

Two documents on industry by trade union bodies

## Nationalization issue dodged

### Reports call for 'watch dog' committees

Two different documents on the question of monopolisation in British industry were prepared by top trade union committees last week.

Each shows the danger of the labour leadership becoming increasingly dominated by the monopolies.

The Trades Union Congress statement, published last Monday, was the result of an examination of government policy on monopolies and wages. Far from calling for an attack on the growing power of these industrial giants, the TUC chiefs are prepared to welcome their development.

'The growth of the enormous corporations has tended to modify traditional capitalist attitudes and practices,' says the statement. 'The diffusion of ownership has weakened the motive to maximise profits—at least in the short run—and has exposed the directors of large concerns to other pressures.'

The only action proposed by Woodcock and company is for the government to set up a committee to study the concentration of industry and finance since the war.

#### Co-operate

These leaders are prepared to co-operate with big business while it automates and streamlines plants in order to compete abroad. Their job will be to discipline their members as the problems of British capital are unloaded onto the shoulders of the working class.

The unpublished report, approved by the executive of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions—news of which was leaked last week—shows how some 'left' trade union leaders are trying to dodge the issue of nationalization.

It contains a plan for a com-

mittee to watch the profits of firms supplying equipment to the nationalized electrical supply industry. The report shows how a few huge firms—AEL, English Electric and GEC are the biggest—control the manufacture of heavy electrical plant.

It is well known that monopolies use the nationalized industries as a source of cheap materials and service, and then milk them when they sell them equipment at monopoly prices.

The dieselisation of British Railways was an example of this. Huge profits were made by some firms while the railway workshops were closed down.

#### Secret

Instead of recommending the nationalization of the electrical plant industry, the Confederation report proposes a 'watch dog committee' to 'control' these monopolies.

Moreover, to avoid embarrassing Mr. Wilson the report is to be kept secret until after the election.

To prevent a defeat for the labour movement workers must prepare now for a fight for socialist policies. The union leaders—both 'left' and 'right' varieties—and their friends at the head of the Labour Party act to prevent such preparation.

Since they do not intend to fight the monopolies they are ready to obey their power. The mobilisation of the rank and file in action against the employers must involve a fight against their hangers-on inside the labour movement.

## UN BANKRUPTCY IN CONGO EXPOSED

As United Nations troops left the Congo by the back door on Wednesday, Moïse Tshombe, former leader of Katanga province and the man the armed forces ousted, made a triumphal return by the front door.

Tshombe is now the man that the French and Belgian copper monopolists are relying on to keep a strong arm peace in the Congo. The Katanga province, which he once ruled, is one of the richest in minerals.

It is no accident that whilst appearing to be in favour of a rule by force, Tshombe flirts with the rebellious left forces in the Congo. He recently visited Mali, reputedly one of the most 'left-wing' countries in Africa.

#### ADVANCES

Yet this man, who, it is widely believed, played a role in the murder of Patrice Lumumba three years ago, makes political advances to the left for particular reasons.

Tshombe realises that he has to try and buy off at least the leaders of these forces in order to keep the masses of the Congo under his thumb and prevent a popular uprising against a future government which will, more than likely, be controlled by him.

If ever there was an indictment of the role of the United Nations in the colonial countries, the case of the Congo

over the past four years has proved it.

First of all the UN either took part in or at least stood by and turned a blind eye to the murder of Patrice Lumumba, the former prime minister of the Congo, when the country gained its independence from Belgium.

Tshombe made certain allegations against the United Nations earlier this year in which he said that, whilst under a United Nations escort, Lumumba was brutally beaten up.

#### BREAKAWAY

After Lumumba's death, UN forces moved into Katanga, which, under Tshombe's leadership, had become a breakaway province from the Congo.

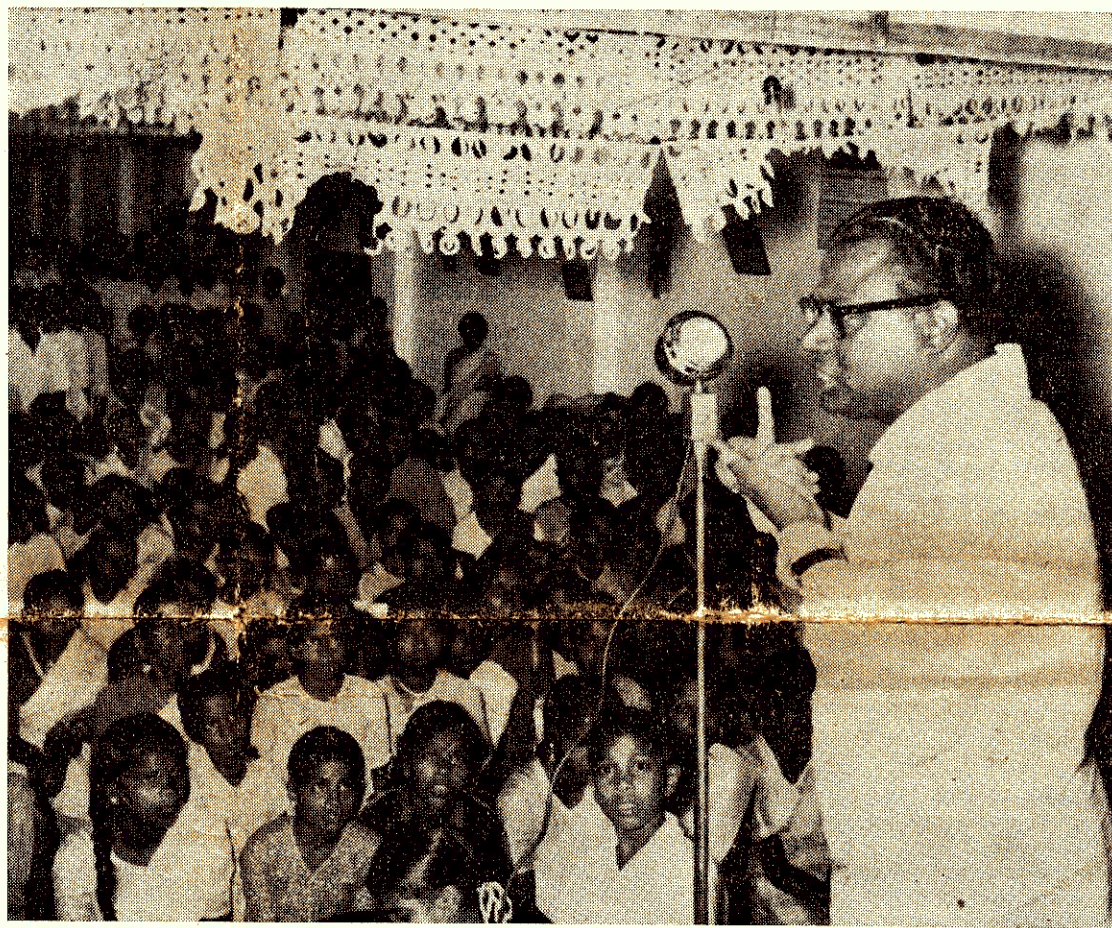
Over 200 men were killed in this attempt by the so-called peace organisation to remove Tshombe and bring Katanga back into the Congo.

Now, Tshombe, backed by imperialism, has returned in spite of all the money spent on keeping troops in the Congo and the effort to maintain so-called peace.

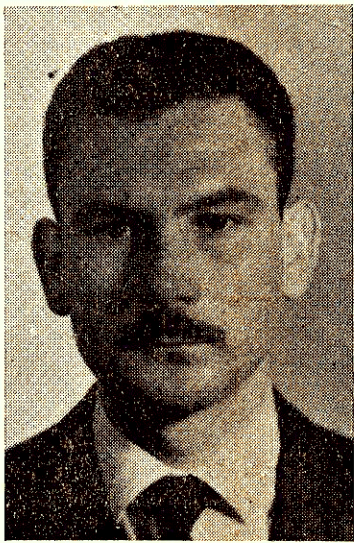
He returns to continue the role he first started—as a supporter of Belgian and French imperialism in the Congo. In spite of the protestations from fake lefts in the British labour movement that the UN is basically a neutral force with only the interests of peace at heart, its role as an instrument of the capitalists has been clearly displayed.

## CEYLON: Facts behind the Coalition

(see Gerry Healy's full report pages 2 and 3)



Mr. S. Thondaman, leader of the 350,000-strong Ceylon Workers' Congress, the island's biggest union, addresses a meeting of plantation workers at Matale, Ceylon



Twenty-five-year-old Francisco Abarca, an anti-fascist fighter and opponent of the Franco regime in Spain, has been granted political asylum by the Belgian government. He was imprisoned in Belgium eight months ago for alleged sabotage of a plane at Geneva, and two weeks ago he gained his release.

At a recent press conference, Abarca thanked everyone for the part they had played in fighting for his release.

The Newsletter consistently called for an end to his imprisonment and a letter was sent by this paper to Belgium demanding that Abarca be freed. In a telephone message to the secretary of the National Confederation of Labour of Spain in Exile Abarca said he hoped to visit Britain in the future.

#### SPECIAL OFFER

This is the second week of the larger size 6d. Newsletter. The special offer to new subscribers is still open. Fill in the subscription form on page 4 NOW and receive The Newsletter at the old rate of 7s. for 12 issues, post paid.

## Lecturer and others on sedition charges

# New charges against Dr Allen

### Complains of no help from Commissioner

DR. VICTOR LEONARD ALLEN, the 41-year-old Leeds University lecturer, who was arrested in Nigeria two weeks ago for allegedly plotting against the government, appeared in court again on Wednesday. He now faces a three-count charge of sedition.

He pleaded not guilty, along with two trade unionists, Sidi Khayam and Jonas Kiomasekenagh and a teacher, Olushegun Adebayo, to conspiring 'with persons unknown, to do an act with seditious intention'; drawing up a plan to overthrow the Nigerian government by military means. All four men were remanded for a week on £250 bail with one surety.

re-arrested as he left the court and taken to Ikeja to face the new charges.

It is alleged the offences were committed at Sidi Khayam's home. Khayam has been secretary of the Nigerian Seamen's Union and Dockworkers' Council.

#### STRIKE

Last week Dr. Allen was granted bail on the original charge after he had gone on a hunger strike in the Kiri Kiri prison.

Dr. Allen claims that he has had hardly any help from the British authorities in Lagos. He was not helped to find a lawyer

or pay for one. He also claims that the High Commissioner did not help him find sureties for bail.

In a letter, dated June 26, which appeared in 'The Guardian' on Thursday, Dr. Allen said that, although MPs were assured in the House of Commons that the British High Commissioner was looking after his (Allen's) interests, he could not get in touch with the Commissioner when arrested.

'He sent the second secretary,' the letter says. 'I requested to see the High Commissioner through the second secretary and received a written reply that I could not do the Deputy High Commissioner.'

He was told the names of four Nigerian barristers, but the Commission 'could not help' when he wanted to obtain a Lagos address so that he could apply for bail.

He said he had been on hunger strike against the methods used by the police to elicit a statement from him. '... all I get from the High Commissioner through the second secretary are polite inquiries about my health,' the letter added.

Dr. Allen said that the government's response would have been much different if he had been arrested in a communist country. 'There would, I venture to suggest, have been a flurry of telegrams and official protests.'

#### VICTORIOUS

His arrest followed closely on the victorious national strike which paralysed Nigeria at the

Government representatives and labour leaders have now reached a settlement on the wages issue. Union leaders, including Alhaji Adebola, leader of the Joint Action Committee, accepted a £10 a month minimum. The workers were claiming £12 and the government had previously offered £9.

● See Editorial comment

## TGWU leaflet attacks support for dockers

In a pathetic leaflet distributed to dockers on Merseyside last week an attack was launched on the Socialist Labour League and The Newsletter.

The leaflet, styled as the 'C AREA NEWS—Transport and General Workers' Union—Published by the C.10 and C.11 Branch Secretaries', is headed, 'Is this an example of the Revolutionary Socialist Labour League in action—Are Dockers being used for political ends?'

It sets out to blame the recent strike of Merseyside dockers on the Socialist Labour League.

Such claims, as all dockers who took part in the strike know full well, are childish. From the series of questions which the authors of the leaflet ask about the strike, seeking as they do to distort completely what happened, we can only assume that they were not present at the mass meetings which were held during the strike.

Also they could not have read the two leaflets issued by the Box 5 Strike Committee which explained in great detail the issues involved in the dispute and the course it took.

#### THANKS

The Socialist Labour League supported the action of dockers in Box 5, and The Newsletter received a letter of thanks from the strike committee for the support and the accurate report of the strike which appeared in the paper.

It is because The Newsletter and the Socialist Labour League have consistently supported the dockworker, exposing the manoeuvres of the TGWU leadership on the 'new deal' and the 40-hour week that they are now being attacked by those who run behind O'Hare.

But the real reason that the leaflet was issued at this stage is made clear at the end of the leaflet. It asks: 'If the wage claim negotiations strike a sticky patch

done their job and invoked the 'abnormal cargoes' procedure immediately, as requested by the men on the job, there would have been no need to have extended the dispute. For three days the dockers on the timber discharge attempted to get this done by O'Hare before they struck.

The strike was therefore caused by Smith Coggins and O'Hare and not The Newsletter or the Socialist Labour League.

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who will be allowed to lead? The sensible people who must find a way around the difficulties or the Hot Pots?'

The recent demonstrations of militancy and solidarity of dockers in Merseyside and other ports have given a clear warning to the TGWU officials that dockers will not be fobbed off this time with a miserable few shillings on the wage claim.

At several mass meetings on Merseyside, dockers have made it quite clear they will fight for £15 a week basic wage and that they are not prepared to allow the Port Employers to protract the negotiations into next year. These are the demands first formulated by the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers (NASD) and supported by the rank and file members of the TGWU.

#### FRIGHTENED

It is because The Newsletter has supported these demands and given dockers a voice that the TGWU is frightened by the growing support amongst dockers for the paper.

What does the talk about striking a sticky patch mean?

The Port Employers have already said they are surprised that a wage claim has been submitted and that they are opposed to granting an increase this year.

(Continued on page 4)

**WHAT is the truth about the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) coalition in Ceylon? This is now the number one question for every Trotskyist throughout the world.**

On June 7 at an aggregate conference of the membership, 507 voted for a coalition with the capitalist government of Mrs. Bandaranaike. 75 voted for the policy of the 'Unified Secretariat of the Fourth International' in Paris to support a United Left Front government of the Communist Party, the LSSP and the party of Philip Goonewardene, known as the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP)

This group, led by Colvin R. de Silva and Leslie Goonewardene, decided to remain in the Party even though it has entered the Coalition government. 159 members who opposed the policy of class collaboration walked out of the conference and formed the LSSP (Revolutionary Section).

Meeting in Paris on June 22, the 'United Secretariat' of the Fourth International unanimously expelled Dr. N. M. Perera, presently Finance Minister in Mrs. Bandaranaike's government, Anil Moonesinghe, Minister for Communications and Cholmondely Goonewardene MP, who accepted another ministerial post.

The same United Secretariat, without batting an eyelid, then decided to suspend 504 members of the LSSP for membership for having supported the coalition. It took no action against the Centre group of de Silva and Goonewardene even though they remain members of the coalition party. Nothing like this has happened in the international Trotskyist movement since its foundation.

The capitulation of the overwhelming majority of the LSSP to capitalist policies is the direct outcome of the split in 1953. This involved the forces of the International Committee, of which the Socialist Labour League is a member, and those who supported Pablo's revisionism, who are now grouped around the 'United Secretariat'.

The degeneration is inextricably bound up with the struggle inside the international Trotskyist movement. It constitutes the most complete example of betrayal by Pablo and his European allies, Germain and Pierre Frank.

These people must take the responsibility, since they have been in constant communication with the LSSP in Ceylon, for the past 18 years.

The answer lies not in Ceylon, but in an international study of the struggle against Pabloite revisionism. The real architects of the coalition reside in Paris.

## Early years

The Lanka Sama Samaja Party was founded in 1935, mainly by students returning from London universities who supported the propaganda of the international Trotskyist movement against Stalinist betrayal.

The Party entered politics by critically supporting the national movement for independence of Ceylon from the yoke of British imperialism. In the early war years its leaders were imprisoned and escaped, some to India, where they founded Trotskyist groups, whilst others continued the illegal struggle on the island.

These student leaders came in the main from bourgeois families. Their parents in some cases were related to the leading aristocratic families on the island. Because of their native

capitalist interests, these families tended to be hostile to imperialist overlordship, a factor which assisted the young leaders of the early LSSP.

In 1947, Ceylon was granted formal independence, which allowed, amongst other things, the granting of franchise through the setting up of an island Parliament.

In the elections of 1947 the Party won a number of seats. The opportunist ideas behind the present coalition began to form inside the ranks of the top leaders of the LSSP almost from this date.

It was one thing for these men to wage a national liberation struggle for independence from imperialism under conditions which allowed the native capitalists of Ceylon to continue to hold power as its agency.

It was another thing to build the LSSP as a revolutionary party whose aim was the destruction of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, the expropriation of the native capitalists and the setting up of the proletarian dictatorship in Ceylon. So far as this was concerned participation in Parliament was of secondary importance.

The main task before the LSSP was to lead the struggles, particularly of the working class and rural poor, against the national bourgeois imperialist agents, at the same time as they exposed Parliament from within.

It was precisely this struggle which the LSSP leadership evaded. They continuously avoided the training of a Marxist leadership with deep roots amongst the working class and rural poor which could carry out this task.

This would have meant a day-by-day, violent clash with their aristocratic friends and they were not prepared for such unpleasantness. It was so much easier to engage in a game of verbal shadow-boxing in Parliament.

So they turned more and more towards these parliamentary methods of struggle in a retreat from the historic responsibility of the building of the revolutionary party.

## From the United National Party to the Sri Lanka Freedom Party

From 1947 to 1956 the Ceylon Parliament was dominated by the extreme right wing United National Party who included amongst its top leaders some of the most corrupt politicians it was possible to meet anywhere in the world.

In the late 40s and early 50s, the economic position of the island deteriorated and the United National Party began to lose support. The position became so serious that in 1952 a split was organised from that party by Mr. Bandaranaike, the late husband of the present Prime Minister, who then founded the Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

The economic situation went from bad to worse and the UNP launched attack after attack against the living standards of the workers and peasants.

On August 12, 1953, the LSSP led the great Hartal action against the increase in the price of rice. That action was in the nature of a direct and violent clash both with the capitalist UNP government and with the capitalist class of Ceylon as a whole. As the LSSP annual Party conference of 1954 said:

'The clash further reached in whole regions the level of actual rebellion... the masses were able to come out of this unprecedented direct action struggle with a sense of victory won and of a government rendered temporarily impotent.'

Clearly the situation was becoming desperate for the

# The fruits of Pabloite revisionism

# BEHIND THE CEYLON

ruling class and British imperialism.

The formation of Mr. Bandaranaike's party was, therefore, of enormous importance to these reactionary forces. The UNP could no longer rule, so the demagogue Bandaranaike was ushered on to the scene.

To save the rule of native capitalism and imperialist interests, however, he had to pay lip-service in the founding programme of his party to vague socialist demands whilst at the same time he was firmly committed to the preservation of capitalism and imperialist interests on the island.

His party was a petty-bourgeois, capitalist party whose main objective was to head off the growing discontent of the masses with the UNP which, following the Hartal action, was resulting in a growth of support throughout the island for the LSSP.

## The 1953 split in the Fourth International and events in Ceylon

Towards the end of 1953, the split took place in the Fourth International and it is now clear that this had a direct bearing on subsequent events in Ceylon.

The split arose over the Pablo theory that under the pressure of international events, an irreversible leftward process had begun inside the Soviet bureaucracy. This, it was implied, could lead to a section of the bureaucracy breaking away, assuming the role of a revolutionary leadership and re-introducing democracy inside the Soviet Union.

As Pablo, in Europe, was drafting his resolution 'Rise and Fall of Stalinism' in which he expounded his revisionist theory, Leslie Goonewardene, secretary of the LSSP, began speculating about the character of the SLFP.

In an early 1953 issue of the LSSP English weekly 'Sama Samajist', he designated the SLFP as 'a centrist party', which, although it upheld capitalism, could, he claimed, be supported in a number of its demands by the LSSP.

The illusion was therefore created that under certain conditions the SLFP would be forced to act in the interests of the working class of Ceylon.

Thus, he confused a process which is familiar in reformist parties based on the working class with the demagogic left cover of a petty-bourgeois party based on capitalism.

The SLFP was not a centrist party, but a capitalist party. It had come to the rescue of a discredited UNP with a left cover that was in practice meaningless. Its emergence was part of a deliberate calculation by the ruling class to isolate the LSSP.

Leslie Goonewardene placed a question mark over the whole future of the LSSP as a revolutionary party, at the same time as Pablo placed a question mark over the role and future of the Fourth International. From such a theoretical revision of Marxism, it was impossible for the revisionists Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin R. de Silva to build a revolutionary party in Ceylon.

Whilst under certain conditions the SLFP talked big against the imperialists and even nationalized insurance and petroleum installations, these actions bring little or no improvement to the conditions of

the working class and should not be confused with the importance of nationalizing the major industries in Britain. The limited nationalization policies carried out by the SLFP, especially recently, are designed chiefly to strengthen the economic positions of native capitalist interests.

At a meeting early in 1954 in Colombo, the LSSP leadership unanimously rejected Pablo's proposals. In June of the same year an international conference took place in Europe to discuss Pablo's resolution 'Rise and Decline of Stalinism'. The delegation of the LSSP to that conference was led to Colvin R. de Silva and Leslie Goonewardene.

Instead of voting against Pablo's resolution as was already decided by their national committee in Ceylon, they agreed to accept that resolution provided Pablo, in turn, accepted a number of their amendments. They agreed, in fact, to turn a blind eye to what was going



Bala Tampoe: a leader of the LSSP (Revolutionary Section) and secretary of the strong Mercantile union

on in Europe provided he remained equally blind to their opportunist course in Ceylon.

This was the basis of the unprincipled agreement which has persisted in the international movement between Pablo and the LSSP leaders since that time.

They gave him support against those Trotskyists organised around the International Committee who wanted a political clarification of international events, whilst he, in turn, praised them to the skies as 'the largest Trotskyist organisation' in the world thus deliberately covering up for their opportunism. Anyone who attempted to discuss the grave problems facing the movement was denounced as a disrupter and a factionalist by both sides.

## The SLFP becomes the government

In the general election of 1956, the SLFP took the government from the UNP for the first time. Now the theoretical designation of the SLFP as a centrist party took on a new form for the LSSP leaders. Shortly after this election they announced that the policy of the LSSP towards the SLFP should be one of 'responsive co-operation'.

The SLFP, like the UNP, did not and could not solve a single basic problem facing the Ceylonese working class and peasantry.

After Mr. Bandaranaike's government was formed in 1956, he came to a coalition agreement with the MEP, which is a petty-bourgeois party with some roots in the trade unions. It was founded and led by Philip Goonewardene, a man who had previously been expelled by the LSSP.

Although he was taken into Bandaranaike's Cabinet and the name of this coalition government changed to the MEP, it failed, as it was bound to, right from the beginning.

Strikes and other mass

struggles were breaking out all over the island during the late 1950s. Even the political resolutions of the annual conference of the LSSP which took place on July 18/19, 1959, had this to say:

'There are two principal features of the current political situation which requires to be carefully assessed for the purpose of determining the tactics of the struggle to overthrow the M.E.P. Government. On the one hand there has been during the last year and a half a tendency amongst sections of the masses and especially of the working class to resort to direct or extra-parliamentary action.

'Since November, 1957, we have witnessed a series of working class strikes, all economic struggles save the One Day Token General Strike on March 3rd last, which however is a special case. The communal upsurge in May, 1958, and the rigours of the first months of the consequent emergency served only to interrupt these strike struggles but did not prevent their resumption in recent months. There is certainly a readiness among workers to strike on felt economic issues.

Apart from strike action by the workers we have also witnessed in recent months such political phenomena as mass resistance to destruction of shanties, mass occupation of crown land and mass satyagraha on railway lines. No doubt these manifestations of discontent did not spread in the manner that strike struggles spread among the working class. Nevertheless they are noteworthy phenomena in that they bore the character of mass and direct actions and were engaged in by other sections of toilers than the workers. It is also to be noted that these sections too were directly rooted in day-to-day needs.

In short the masses still rely primarily on constitutional methods and processes, but they are ready in the case of felt issues to resort to direct action even outside the constitutional process to bring pressure to bear on the 'Government.'

The LSSP was looking both ways. It was paying lip-service to the resistance of the working class and the growth of strike action whilst at the same time turning more and more in the direction of parliamentary politics.

The debates inside the Party centred around these issues. A minority, led by Edmund Samarakody wanted to direct the Party towards extra-parliamentary action, whilst the leadership of N. M. Perera, Leslie Goonewardene and de Silva was turning more and more in the direction of a parliamentary alliance with the SLFP in preparation for the 1960 general election.

The party ranks were thoroughly confused, especially when top leaders announced a slate of close on 80 candidates for parliament, whilst at the same time they signed a 'no-clash' agreement with the SLFP and the Communist Party in a number of important constituencies.

Such an alliance, they said was necessary because of the danger of the extreme right coming back to power and establishing a dictatorship. They justified support for the capitalist party (SLFP) on the same lines as the Stalinists had previously in Spain and France justified support for the class collaborationist betrayal of the Popular Front governments.

## Pablo supported 1960 'no clash' electoral agreement

In a communication to the LSSP early in 1960 the Pablo Secretariat in Paris agreed that it was possible to 'permit practical no-clash agreements with the SLFP', although their letters stressed that it would not be permissible to vote in the elections in those constituencies where such an agreement was operating for the candidates of the SLFP.

This is the first full report by our correspondent G. Healy who recently travelled to Ceylon to cover the emergency congress of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party at which the majority decided to join in a coalition government with Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike's capitalist Sri Lanka Freedom Party. Healy deals fully with the background and developments behind the coalition and the role of the Unified Secretariat in Europe in relation to the coalition. The report shows clearly that the degeneration of the LSSP was an integral part of the degeneration of a section of the Fourth International under the leadership of Pablo, Germain and Pierre Frank.



The Pabloite International Secretariat endorsed, with reservations, the main line of the LSSP in the 1960 elections. The same letter went on to say:

'What is on the other hand permissible, is a critical support for an eventual Government of the SLFP, a support that is temporary each time that this party engages in an action that is effectively anti-imperialist.'

Thus Pablo and Co. supplied them with further cover for their capitulation to the SLFP.

## After the 1960 election

Between them, the Communist Party and the LSSP helped the SLFP to power in 1960. The way in which the LSSP prepared for the election revealed the enormous political degeneration which had now set in within the party.

Candidates were not selected democratically by the Party but in agreement with its top leaders. In the main only those who could pay their election expenses were selected. As a result a horde of undesirable elements were placed on the LSSP slate.

There was no difference between this procedure and many of the practices of a corrupt social-democratic party. The LSSP leaders had turned their backs on mass struggle and were now operating as parliamentarians of the most opportunist character. Yet in spite of all their efforts they only gained 14 seats in Parliament.

Since they had collaborated with the SLFP during the election, the masses were confused as to the party's intentions and therefore voted for the SLFP. From this date active steps were taken to prepare for the coalition.

## The Lanka Estate Workers Union is smashed

The most significant of these was a retreat on the citizenship question in relation to the Tamil estate workers. This took the form of a slight amendment to the Party's programme stating that this issue was a matter for negotiation between the Indian government, representing the Tamil plantation labourers who have emigrated to Ceylon from India, and the Ceylon government.

The conflict over the citizenship issue is necessary for the rule of the imperialists. It cannot be resolved until they are successfully overthrown. By making this a constitutional issue between the capitalist governments of India and Ceylon, the LSSP had turned away completely from the revolutionary requirements of the Tamil poor.

This reflected itself most sharply in the field of trade union relations in the countryside.

Most of the plantation workers are organised between two trade unions of over 300,000 workers, one led by S. Thondaman, right-wing supporter of the SLFP and the other by Aziz, a fellow traveller of the Moscow dominated Communist Party.

During the late 1950s, there was an enormous growth of the Youth Leagues influenced by the LSSP throughout the island and in particular in rural areas never before penetrated by the Trotskyist movement.

This movement amongst the youth was a further indication of the development of a pre-

revolutionary situation. Its most positive effect in the countryside was reflected in the growth of the LSSP's Lanka Estate Workers Union, which had in early 1960 reached a membership of 80,000 among the Tamil workers.

Because of its youthful organisers, it was gaining ground steadily from the reformist trade union leaders, Thondaman and Aziz. Then, when the LSSP retreated on the citizenship question, this union was thrown into a crisis and virtually collapsed.

Large numbers of Tamil workers ceased to be members and the union became torn between the struggle of various gangster factions. This was perhaps one of the cruelest blows which the leaders of the LSSP dealt against their party. It effectively barred the way for the Party's growth in the countryside, something which was absolutely decisive for the taking of power.

## The LSSP loses support

Any illusions which the masses had about the SLFP electoral victory in 1960 were almost immediately dispelled. During 1961, strike struggles became a regular feature of the important industries.

The LSSP leadership noted this in their report of their Politbureau to the Central Committee, on March 31, 1962. They described the 1961 strike wave as follows:

'Broadly speaking, the principal gains of the strikes can be said to be the following:—  
1. They have increased the consciousness of the working class in the strength that is created by its unity.  
2. They have destroyed many of the illusions the working class had in the SLFP government.  
3. They have demonstrated to the Party's programme of conscious workers that struggles on a trade union level cannot take them much further, and that the political struggles which involve the question of the political regime itself, have become necessary.'

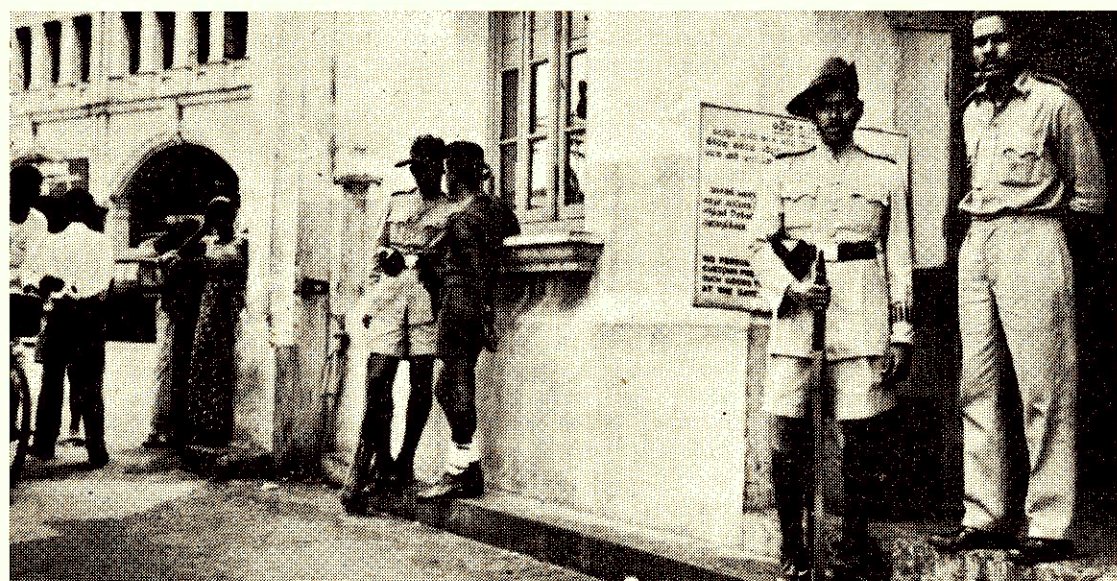
Quite so.

Throughout 1962 support for the SLFP government continued to crumble.

Ceylon had entered a state of extreme class tension which was in itself reflected in the assassination of Mr. Bandaranaike by a Buddhist monk.



Members of the strongest union on the island



Army and police pickets on Colombo harbour front during strike

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ruling class and British imperialism. The formation of Mr. Bandaranaike's party was, therefore, of enormous importance to these reactionary forces. The UNP could no longer rule, so the demagogue Bandaranaike was ushered on to the scene.

To save the rule of native capitalism and imperialist interests, however, he had to pay lip-service in the founding programme of his party to vague socialist demands whilst at the same time he was firmly committed to the preservation of capitalism and imperialist interests on the island.

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As Pablo, in Europe, was drafting his resolution 'Rise and Fall of Stalinism' in which he expounded his revisionist theory, Leslie Goonewardene, secretary of the LSSP, began speculating about the character of the SLFP. In an early 1953 issue of the LSSP English weekly 'Sama Samajist', he designated the SLFP as 'a centrist party', which, although it upheld capitalism, could, he claimed, be supported in a number of its demands by the LSSP.

The illusion was therefore created that under certain conditions the SLFP would be forced to act in the interests of the working class of Ceylon.

Thus, he confused a process which is familiar in reformist parties based on the working class with the demagogic left cover of a petty-bourgeois party based on capitalism.

The SLFP was not a centrist party, but a capitalist party. It had come to the rescue of a discredited UNP with a left cover that was in practice meaningless. Its emergence was part of a deliberate calculation by the ruling class to isolate the LSSP.

Leslie Goonewardene placed a question mark over the whole future of the LSSP as a revolutionary party, at the same time as Pablo placed a question mark over the role and future of the Fourth International. From such a theoretical revision of Marxism, it was impossible for the revisionists Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin R. de Silva to build a revolutionary party in Ceylon.

Whilst under certain conditions the SLFP talked big against the imperialists and even nationalized insurance and petroleum installations, these actions bring little or no improvement to the conditions of

the working class and should not be confused with the importance of nationalizing the major industries in Britain. The limited nationalization policies carried out by the SLFP, especially recently, are designed chiefly to strengthen the economic positions of native capitalist interests.

At a meeting early in 1954 in Colombo, the LSSP leadership unanimously rejected Pablo's proposals. In June of the same year an international conference took place in Europe to discuss Pablo's resolution 'Rise and Decline of Stalinism'. The delegation of the LSSP to that conference was led by Colvin R. de Silva and Leslie Goonewardene.

Instead of voting against Pablo's resolution as was already decided by their national committee in Ceylon, they agreed to accept that resolution provided Pablo, in turn, accepted a number of their amendments. They agreed, in fact, to turn a blind eye to what was going



Bala Tampoe: a leader of the LSSP (Revolutionary Section) and secretary of the strong Mercantile union

on in Europe provided he remained equally blind to their opportunist course in Ceylon.

This was the basis of the unprincipled agreement which has persisted in the international movement between Pablo and the LSSP leaders since that time.

They gave him support against those Trotskyists organised around the International Committee who wanted a political clarification of international events, whilst he, in turn, praised them to the skies as 'the largest Trotskyist organisation' in the world thus deliberately covering up for their opportunism. Anyone who attempted to discuss the grave problems facing the movement was denounced as a disrupter and a factionalist by both sides.

## The SLFP becomes the government

In the general election of 1956, the SLFP took the government from the UNP for the first time. Now the theoretical designation of the SLFP as a centrist party took on a new form for the LSSP leaders. Shortly after this election they announced that the policy of the LSSP towards the SLFP should be one of 'responsive co-operation'.

The SLFP, like the UNP, did not and could not solve a single basic problem facing the Ceylonese working class and peasantry.

After Mr. Bandaranaike's government was formed in 1956, he came to a coalition agreement with the MEP, which is a petty-bourgeois party with some roots in the trade unions. It was founded and led by Philip Goonewardene, a man who had previously been expelled by the LSSP.

Although he was taken into Bandaranaike's Cabinet and the name of this coalition government changed to the MEP, it failed, as it was bound to, right from the beginning. Strikes and other mass

struggles were breaking out all over the island during the late 1950s. Even the political resolutions of the annual conference of the LSSP which took place on July 18/19, 1959, had this to say:

'There are two principal features of the current political situation which requires to be carefully assessed for the purpose of determining the tactics of the struggle to overthrow the M.E.P. Government. On the one hand there has been during the last year and a half a tendency amongst sections of the masses and especially of the working class to resort to direct or extra-parliamentary action.

'Since November, 1957, we have witnessed a series of working class strikes, all economic struggles save the One Day Token General Strike on March 3rd last, which however is a special case. The communal upsurge in May, 1958, and the rigours of the first months of the consequent emergency served only to interrupt these strike struggles but did not prevent their resumption in recent months. There is certainly a readiness among workers to strike on felt economic issues.

Apart from strike action by the workers we have also witnessed in recent months such political phenomena as mass resistance to destruction of shanties, mass occupation of crown land and mass satyagraha on railway lines. No doubt these manifestations of discontent did not spread in the manner that strike struggles spread among the working class. Nevertheless they are noteworthy phenomena in that they bore the character of mass and direct actions and were engaged in by other sections of toilers than the workers. It is also to be noted that these sections too were directly rooted in day-to-day needs.

'In short the masses still rely primarily on constitutional methods and processes, but they are ready in the case of felt issues to resort to direct action even outside the constitutional process to bring pressure to bear on the Government.'

The LSSP was looking both ways. It was paying lip-service to the resistance of the working class and the growth of strike action whilst at the same time turning more and more in the direction of parliamentary politics.

The debates inside the Party centred around these issues. A minority, led by Edmund Samarakkody wanted to direct the Party towards extra-parliamentary action, whilst the leadership of N. M. Perera, Leslie Goonewardene and de Silva was turning more and more in the direction of a parliamentary alliance with the SLFP in preparation for the 1960 general election.

The party ranks were thoroughly confused, especially when top leaders announced a slate of close on 80 candidates for parliament, whilst at the same time they signed a 'no-clash' agreement with the SLFP and the Communist Party in a number of important constituencies.

Such an alliance, they said was necessary because of the danger of the extreme right coming back to power and establishing a dictatorship. They justified support for the capitalist party (SLFP) on the same lines as the Stalinists had previously in Spain and France justified support for the class collaborationist betrayal of the Popular Front governments.

## Pablo supported 1960 'no clash' electoral agreement

In a communication to the LSSP early in 1960 the Pablo Secretariat in Paris agreed that it was possible to 'permit practical no-clash agreements with the SLFP', although their letters stressed that it would not be permissible to vote in the elections in those constituencies where such an agreement was operating for the candidates of the SLFP.

This is the first full report by our correspondent G. Healy who recently travelled to Ceylon to cover the emergency congress of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party at which the majority decided to join in a coalition government with Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike's capitalist Sri Lanka Freedom Party. Healy deals fully with the background and developments behind the coalition and the role of the United Secretariat in Europe in relation to the coalition. The report shows clearly that the degeneration of the LSSP was an integral part of the degeneration of a section of the Fourth International under the leadership of Pablo, Germain and Pierre Frank.

The Pabloite International Secretariat endorsed, with reservations, the main line of the LSSP in the 1960 elections. The same letter went on to say:

'What is on the other hand permissible, is a critical support for an eventual Government of the SLFP, a support that is temporary each time that this party engages in an action that is effectively anti-imperialist.'

Thus Pablo and Co. supplied them with further cover for their capitulation to the SLFP.

## After the 1960 election

Between them, the Communist Party and the LSSP helped the SLFP to power in 1960. The way in which the LSSP prepared for the election revealed the enormous political degeneration which had now set in within the party.

Candidates were not selected democratically by the Party but in agreement with its top leaders. In the main only those who could pay their election expenses were selected. As a result a horde of undesirable elements were placed on the LSSP slate.

There was no difference between this procedure and many of the practices of a corrupt social-democratic party. The LSSP leaders had turned their backs on mass struggle and were now operating as parliamentarians of the most opportunist character. Yet in spite of all their efforts they only gained 14 seats in Parliament.

Since they had collaborated with the SLFP during the election, the masses were confused as to the party's intentions and therefore voted for the SLFP. From this date active steps were taken to prepare for the coalition.

## The Lanka Estate Workers Union is smashed

The most significant of these was a retreat on the citizenship question in relation to the Tamil estate workers. This took the form of a slight amendment to the Party's programme stating that this issue was a matter for negotiation between the Indian government, representing the Tamil plantation labourers who have emigrated to Ceylon from India, and the Ceylon government.

The conflict over the citizenship issue is necessary for the rule of the imperialists. It cannot be resolved until they are successfully overthrown. By making this a constitutional issue between the capitalist governments of India and Ceylon, the LSSP had turned away completely from the revolutionary requirements of the Tamil poor.

This reflected itself most sharply in the field of trade union relations in the countryside.

Most of the plantation workers are organised between two trade unions of over 300,000 workers, one led by S. Thondaman, right-wing supporter of the SLFP and the other by Aziz, a fellow traveller of the Moscow dominated Communist Party.

During the late 1950s, there was an enormous growth of the Youth Leagues influenced by the LSSP throughout the island and in particular in rural areas never before penetrated by the Trotskyist movement.

This movement amongst the youth was a further indication of the development of a pre-



revolutionary situation. Its most positive effect in the countryside was reflected in the growth of the LSSP's Lanka Estate Workers Union, which had in early 1960 reached a membership of 80,000 among the Tamil workers.

Because of its youthful organisers, it was gaining ground steadily from the reformist trade union leaders, Thondaman and Aziz. Then, when the LSSP retreated on the citizenship question, this union was thrown into a crisis and virtually collapsed.

Large numbers of Tamil workers ceased to be members and the union became torn between the struggle of various gangster factions. This was perhaps one of the cruelest blows which the leaders of the LSSP dealt against their party. It effectively barred the way for the Party's growth in the countryside, something which was absolutely decisive for the taking of power.

## The LSSP loses support

Any illusions which the masses had about the SLFP electoral victory in 1960 were almost immediately dispelled. During 1961, strike struggles became a regular feature of the important industries.

The LSSP leadership noted this in their report of their Politbureau to the Central Committee, on March 31, 1962. They described the 1961 strike wave as follows:

'Broadly speaking, the principal gains of the strikes can be said to be the following—

1. They have increased the consciousness of the working class in the strength that is created by its unity.
2. They have destroyed many of the illusions the working class had in the SLFP government.
3. They have demonstrated to a wide layer of conscious workers that struggles on a trade union level cannot take them much further, and that the political struggles which involve the question of the political regime itself, have become necessary.'

Quite so. Throughout 1962 support for the SLFP government continued to crumble.

Ceylon had entered a state of extreme class tension which was in itself reflected in the assassination of Mr. Bandaranaike by a Buddhist monk.

## Enter the United Left Front

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\* Federal Party.



Members of the strongest union on the island of Ceylon, the Mercantile Union, during their strike this year.

bearing on the background to the coalition.

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This United Left Front was based on an agreement between the Communist Party, the MEP party of Philip Goonewardene and the LSSP. The purpose of the agreement was in the words of the Pabloites, to form an 'anti-capitalist' United Left Front on an agreed programme.

Why did the LSSP leaders put forward the United Left Front at this stage? In 1960 the right wing pushed through a coalition resolution at a special conference immediately after the debacle suffered by the LSSP in the general election.

But the same conference elected a central committee in which the right wing was in a minority. The right-wing of N. M. Perera was in a quandary. The leaders then obligingly helped them out with the tactic of the ULF—the sugar-coating for the bitter pill of coalition.

Prior to this, the Communist Party provided wholehearted support for the SLFP whilst the MEP of Philip Goonewardene had in fact participated in a coalition with the 1956 SLFP government.

A resolution of the LSSP submitted on October 14/15, 1961, characterised the role of the Communist Party as follows:

'The Communist Party remains very much where it was before the July 1960 elections. Politically its line remains substantially unchanged and it continues to support the S.L.F.P. Government unconditionally. Its policy of unconditional support is likely to continue as long as this policy subserves the foreign policy needs of the Soviet Government.'

Now this was all conveniently forgotten, by the LSSP leaders as well as the so-called 'Unified Secretariat'. The plain truth was that both the CP and the MEP were already in Mrs. Bandaranaike's coalition pocket and through its electoral collaboration with the SLFP, the LSSP was over halfway there.

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In April 1964, just two months before the coalition, the Unified Secretariat in Paris sent a letter of encouragement to the LSSP leadership which said:

'The United Front of the left, strengthened by mass struggle and directed to the establishment of its own political power on a genuinely socialist programme, provides a means for stemming the tide of reaction and uniting the masses and the ranks of our own party for the ultimate realisation of our perspectives. Ceylon can provide another Cuba or Algeria and prove to be of even greater inspiration to revolutionary minded workers throughout the world.'

The idea that the Stalinist party of Ceylon could participate through the Front in taking power flowed originally from the 1953 conception of Pablo that sections of the bureaucracy could, under 'certain circumstances' fulfil the task of the revolutionary party.

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## Trade Union unity around the 21 points

The second important event during the Summer of 1963 was the enormous growth of unity amongst the trade unions all over the island. While the LSSP and its opportunist allies were seeking to concentrate the attention of the masses on the parliamentary road via the United Left Front, the trade unions were coming together to do battle with Mrs. Bandaranaike's government.

On Sunday, September 29, 800 delegates from all the major trade unions representing one and a half million workers from the plantations and industrial enterprises, met in the Ceylinko Hotel, Colombo, and ratified the following 21 points as an agreed programme for action against the government:

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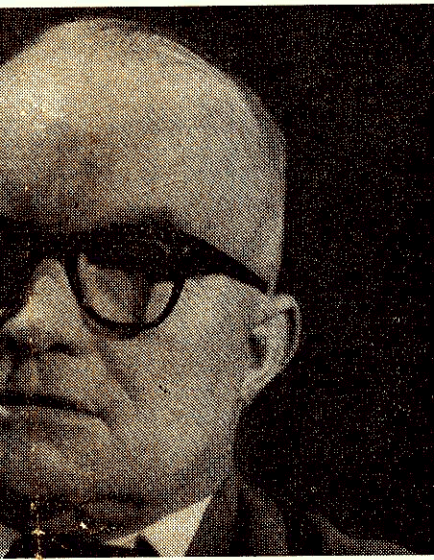
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# COALITION



The dockers in Colombo harbour, who are amongst the lowest paid workers on the island, engaged in a stubborn strike for more wages, which was a continuation of a previous strike they had waged in 1959. That strike arose as the result of an enquiry into their conditions, the findings of which still remain unpublished. It was called off during a state of emergency.

The dock strike was followed by a strike of bank clerks which lasted 90 days. Mrs. Bandaranaike who had now assumed premiership soon showed her class teeth in an outburst of hostility towards the striking workers. 'The Bank Clerk' the journal of the Ceylon Bank Employees Union for June and July 1962, reports her attitude as follows:

"On the morning of the 26th April the Honourable Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Prime Minister of Ceylon, made a political onslaught on the Union in her famous "message to the Nation". Among other things she said that "I have no doubt whatsoever now that the movement started by the F.P.\* was inspired by various organisations in different parts of the island who have been planning secretly to overthrow the lawfully established government of this country. For instance, I would like to refer to the strike organised by the Bank Clerks' Union. There is reason to believe that there are certain elements who are using the Bank Employees to cause grave harm to the economic life of this country".

The significance of the strikes of the dockers and bank clerks is that they were in all essentials political strikes against the government.

In January 1963 the Ceylon Transport Board was affected by a strike which paralysed the main transport services. Mrs. Bandaranaike promptly called in the army to drive the buses and scab on the strikers.

On July 10, 1963, 3,000 Wellawatte (suburb of Colombo) textile workers struck work. The stage for a decisive showdown between the working class and the capitalist government of Mrs. Bandaranaike was being reached.

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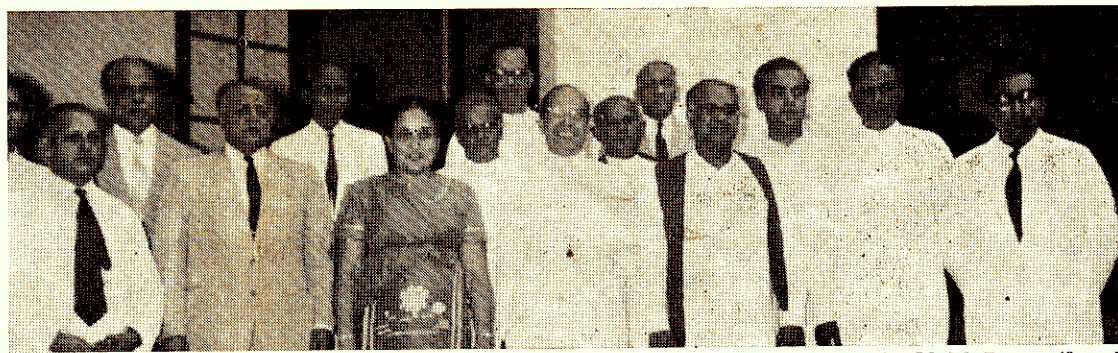
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Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike with her coalition Cabinet which includes LSSP members Dr. N. M. Perera (fourth from left), Cholmondely Goonewardene (second from left), and Anil Moonesinghe (extreme left)

nent and pensionable after three years of service. All service, including interrupted and broken periods of service prior to permanency to be counted for incremental and pension purposes.

9. (a) No retrenchment without the provision of suitable alternate employment and adequate compensation for full past service; (b) Work for unemployed or relief under a scheme of unemployment insurance.

10. (a) Increase employers' contribution to Employees' Provident Fund to 10 per cent of gross pay; (b) Provision for the withdrawal of money lying to the credit of the employee in E.P.F. without restrictions on cessation of employment after not less than 10 years' membership of the fund including funds transferred to the E.P.F.; (c) Double the Widows' and Orphans' Pension Benefits.

11. Gratuity of one month's gross pay for each year of past service prior to the inauguration of the Employees' Provident Fund.

12. Appointment of elected representatives of workers to Boards of State Corporations.

13. Creation of transfer and promotion boards with Trade Union representatives.

14. Full Trade Union political and civic rights to all public servants including teachers and employees in State Corporations and Local Government Service; and full access to all estates [plantations] for trade union Officials.

15. Re-instatement of all employees dismissed or compulsorily retired for participation in strikes or trade union activity and the removal of all penalties imposed for such participation or activity.

16. The implementation of the assurance given by the late

main industrial enterprises in Colombo.

Its general secretary, Bala Tampoe, who is also a leader of the minority, who walked out of the LSSP conference, led his union from the start into battle against Mrs. Bandaranaike's government.

The strike was a display of enthusiasm the like of which the island had not seen for many a long day. On January 9, 1964, the government intervened and told the CMU that it would make no more concessions.

The next day Mrs. Bandaranaike presented them with an ultimatum 'to return to work or else', but the CMU leadership correctly held on and decided to defy the ultimatum with the result that by Sunday, January 12 it had won a decisive economic and political victory.

This was too much for Mrs. Bandaranaike and her government and she decided to close down Parliament in February 1964. The CMU strike had clearly thrown herself and her government into a most serious crisis.

## March 21 demonstration

Such was the temper of the trade union movement fortified by the agreement on the 21 points, the victory of the CMU and the government crisis. They then decided to move into action behind the 21 points with a massive demonstration in Colombo on the evening of March 21.

The remarkable thing about these 21 points was that they united for the first time in



During the late 1950s there was an enormous growth of Youth Leagues influenced by the LSSP

Prime Minister Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike that in implementing the Official Language Act and the Tamil Language Special Provisions Bill no penalties will be imposed on old entrant public servants and the employees in Local Government bodies.

17. Public servants whose duties do not require proficiency in the Official Language be exempted from the proficiency test.

18. (a) A unified administrative service with prospects and promotions from the lowest to the highest and suitable provision for 50 per cent of posts in the higher grades to be filled from the lower grades in the public service; (b) Provision of proper avenues of promotion from lowest grade to highest grade for technical and industrial categories of workers.

19. Reconstitute the Public Service Commission and the Local Government Service Commission to win the confidence of the Public and Local Government Service and to appoint an appellate body answerable to Parliament to revise all previous decisions of the PSC and LGSC.

20. Treble the rate of Workmen's Compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Ordinance and grant full pay from date of accident.

21. Equal pay for equal work: (a) No wage discrimination against women; (b) No wage discrimination on basis of language as in the case of teachers.

## The Mercantile Union strike — Bandaranaike shuts down Parliament

Six weeks later the Ceylon Mercantile Union, the best organised Union on the island called a 69-day strike on behalf of its clerical membership employed on the docks and the

as the capitalist house presided over by Mrs. Bandaranaike began to burn down, it was only natural that those aristocratic children, the Goonewardenes, the de Silvas and the Pereras should in their own way come to the aid of Mrs. Bandaranaike and her class.

## The 'Unified Secretariat' and the CP help N. M. Perera with his secret negotiations for coalition

N. M. Perera knew he was on solid ground for his secret coalition talks. He enjoyed the wholehearted support of the Communist Party, always a supporter of coalition, and a major prop in the so-called United Left Front. He had also enjoyed the tacit collaboration of the Paris 'Unified Secretariat'!

From early 1964 onwards the Secretariat refused to allow any discussion about what was happening in Ceylon. They said it would upset unification by leading them into conflict with the LSSP leadership which they wanted to avoid at all costs.

In reply to a critic who wanted such a discussion they wrote the following:

'The Reunification Congress (June 1963) placed with the united new leadership the responsibility of doing everything in its power to cement the ties re-established after a long split and to work for fresh cohesion and stability in the world Trotskyist movement. This required a certain organisational relaxation for a period and a serious effort to ameliorate internal disputes in the various sections and in the components of the united movement—especially disputes inherited from the past—in order to help every area in the common problem of making a fresh start. All this was explained and agreed upon unanimously by the delegates who participated in the Reunification Congress.

The attitude of the United Secretariat towards the situation in Ceylon as elsewhere in the movement has been governed by these broad considerations laid down by the Reunification Congress.

'The United Secretariat "in essence" as Comrade Anderson puts it, has not modified in the least the criticisms of the LSSP made by the Seventh World Congress. What it has done is to place confidence in the capacity of the leadership of the LSSP to prove responsive to these criticisms. The letter addressed to the LSSP was not intended as some kind of public pillorying or as a challenge to pitch into a factional brawl, as Comrade Anderson appears to believe. The criticisms which it contained were made with complete goodwill by the assembled representatives of the world Trotskyist movement and in full confidence that they would be given thoughtful consideration by the LSSP. The United Secretariat has sought to maintain this loyal and comradely attitude towards the Ceylonese section, while frankly acknowledging that its members tend to sympathise politically with the left wing of the LSSP.'

'However, the United Secretariat feels that it would be wrong for it as a body representing the movement as a whole to brush aside the declarations of the majority of the LSSP leadership and refuse to grant them the time needed to prove in action the sincerity of their stand in relation to the United Left Front and the good faith of their assurances.' (Our emphasis.)

It would mean first of all to deliberately heat up the atmosphere in the LSSP by injecting the sharpest kind of factionalism; secondly, to exacerbate matters still further by transferring the dispute to the public arena. A divisive policy of this kind would put in jeopardy if not destroy, fraternal relations between the United Secretariat and the leadership of the LSSP. The end result could be highly injurious to the Fourth International and to the LSSP, including its left wing which has absolutely no interest to put in question the unity of the party through the creation of undue internal friction and tension from any source.'

After all, was not the island led by a few great aristocratic families such as those of Mrs. Bandaranaike?

Did not the sons and daughters of these families go to London, some to learn to speak on the left and some to learn to speak on the right?

Whilst Colvin de Silva was making left noises on the Galle Face, his colleague, N. M. Perera, was creeping through the servants' entrance of 'Temple Trees' the Prime Minister's residence.

On the evening of March 21,

## Mrs. Bandaranaike explains

All the chickens were coming home to the Bandaranaike roost. The revisionists from Paris to Colombo were now eager to demonstrate that faced with the need to give a decisive lead to the working class to take power, they were on the side of the class enemy.

We have entered the last lap of the great betrayal. On Sunday, May 10, the prime minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike, finally made known to the public at large her plans for the coalition government.

The following extract from her speech will surely rank as one of the most thoughtful class statements in history.

'After July, 1960, after I was made President of the party on the invitation of Mr. C. P. de Silva and other well-wishers, the SLFP was able to form a Government winning 75 seats in alliance with the Left parties, except the MEP. What is the real significance of this?—We who got 46 in March got 75 in July because we got the support of the Left. This must be admitted honestly. If by any chance we got less than 75 seats those parties who supported us in the election would have had a place in forming the Government.'

'However, after forming the Government we had to face certain questions. The leftists who worked with us began a series of strikes because they did not get a place in the Government. In the North, while there were communal issues flaring up, there were various other issues cropping up on the language question, too.

'Though it is true that we faced this bravely, in the light of my experience, I must remind you of something. However much progressive work we do, we cannot expect any results unless we get the co-operation of the working class. This could be understood if the working of the Port and of other nationalised undertakings are considered. We cannot go backwards. We must go forward. Disruptions, especially strikes and go-slows must be eliminated and the development of the country must proceed.

'Some people have various ideas on these subjects. Some feel that these troubles can be eliminated by the establishment of a dictatorship. Others say that workers should be made to work at the point of gun and bayonet. Still others maintain that a national Government should be formed to solve this problem. I have considered these ideas separately and in the context of world events.

'My conclusion is that none of these solutions will help to get us where we want to go. Therefore, what we should do is to travel on the path defined by our leader in accordance with our conscience. It is only by travelling on this path whilst considering the changes that have taken place in our country that we can achieve our purpose.

'Therefore, gentlemen, I decided to initiate talks with the leaders of the working class, particularly Mr. Philip Goonewardene and Dr. N. M. Perera. Though both of them expressed their opinion, I must say that I did not agree with all they said. I then had further discussions on outstanding issues.

'Can we form a coalition Government? If so, how could this be done? These are the questions we considered. Afterwards they informed me that they could form a Government on the basis of a common programme like the 1956 agreement binding on the constituent parties of the MEP. They were of opinion that it was a Government like this which could work for the common weal.

A few hours before the vote was taken at the LSSP Conference on Sunday, June 7, Pierre Frank for the Unified Secretariat in Paris was still advocating his policy of the ULF. The 'centre' group of Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin de Silva supported him.

Fortunately, the revolutionary left wing took no notice and walked out of the conference.

However, Dr. N. M. Perera now on the way to becoming Finance Minister had no difficulty in leading a party which by now had been so thoroughly corrupted, corrupted and betrayed by the United Secretariat in Paris as well as its rotten leadership such as Goonewardene and de Silva that it went the whole hog and gave him a massive majority.

(Next week we shall deal with the struggle of the LSSP (Revolutionary Section) which walked out of the Conference.)



st union on the island of Ceylon, the Mercantile Union, during their strike this year.

## White-collar men join wage queue

NOT only are militant demands being made by industrial workers, but white-collar employees are also joining the fight for higher wages and better conditions. And, like some sections of manual workers, they are being sold out by their union leaders through government inquiries and investigations.

Air traffic control assistants threatened a work-to-rule this week but later called it off after an agreement between them and the Ministry of Aviation.

The men's complaints—about shift conditions, hours and promotion—will be the subject of a discussion between the Ministry and the Civil Service Clerical Association.

An airline pilots' strike was called off after leaders of the British Airline Pilots' Association withdrew the strike notices following the suggestion by the Minister of Aviation for a 'court of inquiry.'

Pilots were demanding higher pay and better working conditions.

This week, too, members of the Association of Cinematographers, Television and Allied Technicians (ACTT) employed by the Independent Television put in for a substantial pay rise or a revised salary structure.

On Tuesday they struck for a week and on Wednesday no scheduled programmes were put out. There appeared only a test card and soft music.

The ACTT is being backed by Actors' Equity, the Association of Broadcasting Staffs, the Musicians Union, and it was expected that the Electrical Trades Union and Variety Artists Federation would also support the men.

George Elvin, general secretary of ACTT, told the press that last year ITV made £24,000,000. The claim—on an average of a 25 per cent increase—would cost the company £2,500,000.

# Industrial Newsletter

## The Spitalfields market strike

### Porters return in five-day week dispute

Will gain nothing from inquiry

PORTERS at five London markets returned to work this week as a government inquiry into Saturday working began. This followed a strike by porters at the Spitalfields market over the five-day week and the sacking of men at four other markets.

The return came after D. T. Jack, chairman of the inquiry, had appealed for a resumption of work so that the inquiry could continue 'in a better atmosphere'.

#### STATEMENT

According to the national press on Tuesday a statement was issued saying that the Spitalfields Tenants' Association—market employers—has agreed to an offer of a five-day week with five and a half day coverage, but this remains in dispute and will be the subject of discussions after the report of the present committee of inquiry.

R. Davis, the porters' union leader has not, so far, shown much firmness on the question

of the Spitalfields strike or the dismissal of 600 other workers from the four markets.

Along with other union leaders, who agree to co-operate in the face of a government inquiry, he will find himself a tool in the hands of the employers.

#### NO CALL

The strike could have been much stronger and have had much more effect on the Tenants' Association if the dockers in the Transport and General Workers' Union had been called upon to black all goods at the docks.

Instead, the employers were able, by threatening to sack other workers as a reprisal for the strike, to break up the dispute and channel it through the government inquiry.

Taken on the basis of past experience of courts of inquiry such as that set up to assess craftsmen's wages at the Steel Company of Wales, the porters are unlikely to get anything at all out of this present committee.

#### TOUGH LINE

The Tenants' Associations have shown by their actions over this dispute that they are prepared to take a tough line. The union leaders in the Transport and General Workers' Union did not show much willingness to counteract this toughness.

Covent Garden tenants have agreed to a five-day week only when it is accepted by associations in the other London markets.

A member of the Covent Garden tenants, has had to admit that fewer and fewer customers were using the market Saturdays. Apart from perishable goods, he said, his experience was that retailers bought on Friday.

#### DEMOCRACY

The leaflet also says: 'If democracy means anything it means that each man has the right to know where he is being led and who is doing the leading.'

We agree with that. We are sure that dockers on Merseyside would like to know where Mr. O'Hare and the TGWU are leading them.

Was it an example of democracy for O'Hare to dismiss the vote of all 11 dock branches of the TGWU which rejected the 'new deal'. Mr. O'Hare has declared that the branches had no right to reject the 'new deal' and he is continuing his negotiations with the port employers with the intention of forcing it down the throat of dockers by the end of this year.

Did he consult his members or even the delegates to the district committee before he signed the 'new deal' which was distributed to dockers on January 16 by employers' agents?

Have the TGWU members been consulted about the way the 40-hour week will be operated? Dare we ask if Saturday mornings will be compulsory after July 27?

Perhaps the secretaries of branches C.10 and C.11 will issue a clear answer on these questions.

While we wait for their reply The Socialist Labour League and The Newsletter will continue to give every assistance to dockers to prepare for the showdown with the employers.

# Scottish and Birmingham stewards still out of work

## All-out fight needed to reinstate McKay

By MICKIE SHAW

FOLLOWING the decision of the Remington Rand, Scotland, workers to leave the issue of the re-instatement of their sacked convenor, Calum McKay, in the hands of the executive council of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, the Paisley district committee of the AEU, like the Clyde shop stewards, have requested the EC to issue a call for strike action.

This is in keeping with the position taken by the Paisley district committee throughout the Remington dispute to evade giving real leadership in the area.

The executive council of the AEU refused to make the five-week long strike of Remington workers an official one and it is hardly likely that they will issue an official strike call now.

Mr. William McQuilkin, district secretary of the AEU in Paisley is reported to have told the district committee that at the central conference in York, the employers' federation had been in favour of re-employing Calum McKay—in some form—but that Remington were completely opposed to this.

#### Dangerous

This would imply that Remington Rand stand alone in their action in sacking the works convenor and attempting to break union militancy in the factory. Nothing could be further from the truth and it would be dangerous nonsense

to develop a further struggle for McKay's reinstatement with such illusions.

#### Re-instate

Any attempt to reinstate Calum McKay now must involve not only the workers at Remington Rand but the whole of the Hillington Industrial Estate—and not merely in a half-day token stoppage but in an all-out fight against the employers.

If the Paisley district committee of the AEU is determined to have Calum McKay reinstated it should take the initiative and lay the preparation for such a fight.

Failure to do this means merely paying lip-service to the fight of the Remington workers against victimisation and in defence of trade union organisation.

## Jelf now suspended — without pay

A QUESTION mark hangs over the future of George Jelf, the AEU shop steward in support of whom 1,250 tool-room workers came out on strike last week at the Joseph Lucas combine in Birmingham.

Jelf was sacked for alleged misconduct in the car park of the Shaftmoor Lane factory. Workers see it as an attempt by the management to single out a militant steward and weaken union organisation at the factory.

As one AEU member expressed it to a Newsletter reporter: 'They wanted to get rid of Jelf and they took this way of doing it.'

Much has been made in the Tory press of the fact that he is a member of the Communist Party.

At a meeting of 900 strikers last Friday a return to work 'formula' was accepted which

withdrew notice of the sack against Jelf, and substituted suspension without pay.

A union official explained that the company was concerned with the 'repercussions' of the strike, which threatened production in Midland car factories.

Strikers were assured that the period of Jelf's suspension would be raised at a forthcoming works' conference and his early reinstatement pressed for.

The question is raised in some workers' minds: 'If the Ford militant stewards, suspended with pay, were never reinstated, will Jelf get his job back, suspended without pay?'

## Pupils exploited says survey

SCHOOLTEACHERS in Crawley and North Sussex have complained to the West Sussex Council about the exploitation of schoolchildren in part-time jobs.

A survey of part-time employment of pupils from only four schools in North Sussex revealed the following cases:

- Three 14-year-old boys employed as run-abouts at a restaurant between 6.30 p.m. and 11 p.m. on two or three week days for a weekly wage of 15 shillings or £1.

- Three 15-year-old boys employed washing up in a kitchen of an all-night restaurant on Friday and Saturday.

- A boy starting a paper round at 6.10 a.m. and

- A 13-year-old boy leaving a milk depot at 5.30 a.m. at the week-end, for a milk round 12 miles away.

When children below the compulsory school leaving age are employed for a continuous period of 14 days, they are supposed to be issued with a certificate of employment.

#### Discovery

The teachers making this investigation discovered that from two secondary schools 282 children in this age group were employed and only 104 had certificates.

In the four schools they examined, 80 per cent of the pupils over statutory leaving age had jobs.

It is clear that many employers are completely ignoring the provisions of the 1954 Education Act concerning the part-time employment of schoolchildren. It is also clear that the authorities have done very little about it.

According to 'The Times' Education supplement a spokesman for the West Sussex Education authority said that 'certain parts' of the survey 'might be inaccurate' and that the teachers ought to have reported breaches of the law to the authorities.

## Dock closure threat over wages agreement

GENERAL Sir Gordon MacMillan, chairman of the Firth of Clyde Dry Dock Company last week issued a warning that the new dry dock at Greenock, Scotland, will close when the workers start their annual holiday on July 3, unless there is a settlement of the dispute with the Boilermakers' Society.

The new dock, which cost £4,250,000, has not yet taken a ship. Since the beginning of the year the company have been in dispute with the Boilermakers' Society over wages.

Originally, a rate of 8s. 3d. an hour was agreed upon when it was the company's intention to work a two-shift system.

When they found it impossible to obtain sufficient skilled labour to operate a two-shift system the company decided to revert back to normal day-shift working but at the same time wanted to reduce the boilermakers' rate of pay which, they claimed, was a special rate negotiated to apply to two-shift working only.

#### REFUSED

The boilermakers refused to accept any reduction in their hourly rate and negotiations with the employers have been going on for many months.

When the situation reached deadlock the Boilermakers' Society placed an embargo on the Greenock dry dock and last Saturday, after the announcement of the closure threat, Mr. T. Canning, the boilermakers' local delegate said: 'The dock remains black until our dispute is settled.'

So far as the boilermakers are concerned the onus for the deadlock is entirely with the employers.

Even Mr. James Jack, the general secretary of the Scottish Trades Union Congress, who is certainly not noted for militancy, has made a statement in support of the boilermakers' demand that the employers honour the original agreement of 8s. 3d.

The employers, of course, worried by the fact that they cannot attract customers while the dispute continues and that they have no prospect of being able to recruit boilermakers, are blaming the workers for the closure because of their inflexibility on the wages question.

#### DECLARATION

Notwithstanding Mr. Jack's declaration of support for the boilermakers, Sir Gordon MacMillan stated that the intervention of such a responsible trade unionist as Mr. Jack will be welcomed by the employers and they will be happy to discuss the matter with him.

What the next moves, if any, by the STUC will be are at present a matter of speculation, but boilermakers throughout the Clyde should rally to the support of the Greenock men.

A victory for the Greenock boilermakers would strengthen the union in the whole of the Clyde in further negotiations on wages and working conditions.

#### 'Black' cargo

WORK on 31 ships stopped at Hull when 2,000 dockers went on an unofficial strike on Tuesday.

The dockers walked out when they found that the cargo of a ship had been moved onto the dockside by the crew. The men refused to load it on to railway wagons.

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## TGWU leaflet attacks SLL

From page 1

Talk about finding a way around this opposition can only mean that the TGWU are preparing to do a deal with the employers, probably bartering working conditions for a few miserable shillings.

What is the record of the 'sensible men' the leaflet talks about? Every gain which dockers have made since the war has been won in struggle against the Port Employers.

In every case they have been forced to take unofficial action where they have had to fight not only the employers, but the state and the officials of the Transport Union and the Labour Party as well.

How many flush toilets or washing rooms have these sensible men gained for the dockworker?

#### BASIC WAGE

The present basic wage of £9 9s. is the lowest of any worker in the country doing comparable work. That is what the sensible people have obtained.

The leaflet complains that dockers are being used for political ends. But dockers wages have been depressed by the Tory wage freeze and the guiding light of the National Incomes Commission (Nicky) and the National Economic Development Council (Neddy) which are organs of the state.

When dockers have fought before they have been taken to the Old Bailey under Order

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## NUM PAMPHLET AIDS RIGHT-WING

### Ignores militant fight for wages

FOR miners today the big question is how to organise a struggle against worsening conditions resulting from colliery reconstructions and mechanisation.

In the past year Mr. Bert Wynn, secretary Derbyshire area of the National Union of Mine-workers, other permanent officials of the NUM and a group of university lecturers have been meeting to discuss these conditions.

The fact that they met and discussed is a reflection of the great measure of discontent in the industry. But the work of this group is directed to lead that discontent into channels harmless for the right-wing leaders of the union.

The group has now produced a sixpenny pamphlet—'A Plan for the Miners', published by the Derbyshire area of the NUM—which is being distributed in other coalfields.

#### FACTS

There are a number of facts and statistics in the pamphlet which will be useful in the hands of militant miners. But it is not a militant miners' pamphlet.

Bert Wynn and W. Whitehead, President of South Wales NUM and member of the Communist Party, have written a foreword. Both were on the drafting committee.

The pamphlet shows that real

wages in the mines were no higher in April 1963 than in April 1956, although production was 20 per cent higher.

In 1962 the incidence rate of deaths and serious injuries combined had risen to 35 per cent higher than the 1953-56 average.

The pamphlet also comments that '... the NCB—and the Government—have been at considerable pains to conceal the great and growing surpluses that are arising.' It estimates that the operating surplus in 1963 was over £140 million—£70 million higher than in 1957. The Board covers up the surplus by boosting depreciation provisions.

#### ROLE

What has been the role of the NUM leaders while the miners' conditions have worsened and the NCB has secured an enormous strengthening of its financial position?

The pamphlet ignores the question of leadership. It makes a mild and vague comment that 'So far, the N.U.M. has been more conscious of the curbs on bargaining involved by the new organisation and wage pattern than its opportunities.'

The truth is that NUM leaders have actively collaborated with the Coal Board in bringing about the present conditions which face miners.

What better example of this

is there than the present wages issue? Robens, Webber, Ford, Paynter—and right-wing leaders of the NUM in the areas—come out with exactly the same arguments against the miners' wage demand. 'Coal News', the NCB paper, is pleased to feature them all.

Bert Wynn and his group want a painless evolution in the mines without anything being upset in the industry or in the union.

#### AMAZED

The miner, this pamphlet says, has a great deal of 'industrial democracy'. The rank and file miner will be amazed to read that 'collective bargaining agreements' and 'joint consultation' are workers' control.

'Consultation is often derided as a "sham"', declares the pamphlet and goes on to answer the derision of the militant miner: 'In fact, if we seriously attempt to use to the full the rights and opportunities conceded in principle (by Statute) on consultation a significant advance could be made.'

Here, the function of this group in helping the right wing couldn't be clearer. As militancy grows in the industry they dress up all the collaborationist procedures that exist precisely to disperse and break militancy.

The great need for miners, as all workers today, is a growing consciousness in their own strength. Just at this time

these groups develop with occasional left-sounding words, to preach the value of going through 'procedure'.

The pamphlet discusses what to do about the mines and the union as if it was only a matter of a few administrative changes; of getting a little more of what the miners already have.

There is not one mention of the conflicts in the industry and the union during the past few years, nor of the general discontent at the union leadership in every coalfield.

It ignores the wages fight, the strikes and overtime bans. It reports nothing about the feelings of the men and draws no conclusions from struggles.

#### COMMUNICATION

Instead of a fight against the right wing, it proposes better channels of communication in the union and more research departments.

Any plan for the miners which seeks to advance their cause at all would have to take on the present union leadership.

The group which published this pamphlet wants to confine action to verbal discussions, propaganda resolutions and votes in union elections.

They have not the slightest intention of carrying through a fight to cleanse the union by organising and co-ordinating the rank and file forces struggling against the NCB and the union leadership.