

# THE NEWSLETTER

Weekly Journal of the Socialist Labour League

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## TORIES PLEDGE SUPPORT FOR NATO WAR PREPARATIONS

By our Political Correspondent

**SPEAKING** in support of NATO on December 15, Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, Tory Foreign Secretary, declared that even if the Soviet government were to switch to non-military methods in their ideological struggle with the West, the West must 'keep up' the military balance. This frank declaration of Tory war aims followed an equally frank speech by Mr. Frank Herter, United States Foreign Minister. Herter called for a ten-year plan to work out common goals and tactics, including military planning to provide what he termed 'balanced forces'.

These two speeches are the real answer to the Stalinists who declare that peaceful co-existence is possible between the Soviet Union and imperialism. What Lloyd and Herter are saying is that imperialism rules by force and will maintain its rule by force. Whilst the NATO warlords plot and plan in Paris, President Eisenhower tours Europe, the Near East and Asia trying to unite his bedraggled forces behind the plan.

This military intrigue is taking place on the eve of the summit talks. The Soviet bureaucracy under the leadership of Khrushchev not only tells lies to the working people about the character of these talks, it constantly attempts to confuse them over the real nature of imperialist war preparations. In fact the Soviet government behaves in just the same way as the imperialists. Whilst it talks 'peace' and draws up elaborate plans for disarmament, it continues to strengthen its own armed forces in every way possible. In other words the Soviet bureaucracy helps the imperialists to hoodwink the international working class on the nature of the real struggle against war, which is the development of the class struggle and not class collaboration diplomacy.

This two-faced game is endorsed by the Parliamentary Labour Party. As the press put it, Mr. Bevan 'diplomatically' avoided a split over the role of West Germany in NATO. The Parliamentary Labour Party apparently were easily subdued by Bevan, but the Right-wing, represented by Mr. Bellenger, made it clear that they are for all-out support for NATO.

Is it not time to end this farce? The Labour movement must understand the life and death nature of the struggle against war. It must combine the struggle against Toryism on the class front with a powerful campaign for a complete withdrawal from all NATO commitments.

### Sparks Demand Action

By our Industrial Correspondent

Some 250 electricians met in the Fellowship Hall, Hammersmith, this week to hear Electrical Trades Union officials report on the Exhibition Contracting employers' reactions to the men's demands for revisions in the industry's agreements.

George Tilbury, new E.T.U. official for No. 27 area, reported that the employers were prepared to offer an interim wage award of twopence per hour.

On Monday, November 16, a meeting of sparks had instructed their officials to put forward a claim for a 40-hour working week, double-time for all overtime working, an increase of fourpence per hour and the consolidation of the present fourpence per hour and 2s. 6d. a week the men are paid for exhibition work. The men also demanded the country allowance be increased from its present 9s. 6d. a night to 13s. 6d.

Before discussing any change to the agreement the employers

had insisted that the unions agree to the setting up of a National Exhibition Electrical Joint Industrial Council. This the E.T.U. accepted.

The new award of twopence an hour is to apply only until the N.J.I.C. meets in January.

After listening to their officials report progress a resolution was moved from the floor. This informed the employers 'that while we accept the tentative agreement regarding wages we feel that a national agreement should be signed by January 15 based on the executive council's proposed amendments or strike action be taken on that date.'

Only four votes were cast against the resolution. Electrical workers told me: 'If the employers don't come across then we should have a go. January starts the busy time for the exhibition and the employers could least afford a struggle then.'

### Clyde Apprentices Prepare

By Bob McCabe

At its second meeting on December 12, the Renfrewshire (All Trades) Apprentices' Committee decided to launch a campaign to unite apprentices in all establishments on Clydeside in an effort to force the employers to grant their wage demands.

For the last seven years the unions have been trying, through negotiations, to convince the engineering employers that the apprentices, boys and youths are grossly underpaid. At present an apprentice engineer receives £2 17s. 9d. in his first year, rising to £6 7s. 8d. in his last. The unions are demanding that apprentices be paid 52½ per cent. (£5 13s. 9d.) of the tradesman's basic rate in his first year rising to 90 per cent. (£8 19s. 1d.) in the last year of his apprenticeship.

The Apprentices' Committee, with delegates covering all trades and representing ten engineering establishments in the Paisley-Renfrew area, appeals to all apprentices' committees and shop stewards' convenors to see that the apprentices in their yard or factory are represented at the next meeting in the Y.M.C.A. Halls, Inchinnan Road, Renfrew, on Saturday, January 9, at 10.30 a.m.

Cash is also urgently required. Shop stewards' committees and trade union branches are urged to send donations to help pay organizational costs to Brother Orr, 49 Wenlock Road, Paisley.

**THE NEWSLETTER**  
 186 Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4  
 Telephone Macaulay 7029  
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### FACTS—AND FACTS

**L**OOKING at the journals of those who criticize the National Assembly of Labour, from the Right and the so-called Left, we feel more and more drawn into the atmosphere of the festive season. Rather than write a critical editorial we will therefore confine ourselves to the 'facts' which these papers attempt to foist on their readers.

First to Iris, which in its December issue has a front-page article entitled 'Be Warned—Now.' Iris tells its credulous readers that the main report at the National Assembly of Labour said 'We will not compromise—strikes must be supported to give the workers experience of fighting for the establishment of a Marxist society.' With all the goodwill proper to the season of merry-making, we do not know how Iris got this report. We are willing to grant that they get their news from many peculiar sources, but the person who gave them this report has surely embarked on his Christmas celebrations rather early.

We do not know what a Marxist society is—perhaps in the minds of Iris writers it means that every man, woman and child has Volume I of Capital strapped on their back. We do not know of a situation where all possibilities of compromise are ruled out. Nor did we call for all-out strike action in general. The keynote of the National Assembly of Labour, as Iris could have learned long ago, was the five-point programme unanimously adopted by the conference. Many of these points are the conference decisions of important trade unions. They are supported by large numbers of socialists, who might differ here and there on how to attain socialism. Of course Iris knows this, but after all, as a struggling journal, it must keep an eye on circulation, and since the bulk of its circulation is to those who see 'reds under the bed' we forgive the editors for unjustly misquoting us on this occasion.

Groping through the political cobwebs of that circle of small groups which peddled various little magazines outside the door of the Assembly, we arrive at one called 'The Internationalist'. For the information of our patient readers, we must explain that this journal began publication in November, 1959. The editors declared that the publication of this tiny broadsheet marked a 'big step forward' and—wait for it—it arose from 'the growth in influence and strength of the Fourth International and its sections.'

We are sorry at this point to mar the atmosphere of festivity by stating simply that this is a lie. The journal concerned has no more to do with the ideas of the Fourth International as founded by Trotsky than the Daily Herald has to do with socialism. It is produced by a small group of people in England who follow the ideas of one Mr. Pablo and a 'secretariat' which resides somewhere on the continent. The founder of this tendency in Britain was John Lawrence; he later became a leading member of the Communist Party in the St. Pancras and Dagenham areas.

In America this tendency was represented by Mr. Bert Cochran whose publication, the American Social-

ist, Mr. Pablo hailed in 1953 as a great step forward. As we mentioned in The Newsletter last week, the American Socialist has now ceased publication.

Pablo's supporters in Britain are a tougher breed than their American ex-comrades. In 1957 they began publication of Workers' International Review. The first number contained a message from Pablo's secretariat hailing it, too, as a 'great step forward.' After a few issues it ceased to appear. No explanation was given, but in its stead came another paper called Socialist Fight, which was again announced as a great step forward, or something similar. This has now become a duplicated sheet. Now we are introduced to The Internationalist—yet another great step forward.

Writing in its December issue about the National Assembly of Labour, this paper tells its readers that the most numerous and most political speeches at the Assembly were (i) from people representing the C.N.D./Direct Action groups; (ii) those who thought the establishment of the Socialist Labour League was a sectarian mistake; (iii) those who favoured dropping critical support from the Labour Party and the immediate proclamation of an independent party; and (iv) those who opposed the anti-democratic practices of the leadership of the Socialist Labour League.

We could question the sobriety of the reporter for The Internationalist, but be that as it may, he certainly had no regard for facts. There were 26 speakers from the floor at the National Assembly of Labour. Three were speakers from the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. One speaker criticised the Socialist Labour League for being outside the Labour Party, but declared his support for its policy. Another speaker called for an open party and one criticized the Assembly on its attitude to foreign policy—a total of six in all. The remaining 20 speakers spoke in favour of the Assembly policy and of their experience in the working class movement.

Perhaps if the reporters of The Internationalist and Iris were to get together they might sort out the real facts of what happened at the Assembly.

### COVENTRY RIGHT-WING LABOUR WITCH-HUNTS MILITANTS

Right-wing leaders of the Labour Party continue their attempts to remove any semblance of socialism from the policies and programme of the party. Labour MPs, such as Douglas Jay, and Labour lords such as Lord Pakenham, can publicly attack the policy of the Labour Party from the Right.

But the drive continues against those who seek to organize the fight for militant socialist policies within the Labour movement. R. Perry, a young bricklayer, and J. Davis, a schoolteacher, have been expelled from Coventry South constituency Labour Party for belonging to the Socialist Labour League. In a statement issued after their expulsion they declared:

'The attention of the Gaitskell leadership is now focused on the Coventry Labour Party. By attacking the rank-and-file socialists fighting for the policy of the Socialist Labour League, the leadership is preparing the path towards closer collaboration with the employers and the Tories and preparing to retreat from the policies and principles on which the Labour Party was founded.'

# BEHIND THE ROME CONFERENCE

By GERRY HEALY

It would be interesting to know how many members of the Communist Party have read the manifesto issued by the meeting of 17 Communist Parties at the Gramsci Institute, Rome, on November 21-24. Although the British Communist Party was represented by R. P. Dutt and John Gollan, there has been no mention as yet of the policy implications of that meeting for the Communist Party in Britain.

The manifesto itself is published without comment in the December 12 issue of World News. In all essentials it is a verification of our warning in The Newsletter of November 7 that in connexion with the summit talks the Communist Parties in the west would swing to the Right. The closer the Soviet bureaucrats draw diplomatically to agreement with the imperialists, the more the Communist Parties must subordinate themselves to maintaining the status quo, that is, a peaceful relationship between the Soviet Union and imperialism.

## Togliatti intervenes

A feature of Moscow's contempt for the puppet leaders of these parties is that they never consult them about the nature of their discussions with top people like Eisenhower. The 'all-powerful' men of the Kremlin take it for granted that, just as it was in the old days, so it must be now. When Nikita turns, all the little would-be Nikitas must also turn.

Kremlin circles appreciate that just as they are obliged to employ house-cleaners to remove the after-effects of an overnight Kremlin banquet, so in a political sense it is necessary to employ similar people to straighten out the comrades who have some slight misgivings about such things as the recent Washington talks, and K's 20th Congress speech.

Following Khrushchev's recent trip to the U.S.A. the man who organised this type of servants' squad was Palmiro Togliatti, an old-guard Stalinist. It was he who brought the boys together, under the auspices of the Italian Communist Party.

Togliatti began his preparations for the new turn with an article in the World Marxist Review No. 11 called 'History of the Communist International—Some Problems.' This article sets out to justify the Right turn now by an admission that the theory of social-fascism outlined by the 1928 Sixth Congress, which largely contributed to Hitler assuming power in Germany, was a mistake. Togliatti, of course, remains silent about the repeated warnings that comrade Trotsky and the Left Opposition gave at the time about this catastrophic ultra-leftism. Instead he turns towards the period of Popular Frontism announced by Dimitrov at the Seventh World Congress in 1935. This, then, is the tactical keynote of the new turn.

The manifesto from the Gramsci Institute calls for broad unity embracing christian workers as well as members of the Social Democratic parties. The appeal is directed to all workers 'whatever their political views', a formula which is flexible enough to embrace sections of the Tory and Liberal Parties.

## A programme of mild reforms

The programme offered for such unity has, of course, nothing to do with communism. It is a mild combination of reformist and liberal demands in vogue in most countries of western Europe over the past 50 years. It calls for economic co-operation between all countries, for full employment, against unemployment, for wage increases, for the improvement of the social security services, for equality of rights for women and young workers, and last but not least it demands in the name of 'the spirit of glorious traditions of past struggles . . . a great international campaign to win the 40-hour week without

reduction of wages.' There is scarcely a Right-wing trade union leader in Britain who would refuse adherence to these demands, on paper at least.

Significant, of course, is the omission of any demands to stop the manufacture of the H-bomb. There is no reference to nuclear weapons in this miserable programme—we must be careful not to offend the imperialists too much. There is no demand for the Communist Parties to take power in their respective countries. All references to overall nationalization without compensation are carefully left out.

## What the new line means in practice

This policy is the mainspring of the new turn and the forthcoming 'unity' offensive. An all-embracing 'unity' appeal around an inoffensive programme of reformist demands, some of which will be gracefully dropped overboard if ever a time arises when a real struggle develops around them. What the Rome meeting wanted to avoid above all was the possibility of any clash between the capitalists and the Communist Parties.

Togliatti, Duclos, Gollan and Dutt know full well that they are in a period when the employers are on the offensive. They realize from past experience the difficulty of keeping the rank and file of their parties in order, so they propose to combine two policies. For the militants they will have a 'maximum' policy which talks vaguely of taking power and nationalization, but in practice they will hide behind the policies of the trade union bureaucrats, particularly in Britain. This is clearly shown in the Daily Worker of December 14, when the provincial edition had a banner headline supporting the National Union of Mine-Workers' call for a seven-hour day. The Daily Worker knows full well that the present leadership of the NUM are doing everything possible to avoid this struggle, but they hope to be able to justify the inactivity of the Communist Party by leaving the NUM bosses to take the can back.

## Mr Ilyichov helps out

In case rank-and-file members of the Communist Party are unclear about their party's new policy of abandoning the class struggle in favour of supporting Right-wingers, they should study the article by one L. Ilyichov in the same issue of World Marxist Review as the declaration of Togliatti, with an eye on the Gramsci conference. (Can this be the Ilyichov who not long ago functioned as official spokesman of the Soviet foreign office?) Mr. Ilyichov declares that it is possible to have peaceful economic competition between the capitalist and socialist countries. He goes on to talk about the struggle in the 'sphere of ideology', which he says must be carried on in a way that makes it possible 'within reasonable limits to take into account the point of view of the opponent.' This ideological struggle, says Ilyichov, must be waged by peaceful, not military means. He calls for 'persuasion, explanation and polemic.' That is how the job will be done. Original ideas are not Mr Ilyichov's strong point; the Fabian Society has been preaching this for a considerable time in their life and death struggle against Marxism. It will be interesting to see the employing class give up control and ownership over their property after a persuasive polemic. Indeed, the Socialist Party of Great Britain might even qualify for united action with the Communist Party on this basis.

The real reason why Gollan and Dutt have not yet outlined the implications of the Italian conference is because they are concerned about the danger of militant resistance in their own ranks. In the motor-car and other industries Communist Party members are in almost constant conflict with the employers, so King Street must proceed with caution. Their support for the NUM programme is an indication of the line they will take in the immediate future. It is in fact a continuation of the policy which the Electrical Trades Union has followed in the Confederation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Unions: 'Go along with the unions on their minimum

(Continued at foot of page 263)

## Railmen Discuss Strike Action

By our Industrial Correspondent

Last week's decision of the London District Council of the National Union of Railwaymen to call a one-day token stoppage in support of the national wage claim, is attracting support amongst provincial railwaymen.

Eric Bedder, secretary of the Nottingham Midland Guards' and Shunters' local district council, told the Nottingham correspondent of The Newsletter: 'A national 24-hour stoppage such as organized by the railwaymen in France, where everything was brought to a standstill, would be more effective than local or district token strikes. This would be a step in the right direction.'

He thought that a mistake had been made 18 months ago when the unions accepted the three per cent. wage offer of the British Transport Commission.

Asked what the position is now regarding earnings he explained: 'So far as traffic grades are concerned, earnings are lower. When the three per cent. was accepted the economy drive began. Although there was an increase on the basic rate, actual earnings dropped.'

### Nottingham railmen support London

'I fully support the proposal of the London railmen,' said E. Hamilton, secretary of Nottingham No. 5, Goods and Carterage branch, to our correspondent.

'My branch has already passed a resolution supporting it. But I think it must be a national stoppage and also made an official one.'

Brother Hamilton commented bitterly on the low wages of goods porters which he said, 'often average eight pounds to eight pounds five shillings per week, including bonus, which is still paid at the pre-war rate of sixpence per ton.'

He was of the opinion that the strike of the restaurant car men 'did a tremendous amount of good, both for catering staff and other railworkers, too.'

Brian Arundel, The Newsletter's rails correspondent in Manchester, says: 'Railworkers in the north have welcomed the call for a 24-hour token strike made by the London district council.'

'It is now 18 months since there has been a pay increase on the railways, despite a pay claim being put in by the

N.U.R., without waiting for the outcome of the pay inquiry, signs of a settlement are still not in sight. The growing impatience with this delay is rousing the feelings of workers in every section of the industry.'

A porter working at Manchester's London Road Station told Arundel: 'I am getting less than eight pounds a week.'

'There should be no need for London or any other district to call strikes. Sid Green (secretary of the N.U.R.) keeps saying how badly off we are. But the leaders sit on their — and do — all. The British Transport Commission will begin to think we cannot fight. Unless something happens soon they will be shown how wrong they are.'

'We want a national stoppage to force our claim.'

### A.S.L.E.F. member rejects pay enquiry

A member of the Amalgamated Society of Locomotive Enginemen and Firemen's Union commented: 'Our Head Office were wrong when they did not back the N.U.R. and submit a joint pay claim. This is the opinion of a lot of our lads and I am sure they will join the strike.'

The A.S.L.E.F. member said: 'We are sick and tired of the findings of the pay inquiry. We suspect even when they issue their findings there will be nothing in it for us.'

Arundel makes the point: 'Many Manchester railwaymen want to go much further than a 24-hour strike. Some say, "we should come out and stay out until we get what we ask for." Others are in favour of a Christmas strike.'

'Whatever the decision there is no doubt, however, railwaymen in the north are ready to have a go.'

'On December 20 the Manchester district council of the N.U.R. meets—it is almost certain they will support the London men. If they do, then railway workers here will be ready.'

## Power Men Are Confident

SPECIAL INTERVIEW WITH BRIAN BEHAN

1. Are you satisfied with the effects of the stoppage?  
Yes, definitely.
2. What is the feeling of the men in the station after the stoppage?  
They think that they made a good impression on the management and the unions.
3. What did they think of the press reports that the stoppage was a flop?  
I think that some of them who accepted what the papers said are now more inclined to take no notice of what they say because a week before this happened the papers hardly mentioned the stoppage.
4. Some stations did not come out, why was that?  
We haven't got the reasons why yet, but we will find out more later.
5. How many stations did actually stop?  
Eighteen, so far as we know. (4,000 men out of 14,000).
6. What plans have the National Committee for the future of the campaign?  
The National Committee will be meeting in the near future and will decide then if further action is to be taken.
7. Had the action any effect on the unions?

We have had a letter since the stoppage saying that they realize the urgency of the situation and will be meeting in the next two or three days to discuss the low wages in the industry. They weren't to have met until some time in January.

8. Do you think that 24-hour stoppages in themselves are a good thing?  
The men who went on strike have definitely realized that they have got strength and they are quite willing to use it again in any future struggle. They are already talking about the next time.
  9. What action do you think will be necessary then?  
We have proved that we can strike for 24-hours and if it proves to be necessary I would like to strike until the wage claim has been met.
  10. What about the fact that electricity was supplied from the National Grid?  
It means that we have to work to get a majority of stations out next time, so that there is not enough electricity.
  11. How will the cross-channel link with France to get electricity affect you?\*
- I don't know much about it, but it seems that we would have to establish contact with French electrical workers to

prevent electricity being brought through the cable to break our strike.

**NOTE:**

The Central Electricity Generating Board has placed a £220,000 contract for the construction of a sub-station at Lydd, Kent, with Richard Costain. The station is to form the British termination of the cross-channel link between the electricity systems of the Generating Board and Electricité de France. Civil construction started in October and is due to be completed in thirteen months. This scheme has the largest capacity of any similar scheme in the world and was introduced in order to save generating capacity in both the United Kingdom and France. The Lydd sub-station is to be connected to the 270,000-volt supergrid which is being extended from Northfleet via Canterbury to Lydd. This high voltage will be converted to direct current for transmission via the undersea link to the sub-station under construction near Boulogne where it will be converted back to alternating current. This system can operate both ways depending upon the direction of power flow. The estimated saving on generator plant in both countries is in the region of £8m. and the annual saving in operating cost is approximately £300,000 of which Britain would take two-thirds. The total cost of the installation is estimated at £4.5m.

(Stock Exchange Gazette December 4)

### SCOTS AERO WORKERS FACE UNEMPLOYMENT

By E. Knight

Promises, promises and yet more promises are the way in which the noose has been slipped round the workers of Scottish Aviation Ltd., Renfrew, where, on December 31, 95 will be signing on at the Labour Exchange, followed by several hundred in subsequent weeks.

At the end of the summer the management assured the shop stewards that there would be no redundancy, but within weeks they were informed that the Canadian Air Force had transferred the servicing of its planes to neighbouring Prestwick for safety reasons, and so workers at Renfrew must go.

Renfrew workers pointed out that work could be transferred from Prestwick without endangering jobs there and so enable a full complement to be retained at Renfrew. The management hesitated, then no, it couldn't be done, but perhaps another contract may be in the offing.

#### Shop Stewards campaign for work

The shop stewards approached local dignitaries in a campaign for more work. The Lord Provost of Glasgow, the Provost of Renfrew, had a conference with the Scottish Trades Union Congress. George Middleton, Secretary of Congress, hinted that he knew of the possibilities of a contract for Renfrew. The rank-and-file workers were not allowed to know details of course, but could live on hope. Motor car industry moves to Scotland, screamed the national and local press. This was obviously Middleton's tip from the horse's mouth. All quiet for a period. Now a mysterious Swedish firm would make cars at Renfrew.

By now the workers had been told that perhaps the redundancies may not be as serious as at first thought, and also that there would be a slow-down over a two-year period. A contract, however, would solve everybody's problems.

An interview with the Secretary of State for Scotland, and finally an interview with the Prime Minister himself (no rank-and-file shop steward was asked to attend No. 10, only full-time officials).

Hovercraft were now the possibility. Perhaps, Yes, No, Possibly. This was the game of ducks and drakes played with the workers of Scottish Aviation.

Of course in the meantime many workers left of their own accord seeking perhaps more permanent employment. Demoralisation can easily set in and the management knew this. But so, of course, did the full-time officials of the trades unions. What of their role in this hunt, the contract game? Talks with the management were held regularly, but

often without the participation of the convenor or shop stewards involved. Hopes were fed out, but no action taken, or lead given.

Now the game is up, Christmas and the New Year holidays are here and workers are going on to the streets. Will they get another job? The unemployment figure for Glasgow is still going up. The question now facing the workers of Scottish Aviation is—is it too late to fight? The noose is tightening, without a fight their feet will soon be off the ground.

### SCOTS ENGINEERS STRIKE OVER VICTIMISATION OF STEWARDS' CONVENOR

By our Industrial Correspondent

Work stopped at John Brown Land Boilers Ltd., Clydebank, following the sacking of Ian Clark, convenor of shop stewards and District President of the Plumbing Trades Unions. This action by 500 workers is against a clear case of victimization and an attempt to smash the organization within the factory.

On the afternoon of Tuesday, December 8, the convenor was sacked without notice on the grounds that he was boiling a can of tea when no tea-break was permitted. In the workshop office where this decision was confirmed, a Superintendent, three staff foremen and a clerk were all enjoying their 'unofficial' cups of tea.

When the Personnel Officer was approached by the stewards he agreed that though no official tea-break existed, a mutual arrangement had been reached between the management and workers whereby tea drinking was condoned, providing that discretion was used and that it was taken on the actual job. For a year this arrangement had been in operation, and at the time of his dismissal Ian Clark was observing both of these conditions.

A management discussion upheld the dismissal, but changed the pretext. Now the convenor was to be sacked for using a heating torch to boil his can which they alleged was breaking safety regulations. The management of course had always known that tea cans in the shop were heated by such equipment, and the foreman in paying off this worker had passed many other workers drinking from cans similarly heated.

The plumbers in the factory took immediate strike action demanding the reinstatement of their shop steward. The other workers in the factory joined the strike. The management was approached to discuss the issue but rejected all talks. Following this a mass meeting of workers unanimously decided to continue the strike, maintaining that they faced not only the victimization of a shop steward but a threat to the trade union organization at factory level.

The District Committees of the Plumbing Trades Union and the Amalgamated Engineering Union have endorsed the strike.

The strike committee has called a conference of all Clydeside shop stewards for Saturday, December 19, to discuss this particular dispute and attacks on the shop stewards' movement in general.

Already support is coming from factories and yards, and meetings are being held to gain assistance for the strikers.

#### BEHIND THE ROME CONFERENCE (Contd. from p. 261)

programme and then, when they arrive at a point where they must betray even that programme, cast a formal vote against the betrayal, first making sure that there is a large majority against your vote.'

The difference between this policy and that of the Marxists is, of course, considerable. The purpose of Marxism is to prepare the working class in such a way that when the class commences the struggle for its minimum demands, its political understanding will be developed towards realizing the absolute necessity for taking power.

The outcome of the summit preparations is that the Communist Parties are to be driven by Moscow more and more into the reformist mire. It is necessary, therefore, for all rank-and-file members of the Communist Party to pay serious attention to the Italian decisions. We are confident that if this is done many important lessons can be learned.

## IRELAND

### I—WORKERS NEED A MARXIST LEADERSHIP

By Andy Bolton

'IRELAND is finished'. How often do we hear this from Irish working men who have been demoralized by long months, sometimes even years of unemployment; of existing on the soup-kitchens and on organized charities? (Who could live on the pittance provided by the National Assistance Board?)

What hope has been held out to us by our capitalist statesmen? Our ex-Prime Minister Eammon de Valera has constantly assured us that 'the country is in a critical position'. Our Government ministers and the Catholic hierarchy have been telling us for years that the crisis can be overcome if only all classes would co-operate with each other for the benefit of us all. This of course means that the workers must pull up their socks and tighten their belts and work harder without getting any share of the increased wealth which they produce. The capitalists and their statesmen on the other hand support 'the cause' by buying the latest make of car, and by spending long vacations doing nothing abroad, as a change from doing nothing at home.

This, however, does not mean that Ireland is finished. Far from it. It means that since the disastrous civil war in 1922 the working class has been politically disarmed and that the capitalists have taken full advantage of this. Throughout this period religion and ultra-nationalism have been willing tools in that hands of the exploiting class.

We are now entering a new era in Irish politics. The old civil war leaders have withdrawn from the field. Extreme nationalism has lost its glamour. The only remaining obstacle to a revolutionary Marxist movement in Ireland is Catholic Action, and we can overcome this by giving the workers proper leadership in struggle, and at the same time educating them

## A Savage Sentence on CND Members

By BOB PENNINGTON

The spirit of Christmas cheer got shut out in the cold at the Marylebone Court last Tuesday, when magistrate Sir Laurence Duane clapped six members of the Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War into prison for two months.

Charged with issuing leaflets which prosecuting counsel Mr. Oliver Nugent said 'were an incitement to the public to invade Air Ministry property,' seven defendants were found guilty of inciting the public to commit breaches of the peace. Six of them, including the Committee's field organizer Pat Arrowsmith and its secretary April Carter, refused to be bound over on their own recognisance of £100 to keep the peace and instead accepted their jail sentences.

One of the leaflets asked members of the public to protest against nuclear armaments and asked them to join a non-violent protest against nuclear armaments. The second leaflet set out a plan which referred to scaling the rocket site and pitching tents to camp there.

In court, Detective-Chief Inspector Statton, who had made the summons, agreed that the movement had abstained from any form of violence. Nevertheless they were found guilty and jailed.

The Socialist Labour League has had, and will continue to have, many differences with the Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War. We do not believe that individual acts of heroism and personal demonstrations of devotion and sacrifice can stop capitalism manufacturing nuclear weapons. Nor do we believe that such acts, sincere as they are, can of themselves inspire the working class to fight against nuclear weapons.

The Hydrogen Bomb, nuclear warheads and all the other fiendish weapons are products of the capitalist system. To remove their threat it is necessary to convince the working class that the same class that threatens their jobs with its profit-hungry system is also the same class that threatens their lives with its war plans.

politically. In this way we will build in Ireland a strong Socialist Republican Party led by Marxists which will stand in the (gap of danger) or if you like in the vanguard of the working class in its struggle for the overthrow of capitalism.

### II—ALL OUT AT THE HIDEOUT

THE three chefs and 27 waitresses at the Hideout, a large cinema restaurant in Dublin, have been on sit-down strike since December 10 over the dismissal of a manageress.

Each morning the strikers have been arriving for work at the usual time of 9.30 a.m. and sitting in the empty restaurant, smoking, talking and reading.

The strike has been condemned by union officials and by the Dublin press as 'irresponsible.' Mr. M. Mullen, secretary of the catering branch of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union has declared that 'the trade union movement has set its face against the unofficial strike. Even if the person dismissed was a member of the union nothing could be done by the branch in the face of the unofficial action by the staff. People who take unofficial strike action are leaving themselves open to sanctions by their union.'

The strikers have a much clearer picture of trade unionism than Mr Mullen. They have refused to resume work after several requests made by the union. They believe that the manageress was victimized because the management had got to know about a contemplated protest about conditions.

It now seems likely that the strikers will be prohibited from entering the restaurant, but despite all attacks they are full of fight and are determined to struggle on to victory.

They should not be left to fight alone. These workers are entitled to the full support of all trade unionists and especially all Dublin catering workers. Trade unionists in Dublin must show their solidarity with the staff of the Hideout by giving real, concrete, effective support; by demanding official recognition for the strikers, by demanding the extension of the strike and by financial support.

That task can only be accomplished by a socialist programme which unites the working people and brings them into action against the Tory government.

Capitalism answers the appeal to reason and the turn-the-other-cheek attitude, by force and violence. It uses its police force to remove demonstrators from the rocket sites. It uses its courts to jail its opponents.

### Labour must act now

Despite our disagreements with the Committee's methods we absolutely condemn the unjust and vicious class sentences meted out to the six defendants. The Labour M.P.'s should shake themselves from their Parliamentary slumbers and raise hell in the House of Commons.

Instead of conducting a witch-hunting inquiry into unofficial strikes, the knights of the Trades Union Congress should organize a trade union protest meeting against the sentences.

It is incumbent upon every socialist to protest against these sentences not piously and in pleading tones to the Tory Home Secretary but with militant meetings and demonstrations.

Now they open the prison cells to receive the pacifists, but they are preparing to attack other sections of the movement. For this reason alone, Labour cannot afford to keep quiet.

## CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

### ★ THE NEW LEFT IS BORN—NO WISE MEN By Bob Pennington ★

At Monday's inaugural meeting of the New Left, new ideas(?) spluttered forth and fizzed out like damp squibs at a washed-out November 5.

Banishing the spectre of the Socialist Labour League, the New Left's verbal exorcist, Edward P. Thompson comforted his audience by assuring them, 'that we are proud of the fact that there is no monolithic unity in our movement.' Amid the polite 'hear, hears, that greeted this sally, one unkind person commented 'or programmatic unity either!'

He explained the New Left as an 'open movement of action and discussion' and 'not as a party or a faction.' True enough, if it is neither a party nor a faction then it will certainly be open. There should be no shortage of discussion either. I do feel that there might be a shortage of action though.

Miss L. Howard, a London student, released a profound if rather pessimistic and unconstructive statement on the meeting when she declared: 'Society is horrible.'

She saw the New Left as 'the link between the two age groups in the Labour Party.' I hope some bright young things don't interpret this to mean that the new magazine's pages will give them an opportunity to demonstrate how useful they could be on the staff at Transport House.

Acknowledging that 'the struggle of the working class goes on hourly', Ernie Roberts, assistant general secretary of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, soon put troubled minds at rest. 'The main battlefield is the Trades Union Congress, the Labour Party Conference and the General Election,' said Mr. Roberts.

### ★ A MORAL TALE By G. Gale ★

Too often nowadays we read only of disrupters in the Labour Party, people whose activities damage the 'Public Image' of the Party.

Recently expelled members have been accused of 'association with proscribed organisations, disloyalty to the party, and working for causes alien to the principles of social democracy.'

For a change, let us glance at the record of a responsible moderate, loyal party worker—one who showed his Socialist principles by being one of the very first to criticise nationalisation, as Mr. Gaitskell does now.

Attorney General in the Labour government, Lord Shawcross (like other members of that government, Sir Hartley is now in 'the other place') is widely expected to fill a vacancy in the Tory Government's Central Africa Commission.

The noble Lord has previous experience of assisting oppressed peoples.

In 1953, while still a member of the Labour Party, he represented the Northern Rhodesian Copper companies against the African Mineworkers' Union in a wages tribunal.

This piece of humanitarianism did NOT come under the

A consoling thought. At least on Mr. Robert's battlefields there will not be any shot and shell flying around for another 12 months. In the latter case for five years. Even then it will be hot air, resolutions and ballot papers. Hardly to be described as dangerous missiles.

When Lawrence Daly got up to speak anticipations rose. Here was a working miner with a long record of activity in the West Fife Coalfield. Daly, to coin a sporting colloquialism, flattered to deceive.

'Last Wednesday I had the unhappy job of telling a mass meeting of 1,100 miners at my pit that 200 were going to be transferred to another pit—16 to 18 miles away. There will be no contract jobs for them at that pit. They will have to go on transport work. For many of them this means a cut of 25s. per day in their earnings,' he told the meeting.

We waited for the New Left's programme on pit closures and transfers. Daly related how they were organizing local agitation and were protesting to the National Coal Board.

There was no mention of a programme to unite all miners against sackings and transfers that slash their wages.

Daly is for Home Rule for Scotland. I cannot make my mind up whether he is cultivating chauvinistic Celts or appeasing antagonistic Anglos. I do feel that it is rather remote from socialism.

The audience of well over 800 did not get a socialist programme. They were offered a copy of the new magazine—normal price 3s. 6d.—for £1, autographed by all the platform

heading of 'Association with proscribed organisations.'

During the debate on Central African Federation in 1953, Sir Hartley was openly in favour of forcing Federation on the Africans, and he abstained when the Parliamentary Labour Party voted against Federation.

This did NOT come under the heading of "Disloyalty to the Party."

Unfortunately, Lord S is no longer toiling for the Labour Party. He no longer tramps the streets of St. Helens collecting monthly subscriptions.

But he was not disciplined. He quietly lapsed his party membership about two years ago.

By coincidence, this was the time he became the highly-paid legal advisor to Shell Petroleum—of which he has since become a full-time director.

This did NOT come under the heading of 'working for causes alien to the principles of Social Democracy.'

Why was this turncoat never denounced by any of the leaders of the Labour Party?

Could it be that they regard him with a sneaking admiration—and envy?

### ★ STOP! MEN AT WORK! By our West End Correspondent ★

Breaking into locked cars and driving them off is as easy as pie. All you need is the right equipment. The technique can be learned any day of the week by anyone with a few minutes to spare. You only have to stroll about the Pink Zone, in the West End, and keep your eyes skinned.

The demonstrations are staged free . . . by the Metropolitan Police. The lads operate very quickly. Crowds seldom have time to gather and admire these men, slickly executing their official duties.

Last Saturday night, at the junction of Irving Street and Charing Cross Road, there was a slight hitch in normal procedure. Police Constables MX and MY had run into a spot of bother. An ancient Morris 12 just wouldn't let them in. The primitive lock obstinately resisted their expert coaxing.

A large, flat, white, wooden box was produced and put on the pavement. From its compact compartments emerged ring

after ring of thickly packed keys. Keys by the hundred, keys of every conceivable size and description . . . enough to drive any thief or locksmith green with envy.

After ten minutes of play the lock hadn't budged. The Force had been foiled. Crowds gathered. Ribald comments were heard (Stop! Thief! Call a copper!). The job had temporarily to be abandoned.

A public-minded citizen was seen taking particulars (probably evidence about police efficiency for the forthcoming Royal Commission). Surely our worthy protectors should not be exposed to such public ridicule. And public money must not be wasted in this way.

We demand that the police be issued with modern means of moving mediaeval motors.

Or that they secure the services of experts in the art of breaking in . . . genuine bank robbers, for instance.

Or that Morris Motors be given a medal.

## Constant Reader | Victor Grayson

Veterans of the Labour movement are recalling today the long, hard struggle that had to be waged before the party could be got, in 1918, to include in its constitution that famous phrase about common ownership, which the Gaitskells, on their way back to "Lib-Lab" politics now wish to strike out.

A landmark in that struggle was the election for the Colne Valley division of Yorkshire, in 1907, on a straight socialist ticket, of a young man whose name became for a few years an inspiring symbol to advanced workers. This was Victor Grayson. His election threw the official leaders of Labour into consternation. But in a comparatively short time he eliminated himself from the political scene owing to personal weaknesses.

Grayson drank heavily and was a womanizer. After accepting £3,000 from one of his admirers he suddenly married another, a lady whom it would be polite to call amoral. In 1913 he had a nervous breakdown and went off on a long voyage to get better. Not only, however, did he return a confirmed drunkard, but after the first world war he appeared on public platforms as a paid propagandist against strikes.

In 1920 he disappeared without trace. But the movement he had served for a while went on, the richer for his contribution, the poorer for his defection.

### Carr on Soviet History

In the second volume, just published, of his 'Socialism In One Country, 1924-1926' (Macmillan, 45s.), Professor E. H. Carr takes his story down to the eve of the coming-together of Trotsky with Zinoviev and Kamenev in the united opposition of 1926. The book includes valuable studies of the administrative developments of the period, in the party, in local government ('Revitalizing the Soviets'), the Red Army and the security organs. These should be compulsory reading for all who talk learnedly about 'Stalinism' without any knowledge of the actual historical and geographical conditions

in which that phenomenon took shape.

'Of Trotsky alone,' writes Carr, analyzing the party crisis of 1925, 'could it be said that his attitude would be determined, and his actions directed, by a profound and unchanging conviction of the correct course to pursue and by an indifference to personal factors if they seemed irrelevant to this conviction. This quality was a source of political weakness as well as of strength. But it won respect and gave him a unique position.'

Trotsky is indeed one of those who in Cornford's phrase, throw a longer shadow as time recedes. The newspapers now planning what anniversaries to commemorate in 1960 will certainly be commissioning articles on the 20th anniversary of Trotsky's murder, in August next. What will the Daily Worker do about it, I wonder? When the murder happened, the Daily Worker of August 23, 1940, carried an article by J. R. Campbell, in which Trotsky's role in the revolution and civil war was dismissed as a 'few ultra-revolutionary contortions' and the general tone was set by the title: 'A Counter-Revolutionary Gangster Passes.'

### Words Fail Me

'Driven to despair by the theft last week of £5,000 of her jewellery, Dorothea, Lady Ley, was faced yesterday with a further tragedy.

'Her 10-year-old white pekinese Brumas disappeared in Belgravia while being taken for a walk by the maid, who believed someone had stolen him.

"I was quite overcome," Lady Ley told me. "I began to think someone was deliberately trying to ruin my life. The person who broke into my flat knew exactly where the key to my wardrobe was, and took all my diamonds and rubies."

'Luckily, Lady Ley's luck changed. During the afternoon her Peke was found and returned to the police.'

(William Hickey in the Daily Express, December 14.)

BRIAN PEARCE

## COMMENTARY

### PRE-CHRISTMAS ANGLE

By Betty Healy

Only a week to go and you wish it were over? Many parents on short-time or redundant this year may be feeling that all this palaver is only adding insult to injury: the glossy toy catalogues and wine lists, the schools with their 'day off for shopping' and the buses crammed with overlaid passengers.

Of course we do need Christmas, after the fogs of November, and mostly wish it lasted a week instead of two days, but the thing gets out of hand. The little stocking stuffed with sweets and fruits, paints and plasticine, has given place to a big and more profitable pillowcase containing a talking-and-wetting-doll and boxes of complicated toys, supplied, if Father Christmas so desires, on a credit basis.

This not only creates financial problems. The child's creative spirit may be buried under a heap of short-lived mechanical gadgets. And of course the real Christmas Box goes to the plastic and metal toy manufacturers.

### Getting nowhere very fast

If Johnnie must have a kiddie-car, Father certainly needs a four-seater to get about at all. And as everyone wants to get around, especially on fine summer Sundays and just before Christmas, the end result is that nobody can, the roads being all jammed up with private cars. Everyone goes in fear of death on the roads, too, and policemen visit the schools to tell the children about it.

During the last war public transport could always get the public through because everything else was restricted. Year by year since then we have been suffering the indignities of second-class citizens travelling like cattle in roads and tubes growing ever more congested. Only today I heard of someone being trampled on in the Underground, and another woman having her umbrella broken.

There has been no organized revolt. Only when the whole thing began to grind to a halt and the West End stores were in danger of losing sales did the Government feel obliged to curb the car traffic or rather the parking.

Will the Pink Zone stay Pink after Christmas? Buses are saving up to 30 minutes on a trip—but the scheme depends on a pantomime tug-of-war between the Police and car-drivers.

In transport as in consumer goods, our weakness is reflected here. We are neither united nor represented. Half the working population, 8,750,000 people who could belong to a Union are not members, and the Unions themselves represent and concentrate on craft interests with little concern for other matters.

Why do we in London accept an extra 1½ to 2 hours travelling time on our working day? Surely no one believes the solution in this country will be a car for everyone. How about the employers paying for travelling time? How about cheap municipal taxi-services controlled by local committees covering every street and block and linking up with bus and train services? How about a real campaign for the nationalization of land and the construction of a network of planned roads, not necessarily speedways? Or should we leave it all to Fairy Godmother Marples and her famous Corps de Police?

### READERS PLEASE NOTE:

The series of discussions on economics will be continued after Christmas.