

# The Newsletter

WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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B/OSL FILE

GLASGOW

THIS SUNDAY ALL TRADE UNIONISTS, STUDENTS, APPRENTICES AND YOUTH IN THE GLASGOW AREA ARE INVITED TO ATTEND A PUBLIC MEETING ORGANISED BY THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE. FOR FUTURE MEETINGS SEE BELOW

7.30 p.m., Sunday, November 7  
Partick Burgh Hall, Lesser Hall  
Speakers:  
Cliff Slaughter, Editor, 'Fourth International'  
John Robertson, Young Socialist and engineering convenor

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Docks battle

## The trade union and Rhodesian Commissions

### TRADE UNIONISTS— FIGHT BACK!

'LEGISLATION!' thunders the millionaire press. 'Legislation!' bellow the bosses. And, 'Legislation!' echoes the Ministry of Labour in its written evidence submitted to the Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations.

Yes, the facade of impartiality behind which the Ministry has so cunningly concealed itself during major industrial disputes has begun to crack and the crack has revealed a remarkable coincidence of views between the Ministry, the 'Daily Mirror', and the employers' organisations, on how to deal with the trade unions and discipline the workers.

As The Newsletter pointed out last week, the press offensive, overtly supported by Heath and covertly backed by the Labour government, is symptomatic of the present period. To save itself, big business is determined to attack the trade unions and the principles and traditions of collective bargaining, since these things stand between it and the lush profits which it so desperately needs.

This is, of course, where the Ministry comes in. Where the 'Mirror' rushes in 'Gung-Ho'-style and demagogically tries to discredit trade union practices, the Ministry uses a more subtle and insidious approach.

The evidence to the Commission concentrates on the 'unofficial' strike. Ninety to 95 per cent of all strikes are unofficial it declares.

Some people would like to illegalsify unofficial strikes: this says the Ministry, is not wrong, but 'impracticable' (1)

'... it is not practicable, nor would it be conducive to good industrial relations, to try and put a large number of people in jail.'

Should the unions be fined? Obviously not yet. Yet, 'if,' says the Ministry, 'it is in the national interest [our emphasis] that there should be powerful and responsible trade unions, any proposal that might lead to the crippling of certain trade unions in circumstances where it might well be that there was little or nothing that the union itself could do it was clearly unacceptable.'

#### WORRIED ABOUT BUREAUCRACY

That the Ministry is seriously worried about the status and role of the trade union bureaucracy in the present period is clearly revealed in the following sentence:

'Moreover, given such a situation, unions would be compelled in their own interests, to call official many strikes which now remain unofficial.' (our emphasis)

'Unofficial' strikers please note.

The way out of their dilemma constitutes the practical plan of attack of the Ministry. First, penalise the union involved, then set up new bodies with state backing if necessary to settle labour disputes: a form of compulsory arbitration.

'... disputes to be referred quickly to some sort of local tribunal or labour court, either set up by the government, under statutory powers, or set up by the two sides of industry themselves, under voluntary agreements.'

This does not by any means exhaust the gamut of anti-union devices contemplated by Gunter and his friends in the Ministry. There are plenty more. But it is enough. The Ministry has spoken not only for itself, but, in fact, for the government as well.

Trade unionists! You have been warned. The basis of trade unions is being threatened.

The employers' offensive must—and will—be defeated. Already the Lambeth Trades Council has given a lead by calling a demonstration and lobby against anti-trade union, anti-strike legislation (see report this page).

This is the only sort of policy that will help defeat Gunter and his big business friends.

by The Editor

IT is no wonder that every capitalist paper welcomed Wilson's agreement for a Royal Commission on Rhodesia.

This time-honoured trick for shelving difficult questions avoids, for the time being, the upheaval of a unilateral declaration of independence by the Smith government.

Deadlock over the terms of reference for an independence scheme, which the Commission can consider putting before the Rhodesian people, remains at the time of writing. And domination of the whites on behalf of imperialism also remains.

#### Africans betrayed

Wilson has served his big business masters well. In doing so, he has betrayed the British as well as the African workers.

Last week's discussion about whether the British government would use force in the event of a UDI in defence of African rights is preposterous and the 'Daily Worker' support for it extremely dangerous.

The fight against imperialism is a class fight.

The task of a socialist government in the present circumstances is clear and mandatory: it must suspend the 1961 Constitution, arm the Africans and sever the arteries of Rhodesian big business.

Mr. Wilson, however, will not dare do this because he and his government are bound to British and U.S. big business.

#### Followed Tories

In his speech to parliament he said that 'the Labour government has consistently followed the principles laid down by the previous government and sought to give effect to them.'

Wilson's statement was an essay in deception, designed to placate the Tories.

But what of the brave men of Labour's left?

Their silence was eventually broken by 11 MPs, led by David Ennals, who made demands for freedom of banned parties and their leaders. These demands were made only in the context of aiding the Commission.

Yet, even experienced friends of imperialism like Nyerere and Nkrumah could not swallow Wilson's canary and called it a 'betrayal'.

What was especially repugnant in Wilson's

statement was not his refusal to use military force in Rhodesia, but his desire to make the African nationalists 'work the Constitution'.

The 1961 Constitution, which restricted the vote to a handful of 'qualified' Africans, was boycotted, even by this handful.

Is it too much then to ask the left MPs to protest and vote against Wilson's treacherous proposals?

#### Combined fight

All over Africa, an imperialist counter-offensive is pushing back the liberation struggles.

To achieve a real independence, and even to achieve a vote in Rhodesia, the African people need a working-class leadership.

They must join hands with the working-class movement in Britain and wage a combined fight against imperialism.



Wage a combined fight against imperialism!

## CALL FOR LOBBY ON UNION LAW

### TRADES COUNCIL LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN FOR JANUARY 26th

By A Newsletter Reporter

LAMBETH, London, Trades Council is to launch a campaign against the anti-trade union legislation proposed by the Wilson government.

At its meeting on Monday this week, the Council carried a resolution from an affiliated Electrical Trades Union branch calling for trade unionists and Labour Party members to campaign for the cessation of payment of affiliation fees to the Labour Party unless the National Executive Committee gives a guarantee that the Labour government will not introduce the threatened legislation.

While Wilson was making his suggestion to African nationalist, Joshua Nkomo, to 'work the Constitution', white police were using dogs on Nkomo's supporters, who are obviously opposed to UDI, and to the Royal Commission.

The resolution also called for a march and lobby of Parliament on January 26.

The campaign to make a demonstration on January 26 even more successful than the demonstration against unemployment held in March 1963 will begin at once.

The Council has decided to set up a special fund and collections will be organised in union branches and in factories and sites in the area.

A special meeting of the Council's executive committee will discuss detailed plans for the campaign and will invite other labour organisations in the area to help in the campaign.

#### MAXIMUM TURN-OUT

Delegates undertook at the meeting to campaign for the demonstration in their branches and on their jobs to get the maximum turnout on January 26.

One of the main tasks of the officers and delegates during the next three months will be to encourage other trades councils to support the demonstration and take part in the campaign. This will be done through affiliated branches.

The Lambeth Trades Council is one of the largest in London with an affiliated membership of over 11,000.

The Socialist Labour League, which is itself carrying on a campaign of public meetings against trade union legislation, welcomes this great step forward by the Lambeth Trades Council on behalf of the working class.

THE shop stewards' committee at Bristol Siddeley Engines (Ansty) Ltd., Coventry, have passed a resolution opposing any legislation against the trade union movement.

#### SLL PUBLIC MEETING - SHEFFIELD

## Build leadership to fight legislation

LAST Sunday the campaign of the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists against the proposed anti-trade union legislation was taken to Sheffield.

At a well-attended public meeting in this centre of engineering and steel, well-known for the militancy and high level of organisation of its workers over many years, SLL Central Committee member, Cliff Slaughter, called for an immediate counter-attack by the working-class movement against the government's pro-employer policies.

#### Newsletter Correspondent

Laws on compulsory wage settlements and the law to enforce the Devlin Report would go ahead, though they were not in Labour's election programme.

But steel nationalization, promised in last year's Queen's speech, would certainly be missing this year.

Why? Because, said Slaughter, the proposed anti-trade union legislation was one of those things which would give 'confidence' in Wilson's government to the bankers whose loans were keeping it in power.

In this, as in all other matters, Wilson's Cabinet was carrying out capitalist policies. It was the

(continued page 4)

#### RIGHT TO UNIONS

For a century and a half, organised workers had fought in Britain for independence of their organisations from the state, for the right to have trade unions, for the right to administer and control their funds, to protect their officials and representatives, to organise in dispute against employers.

Ever since the Taff Vale judgment, the employers had tried to make a come-back, notably with the Trades Dispute Act, immediately after the defeat of the General Strike in 1926.

And now a Labour government was doing the job for them!

Gunter, himself for years a railway union official, had said last year that if the unions did not toe the line, then state intervention to enforce settlements might become necessary 'in seven to ten years' time. This same Gunter now proposed legislation almost immediately.

## RELEASE IRAN STUDENTS!

#### Newsletter Correspondent

TWO Iranians, Ahmad Mansouri and Ahmad Kamanari, are appealing against a death sentence imposed by a Persian military court.

The sentences followed a month-long trial of 14 young Iranians who are alleged to have belonged to the outlawed Communist Party.

Mansouri and Kamanari and two others were also alleged to have plotted against the Shah—the 'constitutional monarch' of the oil-rich state.

Five of the accused (12 of whom were convicted) were graduates from British universities. Like many others, they have returned to their country only to find their ideas suppressed by a dictatorship which takes full advantage of the backwardness of the thousands of workers and peasants.

The Newsletter calls on the British labour movement to demand the immediate release of these 12 students, the withdrawal of all death sentences, and the release of all political prisoners in Persia.

### The Newsletter

Saturday, November 6, 1965

'As for the proposed early-warning legislation itself, it is as well to be clear about the origins of this. It was, quite simply, the conditions laid down by the international monetary authorities, and in particular by the United States Secretary of State for the Treasury, Mr. Fowler, for the September support operations for sterling. Hence Mr. Brown's unexpected dash to Brighton to see the TUC.'

(Financial Times, October 6, 1965)

WHO does Mr. James Callaghan represent? This Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer (known affectionately in the capitalist press, and also on the Stock Exchange as 'Our Jim') made a very frank declaration over last week-end. As Cabinet Minister in a government notorious for its broken promises to the workers who elected it, Mr. Callaghan expressed his determination to keep one promise at least. Speaking to a Labour Party rally in Hamilton, Lanarkshire, he said:

'I have given an undertaking to the International Monetary Fund that we shall be in balance by the end of 1966. I

### Callaghan keeps his promise

intend to keep that promise if it is at all possible to do so.'

Labour voters will note Callaghan's diligence in keeping his promises to international finance capital.

How will he do it? He made that very clear also.

He told his audience that wages were going up about three times faster than they should:

'Despite the intentions and despite the signatures on the Declaration of Intent [to apply the incomes policy], earnings are still going up much faster than productivity.'

'In the first eight months of this year, they went up by 8 per cent. Unless it is controlled it is bound to result in an increase in prices.'

'We have tried to tackle it at its roots. Legislation we are proposing for wage increases and prices will give us an opportunity to have them examined.'

In other words, the workers have pressed and won their increases in many cases, despite the willingness of their tame leaders to collaborate with the employers. We respectfully remind Mr. Callaghan, Sir William Carron and others that we told them at the time that the only people not consulted for the Declaration of Intent, package deal and other beautiful modern Magna Cartas were the workers themselves.

Callaghan's reference to legislation as the way to stop this rise in wages confirms every-

thing we have said about the Labour government's proposed measures serving the interests of capital.

In point of fact, big business itself is very clear about the relation between these things. Callaghan himself pointed the way to attacks on the workers, with the dockers the first victims, with these remarks:

'Every time an export order does not arrive on the day it is promised, every time a price goes up beyond the price quoted, and every time there is trouble in the docks, it is a thrust to the heart of confidence in Britain.'

Now just what does this 'confidence' mean? Does it mean 'confidence' of the international bankers that the Labour government will discipline the working class? For an answer turn to the 'Financial Times' of October 6 (see quote above).

'The conditions laid down,' says the 'Financial Times'. But didn't Mr. Harold Wilson insist at the Labour Party Conference that no political conditions whatsoever had been attached to any of the loans given to his government?

Was this not a gross deception ... or was the 'Financial Times' misinformed?

Callaghan and Wilson should be made to answer and must be rejected by the whole labour movement for what they are, servants of monopoly capitalism.

BY DAVE ASHBY  
(National Secretary of the  
Young Socialists)



This article, the first of two, is based on the main resolution to be presented for discussion at the sixth annual conference of the Young Socialists, to be held in Morecambe in April 1966. By that time, the Labour government will have already made the attempt to carry its betrayal of workers in this country to the utmost limit—it will have put before Parliament proposals for legislating against the trade unions. This fact alone is sufficient to invest the next annual conference of the Young Socialists with considerable importance.

Young Socialists are opposed to any form of legislation intended to take away from the trades unions the right to strike. Its conference is assured of going on record to oppose such legislation. The Trades Union Congress and Labour Party Conference have voted in the main to accept such legislation. The Young Socialists Conference at Morecambe will, therefore, be more than a conference of youth: it will provide a rallying point for the struggle of all workers against the betrayals of Wilson and the right wing.

On September 27, 1964, 3,000 Young Socialists took part in a pre-election demonstration against the Tories. The main theme of this demonstration was the defeat of Toryism for all time by the return of a Labour government pledged to socialist policies.

Those who marched to Trafalgar Square to attend the rally held after the demonstration made clear their attitude to Wilson and his friends. The Young Socialists would not give them uncritical support, but they would be loyal to a Labour government that was loyal to the working class.

This demonstration showed the determination of the overwhelming majority of active Young Socialists to defy the vicious witch-hunt that has been launched against them by the right-wing Labourites.

After this demonstration there could have been no turning back: it was necessary to build the Young Socialists into a mass socialist youth movement independent of the bureaucracy.

All the pessimists and fake-lefts around 'Tribune' who at that time were calling for 'unity' behind Wilson and who were joining in the general appeal not to 'rock the boat', said that it would be impossible to build a socialist youth movement outside the Labour Party. They accused the Young Socialists of retreating into the poli-

main resolution for the next Young Socialist conference, 'Socialism and Youth', draws the balance sheet in this way:

'The rapid exposure of the Labour government as a government for the banks and monopolies, making the working class pay for the crisis of capitalism, throws the fake-lefts and centrists into paralysis and confusion. They have been unable to mount a single campaign to mobilise the working class against Wilson and the right wing. Their argument that the Labour government must be preserved at all costs has proved disastrous. It results in their support for the most reactionary policies.'

The record of the Young Socialists has been entirely different. We alone campaigned against Wilson's betrayal of the old age pensioners.

We campaigned publicly against the Labour government's squalid support for the American war in Vietnam and raised the slogan for full support to the Vietnam.

We organised the Morecambe conference of Young Socialists which called the working class to make a reckoning with Wilson and his gang of traitors. We carried this policy into practice in the 2,000-strong demonstration at Blackpool on the eve of the Labour Party Conference by demanding a fight against the Immigration Bill, the Vietnam policy and the trades union legislation. This has gained the support of large numbers of older workers in Britain.

**Questions answered by resolution**

What has made possible this remarkable achievement? What has enabled the Young Socialists to consistently mobilise

**Fight for better future**

Throughout its history, the Young Socialist movement has always fought on behalf of all young people in Britain against the constant attacks made on their conditions of work and leisure by the employers and their agents.

This struggle to secure for the youth a better future, free on the one hand from boredom and frustration, and on the other from unemployment and war, can only be successful if it is made part of the struggle for the ending of capitalism in Britain.

For the last 50 years, British capitalism has been suffering from a state of chronic decline. All the chickens hatched in the hey-day of imperialism are coming home to roost. Colonial possessions, which

Successive governments in Whitehall cling desperately to the Empire in its new guise of the 'Commonwealth' in the face of the resistance of colonial workers and peasants.

The Empire, that once boasted of ruling the waves, now finds itself an overall debtor in world shipping. Britain's position as 'the world's banker', established in a period when the pound dominated world markets, can only be maintained today by constant 'rescue' operations accompanied by cuts in public expenditure, domestic sacrifice and attacks on wages, working conditions and trades union organisation—politely described as a policy of 'saving the pound' or 'paying our way'.

The pound sterling is backed today by a backward economy notorious for its inefficiency, its antiquated structure, its obsolescent machinery and its inability to compete in world markets.

In this field, as in others, the very fact that Britain was first to introduce large-scale industry and modern machinery, now turns into its opposite.

This state of chronic decline is stamped on every aspect of life in Britain today. Nowhere is it more keenly and sensitively reflected than in the youth.

In the age of automation, nuclear energy and space flights, millions of young workers have to spend their time in towns and cities which ought to be converted into museums of the industrial revolution.

Four years at the secondary modern school are for most young people a complete waste of time. Only one in ten stay on at school after the age of 15. The opportunity of learning a trade is denied to four out of every five boys and the proportion is much worse for girls.

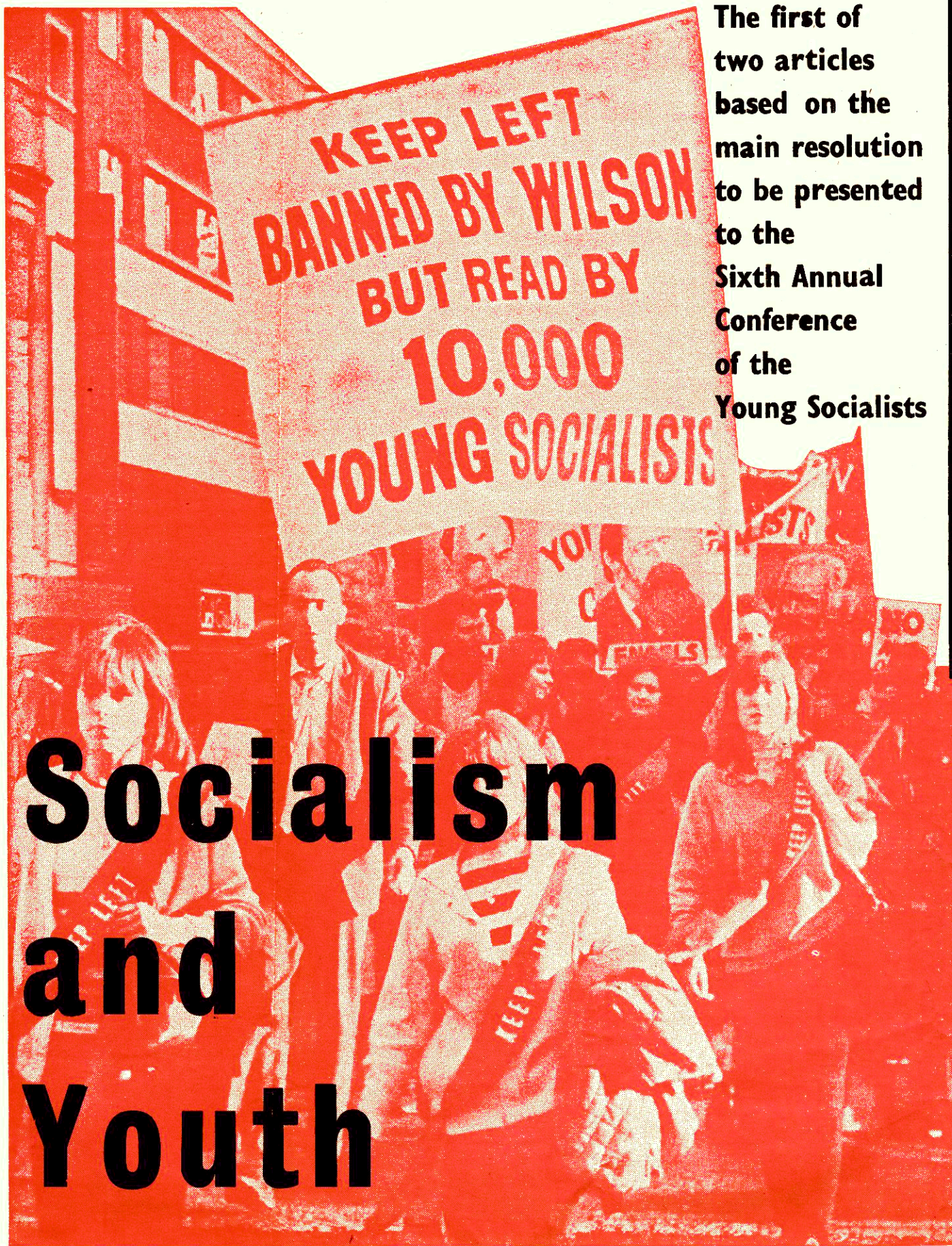
Hundreds of thousands of young people are compelled to work long hours in engineering sweat shops or to take low paid jobs in the catering trade as the only alternative to life on the dole.

Facilities for leisure and entertainment are almost non-existent on the large industrial housing estates on which many of them live. If they rebel against these conditions they face victimisation and intimidation at the hands of the police, the law courts, the magistrates, borstal and prison.

**Demands of YS for youth**

The Young Socialists fight for an immediate improvement in this situation by formulating the demands of youth and organising youth to campaign

—control by workers' organisations over technical education; raising of the school-leaving age to 16 with full grants to working-class families; free access to science and culture for working-class youth, with special arrangements for entrance to universities and



The first of two articles based on the main resolution to be presented to the Sixth Annual Conference of the Young Socialists

committees of youth, working-class and popular cultural organisations.

● The employers and their hirelings try to encourage racist ideas in youth to turn their frustration against young immigrant workers. The Young Socialists conduct constant propaganda, rallies and campaigns against the open racials and their parliamentary spokesmen. We demand: repeal the Immigration Act and withdraw the government White Paper; full rights for immigrant youth in relation to employment, education and leisure; outright opposition to any government plans to conscript youth to fight in imperialist wars; the organisation and training of British and immigrant youth, together with other organised workers, for the defence of their organisations against the fascists.

● Finally, the Young Socialists make the following demands on behalf of young working-class families: 100 per cent mortgages to be paid back at reduced rates of interest; rents to be fixed at rates which young working-class families can afford; step up the house-building programme out of the profits of the insurance companies and building societies; nationalize land, the building and building supplies industry.

In leading the fight for these demands, linking them up at every level with the struggle of all workers for better wages and conditions, the Young Socialists demonstrate in action to thousands of young workers that capitalism admits not the slightest prospect of improving their lot.

Those young workers who join the Young Socialists learn to recognise through their own experience that the struggle for their own demands involves a struggle for working-class power. In this way it has been possible for the Young Socialists to build an organised movement of opposition to the Tories, the employers and their agents in the Labour government.

It was for this reason that the right wing in the Labour Party organised the witch-hunt against youth. The purpose behind the expulsions and proscriptions, which had the full support of the Tories and employers, was to exclude from politics all those young people whose own experience quickly teaches them that they can only solve their immediate problems by waging a struggle for the overthrow of capitalism.

The ruling class requires most of all that the youth be kept away from any contact with the organised labour movement and the theory of socialism. The biggest threat to the continued existence of capitalism is precisely when the youth begin to unite with older workers behind firm socialist policies.

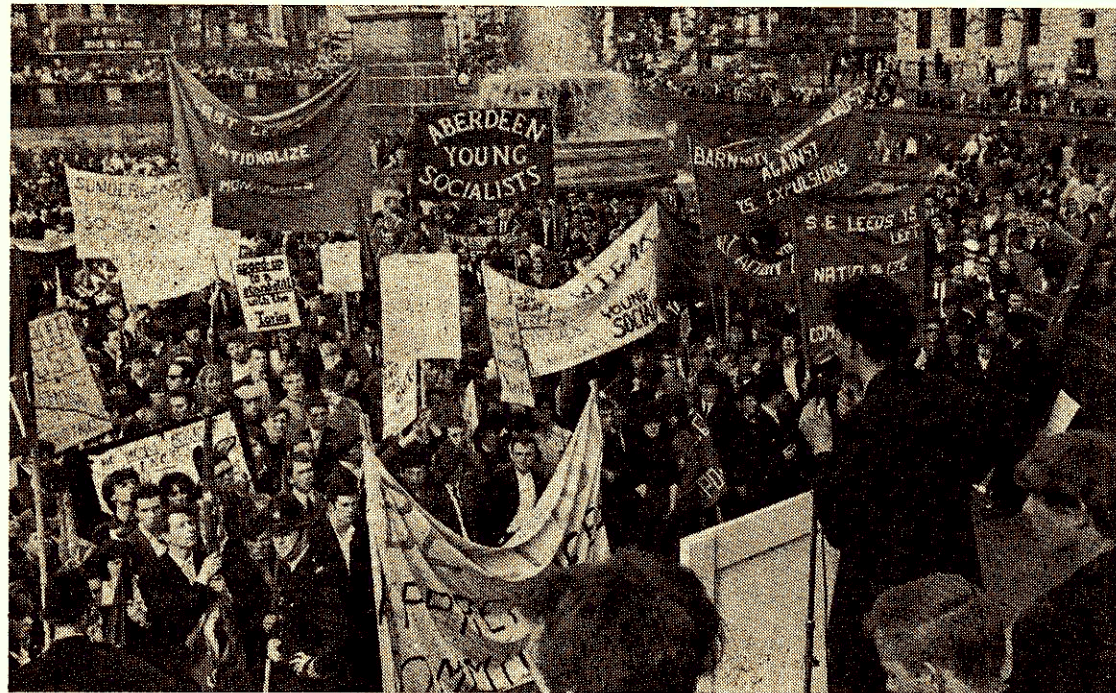
**Programme for Power**

The resolution for the sixth annual conference of the Young Socialists therefore calls openly for a programme for power.

● Only a revolutionary programme for taking power from the capitalist class measures up to the courage, devotion and self-sacrifice of the young opponents of world capitalism. Only by building a socialist society on the basis of working-class power can the demands of youth be implemented.

Youth will have no truck with the double-talk of the reformists. They reject centrism and middle-of-the-road methods: reformism on behalf of capitalism against the working class; pacifism in service to imperialist wars of aggression; with all this past legacy of betrayal the youth will settle accounts, just as the Negro youth in the United States are forced to reject the Martin Luther Kings the minute the battle has begun. Duplicitous and deceit are the stock-in-trade of those bound hand and foot to capitalist establishment. Youth provide the forces for parties of a new type, revolutionary parties which fight to abolish capitalism.

The Labour Party and Communist Party of Great Britain must be rejected as instruments for the taking of power. The entire activity of their leaders has been to act as horse-traders for imperialism. They are soiled and



September 27, 1964: In Trafalgar Square 4,000 people made clear their attitude to Wilson and his friends who were to form the next government.

tical wilderness. All these prophets of doom who only a short time ago were intoxicated with visions of parliamentary power have been confounded by the events of the last 12 months.

Not only has the basic organisation of the Young Socialists been maintained and strengthened, but a high standard of campaigning activity has also been carried out to win support for the policies of the Young Socialists within the adult labour movement. The

large numbers of young workers to fight for socialist policies in opposition to Wilson and the right wing? What lessons can be drawn from this experience?

What is the relationship of the Young Socialists to all those adult workers and trade unionists who will be drawn into struggle against trade union legislation?

It is these questions and others that the resolution for the next Young Socialist conference attempts to answer.

in an earlier period provided British big business with cheap sources of labour and raw materials, hang as a millstone around the necks of the ruling class today.

The amount of money spent on maintaining British troops to defend Malaysia exceeds by six times the money that returns in the form of profit on investment. What else can explain Enoch Powell's proposal to the Tory Party Conference that the 'East of Suez' policy be scrapped?



Carried policies through to September 26, 1965, demonstration in Blackpool before the Labour Party Conference.

on them by class struggle methods.

● For young workers engaged in production we demand a shorter working week, with ample opportunity for open-air sport and recreation; at least one month's paid holiday a year; the right to learn a trade; hours of training to be taken out of the working week; training courses at the bosses' expense and under workers' control; forbidding of all work not connected with apprenticeship; and the prohibition of all night work and arduous, unhealthy tasks.

● On behalf of unemployed youth we campaign to unite them with employed workers by demanding: unemployment benefit paid at adult rates from the day of leaving school; the opening of technical re-education centres at the bosses' expense; a full programme of public works paid at trade union rates and under workers' management; work-sharing without loss of pay.

● In the field of education we demand that the youth are prepared and equipped to face their future with confidence. We demand: abolition of the '11-plus' examination; reorganise education in co-operation with the factory

technical colleges; student status, with full maintenance grants, for all worker-students and those at school, from the age of 16.

● The Young Socialists fights for basic political rights for youth by raising as the minimum demand: the right to vote at 18 in municipal and general elections.

● In the field of leisure and entertainment the Young Socialists lead youth in a fight to develop all its physical and mental powers for the struggle for socialism, by demanding: full recreational facilities for young workers; free access to the gymnasias, sports fields, clubs, swimming pools, cinemas and theatres; all youth centres to be placed under the control of the youth themselves; premises to be made available to young workers where they can meet to discuss their problems and interests free from victimisation and intimidation by the police; elected committees of young workers, trades unionists and tenants in conjunction with local trades councils, to investigate cases of police brutality against youth; nationalization of the recording companies, dance halls, bowling alleys and cinemas under the control of



Modernisation Committee's first report out

STAGE SET FOR DOCKS BATTLE

From BILL HUNTER

LAST week every docker received through the post a copy of the first 'Docks Bulletin' issued by the National Modernisation Committee...

The bulletin declares its aim to keep the dockworker and his family informed of progress of the Committee's work.

But the docker can get very little fresh information from its general statements. Most of it consists of a repetition of the committee's aims...

Again dockers are told that the scheme is to give them 100 per cent permanency, that the dock labour boards will continue and that the 'new arrangements' will not lead to the discharge of men...

The trade union leaders, government representatives and employers on the modernisation committee must rate the gullibility of the dockers at a high level.

Reorganisation of the docks under the Devlin Commission proposals will enormously increase the amount of work turned out by the dockers, rationalising production with less employees, cutting down manning scales...

Amalgamation Already there are reports from London and Merseyside of the beginnings of amalgamation of the employers leading to redundancy among the clerical staff.

'Deal' again So, in Merseyside, for example, there will be another attempt to put forward a 'new deal'...

Car industry

kers' Union and, among others, Hugh Scanlon, supported by the left wing for AEU office.

In three month's time, this report will emerge. Like the Tory Party Conference, it will almost certainly call for Labour courts, fines for going on unofficial strikes...

Official trade union leaders will put up no fight against such proposals.

T&GWU Midlands secretary, Harry Urwin, said quite emphatically in a 'Financial Times' interview on October 18...

Now is the time to fight to defeat the Devlin Report and the plans of the motor employers, and pave the way for a socialist future.

will be an offer on national minimum pay.

The Bulletin reports with studied vagueness that 'active negotiations about this are taking place'.

What is almost certainly being discussed is the best way to tie up a package for the docker, made to look as though he is getting something but, in fact, blowing up all his hard-won rights.

'Sell soul'

As one Merseyside 'Blue Union' area committee man told the Newsletter: 'They could come out with an increase in the national minimum pay, but in return the docker would have to sell his soul'.

'Selling his soul' means fewer dockers tightly controlled by more powerful employers and their collaboratorist servants among the trade union leaders.

Local Modernisation Committees are now to be set up in each port. Once these are set up and the National Committee has gone further with its discussion on amalgamations of employers...

This, says the Bulletin, will 'consist of the abolition of other restrictions on the effective utilisation of manpower and facilities, including the fullest possible use of mechanical aids'.

Now, the stage having been set, will come the direct attack on customs like the 'welfare', on manning scales, etc. This is the real purpose of the local modernisation committee—so much for any illusions by any dockers that they have anything at all to gain by being represented on them.

The Bulletin says here quite clearly that 'the abolition of restrictive practices which are a feature of the casual method of employment is essential in the national interest, but clearly the way of doing this is largely a matter of local arrangement'.

'Deal' again

So, in Merseyside, for example, there will be another attempt to put forward a 'new deal'...

Trade union leaders who sit on these committees are not representing their members.

A real campaign for an increase in wages and nationalization of the industry would smoke out into the open the plans of the employers and all those union leaders who cover up for them by supporting the Devlin Commission proposals.



After Longbridge victory

Demand for 38-hr week spreads

By Sylvia Pick

THE mini-shift struggle has now come down to factory level in many Birmingham car and components firms.

The workers' victory of October 25, which breached the 'package deal' agreement on night working, and permitted four-night shifts to be worked by agreement in each company or factory...

At the giant Austin factory, Longbridge, BMC bosses are insisting on a 40-hour week spread over four nights of 10 hours each. Workers press for a 38-hour week to bring them into line with 4,000 other night workers at Longbridge who have had a 38-hour, four-night week under a special arrangement since 1957.

HARMFUL

When the Longbridge management were trying to force workers to report for the Friday night mini-shift, their chief argument was that four shifts of 10 hours was harmful to workers' health and increased the risk of accidents.

There is to be a further delay while a local conference on the subject is called at Longbridge. No date has yet been fixed for this. Meantime most workers are working a 36-hour week, four shifts of 9 hours.

At the BMC factory of Fisher and Ludlow, Erdington, a four-night week of 10-hour shifts has been agreed. If, however, workers win a 38-hour week at Longbridge, pressure will be on at Erdington for a similar agreement.

NO MINI-SHIFT

One thousand night workers at the Lucas component factory, Shaftmoor Lane, refused to work the mini-shift last Friday.

At another Lucas factory in Great Hampton Street workers say they will join the mini-shift ban this week-end.

Workers can win this struggle at local level, just as they won at national level, by their own determination and solidarity.

The claim for the 38-hour week, worked in four 9 1/2-hour shifts, should be pressed home without delay.

SOUTHALL LP KEEPS TORY SUPPORTERS

By Newsletter Reporter

THE Southall Labour Party has voted almost two to one against expelling the four councillors who with two others voted with the Tories to make immigrants wait 15 years to go on the council's housing list.

At the recent meeting, according to a local paper, 'the majority were in sympathy with the stand made by the rebels'.

This situation is a direct result of the strengthening by the Labour Party of the Immigration Act, and aids the fascists and racialsists in Southall.

The fascists recently broke up a Young Socialists dance. The local Ealing Council have, as a result of the fight at the dance, stopped the YS from having any more halls or rooms for meetings.

The 1/680 branch of the Transport and General Workers' Union has already condemned the council for its action against immigrants, and should be followed by all trade union branches into the area.

National Strike by Shell-Mex drivers

Newsletter Correspondent

OVER 1,500 tanker drivers at 25 Shell Mex-BP depots in the Midlands, Yorkshire, the North-West and South Wales came out on a 48-hour unofficial strike on Monday and Tuesday...

The strike was called by the unofficial action committee which, as revealed in The Newsletter last week, has been formed as the result of the initiative of the Black Country depot at Cakemore, Blackheath.

Not official

It is in no way connected with the men's union, the Transport and General Workers' Union. Leaders of the union in Birmingham disclaim all official knowledge of its existence.

The drivers' present basic pay is £13 for a 41-hour week. They are pressing a claim for £23 10s. for a 49-hour week, guaranteed for 52 weeks in the year.

Unless their claim succeeds the tankermen say there will be further lightning strikes. Their claim, put in over a month ago, has so far reached deadlock between the employers and the union.

There is to be another meeting of the conciliation committee in London on November 10.

LETTERS

Glasgow buses

I WOULD like to take up a few points made in an article of 16.10.65 in The Newsletter on the Glasgow bus workers.

It is quite clear that the Tory press has attempted to mislead by headlines such as 'Thugs attack busmen'.

The real question involved, as the article correctly pointed out, is the low wage rates, shift working and week-end working.

The Corporation has also introduced a large number of Atlantin 83-seater buses, thereby increasing the amount of work done per shift.

The point about the busmen's action is the role of the Transport and General Workers' Union officials, who have, busmen claim, now 'negotiated' the situa-

tion where conductors are instructed not to allow disorderly persons on the vehicles.

Busmen in a number of garages are setting up a rank-and-file committee in opposition to these attacks, while retaining their Transport and General Workers' Union membership.

The responsibility for these attacks lie with the Wilson government. The recent increases in the bank rate, combined with refusal to abolish Tory rent legislation (1957 Act), are placing local authorities deeper in debt.

Building programmes are being cut. In Glasgow 140 labourers in the direct-building scheme are to be laid off permanently this winter. In order to complete existing projects on inflated land values, local authority debts are shooting sky-high and interest on capital is accumulated.

The raising of rents (by 100 per cent in many cases) by the Glasgow Labour Corporation is the same as the attacking of transport workers' conditions:

both represent the betrayal by middle-class Labour councillors of the mandate, on which they were elected, in order to curry favour with the Labour bureaucracy.

All these people must be removed. The only force to do this is the working class, campaigning on the socialist policies of the Socialist Labour League and Young Socialists.

C.F. (Glasgow)

Midlands shift work

FOLLOWING on from your article on the fight for the four-night week, and now the campaign at Austin's for a 38-hour week for night-shift workers...

In 1910, the Coventry hours of work were 54 hours day shift and 45 hours nights, a difference of nine hours.

When the first reduction was won after the First World War, the day-shift hours were knocked down to 47, but nights remained at 45 hours, a difference of two hours.

The next reduction was won after the Second World War when both shifts had their hours reduced to 44 hours, the reduction to 42 and then 40 hours have been equal on both shifts.

I think it can be clearly seen from this record that the general reduction in working hours has been won at the expense of night-shift workers.

To restore the balance of even 1910 conditions, the night shift would only be working 31 hours.

One might ask the question: at what price have our so-called official leaders achieved a shorter working week? A just demand would be at least a 30-hour week for night workers.

Coventry AEU shop steward

DUBLIN

Protest march over jailed P.O. men

Tense atmosphere in Eire

From our Dublin Correspondent

SAVAGE action against strikers and demonstrators in Dublin has created a tense political atmosphere in the Irish Republic.

Two members of the Irish Telephonists' Association, imprisoned in Mountjoy Jail, Dublin, after disobeying a High Court order forbidding the picketing of Post Office premises...

In addition, six other members of the Association have been fined £10 under the Offences Against the State Act for picketing the Dail (parliament).

The Association is striking for recognition from the government—the employers in this dispute. Two protest marches—both involving several hundred workers—have taken place.

Amongst the marchers were large groups of dockers, busmen and factory workers. A significant feature also, was the number of youth taking part—75 girl operators from two telephone exchanges, members of the Post Office Workers' Union, walked out of their jobs on Saturday to join one of the marches.

Busmen and dockers are considering strike action in support of the Irish Telephonists' Association and resolutions condemning the government have been passed by trade union branches throughout the 26 counties.

BATON CHARGE

During last Saturday's protest march the police made a sudden, unprovoked and savage baton charge on the marchers. Naturally, feeling against the police is now running very high.

The militancy of the workers stands in stark contrast to the treacherous attitude of the trade union bosses and of the Labour Party.

Leaders of the Post Office Workers' Union (from which the Association is a breakaway), refuse to support the Association at all.

The Labour Party's attitude is exemplified by the action of one official who, instead of aiding the fight against the government, restricted himself to fostering the illusion that the basis of the strike was an inter-union dispute between the Post Office Workers' Union and the Irish Telephonists' Association.

In response to this, the Association has stated categorically

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servant of big business against the working class.

All Socialists must make their minds up to fight now against the Wilson government, by supporting and joining the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists.

It was highly dangerous to wait for the new laws to go through with the complacent assumption that the workers would make their implementation impossible.

These MPs should threaten to bring down the government on every issue in parliament until Wilson, Gunter and Brown withdrew the threat of legislation.

KEEP SEATS

Instead, they were going to keep their comfortable parliamentary seats, and encourage workers to risk imprisonment and heavy fines after the law was passed.

Of course, it was true that it would be impossible to lock up hundreds of thousands of strikers, but the law would intimidate and inhibit workers' organisation, and strengthen the bureaucracy against the membership.

The time to fight was now, said Slaughter. It was no good relying on any of the traditional leaders like Woodcock or their half-hearted opponents in some union elections, the Communist Party. Their reply to the 'Daily Mirror' amounted to a capitulation.

Woodcock, interviewed on television about the 'Mirror's' attack on 'selfish' workers, had this to say:

'There is too much truth for my comfort. I think, like most general statements, it is an exaggeration, perhaps even a gross exaggeration. But I am bound to confess that there is enough truth in it to give me a great deal of uneasiness.'

He was echoed by Arthur Horner, for his whole life a member of the Communist Party, now retired from the secretaryship of the National Union of Mineworkers:

NEED OF THE DAY

The alternative to this 'official' leadership was the real need of the day, said Slaughter, declaring confidence that in the struggles to press wage claims and organise a political struggle against the Labour government's plans, this alternative would be built.

The Tories were having it both ways. They used the housing and mortgage situation to break voters from the Labour Party, at the same time leaving Wilson in power to carry out laws against trade unions, laws which the Tories could not have carried through.

'We must change the alternatives before the working class,' said Slaughter. 'Appeals for loyalty to Labour are an abandonment of leadership. Loyalty to Wilson must be broken and the leadership built for a new alternative, a Trotskyist alternative.'

'In the struggle against legislation, and against the reactionary policies of Wilson on immigration, on Vietnam and every other issue, this leadership will be built.'

The audience expressed its agreement with this prospect in giving a collection of £21.