

**Mr. 5 per cent at
Barking**

THE Communist Party rally at Barking on November 30 was in some respects a refreshing contrast to its predecessors, with the audience consisting largely of workers from local industry.

'Questions will be answered', said the chairman in his opening remarks, and he appealed for the co-operation of the meeting in view of what had happened at other rallies. This appeal did not fall on deaf ears, the tantalizing bait of question time was too strong to be spoiled in advance.

Gollan's speech was a nervous, half-hearted repeat performance of at least two previous efforts. At 8.48 p.m. he reached the 22nd Congress; at 8.57 p.m. he hit the revelations. By 9.00 p.m. all the excitement was over.

Gollan explained all the crimes of Stalinism away as the necessary 'problems, pain and mistakes' that accompany social change, for was not the Soviet Union encircled, and constantly threatened by imperialism during those years?

Stalin, he declared, made a historic contribution to the revolution especially after the revolution. Whereupon there was uproar in the hall, the menaces of the stewards notwithstanding.

'How can Gollan and Co. continue to speak in the name of the CP now that the truth about the Kirov assassination and the Moscow trials is known?'

'In view of the public, close, successful collaboration between Communist Party members, Trotskyists and Labour Lefts in the ETU Campaign Committee does not the speaker think it time to clear up all the misdeeds and errors in relation to the Trotskyists in the past and perhaps debate these differences with the Socialist Labour League?' There were more questions in the same vein, including one about the role of the ETU in the British Light Steel Pressings strike.

Replying, John Gollan said that the Communist Party would judge him. If it so wished, it could sack him. He was answerable to his party and would not debate with the Socialist Labour League.

'Weren't the Trotskyists right?'

'No, only 5 per cent. We were right 95 per cent.'

Gollan mentioned the constant preoccupation with the life and death struggle against fascism and was warming to his task when he was sharply challenged from the floor: 'Do you still say that Trotskyists are Fascists?' He did not reply.

'Definitely not!'

GOLLAN doesn't like what is happening in the Italian Communist Party. At a thinly-attended meeting in Trealew, South Wales, on Sunday, a questioner asked about the discussion on Trotsky in the Italian Young Communist League and enquired if such a discussion was likely in Britain. 'Definitely not', snapped Gollan.

HAXELL QUILTS CP

ETU Issues Evaded

Meeting Calls for Inquiry

'THE Socialist Labour League has a very special responsibility for the work in the present great discussion taking place inside the international communist movement. We feel this responsibility because we are part of that movement.

'We are an integral part of the 1917 revolution. Our movement is bound up in its history and struggle and actions with that revolution. We are the continuators of the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.'

A well-attended meeting listened attentively to Gerry Healy, secretary of the Socialist Labour League in Caxton Hall on Friday, December 1.

'We want to suggest to you', said Comrade Healy, 'that what is involved is something very serious in relation to policies which affect the work of the whole Labour movement in this country. The Communist Party must begin a discussion on the whole history of their party and the policies it has pursued.'

He appealed to Communist Party members to throw out the Stalinist leadership of the British Communist Party. There would never be a proper communist movement in Britain until they had been thrown aside.

Cliff Slaughter, a member of the League's National Committee, dealt in detail with the events recalled by delegates to the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. He challenged John Gollan to tell the truth about what had happened in the purges and trials of the 1930s. Gollan was claiming that he didn't know any details; but he had sat in the hall at the 22nd Congress and heard delegates speak of their own experiences in the purges.

An informative contribution to the discussion was made by Harry Wicks, a founder member of the Trotskyist movement in Britain. He described how, as a member of the Trotsky Defence Committee in 1936, he and others had visited Fenner Brockway, then the secretary of the Independent Labour Party, to seek

THE resignation of Frank Haxell, former general secretary of the Electrical Trades Union, from the Communist Party settles nothing so far as the affairs of that union are concerned. We repeat now what we said many months ago, that the responsibility for the crisis in the ETU cannot be loaded on to an individual or individuals but must be examined in conjunction with the trade union policy of the Communist Party.

For example, the leaders of that Party now follow Khrushchev in condemning Stalin's 'cult of the individual'. They scrupulously avoid a study of Stalin's political policies which the 'cult of the individual' served, because they do not wish to make a serious examination of the sectarian and opportunist nature of Communist Party policy in Britain. This would apply, in particular, to CP work in the trade unions.

If we are to accept the 'Daily Worker' statement of Monday, December 4, which claims that there were 'ballot malpractices' in the ETU, we must then ask ourselves: what is the political nature of such practices?

They can only be described as opportunist, since they apparently have arisen through a determination to hold the union under the sway of the Communist Party in circumstances where the political policy of the party had clearly lost support inside the union.

Is not the opportunist character of the mistakes in the ETU also related to the opportunist character of the mistake which the party constantly makes in advocating the 'peaceful road to socialism?'

Was it not Stalin who personally checked the draft of 'The British Road to Socialism' in 1952?

If the Communist Party is correct when it implies that Haxell has been guilty of malpractices, then surely the question arises why he found it politically necessary to carry out these malpractices. In

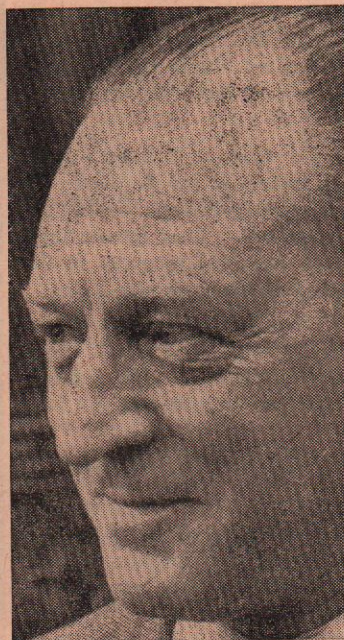
support for meetings to expose the Moscow Trials.

Brockway had replied that if the skies had been clear of problems, then he would have helped, but the problem of Spain was looming on the horizon. 'These sort of people are playing the same role today', said Harry Wicks.

At the end of the meeting the chairman, Mike Banda, called on the audience to sign the demand, now being circulated, for an investigation into the Moscow Trials and the murder of Leon Trotsky.

Left to right:

G. Healy, M. Banda, C. Slaughter.



Frank Haxell

situation inside the ETU in order to retain control in that union as long as possible?

Their real crime in our opinion arises from the fact that what happened in the ETU is directly traceable to the opportunist policies of the party, pursued under the guidance of Stalin.

What is now needed is not an investigation into Haxell, but an investigation into the entire history of the trade union policy over the past 25 years.

The Communist Party statement announcing the resignation of Haxell naively tells us that the executive have in the last few months been examining the facts. The delay, they state, has been necessary because of the appeals which are pending.

CONDEMNED

The publication of the statement, however, virtually condemns any appeal. But that is not the most extraordinary thing. Frank Haxell, who polled the highest number of votes for the CP executive in 1959, announces that he cannot proceed with his appeal because he is short of cash. Yet, according to the last published balance sheets of the party, a substantial sum of several thousands of pounds stands to the credit of the party in the bank. Surely ETU members will want to know why it is that the Communist Party failed to raise the necessary money to enable one of its most prominent trade unionists to appeal to the courts.

First the party leadership endeavours to lay the blame on Haxell, when everyone knows that it was well aware of what

(Continued on back page)

ETU GREATER LONDON
CAMPAIGN

MASS MEETING

Friday, December 8, 7.30 p.m.

Denison House, S.W.1

Speaker: FRANK HAXELL

other words, why did he lose support inside the ETU?

The statement proceeds as if there was only one leading Communist Party member involved. But this is nonsense. The Party executive constantly extolled the virtues of Communist leadership in the Electrical Trades Union. They took all the praise when the party controlled the machine.

Why was it, for example, that they ignored the press barrage

by Gerry Healy

of December 1959 which alleged that there had been malpractices? Why did not a commission of enquiry sit and investigate the activities of party members in the union at that time?

Indeed, this was not the first time that the rumour of malpractices had been spread, yet the party leadership remained silent, even though one of the most frequent attenders at the executive meetings was Frank Haxell himself.

CONTEMPT

It is, therefore an act of extreme contempt for Communist Party members in the ETU that this leadership now turns round and attempts to lay the blame on Haxell alone.

Communist leadership in the last instance must accept the responsibility for what its members do in the trade union and labour movement. Otherwise, how can it be called a leadership? Even if we grant that here and there members of the Communist Party can make mistakes of which the leadership is unaware, this cannot in any way apply to the ETU. There are some 2,000 members of the party involved, a considerable portion of the total membership. Was everybody asleep at King Street when Haxell and his supporters were engaged in malpractices, or it is not more likely that they ignored the



The Newsletter

December 9, 1961

Thieves Fall Out Again

ONE of the minor crooks has left the thieves' kitchen of the United Nations and has levelled some acutely embarrassing accusations against the British and French governments for their roles in the imperialist blood-bath of the Congo.

The statements of Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien serve to underline what has been said many times in The Newsletter: that a serious breach exists between the United States on one side and France and Britain on the other, over the activities of the United Nations in the Congo.

As UN chief representative in the Congo, O'Brien's task was to 'unite' the country—by any means at his disposal—so that the stranglehold of American imperialism could be judicially tightened around the economy. This meant that Tshombe would have to be forcibly removed in order to tie the wealth of Katanga in with the rest of the country.

Britain, France and Belgium, with their tremendous stakes in Katanga, have fiercely opposed any such unification. The bourgeois press of these countries launched a bitter attack on the activities of the UN and has heaped praise at the feet of their stooge, Tshombe.

In a statement printed in 'The Observer' on December 3, O'Brien said:

'There were more than 500 foreigners in the Katanga gendarmerie, including 200 officers of the Belgian regular army. All the key advisory posts in the Katanga service were held by Belgians.

'Months of negotiations had failed to modify this situation. My instructions from the late Secretary-General were to effect a break-through and end the situation in which the Security Council resolution was being openly flouted.'

When he started his 'unifying' operations, O'Brien continued, he found himself the subject of mounting criticism, not only from Belgium but from France and Britain as well. 'After September 13, when the UN was obliged to take counter-measures against the hate campaign launched by Tshombe, the demand for my removal (by Britain and France) turned into active and heavy pressure.

'The British delegation of the UN was particularly active and not unduly fastidious about the methods employed.'

At a press conference in New York on Monday Dr. O'Brien continued his sniping. The campaign of hostility against him, he said, had been led 'by the British millionaires of the Beaverbrook type and people like Sir Roy Welensky, Capt. Waterhouse, Mr. Macmillan, a man called Salisbury and Lord Lansdowne, not necessarily in that order.'

We shed no tears for Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien, who added that America was 'deeply committed' and was giving solid, sincere and undeviating support to the United Nations action in the Congo. Unlike that other servant of American imperialism, the late Secretary General, he is still alive.

We shed no tears, but reaffirm that the only solution to the Congo chaos lies in the hands of the Congolese people and the international working class and not in the bloody ones of imperialism, be it the American, British or French variety.

Cock and Bull

THE publication by 'Izvestia' of Kennedy's interview with Adzhubei was hailed by the press as a victory for democracy. But while the American millionaire's words are printed in full, Molotov is expelled from the Communist Party without one sentence of his policy being available to Russian leaders.

Both Adzhubei's questions and Kennedy's replies emphasize the possibility of a diplomatic solution to the East-West conflict. Perhaps Molotov's views on these issues would have been different.

The President blamed the cold war on to 'the efforts of the Soviet Union to communise the world'. His interviewer and the leading article in 'Izvestia' denied this charge. The article referred to it as 'a cock-and-bull story'.

'Izvestia' welcomed much of Kennedy's statement. It finds 'noteworthy' his declaration that it would be useful if the NATO countries and the Warsaw Treaty countries 'assumed an obligation to live together in peace'.

What do these tactful and gentlemanly exchanges mean? Can peace be attained by such discussions?

While Kennedy was speaking to his 'communist' questioner, his brother was getting ready to indict the United States Communist Party. American military equipment was being unloaded in Vietnam. United States troops were patrolling Berlin streets. Nuclear rockets were aimed at Moscow.

For 44 years the Western powers have been fighting against the Russian revolution. Despite the policies of Khrushchev and Stalin, that conflict goes on.

Polite discussions and diplomatic manoeuvres will never suffice to bring it to an end.

WALTER HOLMES, in the 'Daily Worker', Saturday, December 2, 1961, wrote:

'In view of the activities of some of Trotsky's followers just now, what Maurice Thorez, general secretary of the French Communist Party, has to say of him is worth noting.

'For Thorez is one of the few Communist leaders now living who can speak with personal knowledge of the conflict which Trotsky caused.

'As a clear summing up of Trotsky's position, I quote what Thorez said to a recent meeting of the central committee of the French Communist Party.



WHAT is most significant about the statement by Thorez which Walter Holmes quotes in Saturday's 'Daily Worker' is what is not said. What about Trotsky the agent of the British, French, Polish, German, etc., bourgeoisies, the crypto-fascist, the police spy? If Thorez believes that all that was true, why doesn't he still say it? If he believes it was untrue, why doesn't he admit that frankly, and draw the political conclusions? Thorez, following Khrushchev, is withdrawing, in his critique of Trotskyism, to the positions of 1927-1931, when there was still some sort of attempt to discuss Trotskyism in a political way, at any rate outside the USSR.

From 1932 onward came the wave of expulsions on the slightest suspicion of interest in Trotskyist ideas, physical violence against Trotskyists, ever more fantastic allegations of links between the Trotskyists and the enemies of the working class—all designed to lay down an impassable screen of poison gas between Party members and Trotskyists. By implication, Thorez now acknowledges that all that was done on a false basis.

This is a very important admission: not only were a lot of personal injustices inflicted in the period from 1932 onward, but what is even more significant, a whole series of political actions were carried out under this artificial 'protection' from Trotskyist criticism.

The key note for the new period of Trotsky-hunting was sounded by Stalin in his letter to the editors of the journal 'Proletarskaya Revolyutsiyad', published in October 1931,

under the title 'Some Questions Concerning The History of Bolshevism'. It was in this letter that he wrote against 'rotten liberalism' in relation to the Trotskyists. 'Some Bolsheviks think that Trotskyism is a faction of communism—one which makes mistakes, it is true, which does many foolish things, is sometimes even anti-Soviet, but which nevertheless is a faction of Communism... As a matter of fact, Trotskyism has long ceased to be a faction of Communism. As a matter of fact, Trotskyism is the advanced detachment of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie...'

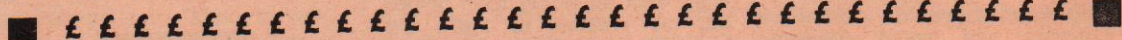
Why did Stalin make this 'turn' at that particular period? It was a time of acute crisis for the whole Stalinist system. In Russia, Stalin's policy was bringing about a disruption of agriculture from which there has probably not been a full recovery to this day. In Germany, the largest Communist

and other enemies of Leninism.

'And like a petty-bourgeois, who sprouts wings when everything is going well, Trotsky, when things became difficult, displayed at the same time the confusion and the lack of perspective of unstable elements, as well as a tendency toward bureaucratic and military methods to deal with these difficulties.

'He always failed to understand the peasantry. He proposed the militarisation of the Soviet trade unions. At the same time he endangered the unity of the Party as well as its principled basis and organisation.

'With his slogan of 'Neither war nor peace', correctly opposed by Lenin, he would have hurled the Soviet Union into adventurism and catastrophe. He had no confidence in the creative forces of the Soviet people, in the possibility of building socialism in a single country. He wanted to 'stimulate revolution by war'.'



City Slants by colin chance

The Great Lie

Buoyant, prosperous, productive, golden Western Europe. These are the usual adjectives our economic experts use to describe member countries of the European Common Market.

So it was with considerable gloom that the economic review of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research was welcomed last week.

At a time when the Export Council for Europe was holding its convention in Eastbourne to examine methods of increasing exports, the Institute was giving the tidings that the European boom was over anyway.

Production in Europe as a whole is declining rapidly, particularly in West Germany, so that it is unlikely that trading conditions there will enable

British capital to increase its share of the available market.

Commodity prices continue to fall so that the primary producing countries have less income available to buy goods from Britain.

These factors lead the Institute to conclude that the future for a rise in exports is bleak but that there will be no corresponding fall in imports because stocks of imported raw materials have been allowed to run down and they must be built up again.

The conclusions to be drawn from the Institute's report are that the balance of payments situation will deteriorate still further, and Selwyn Lloyd's July measures, far from improving the position, will aggravate it.

But we were told that the reason for the pay pause was to 'make Britain more competitive' and to keep productivity in line with wages.

All the evidence would suggest that wage rates here are not higher than in most European countries and that wages, far from outstripping productivity, were tending to be left behind.

'The Guardian' has now published a productivity index. Mr. K. S. Lomax of Manchester University who prepared it, states '... from 1958 to 1959 generally, wage rates were not rising so fast as productivity. From April 1959 to June 1961, there was again acceleration in the wage-rate increase with the result that productivity and wage rates, broadly, kept in step'.

So much for the great lie of the Tories on the subject of productivity and wages.

On the one hand, the Tories cry for greater productivity; on the other they institute credit controls to bring about economic stagnation.

US War Danger in Viet Nam

MILITARY intervention by the United States in South Vietnam is increasing quietly but steadily. More and more equipment, including warplanes, is arriving, together with American personnel to service it and to train Vietnamese soldiers.

Ships of the Seventh Fleet are in the area with marines on board ready for combat. Still more military support is being demanded by Ngo Dinh Diem, the South Vietnam dictator.

The regime, installed with US backing when French influence was eliminated in 1954, is threatened by growing guerrilla activity. The guerrillas, led by supporters of the Viet Minh in the North, receive backing from the peasants in their fight against the corrupt government.

The area was recently visited by General Maxwell Taylor. His report to President Kennedy is now likely to result in still further stepping up of US military aid.

Washington wants the Ngo Dinh Diem government to make this assistance more palatable by giving the dictatorship a 'liberal' face-lift. A few, minor reforms in Saigon, General Taylor had urged, would make the anti-Communist fight much easier.

The ruling group in South Vietnam has taken these helpful suggestions very badly. Saigon newspapers, influenced by the government, attacked these ideas as foreign intervention in domestic affairs. The Saigon puppets know that they are indispensable to US strategy in South East Asia.

As a cover for their military plans, the State Department puts out stories of Viet Minh 'aggression' against South Vietnam. In 1954, when Khrushchev persuaded the Viet Minh leaders to accept the Geneva agreement, free elections were promised in the whole of what had been French Indo-China within one year.

Everyone knew that such elections would have meant victory for Viet Minh. They are still awaited, seven years later.

Thus the 'co-existence' deal of 1954 means further hard struggles for liberation from imperialism by the Vietnamese people. It is also the cause of war dangers in 1962.



'It was not accidental that for decades we had no works on political economy philosophy or history of any worthwhile significance.'

Ilyichov, at 22nd Congress CPSU October 24, 1961

Read Trotsky's classic analysis of the Soviet Union, its origins, its betrayal, its future.

Available from: New Park Publications Ltd. 186a Clapham High St., S.W.4 Price 11s. 6d. (soft cover), 16s. (hard cover), postage paid.

Homeless Queue Lengthens

by Reg Perry

OVER 3,000 families are now homeless in the London area. Before the 1957 Rent Act there were only 1,200. Most of those now homeless have been evicted by landlords demanding higher rents. What chance have these and others on the waiting lists of local councils got of finding accommodation in the next few years?

The annual report of the Alliance Building Society published recently estimates that 400,000 houses a year for the next 20 years must be built in order to satisfy the present demand.

YEARLY FALL

In 1954, the peak year for housing construction, only 308,952 dwellings were built. Of these, 240,000 were built for local authorities to let.

Since then the figure for rented accommodation being constructed has fallen yearly, to a figure of 128,000 in 1960. Official statistics show that of this 128,000, over 50,000 has to be used for slum clearance.

This means that the total rented accommodation which becomes available each year is

approximately only one-sixth of that which is conservatively estimated as being necessary by the Alliance Building Society.

These figures show the magnitude of the problem. They do not include the accumulating problem of slum clearance. Officially there are 600,000 slum properties in Britain, and a further 150,000 houses a year become more than 100 years old.

According to Dr. Charles Hill, Tory Housing Minister, there are a total of 4½ million houses in Britain built before 1880. Professor M. Wise of the London School of Economics claims that of 6½ million houses built before 1919, half could not be modernised to the standards required by the 1936 Public Health Acts.

SCOTLAND

In Scotland, where 700,000 houses are required immediately, only 26,000 a year are being built. This means that without any additions to the waiting lists and without any more properties becoming classified for demolition, the housing needs of Scotland will take 30 years to satisfy.

abandon housing projects because the price of land has risen to £100,000 an acre. With the interest rate at 6 per cent and Government subsidies removed, it becomes almost impossible for councils to build flats for rents of less than £6 13s. a week.

The housing problem cannot be solved as long as the land, finances, building and building supply industries remain in the hands of big business. The refusal of Gaitskell and Right-wing labour to face up to this has made it impossible for them to present any alternative solution to the Tories.

THE SOLUTION

The first step which should be taken by the LCC and other Labour Councils should be the requisitioning of all vacant properties and the conversion into flatted accommodation. But unless the plan for the nationalization of the land, building, building supply, and finance is fought for there can be no solution to the housing problem.

Challenge to the Daily Worker

Copy of a letter sent to the 'Daily Worker' by a Newsletter reader.

The Editor, 'Daily Worker'.

Dear Sir,

Walter Holmes' quotation from Maurice Thorez on Trotsky simply proves that the British, like the French Communist Party leadership, remains Stalinist at heart. They have learned nothing and are incapable of learning anything.

The quotation itself is an assembly of lies, half-truths and sentences torn out of their context. The 'famous August bloc', for instance, never included 'all the Mensheviks'. Organisationally, Trotsky broke with the Mensheviks before Lenin did. 'He always failed to understand the peasantry.' This is an old and hoary chestnut. Did the great Stalin understand the peasantry so much better when he introduced his policy of forced collectivisation? Three million peasant deaths and years of famine was the price the Soviet Union paid for this policy. That is why agriculture is today still—and admittedly so by Khrushchev—the weak spot in Soviet economy.

Without the background to the Brest-Litovsk negotiations the phrase 'Neither war nor peace' has no meaning at all. Thorez gives in quotes that Trotsky wanted to 'stimulate revolution by war'. From which work of Trotsky's is this culled?

Lastly, 'Trotsky was never a Leninist nor a Bolshevik (is there a distinction?). He was a fellow traveller at the start of the Revolution.' How short-sighted of Lenin and the Bolsheviks to elect him to the Central Committee and the Political Bureau, and to give this petty-bourgeois fellow traveller the responsible post of Commissar for War at the most critical stage of the Revolution—when the young Soviet Republic was threatened by internal civil war and foreign intervention.

Yours truly,

C. Matthews.

P.S. If this letter is published I will refuse to believe that the age of miracles has passed. Who knows, perhaps even Walter Holmes and Johnny Gollan may yet become Bolsheviks one day.

The 'Selfless Defender'

by Cyril Smith

ON November 23, a ceremony took place at Moscow University, when the degree of Doctor of Law was conferred on an outstanding British barrister. Mr. D. N. Pritt, QC, the recipient, was described as 'a selfless defender of the common people' and 'an active fighter against fascism and for peace'.

Pritt recalled that he first visited the Soviet Union in the '30s. He did not specifically mention his visit to Moscow in August 1936.

OBSERVER

On that occasion, he was able to attend the hearing of the case against Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and others. He heard those defendants who were in custody 'confess' to conspiring with Hitler against the USSR. He saw Prosecutor Vishinsky 'prove' with the aid of these 'confessions', that these Bol-

shevik leaders had planned the murder of Kirov.

On his return home, Pritt became one of the chief defenders of the genuineness of the trial and the authenticity of the confessions. In the 'Daily Worker' of September 3, 1936, he wrote a special article, afterwards reprinted as a leaflet called: 'What are my impressions of the conduct of the Zinoviev trial?'

REPORTER

'And throughout the hearing', he wrote, 'when the result was a foregone conclusion, and nothing that was or could be said could do much to lessen the guilt or the complete social worthlessness of the accused, they received the same courteous treatment, the same liberty to intervene at almost any moment and say anything they wanted at any length, as would any ordinary accused in

any ordinary trial in the Soviet Union (and that is saying a very great deal).'

In 1956, Khrushchev implied what many people in the labour movement had known: that this trial and its successors were monstrous frame-ups, gigantic frauds, mockeries of socialist justice.

And what did Mr. Pritt, QC, have to say? Nothing!

Now, Khrushchev's references to the Kirov assassination expose Pritt's 'guarantees' as worthless. All can see that this member of the Bar was helping to slander the finest representatives of international Communism. By quieting the fears of socialists about the first of Stalin's trials, Pritt aided in the preparation of the later purges.

SILENCE

Pritt and all those who acted like him must be forced to speak out publicly about their role in the '30s. His continued silence now is as shameful as the part he played 25 years ago.

A Scots Communist writes . . .

After the 20th Congress CPSU in 1956, most Communist Party members expected a thorough discussion in the Party. A frank reappraisal of the international Communist movement, and of the relationship between the Communist Parties of the world and the CPSU was needed. The members did not get it. The Party hierarchy used their control of the apparatus to suppress all discussion in the Party, and lost thousands of members in the process.

Now, once again, startling revelations and admissions are being made in the Soviet Union. The present membership of the British Communist Party is wholly unprepared. A frank discussion after 1956 would of course have

meant Gollan, Dutt and Co. making some revelations and admissions of their own. Now they are forced to try to seal off their members again, in a vain effort to stop the embarrassing questions.

The time has come for Communist Party members to demand answers, discussion and facts.

Ask your leaders for a record of their own actions when Stalin was in power. Demand to know why they are now preventing a full discussion of Stalin's crimes with the excuse that 'that is the business of the Soviet Union'.

Ask why you can buy in Communist Party bookshops, all kinds of books and pamphlets, including even the memoirs of Sir Winston Churchill and Viscount Montgomery, and yet

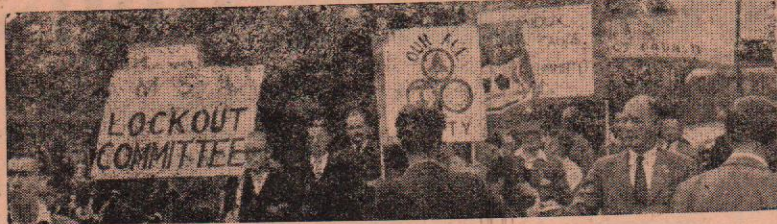
not one book or pamphlet by Leon Trotsky.

You apparently cannot be trusted. Why are not the pages of the 'Daily Worker' and 'World News' seething with discussion of the latest revelations? Why is there not at least an internal discussion bulletin, with its pages open to all members?

Until the conspiracy of silence in the Communist Party is broken, it will remain a tame instrument of the Stalinists, incapable of waging a struggle against imperialism.

Glasgow, W.1 Alex McLarty

(Formerly Scottish Organiser for the 'Soviet Weekly', and ex-member of the Glasgow Committee of the Communist Party)



The Industrial Front

1,500 Cycle Workers 'Redundant'

'WE saw this coming all along — but could we get union officials to believe us? We were always told not to cross our bridges before we came to them.' This was how Bro. Wal Spiddings, secretary of the Shop Stewards' Committee, summed up the situation in Smethwick, near Birmingham, where Raleigh Industries Ltd. (taken over last summer by Tube Investments) are closing their Downing Street cycle factory next March. The jobs of 1,500 workers are threatened.

'This is a case where a handful of people sitting round a table in London are able to make decisions which affect the lives of hundreds of workers', declared Bro. Spiddings. 'We are being sacrificed in order that the rule of, Big Business, by Big Business, for Big Business, shall not perish from the earth. First and last, it's profits that matter, not people.'

He told how, when Tube Investments made their take-over bid, the shop stewards felt great concern for the workers' future and sought a top-level meeting with the management. They were then solemnly assured by Mr. Leslie Roberts, production manager of Tube Investments Cycle Division, that 'nothing would be done and nothing moved' until they had been consulted.

He described the shock and anxiety felt by the workers when later a statement appeared in the press made by Sir Ivan Stedeford (Chairman and Managing Director of TI) that in future cycle production would be concentrated at the firm's

By OUR BIRMINGHAM CORRESPONDENT

Nottingham factory. Mopeds and scooters would be made at Downing Street, Birmingham, and there 'would be some redundancy'.

The shop stewards estimated that production of mopeds would only employ 200 of the 1,500 Raleigh workers, and that this was a flagrant breach of the promise made to them.

They sought an explanation from the manager of the Cycle Division, who professed surprise at Sir Ivan's statement, but admitted that 'his outline might be the one which would finally emerge!'

'Within a week of that', went on Bro. Spiddings, 'we saw that movements of work were taking place; we were told that some of our work was being done at Nottingham. There was a bit of unrest in the factory; the lads wanted to get a definite statement as to our future.'

'Then Mr. Leslie Roberts told us that Raleigh's at Nottingham were losing £50,000 a month, and that the management proposed to stop this loss by virtually concentrating on mopeds here at Downing Street. He painted a glowing picture of the wonderful future for mopeds. He foresaw that within three years they would be employing 3,000 men here instead of 1,500.'

'We smiled openly when he said this; he was quite indignant with us. We told him we saw no future in the moped trade.'

'He came back last week and told us the bottom had fallen out of the market and the

factory must close in March.' 'Ours is a booming factory', said Bro. Spiddings, 'yet they propose to close it and take the work over to a factory which has been running at a loss, keeping the same people at managerial level. If this is sound economics, nothing makes any sense. The Tories keep talking a lot of nonsense about free enterprise, but if that can't ensure the workers a living, then industry must be nationalized.'

Workers from the Raleigh factory are planning to hire buses to go to London and lobby their MPs.

Strike at George Manns

WORKERS at George Manns, Leeds, struck on Thursday, November 30, against the threat of time-studies. The management intended to time-study a number of jobs, and a bonus payment for one man was being withheld in order to force through these plans.

The workers, realising that timing of jobs meant lower earnings, were prepared to make a fight of the issue.

At a meeting on Friday, December 1, the employers sent a statement to the strikers that they were prepared to pay the withheld bonus, and to have talks afterwards.

The men agreed to return to work after expressing their opposition to timing of jobs. They were assured that their shop stewards would put forward this opposition on their behalf.

itself. This flows quite logically from the way they deal with the 'revelations' of the crimes of Stalin. There are people in the leadership who are well aware that something must be done to face up to these but they fear breaking off from die-hard Stalinists such as Dutt, Gollan and Kerrigan.

The ETU compromise will temporarily relieve them of the necessity to make a political examination of Communist Party work in the trade unions. But like the evasion over Stalin it is only a symptom of a deep crisis.

The Socialist Labour League is the only Marxist organization in Britain today which faces up to these problems and draws the correct conclusions for Communist activists.

The present leadership of the British Communist Party sold out to Stalin after Lenin's death in 1924. They gave up all claims to be independent of his thinking. That is why they

condoned all the crimes that went on in the Soviet Union and elsewhere. That is why they carried on in Britain not as a communist leadership, but as the stooges for Stalin.

How can such a leadership fight all the forces of the gutter press of Fleet Street which trains its foul weapons against the militant leadership of the Electrical Trades Union. Their sole interest in controlling the ETU in any case is to be able to boast to Moscow that they can influence peaceful co-existence in Britain because they have control of a trade union.

It will be a crime to allow Frank Haxell to become the victim for the policies of this leadership. In the history of the Bolshevik Party many communists made more serious mistakes and were for a time disciplined as a result. For Haxell to have to resign from the Communist Party because of the Stalinist policies of this

B L S P — Who are the Victims?

By Our Industrial Correspondent

THE names of the 150 strikers who will not get their jobs back at British Light Steel Pressings will be known by December 14. This is the deadline set by Rootes for re-employing labour and getting production into full swing at Acton.

One hundred of the strikers obtained permanent employment elsewhere during the struggle. Those who cannot be taken back immediately are to receive the guaranteed week. So will those who are victimized and made redundant. This, however, will last only for two weeks except where workers have been employed for three years or over. They receive three weeks' pay.

Those victimized by Rootes plan to meet in Acton Town Hall on December 15 to work out ways and means of alleviat-

ing the hardships ahead. At the mass meeting last Wednesday, a resolution was passed unanimously pledging those workers who got their jobs back to donate one hour's pay per week towards a Victimization Fund. It is quite possible that the Amalgamated Engineering Union will also grant victimization benefit now there is no danger of this involving them in a serious struggle against the employers.

The strike is said to have cost Rootes £3,000,000 but they can have little doubt that it was worth every penny. By breaking the shop organization and reducing the labour costs at Acton, they can prepare to attack conditions throughout the combine and it will be all the easier for them to begin production at their new £22,000,000 (government subsidized) Scottish works at much lower rates of pay than in London and the Midlands.

Work-to-rule Motormen Hit at 'Pause'

ELECTRIC train drivers, members of ASLEF, hit at the pay pause and the drawn-out negotiations over the union claim for a 10 per cent increase, by working to rule this week on the London-Kent line. The campaign was started by workers at the Gillingham depot who said they will continue to work-to-rule until the claim is met.

The British Transport Commission has turned down claims from all three railway unions already this year and is now considering them again after re-submission to the second stage of the railway negotiating procedure.

An ASLEF official said the union entirely disapproved of the men's action which could only be detrimental to the efforts the union was making on their behalf. He said that the Gillingham men and others at Clapham Junction who were alleged to be supporting them had been told to stop working to rule.

This appeal had been refused; the men were determined to con-

leadership is one more example of how Stalinism sets out to destroy militant workers.

There is no future for a militant communist inside the Communist Party except one in which he struggles ceaselessly to overturn the King Street leadership by fighting for a return to the policies of Lenin and Trotsky.

We do not blame Haxell for what happened in the ETU. We blame the political policy of the Communist Party. It is around this that the real investigation must take place.

tinue with their plans. The official stated that the union had received letters from railmen all over the country expressing discontent and disgust at the attitude of the management — 'but not indicating up to now unofficial action'.

At present it is estimated that only about 50 workers are involved in the dispute.

Effective action to combat the Transport Commission and, behind them, the Tories, must involve the strength of all three railway unions.

Although only a few motormen were working to rule, rush-hour travel from London to Kent was badly affected. Dense crowds waited at stations. One irate business man said: 'We travelled like cattle this morning.'

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PUBLIC MEETING Glasgow

Sunday, December 17, 7.30 p.m.

'Trotskyism, the 22nd Congress and the Soviet Union'

Chairman: A. McLARTY
Speaker: G. HEALY

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Berkeley Street, Glasgow, C.1
(entrance through Door G)

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was going on inside the union and that the fault is not one of malpractice but of politics. Then it washes its hands of Haxell's appeal. What sort of cowardly leadership is this?

Every serious member of the Electrical Trades Union must examine his position in that union under the guidance of such leadership. The very first time they get into serious trouble, Kerrigan and Gollan run for cover saying in effect that their 'hands are clean'.

We say that a leadership that cannot take the responsibility for its members in such circumstances is not a leadership but a cowardly clique educated in the Stalin school.

This evasion of responsibilities leads to opportunist compromise in practice. The Haxell affair is not so much one in which he is used as a scapegoat as one of compromise within the Communist Party leadership