the strikers more help.

A further leaflet outlining the present stage of the dispute is being distributed in factories throughout the Clyde area.

The strike committee is confident that with sustained support the workers will be able to defeat the employers—and so strike a blow not only against the Harland management, but against the Clyde Employers' Federation as a whole, for whom this is a test case.

'MACLEAN AND LIEBKNECHT—THESE ARE NAMES OF SOCIALISTS WHO PUT THE IDEA OF REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM INTO LIFE' (Lenin, June 17, 1917).

'Karl and Rosa' Lived and Died for the Socialist Revolution

WE SALUTE A GREAT REVOLUTIONARY, AND PLEDGE TO CONTINUE THE CAUSE FOR WHICH SHE DIED

By Cliff Slaughter

FORTY years ago last Thursday there died a woman who takes her place with Lenin and Trotsky as a great revolutionary representative of Marxism and the working class in the twentieth century.

Rosa Luxemburg, a Polish woman who spent most of her political life in the German Social-Democratic Party, was a brilliant theoretician and writer in the fields of economics and politics—and also a great woman of action, with the revolutionary qualities of complete fearlessness and devotion to the cause of her class, right to the point of death.

This delicate woman steeled herself to great heroism, and from the very beginning never gave a single thought to her 'self-interest' or personal 'success' outside the working-class movement.

At the age of 22 she was so feared by the established socialist leaders as a 'rebel' that she was excluded from the 1893 international conference at Zurich.

Her fight against those 'revisionists' who denied the class struggle and advocated socialism by gradual reform began just after this with her book 'Reform or Revolution', directed against Bernstein.

At that stage the leaders, Bebel, Kautsky and others, rejected Bernstein in words; but Rosa Luxemburg was one of the few who realized that they were taking the same direction themselves. In 1907 she wrote this about the party leaders:

'They have completely pledged themselves to parliament and parliamentarism, and whenever anything happens which transcends the limits of parliamentary action they are hopeless—no, worse than hopeless, because they then do their utmost to force the movement back into parliamentary channels, and they will furiously defame as an "enemy of the people" anyone who dares to venture beyond their own limits.'

Her fight against this kind of 'socialism' ended in the tragedy of her assassination at the hands of thugs employed by a government of the leaders of the Social-Democratic Party itself.

A party with millions of members, dozens of newspapers, cultural clubs, mass women's and youth organizations and co-operatives, and avowing Marxist principles—this party in 1914 supported 'the Fatherland' in the imperialist war.

Rosa Luxemburg was one of the few who had seen the writing on the wall with the incorporation of the party and trade union leaderships into the capitalist system.

Clear parallel for us

For us in Britain there is a clear parallel. Our leaders too have become written into the system. They are part of the established institutions. And so the lessons of Germany are urgent and vital for us.

Offered power in 1918, the reformist leaders in Germany

turned on the working class, helping reaction to defeat and crush the revolution. Within a few years fascism was driving to victory.

We must insure in good time against such a sequence of events here, on the basis of really militant socialist policies in the struggles that the working class is now facing.

Such was always Rosa's starting point, and so her works are of immeasurable value to our movement today; like those of every great individual, even her mistakes are tremendously instructive.

It is to be hoped that a large and representative selection from her writings can soon be published.

Today we should salute a great woman, and pledge ourselves to continue as best we can the cause she lived and died for—the emancipation of the working class.

CONSCRIPT, IN UNIFORM, SPOKE AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR AT BERLIN MAY DAY RALLY

By a Correspondent

IT will be interesting to see how the Daily Worker commemorates this year the fortieth anniversary of the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.

The tenth anniversary, in 1929, was marked by a special article in the Workers' Life—the weekly predecessor of the Daily Worker—from the pen of T. A. Jackson, then one of the Communist Party's leading writers.

He recalled how Liebknecht had fought 'for a persistent anti-militarist campaign and the organization of a youth movement to be its special instrument', how Rosa Luxemburg had written important works against revisionism and analysing imperialism, and how both had been done to death by German army officers with the connivance of social-democratic leaders.

Liebknecht's book 'Militarism and Anti-Militarism', published in 1907, studied the sociology of army life with particular reference to how the young worker is systematically corrupted by the army.

It gave an account of the attempts made by socialists in many countries to carry on agitation and propaganda among the soldiers, and critically discussed the various approaches to anti-militarist work.

Liebknecht put the main emphasis on building a socialist youth movement, for 'he who has the youth has the army'.

During the first world war Liebknecht won world fame as the only German social-democrat MP to oppose the war—especially when, after being called up to the army, he appeared in uniform at a Berlin May Day rally in 1916 and delivered an anti-war speech to the crowd.

Event remembered and discussed

His book and a selection from his war-time speeches were published in Britain and greatly helped our own fighters against imperialist war.

With Rosa Luxemburg he emerged at the head of the 'Spartacus' organization which for a time looked like bringing off a revolution in Germany similar to that already victorious in Russia.

What a difference a German workers' revolution would



Rosa Luxemburg

have made to subsequent developments in Russia and to the whole history of the international working-class movement!

It is not surprising that the murder of 'Karl and Rosa' was widely recognized as an event of profound historical significance, to be remembered and discussed.

That was still true in 1929. In 1939, however, the Daily Worker ignored the twentieth anniversary altogether; in 1949 it published only a brief letter from a reader on the thirtieth anniversary.

The fact is that Liebknecht's revolutionary anti-militarism has become an embarrassment to the Stalinists of King Street. And about Rosa Luxemburg the less said the better, so far as they are concerned.

Jackson could write, in 1929, that 'the absence of any translation of [Rosa's] work is a glaring shortcoming of British Marxian equipment'.

Since then a few of her writings have been made available*—but not by the Stalinists. No, indeed; for did not Stalin in his notorious 'Letter to the Editors of Proletarskaya Revolyutsia' (1931), show that Rosa Luxemburg was one of the founders of . . . Trotskyism?

* * *

Lenin also, who died on January 21, 1924, though he could not be entirely suppressed, was commemorated with increasing perfunctoriness and formalism in the Stalinist Press after the mid-thirties.

More and more he was presented as essentially the friend and helper of Stalin.

Perhaps the frankest expression of the contempt for Lenin which became a deep-seated characteristic of the typical Stalinist 'intellectual' was given by Archibald Robertson in a letter in the New Statesman of August 11, 1956.

'May I say,' he wrote, 'that I for one never doubted the existence of the document foolishly called "Lenin's Testament"?'

'But—and many probably felt the same—I couldn't have cared less what Lenin had or hadn't said about Stalin, nor did I see—nor do I now—that we in Britain were under any obligation to care.'

USSR

WHERE WE CAME IN (CONTINUED)

'On all formal occasions [Shepilov] has not been bracketed with the leading members of the ['anti-party'] group but merely tacked on at the end of the list of their names, as "Shepilov who joined them".'

'During the present session [of the central committee] Mr Serdyuk, the Moldavian party secretary, exposed himself to a mock-serious interruption by Mr Khrushchev when he omitted to refer to Shepilov in the approved way.

Mr Serdyuk spoke of "the political bankruptcy of the anti-party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov, Bulganin, and Shepilov."

'Khrushchev: "And of Shepilov who joined them."

Serdyuk: "It gets to be very long, said like that."

* * *

'Mr Yurkin "was amazed at the enormous work, the strength of will, the patience and determination which Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev displayed while he was fighting the anti-party group and decisively upsetting their anti-party plots".'

'Another speaker, Mr Kapitanov, the Moscow party secretary, came as near to the Stalin model as he comfortably could.

'“We all of us, comrades, know well that the initiator and soul of this tremendous work of raising agriculture, as in all other important questions, is Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev.

* Notably her controversial study of 'The Accumulation of Capital' (English edition, 1951).

'“It is he who has taught us to tackle agricultural questions in a real and concrete way. This, comrades, is an example and a model of the Leninist style of leadership”'

—Manchester Guardian, January 13, 1959.

* * *

'Addressing the last session of the Supreme Soviet, Mr Rudenko recalled that as long ago as 1922 Kaganovich had opposed Lenin, and that he had been associated in this with Kamenev, Rykov and Zinoviev.

'“As subsequent events have shown,” the chief prosecutor added darkly, “this attitude of Kaganovich's was not simply a mistake or error on his part.”'

—Manchester Guardian, January 9, 1959.

NO DOUBT AT ALL

'There can be no doubt that those who are carrying on his work in leading positions in the Soviet Union today, such as Malenkov, Beria, Molotov, Bulganin and Kaganovich, owe their development as Marxists and leaders to the very great help and assistance which Stalin always gave to those who worked with him.'

—Harry Pollitt, 'In Memory of Joseph Stalin and Klement Gottwald' (1953).

CUBA

CASTRO CASTRATED HIS PROGRAMME TO PLEASE THE STATE DEPARTMENT

By Bob Pennington

THE Batista exodus began in the early hours of New Year's Day. Soon after midnight the Cadillacs began to convoy the generals, the politicians and their racketeering friends out of Havana.

By hired ship, plane and schooner the scuttle went on.

It was the end for Fulgencio Batista. Ever since he led the 'sergeants' revolt' in 1933 this ex-farm hand, former barber's assistant and one-time NCO had bossed Cuba's six million inhabitants.

Twice as president, at other times as the real power behind the throne, he had ruled the Caribbean island on behalf of foreign capital and the most reactionary section of the native capitalist class.

With Batista went his henchmen and hangers-on. Men like Pilar Garcia, boss of Cuba's graft-ridden police force.

Built up huge fortune

It was Garcia's thugs who had tortured opponents of the régime and shipped their mutilated and dismembered bodies to their relatives.

Garcia had built up a huge fortune from prostitution, gambling and fiddling the street parking meters.

Another man who left in a hurry was Meyer Lansky. It was he who ran the gambling in Havana's casinos, as a result of a deal with Batista himself. An American citizen, he was formerly one of the top mobsters in 'Murder Incorporated'.

As the thugs left the crowds came on to the streets. Hundreds of slot machines were smashed. One casino was looted. The notorious Principo prison was forced to open its doors and release its political prisoners.

People's hatred of Batista

As in Hungary in 1956—as in all popular revolutions—the victims of persecution began to revenge themselves. Many of the police were shot.

It was in November 1956 that rebel leader Castro landed on the island from Mexico with a task force of eighty men. Warned in advance, Batista wiped out all but twelve of the invaders within a matter of hours.

Castro fled to the Oriente province and began guerilla warfare against the government.

Bit by bit he built up his forces. What helped him was the people's hatred of Batista. To win their support he advanced a quite radical programme.

It included the nationalization of the electric and telephone trusts and the return to the public treasury of all taxes owed by the firms operating those services.

American firms have invested more than 316 million dollars in public utilities. Biggest finger in the pie is that of the American and Foreign Power Co., which in the past twelve months alone has invested 220 million dollars.

Under Batista such foreign investors enjoyed lush profits. By bribing officials they could evade payment of both taxes and rates. So Castro demanded the return of all the income obtained by tax-evasion.

He said he would give land to all tenant farmers with less than 170 acres.

He promised the workers 30 per cent. of the profits of all industrial enterprises.

To appease State Department

Last February, however, he discarded this programme. Obviously he wanted to appease the American State Department. After all, American firms have a total of 1,000 million dollars invested in Cuba, and the USA takes 70 per cent. of the island's exports.

In an interview given to Look magazine Castro said nationalization could never be as rewarding as 'the right kind of private investment, domestic or foreign, aimed at diversifying our economy'.

He added: 'Our movement has never called for the nationalization of foreign investments.'

At the same time he rejected a proposal from the 20,000-strong Cuban Communist Party for a united front and a coalition government.

Castro's watering-down of his demands led to a poor response to his call for a general strike last April. Just before the strike Homer Bigart, New York Times correspondent, wrote:

'A drive through the poorer districts along the waterfront was uneventful. It is in these districts that Senor Castro has need for much missionary work to convince the labourers that his revolt is not solely a middle-class affair.'

Their national pride offended

Castro does in fact get large support from the middle class. The police régime stifled the young middle-class intellectuals, and gave them little chance to pursue their careers.

Frustrated, hating the dictatorship, their national pride offended by the way the government sold out to British and American firms, the middle-class youth rallied behind Castro.

A section of the capitalist class also swung over to him, first of all because they felt he offered them a chance to negotiate better bargains with the Americans.

They had become convinced, too, that unless Batista was removed his excesses would lead to a revolt that would not only sweep him away, but themselves too.

Castro's final threat to burn the sugar crop made their minds up for them.

Once the middle class and sections of the capitalist class began to withdraw their support, Batista was doomed. His armies started to crumble. Thousands of his troops went over to Castro.

Won't appease plantation workers

Towards the end the workers and peasants, too, began to move. But it is not likely that they are going to be satisfied with the limited aims of Castro and President Urrutia. Castro has said:

'Ours is a special kind of revolution. It is political, not social. It is not a revolution of class against class, but of all social classes against the government—against a small army group.'

This is hardly likely to satisfy the 361,000 unemployed—equivalent to over three million unemployed in Britain.

Nor is it likely to appease the plantation workers, who are being exploited by semi-feudal bosses and American combines like the United Fruit Company.

Only by attacking foreign investments, by nationalizing the plantations and the nickel mines—the real source of Cuba's wealth—will it be possible to answer the needs of the island's poor.

The overthrow of Batista makes this advance possible. But it requires the leadership of a working-class party, which can unite the revolutionary youth, the workers and the peasants. Castro cannot give leadership of this kind.

CEYLON

ONLY THE WORKERS, LED BY MARXISTS, CAN PREVENT MILITARY RULE

By Michael Banda

By the beginning of 1958 the MEP (People's United Front) had squandered its political capital and sold whatever political principles could even remotely be called socialist in return for foreign loans.

Nationalization of the tea estates was postponed indefinitely. This was one of the MEP's major election

This is the last in a series of three articles by Michael Banda, a member of the Editorial Board of The Newsletter, who recently returned from a visit to Ceylon. Previous articles appeared on January 3 (pp. 7-8) and January 10 (pp. 13-14).

promises. Tea was to the Ceylonese people what cotton is to the Egyptians: the central pillar of its economy.

More than 45 per cent. of the tea estates (in terms of acreage) is owned by sterling and other foreign-owned companies.

No plan of national economic development could be successfully carried out so long as the key industry—and major source of the national revenue—was left in foreign private hands.

The abandonment of this major anti-imperialist plank and the continuation of the United National Party's economic programme in industry and agriculture soon revealed the spuriousness of Bandaranaike's 'socialism'.

Neither effective nor permanent

The MEP, it is true, has made things a bit better, but by no stretch of the imagination can its measures be equated with socialism. Nor have they proved an effective or permanent antidote to communalism.

There is no doubt whatever that the MEP régime would have collapsed had it not been for the continual spate of race-hatred and communal propaganda which the government released. The Federalists in the north must also bear a share of the responsibility.

The only party which has not succumbed to the communalist wave and has fought consistently for inter-communal unity in a really free and independent Ceylon is the working-class party—the Marxist LSSP (Socialist Party).

More than seven months

Despite repression, isolation and temporary unpopularity the LSSP did not for a single moment abandon its stand on parity of status for Sinhalese and Tamil.

It did so not because of some abstract love of democracy or martyrdom but because it saw that the only alternative

to parity would be a disunited Ceylon torn by civil war and completely subjugated to foreign imperialism.

Its stand has been vindicated and its popularity today is greater than it ever was before.

Unfortunately its forecasts of racial disunity and the dangers of dictatorship have been underlined by the events of May 1958, and the government's proclamation of an emergency which it has continued for more than seven months.

The MEP almost completely lost the support and confidence of the racial and religious minorities. Now, thanks to its policy of unbridled terror during the emergency, it has also lost a considerable following among the Sinhalese Buddhists.

What few elements of the working class did support it before the elections no longer do so today. The government's failure to check inflation and to solve the acute unemployment which exists in the rural areas has lost it the support of the peasantry.

At the same time the government, by its vacillation and procrastination, has lost the support of the capitalist class; the big imperialist representatives treat it with contempt. Assailed from the Left and spurned by the Right the govern-

ment can rule only by bayonet and baton.

This is the major reason for the refusal of the 'democrat' Bandaranaike to lift the emergency and hold a general election.

This policy however has a logic of its own. It is not enough to rely on the armed forces—it becomes necessary to increase their powers and augment their numbers.

His coterie of demagogues

Sooner or later a Frankenstein is created. Whether his name is de Gaulle or Ayub Khan is immaterial. The fact is that no parliamentary régime has survived this risky business.

Whether Ceylon follows the tragic example of Pakistan, Sudan, Siam and Burma does not depend on Bandaranaike and the coterie of demagogues and parvenus who comprise his cabinet.

The only power that can weld all the religious and national minorities into one nation, provide full employment, nationalize the means of production, abolish rural poverty, expand production on a planned and diversified basis and banish the spectre of military and police dictatorship for ever is the organized Labour movement, led by the LSSP.

Constant Reader | Triple Alliance in a CLP

A MEMBER of The Newsletter's Editorial Board had an interesting experience at the general management committee of his Constituency Labour Party the other evening.

It fell to him to move a resolution on behalf of his ward, with a view to its going forward to the annual conference of the London Labour Party. The resolution ran:

'That conference condemns the attacks which have been made on coloured people in the London area, and registers its opposition to all forms of racial discrimination and incitement, which can only weaken the Labour movement.

'Recognizing that it is the responsibility of the movement in the London area to take the lead in preventing further incidents such as those which occurred in Notting Hill, it calls on the LLP, jointly with the London Trades Council, to initiate a campaign of meetings outside factories and employment exchanges, to explain the need for united struggle by all sections of the workers in defence of living standards and trade union organization, and for socialist measures to deal with unemployment and the housing shortage.'

Three in harmony

To oppose this resolution there stood forth a quite classical grouping of different kinds of adversaries of the class-struggle approach.

There was the witch-hunting Right-winger who openly said he was against the resolution because it was moved by 'a certain person'.

There was the smart young New Thinker from Oxford who argued that it was 'old hat' to presume any relationship between race-conflict and economic and social factors.

And there was the fellow-travelling delegate from the Electrical Trades Union who opposed the resolution because it was . . . badly drafted.

Lenin on the workers' Press

'Since there can be no talk of an independent ideology being developed by the masses of the workers themselves in the process of their development the only choice is: either the bourgeois or the socialist ideology . . .

'This does not mean, of course, that the workers have no part in creating such an ideology.

'But they take part not as workers but as socialist theoreticians, as Proudhons and Weitlings; in other words, they take part only when, and to the extent that they are able, more

or less, to acquire the knowledge of their age and advance that knowledge.

'And in order that working-men may be able to do this more often, every effort must be made to raise the level of the consciousness of the workers generally; the workers must not confine themselves to the artificially restricted limits of "literature for workers" but should learn to master general literature to an increasing degree.

'It would be even more true to say "are not confined", instead of "must not confine themselves", because the workers themselves wish to read and do read all that is written for the intelligentsia and it is only a few (bad) intellectuals who believe that it is sufficient "for the workers" to be told a few things about factory conditions, and to have repeated to them over and over again what has long been known.'

—Lenin, 'What Is To Be Done?', chapter 2B ('Bowling to Spontaneity')

The Red Army

DORA SCARLETT, whose book 'Window Onto Hungary' will be reviewed in The Newsletter next week, had an excellent letter in the Daily Telegraph of January 8, replying to some Russophobes.

She described how she had personally seen or heard of cases of Soviet troops fraternizing with the Hungarian workers during the revolt of October 1956.

For the second intervention the Soviet leaders had to use troops who knew nothing of what the fighting was about.

'I mention these facts,' wrote Miss Scarlett, 'in the interests of truth, not in support of Mr Y. Kinash's letter, in which he drew the moral that in the event of war between the Soviet Union and the west "vast numbers" of Red Army men would desert.

'If the Soviet troops felt they were defending their motherland against an aggressor, their feelings would be very different from those with which they faced the people of Budapest.'

BRIAN PEARCE

BEHAN AND LYNCH APPEAL ON WEDNESDAY

The appeals of Brian Behan against a sentence of six weeks' imprisonment imposed for his activities on the picket-line during the South Bank dispute, and of Matt Lynch against a sentence of two months, will be heard at the Sessions House, Newington Causeway, S.E.1, on Wednesday at 10.30 a.m.

LETTER**SUFFRAGETTES AND THE H-BOMB CAMPAIGN**

WRITING about the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in the light of the history of the suffragettes, Brian Pearce raised (January 3, p. 8) an important matter but one that might well be misunderstood if not further examined.

The great damage done by suffragettes, unwittingly no doubt, was not so much that they distracted attention from the struggle for socialism (which was hardly on the agenda in the years 1910-14) but that they actively sabotaged the struggle for the central plank of the socialist (i.e., ILP) platform. This was the exposure of, and opposition to, the impending capitalist war.

It is just not true, despite frequent assertions to the contrary, that the war took everyone by surprise, although this was true enough about the actual occasion of it—Sarajevo.

Writing in 1912 about the situation in Europe at the time of the Basle conference of the Second International, Keir Hardie said:

'The moment is critical and European war will certainly lead to European revolution, the end of which no man can foresee.'

The ILP had conducted a militant anti-war campaign since 1910 at least, and at the Basle conference had proposed an international general strike as the workers' answer to war.

The ILP was, however, very much a minority movement. The fact that only eight out of the forty-two Labour MPs were ILP nominees is some indication of their relative position. The political consciousness of the working-class movement in general had not risen to the recognition of socialist objectives and policies.

It was in this situation that militant socialists (who strongly supported 'votes for women') called meetings and organized demonstrations against war, only to find their efforts marred and sometimes ruined by frantic unthinking elements of the suffragettes who clamoured for the vote and nothing but the vote.

Went to endless pains

It would be quite wrong to blame all suffragettes for this, as the National Union of Suffrage Societies was in fact very close to the Labour movement.

But to bring this subject up to date. What is to be learnt from the 1910-14 experience that might help today to avoid, for example, a similar clash between CND and Direct Action on the one hand and militant socialism on the other? There are at least two answers and they both arise out of the recent agitation around the rocket bases in East Anglia.

The first answer is that if the Labour movement itself will take the initiative (as in the Mepal march), keep all 'non-party-political' organizations informed, and invite them to co-operate, then no problem will arise. This is clearly the best solution. It works extremely well.

If on the other hand the non-party-political organizations take the initiative then they should do the same thing in reverse. In the case of the recent North Pickenham demonstrations this was, in fact, what happened.

For weeks before the demonstrations the organizers went to endless pains to contact local Labour Parties, trade unions and trades councils, addressing meetings and talking to a long list of responsible individuals.

There was no great immediate response but it was the correct thing to do and they did it. Thus the pitfall of 1910-14 was avoided.

Since doubtless many similar situations await us in the future we can be all the more ready for them by the virtue of the lessons of these experiences.

Cambridge

Peter Cadogan

CRAWLEY (Continued from front page)

The writ, claiming damages for 'conspiracy to injure the plaintiffs in their trade', was issued on Tuesday against Brothers Vic Lawton and T. V. Kirrage.

The strike began on December 29, after the firm announced its intention of making ten men redundant in the machine shop. Next Monday the strikers received their dismissal notices through the post.

The immediate response of the strike committee to the sackings was to organize a protest march round the Manor Royal—the industrial estate where Universal Pattern's factory is situated.

Marching three abreast, whistling 'Colonel Bogey' and carrying slogans which read, 'We fight for our rights,' and 'We demand the right to work,' the strikers gave quick notice to the firm of their intention to fight on.

Since then three staff men have joined the strike.

In a letter to the United Patternmakers' Association, the other union with which the firm has relations, the management said:

'Even should the men wish to return to work on any terms whatsoever, there is no work to do as our customers have been informed that we have closed down.'

A copy of this letter has been sent to the AEU. Although the AEU executive council met on Tuesday it did not discuss the Universal Pattern dispute.

The AEU district committee, which met at Croydon on January 6, unanimously endorsed the strikers' action.

When I interviewed Vic Lawton, chairman of the strike committee, he was enthusiastic about the spirit of the men and 'the wonderful support we are getting from the Labour and trade union movement for our struggle.'

'Crawley Trades Council voted us £20 and the local Labour Party has promised a further £50.'

Meeting of strikers' wives

'A meeting of the shop stewards from all the main engineering shops has decided to levy all members one hour's pay per week as long as we are out. The first collections from that are already coming in.'

'We have also had a meeting of the strikers' wives. This was attended by about forty of the women.'

'They decided to support the strike and they carried a resolution declaring that they stood by their husbands. A number of the women are now helping in our work.'

Unemployment is mounting in Crawley. Since December 19 the unemployment figure has doubled.

During the past week, Lost Wax Castings, part of Bourners Ltd, sacked thirty-six employees. Hirst Electronic Development laid off fifteen of their workers.

LONDON MILITANTS SUPPORT MINERS' FIGHT AGAINST SACKINGS

From Our Industrial Correspondent

DESPITE the bad weather, over 100 attended the meeting called by The Newsletter in London last Sunday to hear Jim Allen speak on behalf of the Miner, a rank-and-file pit paper published by Bradford (Lancs.) branch of the National Union of Mineworkers.

Illness prevented the editor, Jim Swan, from attending, but he sent a message of good wishes.

Bro. Allen said the leaders—both the Right wing and the Communist Party—had failed to face up to the question of how to prevent the sacking of miners.

Many of the industrial workers present spoke on the need to build a united movement of the working class based on the use of industrial action, as the only real answer to the sack.

A collection of over £8 was taken, and the meeting pledged its support to the miners in their struggle against sackings.