

BACKDATE PENSIONS

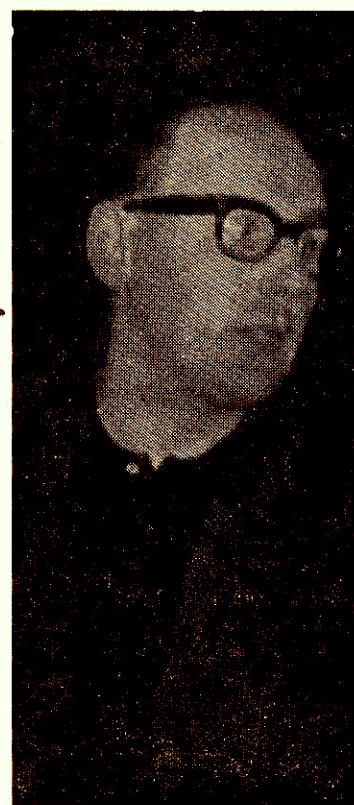
The Newsletter

WEEKLY JOURNAL OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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Cliff Slaughter to work full-time for S L L

THE National Committee of the Socialist Labour League, meeting on December 19 and 20, unanimously decided that Comrade Cliff Slaughter should devote himself full time to the training of cadres during 1965.

This will include the regular quarterly production of the 'Fourth International' magazine, as well as all the educational arrangements for the League schools covering different groups of members.

Convinced socialist

Comrade Slaughter became a convinced socialist at the age of 16 and joined the Communist Party.

During his period of activity in the labour movement he worked for two years in the coal mines, from 1947-1949, followed by a few months in engineering. After that he took up a university scholarship at Cambridge. Here he changed from a study of history to a study of anthropology (a study of tribal society).

After completing his degree he continued in a research post and eventually took up the university teaching post at Leeds.

BELGIAN SOCIALIST PARTY SPLITS

THE Walloon wing of the Belgian Socialist Party split from the party last Sunday. At a Congress in Liege, attended by 600 people, it was decided to create a new socialist party, to be constituted at another Congress in Charleroi at the end of January.

The split originates from the activities of the Movement Populaire Walloon founded in 1961 by Andre Renard and the policy of the left-wing weeklies circulated in the Belgian Socialist Party, 'La Gauche' and 'Links'.

PROSCRIBED

At the Congress of the Socialist Party on December 12 and 13 the MPW and the newspapers were virtually proscribed.

The special Congress at Liege was presided over by Socialist deputy Massart, who resigned from the Party a few months ago. Ernest Glinne MP, who was attacked at the December 12 Congress, criticised the Socialist Party for abandoning its programme of structural reform and tending towards a centrist coalition of a neo-capitalist tendency.

MEETING

Labour Must Stop Retreating!

No Wage Freezing!

Pay the Old Age Pension Increase Now!

Saturday, January 16, 1965

7.30 p.m.

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1

Speakers: G. HEALY, CLIFF SLAUGHTER

He was one of a small group of intellectuals who broke from the Stalinists over the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 from the standpoint of the teachings of Trotskyism.

'Necessary step'

In an interview with The Newsletter, Comrade Slaughter said:

'In leaving my employment as a University lecturer to work for the Socialist Labour League, I know that I am taking a step forward that becomes absolutely necessary for a number of people at this time if the working class is to throw out its fake Labour and Communist leaders and go forward to the socialist revolution. Besides the task of doing what is demanded by the interests of this working class, the question of 'good jobs' naturally takes on no importance whatsoever.

'I am sure that I am speaking for every comrade in the leadership of the League when I say how inspired I am by the hundreds of youth that are now joining us from the ranks of the socialist youth movement.

'I am especially keen to play my part in training this youth, which is the most valuable asset that we have in the revolutionary struggle for socialism.'

RETRACTION BY SHEFFIELD 'STAR'

THE following apology appeared on page 1 of 'The Star', Sheffield's evening newspaper, on December 8, 1964:

'A report in our issue of October 15 quoted an article in "Darts" the Sheffield University students' newspaper, which alleged that the Socialist Labour League whose headquarters are in London were attempting to use the University's Labour Society for its own ends, that the Labour Society was the centre of Trotskyite activity in South Yorkshire, that it is connected with people who helped to organise the Hull dock strike and that there was a "national conspiracy".'

Mr. Thomas Gerard Healy and Mr. Clifford Slaughter, who are respectively the secretary and a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Labour League, have denied these allegations and furthermore a statement in our report that they were among leading Trotskyists who attended a secret meeting at Broomhill.

We accept their assurance that they attended no such meeting and that neither they nor the Socialist Labour League sought to use the Sheffield University Labour Society for their own ends. We also accept that the allegations as to the Society, the Hull dock strike and a "national conspiracy" are entirely false so far as they the League are concerned. We apologise to them for the publication of these allegations.

A similar apology appeared in a recent issue of the Sheffield University students' newspaper 'Darts'.

MPs TO MEET ON ALLEN DETENTION

BEFORE Parliament broke up for the winter recess, several MPs promised a deputation of young workers, trade unionists and students that they would attend a meeting to discuss the imprisonment of three Nigerian trade unionists

Spaniards to appeal against sentences

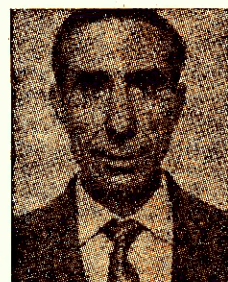
NEXT Thursday (January 7) an appeal will be made to the Supreme Tribunal in Madrid against sentences passed on three Spanish workers in August 1964.

The three, Francisco Calle, José Cases and Mariano Pascual were arrested at the beginning of the year, tried and jailed by the Tribunal of Public Order for six, five and three years, respectively.



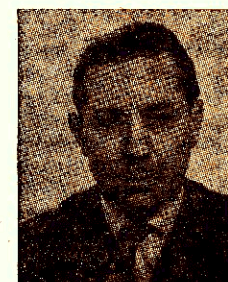
Francisco Calle

In an urgent appeal, the National Confederation of Labour of Spain in Exile calls on the trade union and labour movement to send telegrams, letters of protest and petitions for the release of the three men to the Minister of Justice, Señor Irujo and to the President of the Supreme Tribunal in Madrid.



José Cases

'What were the "crimes" of these men?' asks the Confederation: the struggle for the right to have working-class trade unions, for the right to strike, freedom to hold meetings and freedom of the press.



Mariano Pascual

The Newsletter joins the call for action to release the three men, who have fought courageously against the Franco regime.

INCREASE

By The Editor

CHRISTMAS has come and gone with nothing extra for the old people. Meanwhile the cost of living has increased, several higher grades of civil servants have received substantial pay increases—all backdated, and Labour Members of Parliament maintain a shameful silence.

Before the General Election, Labour candidates cruised up and down the country mouthing phrases about the terrible plight of the old people. It is now clear that all they were doing was looking for votes and shamelessly exploiting the degradation of those whom capitalism can no longer make a profit out of through exploitation.

This is the real treachery of 'Tribune' and the left-fakers. Why is it, gentlemen, that the old age pensioners are worse off at Christmas 1964 under a Labour government, than they were under a Tory government in 1963?

Only the Young Socialists held the banner of Labour aloft when they campaigned at Brighton for the increase to be paid immediately. The answer of the Labour parliamentarians was that there was too much paper work to be done and the increase could not be made before March 29.

This is just an excuse to cover up their shameful capitulation to the international bankers and money changers who care nothing for the plight of old people.

Simple job

Even assuming that there is an enormous amount of clerical work attached to an adjustment in pension rates, why not backdate the pension increase to the time when they were decided in the November Budget proposals? This would be a relatively simple job, once the new books are issued.

We believe that the time has come to end all the humbug and platitudes about the terrible conditions of the old age pensioner. They can and must have the protection of the organised labour movement.

It would be shameful if those trade unions who correctly negotiate backdated wage increase payments for their members were to stand aside and deny this right to the old age pensioners.

The Newsletter calls upon the entire Labour and trade union movement to stand by the old people and demand that their pension increase be backdated.

This is the least that can be done to rectify the terrible hardship which they are now undergoing as a result of the increase in the cost of living.

Let the real views of rank and file Labour be heard immediately.

WILSON'S H-BOMB LINE IS 'LEFT'

—says Tribune

HAROLD WILSON's well-known ability to make statements which can be interpreted in three ways has been exercised to the full in relation to the plans for the nuclear reorganisation of NATO.

In this he has had able assistance from the ex-left wingers around 'Tribune'. These people are adept at quoting those bits from Wilson's speeches which imply that he may be acting radically.

In 'Tribune' of December 18, Richard Clements picks out excerpts from Wilson's Brighton Conference speech to prove that his views, 'as far as they go, are in line with the arguments which the left has put forward for a long time' on the question of the H-bomb.

Clements explains that 'the left in the Labour Party (excluding the pacifist element) had argued all along that the major reason for Britain's unilateral renunciation of the bomb was that it would break the log-jam in disarmament negotiations'.

In other words, all the work of CND, Aldermaston marchers included, was merely an appendage of the manoeuvres of the great power diplomats, according to 'Tribune'.

ANTI-SOVIET

Meanwhile, Wilson is engaged in helping imperialism to re-organise its anti-Soviet military alliance. This job is made necessary by the economic problems of world capital and the changed balance of economic power since the North Atlantic Treaty was signed in 1949.

That, Wilson's efforts are given firm backing by sections of the British ruling class is confirmed by the first leader in 'The Times' on December 19. This takes Home severely to task for irresponsibly criticising Wilson in the Foreign Affairs debate.

'Tribune'-ites will justify their failure to utter one squeak of criticism of the right-wing's policy of consolidating the nuclear alliance by claiming that there is a danger of bringing back the Tories.

In fact, their role, as on other issues, is to use their reputations as 'lefts' to sell Wilson's actions on behalf of imperialism to Labour's rank and file.

SOUTH WALES CP CRITICISES PAYNTER

THE poor results which the Communist Party received in the General Election are now being heatedly discussed within a number of important party regional organisations.

This is particularly true in South Wales, where, despite their traditional stronghold in the miners' union, their vote declined. Whereas in 1955 they received 15 per cent of the total poll, this has now dropped to 11.7 per cent in 1964.

Well-known South Wales member of the Communist Party, Annie Powell, in her election campaign in East Rhondda, has become the target for a major discussion.

This takes the form of criticisms of Communist Party member Will Paynter, who came from South Wales and is now General Secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers.

The Welsh Party organisation suggests that Annie Powell lost votes because Paynter signed his name to an appeal issued by the miners' union calling on miners to vote Labour. They claim the fact that this was distributed in

large numbers made the Communist Party candidate look ridiculous.

They had, in fact, to endure the spectacle of one leading member of the Communist Party who owes his position in the National Union of Mineworkers to the activity of their rank-and-file members, attacking by implication another member of the Party who was standing in the election.

They also claim that for the first time the Communist Party organisation in King Street failed to provide them with well-known national speakers in the coal industry to speak at public meetings.

A section of the report on the East Rhondda election poses what is described as the '64 dollar question'. It reads as follows:

'One thing that stuck out a mile was that practically everyone thought we had the best candidate. Annie's standing is very high indeed. We had very little objection to our policy—the commonest of all comments, reported by every can-

(Cont. back page, col. 1)

THE Young Communist League's bi-ennial conference held recently at the Finsbury Town Hall, London, will be remembered as one of the most undemocratic in YCL history.

Discussion on the main issues confronting the world Communist Movement and the working class was completely avoided and the reports presented to Congress are filled with inconsistencies.

It was only as a result of protests at the National Committee's proposal to postpone the Congress for several months that it was held at all. In any event the Congress was held a month too late to conform with the Young Communist League rules which demand that a Congress be held at least every two years.

Contrast this with the decision of the Socialist Labour League to hold two conferences this year in view of the important political developments in relation to the election of the Labour government.

Prevent discussion

The leadership of the Young Communist League and Communist Party were anxious that none of the issues which would constitute a challenge to their political programme of peaceful co-existence and parliamentary roads to socialism (and therefore to their own bureaucratic positions) should be raised.

They had to prevent any serious discussion on the Sino-Soviet dispute, the removal of Khrushchev, and most important of all on the growing interest in Trotskyism in the ranks of the YCL.

On their own figures, 70-odd of their members have this year joined the Socialist Labour League. The Congress had to be delayed in order to ensure that all such people were expelled.

It was also necessary to minimise any controversy in connection with the line adopted in relation to the Labour government and the failure of the recent apprentices' strike.

No resolution

The YCL leadership therefore took the unprecedented step of not issuing a draft political resolution for discussion and amendment in the branches and district committees. Branches were, however, informed by letter that they were 'entitled to send in resolutions' and that these would be 'taken either as amendments to the political report, or as separate resolutions according to their content'.

In taking this action, they undoubtedly got more than they bargained for. Three branches and one district committee sent in resolutions protesting at this action—but none of these resolutions came up before Congress.

'We feel that this action interferes with the basic democracy of the YCL. . . . We rejected the excuse of the retiring NC that there was not enough time . . . ran the resolution from Croydon (Surrey).

In response to the call for resolutions, 211 were submitted—compared with 125 at the previous Congress.

But of this very large number only three came before Congress. On the insistence of the standing orders committee the others were withdrawn or remitted to the new National Committee, whilst several were composed in such a way as to ensure that no difference whatsoever was expressed with the political line of the Communist Party. On a two-day agenda, only 40 minutes was allotted to the moving of resolutions.

Promise broken

Three delegates who refused to withdraw their resolutions were kept waiting until the Congress was drawing to a close before having the opportunity to speak.

They were then given three minutes in which to convince the Congress that they should be allowed to move their resolutions.

Two of the three delegates concerned had their requests to move resolutions defeated on the recommendation of the chairman of standing orders committee, Alex MacDonald, the 34-year-old editor of 'Challenge'.

Young Communist League in crisis

by a delegate

25th Congress evades main issues

The promise that those resolutions which were appropriate would be taken as amendments to the political report was not fulfilled.

Immediately Barney Davis, new YCL national secretary, had delivered the report, printed copies of it were distributed to the delegates. They were presented with a 'fait accompli'. When questions were raised, they were told that, despite previous assurances, the report was not open to amendment.

Press invited

Presumably in order to prevent any expelled members or members who hold views in opposition to those of the leadership from being present, the number of visitors to the Congress was restricted and all applications for tickets were vetted by district secretaries.

Contrary to previous practice, visitors who were not members of the YCL were not permitted on the grounds that there would be insufficient room—yet the total number of delegates was smaller than at the previous Congress, 213 compared with 240.

A further step in inhibiting discussion was the invitation to the capitalist press—before whom some delegates would be reticent in breaking unity with the leadership, in view of the attacks on the YCL which this could provoke.

The last stroke in these elaborate preparations was the decision not to invite fraternal delegates from other YCL organisations.

Perhaps a delegate from China would have attended? Then there might have been some discussion on one of the most important problems confronting the world Communist Movement, the Sino-Soviet dispute; and that would never do—not at any conference of 'Communists' anyway.

Crisis

One of the first items on the agenda was the presentation of the report of the last two years' work.

This is an amazing document. It reveals that out of a National Committee of 35 elected at the 24th Congress, nine have resigned (in fact the true figure is ten). This compares with one resignation from the previous National Committee.

When an explanation of this was called for, the reason given was that two of the members had moved into full-time Party work, whilst the others had resigned for 'personal reasons'. No further clarification was given.

As a result of these resignations, a whole committee (the Executive Committee Sub-committee), completely disappeared with the exception of Jimmy Reid, the then national secretary. The function of this committee was to prepare Executive Committee and National Committee agendas and attend to urgent business.

The resignation of over a quarter of the National Committee and the disappearance of whole sub-committee is an expression of the real crisis which confronts the Stalinist movement in its efforts to formulate a policy which is consistent with the requirements of the bureaucracy, yet acceptable to the membership.

As the crisis in imperialism deepens, so the Stalinist movement finds it ever more difficult to maintain its crumbling edifice.

The report also claims a membership increase of 900 in the past two years—from 4,195 to 5,101. This is far less than the increase of 1,500 claimed to have been made in the preceding inter-Congress period, yet even so, is difficult to swallow.

How can an organisation increase its membership by

nearly one-fifth in a period in which one-quarter of the National Committee resigns and over 70 members, many of them leaders in their own areas, are either expelled or suspended? And, if there has been this increase in membership, then why has the number of full delegates fallen by more than 10 per cent?

Sales of the paper 'Challenge', the report insists, have risen from 10,780 per month to 12,200. How can this be when the financial statement reveals that a loan of £175 (not repaid) was granted to the paper and, on editor MacDonald's own admission, the paper is insolvent?

An increase in circulation does not lead to a financial crisis. Could it be that 12,200 is the number of papers printed, not the number sold?

Even if the figure is correct, why was no mention made of the failure to reach the sales target set at the 24th Congress of 15,000 per month? And what happened to the membership target of 10,000? Reid repeated it again, of course—and no doubt it will be similarly repeated if ever another Congress is held.

No campaigns

If we accept the figures then, it is necessary to see that campaigns amongst working class youth have led to the increases in membership and circulation of the paper. But the report reveals that in the whole two-year period, the YCL has failed to lead one single effective national campaign.

What kind of Communist organisation is this that does not lead campaigns?

The YCL, we are informed, in 1963 supported the Trades Council lobby of Parliament and the Young Socialists lobby of Parliament. In November the League gave its active support to the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers' youth lobby of Parliament on Youth Unemployment.

Actual support for the first two events was purely minimal, whilst the USDAW lobby was, in fact, called by the YCL using one of the London Youth Committees of USDAW as a 'front' organisation.

This was done supposedly to prevent the YCL from being isolated from the labour movement. Less than 199 took part in this lobby—less than one-fifth of their alleged membership—compared with thousands who supported the Young Socialists lobbies.

The report also refers to work in the Youth Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (this organisation has all but disappeared) and a number of other similar organisations and also the support for the Apprentices' Movement for Higher Wages and Better Conditions.

This body was, in fact, initiated by an unholy alliance of YCL members from Manchester and Pabolites from Liverpool as a breakaway from the Direct Action Committees which have the support of a much larger section of young workers. The YCL's organisation was responsible for the recent ill-prepared apprentices' strike which ended in defeat and demoralisation for those who participated and was called for purely sectarian reasons of aiming a blow at the real political leadership being given by the Direct Action Committees.

These splitting tactics are the extent of the YCL's campaigning in industry.

The failure to lead any campaigns amongst working-class youth was reflected in the composition of the delegates. It is clear that the base which the YCL had amongst the youth in some of the major industries has been considerably weakened in the past two years.

At the 1962 Congress, 19 of the delegates were building

workers, at this Congress only two; similarly 23 of the delegates were Electrical Trades Union members, on this occasion only 11; 33 were engineers, this time 20; and seven were in the Transport and General Workers' Union, compared with six at this Congress.

Discussion at the Congress was on a low level and few of the real issues emerged clearly, although several delegates expressed criticism of the attitude to the Labour government outlined in the political report (the official line is to support what is progressive, criticise what is not and work to push the Labour government to the left).

Those who expressed differences with this opportunist position were roundly condemned by Reid as sectarians before he took off for his full-time job with the Communist Party. A typical parting blow.

Haranguing

Despite the atmosphere of near unanimity in the Congress Hall itself, it is clear that much haranguing went on in the main committees, the standing orders committee and the elections preparations committee.

Disputes about procedure were frequent and a number of delegates expressed surprise when they learned towards the end of the Congress that their resolutions had been withdrawn without their knowledge.

They must have been out of the hall when the Congress voted on a particular report of the

standing orders committee, they were told.

Yes, the standing orders committee had sent for them for discussion—what a pity the steward was unable to locate them. This was the kind of argument that prevailed.

Delegates emerging from committee rooms could frequently be heard remarking about the lack of democracy. The committee formally elected at the Congress in fact met prior to the Congress and most of the decisions about the composition of the new National Committee and the organisation of resolutions were made then—on the recommendation of full-time organisers and leading Party members.

It was impossible to change the views of the committees with regard to those decisions.

For example, eleven members of the London District Committee spent an hour with the election preparations committee proposing changes in the recommendations for representation on the National Committee for the London area.

The committee could not be moved. They had their orders and that was it. The first and final recommended lists were precisely the same.

Young Socialists

In fact, Transport House has afforded as much democracy to the Young Socialists as the Young Communist League and Communist Party leaderships do to their members.

It became increasingly clear in the course of the Congress that objectively the leaderships in King Street and Transport House stand shoulder to shoulder in the fight against

revolutionary socialist policies and campaigns—the policies and campaigns of Trotskyism.

In the section of his report dealing with the Young Socialists, Barney Davis said that due to a faction fight between Transport House and the Trotskyists, the Young Socialists was being 'ground to pieces'.

'This has meant that the Young Socialists has played no effective part in the fight for socialist policies in the labour movement. . . .

'We will strive to achieve unity with Young Socialists branches on issues where it is possible, but there can no unity with Trotskyists. . . .

This so-called faction fight was, in fact, precisely a struggle between the right-wing leaders of the Labour Party and those Young Socialists who were determined to carry on a fight for socialist policies in the labour movement.

'In the course of this struggle many young workers have been recruited to the Labour Party and trade unions and have participated in big campaigns.

As is well known, a considerable number of Young Socialists have, in the course of this struggle, become supporters of the Socialist Labour League which they recognise as the only organisation which can give them real assistance in fighting and developing as working-class leaders.

If the YCL are going to strive for unity with the Young Socialists, but reject unity with the supporters of Trotskyism, then they will have to unite with the right wing. These are virtually the only alternatives.

Although the YCL leadership clearly wishes to do the latter, we are convinced that in the next period many more YCLs will seek and develop unity in action with the left-wing majority of the Young Socialists.

It is interesting to contrast this present statement with paragraph 33 of the resolution passed at the 1962 YCL Congress.

'We support those Young Socialists who have fought for policies for peace and socialism in the face of bitter attacks from the right-wing leaders of the Labour Party. The YCL regards those Young Socialists as allies in the struggle for peace and a socialist Britain.'

Things are different now.

The chips are down. The Young Socialists majority have made it clear that they are serious—they are not playing at politics. They have broken with the social-democratic bureaucracy; they are lifting high the banner of revolutionary socialism.

More and more young workers are joining them. To unite with them is impossible—they are beginning to look too much like real communists.

Gains for SLL

In replying to the discussion, Jimmy Reid, made special reference to the decisions of the Congress to uphold the expulsions of those members who had appealed against the National Committee's decision.

This year, over 70 members of the YCL have been either expelled or suspended from the YCL on the grounds that they were members of or collaborating with the Socialist Labour League.

'One of the great features of this Congress is that the Socialist Labour League plot has been smashed. We have fought them politically to a standstill and as a result, this has been a Congress of real unity,' said Reid.

How Reid's mind works! Seventy members of the YCL decide to join the SLL and this somehow becomes a 'plot' engineered by them. They then take up the fight for revolutionary socialism in the YCL and are expelled.

In Reid's view this is a victory for the YCL. Seventy recruits sounds more like a substantial gain for the SLL. The final remark really wins the prize.

You expel all those who are in opposition and take elaborate precautions in preparing your Congress to ensure that only 'the line' is heard—and then brag about 'unity'.

Everything about this Congress confirms that the YCL is completely unable to develop a policy around which it can win youth to the struggle for socialism. Its only method of attacking those who really lead this fight is through expulsions, witch-hunts and slanders.

The leadership of the revolutionary youth was never more firmly in the hands of the SLL and our co-thinkers in the youth movement.

Opportunism and Intellectuals in Britain

By CLIFF SLAUGHTER

In each country, the forms taken by the class struggle are often different, according to the particular historical circumstances and the place of that country in the development of capitalism as a world system.

For example, in Russia, the years between 1900 and 1917 were particularly stormy, not at all because capitalism was very advanced and well-established there, but because the first elements of an advanced capitalism were implanted in a backward auto-

cracy. All the contradictions were brought to a head by this late developing capitalism being faced with the critical problems of modern imperialism war.

In these circumstances, Lenin and the Bolsheviks successfully prepared for revolution in October 1917.

Drawn-out process

In Britain, the process of building a revolutionary party has been much more long drawn-out. The first Marxist groupings were brought together with the militant shop stewards in 1919-1920 to found the Communist Party under the influence of the Russian Revolution and the Communist International.

But before the revolutionary opportunism of 1926 (the General Strike) this party had been fatally stunted in its growth by the dominance of Stalin's bureaucratic faction in the Communist International. Since then, thousands of workers and intellectuals in Britain have been attracted to Communism, especially by the example of the October Revolution.

The politics of Stalinism have driven most of them either out of politics or to the right.

There is an explanation of this process. Britain has been a very

rich country, for a long time the leading imperialist power.

The contradictions of capitalism do not take the same form here as in backward countries with their mass malnutrition and disease. This helps the formation of reformist trends in the British labour movement, who sell to certain sections of the workers the idea that their problems can be solved without a fight to the end, a revolutionary fight against the capitalist class.

The apparent strength of capitalism in Britain, sanctified by the elaborate institutional and religious compromises between the business and landlord classes, provides an apparently irresistible pole of attraction for the vast majority of middle class intellectuals, including those few who have 'graduated' through the educational filter from the working class.

Humanising capitalism

Consequently, even though a large number of those writers, artists, scientists, philosophers, sociologists, critics and others who make protests against the hypocrisy and inhumanity of this or that aspect of capitalist society (poverty, the bomb, capital punishment, racialism, etc.—after all there is no shortage of good causes) they end up as supporters of reformism, trying to humanise capitalism, to make it more honest, more democratic, more rational, or whatever is their pet theme, rather than joining the working class in its fight for the overthrow of the capitalist system.

It is not difficult to see then, why Britain has been and still is the home of the most virulent breeds of opportunism. But there is another side to this.

Capitalism, as it goes deeper and deeper into decay, not only strengthens its apparatus of repression; it is beset by open contradictions and striking injustices on all sides.

The big business class is very small numerically; it relies upon a large middle class and upper working class support. And it is not at all unimportant to recognise the political significance of a break in the 'morale' and con-

viction of this middle strata (e.g., the Profumo crisis of 1963).

Such crises of morale, when they coincide with periods of working-class struggle and economic crisis, provide the groundwork for revolutionary preparation.

We are in such a situation as we approach 1965.

The struggle for Marxism

The political correspondents and editors of all the newspapers and magazines have been busy summing up 1964 and guessing at prospects for the New Year. Their crystal-gazing is full of forebodings, and none of them are confident of a year of 'progress'; they all are certain of 'difficulties' and crises, wondering what their extent will be.

The Newsletter is a different type of paper from those of the capitalist press. We look at the prospects for a New Year with a view to organising for the struggle against the employers, against their political parties and governments, and against their agents within the labour movement.

If crises and difficulties confront the capitalist system, then above all the working class must find strength and leadership to take advantage of these crises to weaken the capitalist class, expose its agents and prepare for the workers' own state power.

Every crisis means more sections of the working class being drawn into struggle, testing out their leaders, seeking the best ways of fighting the enemy class.

For the Marxists, organised in the Socialist Labour League, such struggles provide an invaluable school of experience.

It is in struggle that the revolutionary party of the working class will be built; only in that school can its members and leaders be tested; only if they develop Marxist theory through these struggles will the future socialist victory be assured.

Since its foundation in 1959, the Socialist Labour League has grown and strengthened its influence for two basic reasons:

It has accepted the responsibility of fighting against all distortions of Marxism and for a

development of Marxist theory, strategy and tactics; and it has participated to the full extent of its ability in every struggle of the working class.

Every industrial strike, every fight for democracy and against witch-hunting in trade unions, the Electrical Trades Union, and in the Labour and Communist Parties, every step taken by the Young Socialists as they have fought their way to a socialist programme against the right-wing Labour leadership: all these have had the support of the Socialist Labour League, which is now recognised by many sections of workers, particularly the youth, as the only socialist tendency which, with its paper, The Newsletter, is prepared to fight every struggle through to the end.

Confidence of workers

When we say that capitalist crisis brings struggles for the working class, therefore, we must understand that the building of the Socialist Labour League is intimately bound up with these struggles. There will be no victory for the working class unless a revolutionary party, with the confidence of the organised workers, is built on the foundation of Marxist theory.

We live in this epoch of the world socialist revolution. Capitalism is an international system, where the struggle of workers in one country strikes blows against the same enemy as those of another.

International finance capital defends itself through a million different agencies and forces of repression and the working class must learn the lesson of every form of this many-sided struggle.

For this reason, a Marxist Party can be built in Britain only on the basis of the most advanced political theory in the international working-class movement.

It is not enough to reject social democracy and Stalinism. More important is to understand the way in which Lenin and Trotsky built a Marxist revolutionary movement in struggle against them; in so doing, they arrived at a clearer understanding of the fundamental character of modern capitalism and the class struggle. The Marxist Party in Britain today, built from the Socialist Labour League, must necessarily be a party of the Fourth International.



Following the collapse of Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike's Ceylon government, Lanka Sama Samaja Party (revolutionary) M.P.s, including Edmund Samarakoddy (seen left), have been attacked by Stalinists and their friends in the reformist LSSP.

MICHAEL BANDA reports . . .

Ceylon Stalinists slander LSSP (revolutionary)

THE Communist Party of Ceylon (Moscow wing) has good reason to abhor Trotskyism. Like its British counterpart it operates in a country where Trotskyism is a living and vital force in the labour movement—and a constant menace to Stalinist reformism.

Thus it came as no surprise to most people that the wrath of the Ceylon branch of the Kremlin oligarchy, subsequent to the fall of Mrs. Bandaranaike's government, should have fallen on the two Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Revolutionary) MPs, Edmund Samarakoddy and Meryl Fernando, who voted against the coalition and thereby helped to torpedo it.

The Lanka Sama Samaja Party MPs to their credit acted with dignity and according to their principles, something which is totally lacking in Stalinist practice.

They opposed the coalition as a capitalist government when it was alive. They refused to give it artificial respiration when it passed away.

In the eyes of the Stalinists there could be no greater crime than this and so they have set out to vilify and slander, to insinuate and incite people against the leaders of the LSSP (R). In this sordid campaign they have been joined by the renegades from the Trotskyist movement.

CP allegations

In a statement signed by the president and general secretary of the Communist Party and published in their English-language paper ('Forward', 11.12.64), the leaders of the CP allege that the LSSP (R) is in league with reaction.

On December 4, 1964, all the foreign and local reactionary forces got together in a secret manoeuvre to defeat the Government and stop the takeover of Lake House. . . .

It depended on the treachery of the SLFP right wing and the shameful alliance of former Leftists and self-styled "revolutionaries" with the UNP and the Federal Party and the representatives of British and American imperialist interests.

Men like C. P. de Silva, Philip Gunawardena, Robert Gunawardena and the "ultra-revolutionaries" like Samarakoddy will stand before the bar of history branded with their infamous responsibility for assisting this conspiracy against the people.

So will the so-called "trade unionists" like Thondaman, Tampoe and Sanmugathasan who said there was no danger of a reactionary offensive and tried to drag the working class into it by calling on them to overthrow the Coalition Government—a task that has now been performed by reaction.

All the forces of reaction combined to carry through this conspiracy. . . .

Reactionary "Buddhists" have united with Catholic Action! The JVP has united with the Federal Party! Philip Gunawardena and the so-called "revolutionaries" have united with the UNP and the SLFP right wing! . . .

Let there be a stable united front of the SLFP, the LSSP, the Communist Party and the sections of the MEP who have rejected the present disastrous policy of Philip Gunawardena. . . .

Down with the traitors to the people's cause! ♪

Coming from Stalinists, this farrago of lies is not new nor surprising. The intensity of their effort on this occasion is also a clear measure of their failure to arouse any section of the working class against the courageous stand of the two LSSP (R) M.P.s.

Nor is it new or surprising that they should continue their open and unabashed wooing of the reformist LSSP.

The time is not far distant when these strange bed fellows will drown their remaining difference in an orgy of reconciliation to form a single, if not united, reformist party.

Those who are guilty of deceiving the people are not the LSSP (R) MPs, but those who, like the CP leaders and their reformist allies, tried to deceive the working class about the real class nature of the coalition government and who courted and defended the people who today they describe as 'reactionaries', 'traitors', etc.

'No tears'

With studied cynicism, the CP refrains from publishing the real, stated position of the LSSP (R). This is natural in their case. But the truth will out, regardless.

Edmund Samarakoddy, secretary of the LSSP (R) and a life long member of the Trotskyist movement hit out at the Stalinist and reformist slanderers in an extensive press statement which we reproduce below:

While the ranks of the Government are weeping and gnashing their teeth over its defeat in Parliament as a result of a split in the SLFP and while the Reformists of all shades are also shedding tears over this development, the LSSP (R) has no tears to shed whatsoever for the Government.

The working class, which has suffered under a still continuing wage freeze and has also been struck by the batons of Sirimavo's police has no tears to shed at the defeat of her government. The masses of workers on the plantations who have been denied the elementary democratic rights of citizenship and of the vote, and who have been the subject of a barter agreement between Sirimavo and her fellow capitalist Prime Minister, Shastri of India, have no tears to shed. The vast masses of landless, jobless and miserably housed toilers in the countryside as well as the masses of jobless and slum dwelling people in the towns have no tears to shed. The linguistic and religious minorities who have been openly discriminated against, and been subject to direct oppression under the pressures of the Sinhala Buddhist chauvinism also have no tears to shed for the defeat of Sirimavo's Coalition Government.

All that these various sections of the exploited and oppressed masses of our people need to shed completely are the illusions that large numbers of them still unfortunately have in the prospects of some measure of improvement in their conditions through political combinations of one kind or another that are set up to maintain decaying capitalism in Ceylon. Such combinations, whether they be admixed with Red, Blue, Green, or Yellow can only continue to deceive, divide and confuse the people in the way that S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's MEP and Mrs. Bandaranaike's Coalition with the Reformist LSSP has done. Both coalitions led to a strengthening of rightist reaction. The LSSP (R) calls for a

break with the politics of Parliamentary Combinations with bourgeois parties, and for the unification and independent assertion of the organised power of the working class at the head of all sections of the toilers and the oppressed in town and countryside.

Whatever may be the outcome of the coming elections it is clear that none of the democratic or socialist tasks of the mass movement for socialism in Ceylon will be achieved through the next Parliament. All that the masses can expect and should strive to attain is an independent position within the next Parliament for the purpose of serving and strengthening the development of the class struggle outside it by exposing and opposing whatever bourgeois government that may emerge within it.

The crisis of capitalism will continue to advance and it will lead either to the suppression of the mass movement by the forces of capitalism or to the revolutionary triumph of the masses in direct action for the overthrow of capitalist rule. It is in the latter perspective that the LSSP (R) calls upon the working people and all genuine socialists in the country to unite in the coming struggle. ♪

This statement expresses succinctly the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism in Ceylon today.

In the face of all this, it is nothing short of monstrous that the Unified Secretariat in Paris should not only tolerate reformists like Colvin R. de Silva, but actually invite them to the meetings of the Secretariat, as they propose to do in January!

Nigeria's democratic image crumbles in election terror

IDEALISTS who believed Nigeria to be the stronghold of democracy in the whole of the African continent have received a smack in the eye in the country's recent election campaign.

The whole farce of this country's governing system, which has so far worked admirably for the imperialists, has been fully exposed in the pre-election alleged poll-terror.

In northern Nigeria hourly arrests have been reported and some opposition candidates are sheltering from arrest by Native Authority Police.

These candidates do not appear in their constituencies for fear of arrest. Campaigns are conducted by their supporters.

In a report detailing events in 65 constituencies, the incidents are alleged to have taken place where unopposed seats have been announced.

One constituency which is 'unopposed' is the one held by Federal Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa.

According to reports, three unsuccessful attempts were made to nominate an opposition candidate in this constituency.

Affidavits claim that the first time nominators were arrested; the second time they were carried away by thugs and the third time they were kidnapped until the lists closed.

In another affidavit it is reported: 'Native Authority Police refused candidate entry

Vietnam: workers face 20th year of war

RISING public feeling about the crisis in Vietnam is, for the first time, being expressed by American Senators. President Johnson faces growing pressure from Congressmen, who are threatening a Senate investigation into the crisis, to withdraw forces or cut down aid.

This outburst follows the death of nine U.S. soldiers in Vietnam when the Vietcong blew up their skyscraper living quarters in Saigon just before Christmas.

To the Vietcong, this explosion was just another step towards victory in a war which has lasted since the revolution established the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in August 1945.

HEROIC

The French Vichy regime attacked the Republic and the world witnessed a nine-year war of resistance.

Ho Chi Minh, a founder member of the French Communist Party in 1920, heroically organised the Vietnamese people into a seasoned army of fighters. Finally, the French surrendered to the Vietnam Workers' Party at Dien Bien Phu and the Geneva Agreement was signed in 1954.

There was to be a ceasefire and the withdrawal of military units on both sides of the 17th parallel. Neither zone was to adhere to any military alliance and foreign military personnel, war material and bases were forbidden.

The demarcation line is provisional and should not in any way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary. . . . General Elections should be held in July 1956,' said the Agreement.

An International Control Commission (Poland, Canada India) was constituted to execute

the provisions of the Agreement. This body proved useless. Needless to state the Agreement was honoured in its breach!

In March 1954 ominous mumbles were heard on the world political horizon when John Foster Dulles remarked: 'It (Vietnam) is rich in many raw materials such as tin, oil, rubber and iron ore. The area has great strategic value. It has major naval and air bases.'

Starting ten days after the signing of the 1954 Agreement, the Ngo Din Diem puppet regime, put into power by the Americans, began an unspeakably cruel war of national extermination.

MASSACRES

By April 1963 100,000 men, women and children were massacred. The U.S.-Diem clique carried out 30,000 'mopping up' campaigns. They built 874 concentration camps, holding 35,000 patriots and a million peasants. These prisons were called 'strategic villages'

The military operations were described in heavenly terms like



'Operation Sunrise', 'Morning Star', etc. According to the Roman Catholic Diem, they were performed for the purpose of 'spiritual humanism'. A Western journalist called it 'fascist existentialism'.

Thousands of starving peasants, maimed by war, sought refuge in the towns and wandered about like worn-out shadows.

At present, only small industries and handicrafts remain in the hands of the Vietnamese. Weaving and sugar refining are disintegrating.

U.S. 'AID'

A 1963 analysis admitted that 80 per cent of the American 'aid' is actually spent within the USA and accounts for 12 per cent of the exports.

Of economic aid, 75 per cent goes into commodities shipped from the USA.

Some time ago, South Vietnamese textile manufacturers bewailed the fact that they were not even allowed to supply uniforms for Diem's army and police force!

On December 20, 1960, the Vietcong was formed. It is a fighting force uniting communists and nationalists.

By 1961, 10,000 of Diem's forces deserted and joined the Vietcong. The successful advance of Diem-U.S. troops precipitated into open South Vietnamese resistance.

A National Liberation Front was formed and received tremendous support from the peasants. In Ben Tre province a million and a half people protested through demonstrations.

In March 1963 over 5,000 of Diem's army men deserted to the Vietcong side.

The American ruling class deployed more reserves into the field, but only succeeded in succumbing under the weight of their crimes.

The 'Saturday Evening Post' (March 23, 1963) published a long report in which it contradicted the 'New York Times' statement that uniformed Americans were 'solely advisors and trainers' by stating: 'Virtually all fighting is done by U.S. troops.'

The greater the success of the Vietcong and Liberation Front, the more brazen and ferocious U.S. imperialism became.

At this stage chemical warfare became a regular affair. The American imperialists maintained that—having killed cattle, defoliated trees and maimed and killed many peasants—the chemicals were merely 'common weed killers'.

DESTRUCTION

Altogether 160,000 people have died and 700,000 maimed by napalm bombing.

With a redoubled passion for destruction, American imperialism then sent in helicopters (called 'choppers'), toxic poison and barbed wire.

A young girl, tortured in a barbed wire 'strategic village' records (as quoted by Bertrand Russell): 'Once I recovered consciousness and found I was stark naked, blood oozing from wounds all my body. There were others in the cell. I heard a woman moaning and in the half dark saw a woman in a

pool of blood. She had been beaten into having a miscarriage. Then I made out an old man. An eye had been gouged out and he was dying. Alongside him a 13-year-old boy also dead; a little further away another dead youth with his head split open.'

Amid this rampant barbarism, the 'protests' of the Polish members of the Control Commission have proved not only ineffective but somewhat farcical. So much for the Stalinist aid to the Vietnam workers' and peasants' struggle against imperialism.

The Vietnamese wave of struggle rippled outwards and touched many world circuits. The Australian ruling class contributed £3,000,000 to the tottering Diem regime. Malaya was used as a training ground for Diem forces. A British Police Mission was instituted in Saigon by the Tory Party.

DEMONSTRATIONS

The American intelligentsia sent vehement protests against the buccaneering raids upon the Vietnamese. Youth demonstrations were held in many metropolitan highways. Students fought pitched battles with the police in Saigon. Buddhists protested by burning themselves in the streets.

The time had come for the American militarists to stage another 'palace' revolution.

Diem was overthrown and replaced by General Khanh. Four months ago Khanh left the political stage, only to reappear in the midst of an insoluble crisis.

To divert world opinion from the failing war in the South, aeroplanes attacked the village of Nonng De in North Vietnam on July 26, 1964.

Three days later, warships shelled the North Vietnamese island of Hon Me and Hon Ngu. On August 3 and 4 more American planes flew over the Bay of Tonkin and attacked the ships of North Vietnam.

The 'New York Herald Tribune' said it was possible that the U.S. commanders 'simply got jittery and fired at phantoms in the night' (!)

President Kennedy called the war an 'endless tunnel'. By attempting to spread the war to the north, Johnson aims to blast this tunnel into a world inferno.

P.M.'S FEAR

Prime Minister of Britain, Harold Wilson, has recently visited Washington to confer with Johnson. Mr. Wilson, it is reported, did not commit Britain to outright involvement in the South Vietnamese war. This, we can be sure, was done not out of consideration for the starving and helpless people of Vietnam—but out of fear that such a war would intensify the already grave crisis of sterling.

During the past three years, since the birth of the National Liberation Front, the relationships of forces has been modified in favour of the Vietnamese. The Vietcong has liberated about 70 per cent of the country.

The struggle, however, will only be resolved when the workers in Saigon and other towns rise up in unison with the peasants in the countryside.

Declaration of intent ties unions to state

by Ann Gray

Job prospects 'pretty grim' at GEC

WORKERS at GEC, Four Ashes, near Wolverhampton, face a very grim New Year. Although the Minister of Labour, Ray Gunter, gave the impression that there were plenty of suitable jobs in the area when he spoke in November, of the 400 employees who had already left only 50 had found jobs through the Ministry of Labour.

Another 100 workers are due to leave this Friday who will need to find new jobs if they are to start work again on Monday. Reports from union officials in the factory state that the prospects are 'pretty grim' and 'there are particular difficulties for a number of women who are over 40'.

Instead of demanding that the Labour government should nationalize industry so that redundancies can be met with proper planning, the shop stewards are making a last-ditch stand by waiting to see if they can meet the board of directors.

FIGHT FOR WORK-SHARING AT LINWOOD

AFTER the management of the Pressed Steel factory at Linwood, Scotland, planned to avoid redundancy by removing 150 men from the night shift to the day shift, 3,000 of the factory's workers threatened to come out on strike.

Talks were held between the management and the shop stewards and later a union official said that he was 'hopeful that a basis for settling the dispute had been reached' but no decision would be taken until a mass meeting of the men took place.

Workers at Linwood should demand that instead of having cosy talks with the management, the union leadership should lead a fight for proper work-sharing and reduced hours without loss of pay.

They should demand that the Labour government nationalize the car industry so that redundancies can be avoided.

S. Wales CP

From page 1

vasser every night in every Ward, was: 'She's a fine woman but she's in the wrong Party. If only she was in the Labour Party she'd go in flying.' So the biggest question we are left with is: they know we've got the right candidate, how do we show them we've got the right Party? Remember this is in the Rhondda where there is some considerable background of Party work! Our policy, its presentation, and our style of work as a Party, need looking at in this light.'

In the part of the report dealing with the Party's defeat in the Pontypool election, the rank and file members came in for sharp criticism because many of them failed to turn out on the election campaign. The report says that many of these members 'remain unconvinced of the importance of the Party contesting elections'.

'We had,' the report goes on to say, 'additional argument to contend with; the belief that Leo Abse is a left-wing MP and that we should not have opposed him.' Thus the general decline of the Communist Party is reflected in the report which we publish elsewhere on the Young Communist League Congress continues. It is obvious that sooner or later the leadership of John Gollan is going to come up for criticism and attack.

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London busmen vote for overtime ban

Newsletter Correspondent

A JOINT delegate conference representing London busmen from red central, green country and green line garages met on Wednesday to ban overtime from next Wednesday over the fleet in protest against the proposed cuts in bus services this year.

One garage, Hanwell, has operated a ban since November, when the last schedules, also involving cuts, were introduced. Another garage, Poplar, staged a three-day strike over Christmas.

It is also likely that action will be taken by London tube men this month.

Last October, when the present schedules which cut services were introduced, some depots struck unofficially, just a few days before the General Election.

Wilson and Gunter condemned the strikers, and, after three days, they returned to work giving the London Transport Board an ultimatum to withdraw the schedules within three months—by mid-January. The Board is not expected to withdraw them.

SCHEDULES

The schedules were originally intended to be introduced at the same time as those operated by the tube men, but when the management realised how strongly both tube men and busmen felt about the continued deterioration in their conditions, they postponed the bus schedules for a month.

By this time, the tube men were working normally and joint action of busmen and tube men was avoided.

In this way, London Transport played off one section of workers against another to the detriment of both.

They have been assisted in this by the leaders of the three unions involved, the Transport and General Workers' Union, National Union of Railwaymen and Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen.

Not once have they attempted to obtain joint action, although it is clear that without it, no important improvements in the conditions of transport workers can be won.

No help will be forthcoming from the Labour government. Gunter, Minister of Labour, condemned the tube men and also Southern Region railwaymen who staged a work to rule recently.

RETIREMENT

When the retirement of Valentine, chairman of the London Transport Board, was announced recently, he was warmly praised by Minister of Transport, Tom Fraser, for the 'excellent job' he had made of running London's transport system.

The management displayed a report of this in their notice case in every bus garage and tube depot in London, to emphasise to the workers exactly where the Labour government stands in relation to their struggles.

It is vital that all transport workers take note of this and unite to defeat future attacks by their employers and the right-wing Labourites.

ANYONE who had illusions about the role of the present Labour government must surely have dropped them after the acclaim George Brown's Declaration of Intent received from the capitalist press.

This declaration, hailed by 'The Guardian' on December 17 as 'a major success' for the Labour government, is nothing more than a policy of wage restraint for the working class.

It is hardly surprising that George Brown was able to get the employers to agree to sign the document since its main policy is to increase industrial efficiency at the expense of the workers and not the profits.

As 'The Times' editorial of the same day says: 'There is a clear recognition of what needs to be done to keep costs down and sharpen industrial efficiency. Mr. Brown has coaxed the unions' and employers' representatives to agree on the outline of an incomes policy. It is time to put it to the test.'

More success

The 'Financial Times' comments: '... Mr. Brown is likely to have more success in encouraging labour mobility and securing the abandonment of restrictive practices than in keeping wage increases in line with the rise in national output.'

But all this surprise expressed by the capitalist press at the negotiating feat of George Brown is so much eyewash.

The Tories were relying on a Labour government to do something Selwyn Lloyd and Reginald Maudling were unable to do—tie the trade unions closer to the state under some form of agreement in order to prepare to crush working-class militancy.

The 'Financial Times' reference to 'restrictive practices' is no accident. British employers, faced with increasing competition from abroad, need a Labour force which is not militant, but which is tied to increased profit making.

Agreed

Helping George Brown in his task of licking the boots of the monopolists, some union leaders of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions agreed that there should be improved methods of working and increased efficiency, as outlined in the three-year package deal.

Led by Sir William Carron—a governor of the Bank of England—the executive of the Amalgamated Engineering Union accepted the whole of the deal which included agreements on wages, hours and holidays.

Last Thursday (December 31) it became clear from reports in the press why the union leaders in the engineering industries, and George Brown are so eager for increased efficiency.

UNION LEADER COMMENTS ON 1964

In an editorial for the December issue of 'The Journal', magazine of the Constructional Engineering Union, general secretary E. Patterson looks back on the election of a Labour government in 1964

'Hurrah! a Labour government and life immediately assumes a newer and more exciting prospect', he says.

'Hard-won opportunity after 13 years. Newspaper, radio or television avidly absorbed, with approval to "The Guardian", "The Observer" and the "Daily Worker" for serious and, at times, sympathetic criticism. "Tribune"—puzzlement.

'Concord, supersonic bangs, incomes policy intent, dubiety, M.P.s salaries, more dubiety delayed old age pensions, and yet more dubiety Immigration Bill, suspicion of hybrid M.L.F., credit and debit South Africa, full marks Southern Rhodesia, import surcharges, aid to export, higher bank rate, corporation

Brown told trade unionists and leading industrialists that a most urgent task was assuring an improvement in the export of electronic equipment. He expressed concern at the number of computers imported from the United States.

The actions of the Labour government and the trade union leaders are tied up with the present economic crisis facing capitalism in this country.

Yorkshire town's bus crews stage one-day strike

By a Yorkshire correspondent

BUS crews in Keighley staged an unofficial one-day strike after a dispute between them and the West Yorkshire Road Car Company over duty schedules operated on Monday, December 28.

It is reported that the Keighley bus workers considered that Monday should have been an ordinary working day with a normal schedule being operated.

They said that if the bus company wanted to run a reduced bus service on Monday, as on a Bank Holiday, then the busmen should be paid Bank Holiday rates and receive a day off in lieu.

It would appear that the company wanted to operate a special reduced service and yet continue to pay the bus crews at a normal working day's rate.

NO SUPPORT

The strikers were not joined by crews in other garages in Bradford and, according to reports, they received no support from local union officials.

One area official was reported to have weakly said: 'I cannot see anything being resolved.'

For a successful dispute it was obvious that the strike had to be declared official by the bus workers' union and supported by crews of the West Yorkshire Road Car Company in other garages.

tax revelations. Praise from the City and the faceless ones, inward shudder. Speculators and pension delay?

'Who guides where? Shades of 1931. Fervent loyalty and a nagging conscience as to the quality of the "socialism" to correct capitalist economic ills. When will the big break come?

INCOMES POLICY

'Investors, foreign or British, do not risk their funds plotting crazy attacks on governments. What they and their advisers care about is simply the security of their money. They will invest it wherever they are confident that it will be safe and be profitable. And they are entitled to decide where for themselves.' ("Sun" editorial).

'Apart from the point about investors plotting, which they do in a "civilized" way, there is no reason to reject the statement of the paper as it is current practice.

'"They" invest their money to secure the highest interest and "they are entitled to decide... invest their lives, have to do what they are told.



Brown: 'coaxed the unions' and employers' representatives to agree on the outline of an incomes policy'

As henchman of the monopolists Brown is solving this crisis—not by nationalizing the banks or the insurance companies—but by tying the working class closer and closer to state control so that increased profits can be made for the bosses.

BACKING FOR CARAVAN STRIKERS

THE export of Fairview caravans on many docks is being blocked by railwaymen and dockers in support of workers who have been on strike since November 20 against the dismissal of militant trade unionists.

The strike, which is officially recognised by the National Union of Vehicle Builders involves workers at the Fairfield factory in Dovercourt, Essex.

Workers in Hull and Parkeston Quay have given assurances that no Fairview goods will be handled through their ports.

Some factories in London are expected to send deputations to a strikers' march through Dovercourt on Monday.

'Like hell they will, so long as this sort of situation exists.'

REALITY

Stating the reality of the present situation Patterson says that whilst Mr. Brown tries to persuade the employers and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress to sign a declaration of intent on incomes, thousands of men on constructional jobs are discussing, arguing and stopping work in pursuit of bonus.

'False redundancy, closed jobs, blocked jobs and disruption of production. Constantly working seven days per week to average around £20.

'Then by hook or by crook, by allowances and bonus, and in many cases by excessive overtime, attempting to push this towards £30, averaging in the best cases 9s. to 10s. per hour and in the worst the basic rate of 6s. per hour. The philosophy of the carrot and an existence entirely conditioned by work. Is this life? Is it hell.

'This situation is determined entirely by the attitude of the employers and will continue until there is a change on their

Glasgow OAPs demand backdated increase

By MICKIE SHAW

ON Christmas eve, old age pensioners carrying placards demanding that the increased pension be paid immediately, demonstrated outside the City Chambers in Glasgow.

A deputation from the National Federation of Old Age Pensioners was admitted to the council meeting. They asked the Glasgow Corporation to support the demand of the Federation that the pension increase be backdated to November 11.

ROBBED

Heading the deputation, pensioner Bob Irvine said that retrospective payment would amount to £12 10s. for a single pensioner and £21 1s. for a couple. 'I don't think it's fair that they should be robbed of this,' he said.

Mr. Irvine also stated that he thought it was a scandal that there was not a computer which could have overcome the administrative problem of paying the increase immediately.

He said that unless the government was now prepared to backdate the increase a lot of people would think it had fallen down on its election promise.

Pointing out that thousands of old age pensioners have to apply for National Assistance in order to survive, Mr. Irvine expressed the feelings of many old people when he said that old age pensioners were too often regarded as 'just a damned nuisance'. 'We're costing too much money and we're living too long.'

MINISTER

As a result of the deputation, Glasgow Corporation have agreed to raise with Margaret Herbinson, Minister of Pensions, the possibility of having the pension increase backdated.

Miss Herbinson is to pay a visit to the Ministry of Pensions in Glasgow on December 30 and will also be meeting the Lord Provost.

Although claiming sympathy with the plight of the old age pensioners and support for the backdating of the increase, the Labour-controlled council refused to take action on the matter before discussing it with Miss Herbinson.

STEELMEN ACCEPT BOSSES' PLAN

By Our Industrial Correspondent

AN aggregate meeting of A craftsmen employed by the Steel Company of Wales accepted the first of three phases in the management's reorganisation plans on December 19.

However, this does not represent confidence in the future under the new plan, but disillusionment with union officials.

Port Talbot steelworkers know from bitter experience that they will get no leadership from these officials in any fight with the bosses.

At the mass meeting on Saturday morning, the management's own terms—mobility, flexibility, interchangeability—were continually hurled at the rank and file from the platform, yet little was said of the effect on their jobs.

In an interview with The Newsletter, Amalgamated Engineering Union regional organiser, Tal Lloyd said that the first phase consisted mainly of 'small items' such as the full co-operation of the card system in the central engineering shop and taking orders from the telephone instead of directly from the foreman.

AGREED

Tal Lloyd agreed with The Newsletter that re-training of workers and further training for apprentices must be carried out on full pay and that apprentices might find it very difficult to find employment in SCOW on finishing their contracts.

But he thought that there might not be much unemployment among the men at present employed in the steelworks.

In fact, a study of the report which Lloyd has agreed to as a 'basis for negotiations', shows that 'greater flexibility' must inevitably mean unemployment for craftsmen at present working at SCOW, as well as massive redundancy for the production workers.

Those who remain at work will be effected by intensive speed-up and the reduction of established union rights.

In addition, the existence of a large pool of unemployed labour could be used by the management as a threat to steel workers fighting for better wages and working conditions.

The union officials are not only talking about the 'small items' in phase one. They persuaded the meeting to allow the Joint Crafts Negotiating Committee to start talks on the second phase as well.

Later in the day, at a meeting of AEU members, union officials once again showed how they help the management. The attacks from the platform were directed not at the steel bosses, but at welder members of the Boilermakers' Society.

This attempt to split the workers, in line with similar attempts by the management, concentrated on the fact that the Boilermakers do welding and marking off, whereas AEU welders do welding operations only.

MOBILITY

At present Boilermakers are not employed in the Abbey works, but under the new agreement there will be complete mobility of craftsmen throughout the SCOW works, so given a choice, the management would be most likely to give a job to a Boilermaker.

The AEU is to enter into talks with the Boilermakers on this issue. They could then agree to operate on the same terms as Boilermakers in the hope that their members would blame the lowering of their working standards on other workers.

Many members, though, are not deceived by their leaders' false confidence in the future.

One craftsman declared that he would rather have no wage increase than one with these strings attached.

The steelworkers must be equally clear on their real enemy and unite against attempts to divide their ranks, whether these come directly from the company or through the union officials who now stand exposed as the employers' agents.