

THE NEWSLETTER

Weekly Journal of the Socialist Labour League

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March 26, 1960

BRITISH LABOUR MUST ACT IN DEFENCE OF THE AFRICAN PEOPLE

A STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

POLICE violence and terror have struck again in South Africa. On Monday, South Africa's brutal race-hating police cold-bloodedly massacred 66 African men, women and children. Another 186 were injured. Tuesday's death roll is not yet known.

South Africa is a land of terror and slavery for its eleven million coloured people. Africans are herded like cattle into reserves. Every African is compelled by law to carry a pass-book. Any day, any hour, the police can demand that pass-book. The penalty for failure to produce it is £2 fine or two weeks in jail.

Apartheid is used to supply cheap African labour for the South African capitalists and wealthy farmers.

British capitalism also has an interest in maintaining apartheid. In 1957 British capitalists had over £865 million invested in the South African economy. Over half of that was in manufacturing, including heavy engineering.

The Tories may have tactical disagreements with Verwoerd on how best to exploit the Africans. But they certainly stand with him against the African revolution. In the House of Commons on Tuesday C. J. M. Alport, Tory Minister of State for Commonwealth Relations, when told by a Labour Member that the shootings were being carried out by arms sent from Britain blandly replied: 'It has been the policy of successive governments of both political parties to help other Commonwealth governments to meet their armament requirements.'

Naturally Alport cynically brushed aside the Labour suggestion that he should protest against the shootings. The fight against South African white terror is a fight to get rid of the Tory government now.

Protests not enough

Nor will protests to the South African ruling class evoke any different response. Police chief of Sharpeville, Colonel J. Pienaar, calmly commented on the massacre of coloured workers: 'If they do these things they must learn their lesson the hard way.' This is the authentic voice of the South African ruling class and their answer to peaceful persuasion.

As the London Star comments (Tuesday, March 22) the present boycott and marches 'may give heart to the African rebels. But they will bounce from the rigid convictions of Premier Verwoerd and his government like stones from an armoured car.'

It is not protests and lobbies that will move the men in Pretoria and Whitehall. Their policies are based on maintaining their investments and their right to exploit African labour, not on sentiment or goodwill.

The great force for defeating apartheid and smashing the Verwoerd government are the eleven million dispossessed people of South Africa. Their allies in that fight must be the British Labour movement. Both have a common enemy: British and South African capitalism.

Mobilize the Labour movement

British Labour must extend the boycott. The real wealth of South African capitalism lies in its gold and diamond and uranium mines. South Africa exports other industrial goods as well. In 1958, South Africa exported to Britain £10,504,468 million of wool, £2,422,159 of sulphite, £1,587,787 of asbestos and £2,538,865 of chemicals. None of these are on the present boycott list. We call upon the Labour Move-

ment to:

Demand that the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party immediately call on the dockers, railwaymen and other transport workers to place an embargo on these industrial commodities. Already African workers are going on strike in protest at the killings. British Labour must support that strike by an embargo on the transport as well as on the sale of all South African goods here.

Demand that the TUC and the Labour Party support the march called for Sunday, March 27, by the Committee of African Organizations and call on all their members to march. British Labour must act now.

This action would also help to show the British race-mongers and the fascist thugs that despite the encouragement they get from South African circles the British Labour movement is determined to smash any attempt of theirs to introduce race policies over here.

- Industrial action in support of African people. Portworkers should refuse to handle all goods to and from South Africa.
- Railwaymen, transport drivers and airline workers, should refuse to move all South African goods.
- Demand in your Trade Union branches and Labour Parties that the TUC and the Labour Party declare now for solidarity with the African revolution, for immediate colonial independence and against racialism in Britain.

22/3/1960.

**SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE PAMPHLET
END SOUTH AFRICAN WHITE TERROR!**

By James Baker

2/- per dozen from 186 Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4

SOUTH AFRICA PROTEST MARCH

Assemble: LEFT COFFEE HOUSE
Brazenoze Street, Manchester

At 2.30 p.m., SATURDAY, MARCH 26

THE NEWSLETTER
 186 Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4
 Telephone Macaulay 7029
 SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 1960

THE WITCH-HUNT STEPS UP AGAINST THE ETU

THE Trades Union Congress have decided to solicit the aid of outside forces to enquire into the internal affairs of the Electrical Trades Union. The gentlemen of the TUC should think twice before asking representatives of the capitalist State to enquire into the affairs of a trade union. Once this is done they might well find themselves victims of similar types of enquiry in the not too distant future.

This dangerous precedent must be opposed by all trade unionists, irrespective of what opinions they may hold about the leadership of the ETU. Nobody, we repeat, nobody is qualified to decide on an enquiry except the members of the ETU itself. Nobody has consulted them as to whether or not they want an enquiry.

The first thing to be done is to have a ballot of the entire membership on this question. If they decide by a majority to have an enquiry, then the procedure should surely be for branches in the union to nominate a panel of people who are not officials or executive officers in the union to enquire into whatever activity about which the membership may want information.

The present demand for an investigation of the ETU has come from Fleet Street, together with a number of renegades who believe they will be able to regain the leadership of the ETU for the TUC right wing by cashing in on the genuine discontent that exists in the union with some aspects of Communist Party leadership. No militant should have any truck with such people.

AEU RIGHT-WING LEADERS ATTACK SLL

By Harry Ratner

Amalgamated Engineering Union branches in the Manchester district have received a circular signed by Bro. C. W. Hallett, general secretary, forbidding them to consider correspondence from the Socialist Labour League or to participate in the Manchester Assembly of Labour. The circular says:

'Dear Sir and Brother,

'The attention of Executive Council has been drawn to a letter which has been circulated to our branches in and around Manchester inviting them to send delegates to a Conference to be held on Sunday, March 27, at the Registrar's Office, All Saints, at 2.30 p.m. The sponsors are the "Manchester Assembly of Labour".

'Executive Council would explain to branches that this organization is an offshoot of the Socialist Labour League—the latter being a Trotskyist organization which has been proscribed by the Labour Party.

'This being so, we would draw the attention of your

branch to the contents of circular B9/50, which was upheld by our 1950 Final Appeal Court and which instructed branches that they must not consider correspondence from proscribed bodies or their statutory organizations. This instruction is still effective and must be observed by all branches.

'Yours fraternally, C. W. Hallett, General Secretary.'

This action by the Right-wing Executive of the AEU comes after a series of attacks on the democratic rights of the rank and file.

Some time ago, a circular came out forbidding branches to circularise other branches. Last year the EC, very slow in pursuing the wages' and hours' claim, refused permission for District Committees to undertake campaigns and mass meetings in support of the claim.

Having stopped official activity to mobilize the members to support official union demands they then banned all attempts by shop stewards to convene national conferences. They victimized Bro. Caborn of Sheffield. They threatened Assistant General Secretary Bro. Roberts if he spoke at a Daily Worker Conference. Now comes this attempt to prevent AEU members from attending the Manchester Assembly of Labour and meeting fellow workers in other industries to discuss common action on hours, wages and nationalization.

There is widespread dissatisfaction among active AEU members and shop stewards at the EC's failure to fight for the union's hours and wages claim and their constant refusal to support legitimate disputes. At the moment this hostility merges with cynicism and disillusionment because the members see no alternative. The emergence of a rank-and-file movement linking all this discontent with a positive programme to revive the union could mean a dangerous challenge to the Right wing. That is why they are so quick to ban any attempt at organizing the rank and file.

That is the reason behind their latest attack on the Socialist Labour League.

SHOP STEWARDS GIVE STANDARD MOTOR COMPANY SEVEN DAYS

By our Industrial Correspondent

A meeting at Transport House, Coventry, on Friday, March 18, of all Standard shop stewards, unanimously passed a resolution describing the dismissals as 'morally indefensible and inhuman'. They went on to say, 'The immediate problem, therefore, is the absorption of all this labour by the Standard group of factories, and the company will therefore be expected during the next seven days to make this effective.' If the company do not meet this condition satisfactorily the stewards' meeting will be recalled to discuss 'what further steps are necessary'. Most stewards and officials felt that these 'further steps' would mean the calling of a strike at Standards and maybe a city token strike to ensure the re-employment of all the sacked workers.

Mr. C. Gallagher, Coventry organizer of the National Union of Vehicle Builders, said that out of 70 members of his union sacked by Mulliner's only four have been given jobs so far, and that all of his members who are not employed by this Thursday afternoon will be meeting to discuss what action to take. He said that if the men are found jobs this will only have been due to 'the resoluteness on the part of the workers and shop stewards at Standards that the management could not be allowed to get away with this sort of thing'.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF LABOUR CAMPAIGN: AREA ASSEMBLIES

**book
these
dates
now!**

LEEDS: March 27	...	Leeds Museum.
		3.0 p.m.
MANCHESTER: March 27	...	Registrar's Office, All Saints.
		2.30 p.m.
BIRMINGHAM: April 24	...	Typographical Hall, Bath Street, Birmingham.

Clydeside Assembly Support 40 Hr Week Demand

By OUR GLASGOW CORRESPONDENT

Despite the fact that two important conferences were held in Glasgow on the same day as the Clydeside Assembly of Labour, the Assembly was very successful. Amongst the factories which sent delegates were Babcock & Wilcox, Renfrewshire, Harland and Wolff, Scotstoun, and Goodyear Tyre. Delegates also came from Amalgamated Engineering Union branches, Boilermakers and the National Union of Railwaymen. The National Federation of Old Age Pension Associations sent a delegate. There were visitors from various constituency Labour Parties, together with a number from branches of the Electrical Trades Union, Transport Union and ASSET.

In his opening statement Brian Behan, the National Chairman of the Socialist Labour League, accused Gaitskell of being a Tory in the Labour Party and drew attention to the connection between the witch-hunt against the left wing and Gaitskell's attempt to Liberalize the Party at a time when the class struggle was becoming sharper. Behan said that Gaitskell's strength lay in the unity between the right wing of the Labour Party and the right wing of the Trade unions. The Socialist Labour League is the only political organization which can counter this because its strategy was based on linking up the left in the Trade Unions with the left in the Labour Party. The right wing had recognized it as a stumbling block in their plans and had therefore proscribed the League.

A resolution supporting the Apprentices' Fight for their wage claim was moved by a visitor from the Trades Council Youth Section, who stated that the recent demonstration of the Clydeside apprentices had shown that despite all that was being said about the youth, they had a tremendous capacity to fight. The apprentices must receive the full support of the adults.

The motion was seconded by an engineering apprentice delegate, who is a member of the Clyde Apprentices' Committee. He said that when the claim goes to the employers the apprentices in Scotland will be preparing for a token stoppage and they hope the apprentices in England will back them up.

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Brother Tennent, NUR, said the apprentices' committee should approach the lads in the railway workshops who, as yet, had not been drawn into the campaign.

The Convenor of Scottish Aviation, Jim Cavan, said the adult workers had a responsibility to help the lads. All Convenors should give every assistance.

The discussion continued for some time and after approving the resolution the Conference debated the problem of unemployment.

Brother Dahlstrom, Sub-Convenor of Sir William Arrol Shop Steward Committee, said that the employed workers were not concerned enough about the unemployed. The Tories want unemployment as a weapon against the workers. We should fight for a shorter working week to alleviate the position.

An NUR delegate warned that our own jobs became less secure with the growth of unemployment and the employers were in a better position to victimize militants.

P. Maher, Boilermaker delegate, thought there should be an embargo of goods coming into Scotland which we could make ourselves and that this would ease the position. This was opposed by a young girl student.

The Convenor of Scottish Aviation, which had been severely

hit by pay off's, said that his workers were militant on all other issues, but they had accepted redundancy. One of the reasons in his opinion was that they had no experience of the 1930s.

W. McLellan, Babcock Shop Steward, said it was ridiculous that workers in many cases were working excessive overtime whilst others were on the streets. The first step should be a ban on overtime on a national basis.

D. Forfar, Convenor, Harland & Wolff, said we need to get it into the workers' heads that the fight against pay-offs was really necessary. We would require to get a national ban on overtime for the tendency would be for workers to go into areas where they could get a higher income, although the fight must begin in our own districts.

Mellin opposed the idea of an unemployed workers' movement and said we don't want to repeat the pre-war experiences. The place to start preventing pay-offs was in the factories and unions, and we must concentrate on developing the campaign for the 40-hour week and a ban on overtime.

T. Gahagan, Fairfield's Boilermaker Shop Steward, said we should ban piece-work. This was endorsed by another delegate.

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G. Moffatt said the workers must take their problems into the Labour Party and fight for nationalization.

A resolution was endorsed by Conference pledging to fight for a ban on overtime, the 40-hour week and to support the work-sharing principle as means to preserve the unity of the class in facing unemployment.

E. Knight, Socialist Labour League, moved a resolution opposing the Right-wing attempts to Liberalize the Party Constitution. He compared the efforts of the Right wing to those of the Right wing in West Germany; the party there had given up the fight for Socialism. We must ensure that nationalization is extended and applied in practice.

J. Hooper said that in his experience the majority of Labour Party members were satisfied with the attempts to revise the constitution, although his might be an isolated experience. He did not see how we could fight it going through constitutional channels.

A. Cherry, Convenor, Babcock & Wilcox, said that the present form of nationalization was no good and that what was needed was socialization of industry. Other delegates who spoke emphasized the need to take up the fight inside the Labour Party.

An Electrical Trades Union member, G. Dick, moved a resolution against bans and proscriptions, and the witch-hunt against the ETU. Whilst pointing out that he disagreed with the policies of Haxell and Foulkes, the Stalinist leaders of the ETU, he made it clear that the witch-hunt against the ETU was designed to weaken the whole trade union movement and must be resisted.

The delegate from the NUR, T. Tennent, in seconding the resolution, warned against the menace of McCarthyism in Britain. He said this Conference had been a good experience for him and he felt that the ban on the Socialist Labour League should be fought against as well as the witch-hunt against the ETU.

During the discussion a clash of opinion occurred between G. Moffatt and W. McLellan. Moffatt criticized Frank Cousins, secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, for his inactivity in preventing the victimization of convenors and alleged that the comfortable lives the officials lead through getting high salaries and expenses removed them from the working class. What they should get was average workers' wages, plus a small van and not a limousine. W. McLellan said that the officials are entitled to a higher wage and that a car helps them to get around much quicker. He said it should be noted that the TGWU was the only

union to oppose wholeheartedly the revision of the party constitution. In his opinion Cousins was not a bad leader. The resolution was carried.

A short discussion then ensued on the application of the 42-hour week, and a strong feeling existed amongst night-shift workers particularly that the working week should now be re-arranged to allow them to finish work on a Friday night instead of Saturday morning. Most of the people seemed to agree that the Union officials (who are objecting to this re-arrangement) should accept it.

In summing up the Conference, Brian Behan said he had attended many conferences, but this was one of the finest he had ever seen. The method of a short statement followed by specific resolutions, enabled the widest possible discussion to emerge. The Socialist Labour League was beginning to drive its roots into the factories. This was very necessary. In 1926, we had a big conflict between Capital and Labour. The workers were sold out because of the lack of a socialist political leadership. The League was laying the basis for the construction of such a leadership amongst the rank and file of the unions and the Labour Party.

The debate on unemployment revealed the need to wage a consistent fight along the lines indicated by conference, but at the same time some attention should be paid to organizing those workers at the moment idle and fighting for their right to protection by the Trade Unions.

INDUSTRY

BMC TRUCK DRIVERS FIGHT FOR A DECENT WAGE

By Harry Finch

Once again, the strike of the internal transport drivers at Tractors and Transmissions, Birmingham, has highlighted the intense dissatisfaction of the lower-paid, day-workers throughout the British Motor Corporation.

It is useless the BMC and the press howling in rage that such stoppages disrupt production. It is the motor barons who are responsible by their constant, rigid failure to accede to the moderate and just demands of these categories of workers.

The issue at Tractors and Transmissions is quite simple. Stacker and Lister truck drivers are shifting 50 per cent. more work than six months ago due to a rapid expansion of production. They are getting no where near the slightest compensation for their extra effort. Their wages remain between £11 5s. 0d. and £12 9s. 0d. per 44-hour week. Charles King Scott, the works convenor, told me that such a wage is at least £5 to £6 per week below the average piece-work wage in the factory.

'The drivers have merely asked for about 10s. per week increase', he said. 'Yet the management, whilst admitting every single point we have made regarding the extra effort these lads have put in, in shifting the increased output, have merely turned round and said "They're getting enough".'

The drivers thought otherwise. Strikers said to me 'We've been dissatisfied for a long time. We have been waiting since December for a positive answer to this demand for an increase. We've waited long enough.'

At the meeting of the 51 strikers, E. Beard and Jack Williams, TGWU officials instructed the men to go back to work. Their stewards' committee executive also advised a return to allow 'procedure' to be carried out. The men, however, still voted to continue the stoppage by an overwhelming majority.

J. Farrington and J. McCoy, TGWU stewards from Nuffields, told me that their branch demanded of their EC over a month ago a meeting to discuss the question of unifying all rates in the BMC to ensure everyone a decent wage, but they have heard nothing at all in answer to the resolution.

A unified strategy by the shop stewards' movement in the BMC factories could ensure that this day-work problem could be thoroughly tackled. Day workers must have a decent wage. All stewards, piecework or otherwise must back them in their demands. The levelling up in the BMC can be brought about much more easily if the BMC joint committee was to really function as a **unifying** body prepared to match solidarity resolutions with action.

Over-riding, and indeed, determining the motor barons' attitude to these wage demands, lies the development of the motor industry. All the 'Big Five' are expanding output, in competition with each other and with motor combines throughout the world. They intend to make the workers' standards the first victim in the 'cheapen costs' campaign. That is why Standards sacked the Mulliner workers. That is why BMC resist the most modest wage demands of workers, such as the 10s. demand by the truck drivers.

The Midlands Assembly of Labour, to be held in the Typographical Hall, Bath Street, Birmingham, will be open to all motor car workers. High on the agenda is a discussion on the motor industry: a policy for raising day and piece rates, ending the York Memo, defence of stewards, and the nationalization of the car industry without compensation, will be discussed and voted upon. The basis of linking motor militants with other militants in the unions and the Labour Party will be laid, at this Conference, in order to prepare for the future struggles within the Midlands' industries.

Birmingham, Tuesday.

The 51 strikers voted this morning to return to work on being told that their wage demand would be immediately negotiated at a special works conference to be held at Tractors and Transmissions at 9 a.m. Wednesday morning.

FIRES AND FIREMEN

By G. Gale

In 1958-9 there were 91 fires caused by oil heaters in Lancashire alone. And the recent spate of house fires said to be due to accidents with these heaters is causing considerable alarm.

However, the Oil Appliance Manufacturers' Association recently stated that it considered there was no need to stop the sale of drip-feed heaters.

The Fire Brigades' Union, on the other hand, has called for immediate government steps to compel manufacturers to accept the return of drip-feed oil heaters for modification to make them draught-proof.

The FBU also demands the prohibition of further sales of such heaters unless they comply with safety requirements.

This desire to have a say in safety conditions—before fires break out—is typical of fire service workers. They want the fire brigade to be a fire **prevention** service—not just a band of fire extinguishers.

They want a say in safety conditions of domestic appliances. They also want the right to inspect offices, factories, etc., to enforce fire safety conditions. They regard many old office blocks, for instance, as potential death traps.

Firemen feel they should be spending more time on fire prevention and less on stupid time-wasting, spit-and-polish routine in the stations. They say there is so much emphasis on 'bull' in the stations that some station officers regard fires as unwelcome interruptions.

Firemen demand better conditions

In short, firemen want to transform the service into a modern, up-to-date force. One of the things needed to do this is to bring the pay structure up-to-date.

At present, the starting wage for a fireman is £10 7s. 6d. (less £1 per week stoppages). Annual increments bring him up to a maximum of £12 12s. 6d., but this takes 15 years.

And this wage is for a standard week of **sixty** hours.

If he works more than sixty hours, a fireman gets one

shilling and sixpence for each additional hour. And, remember, a fireman must be ready to work week-ends, Christmas Day, bank holidays—the lot.

The pay is not the only out-dated part of a fireman's job. The fire uniform, they feel, is also something out of the Ark. Firemen think it should not be impossible to produce a good light-weight, waterproof fire-dress, in place of the present bulky, heavy and not-so-waterproof one.

BOOKS

More Facts about Trotsky's Murderers

The Mind Of An Assassin, by Isaac Don Levine. Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 21s.

Reviewed by G. HEALY

AMONG the many important points made by Nikita Khrushchev to the closed session of the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on February 24 and 25, 1956, was his frank admission in relation to Stalin's brutal treatment of opponents and especially those who were characterized as Trotskyites.

'In his "testament",' said Khrushchev, 'Lenin warned that "Zinoviev's and Kamenev's October episode was of course not an accident." But Lenin did not pose the question of their arrest and certainly not their shooting.

'Or let us take the example of the Trotskyites. At present, after a sufficiently long historical period, we can speak about the fight with the Trotskyites with complete calm and can analyze this matter with sufficient objectivity. After all around Trotsky were people whose origin cannot by any means be traced to bourgeois society. Part of them belonged to the party intelligentsia and a certain part were recruited from among the workers. We can name many individuals who, in their time, joined the Trotskyites; however, these same individuals took an active part in the workers' movement before the Revolution, during the Socialist October Revolution itself, and also in the consolidation of the victory of this greatest of revolutions. Many of them broke with Trotskyism and returned to Leninist positions. Was it necessary to annihilate such people? We are deeply convinced that, had Lenin lived, such an extreme method would not have been used against any of them.'

Probably few in Communist Party circles in Britain today would care to deny that not only many 'Trotskyites' but Trotsky himself fell victim to Stalin's 'annihilation' methods of dealing with political adversaries. The brutal murder of Trotsky and all the meticulous planning which led up to it on that warm summer day of August 21, 1940, in Mexico, remain very much a terrible skeleton in the Stalinist cupboard.

Mercader, alias Jacson, the man who drove the ice-pick into Trotsky's brain will be released from his prison in Mexico City next August, exactly twenty years after he carried out that foul deed on behalf of his master in the Kremlin. He and other people who were actively implicated in the murder and are alive today constitute a terrible danger to all those bureaucratic elements who cling to Stalinist policy in practice, whilst they mumble pious words about mistakes having been made and comrades posthumously rehabilitated. The Harry Pollitts, Andrew Rothsteins, John Gollancz and John Ross Campbells cannot claim to be cleansed from the crimes of Stalinism.

Interest in this subject is bound to be heightened by the publication on March 25 of a book by American journalist Isaac Don Levine, 'The Mind of An Assassin' (Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 21s.). It is necessary, however, to treat with great caution the story which is told by Levine. The author is one of a band of reactionary American publicists whose talks are frequently beamed to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union by the American State Department. Mr. Levine has a definite object in trying to cash in on the rightful indignation of the Labour movement against Stalinism. He wishes to make use

Another grievance is the employers' plan to introduce a new officer cadet force. The men say this would mean a two-tier service with promotion and better pay confined to one section.

So—better pay, modern conditions, less 'bull'—is this too high a price for an efficient fire-fighting (and fire-prevention) service?

of the crimes of Stalin to whitewash capitalism by implying that Stalinism equals Communism.

He attempts, therefore, to depict the murderer Mercader as the Communist man of the future, a robot in every sense of the word, who plods irresistibly on his foul mission as if guided by some remote-control bureaucrat thousands of miles away. Levine is not concerned with an examination of the historical basis of Stalinism and the parasitic role of the Soviet bureaucracy. He portrays 'plots and conspiracies' as if they were the normal mode of conduct in the Communist movement.

From this point of view he is not over-careful in his handling of certain facts. One of his assertions is that Louis Budenz, who for a time in the early 1940s was editor of the New York Daily Worker, was congratulated by the Kremlin for a report which he is supposed to have made to the GPU agent Roberts in New York. This report was to the effect that Trotsky was expelled from Norway because Soviet diplomats in that country were able to produce for the Norwegian government of the day a statement alleged to have been made by the Reverend A. J. Muste that Trotsky had plans for the 'violent overthrow of the Soviet regime'. This is highly questionable material. At the time Trotsky was in Norway the Soviet government had a fishing trade agreement with the Norwegian government, which was regarded as very important to the economy of that country. To have Trotsky expelled from Norway was not a big job for the Soviet bureaucrats; all they had to do was to threaten the termination of this agreement. There is absolutely no evidence that Muste ever made any report such as Budenz is supposed to have reported.

Levine's book produces important evidence concerning the background to Trotsky's assassination, but the credit for this cannot be extended to Levine himself. He has drawn heavily from the writings of others, especially David and Lilia Dallin, who have specialized in exposing a Soviet agent known as Mark Zorin, alias Mark Zborowski, alias Etienne, as he was known in European Trotskyist circles in the years before the war. Etienne was responsible for the murder of Sedov, Trotsky's son. This man is now serving five years in an American penitentiary, and in his declaration to the FBI he admitted that he was an agent of the GPU, although he denied having carried out the crimes attributed to him. Levine says:

'Zborowski was tried and convicted on charges of perjury in New York early in December, 1958, receiving the maximum sentence of five years. Although the United States Attorney accused Zborowski of having served the cause of Soviet Russia and international Communism from the very beginning of his adult life, the defendant could not be brought to justice here for his criminal acts committed in France in connection with Stalin's operations against Trotsky.

'The first break in the far-flung espionage web around Trotsky, leading to the downfall of Soble and Zborowski, was made by Alexander Orlov, who confided his suspicions to the Dallins. Orlov had learned in Moscow of the reports of the mysterious Etienne, which Stalin cherished on the inside doings in the Trotsky camp.

The source of material in Levine's book on this matter leaves no doubt that Etienne is a guilty man. Speaking about the death of Leon Sedov, Trotsky's son, Levine says:

'Leon Sedov was taken ill with abdominal pains, and had to be rushed to a hospital for an appendectomy. Mrs. Dallin and her good friend Zborowski took elaborate precautions to prevent the NKVD from finding out where Sedov was going to be operated upon. Zborowski ordered an ambulance and accompanied Trotsky's stricken son to a small hospital in Auteuil, the head of which was a Russian emigre physician. To protect the patient from Stalin's killers, Zborowski had him register under the name of Martin, posing as a French engineer. The operation was successful and there was steady improvement thereafter, so that the special attending hospital nurse was removed.

'Then, suddenly, Sedov died. Immediately before his death he was found pajama-clad and in delirium wandering around the corridors of the hospital. The surgeon who had operated upon him was so puzzled by the death that he asked Mrs. Sedov whether her husband had ever tried to commit suicide. His mother, Natalia, subsequently added what she called bizarre details: that the hospital was frequented by pro-Stalinist Russians, that her son had been addressed in Russian by a physician, and that he had been given something to eat in the hours between regular meals.'

The merit of Levine's book is that it brings together a large body of factual material which proves beyond doubt the identity of Trotsky's assassin and the fact that he was an agent of Stalin and the GPU. We challenge the London Daily Worker to disprove this material. For instance, Caridad Mercader, the mother of the assassin, is now resident in Paris. She was a key figure in the Soviet GPU's behind-the-scenes planning of the murder. Immediately after Trotsky died she went to the Soviet Union with her companion Eitingon, the man who was in charge of GPU activity abroad. Incidentally, this man disappeared or was shot during the purge of Beria's group.

J. R. Campbell's explanation of the murder of Trotsky, given at the time, was that it was carried out by malcontent Trotskyists. We challenge Mr. Campbell to now come forward and justify this explanation in the light of the facts which have been presented.

It will be no use Mr. Campbell claiming that Isaac Don Levine is an agent of the State Department. That is all very well, but what we are concerned with here is an objective appraisal of the facts in Levine's book.



Perhaps John Gollan would also like to comment now on the disappearance of Rose Cohen in Moscow during the purge years of 1937-1938. Your silence will not help you for long, gentlemen of King Street. Levine's book must be answered, not for its author's sake, but because of the facts he presents regarding Mercader.

Levine has, of course, another purpose in mind in his intermingling of correct facts and reactionary aims. He would like to depict the international Trotskyist movement as over-run with Soviet agents and spies. Levine reflects the spy mania of cold-war McCarthyism. He tries to depict Trotsky as a naïve old gentlemen who, whilst he plodded on with his peculiar ideas, was nevertheless blind to the reality of the Stalinist murder-threats.

The method used by Levine is quite consistent in this respect. He is not interested in the historical significance of Trotsky's political struggle against Stalinism. Indeed he wants to dispute this by obscuring Trotsky's Marxist method in the fight against Stalin with the impression that spies were crawling all over the Trotskyist movement. There is no doubt that Stalin sent agents of the GPU into Trotskyist organizations. There is no doubt that Etienne, who worked with Mercader, was one of Stalin's leading agents, but Marxists, and Trotsky was the foremost Marxist, do not consider that a panic reaction is the answer to spies, not only agents of Stalin, but also agents of Scotland Yard and the FBI. The

struggle against these vermin is basically a political one. It is a question of programme and an understanding of the class struggle in the construction of the revolutionary party. It is entirely to Trotsky's credit that he never panicked, but concentrated his attention on the political aspects of Stalinism. In other words his very greatness was that he did the opposite to what Levine believes him to have done. Even when his son lay dying in Paris, Trotsky used the occasion to establish Marxist understanding of such terrible crimes in the minds of revolutionary youth all over the world. His words on the death of Sedov will remain one of the great classics of Marxist writing for all time.

It was within the framework of his political exposure of Stalinism that Trotsky, contrary to what Levine would have us believe, constantly warned about the murderous intentions of Stalin and his agents. The Trotskyist movement all over the world issued declaration after declaration exposing the murderers of Ignace Reiss and Rudolph Klement. That is the side of Trotsky and the Fourth International which Levine wants to conceal.

Levine's book should be read by the widest possible number of active workers in the Labour movement. But it must not be taken as the last word. No Marxist can be complacent about Stalinism and its counter-revolutionary role. There are a number of questions which will have to be answered concerning the role played by Etienne and his allies, if he had any, in the world Trotskyist movement—a movement which inevitably must attract intense attention from the agents of the Soviet bureaucracy. The answers will be found in the course of political struggle as well as in a constant checking of a multitude of historical facts brought to light by such people as the Dallins and Isaac Don Levine.

CND CONFERENCE

By Celia Underhill

Three particular resolutions debated at the recent conference of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament illustrate most strikingly the contradictions developing inside the Campaign.

One resolution called for the withdrawal of Britain from NATO, saying that this should be 'an essential part of CND policy'. Another resolution urged that the Campaign play a larger part in the Labour movement. Despite these progressive and positive decisions, a plea for greater democracy inside CND, including the election of the leadership, was rejected.

It is ironic that the present unelected leaders of the CND are the bitterest opponents of political action, and therefore the least likely people to implement the other two resolutions.

Conference carried another resolution instructing the executive committee to emphasise the economic and political aspects of its (CND's) policy. This resolution called for the sending of CND speakers to trade union branches, holding of factory gate meetings and setting up of supporters' groups in factories. This shows the growing awareness developing amongst many CND members of the need to gain wider support inside the Labour movement.

Following this, Conference then rejected a resolution from Woolwich CND calling for a vigorous campaign amongst the rank and file of the trade unions to gain support for the 'blacking' of work on rocket bases and H-bombs.

Certain steps forward have been taken by CND. The adoption of the anti-NATO resolution brings the movement into conflict with the real enemies of peace: the Tory Government. The recognition of the need for a more decisive turn towards the working class brings the CND into contact with the only forces able to resist successfully the nuclear war plans of the Tories and fight for the Government's removal.

Still lacking in the CND is the recognition of the need to develop a conscious anti-Tory policy and the need to ally the CND with Labour's left wing, which is the main political force against war. Unless CND takes up the fight against Toryism all its propaganda against the Bomb, its marches and lobbies will be unable to stop nuclear war.

Constant Reader | Geese, Ganders and Gaitskell

THE New Statesman points out that Gaitskell and his advisers, in disciplining Crossman, 'have challenged the central principle of debate in the party (a freedom of which, in attacking Clause Four, they have availed themselves freely)'. The 'leadership faction' (or Frogna! Set) have indeed tried to establish a precedent whereby the Right has rights while the Left has none. But this didn't begin with the Crossman affair. Yet the New Statesman made no protest when supporters of The Newsletter were being thrown out of the Labour Party last year to the tune of propositions like this: 'They oppose the declared policy of the Labour Party from within the Labour Party' (Peter Robshaw in London News, May, 1959).

It is because Gaitskell and Co. were allowed by the 'respectable' Left to get away with their action against The Newsletter, the Streatham and Norwood Labour Parties and the Socialist Labour League that they were encouraged to take the further steps which have now made even the New Statesman begin to see that the real threat to the Labour Party comes from them, from the Right, and not from our much-maligned selves.

'Forgotten' Words of Marx

Readers looking for material to combat the latest spate of Moral Rearmament propaganda will find it useful to refer back to the two articles by Bob Pennington which appeared in The Newsletter for January 9 and 16.

The pamphlet which MRA are distributing so widely at the present time was evidently written in the first place for an American public. Hence such gaffes as a verse from the Internationale given in the version they sing over there, which differs from ours—and the statement that the British Labour movement began in the East End of London. . . .

I noticed that William Wainwright, discussing the pamphlet in the Daily Worker, saw fit to include among its weaknesses a 'quotation from Trotsky on "permanent revolution" without mentioning the fact that he was expelled from the Communist Party and from the Soviet Union'. This caught my eye because of a conversation I had just had with a Communist Party acquaintance who is reading Deutscher's books and being made by them willy-nilly to reconsider some of his old ideas. Struggling hard, he put the point to me that it was a mistake on Trotsky's part to think up 'such an unfortunate expression as "permanent revolution"'. When I demurred that, whether or not the expression is an unfortunate one, it was first used by Marx, not Trotsky, he was genuinely incredulous.

The phrase was first used (so far as I know) in the 'Address of the Central Council to the Communist League', written by Marx and Engels in March, 1850. Discussing the tactics of the revolutionary workers in revolutions directed against feudalism and autocracy, they observe: 'While the democratic petty bourgeois wish to bring the revolution to a conclusion as quickly as possible . . . it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been displaced from domination, until the proletariat has conquered State power. . . .' And they conclude the document by urging the workers of Germany not to allow themselves 'for a single moment to be led astray from the independent organizations of the party of the proletariat by the hypocritical phrases of the democratic petty bourgeois. Their battle-cry must be: "the permanent revolution".'

The document is altogether of a character such as to embarrass the Wainwrights and other miseducators of would-be Communists like my acquaintance. Take this, for example: 'Weapons and munitions must not be surrendered (by the workers) on any pretext; any attempt at disarming must if necessary be frustrated by force.' Or this: 'Far from opposing so-called excesses, instances of popular revenge against hated individuals or public buildings that are only associated

with hateful recollections, such instances must not only be tolerated but the leadership of them must be taken in hand.'

Never So Good—25 Years Ago

'It is cold comfort to tell the wage-earners that they are better off than their fathers and grandfathers were. . . . The standards of the workers have advanced, but the rich, too, have had their standards raised even more. The general luxury of today would amaze the property-owning classes of fifty years ago far more than would the workers' standards of those who were then toiling in the factories, mines and fields. Although both classes have advanced, the gap between the two has widened. The extremes are more violent and more remarkable.

'This general advance brings into still higher relief the tragedy of poverty, disease and slums, because it emphasises the fact that science has now provided us with the means of overcoming these evils if only we will mobilize our forces to deal with them effectively.'

—Stafford Cripps, 'The Struggle for Peace' (1936).

More To Come

The review of Deutscher's book 'The Prophet Unarmed: Trotsky, 1921-1929' in the second issue of New Left Review is headed 'Trotsky: The Final Act'. This must be what is called, I believe, in New Left circles, a Freudian slip—wishful thinking coming out in a verbal mistake. The year 1929 by no means marked the end of The Trotsky Story; and Deutscher has a third volume in preparation, 'The Prophet Outcast: Trotsky, 1929-1940', which will tell of his hero's activities in exile. These laid the basis of the Trotskyist movement on a world scale, including the British section which has developed into the Socialist Labour League of today.

A Socialist Manager

Alasdair MacIntyre's mention of the role played by Herbert Morrison in getting the Labour movement to accept the 'London Transport' model for nationalization without workers' control recalls the help Morrison was given in that crucial discussion in 1932-1934 by A. L. Rowse.

Rowse was in those days, as author of 'Politics and the Younger Generation' (1931), one of the Labour Party's bright young men. He contributed an essay on 'Industry in the Transition' to an influential symposium called 'Where Stands Socialism Today' (1933), and in this essay argued in favour of a socialist government entrusting the top management of nationalized industries to the same people who had held the jobs under capitalism.

One of his points was that Lenin had appointed Krassin, manager for Russia of the great Siemens electrical concern, to some key economic positions. Later, as a result of the confidence shown in him, Krassin had come over to Bolshevism. 'At first he was an outsider, a great manager, not really understanding the social aims and ideas of Communism. . . . To my mind, the story of Krassin's coming over is a story the moral of which, for our own purposes, we should take heart.'

What the worthy historian concealed from his readers' view in this example was that Krassin had been a Marxist from student days, had been to prison and Siberia for his views, and had been a member of the first Bolshevik central committee! He was responsible for a great deal of the Bolshevik underground work in Baku, which was later attributed to Stalin. True, in the period of reaction after 1908 Krassin drifted out of active politics, like many other 'old Bolsheviks'; but in 1917 he once again placed himself at Lenin's disposal—and this Krassin was no naïve, non-political 'specialist' such as Rowse would have had his readers visualise.

The moral of which is that even the most respectable-seeming of historians ought not to be taken on trust when he writes about political issues of his own day.

USA**NEGRO STUDENTS FIGHT COLOUR BAR**By **GEORGE LAVAN**

POLICE-STATE tactics and gangs of deputized storm troopers are being employed by Southern officials to smash the still spreading protest movement of Negro students.

City and State officials have imposed a regime close to martial law upon the Negroes of Montgomery, Alabama, who now risk life and limb if they attempt to assemble, petition or peacefully demonstrate. In addition to city and State police, gangs of deputized horsemen and Ku Klux elements wearing Civil Defence insignia are terrorizing Negroes, newspaper reporters and photographers.

The actions of the authorities and the white-supremacist vigilantes in Alabama are so ominous that Roy Wilkins, head of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, asked the White House to act to avert a possible 'massacre' of Negroes.

On March 13, Walter Reuther, president of the AFL-CIO United Auto Workers, wired Eisenhower: 'The reign of terror in Montgomery, Alabama, reported to you by the Rev. Martin Luther King, is shocking, immoral and un-American—appealing to you to instruct the Attorney General to take immediate action in your name to restore law and order in Montgomery.'

Pressed by questioners at his March 16 news conference, the President agreed that the Constitution guaranteed people the right to hold peaceful demonstrations, but he saw no way of protecting the Negro people in this right. He suggested it would be good if bi-racial conferences were held in every Southern community.

Held in stockade

In Orangeburg, South Carolina, a demonstration by 1,000 students from South Carolina State and Clafin Colleges was met by tear gas and fire hoses. Walking in groups of one hundred, the young Negro men and women, attempted to converge on the downtown section by different routes. They continued, though drenched by hoses in the forty degree weather.

About 350 (one-third of them women) were herded by police into a stockade beside the court house. They were arraigned in groups of fifteen, while buses stood outside to take those unable to find bail to the State prison.

Other demonstrations in South Carolina occurred in Rock Hill, where 70 students were arrested for picketing city hall; in Columbia, the State capital, where ten were arrested for asking for service at lunch counters; and in Sumter, where police made no arrests.

In Atlanta, Ga., students from the six Negro institutions comprising Atlanta University Centre, staged simultaneous sit-downs on March 15 in about a dozen eating places. Seventy-seven were jailed under three charges including violation of a new trespass law providing sentences of a year and a half and \$1,000 fine. The next day Georgia experienced its second demonstration in Savannah, where sit-downs occurred at seven lunch counters; three students were arrested.

Mississippi next?

The spread of the sit-downs to Arkansas and Georgia means that every Southern State except Mississippi has been affected. That the rulers of that most notoriously anti-Negro State expect demonstrations is attested by the legislature's rushing through a harsh anti-trespass law. Five students from Philander Smith College in Little Rock are being held for trial following the March 10 sit-downs in that city.

In San Antonio, Texas, six dime stores and a city-wide chain of drug stores, faced with an ultimatum by Negroes that sit-downs would begin March 17, desegregated their lunch counters the day before. In Nashville, Tennessee, Negroes were served for the first time at a bus station lunch counter

where students two weeks before had been arrested for sitting down.

Many of the approximately 150 students arrested in that city refused to pay fines and are serving 35-day sentences. Under armed guards they are being used to collect garbage and do similar tasks on the city's streets. A bi-racial committee appointed by the mayor has been holding discussions of the situation in Nashville.

Negro students have already told this committee they will not accept a 'compromise' proposal by which any section of a lunch counter would remain segregated.

Addressing 600 students in a Montgomery church, March 8, after police had invaded the Alabama State campus to stop a meeting and arrest 36 participants, Bernard Lee, expelled as a 'ringleader', urged Negroes to be ready to be jailed or even killed in their 'fight for freedom', to form a 'united front against guns, clubs, and tear gas'. 'By Friday,' he said, 'the North will respond. They will be 100 per cent, with you, as they were during the civil war.'

(Reprinted from the Militant—an American Socialist weekly.)

RENTS**ST. PANCRAS TENANTS STILL REFUSE TO PAY RENTS**

Twenty-three St. Pancras tenants who are still refusing to pay the rent increases imposed by the Tory Borough Council in January, are being taken to court on May 17 and 24. The court hearings will be a mere formality and the tenants face eviction as soon as they have taken place. Many more tenants whose notices to quit have also run out have not yet received summonses; Tory councillor Prior is evidently waiting to see what resistance is offered to the first batch of evictions before he takes on the rest.

Though the exact number of tenants still with-holding the increases is not clear, what is clear is that the battle against the Differential Rent Scheme is over. All that remains is to protect those tenants now facing eviction. The United Tenants' Associations have made no effort during the course of the rent strike to collect the increases from with-holding tenants. Hence those under threat of eviction are in a doubly-exposed position, being unable to find the arrears.

The tenants' associations are paying lip service to the necessity for organized resistance to the evictions. But actual preparations seem to be rather half-hearted. It was intended as a first step to compile a list of tenants with telephones who are at home all day to sound the alarm should the bailiffs arrive. But one tenant involved told me, 'I have never yet seen such a list, and I doubt very much if it exists'.

Defence squads to picket the flats of any threatened tenants are now a matter of urgency. In our opinion it is not too late for the local Labour Parties to act by organizing a conference of delegates from the Labour Parties, Trades Council and all the local union branches. Such a conference could set up the necessary squads.

MARXISM IN THE 1960s

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