# A MASSIVE STEP TOWARDS SOCIALISM The Newsletter

WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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# by The Editor

ised areas.

and centrists.

against the right-wing traitors

It is, in fact, the most

experience

experienced leadership in

Western Europe. It has con-

struggle, not only against the right wing but against fake lefts

Answer

Only two days before the

conference began, the main

organ of the fake lefts,

'Tribune', viciously attacked

the conference and described

all Young Socialists as either

What happened was a

fitting answer to all these

enemies of the working

class. A thousand young

people supported and

voted unanimously for a

socialist policy for the

British labour movement.

being 'rats' or 'chickens'.

of the Labour Party.

■IVE hundred and ten delegates and over 500 visitors crowded the Winter Gardens at More-

cambe on the week-end of February 27 and 28 at a

conference which insisted upon a socialist policy for Britain. These young people came from all over

the country, particularly from the most industrial-

lives. Their leadership has just concluded a lengthy struggle

Many had only been in politics for a short period of their

#### The Newsletter

Saturday, March, 6 1965

#### The Young Socialists and their enemies

THE Fifth Annual Conference of the Young Socialists, which met at Morecambe on the week-end of February 27-28 was undoubtedly the most significant event in the working class of Britain since the end of the war.

It was the culmination of four years of political struggle against the right wing of the Labour Party, led in the first instance by Gaitskell, and since early 1963 by Harold

During those years, the Young Socialists have rapidly transformed themselves into the most advanced political leadership within the labour movement that has ever been seen in its history.

The Times' of March 1 had this to say of the conference:

'It was not, however, the content of the discussion so much as the almost frightening discipline of the affair that made it significant to the outside observer. At first glance these delegates did not appear to be the sort of people who would sit cheerfully for eight hours in a smoky conference room.

In fact they did sit silently through the whole eight hours, speakers were not interrupted, they voted unanimously on every resolution, ranging from a demand for the withdrawal from NATO to a call for higher apprentices' pay and a commission to investigate reported cases of police brutality.'

Of course, the gentlemen of the capitalist press would have been pleased if these young people had engaged in a futile struggle with the police who were massed in formidable numbers in the vicinity of the conference.

The Times' and the capitalist press are always pleased when youth engage in actions with police in conditions under

which they must lose. What really, in fact, frightened 'The Times', as well as 'The Guardian', was the fact that 1,000 young people could seriously discuss their own future under capitalism and unanimously decide for socialist policies.

This great victory for the labour movement more than compensates for the severe defeats it has suffered in Leyton, Smethwick and Nuneaton as a result of right-wing policies. It is not, however, our intention to speak only of the positive

features of the Morecambe Congress. the background were thousands of young people who are entering politics for the first time in their lives. They bring with them all the faults and conceptions of capitalist education. They also bring a powerful, decisive struggle for

would be very wrong for the conference leadership to idealise these young people. Now that the conference is over, the central task is to educate them in the course of their activities and experiences.

The Young Socialists have still to become a mass movement. Without recruitment on a big scale and the political assimilation of thousands of youth, it will not be possible to do anything effective so far as providing the leadership of the working class in the next period is concerned.

Many of those at the Congress lack real Marxist education They are willing to learn, but they still have to be taught. This task must be undertaken immediately.

We are confident that the future is bright as far as the working class is concerned, provided the Marxist movement, which is the Socialist Labour League, measures up to the great events of last week-end.

# **Bukharin** book to be reprinted?

By JOHN CRAWFORD

REPORTS from Moscow indicate that re-publication is now being considered of 'The ABC of Communism' by Bukharin and Preobrazhensky.

This book was commissioned in 1919 by the Communist International. It was published in many languages and used as a basic text book to train thousands of young Com-

After Bukharin, one of the foremost Bolshevik leaders, was deposed as President of Comintern in 1929, the book was no longer recommended reading.

#### 'CRIMES'

Bukharin was shot in 1938 after being tried as the leader of the so-called 'Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites'.

The indictment accused this group of a variety of crimes ranging from plotting the dismemberment of the USSR, to

putting broken glass in butter. In 1962, the trial was admitted in the Russian press to have been rigged.

Rosengoltz, one of the chief accused, was completely exonerated. Bukharin, like a number of other old Bolsheviks, was admitted to be innocent but politically not 'rehabilitated'.

The main defendants, Trotsky and his son Sedov, have still not been mentioned in this connection.

The 1938 trial was remarkable for the way in which Bukharin, Krestinsky and Rykov partially withdrew their 'confessions' in open court.

Despite a year in Stalin's jail, the 54-year-old Bukharin continually found ways of confusing his captors.

While admitting all the monstrous charges put to him by prosecutor Vyshinsky, the former White Gaurd, Bukharin managed to use his testimony to the court to signal his innocence to the world.



Behind the portrait of Trotsky a delegate speaks from the platform to the conference. The fact that youth could sit for eight hours in a smoke-filled conference hall and listen quietly to serious political discussion of socialist policies astounded the capitalist press.

#### They demanded the nationaization of the basic industries, the withdrawal of all foreign troops from overseas, the re-'DRIVE OUT FASCISTS'

NEWSLETTER REPORTER

DEMONSIVATION

**TOUNG** Socialists are organising a mass demonstration against racialism and fascism in West London on March 13 in answer to the vicious attack on the labour movement there three weeks ago.

wounded outside a Young Socialist dance in an attack by armed fascists on a group of West London youths.

He underwent an emergency brain operation and is now making a slow recovery.

At the Morecambe conference of the Young Socialists last week-end one of the youths involved in the ambush in Barlby Road, North Kensington, Austin Rollins, a North Paddington delegate, said the attack was a political blow at the Young Socialists by fascists.

#### NO SOLIDARITY

The Labour Party has expressed neither sympathy nor solidarity with Roy Smith, or the London, Middlesex and Southern Region Young Socialists who met two weeks ago to plan the demonstration.

Instead, a statement, signed by John Keys, London Regional Organiser of the Labour Party, declared the Young Socialists

#### **PIECEWORKERS** AWAIT NJC

Assembly welding and machine operators at the Massey Ferguson factory, Manchester, agreed to return to work on Wednesday following a week-old strike over a local piece-work claim.

They will await a meeting of the National Joint Council on either March 15 or 22 before deciding further action.

The men, 500 engineers, boilermakers and metal mechanics, recently received a 4d. an hour increase backdated to January under a national agreement, but are determined to win the local

Then, 17-year-old Roy Smith was attacked and seriously involved 'unofficial'! (Reported

> He 'disassociated' the Labour Party from the affair.

in last week's Newsletter.)

But the right-wing bureaucrats cannot 'disassociate' themselves.

#### PENSIONERS STARVE

It is they who allow pensioners to starve by refusing to pay the pensions increase, allow prices to rocket and attempt to impose a wage freeze.

It is they who stand by and let their supporters rot in the slum empires of the Rachmantype landlords in areas like West London.

It is they who let the racialists confuse these workers by allowing them to blame coloured workers for their problems.

It is they who close down Young Socialist and Labour Party branches attempting to fight for socialist policies.

But as the Morecambe conference showed, the Young Socialists and their allies in the Labour Parties have a great amount of support in the labour movement as a whole.

The Newsletter urges hundreds of trade unionists and Labour Party members to come out on the streets with the youth next week in West London and drive out the racialists and fascists.

The Demonstration will begin at 3 p.m. at St. Stephen's Gardens, Paddington, W.2. A public meeting will be held at the Isaac Newton School at 4.30 p.m. and a dance in the same school will begin at



#### **EFFICIENCY** DRIVE **PROPOSED**

OVERNMENT efficiency experts have been set to work again to find ways and means of making the most profit for the employers with as small a labour force as possible.

In a five-year plan the government calls for 'an all-round improvement in industrial efficiency and productivity'.

Three points outline the plans the government wishes to put into practice.

#### Manpower saving

1. More economic use of labour could result in a manpower saving of between 10 and 15 per cent.

'2. The diversion of only 1 per cent of production from the home markets to exports could increase Britain's overseas earnings by about £150 million a year.

'3. The achievement of a 25 per cent economic growth by 1970 would increase the gross national product by £80,000 million at 1964 prices.'

The aim is only too clear. What the government is advocating is an economy drive all round to cut manpower and speed up production with a smaller force with the employers reaping the profits.

Delegates raise their cards discipline.

#### Unanimously

(above) to vote unanimously for one of the conference decisions. It is this youth which frightened 'The Times' reporter so much by its

#### Contribute This is a truly massive contribution to the international fight for socialism.

peal of the Immigration Act,

a review by the labour move-

ment of the workings of the

police force, and full indepen-

dence for all colonial and semi-

colonial peoples.

It is also a fitting answer to the Stalinists, who, despite all their pretentions, were in fact the avowed enemies of this congress.

The British Communist Party has constantly collaborated with the extreme right wing against the youth. They have joined hands with the most reactionary capitalist news agencies to twist and distort the real position of the Young Socialists.

Through their small organisation the Young Communist League they have constantly spread lies and distortion about the fight which the Young Socialists are waging against the right wing. The Morecambe conference was a decisive answer to these enemies of the labour movement.

#### Understand

Only the Newsletter and the Socialist Labour League fully understood the remarkable struggle which the Young Socialists have waged against the right wing.

Our paper has continuously fought to expose the attacks against the Young Socialists and at the same time to politically help them to understand the problems ahead.

The Socialist Labour League and the Newsletter say: 'Well done' to the Young Socialists. What you have achieved at Morecambe is in fact to lay the foundations for a revolutionary party in Britain.

We are confident that in the next period your struggles will be crowned with success.

(For a full report see page 2)



An old age pensioner, a fraternal delegate, who received a tremendous reception when she told the conference: 'We old people will help all we can to see that you people are not destroyed. . . . You youngsters fight like hell. Don't be trodden down by your gaffers. Stand up to the bosses . . . if the Labour Party goes on like it has done, and the Tories get in, there will be no trade unions, there will be open shops. The Tories don't want trade unions. Fight like hell and you'll win.

### Demand by Young Socialists in conference at

PENING the Fifth of the Young Socialists at Morecambe last weekend, Dave Ashby, chairman of the National emergency Labour Party Conference.

This, he told over 500 delegates and 500 visitors, was a vital step to prevent the working class abandoning Labour in the face of rising prices and the refusal of the Labour government to pay the pensions increase.

The resolution 'The Young Socialists and the Labour Government' (printed in full on this page) said there must be no budget until such a conference has given its verdict and there must be no General Election until that conference is consulted and decides Labour policies.

Ashby said an alternative leadership had to be built 'to put the Tories out for ever'.

'What we are showing at this conference is that we are not prepared to see the Tories get in again and will do everything possible to strengthen the working class to prevent this happening,' he said.

The labour movement also had to say that the Wilson government had played a confidence trick on the working class who voted for change.

'The problems of the working class have not been solved.

'The policies carried out by this government are the policies of the bankers and big businessmen. These policies are disastrous for the working class.'

#### Judgment

Workers maintained the trade unions and the Labour Party organisations and it was time for them to pass judgment on the government, which had made rising prices and small wage packets a burning issue for the working class.

Because the Labour government had continued the policies of the Tories, the working class had been presented with an increased defence budget by Callaghan, a three-year package deal in engineering, wage restraint and rising prices.

'We fight to unite the working class against Tory policy, whether it comes in the traditional form, or dressed up by the Labour government,' Ashby said.

'It is the responsibility of the Young Socialists to organise struggles of the working class and direct them into the labour movement; to preserve a solid front against the Tories and to change the policies of the Labour Party.'

All sections of workers, from aircraftmen, railwaymen to dyeworkers at the Denby factory were being betrayed.

At the same time the Labour Party refused to campaign against racialism in Smethwick and repeated this at Leyton.

'We call on trade unionists, Labour Party members and Young Socialists to call a halt to the situation where Labour's policies are turning away from the workers Party and trade Labour

They must demand an emergency conference of the Labour

'We must demand that measures proposed and policies decided on will place the working class on the offensive. We must demand the nationalization of all major industries,' he added.

'We have to remind ourselves what happened in 1931. Pressure was put on the Labour government by big business to cut the dole in order to secure a loan from the USA. The dole was cut. The trade unions put down a resolution for the expulsion of Ramsay MacDonald from the Labour Party.

'The course of the present Labour government is following the implications of 1931.'

#### 'National interest'

In the discussion that followed delegates also introduced the problems of housing, racialism and immigration, and nationalization and wage restraint, dealt with in composite resolutions which, along with the resolution on the Labour government, were passed unanimously, with one abstention on the resolution on racialism.

Yorkshire delegate J. Beechall said that Wilson had attacked bus workers, dockers and other

'He is trying to solve the crisis "in the national interest", which means, of course, in the interests

# Annual Conference the Young Socialists Call emergency Committee, said the British labour movement must demand an emergency Labour Labour conference

## Stop workers turning away

of the bosses in this country.

'It is up to the Young Socialists to form a united front with all workers,' he said.

Moving the resolution on Housing, J. Burn from Birkenhead Young Socialists said Merseyside had a particularly bad housing problem.

#### Poor housing

He knew of one family which was forced to spend a year in a condemned house, having to draw water from a hydrant 100 yards There were no toilet facilities and drains were broken. The children were in and out of hospital with several illnesses.

This family was moved to a housing estate where conditions were still poor.

Young Socialists were the only people to put forward an answer to bad housing, he said. Workers would respond to this-Wigan Young Socialists had campaigned against rent increases, and 2,000 had come on to the streets in

Seconding the resolution, Myles Buchanan from the Glasgow Gorbals Young Socialists said the Labour government could not solve the housing problem because they refused to nationalize big business. Nationalization would also abolish the 'points' system which, at the moment, means that those sections such as pensioners who are less able to stand up to the housing

problem have no chance of being re-housed. Dave Greenberg, from North Kensington, moving the resolution on racialism, told of the attack by fascists on 17-year-old Young Socialist Roy Smith, and the campaign launched by London Young Socialists to gain support and answer the fascists.

Commented Greenberg: 'The

strengthening of the Immigration Act was the most disgusting act by the Labour government.'

Paddington South Young Socialist, P. O'Regan moving the resolution on nationalization and wage restraint said the 'package deal' for the engineering industry 'is really Labour Party policy on

'It really strikes at workers' wages and conditions. It ties the hands of workers in the engineering industry and prepares for the introduction of automation which will bring with it unemployment,' he said.

'The only answer is to campaign for the nationalization of these

#### Foreign policy

National Committee member Barry Evans (East Midlands) moved the Foreign Policy resolu-

He explained the role of Britain and the United States overseas since the end of the war, and how Bevan, in 1945, said 'I am not prepared to sacrifice the British Empire because if that falls, the standard of living of our constituents would fall.'

Evans commented: Wilson says the same today, only he calls it the British Commonwealth.

'His primary concern at all times is the defence of imperialist profes and defence of the capitalist economy.

In return for American support in Malaysia, Wilson gives frank approval to America in South Vietnam. Every time American planes drop napalm on the people of South Vietnam, consuming men, women and children in a sea of flames, then Wilson is as responsible as Johnson of the United States.'

The Young Socialists, he said, 'offer the hand of class friendship' to workers in struggle every-

The Young Socialists wanted an



that his government would not introduce conscription. 'Young workers are no longer prepared to fight the wars of British imperialism,' he added.

An emergency resolution on

#### Vietnam

'Not for us the hypocrisy of those who support the United Nations as a peace-keeping force,' said Evans. 'Not for us Wilson's war in Malaysia and Borneo. Here at this conference we demand quite clearly: 'Withdraw all troops from South-east Asia.'

unconditional pledge from Wilson



Farley: new stage

Vietnam was moved by S. Rich, North-west Leeds YS, who explained the events leading up to the present situation in the

The resolution demanded that in the words of seconder Peter Green of Burgess Hill, Surrey, 'the United States troops clear out of Vietnam and take their misery and corruption with them. Let the Vietnam people take over their own country at last and move on to peace and socialism.'

A Redhill and Reigate Young Socialist who was born in the South Pacific told how workers in his country, where Britons, Americans and Australians owned the monopolies, had demon-

the demands that the apprentices are fighting for, young workers are going to be turned out'.

less in some cases.

MORECAMBE

strated to improve their wages

Workers who had organised

this demonstration were jailed

-between £1 and £3 a week.

kers throughout the world.

throughout the world,' he said.

better wages and conditions.

a person who is training for a

skilled job should take home a

full rate for the adult worker.

But we do not accept that

Automation, he added, threat-

ened many jobs, including those

of apprentices, and 'unless some-

thing is done along the lines of

'Package deal'

An important struggle had been the fight to get support from adult workers, but since the election, the action of the Labour government had saddled workers with the 'package deal'.

'Now men are in open revolt against the employers and their own union leadership, and the men know that the only way to safeguard their conditions is to fight for

For the National Committee, Bob Hamilton (Scotland), said engineering workers had still not replied to the attack of the employers and the 'package deal'.

Apprentices in the engineering industry would lead those engineers and workers who wanted to fight against the employers. Young Socialists should support that struggle.

Conference unanimously accepted the resolutions along with one supporting the dockers' struggle against decasualisation and for nationalization of the port industry. Jean Kerrigan, Sheffield, moved

an emergency resolution supporting students and metal workers in Spain who had been viciously attacked by the fascist state because they were demanding their own organisations. This was passed unanimously.

On behalf of the National Committee, Mike Farley (North-west), moved the Constitution of the Young Socialists.

He spoke of the new stage reached by the Young Socialist movement which was brought about by the new stage in society.

It was a critical time for the working class and the Young Socialists could not be complacent because they had got 1,000 people at their conference.

without charges, like many wor-The conference had been called to discuss certain policies so that 'I hope the British socialist YS members could go out and government, not this Labour become an alternative leadership. government, which is not socialist, will give freedom to all people

#### Struggle

Mike Hughes, Droylesden, Manchester, YS, moving the British capitalism in striving to catch up with America and resolutions on Apprentices and Germany would seek a closer Unemployment called on all unity between the state and the Young Socialists to support the unions and make the working apprentices in their struggle for class pay.

But, said Farley, 'Workers 'Nobody accepts,' he said, 'that since the war have suffered no real defeats and they will not lose their standard of living without a struggle, such as that waged by busmen, dockers and

apprentices should be used mainly as a source of cheap 'The working class more than labour, or that a young worker ever needs a leadership now,' he should only take home £3, and

The Young Socialist movement had to become a disciplined organisation. reason for the high discipline at the conference and dance held on the Saturday evening, he said, was because the Young Socialist movement had fought to convince youth politically.

The Constitution, which accepted 'Keep Left' as the official newspaper of the organisation, was passed unanimously.

Editor of the paper, Aileen Jennings, explained the history and role of 'Keep Left'. 'It is the only paper which constantly fought for the policies of the Socialist movement throughout its four year history. We defended the right of the Young Socialists in the Labour Party to fight for their decisions and policies,' she said.

#### Champion

The paper, she added, had become 'the champion of youth'. It united youth in struggle around socialist policies to fight the bosses. T. Macintyre (Cranhill, Glas-

gow YS) moved the resolution on police brutality which, along with the resolution on facilities for youth, was passed unanimously. Macintyre said the fight against the police was a fight against the Labour government, which paid and controlled the actions of

the force.

On the other hand there was the tremendous discipline of the youth in the face of provocations by police at many Young Socialist functions.

Another section of the working class was given full support by the youth when they passed a resolution on better conditions for miners unanimously, as were resolutions on drugs, partition of Ireland, abolition of public schools, and 'Tribune'.

# Fraternal greetings

FRATERNAL greetings were given to the conference by socialist youth from America, France and Belgium, Bill Dow, secretary of South Paddington Labour Party and Peter Kerrigan, a docker. Chairman Dave Ashby also read out many letters of support from Labour Parties and trade unions.

An old age pensioner, speaking on behalf of many old people who joined the Young Socialists in their pensioners campaign, said:

'You youngsters are trying to fight for socialism. Don't be down-trodden. We old people will help all we can to see that you people are not destroyed.

Wilson says he doesn't owe you a living but by God he does. My husband, my sons, my nephews, in three generations have

fought for this country. We, the old people, have put the Labour Party where it is. There was only the Liberals and the Conservatives. We went round the streets building up the Labour

We do not ask for luxury. We ask for comfort, warmth. We have to go to jumble sales to buy the cheapest we can. Is that a

living in our old age? They give us 5s. a week for coal if you are over 70. We pay about 25s. for coal and heating. In April, they knock that off. When we get the 12s. 6d. increase it will be 7s. 6d. with everything going up. That is what the three stooges have done, Wilson, Brown and

Callaghan. You youngsters fight like hell. Don't be trodden down by your gaffers. Stand up to the bosses and if the Labour Party goes on like it has done, and the Tories get in, there will be no trade unions, there will be open shops. The Tories don't want trade unions. Fight like hell and you'll



Docker Kerrigan

Conference pledged to give the fullest possible support to the March 28 demonstration called by the Indian Workers' Association against the imprisonment of Communist Party members in India after an appeal by Mr. J. Joshi national secretary of the Association who spoke as a fraternal delegate.



### RESOLUTION

Dave Ashby, chairman of the National Committee, moved the following resolution at the conference

**'The** Young **Socialists** and the Labour government Every day brings greater hardships for the working people of

Thousands of items have increased in price, making the cost of living impossible for many workers. Rates are going up, fares are increasing. Pensioners have had to wait the whole of the winter prices. All this is because Wilson and the Cabinet have capitulated to the international bankers. The statements of Lord Cromer and Wilson's speech on February 6 about 'unpopular measures' are warnings that the workers can expect even more attacks.

The time for talking about rising prices is over; it is time for action. There must be no more price increases; this inflation is being used to make the workers pay for the crisis caused by the

The Labour government was not elected to place unbearable burdens on the workers and their families.

Wilson's election pledges are being broken on every vital issue: aircraft workers are cynically sacked after being promised permanent jobs; miners are to be the victims of pit closures on a vast scale; millions of workers are to lose their jobs; busmen, railwaymen, dockers and many others are threatened with 'modernisation' which means loss of jobs for some and low wages for the others. Callaghan threatens increased taxes in the budget. Engineers have been hog tied by the infamous 'package deal' which is nothing less than a three-year wage freeze imposed upon the union members.

In foreign affairs the Labour government carries out Tory policy. A defence expenditure of £2,000,000,000 is planned—a fantastic and wasteful burden on a working class which every day is asked for sacrifices. In Malaysia and Vietnam the only answer is withdrawal of all British and American forces, leaving the people of these countries to settle their own future. But Wilson continues support for the U.S. war alliance in Asia as well as in Europe. He keeps Polaris and the U.S. bases in England in clear breach of Labour Party Conference decisions. The tightening of immigration restrictions is an anti-working class and anti-socialist measure. Legislation on steel nationalization has already been deferred and the retreat is being prepared.

This Young Socialists Conference declares that the Wilson leadership has lost the right to command the support of the served the banks and are attacking the working class. Labour movement. The capitalist policies of the government have brought the Leyton and Nuneaton reverses, as thousands of workers are disgusted by broken election pledges. Racialism flourishes and the fascists dare to raise their heads as the Tories gain in confidence. Wilson obeys every call of the banks and big business. The great danger confronting the working class is that these disastrous policies will bring a return of the Tories at an early election. In that way Wilson would get free from responsibility after carrying out Tory policies.

Stop the retreat now! This must be the watchword of the Labour movement.

We campaigned for the election of the Labour government, warning that it must adopt socialist policies or find itself in a severe crisis. We then called urgently upon the government to change its policy and defy the banks. But Wilson persists in serving big business.

Before losing any more support, the Labour movement must now pronounce: keeping Wilson in power means certain defeats for the workers.

There is only one way to prevent the return of the Tories. The Labour Party Conference must be called immediately to decide on for a miserable 12s. 6d, which has already been eaten away by rising a policy against the rising cost of living, against the wage freeze dressed up as 'incomes policy'. This means immediate backdating of the pensions increase and a refusal to toe the line of the banks. There must be a budget which takes the money from the bosses and gives increased benefits to the workers. Nationalization with workers' control of all the major industries is the basic measure for taking the wealth from the employers and ensuring the jobs of those threatened with unemployment before the year is out.

> The calling of an emergency Labour Party Conference must be the demand of every trade union, YS branch and Constituency Labour Party if the movement is to be saved from a disaster of the magnitude of that engineered by MacDonald in 1931.

> Already divisions appear within the Labour Cabinet on economic policy and many unions will be forced by the demands of their members to oppose the government's wage freeze as prices

Are we to allow the Labour government to go down in a morass

of divisions and disillusionments? The Young Socialists say no! There must be no budget until the conference of the Labour Party has given its verdict. There must be no General Election until the conference is consulted and decides Labour policies.

Only a change in policy and a change in leadership can save the day. Make the bosses pay! Wilson, Brown and Callaghan have no answer but to attack the Labour Party's own supporters while the bosses get richer and nicher. They must be forced to give way to a socialist leadership. Every struggle for higher wages, every act of resistance to sackings, every demand for increased pensions and benefits, must be supported by the unions and the Labour Party if the Tories are to be kept out.

Working class unity can be preserved, and the struggle for socialism against the bosses can be won. But that means an immediate change, a reversal of the attacks on living standards through rising costs, a new leadership to replace those who have

This is the message of the Fifth Annual Conference of the Young Socialists to the working class and the Labour movement. Keen the Tories out for ever. Demand in every section of the movement an immediate emergency Labour Party Conference whose decisions will be binding on the Executive elected there and upon the Labour government.

No wage freeze, no sackings, stop rising costs!

Backdate pensions increases now. Say no to the banks!

Nationalize aircraft, engineering, steel and chemicals, land and the building and building materials industry, the banks and insurance, with workers' control!

End colonialism, withdraw all support for imperialism in

lietnam and Malaysia! For a socialist leadership and an end to Toryism for good!

# BELGUN

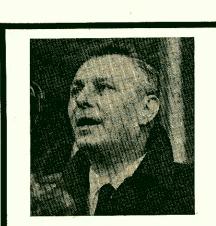
## PART THREE

by Peter Arnold

# Split reveals **Ernest** Mandel's bankruptcy



sommaire 2 Les sécurité dans les charbon-



**Vers le Socialisme** par l'action

In February this year, two new parties were founded in Belgium by people who had left the Socialist Party. On February 7, the 'Union of Left Socialists' was founded in Brussels, and on February 21, the 'Walloon Party of Workers' was founded in Wallonia.

This article is the third of our series analysing the split in the Belgian Socialist Party. The first article examined the recent development of the Belgian economy. The second, dealt with the record of the right-wing socialists and the middle-of-the-road trade unionists.

This week we take up the role of Ernest Mandel, editor of 'La Gauche', who has been prominent in the founding of the new parties.



**Hebdomadaire** 5<sup>--</sup> année --- 28-1-1965

Top: 'La Gauche' mourns André Renard. Centre: 'Combat' was the paper founded in 1961 by André Renard, as the weekly journal of the Walloon Popular Movement and to fight La Gauche'. Bottom: 'La Voix Socialiste' (Socialist Voice) was the paper founded by Leo Collard, right-wing leader of the Socialist Party in May last year, to witch-hunt 'La Gauche'.

HEBDOMADAIRE DU

THE split in the Belgian Socialist Party, which followed the proscription by the right wing of the two left-wing papers 'La Gauche' and 'Links', has exposed the bankruptcy of the politics of Ernest Mandel, the editor of 'La Gauche'.

For years, this man has been advising all and sundry in Europe and Asia. He was bold enough to offer advice to the Hungarian revolutionaries in 1956, and he has consistently offered advice to the Socialist Labour League and to the Young Socialists in this country on how to fight the right wing.

The contrast between the founding congress of the new Walloon Party of Workers in Belgium last week, and the Fifth Annual Conference of the Young Socialists at Morecambe, shows how right we were to ignore that advice.

It has been Mandel's great boast that his paper 'La Gauche' wielded great influence in the Belgian labour movement. There appeared to be some substance in his claim.

The paper had a circulation of around 10,000 copies a week and was supported by a group of social-democratic MPs like Ernest Glinne, who is MP for Charleroi, and by middle-of-the-road trade unionists like Jacques Yerna. For years, the editorial board of 'La Gauche' was dominated by Mandel, Glinne and Yerna.

But the proscription of the paper by the right wing and the events that have followed, show just how hollow that support from the social-democratic and trade union middle-of-the-roaders

Far from influencing these people and winning them to his position, Mandel adapted his policies to them in order not to lose their friendship, which was the only connection with the working class movement that he

The only alternative would have been to build a revolutionary party which would fight the right wing on the basis of its own independent support in the working class. This support could only be won by fighting on the issues that affect the workers in conflict with Belgian capital-

But Mandel turned away from this. He preferred the 'influence' of the bureaucrats in the apparatus to real support from workers.

What really happened was that the middle-of-the-road bureaucrats used the 'left' cover of Mandel and 'La Gauche' for their own purposes. They dropped the paper when it no longer served them. This was true of André Renard, who started the paper with Mandel.

#### Andre Renard

Renard was happy to work with Mandel as long as he was in opposition to the Van Acker government before 1958. But when the right wing called him to heel after the elections of that year, he turned against 'La Gauche', doing his best to destroy the paper.

In the 1959 miners' strike in the Borinage region, Mandel prepared an issue of the paper calling for a General Strike in sympathy with the miners.

Renard was collaborating with the right wing to break the strike. As he controlled the press on which 'La Gauche' was printed, he prevented the issue calling for a General Strike from

appearing. After the strike, although Mandel transferred the printing to another press, he did not publish any criticism of Renard's role in the betrayal of the miners.

By failing to do this, he left the way open for Renard to betray the General Strike of 1960-61, and again to attempt to destroy 'La Gauche'.

Renard did not support the strike for three days, and the workers came out in the Liège factories after fights with his supporters. A demonstration against Renard was held in the

town. Mandel was unable to take advantage of the situation. He had no cadres prepared to take a lead in the strike and, in any case, those workers who had come out on strike against Renard's instructions, associated 'La Gauche' with the very man

who had betrayed them. Renard took over the leadership of the strike after three days. He was to betray it completely. He put forward the ultra-left slogan of letting the blast furnaces go out, knowing that the workers would be unwilling to face the unemployment that this would cause. He did this to sabotage the policies put forward by Mandel and by the militant sections of the workers on strike.

His final blow was to turn the frustrated Walloon workers towards nationalism. In April 1961, he founded the Walloon

Popular Movement, which was to struggle for 'federalism', that is the division of Belgium into three federal states of Wallonia, Brussels and Flanders. At the same time he founded a paper 'Combat' as a direct challenge to

'La Gauche'. The argument used by the Walloon Popular Movement was that the backwardness of the Flemish workers held back the Walloon workers from victory over the employers. A federation would free the Walloon workers from the grip of the backward Flemish, it said.

Mandel did not attack this as dividing the working class in Belgium. He did not carry out a campaign to bring home the fact that the attacks of the ruling class and the betrayals of the right-wing socialist leaders and trade unionists like Renard were really responsible for the defeat of the strike, not the Flemish workers.

'La Gauche' at first remained silent on the subject and then opened its columns for 'discus-

#### Federalism

Obviously, Mandel wanted to find out just how strong this movement was, before deciding whether to support it or to attack it. This is the kind of approach that takes the place of principles in his politics.

When the Walloon Popular Movement held a meeting attended by 25,000 workers in April 1962, just over one year after the end of the General Strike, Mandel declared himself in favour of federalism.

He still justifies this by stating that the desire for a federation of three states in Belgium 'is a very deep sentiment in the working

Alongside this, 'La Gauche' continued the build-up of André Renard. It had to, for the only alternative was the fight to build a revolutionary party, and this was the fight that Mandel had

evaded all his life.

When Renard died in the summer of 1962, 'La Gauche' put out a special mourning issue of the paper (seen left) ringed with black. The issue contained nauseating articles by Mandel and Yerna, the publisher of 'La Gauche', praising Renard to the

Who would have thought that these articles were dealing with the man who betrayed the Borinage miners in 1959 and sold out the entire Belgian working class in the following year?

What contempt these articles express for those workers who courageously fought Renard on these occasions and took the

After Renard's death, Mandel used 'La Gauche' to build up Ernest Glinne, the Socialist MP for Charleroi, and Jacques Yerna, the popular middle-of-the-road secretary of the Liège federation of the Socialist trade union.

He continued to boost the memory of André Renard. One year after his death, 'La Gauche' carried an article commemorating the 'painful anniversary'.

The events around the proscription of 'La Gauche' and the foundation of the new party, show just how dangerous this policy of adaptation is.

#### 1964 Municipal **Elections**

Before the municipal elections that were held on October 11 last year, the Walloon Popular Movement announced that its members would vote only for those candidates that supported federalism-whether they were candidates for working class or for

ruling class parties. Thus, the movement that Renard founded to head off the workers after the 1960-61 General Strike, announced that it had completely abandoned class politics and that it had more in common with Walloon employers than non-Walloon workers.

At the same time, Jacques Yerna, the man with whom Mandel worked on 'La Gauche' since its foundation, and who was publisher of the paper at the time, put pressure on Mandel not to support the Socialist Party in the municipal elections. He himself campaigned for an independent candidate in a village near

Under the combined pressure of Yerna and the Walloon Popular Movement, Mandel accepted that 'La Gauche' should not support the Socialist Party in the October municipal elections. The paper remained silent, not advising the workers to vote for any party.

Yerna's attitude was not surprising. He was simply a militant middle-of-the-road trade unionist, with anarchistic leanings, trained by Renard.

He shared the moral revulsion to the 'apparatus' of the Socialist Party that is so common in trade union circles and which contributed to the founding of the Walloon Popular Movement in

But Mandel's attitude did not spring from any such beliefs. He refrained from calling for support for the Socialist Party simply because he did not want to offend Yerna. He was afraid that Yerna would resign from the editorial board of 'La Gauche', which would be a blow to the paper's 'influence'.



Leo Collard, right-wing leader of the Socialist Party.

But this abstention made nonsense of Mandel's whole presence in the Socialist Party and of the be carrying out in there.

not in the Socialist Party because he believed that the leadership of Spaak, the ex-secretary-general of NATO, and Collard could lead the workers to socialism.

in the Socialist Party was precisely to lead the workers on different policies from those of the right-wing leadership, in order to break them from such traitors. He could not then, claim that

he had suddenly discovered, just before the municipal elections last October, that Spaak and Collard were traitors and that they could not lead the workers anywhere but to defeat.

in his advice to the Socialist Labour League for many years.

Once again, Mandel was confronted with a choice between principled politics and keeping the support of his influential friends. Needless to say he chose

The reasons for the fight inside



struggle that he was supposed to Mandel claimed that he was

His expressed aim in remaining

It would be a late discovery

for a man who has been so liberal

to keep his friends.

the Socialist Party remained as before. It was still the party that the Belgian workers voted for in the great majority. It was still the party that they believed could act to solve their problems.

In the struggle to expose the right-wing leadership, surely Marxists must work to put them in power with the greatest poss-



organe do combat socialiste

ible majority, so that they have the fewest excuses for betrayal. Did this not remain as true in October 1964 as when Mandel joined the Socialist Party?

Or did Mandel believe that the creation of the Walloon Popular Movement, and the support that undoubtedly enjoyed, now enabled him to turn his back on the Socialist Party?

The silence of 'La Gauche' over the municipal elections gave the right wing its chance. Ironically, was also to lead to the betrayal 'La Gauche' both by the Walloon Popular Movement and by Jacques Yerna.

#### Witch-hunt

The leadership of the Socialist Party had been preparing the expulsion of Mandel for some time. They wanted to clear the decks in the party before the General Election takes place in May this year.

After the General Election in May, the Socialist Party is to change its programme, to adopt one which, like that of the German Social-Democrats, will tie it even closer to the monopolies.

The policy of even closer collaboration with monopoly capital, made necessary by the enormous developments that have taken place over the last few years in Belgium, drove the party leadership to get rid of any elements in the party that could challenge it. Although the right wing in

Belgium, as in Britain, normally shuns a political fight, Collard was prepared to take on 'La Gauche', so anxious was he to get Mandel and his supporters out of the Party.
In May 1964, Collard founded

weekly journal called 'Socialist Voice', which was distributed free to all members of the Socialist Party. In the journal, a witch-hunt was started against 'La Gauche'. Mandel was denounced as a

'Trotskyist' and documents alleged to be internal publications of the Trotskyist movement in published in Belgium were 'Socialist Voice'.

In September, the right-wing leadership of the Socialist Party called the police to beat up 'La Gauche's supporters in the youth

movement, when they carried the paper's policies on the demoncommemorating hundredth anniversary of the First International.

But after the municipal elections for the December conference changed. The right wing immediately demanded Yerna's expulsion in the Liège federation of the party, and put down resolutions for the ecember conference of the party, calling for the proscription of 'La Gauche', 'Links' (the Flemish equivalent of 'La Gauche') and the Walloon Popular Movement.

The motion for Yerna's expulsion was defeated in Liège, because of his personal popularity in the town.

But the situation at the Congress was much more serious. The right wing now believed that they could avoid a political fight, demanding the proscription of all three movements, simply on a question of party discipline.

#### 1964 Socialist Congress

Collard was able to make the point very strongly against Mandel at the Congress:

'Those responsible for "La Gauche",' he said, 'stated that they did not support the Socialist Party because they did not have time to hold a meeting of the editorial board. . . . But Yerna wrote in "Combat" that votes should be cast for candidates of different parties who supported the positions of the Walloon Popular Movement. "La Gauche" did not see fit to disassociate itself from that in its next issue.'

'In Liège,' he continued, 'the socialist candidates did not support the positions of the Walloon Popular Movement, but as the Communist candidates did, Yerna and the Walloon Popular Movement were in fact calling for people to vote communist.'

Collard then called for stricter rules to curb the activities of tendencies like 'La Gauche' in the party.

Mandel's answer to this was to demand that tendency rights be left as they were. Instead of attacking the policies of the right wing and exposing the real reasons for the attack on himself, he pleaded that 'La Gauche' had obeyed the rules of the party!

Having played the right-wing game by providing them with an organisational reason for expulsion, Mandel chose to keep the discussion at this level!

This choice of terrain for the fight enabled Collard and Spaak to isolate Mandel from the other tendencies. Already at the Congress itself, the editors of 'Links' were anxious to show their remorse for their 'errors' since, as they stated afterwards, 'why should they be expelled because Yerna played the fool'.

Throughout, the Walloon Popular Movement disassociated itself from Mandel. After the Congress, when Mandel announced his intention to go ahead and found a new party, the Walloon Popular Movement refused to have anything to do with

This enabled the Socialist Party leadership to come to terms with the Walloon Popular Movement. By February 1, 1965, Collard was writing in 'Le Peuple', the official daily paper of the Socialist Party, that the Walloon Popular Movement and the Socialist Party represented the same workers and the same ideals.

The organisational nature of the struggle also made the splitting of the forces of 'La Gauche'

itself a relatively easy matter. There was no clarity as to why the split was taking place and, when the party leadership announced that there was no question of abolishing tendency rights and that the proscription had been carried out merely to discipline the anti-party actions during the municipal elections, a group of 'La Gauche' supporters capitulated.

On January 11, 1965, the Socialist Party was able to publish a statement signed by all the editorial board of 'Links' except for two (one of whom signed later) and by Ernest Glinne and M. Hurez of the editorial board 'La Gauche', accepting the Party's conditions.

Reliance on his influential friends had led Mandel to be abandoned by all of them. Only Yerna remained, and he was shortly to play a very dubious

#### Jacques Yerna and Francois Perin

All that was left to build the new party was a group in Brussels around Mandel, a group in Liège around Yerna, and a few isolated individuals in the rest of Wallonia. In Flanders there was nothing.

The defection of Glinne removed any hope of mass support from Charleroi, where everything had been left to him. Yerna's actions in Liège were to ensure that the workers there would turn away from the new party.

As soon as Mandel declared his intention to set up a new party, the nationalists moved in. In Liège, the offensive was led by Francois Perin, a university teacher, formerly a close asso-

ciate of André Renard. Perin made his bid to take

over the party from the very first meeting held after the Socialist Party Congress, held in Liège on December 27. He managed to get himself elected on to the provisional committee of the new

party. From this position he proceeded to witch-hunt Mandel and 'La Gauche' far more viciously than even the right-wing socialdemocrats had done.

At the second meeting of the new party in Liège on December 29 he accused Mandel of being Ernest Germain, the leader of the Belgian Pabloites, declaring that there was a Trotskyist plot being hatched in Brussels to take over the Liège party.

Moreover, he claimed, Brussels Trotskyists attack the memory of André Renard and are thus enemies of the working class. The injustice of this accusation must have been painful to Mandel!

Instead of defending Mandel, Jacques Yerna then proceeded to back Perin in his anti-Trotskyist binge. He stated that Trotskyism as far as he knew, was confined to Brussels, but that were any Trotskyist elected to any position in the new party, he should feel morally obliged to

He then proceeded to carry out his own principles by opposing the election of two supporters of 'La Gauche' onto the provisonal committee of four, that was to set up the new party, proposing instead supporters of

Thus, thanks to Yerna, the publisher of 'La Gauche', Perin was given a three to one majority in the founding committee of the

new party. Once the nationalists had control of the Party, those workers who had shown an interest in the beginning, soon fell away.

F. Perin and his friends then went to work to turn the new party into an out-and-out Walloon Nationalist Party. They opposed all the socialist measures in the programme and manoeuvred to obtain a fusion of the new party with the overtly nationalist 'Walloon Front'.

A determined fight by some worker members of the new party managed to prevent the fusion, which would have meant a complete abandonment of any pretence to be a 'socialist' party. But the two tendencies in the new party remain and will explode as soon as any pressure is brought to bear.

Perin did manage, on the other hand, to cut the movement in Wallonia off from the rest of the country, on the pretext that 'our needs are different'. Of course, Mandel's supporters, who had backed federalism with him, had no answer to this.

This means that the new party is already organisationally split into three parts, as well as being in the throes of bitter inner conflict between the worker members, notably in Charleroi,

and the nationalists. The 'Union of Left Socialists', is the organisation covering Brussels (population 1 million!). Its founding conference was held

on February 7. The meeting grouped about 200 people, predominantly from the middle class. This was reflected in the discussion. There was no mention of the right wing of the Socialist Party, nor of the role it played in the working class. This could safely be forgotten now that the new party

existed! The main subject in the discussion was whether the new party should support legalised

abortion or not! The party's programme is an incredible mixture of policieswhich is not surprising as every section was written by a different person. In fact, even Mandel and the other leaders of the party had to admit that it was

#### 'provisional'. Walloon Party of Workers

On February 21, the Walloon Party of Workers held its founding conference. The discussion there was scarcely more encouraging. F. Perin's speech was devoted to an attack on 'American' investment in Belgium and to the 'Americans' in general, thus enriching the nationalist line

of the Walloon party. 'La Gauche' of February 27 reports the speech without com-

At the same conference, R. Nicolas, a member of the editorial board of 'La Gauche', put forward the 'economic and social' policy of the party.

It contains only one mention of nationalization: that of the fuel and power industry. But this is a demand that could be carried out by a government working for monopoly capitalism (like the Italian conservative government did in 1963)—as could be the anti-Flemish and anti-American policies.

The programme of the party reflects the same nationalism. It is based on four main demands: (1) Federalism; (2) Structural reforms; (3) The return of a Frenchspeaking area of East Flanders to the province of Liège; (4) Referendums by popular initiative (this would compel the governto hold a referendum on any subject obtaining a certain number of signatures on a petition).

Here then is the end result of (Cont. p. 4, col. 1)

# Midlands busmen's leaders too hesitant

NEWSLETTER REPORTER

FTER a week of delays, in which there was no move to A extend the Midland 'Red' busmen's unofficial Saturday strikes to include a suggested ban on overtime, 33 of the 34 garages came out in support of the seventh successive one-day week-end strike.

Ray Gunter.

official.

On Thursday the co-ordinating

committee decided to shelve the

call for a ban on overtime until

the meeting of the Transport

and General Workers' Union

executive had decided whether

or not to declare the strike

The Amalgamated Engineer-

ing Union, also involved, has

offered to back the TGWU if it

Unfortunately, there has been too much of a tendency

amongst leading members of

the co-ordinating committee

to cling to hesitant methods

of struggle and language of

the kind usually forthcoming

'A ban on overtime would hit

industry and we don't want to do

that, do we?' declared one of

But a fully-justified fight for a

long-overdue pay rise can seldom

be won without somebody or

something being hit. Workers

in industry would understand

and sympathise with the needs of

There have also been dis-

of the 'Tynemouth' and the

Two days before, after a

stormy meeting, the local joint

garages committee - composed

of delegates from all garages of

the Northern and Associated

Companies-decided on an over-

The intention of this decision

was clear, however. It meant to

cut across the one-day stoppage

which, in the third week would

have embraced all garages and

would have been bigger than the

WEAKNESS

Here is shown the weakness

of some of the local leaders-

they are caught between the

desire to avoid a struggle and

yet ride with the great dis-

content of the rank and file.

This wage increase, as The

Newsletter has said before,

could have been won long ago if

the union leaders had organised

a real fight against the em-

As usual, it is leaders who

fear to step out and organise

workers in the only way

possible to win their demands,

who are causing more sacri-

fices and splitting and con-

Because of the failure of the

union to carry forward a united

fight for municipal busmen and

busmen in private companies,

one can already hear anti-colour

There are Indian workers

employed on the Newcastle

Corporation buses who have

already got their 15s. increase.

FRUSTRATION

The frustration of some of the

private company busmen has

been turned against them. But

this would not arise if there was

a real fight on the part of the

That sort of struggle would

educate workers in the need for

unity, create a desire for it and

overcome differences in colour

and differences between garages.

wages dispute to the Ministry

of Labour last week. There

The union leaders took the

fusing workers.

remarks occasionally.

work on

time ban.

week before.

ployers.

union.

their own last

paraging references to the Bristol

striking busmen.

gaged in struggle.

busmen's

from paid union officials.

calls an official strike.

Shrewsbury garage, which had supported the previous Saturday's strike, worked normally on the plea that they could not make up in overtime the money they were losing by not working on Saturdays.

Before the 68-man coordinating committee met in on Thursday, Birmingham February 25, delegates spoke indignantly of Harold Wilson's reference in Wednesday's television broadcast to 'buses laid up; thousands put to inconvenience' as one of the 'attitudes' in industry which must be banished.

'If he thinks he's slapping us down he'll have another think coming,' said one delegate. 'It sounds like he's turning over to the other side,' declared another.

#### ACKNOWLEDGE

A bare acknowledgment was the only reply received to the committee's letter of the previous week urging the Prime Minister to intervene in the dispute.

The co-ordinating committee has allowed itself to get bogged down in too many delays and useless appeals to politicians, instead of making a determined drive to extend the strike and win the workers' demands while support for action was 100 per cent solid.

First they were persuaded to shelve the proposal for weekday strikes on unannounced dates pending the outcome of conciliation talks in London.

The committee was also reported to be under some pressure from union officials to await the outcome of last week's talks at the Ministry of Labour with

### BELGIUM

From page 3

Mandel's work in the socialdemocracy. He split on an organisational issue to go into a movement with no support in the working class and no clear policy. to challenge capitalism. Already it is in the throes of sternal conflict which arises out of the contradictions between the needs of the workers and the 'solutions' of the nationalists (in which conflict, naturally, he plays the role of a mediator) and split into ridiculous small organisations covering minute sections of the working class. (There are more workers in South London than in Wallonia!)

In Belgium, Mandel built himself great 'influence' through his friendly relations with Renard, Glinne and Yerna. He had no idea of how to build a party. Instead of that, he gathered around him a loose group of 'friends' on formulae vague enough not to offend anyone.

He carried out no attempt to clarify these people, nor make them into communists. Indeed, he saw no need to. Building a party becomes superfluous, when one has so many influential contacts who can do the job instead.

The result of this was that he remained completely isolated from the working class, relying on men who had no real intention of fighting the right wing and who would run as soon as the fight became serious.

With him in this fight, he was supported only by a small group of people who were unclear why they were in the social-democracy in the first place and doubly unclear as to why they were breaking from it.

The result of this method is a small confused, centrist party, which at best is a poor imitation of the Independent Labour Party, and which makes Brockway's prewar creation look like a mass movement, and at worst could be the vehicle for the most reactionary nationalist movements in Wallonia in the near future.

The working class in Belgium is left leaderless at a time when the capitalist crisis takes a new turn downwards. Those militants in the workers' movements who did attempt to do something are left even more confused than

before. Only a break with the Pabloite used by Mandel methods (although Mandel himself is not, of course, a member of the Pabloite organisation) can now lead to any way out of this morass. The fight to build a revolutionary party in Belgium is more urgent than ever before.

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# Sell-out likely in provincial

HEATED DISCUSSION LIKELY AT **AEU CONGRESS** 

DISCUSSION on the threeyear package deal at the annual conference of the Amalgamated Engineering Union on April 26 could be very stormy indeed.

One resolution which has been submitted to the conference states that the deal was signed in defiance of union policy.

Pointing out that the AEU is opposed to any form of wage restraint the resolution says that 'a standstill is implicit in this three-year contract'.

#### Anger

The package deal was signed last December and gave a basic skilled rate of £12 17s. 8d. a week and a basic labourer's rate of £10 17s. 4d. a week by 1968 and a 40-hour week by this July.

It has been the cause of a great deal of anger amongst the rank and file in the union since it brings very little benefit to engineering workers.

among militant

Again, this was just another

Militant busmen asked: What

can we expect from Gunter the

Minister of Labour? He has

made his opinion plain. He

condemns the busmen's strikes.

just like Mr. Wilson, who

attacks busmen for taking

action over 'real or imaginary

union dues, then it would do

something,' said one bus con-

But that is not the way.

busmen's demands.

We should all refuse to pay

There is only one answer-

the building of an alternative

leadership in the fight for the

What is involved here is not

only the winning of the present

wages struggle by organising

united action, but the building

of a force that can transform the

union into a fighting organisa-

tactic in the trade union leaders

procedure for avoiding action.

In spite of the fact that the lightning one-day strike as a 'wild-cat strike' which union leadership has attempted to dress the deal up with vague ought not to be imitated by words, the rank and file in the Midland 'Red' busmen. This phrase should never be union is obviously not prepared to let arrangements be signed applied by one section of worwith the employers behind their kers to any other section en-

Union leaders split

strength of NE

busmen

Newsletter Reporter

A at the course of the local busmen's struggle for higher

wages. On Tyneside, 400 men and women in the bus garages

'Tyneside' companies stopped were some sharp comments

NY militant North-east busman cannot fail to be concerned

busmen.

grievances'.

ductor.

# bus strike?

Ministry of Labour may intervene

By Ann Gray

ITH the announcement of the authorisation of an official strike by the executive of the Transport and General Workers' Union, the struggle of provincial busmen for higher wages

### Linwood— A fight on sackings only answer

T a meeting of 5,000 A workers at the Pressed Steel Company's factory at Linwood, a recommendation to fight the proposed sacking of 350 men by strike action was overwhelmingly defeated.

Speaking for the shop stewards' committee, the factory convenor, Ian McAngus said the management had rejected worksharing to prevent redundancies. He called for the complete withdrawal of labour on March 5

when the dismissals become Opposition to the strike proposal was led by the spokesman for the National Union of Vehicle

Members of this union had previously met and decided to accept the redundancies on condition that a fight is conducted for fringe benefits.

The split in the factory is a product of the Emerson Plan. This plan, which linked earnings with sales, also aimed to make all militant action in the factory impossible.

#### Collaboration

Full collaboration from the shop stewards with the firm's production plans was called for in the Emerson Plan.

Speaking to National Union of Vehicle Builders members, senior steward McCauley said: 'We believe there will be fewer dismissals than at first expectedthere will be fewer than 350.

'There will also be 100 people retained in the surplus labour pool, to prevent the need to bring in labour suddenly.'

Thus the pool is seen as a cushion to protect workers in the factory from sackings. Those who are sacked are regarded as being expendable.

Pressed Steel workers should take a closer look at the proposals contained in the management's labour pool scheme. Illusions that by negotiating

for fringe benefits as a consolation for going along with sackings are extremely dangerous. Only the management can benefit from such a policy since it means that all sackings can be

saving in production costs. The alternative is for the whole factory to fight against sackings by demanding a reduction in hours with no wage cuts.

carried through, bringing a big

could take a new turn. It is obvious that the officials of the TGWU and the other unions which have supported strike action - the National Union of Railwaymen, the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the Vehicle Builders Union-have come under pressure to declare an official strike.

#### Treachery

Official national action, with properly organised co-ordinating committees between the garages, could successfully fight for the wage increase.

But bus workers must beware of treachery from their own union leaders. The official strike could very easily become the excuse for TGWU negotiators, who up to now have held back the struggle, to sell out the strike.

The only way for bus crews to answer this possibility is to make sure of complete solidarity amongst all provincial garages and a 100 per cent stoppage.

Indications that the government are going to step in and intervene in the strike were given on Wednesday night this week when Gunter, the Minister of Labour and his Ministry arranged a meeting between the employers and the union leaders for Friday.

No doubt in the interests of keeping big business going, the Labour leaderhip, along with the trade union leaders, are preparing to sell out the busmen.

The Labour government does not want a big national strike in case it should seriously harm the profits of the monopolists.

#### Refused

Provincial bus drivers get a maximum rate of £11 11s. 3d. a week. No worker can support a family on that with the present rise in the cost of living.

The employers have refused to offer more than 11s. increase a week in spite of the fact that municipal busmen received 15s.

Provincial busmen have already been taking militant steps to secure their rise—in unofficial strikes up and down the country.

In these strikes they established unity amongst many garages. They must take this further and set up joint committees so that there can be no blacklegging.

# Industrial Newsletter

# MINERS IN CONFLICT WITHMANAGEMENT

By JACK GALE

COLLIERY managements no longer being made.

Three weeks ago barking on a 'get-tough' policy, which has resulted in a number of strikes in the area.

At Bentley Colliery the management has been trying for some time to end the system whereby the union keeps a priority list of men to be placed on new faces or units.

When a unit finishes, the men go 'on the market', that is, they have to take any job that comes

For years the union has kept a priority list' and ensured that such men were the first to go on a new unit or back to the old one when it re-opened.

Now the Bentley management is trying to end this system so that only the employers will be able to place men where they want. This means that a man might be earning 77s. plus bonus on the face and then drop to 44s. 1d. when the unit ends.

Obviously, if the union has no say in whether these men get back to higher paid jobs, then the 'blue-eyed boys' will be in the good money and the militant outspoken men can be systematically victin-

#### SIX YEARS

One ripper told a Newsletter reporter that he had worked on a unit for six years, when it ended. When it re-opened the union put him back on his old job but for five months the management tried to get him off it. On two occasions all 28 men on the unit walked off because of the management's attempts to move him.

Such conflicts have been going on at Bentley for two years now, but the men have honoured the national agreement which obliges them to continue work while their grievances go through the official machinery.

Now the men feel that a deadlock has been reached. The management will not budge and last week they stopped work.

Another recent dispute took place on the 14s face at Brodsworth Colliery.

When the face opened the men were paid 70s. plus 5s. bonus because of the extra effort needed. About five weeks ago conditions began to get slightly better as they moved forward to more coal, so this extra 5s. was stopped.

Howitt, said the extra effort was afternoon shift.

Three weeks ago the face changed from a Trepanner

Shearer to a disc type machine

and a man was taken off the On Tuesday, February 23 the day shift came out on strike over the extra man, and

the afternoon shift refused to go down when they saw they were only being paid 64s. 6d. The following day they returned to work but the manager offered only another 3s. 6d. and

they came out again. By Thursday between 150 and 200 men were involved. Jock Kane, an area official of the National Union of Miners

and a prominent Communist Party member, came to discuss the issue of the extra man with the management.

#### RETURN

On the basis of this, two chargemen (i.e., elected representatives of the men from the face) persuaded most of the men to return to work, even though the question of pay was not being discussed.

A meeting was due on Tues-day, March 2, to decide on a new contract on 14s face. It is obvious that the Brodsworth management, too, is getting tough, and this trouble is unlikely to be over.

At Wheldale Colliery between 450 and 500 men struck work for four days last week. About two months ago a new agreement for rippers was signed at

Wheldale colliery. Under this 'consolidation agreement' the men were required to subsidise extra men where necessary out of their

For instance, there would normally be four men in a gate but if conditions were such as to require an extra man, the first four would have to contribute out of their wages to

make up his pay. The agreement also stipulated that where there were abnormal conditions the management must pay extra money. On 12B gate the men claim that there were bad faults and this constituted abnormal conditions.

However, they found on getting their wage slip that they were approximately 5s. a day

On Tuesday, February 23, the rippers on 12B gate came out and were supported by rippers The deputy manager, Mr. from the other gates and by the

## Communist Party leadership retreats on racialism

REAL Communist who class is opposed to any divigovernments.

But in its recent statement: 'Stamp out the Racialist Menace' the Communist Party

'The present British government and the Commonwealth governments may find it necessary, in both their interests, to agree to regulations regarding immigration or emigration.

It is to the credit of some members of the Communist Party that they are opposing this recent statement from King

At the last North-east District party positively adjust towards Committee meeting it was only racialism, the CP leaflet criticises carried by the chairman's vote. them only in that they 'refused

The first sentence of the A fights for the inter- statement says: 'A new and dannational unity of the working gerous menace faces the British people.

Why is racialism a growing sions imposed on the move-menace? King Street cannot ment of workers by capitalist say. Racialism, it appears, is some sort of evil cloud which has drifted over Britain.

#### SPLIT AND DIVIDE But racialism grows as a

menace today because of the need of the ruling class to split and divide the working class. The CP leaders, however, cannot connect the growth of racialism with the development of the class struggle.

The Stallinist policy is an allclass fight against racialism by progressive people.

While the leaders of the Tory

From BILL HUNTER

to condemn these disgraceful activities' of sections of the Tory Party at Smethwick and Slough. Failure to begin with the class basis of racialism means adaptation to it. So that in the middle of words against racialism appear concessions to it.

'Of course, there are many problems concerned with the economic and social integration of immigrant workers into the British community,' says the CP. The language is that of selfcomplacent liberals.

What problems? Racialism is not a problem of economic or social integration.

It is a problem of capitalism constructive work has been done, much more is needed.'

Again, what constructive work on integration is needed?

struggles against capitalism. King Street says, after dec-

laring that some immigration control may be necessary that: 'we are absolutely opposed to, and will fight against, any form of colour bar discrimination, whether open or disguised, tence: Every British worker, which masquerades behind immigration control. That is why we demand the repeal of way to develop personal friendthe Commonwealth Immigrants ship with the coloured people

#### HORROR

What does all that mean? The Labour leaders who are

There can be no constructive colour prejudice will be warmly work separate from uniting welcomed by every decent man black and white workers in the and woman in the country,' it declares.

It is natural that the CP leaders should praise Wilson. Their attitude to racialism is substantially the same as his.

Its own racialist paternalism is shown by the patronising sentrade unionist, democrat and socialist should go out of his he meets at work, in canteens, pubs and clubs and help them to understand real class solidarity and democracy.'

The statement is the fruit of now supporting and extending the desertion of class policies leaders retreat before racialism.

in crisis. The statement goes immigration control, will also by the Communist Party. CP on: 'Although a great deal of express their horror at colour leaders, together with Labour King Street praises Wilson: One result will be to encourage 'The Prime Minister's strong racialist prejudices which nestle denunciations of racialism and in their own ranks.