

# The Newsletter

WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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## THIS WEEK

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*Before Budget prices increase*

B/OSL FILE

# CALL LABOUR CONFERENCE NOW!

## Sham fight by 'lefts' on Vietnam

by Robert James

LABOUR's cowardly 'left' in the Parliamentary group revealed its sham tactics in the House of Commons on Tuesday when Prime Minister Wilson was questioned about policy on Vietnam.

Wilson brushed aside what the Press had been attempting to build up as a formidable opposition within Government ranks.

His position is quite clear. As Sir Alec Douglas Home put it so ably:

**'We support the Prime Minister in the action he has taken so far and think it necessary to support our American allies.'**

Sidney Silverman, hero of the Hanging Bill, asked Wilson what action the government would take to promote a peaceful solution in Vietnam.

Wilson maintained urgent 'diplomatic activity' was proceeding.

### Tolerable

Working up to his militant climax Silverman then said:

'Does not the Prime Minister agree that this attack by the armed forces of the United States on the armed forces of North Vietnam, deep within North Vietnamese territory, goes far beyond the hostilities in earlier days, which we were prepared to tolerate? Do they not amount to an act of plain, naked war?' (Our emphasis)

This spokesman for the 'left'—many of whom joined in several humanitarian binges in the past and now hold Ministerial posts—completely ignores the plight of the people of South-east Asia, even from a humanitarian aspect.

Attempting to give the appearance that the 'left', along with 'Tribune', has not capitulated completely to Wilson's capitalist policies, Silverman talks of 'plain, naked war' which now cannot be tolerated. He ignores the 20 years of death and destruction of the French and U.S. imperialist war imposed on the people of South-east Asia.

Even recent hostilities—in reality a revolutionary struggle by the Vietnamese people against U.S. oppression and napalm brutality—could be 'tolerated' by the 'lefts'.

This sham 'fight' by Silverman and his cronies fools no one.

It does not cover the nakedness of their agreement with Wilson.

### Farce

Along with the Communist Party and do-gooding organisations, Labour leaders and their 'left' pets, are hoping for that 'peaceful solution' which Silverman is looking for and was looking for, along with the same people, at the time of the Geneva Agreement on South-east Asia in 1954.

That agreement was a farce, and any similar agreement would have the same result—to allow imperialism to impose itself on the peasants and workers of South-east Asia for another period of misery

and war.

Silverman and the 'lefts' will not end this situation with their sham talk.

It is the British working class; rank and file Labour Party members and trade unionists, and Young Socialists who can give a lead internationally by demanding the immediate withdrawal of all troops, U.S., Korean, Australian, British and others from South-east Asia immediately; the cessation of bombing of North Vietnam; and end to British support for U.S. imperialism; no secret diplomacy and every support for the revolution in South Vietnam.



## YS march against racialism

By ANN GRAY

THROUGH the streets of North Kensington over 250 Young Socialists marched against racialism and fascism last Saturday.

In this area where all sections of workers, British and immigrant, are herded together into the most derelict housing conditions, the Young Socialists demonstrated against landlordism and the attempts of the fascists to divide the working class on racialism.

The march took place only a month after threats against the secretary of the local branch of the Young Socialists.

In a meeting at the Isaac Newton School, Lancaster Road,

Paddington, chairman Dave Greenberg said that one of the biggest retreats of the Labour government was on the question of racialism.

He said that although the Labour leadership had opposed the Immigration Act when it was first introduced, Wilson and others had strengthened it. This was one of the most reactionary retreats these 'leaders' had made.

Secretary of Paddington Young Socialists Dany Skelton described how there had been racist attacks in an area where there were some of the worst slums of

London.

The fascists, she said, had never fought against the bosses or the landlords, they were out to confuse the working class.

When the Labour Party in North Kensington expelled three members from the Young Socialists they were in fact encouraging the racialists by attacking an organisation which was fighting for the unity of all workers.

She stated that the only way to solve bad housing was to nationalize industry in the interests of the working class.

'We call on the whole of the labour movement to demand that there be an emergency Labour Party conference which would lay down these socialist policies for the Labour government. This conference should be held before the next Budget.'

National Committee member Sheila Torrance said that instead of turning their backs on Labour by not voting, the workers must fight to build their own leadership. It was up to the Young Socialists to fight for the policies passed at the recent Morecambe YS conference that were in the interests of the working class.

A member of the strike committee of the Rockware factory in Southall—where workers have taken part in a stoppage for the past week—said that the demonstration was a powerful rebuff to all reactionaries.

'You are not only fighting for white workers, you are fighting for every worker, and you are fighting the capitalist system.'

in front.

From their struggles already emerge some useful lessons for the trade union movement as a whole.

Last Saturday in Manchester there took place a conference of some 200 apprentices to consider strike action in support of their demands for increased wages, longer holidays, shorter hours, negotiating rights, and adequate training.

Their demands are elementary demands for a living wage and decent working conditions—demands which have been passed at (Cont. back page, col 5)

## Apprentices call for strike in May

To lobby AEU conferences

THE increasing cost of living hits harder every day at the working class. More than ever the workers are forced to struggle against the employers for higher wages.

Policies of the Labour government, aimed at protecting capitalism from crisis, are responsible for the rapid increase in prices. The same Labour government is insisting upon wage restraint, disguised as an 'incomes policy'.

The union leaders have signed a 'Declaration of Intent' with the employers which is supposed to commit the unions to wage restraint.

Leaders of the engineering unions have signed the three-year 'package deal' with the employers, which is a virtual wage freeze for the vast majority of engineers, without any consultation with the rank and file.

But declarations and agreements are not everything. Up to now not a single worker is known to have signed the Declaration of Intent, and it is not just that they haven't been asked!

Last week's strike of mates at the British Motor Corporation's factory in the Midlands was part of a situation which is now beginning to blow up, and which will consign the 'Declaration of Intent' to the museum.

The BMC strike ended in a victory for the employers for the time being, thanks to the intervention of the union leaders and a shop stewards' convenor, who calls himself a Communist.

But this was only one of a large number of wage claims which are beginning to come up in the Midlands' motor factories.

Like the busmen, these motor workers are recognising the need to fight on their own behalf after four months of Labour rule.

They are in a very strong position to do so. There is a great 'shortage of labour', as the employers call it, in the Midlands, which puts the workers in a very strong bargaining position.

The 'Financial Times' of

Monday this week reports that employers are seeing the need to take the offensive against these car workers.

Rising costs of materials and transport in the last few months have already necessitated an examination of profit levels, and the bosses see that their only hope is to cut wage costs.

They are in a dilemma: if the boom continues, labour remains scarce and wage increases will be won; but if a recession sets in, their profits may be reduced for more than the few months during which they would hope to discipline the workers through unemployment.

The employers' only hope of arresting an almost certain increase of wage levels locally of some 8 per cent this year is that the Labour government and the union leaders will be able to discipline the labour force.

### Breakthrough

The working class can make a breakthrough here. The 'Financial Times' complains that discontent is due, in some measure, to the fact that workers oppose the 'package deal'.

When the National Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union meets on April 27 at Blackpool it should be lobbied by all engineering workers to reject the report of the Executive on the 'package deal' and insist on all-out fight against the engineering employers.

When the trade union leaders meet at the end of April to decide on their attitude to Brown's 'incomes policy' they can be forced to reject it.

Unless this campaign is carried forward, alongside the most vigorous pursuit of wage demands, then the employers will carry forward their offensive, under cover of the Labour government and its appeals to the workers' loyalty.

### Apprentices fight

Just as the youth have been in the forefront of active opposition to the right-wing policies of the Wilson government, in the struggle of the Young Socialists, so in industry it is the young workers who find themselves out

By The Editor

WITH less than two weeks to the Budget, speculation is rising that the Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer will embark upon a further programme of anti-inflationary measures. There is growing scepticism in international banking circles on whether Britain can survive without devaluation.

The 'Financial Times' in its leading article on Monday, March 15, had this to say about the problem:

'Wall Street will welcome further assurances from the Prime Minister that the Labour government intends to use all the forces at its disposal to defend the parity of sterling. But his remarks will make little impact if they have been preceded eight days earlier by a Budget containing enough inflationary elements to threaten these defences.'

'Even business economists in the U.S., though typically less sanguine about the merits of deflation than most financial men generally, agree that Britain, having spent beyond its means in 1964, must now be prepared to tighten its belt for a time.'

talist Britain grows steadily more serious.

If Callaghan continues with his capitalist solution for inflation then this undoubtedly means a policy of increased taxation followed by a sharp increase in the cost of living. Taking place, as it would, following the increases of recent months, this would spell the end for the Labour government and practically rule out any serious possibility of such a government being re-elected if there is a General Election during the next year.

In other words, the right-wing Labour leaders are continuing to split the working class in the interests of capitalism whilst at the same time weakening the labour movement.

We repeat what we have said many times in The Newsletter, that if the Labour Party continues to operate these capitalist policies and allows prices to rise and the purchasing power of wage packets to dwindle, it will enormously weaken the labour and trade union movement in the face of the Tory offensive.

### Devaluation

Further down in the same article the 'Financial Times' remarked:

'Yet in practically any Wall Street discussion on Britain's economic situation, speculation will eventually crop up as to whether devaluation may not have to be resorted to in the not-too-distant future.'

All this kind of discussion simply adds up to the fact that the economic crisis for capi-

### No mandate

We ask again. What conference of the Labour Party gave a mandate to Wilson to raise the cost of living?

No conference gave him any such permission. The right-wing Parliamentary leaders are a law unto themselves. They go ahead completely contemptuous of the rank and file.

They are treading firmly in the footsteps of MacDonald. Before Callaghan, Wilson and Brown put any more burdens on the backs of the working people, it is not time for an immediate conference of the Labour Party to be called?

We appeal to all serious socialists in the Labour Party and the trade unions. Time is running short. Demand immediately an emergency conference of the Labour Party, before any further increases in the cost of living take place.

### 'Buddhist protest' by Detroit woman

Feeling against the Vietnam situation runs high in the United States itself. Seventy-nine-year-old Mrs. Helga Herz went to the extent of calling attention to 'the problems of South Vietnam by the illuminating death of a Buddhist,' she said in a note. She set herself alight in a Detroit street and is now in hospital in a critical condition.

## YS NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETS



The new National Committee for 1965. Left to right, back row: Paddy O'Regan (London), Joe Kearney (Southern Region), Dave Ashby (North Yorkshire), Jim Beechall (South Yorkshire), Jackie Vance (Northern Ireland). Front row: Sheila Torrance (Middlesex and Essex), Jack Williamson (North-east), Barry Evans (East Midlands), Mike Farley (North-west), Maureen Healy (West Midlands), Bob Hamilton (Scotland), Tony Gard (Wales and West). The following officers were elected at the first meeting of the committee in Birmingham last week-end: Mike Farley (chairman), Dave Ashby (secretary), Sheila Torrance (treasurer).

### Condemn U.S., says Moscow

MR. Gromyko, Soviet Foreign Minister, told MPs in London on Wednesday night that the Soviet government was willing to resume its role of co-chairman of the Geneva Conference with Britain on Vietnam only when the U.S. stops its air attacks on North Vietnam.

Meanwhile, in Moscow, the Soviet government has called on Britain to agree to issue a joint condemnation of U.S. violations of the Geneva Agreement. (The U.S. government was not party to that agreement and refused to sign it in 1954. The call by the Soviet government is ridiculed by the fact that U.S. diplomatists have used this as an excuse for intervention 'to save South-east Asia from the Communists').

### Spanish miners' pay rise?

SPANISH mineworkers have been promised a pay increase of 5s. 9d. a day for face workers and 2s. 11d. a day for surface workers. This important announcement followed the attack on a police station in Mieres in the Asturias mining district last Saturday.

THE MILNER HOLLAND REPORT



It is worthwhile recalling the atmosphere prevailing at the time of our appointment. Owing to some public scandals, having no connection with the problems of London housing, the name of the late Perec Rachman had been much in the public eye; and stories of disgraceful treatment of his tenants by him and those associated with him had been given great publicity.

Our terms of reference, however, were far wider than would justify an inquiry limited to what came to be known as "Rachmanism". They plainly required a review of rented housing accommodation in London as a whole.

# HOUSING

which found—no doubt rightly—that the government and its supporters had done nothing wrong.

'But how is this committee going to find anything out, when the people who know what is happening are too frightened to go to the Rent Tribunals or the police.'

After 18 months of work, the Committee reported last week in 250,000 words. It has certainly done its job—to whitewash landlordism and Toryism and avoid all the embarrassing questions raised by the Rachman-Profumo scandal.

Rachman himself is relegated to a few paragraphs in Appendix II. These end with the words

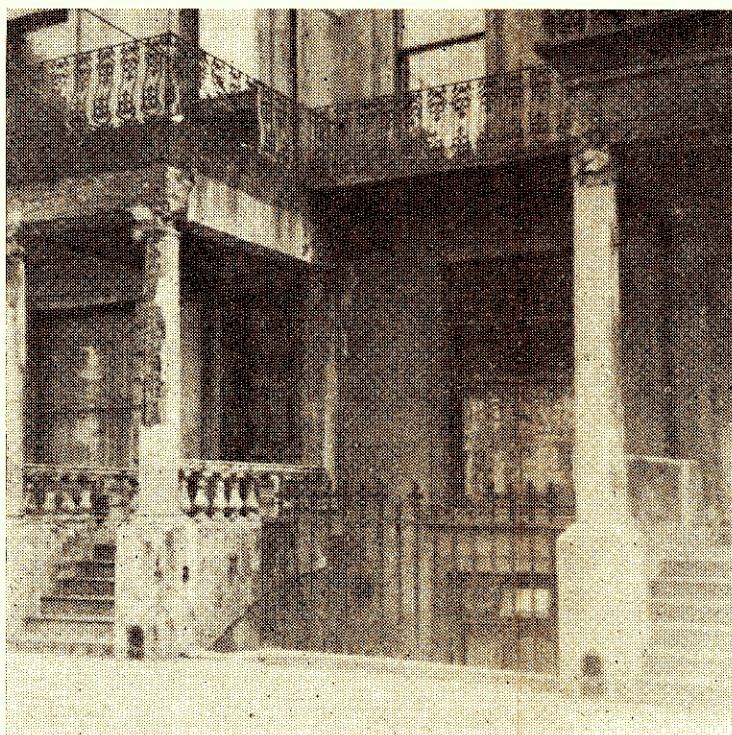
'We did not regard investigations of that description as coming within the scope of our enquiry.'

## Hard-done by

The key to Rachmanism lay in the legal use made of the 1957 Rent Act. The Milner Holland Report mentions this Act in passing but never studies its effect on housing conditions in detail.

Instead it concludes that the landlords as a whole have been hard-done by and that rent restriction would intensify the housing problem in London.

'The supply of privately rented accommodation in Greater London has diminished and is still diminishing fast. This trend will



Decaying frontage in the heart of Rachmanland (above). The true story of the elusive, unlamented slumlord was revealed exclusively by The Newsletter in July 1963 following the trial of Dr. Stephen Ward (below right) and the public 'scandal' involving the then War Minister Profumo (top left) and Christine Keeler (top right). The end of the Rachman Empire did not end the misery of families. Many have to resort to County Council 'half-way houses' (below left).

not be halted, still less reversed unless investors can be assured that, provided their properties are properly maintained and managed, they will be free from the hazards of political uncertainty and able to obtain an economic return.' (p. 227)

Of course, the Committee finds that housing conditions in many parts of London are appalling, and that many land-

lords use all kinds of methods to evict tenants so as to get a higher rent. But it hardly needed 18 months work, not to mention several thousand pounds, to make that discovery.

Capitalism has always condemned large sections of the working class and part of the lower middle class to live in overcrowded and insanitary conditions. The provision of housing, like everything else, is governed by the laws of capitalism.

Herded together in the towns, workers are forced to pay extortionate rents for the privilege of existing in such accommodation as they can find. The misery and degradation under which thousands of London families live, which come as such a 'shock' to the ladies and gentlemen of the Committee, are part of the daily life of capitalism.

## Other slums

This does not only apply to London. Perhaps Sir Milner Holland and his friends would be surprised to learn of similar or worse conditions in every major industrial city. If they were surprised by their exploration of Kensington what would they say about the Gorbals?

Taking for granted capitalism, i.e., all the causes of the conditions it is investigating, the Committee decides that the landlords need tax relief and that rents should not be controlled. Thus, at the time when the Labour government is supposed to be preparing to repeal the Rent Act, a blow is

struck against the re-introduction of rent restriction.

(The Committee did not have time to consider the recent Protection Against Eviction Act. This interim measure, as articles in The Newsletter predicted, offers no protection whatsoever.

Landlords can only be prosecuted if they go through the legal forms of giving notice to quit. Illegal eviction cannot be challenged!

In any case, the police have made it clear that they cannot intervene if an eviction is taking place since they are unable to decide on its legality.)

The Milner Holland Report is in favour of greater security of tenure. It fails to explain how this is compatible with freedom for landlords to put the rent up.

## Prejudice

A special chapter is devoted to the question of 'coloured' landlords and tenants. This is written from a 'liberal' standpoint with the effect of all such approaches: to strengthen the racialists.

Those Tory papers, like the 'Daily Telegraph', which are engaged in playing up racial issues at every opportunity, were able to make the most of the reports on some of the 'case histories' reported by the Committee.

With the aid of long questionnaires, and pages of statistics the Committee makes a great show of 'objectivity'. In reality the findings are designed to its capitalist prejudice.

They are attempts to divert attention from the scandals which brought the Committee into being, and to put a coat of whitewash on the rickety capitalist basis of London's housing.

The provision of decent



## A message to

### U.S. Negroes

# BEWARE OF JOHNSON'S VOTING RIGHTS BILL

PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S pledge that he will transmit a Bill to Congress to guarantee voting rights to Negroes will fool nobody except some self-deluded clerical rascals such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Abernathy and others.

It also shows what the Civil Rights Bill, passed in 1964, was really intended to be: a calculated fraud designed to sidetrack the mass upsurge of Negroes.

Johnson owes his Presidency to the very same 'crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice' which he now sanctimoniously condemns.

It is from the Southern states that many of Johnson's closest political allies derive. And all these men owe their position in Congress and Senate to the fact that millions of Negroes in the deep South are deprived of the vote.

In Selma and Marion—two areas affected by the Civil Rights struggle in Alabama—over 50 per cent of the people are Negro yet few have the vote.

In Dallas county, whose capital is Selma, 57 per cent of the people are Negro yet only 0.9 per cent are registered to vote!

## Foregone conclusion

President Johnson is least qualified to talk about Civil Rights. Only a few weeks before the events in Selma his administration persuaded the Supreme Court to defer judgment on the constitutionality of Mississippi's voting law.

(Under this reactionary law only 5 per cent of eligible Negro voters have been able to vote.)

The case was handed down to a federal court with the prospect of a two-year delay.

The judgment of this court will be a foregone conclusion: two out of three judges are from Mississippi.

In Selma the voter-registration drive, begun in the third week of January, has resulted in more than 3,400 arrests and unprecedented brutality against the Negro voters and religious leaders, which has resulted in two deaths.

Leading the orgy of brutality is Sheriff Clark of Selma.

In the nearby town of Marion 300 Negroes were arrested and crowded into one cell with one toilet, no heating and wet concrete floors.

All this violence has been witnessed by hundreds of federal agents and, although interference with voting rights is a Federal law, absolutely no action has been taken.

The collusion of federal officers is not the only enemy of the Negro voters. More subtle, yet no less demoralising, are the 'non-violent' tactics of the leaders of the Civil Rights movement who are trying their utmost to restrain the Negro movement and divert it into constitutional channels.

## Humiliation

Instead of organising the Negro workers and farmers to resist the violence of the Sheriffs and deputies with their own violence they ask the Negroes to humiliate themselves publicly and place their confidence in God and Johnson.

The only reason why Martin Luther King and other Uncle Toms request the despatch of federal troops is because they fear the potential revolutionary power of the Negroes more than they fear the Sheriff Clark's and the Bull O'Connors of the deep South.

It is therefore not surprising that the late Malcolm X was cheered long and loud when, in a speech in Selma, he declared:

'The white people should thank God that Dr. King is telling these people to be loving and non-violent, that he is holding these people in check.'

President Johnson's Bill is a deception. The Negro people North and South will be well advised to beware of Texans bearing gifts.

THE Profumo affair, which came into the open in the summer of 1963, shook the Tory Party to its foundations.

Accidentally, one corner of the curtain was lifted for a moment, and a small part of the corruption and decay lying beneath the surface of capitalist society was exposed.

With the aid of the Labour leaders, the ruling class hastened to cover its nakedness.

The report of Lord Denning was used to brush some aspects of the affair under the Parliamentary carpet. Wilson carefully avoided any real discussion on its findings.

Another side of the revelations was first brought out by The Newsletter and became a major issue. This was the role of the slum landlord Rachman.

## Exposure

Because members and supporters of the Socialist Labour League had been active in the tenants' movement in Paddington, The Newsletter was able, after Rachman was mentioned in the Stephen Ward case, to expose exclusively the activities of the elusive Rachman.

Rachman, who had shared a friend with Her Majesty's Secretary of State for War, died in 1962, as conveniently as Stephen Ward died later. But he left behind him a number of unanswered questions.

How did this former small-time brothel owner manage to accumulate his slum empire so fast?

Who helped to finance his acquisition of short-leased property in Paddington and North Kensington?

How was he able to obtain mortgages so readily?

Why did the police never act, despite the repeated complaints of gangster methods used to evict controlled tenants from his property?

Why did the enquiry promised by Henry Brooke—the Tory Home Secretary in 1961—never take place?

Was Rachman merely a cover for bigger and more 'reputable' financiers?

Was he connected with the Notting Hill race riots or with the murder of Kelso Cochrane?

## No confidence

To avoid answering questions like these, Sir Keith Joseph, Tory Housing Minister, used the customary dodge: he set up a Committee of Enquiry.

Under the chairmanship of Sir Milner Holland, QC, it was asked:

'to survey the housing situation in Greater London, with particular reference to the use, maintenance and management of rented accommodation, whether privately or publicly owned, and to the relations between the occupiers of rented accommodation and private landlords.'

On July 27, 1963, The Newsletter quoted the 'Daily Sketch' following a Parliamentary debate and eventual action by Sir Keith Joseph in setting up the Committee of Enquiry.

'And even Sir Milner Holland may not command universal confidence. He has sat on two Tribunals, both of



The tenants' movement in Paddington (seen below) helped expose Rachmanism



# CP 'theorist' talks of 'long-dead men'

**Peter Arnold**  
deals with  
**Bob Williamson's**  
article in 'Marxism Today'



Kamenev



Trotsky



Piatakov



Bukharin



Zinoviev

**T**HE British Communist Party has published yet another of its odious combinations of slander, distortions and lies, aimed at the Socialist Labour League.

The March issue of the 'theoretical' journal of the British Communist Party, 'Marxism Today', contains an article by Bob Williamson, taking up a number of points raised by Mrs. Betty Reid in a previous article last November.

Like Mrs. Reid's, Williamson's article is an attempt to discredit the Socialist Labour League in the eyes of the many members of the Stalinist movement who are now abandoning their leadership and looking around for an alternative.

In order to discredit the Socialist Labour League, Williamson has to distort the history of the Trotskyist movement.

He rejects the crude falsifications of Mrs. Reid and J. R. Campbell. Trotsky, he tells us, could not have been completely bad, or he would not have been a leading member of the Bolshevik Central Committee, 'foreign

the Red Army, which defended the new USSR against many invading capitalist armies.

Together with the Left Opposition, all later deported and murdered by Stalin, he fought for industrialisation and planned economy for the USSR, when Stalin ridiculed the idea.

From the beginning, he fought against Stalin's policies in China in 1927, in Germany in 1929-33, in Britain in 1926. These policies led to disaster in all cases.

## Frame-ups

Deported by Stalin, he continued the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. When Stalin began the great show trials of the 30s, to get rid of the leaders of the old Bolshevik Party, Trotsky denounced the trials as a frame-up.

Trotsky pointed out that Stalin's policy in Spain would lead to the destruction of the Spanish revolution—which it did. He pointed out that for all Stalin's illusions, Hitler would attack the Soviet Union—which he did. This occurred after Trotsky's death—murdered by having an ice-axe smashed through his skull by one of Stalin's agents.

Doubtless Stalin too, like Williamson, thought that these questions should be left to 'historians in years to come' and so killed the embarrassing revolutionary of his day, who alone

able to give them the only hope they have ever had in this society of rotten over-ripe capitalism.

The Young Communist League can certainly not attract this youth to it, for all its long articles on the 'Beatles' in its newspaper 'Challenge' and its pin-up photos of the 'Swinging Blue Jeans'.

Williamson also claims that 'serious organisational setbacks often occur when a Trotskyist group actually wins influence within a working class organisation'.

In the light of Stalin's role in the international Communist movement, this statement is ludicrous.

But let us examine more recent events in Britain.

Was it the Trotskyists or the Stalinists that controlled the Electrical Trades Union until recently? Who was it that, through personal corruption of its leading members, opened up the union to the attacks of the capitalist courts, to place the right-wing Catholic group in power in that union?

And was not the bitter anti-communism of those right-wingers itself the product of

tion to the miners, a 'serious organisational and political setback'?

And where, on the other hand, can Williamson produce examples of Trotskyist control producing the same results? Was it the Socialist Labour League that was responsible for the Communist Party losing control of the Scottish mineworkers?

## South Bank

Williamson produces the South Bank strike of 1958 as an example of the disastrous consequences of Trotskyist activities. But what are the facts of that strike?

The so-called 're-phasing' carried out by McAlpine's on the Shell-Mex site was a direct attack on the union organisation on the site and involved the sacking of 1,250 men.

The response of the Socialist Labour League was immediate.

It called for action by the Transport and General Workers' Union to break McAlpine by refusing to deliver to McAlpine's Dorchester Hotel and by blacking deliveries of Shell petrol.

It offered the strike committee

# and 'forgotten organisations'



A meeting of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party (Lenin is on the extreme right)

When the Constructional Engineering Union told its members to return to work, the 'Daily Worker' merely reported the fact without comment.

When the leadership of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trades Workers issued a warning against what they termed 'dissidents' (meaning the strike committee), the 'Daily Worker' reported it under the headline 'Troublemakers Warned'.

Sabotage activities of the Stalinists were not confined to words.

## End support

Jim Rootes, a member of the British Communist Party, shortly before his appointment as London divisional organiser of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trades Workers, voted on the London divisional council of that union to end support for the strike.

But the worst is yet to come. The strike could have been won despite all the betrayals had the supply of electricity to the site been cut off.

But the leadership of the Electrical Trades Union, leading members of the Communist Party, such as Frank Haxell, ignored a telegram from the strike committee demanding their support

and finally instructed their members to cross the picket line.

Whose record bears examination in the South Bank strike, Mr. Williamson?

Williamson talks of 'principled unity'. The policies of the Stalinists prevent them from even approaching anything like this. From the branding of the social-democrats in Germany in the 30s, as 'social-fascists' to the branding of the Trotskyists during the war as 'Hitler's agents', the record of the Stalinists on this score has been consistent.

Let us examine the Trotskyist record, on the other hand. They have always fought for the defence of the Soviet Union, despite the persecutions suffered at the hands of the Stalinists.

Trotsky's last struggle inside the American Socialist Workers' Party was precisely on this point.

The Young Socialists conference at Brighton last year rejected a motion against the Warsaw Pact on the grounds that the movement was opposed to pacifism and for the defence of the Soviet Union.

At the time of the attacks on the leaders of the Electrical Trades Union by the right wing, The Newsletter, although it disagreed politically with the CP, gave Frank Foulkes, ETU president, a complete issue to reply

to the attacks. He did not get this from the 'Daily Worker'.

## CP betrayals

On the 28th of this month, the Young Socialists will march through London, together with the Indian Workers Association to protest against the imprisonment of the members of the Indian Communist Party by the Shastri government.

Which is principled, this march, or the supplying of Soviet arms to Shastri for use both against the Indian Communists and against Communist China?

Wherever one looks the record is the same.

On the side of Stalinism there is betrayal and defeat. On the side of Trotskyism there is the struggle to build the movement to overthrow capitalism.

The Fourth International does not betray. It offers the only way forward.

There is no place for Stalinism in the working-class movement today.

It is only by fighting to build the Socialist Labour League as the British section of the Fourth International that the British working class can overthrow capitalism and end exploitation for ever.

# More lies from the Communist Party

minister' of the Soviet Union, 'sometimes leading majorities against Lenin'.

But this is enough history for Williamson. After briefly referring to the Moscow trials, without passing any judgment on them, he passes on to what he considers to be safer ground with 'these questions of history whose ever responsibility they may be, will be sorted out by historians in the years ahead.'

## Falsification

Recognising just how damaging the history of the Stalinist movement is to the British Communist Party, Williamson even chides Mrs. Reid for putting too much emphasis on 'forgotten organisations and long-dead men'.

But this is much too convenient. So the Bolshevik Party, because its history does not tally with today's Stalinist myths, now becomes a 'forgotten organisation'? The leaders of that party, like Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin, Piatakov, Smirnov and others destroyed by Stalin, become 'long-dead men' better forgotten.

Williamson knows that the old-style Stalinist falsifications of history no longer wash. He also knows that the history of the Stalinist movement is one of betrayal and that they destroyed the 'forgotten organisations' of the working class and murdered its 'long-dead' leaders.

We cannot accept this. The working class must learn from its own history. If it is to overthrow capitalism it must build a Marxist party, as Lenin did. Stalin destroyed Lenin's party, both in the Soviet Union, and throughout the world. Trotsky led the international opposition to Stalin, and founded the Fourth International in 1938 to carry on Lenin's work.

If the working class is to overcome the forces that destroyed its movement in the 20s and 30s, it must examine and understand the history of Stalinism.

Trotsky's record is the complete opposite of Stalin's. He was one of those leaders of the Bolshevik party in 1917 who fought to carry out a working-class revolution in Russia, at a time when Stalin was still saying that a bourgeois revolution was enough.

He planned the actual October Revolution, and for this, was proposed by Lenin to be the first Chairman of the USSR. He declined this in favour of Lenin himself.

He founded and commanded

threatened his power.

These questions cannot be left to future historians. They are of vital importance now.

For Stalin's actions weakened the working class internationally and opened up the road for fascism and the butchery of the Second World War.

It is because of the betrayals of Stalinism that the workers of Western Europe still live under capitalism.

The British Communist Party supported all of Stalin's actions. Its leaders supported the witch-hunt against the Trotskyists, condoned the murder of the old Bolsheviks, and, in Spain, actually took a part in the murder of Trotskyists.

The leaders of the British Communist Party accepted and praised every act of betrayal carried out by Stalin. To them, the perks that they could receive from the Soviet bureaucracy were far more important than the needs of the British working class.

This must be borne in mind to understand the betrayals of the British Communist Party today.

Williamson accuses the Trotskyist movement of leading young people to cynicism and despair.

Let us just compare the last conference of the Young Communist League to last month's conference of the Young Socialists in Morecambe.

## Rigged

The conference of the Young Communists was rigged from beginning to end.

Resolutions from branches were suppressed, discussion curtailed.

But, in any case, the conference met uneasily under the shadow of the recent mass expulsions from the Young Communist League of those members who had tried to fight for working class policies.

The conference of the Young Socialists at Morecambe was completely different.

Attended by one thousand young workers, it put forward proposals offering real prospects of victorious struggle against capitalism.

It put forward, in fact, the only socialist policies that offer any way forward for the youth of this country today.

How can Williamson explain the fact that the Young Socialists can attract and hold in serious political activity, the youth that every one else in the country has written off as 'uncontrollable hooligans', 'thugs' and so on?

Far from making this youth cynical, the Young Socialists are

Stalinism? Were many of them not members of the British Communist Party until they found the Catholic Church attracted them more?

## Ford sell-out

The net result of Stalinist leadership of the Electrical Trades Union has indeed been a 'serious organisational and political setback'.

Is not the same true of the Stalinist control of the shop stewards' committee at Ford?

Where did that lead to except the biggest defeat suffered by the working class in this country since the war?

What about Stalinist control of the National Union of Miners? Is not Paynter's support for the National Coal Board, in opposi-

on the site half the space in the Newsletter to put their case. This was accepted.

Newsletter supporters sold the paper round factories, union branches and building sites to spread the case of the South Bank strikers. This drew support from building workers all over London and from as far as Liverpool.

The Newsletter consistently pointed out the role of the trade union leaders and did all within its power to assist the strike. Such activity gave the strike the only hope it had of victory.

Contrast this with the activity of the Stalinists. The 'Daily Worker' failed to warn against the betrayals of the union leaders although the leadership of the Transport and General Workers' Union from the very start refused to recognise the strike.

# 'World Outlook' hides Walloon nationalism

**T**HE article in 'World Outlook' (a duplicated news-sheet circulated by the Pabloite 'Unified' Secretariat from Paris) for March 5, dealing with the founding of the 'Walloon section of the new Socialist Party' in Belgium, completely falsifies the situation in that country.

The editors of 'World Outlook' are very concerned to conceal from their readers just how disastrous the consequences of their policies in Belgium have been.

So, by simply reporting, without comment, they contrive to make a very poor show look like a roaring success.

The article states that 300 delegates attended the founding conference of the Walloon section of the new party, and that the main reports were given by Francois Perin and Robert Nicolas.

What the article does not reveal is that the founding of the Walloon party, separately from the rest of Belgium, as opposed to a Belgium party, was in itself a defeat for Mandel, the editor of 'La Gauche', and his supporters.

Nationalist elements in Wallonia wanted the party in Wallonia to be separate from the rest of the country as they did not want the 'Trotskyists' in Brussels to have any influence.

The man behind the separatist

tendency in the new party is Francois Perin—who so out-maneuvred the 'La Gauche' supporters, that he now virtually controls the Walloon party.

In gaining this control, Perin witch-hunted the 'Trotskyists', denouncing Mandel as being their 'leader'.

Yet 'World Outlook' merely states Perin's report 'could be characterised as rather mild'.

## QUEER IDEA

Even if we ignore Perin's role in witch-hunting the 'Trotskyists' in the new party in order to give the movement a strong nationalist flavour, an examination of his speech, as reported in 'La Gauche' of February 27, 1965, shows that 'World Outlook' has a queer idea of the meaning of the word 'mild'.

Perin's speech is riddled with nationalism. He demands a 'European Europe independent of the USA' co-operating with the Poles, Czechs, etc., who 'are also Europeans'. This will be done peacefully, he says, so the 'army of our American masters must go'.

These sentiments could be shared by General de Gaulle. Does 'World Outlook' consider him a moderate too?

On Benelux (a trading group of Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands), Perin says that it 'merely enables the Flemish and Dutch to negotiate on the backs of the Walloons'.

His verdict on the Belgian government's Congo policy is that 'the Belgian government is pushed

by the USA to carry out ugly policies that the Americans are tired of carrying out themselves'.

'We must tell the government: "You are unable to ensure the safety of our fellow countrymen who are the innocent victims of a civil war which might last for years..."

So to Perin the exploiters of the Société Générale, and its affiliates like the Union Minière, are the 'innocent victims' of a civil war unfortunately given insufficient protection by the Belgian government.

Presumably, if their safety could be ensured, Perin would be in favour of the Belgian government's Congo policy.

In fact, he makes this clear, by calling for Belgium to do its duty towards the underdeveloped countries 'by means of world institutions', presumably meaning the United Nations!

Finally, Perin calls for a unification of all 'Walloon Federalist' forces (that is, all movements demanding that Belgium be split up into three federal states).

But this, too, is a blow to Mandel and 'La Gauche', as they fought against this and managed to get it rejected at previous meetings.

The second report was given by Robert Nicolas, whom 'World Outlook', eager to give the new party a 'working class' look, describes as a Charleroi trade unionist (he is, in fact, a social worker in a school in La Louvière).

Here, too, 'World Outlook' is

misleading when it states that this report 'clearly adhered to the line of revolutionary socialism'.

Nicolas' demands included 'a plan for the regeneration of Walloon industry'. This would consist of (1) the creation of 100,000 new jobs 'especially in the new and dynamic industries' and to 'carry out the vitally needed diversification of the economy; (2) the modernisation of the roads and railways (1); (3) the rebuilding of 300,000 houses per year; (4) free medical service.

## CAPITALIST DEMANDS

This 'revolutionary socialism' could be desired by many Walloon capitalists!

In the implementation of this 'plan', he only forges the nationalization of one branch of industry: fuel and power.

But private industry often itself demands the nationalization of fuel and power, in order to cut costs.

In fact, the Italian conservative Christian-democratic government nationalized the electricity industry two years ago. No one could conceivably call that government, which took its orders from the Vatican, as 'revolutionary socialist'.

Another demand made by Nicolas is for a 'Walloon Investment Society', to carry out research and to set up 'industries of all kinds'.

Again, this is a demand which is in the interests of the capitalists.

Nicolas himself recognises this

# Industrial Newsletter

## Bus crews operate overtime ban in North-east

By a Newsletter Correspondent

ALL 14 depots of the Northern General Transport Company and Associated Companies are operating an overtime ban. This is the latest action of North-east busmen in support of their wage claim.

The discontent of the bus crews at the delay over their wage claim has resulted in the overtime ban being completely solid.

But with the help of trade union leaders the private bus companies continue to ho'd back the wage increase. The latest sell-out by busmen's leaders resulted in them calling off the national strike and agreeing to a court of enquiry.

It is now announced that the court of enquiry will begin its sitting on April 5.

In the meantime, while the companies make their profits, the busmen are getting nothing extra in their wage packets. And soon there will be a

## Dockers refuse to scab in bus dispute

THE Saturday strike which for the fourth week running was again solidly supported by the majority of bus crews employed by private companies in Central, South-west Scotland, the Borders and Lothians, was extended to three days in Gourock, Greenock and Port Glasgow.

Five hundred drivers and conductors at the Western SMT depot at Inchgreen, Greenock, decided to extend their strike in protest against the operation of five private hire buses manned by inspectors during the Saturday stoppage.

On Monday, 70 dockers expressed their solidarity with the striking busmen. The dockers were being transferred from Greenock to Glasgow for the day.

When a bus arrived at the Dock Labour Board offices to take the dockers to Glasgow they refused to board the bus because it was being driven by a traffic regulator. Three hundred drivers and conductors at the Scottish Omnibus depot at Bathgate also extended their strike. They refused to take the buses on the road because one man scabbed during the stoppage on Saturday.

At the Milngavie depot of W. Alexander and Sons four scab buses operated on Saturday, but only after the police had been called to the depot to intervene between the pickets and the scabs.

## Linwood sackings to be referred to works conference

THE sacking of 63 members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union at Pressed Steel, Linwood, is to be referred to a works' conference.

By Monday all car workers were back in the factories, except the 327 who have been sacked.

They spent the day looking for jobs and reporting to the Labour Exchange where they were offered work as far afield as Vauxhall Motors, England.

The militant struggle begun by AEU members against the right claimed by the management to sack workers at will has temporarily ended with a typical Emerson Plan deal. The 327 men are sacked and discussions will proceed, as far as the management and trade union leaders are concerned, only to arrive at a formula for keeping those sacked outside the factory.

During the strike the managements of Pressed Steel, Rootes and BMC laid off a total of 6,675 men.

This was an obvious attempt to intimidate the strikers and was backed up by the full treatment of abuse from the press and

# Midlands busmen say NO to enquiry

By Sylvia Pick

**'WE think the court of enquiry is a way of stalling us. We're getting nowhere at all with our claims; it's just one delay after another. We've got to keep our solidarity together until we get a satisfactory offer on the five points of our original claim.'**

This was how Mr. R. H. Buckley, chairman of the Stourbridge garage committee, summed up the situation facing Midland 'Red' bus workers following the setting up of a committee of enquiry by Ray Gunter, Minister of Labour, to investigate the dispute between provincial busmen and the employers of the privately-owned bus companies.

This dispute, over a claim for increased pay and holiday, and sickness and bonus payments, has resulted in nationwide unofficial strikes.

### Defiance

In defiance of appeals to crews by leaders of the Transport and General Workers' Union to resume normal working pending the outcome of the committee of enquiry, seven Black Country garages were completely closed by the ninth successive strike last Saturday. These were Stourbridge, Cradley Heath, Dudley, Oldbury, Brierley Hill, Wolverhampton and Redditch.

After a meeting of the Black Country garages on Saturday morning it was announced that crews had decided to strike every Saturday until they had a satisfactory offer.

Mr. Buckley said: 'We have agreed to continue the strikes because we are not satisfied with the action promised as a result of the recent meeting between the Ministry of Labour, the employers and our own union officials.'

### Strikes

Mr. Jim Warren, secretary of the Oldbury garage committee, said they hoped that the garages, which last Saturday returned to work, would consider taking up the Saturday strikes again until satisfaction of the claims was obtained.

## Lancashire miners fight against 'agreement'

ONE thousand three hundred miners returned to work at Bradford Colliery, Manchester, on Monday, following a dispute which involved the whole pit for a week.

The strike began when 140 piece-workers on the 58's face stopped work over an alleged difference with the management on wages.

In fact much more was involved than merely the

question of wages. The miners claim that for months there has been friction with the management over broken agreements. For this reason the strike was not waged on any single clear-cut demand.

### REFUSED

The following day the management refused to allow the afternoon shift day-wage men down the pit on the grounds that, according to the national agreement they had the right to lock other miners out once an unofficial dispute had been in progress for 24 hours.

This lock-out led to a spontaneous movement of solidarity throughout the pit. The union committee fought on the principle, 'if one day-wage man is locked out, then we are all out'.

At this stage in the dispute the colliery management was asked what national agreement or clause they were using to give themselves authority for locking out the day-wage men. They were forced to confess they did not know.

Since then the dispute centred around the fight to find this so-called national agreement, which has for some time been cited by both the National Coal Board and the National Union of Mineworkers officials in a number of disputes.

So far neither officials of the NCB or the NUM have been able to produce this agreement—and it is clear that if it does not exist then it is a secret one having been made behind the backs of the workers.

On Thursday morning a mass meeting outside the NUM

## APPRENTICES' STRIKE CALL

From page 1

the annual youth conference of the AEU for the last 11 years. The conference decided upon a resolution which included the following points.

1. Apprentices will lobby the annual youth conference of the AEU, which meets this week, to win support for action on their demands.

2. A mass national lobby of the AEU National Committee which meets from April 27 to May 7 in Blackpool, to win support for their demands from the adult workers who will by then be drawn into big struggles against the employers and the package deal.

3. A national strike of apprentices on May 10 if no progress has been made on these demands by that date.

### Role of CP

This conference and its correct and well thought-out programme were ignored by the employers' press is not surprising. More interesting was the complete silence of the 'Daily Worker', whose correspondent was present at the press conference which followed the conference.

To understand this silence we must expose the rotten record of the Communist Party in this apprentices' struggle. It should be a lesson to the whole movement for the months ahead, when

the nature of leadership will be decisive.

In the course of 1964, apprentices in Manchester and other northern towns set up, alongside the official Junior Workers' Committees of the AEU, their own 'Direct Action Committees' to mobilise for action around their demands.

During September and October the supporters of the Communist Party on the Manchester committee became fearful of the fact that they no longer controlled the movement.

More and more apprentices were attracted to the policies of the Young Socialists, passed at the Brighton conference, and many apprentices supported the YS demonstration in London on September 27.

The CP supporters then took a step which threatened untold damage to the apprentices' movement. They hastily proceeded to break from the existing Direct Action Committee, where they were outvoted and, under the guidance of the CP leadership, set up a national committee of a handful of their own supporters.

This committee called a strike of apprentices at a few days' notice, to begin on November 2.

### October conference

The Direct Action Committees responded in an exemplary way, and called a conference, to which all apprentices were invited, on

October 30.

The 300 apprentices present listened to the Stalinists give their call for a strike. These half-dozen CP supporters refused even to wait for discussion. Unable to answer questions about their supposed forces, since there were present in the hall representatives from all areas, they ran out of the conference—these were the men who were going to lead an apprentices' strike two days later!

The conference passed, without opposition, a resolution condemning the November 2 strike as an irresponsible adventure, for which no preparation had been made.

The conference resolved to build up apprentice organisation in all areas and to campaign for adult support for their demands, with a view to a strike at a later date: March 29, 1965, was provisionally agreed.

### 'Doomed'

The November strike was a disaster, engineered by the Stalinists because they feared above all the emergence of a youth leadership out of their control.

At the meeting of the Young Communist League National Committee on October 31, the then national secretary, Jimmy Reid, admitted that the strike was 'doomed to failure', but insisted that it go ahead.

For two weeks, with many Communist Party members in the industry not even informed of the strike decision, and with some of them actively opposing it, a few hundred apprentices were kept on strike with fictitious reports of support in other towns. Eventually they returned, divided and dispirited about the prospects of any future militant action.

Since then, the Stalinists have continued their wrecking activities. In Sheffield, because they feared growing support for strike action in March, they voted on the Junior Workers' Committee to support the strike, but to oppose the Direct Action Committee which was campaigning for it!

This was a sham, as was shown by their open opposition to the strike as the date approached.

Part of this ridiculous sham was to call upon the executive committee of the AEU to make the March 29 strike official.

In Belfast as their attention has been concentrated in campaigning against the proposed strike. Their members have been a hundred times more actively mobilised for this task than they ever were for the strike of last year.

### Take-over bid

Now we return to last week's apprentice conference.

The Stalinists mustered some 20 supporters from Manchester and Belfast with the sole intention of wrecking the conference and defeating the strike call.

They tried, unsuccessfully, to take over the microphone and platform from the national officers elected at the previous conference. They then settled down to argue for a postponement of the strike . . . on the grounds of inadequate preparation!

But their guns were spiked. The apprentices themselves, taking into account the growing militancy in the adult movement around the package deal and the approaching National Committee, suggested precisely a postponement!

Did this lead to unity, as one might think? By no means.

The apprentices were arguing for a postponement in order to strengthen their strike, and to allow extra time to repair the damage done by the abortive strike of November last year. The Stalinists only argued for postponement in order to split the conference.

When asked directly if they had any objections to the plans put forward they had no answers, resorting only to slanders about last year's strike. They were challenged to stay until the vote, instead of walking out, as they did last year, but they walked out once again before the vote was taken.

These Stalinists are only a tiny minority. They must not be allowed to weaken the determination of the young engineers to fight for their demands.

All workers should support the apprentices' lobby of the National Committee in April, and above all learn the lesson from the anti-working class tactics of the Stalinists. They have gone from adventure to sabotage.

All members of the Communist Party should break from this decaying leadership, whose support for the Soviet bureaucracy and the Labour government prevents it from carrying forward any of the traditions of Marxism and militant class struggle.

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## Workers picket Rockware



Pickets stand outside the Rockware glass factory in Greenford, Middlesex, where 165 workers in the sorting department were sent their cards by the management three weeks ago, following a dispute on a night shift between the foreman and men. This arose when six men were unable to keep up with a belt which was delivering bottles at 102 a minute. These workers have rejected Transport and General Workers' Union officials' proposals that they apply individually for employment and have demanded that the other 300 employees in the factory be called out on strike. Trade unionists send messages of support and financial aid to the Rockware Employees' Action Committee, 18 Featherstone Road, Southall, Middlesex.

## British United Airways strikers get support

IN support of the strike by foremen and engineers, 150 British United Airways loaders staged a 48-hour token strike this week.

A decision whether Esso tanker drivers should join the strike was to be taken later in the week.

Foremen and engineers came out on strike over the firm's refusal to withdraw dismissal notices to technicians, who are demanding the same rate as men working for the British Overseas Air Corporation.

### Newsletter Reporter

branch was held to try and pull out other pits in the district.

Nearly 20 pits in the Manchester, Wigan, St. Helens, and Leigh panels were visited and agreement was generally reached that support would be given to rescind the 24-hour lock-out agreement (if it exists) and to strike in support of the Bradford men if moves through the District Council and at national level failed to ensure the scrubbing of the agreement.

The 58's piece-workers who had originally come out on strike felt themselves to be in complete solidarity with the locked-out day workers.

The question for the whole pit had become one of support for the locked-out men.

On Sunday, however, a mass meeting voted to return to work on the recommendation of the branch committee.

### CONTINUE

The meeting felt that the best way to continue the dispute was to fight on the district council (which meets in two weeks' time) and at national level, rather than to continue the struggle without the active support of other pits in the coalfield.

A resolution was passed at the meeting declaring that if the management were to take similar action in the future under the alleged '24-hour agreement' then the whole pit would strike once again.

Such united action in the future will come to depend more and more on the ability of leading rank and file miners