

The Newsletter

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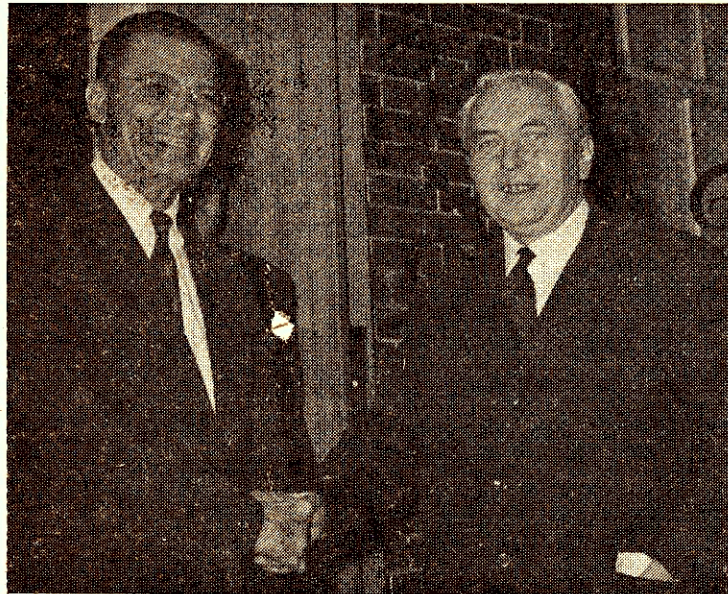
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FOR
BOLSHEVISM?
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TO SMITH
—a historical
outline

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SHOWDOWN
ON DOCKS
CANNOT BE
POSTPONED

PUBLIC MEETING
MANCHESTER
Sunday, December 12, 7.30 p.m.
Chorlton Town Hall,
All Saints
Speakers:
Cliff Slaughter, Editor, 'Fourth
International'
Dave Ashby, national secretary,
Young Socialists



The Atomic Handshake? Wilson meets McNamara, U.S. Defence Secretary, outside No. 10 Downing Street before McNamara's latest visit to Vietnam.

THE VITAL QUESTION ON VIETNAM

HAS WILSON GIVEN NUCLEAR GO-AHEAD?

By JOHN CRAWFORD

Is the Wilson government preparing its biggest betrayal of all? Tied by billion-dollar threads to U.S. imperialism, have the Labour leaders given the go-ahead for nuclear weapons in Vietnam?

This is the question raised by the world tour of U.S. 'Defence' Secretary, Robert Strange McNamara. He visited Saigon on November 28, returning to Washington via the bomber base at Guam.

But his Vietnam visit followed discussions with the NATO powers—starting with Britain. What did Harold Wilson, one-time 'left', discuss with the man in charge of the brutal imperialist war against the Vietnamese workers and peasants?

NOT IGNORED

The question of a European H-bomb was certainly on the agenda, both in London and Paris.

But Vietnam could not have been ignored.

Recent reports from Washington stress the growing desperation there at the defeats suffered by U.S. forces at the hands of the Vietcong.

The war was once planned to end in December 1965.

That was two years ago when U.S. 'advisers' in South Vietnam numbered some 15,000. Now, when 170,000 U.S. men are in action with 600,000 South Vietnamese troops, McNamara tells the world that 'it will be a long war'.

And so, as the casualty lists lengthen, the American ruling class debates whether to try to find a compromise or step up the slaughter.

Already, another 100,000 Americans are expected to be shipped out to Vietnam in the new year.

But more than troops are involved here. The U.S. Seventh Fleet, operating off the coast, comprises 125 warships, including three aircraft carriers.

One of these is the nuclear-powered U.S.S. Enterprise.

Four hundred strike planes operate from these carriers.

The further 'escalation' of the war undoubtedly raises the question of adding to all the other horrors practiced on the Vietnamese people by using atomic weapons.

Since they see no way of bringing Vietnam under their control, the imperialists are prepared to wipe it off the map.

Wilson has gone along with all the actions of U.S. imperialism in South-East Asia so far.

What are his views on this new possibility?

RIGHT TO ASK

We have a right to ask.

After all, did not Clement Attlee, when deputy to Churchill, agree to the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atom bombs?

Was it not the Attlee government which, without even pretending to consult the labour movement, started development work on the British H-bomb?

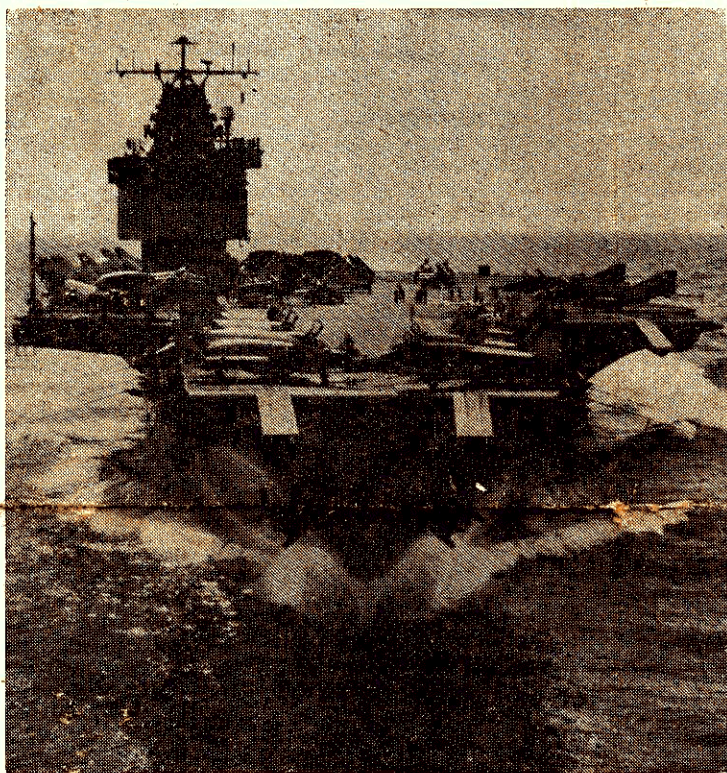
Imperialism has already shown what it is prepared to do to hold on to its power and the right-wing Labour leaders have always acquiesced.

Those Labour MPs who, while bleating about 'peace' have continued to support Wilson's administration with their votes, must come off the fence.

Wilson and Stewart belong not with Labour, but with Johnson and McNamara and their H-bomb threats.

The 'lefts' should stop faking and cast their votes in Parliament against this reactionary government.

The whole working-class movement must be aroused to throw Wilson and company out of its ranks.



The Atomic Aircraft Carrier. The U.S.S. Enterprise the largest atomic-powered aircraft carrier in the world is now operating with the Seventh Fleet off the coast of Vietnam.

VIETNAM: VOTE AGAINST WILSON

'LEFT' MPs attacked their leaders' Vietnam policy at a meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party on Wednesday. But criticisms were softened by 'polite and moderate terms', according to Ian Aitken in Thursday's 'Guardian'. John Mendelson, MP for Penistone, urged Prime Minister Wilson to tell President Johnson that Britain insists on the unconditional cessation of U.S. bombing attacks on North Vietnam and an assurance that the Vietcong will be invited to any peace negotiations. But such demands mean nothing as 'polite' demands. These critical 'lefts' have to take a stand on Vietnam by voting against Wilson's support of U.S. aggression, even if it means bringing down the government.

HOUSING POLICY IS RACIALIST

—say Lambeth Trades Council

LAMBETH Trades Council has taken a firm stand against the local borough council's recent document on housing called: 'Immigration from the Commonwealth'.

The council has suggested that its housing problem—it has 13,500 families on its fast-growing housing list—is aggravated by the influx of coloured immigrants and that 'a lasting solution to these major concentrations can only be achieved by dispersal throughout Greater London and the provinces'.

To carry out its responsibilities to these workers (i.e., give them decent housing) might well be regarded by the public within the Borough as giving quite unfair consideration and priority to the claims and difficulties of these people.

Divides workers

In a press statement given on Monday this week the Lambeth Trades Council says that the borough council document 'divides off sharply one section of workers, who are victims, not causes of the problem, and invites the remainder not only to blame them for the capitalist crime of the housing situation, but even to hound them out of the borough.'

(Continued on back page)

JANUARY 26

LOBBY OF PARLIAMENT

Vital stage in fight against capitalism

By CLIFF SLAUGHTER

THE initiative of the Lambeth Trades Council in calling a lobby of Parliament on January 26 against the proposed laws on wage control and trade unions is being acclaimed by trade unionists all over the country.

On Tuesday, November 30, the Sheffield District Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union voted unanimously to support the lobby and there are many militant engineers in that city who will work for a large delegation to back up this support.

During the 'fifties', when the Tories were in power and the economy was booming, factory workers were called out on one parliamentary lobby after another, usually under the leadership of Communist Party or 'left-wing Labour' (of the 'Tribune' type) members and sympathisers.

UNEMPLOYMENT

In 1963, the first dose of unemployment for a generation, even though it remained at only one-quarter of the figure of the '30s, brought a new and immediate response.

On March 26, 1963, many thousands of workers responded to the call of the Trades Councils of the north-east region to lobby parliament.

It had been intended by those who called it that this lobby should be just another of the old type—a long queue outside the House of Commons and a few arguments, violent or otherwise, with MPs.

But changes had taken place in the working class.

Over 20 years of full employment, with no major defeat for the working class, meant that the workers had high expectations and were prepared to defend them.

Not only that: in the Young Socialists and the Socialist Labour League, with their papers 'Keep Left' and 'The Newsletter', there was being built a political leadership which was determined to fight in a revolutionary way, basing themselves on the ability of the working class to struggle.

In our epoch, the question of political power of the working class is raised by every clash with the employers.

It was this drive towards work-

ing-class power, the rejection of class-collaboration, which differentiated these non-political tendencies from both the Labour Party and the Communist Party, with its 10-year-long marriage to 'the parliamentary road to socialism'.

Into the middle of the protest lobby on unemployment, there-

(Cont. page 3, col. 1)

Support for lobby

OTHER organisations which have added their support to the January 26 lobby, and have passed resolutions opposing legislation against the unions include:

The Clydebank No. 4 branch of the NUGMW which covers the majority of engineers in the Singer works; the North Glasgow branch ETU; the Clydesdale Television Engineers' Works Committee, Edinburgh; the Croydon, Surrey, Trades Council; the South-west London CAWU branch; the London School of Economics Socialist Society; the Birkenhead No. 7 branch of the United Pattern Makers' Association.

Most union branches are sending further resolutions to their union executive committees and to local trades councils calling for support for the lobby.

BOOKS EVERY WORKER SHOULD READ BY LEON TROTSKY

The Age of Permanent Revolution: A Trotsky

Anthology (a collection of vital writings) 9s. 6d.

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SEVEN HUNDRED IMMIGRANTS SACKED

After strike over suspension

Newsletter Correspondent

SEVEN hundred workers at R. Woolf and Company, Hayes, Middlesex, went on strike last Wednesday after the alleged suspension for three days of one of their fellow workers for being ten minutes late.

On Tuesday morning this week all the men are reported to have received their cards.

According to a report in the 'Weekly Post', Southall, a document issued by N. S. Hundal, the convenor, claims that over the past two years the management at Woolf's have continually attempted to break up their trade union organisation.

The document puts forward the following reasons for the strike:

1. The management has continuously over the 2 years, given preferential treatment to non members and over the

same period there has been constant victimisation of shop stewards. We are therefore demanding 100 per cent trade unionism.

2. Many of our members are regularly taking home only the bare minimum, despite the fact that they are always being asked to work harder and in fact have been doing so. Whilst this has been going on, wage claims for the lower paid workers have been pending for very long periods; one such claim has been pending for over a year. We are demanding these outstanding claims are settled at once.

A further point states that all agreements between the employers and the workers must be honoured.

The majority of the workers at Woolf's are from India and Pakistan and they organised themselves into the Transport and General Workers' Union.

TOLD TO GO

On Tuesday the strikers were told to go early to their Transport and General Workers' Union branch 1/686 biennial general meeting, where they were to be informed of the latest developments in the strike.

After a discussion on the strike, the several hundred Woolf's men, who had turned up to the meeting were told to go home by a union official and did so.

When this action was questioned by two members of the branch they were told that the hall was not large enough.

One of the members moved that the business of the meeting—the election of officers—should be postponed for two weeks and that a larger hall should be found.

But the chairman is reported to have refused to accept the motion.

The two members continued to object, on the grounds that the militant members of the branch were being denied their rights, whereas at least one member of the British National Party was in the meeting.

A union official then allegedly called the police into the meeting and the two trade union members were removed.

Full support must be given to the Woolf strikers by the labour movement. T&GWU members must also ensure that they enjoy full union rights.

Not sanctions — Arms!

THE seriousness with which the Wilson government intends carrying out the farcical sanctions against the Smith regime in Rhodesia was brought home when his 'left' lap-dogs revolted on Tuesday evening over the movement of crude oil by the British Petroleum tanker, 'British Security', to Rhodesia.

Wilson claimed that stopping 'British Security' might harm Zambia, and twice, in Parliament, he said that stopping the tanker would be only a moral, ineffective gesture.

This contempt of the right wing for the rights and safety of the African workers and peasants must be answered in Britain not merely by effective sanctions carried out by British workers, but the raising of the demand of arming the Africans.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Successful series draws to close

THE last in the highly successful series of Socialist Labour League public meetings, held throughout the country over the past two months, will be held in Manchester this week-end.

Youth, students and adult trade unionists have crowded into these meetings to hear SLL and Young Socialist speakers outline a socialist policy to answer the deepening crisis of imperialism.

The immediate questions dealt with by the speakers have included the proposed legislation against the trade unions, the betrayal of the working class by the Labour government, which now moves into open attack, and the burning international questions of Vietnam and Rhodesia.

Speakers have maintained that, because of the Wilson government's subservience to international finance capital in the name of 'the national interest' and 'saving the pound', big attacks have been made on the working and living conditions of the British working class. It has also led to the British government's support of U.S. aggression in Vietnam.

This betrayal, speakers said, is more blatant than that of the MacDonald government of 1931.

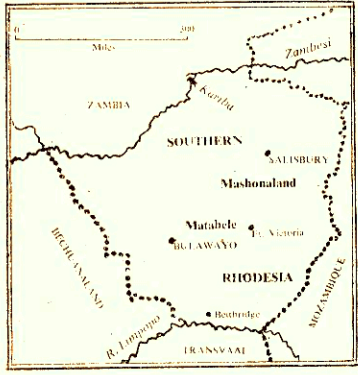
Speakers declared that to answer these betrayals, the working class must clear out the Wilson government through a fight for socialist policies, and, in this struggle, build an alternative leadership of the working class.

By taking up this struggle against legislation against the unions, against the Devlin Report and Immigration Act and demanding nationalization of all the basic industries, the British working class would also immeasurably strengthen the struggles of the colonial workers.

At the same time, the SLL and YS still put forward the slogans of 'Victory to the Vietcong' and 'Arm the Africans' and declared full support to the struggle being waged by colonial workers and peasants against imperialism.

All these policies are contained in the manifesto of the Socialist Labour League 'A Socialist Policy for the Crisis', available from 186a Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4, price 3d.

RHODESIA



From Rhodes to Smith

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT FROM SOUTH AFRICA



Times certainly have not changed in Rhodesia over the decades. There is no difference between the treatment meted out to African workers by white Rhodesian 'authority' today than the brutal methods used last century to move the African peasants from their land.

a historical outline

THE history of how British imperialism conquered Rhodesia is important for many related reasons. Among these are that it shows the historical nearness (only two generations old) of the origin of the great popular demand for the re-distribution of the land—the agrarian revolution.

This demand first arose when Britain plundered the Matabele and Mashona tribes of their communally held land and converted them into landless labourers and peasants without any rights in their own birthplace.

It is especially important to recall this land robbery by force when entire pseudo-analytical articles on Rhodesia, written from a neo-Marxist viewpoint, make not a single mention of the agrarian revolution in Zimbabwe's struggle for independence. They call for the peasants to ally themselves with the workers without giving the peasants a single good reason (and there is only one: land).

COLONIAL FASCISM

A second sound reason for a reminder of what happened 70 years ago in Rhodesia is that this fairly recent conquest was so bloody and brutal. The subsequent subjection of the African people by the British was carried out with such violence and by brute white-supremacist dictatorship, that to imagine that the Smith regime is any worse or any different or any more dictatorial than the colonial reign of terror, is merely to be a victim of British chauvinism in yet another form.

Smith is a continuation of Rhodes.

The Governor is a continuation of Baden Powell.

Under British rule there never was any democracy or equality for the Africans.

Imperialism has always used fascist methods in the colonies. To suggest that the use of dictatorships—one-party or other-

wise—or fascist governments in the colonies is something new, is to forget that fascism itself in Europe was the importation into the imperialist countries (Spain, Italy and Germany) of the system of rule long used in the colonies.

A third timely reason is that Rhodes used both white and African agents to achieve conquest and to set up the slave-colony which Smith now manages for Britain as an 'independent' state.

Against this history, to talk of 'neo-colonialism' as against the Leninist term 'semi-colony' is both confused and confusing.

A recent instance of such confusion, among many others, was the African nationalist illusion that Verwoerd and Co. of South Africa would be upset by 'neo-colonies' on their border and for this reason Britain chose to keep Rhodesia 'white'.

Verwoerd, in fact, is not worried by this at all and, indeed has got four 'African states' on his border, practically: Bechuanaland, Basutoland, Swaziland and Malawi.

He gets on excellently with their rulers, has some of them in his pocket, and has had equally amiable relations with the Congo

government, where his white mercenaries are not unknown.

Semi-colonialism is now 150 years old, almost, since the days of the Monroe Doctrine when 'Latin' America was engaged in her 'long, bloody and protracted struggle' for political independence. The people of India and many other countries were to repeat this struggle in this century.

It began in the very struggle against conquest and dispossession, including that of Matabele and Mashonaland—i.e., Zimbabwe.

UNEQUAL FIGHT

The conquest of Rhodesia was prepared by the conquest of South Africa. The crushing of the Xhosa, Sotho, Tswana, Zulu, Khoi-Khoi (mis-named 'Hottentot') and Batwa (mis-named 'Bushmen') tribes had taken Holland and Britain, and their spawn, the Boers, two full centuries.

The record of the heroic and prolonged resistance of the Batwa, Khoi-Khoi and Bantu tribes against their dispossession and enslavement in South Africa and Rhodesia is documented in '300 Years' by 'Mnguni', a three-volume history of South Africa first published in 1952, 300 years after the seizure of the Cape by the Dutch under Jan van Riebeeck.

By the time British imperialism struck at Rhodesia she already had not only conquered South Africa—with only the Boer War ahead to make the conquest formal—but had by this time become master of the world's largest diamond and gold mines and had established a flourishing industrial economy, with rapidly growing cities and factories and mines.

She had also by then practically completed her conquests in Asia. Hence the Africans in what is now Rhodesia were facing impossible odds when the British crossed the Limpopo river.

By this time, too, the machine gun had been used in colonial conquests and the African people had, at most, some rifles and dynamite, apart from their outmoded assegais and shields.

During the days of Tshaka, the Zulu tribal monarch, Mzilikazi had broken away from the then forming Zulu kingdom.

In the 1820s Mzilikazi created a proto-feudal order, with the Bapedi, Bangwato, Bakwena, Bakgotla, Baralong and Batlokwa tribes rendering tribute in return for retention of their lands.

In the 1830s the first Trekboer invasions burst into this developing early feudal system.

Mzilikazi defeated Liebenberg and Trichart and the British Governor at the Cape D'Urban, was forced to protect the Boers from further humiliations by drawing up a 'Treaty of Friendship' with Mzilikazi in 1836.

This did not deter the Boers and in October 1836 Potgieter attacked Mzilikazi's camps and was duly routed, losing about 5,000 cattle and 50,000 sheep (previously stolen from the Bantu) at Vechtkop.

But then, with the assistance of the missionaries, the Boers won battle after battle in a section of the Baralong of Moroka, of the Korannas, the Batlokwa and the Griquas and won a now much-celebrated Boer victory at Mosega in January 1837.

In this battle the Boers killed 400 old men, children and women in cold blood.

In November of 1837, on the Marico river, Potgieter and Uys, assisted by Baralong spies, brought down 500 of Mzilikazi's crack troops.

It was the same old story in Africa—now being repeated at a different level again: We were never defeated by the imperialists alone, but always by ourselves as well—by our own divisions, by treachery in our midst.

Mzilikazi, already weakened in addition by an attack by Dingaan, then withdrew across the Limpopo into what is now Rhodesia. His well-ordered late tribal, early feudal independence was recognised by the Boer Potchefstroom Republic in 1846.

Thus the Matabele of Mzilikazi was the first recognised government of Rhodesia.

Eastwards and north lay many other tribes and also the ruins of the very old African-built civilisation of Zimbabwe, ruled under the Monopmotapa kings and ravaged, African historians believe, not by the Matabele, but by the Portuguese gold-seekers and conquistadores. In September 1868 Mzilikazi died and was succeeded by Lobengula.

MOFFAT

In 1880 the Boers broke the 1846 treaty of independence by raiding Lobengula's territory.

It is worth repeating that the so-called 'white man' did not find empty territory anywhere in Southern Africa. He stole it from African tribes who owned the land collectively, per tribe, and who occupied the country in large numbers long before the first 'white men' arrived.

In July 1887, the Boer, Grobler, got the right to farm in Lobengula's area. Under Bantu law, there was no private property and Grobler had no title deeds to

his land. But the missionary, Moffat, from Kuruman, fraudulently tricked Lobengula into 'signing' a treaty which, in English, purported to give the British High Commissioner in the Cape control over Lobengula's right to 'cede' land—a trick aiming at a virtual declaration of ownership by Britain over Matabeleland.

The concession hunters, Rudd and Beit (partner of Rhodes) followed up by getting similar bogus 'concessions' out of Lobengula, including a monopoly of all minerals in Matabeleland.

For the Matabele, these treaties did not exist as private property treaties and could not exist as such, under tribal law, and Lobengula protested vigorously when the British interpreted his 'consent' as agreement to a deed of sale (which did not even exist under Matabele law, with regard to land).

In 1889 the powerful British Chartered Company was formed by Rhodes and dispatched Jameson with troops to force Lobengula to allow the company to enter Matabeleland. Lobengula refused, after his experience with previous treaty-makers and the missionaries. But Rhodes was determined.

At the same time that Lobengula was dying, Rhodes gave a victory thanksgiving at the Cape Town city hall in which he gave special thanks to the missionaries for the unanimous support of the religious denominations in Mashonaland—religious denominations representing the Church of England, the Roman Catholics, the Wesleyans, and, if I might say it, the Salvation Army.

He praised Moffat who had blessed Rhodes' land-robbery army with these words: 'Your men go as liberators to do the work of the Aborigine Protection Society.'

The church, which paved the way for British imperialism into Rhodesia is now not less active in trying to preserve British hegemony in Rhodesia by subverting the vital struggle to drive Britain out of Zambia and Rhodesia into 'constitutional channels'.

1896 REBELLION

The British drove the Africans off mineral lands, rich in loam soil, impoverished their farms, slaughtered their cattle under the pretext of rinderpest, shot down in cold blood women demonstrators who refused to have their cattle destroyed, and rounded up the people as if they were cattle for compulsory labour service.

The murder of the women sparked off the rebellion in March 1896. It had been well planned and timed to take place during Jameson's absence on the absurd 'Jameson raid'.

British troops received the order: 'Shoot down natives indiscriminately.'

In May the Boy Scout founder, Baden-Powell, took the field together with Rhodes against the Matabele. After tremendous losses, the chiefs were disarmed and, after two negotiations, 'peace' (70 years of Crown colony war) was signed in August 1896.

The neighbouring Mashona tribal resistance continued for yet a further year, before being subdued by machine-guns and the use of treacherous African troops. Officially, 8,000 Mashonas were killed by the British in crushing this heroic rebellion.

By 1888 it was all over. The British resumed their land plunder, forced labour, cattle-culling, land taxes, introduced hut, poll and wife-taxes to 'smoke' the people out of the reserves to slave for the farmers and mining companies, made the 'white man boss', introduced colour bars at most levels, starved the Africans of education and Rhodesia became what Plomer once called:

'This land where an acre of gold is worth a thousand souls, and a reef of shining dust is worth half a people, and the vultures are heavy with man's flesh.'

By building the revolutionary leadership in the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists, and fighting for a Trotskyist daily newspaper, we are involved in the most important task of all.

The lobby of Parliament on January 26 will mark a great step forward in the struggle and experience of the working class in defeating its false reformist leadership on the road to struggle for power against capitalism.

There is a contradiction between the real situation (Labour government acting on behalf of big business) on the one hand, and the outdated ideas of loyalty to the Labour Party on the other.

This contradiction will be resolved by making ideas in the support of the majority of trade unionists cannot hope to retain that support if it continues to take the side of the employers against the unions.'

Mr. Elvin wrote 'as a Labour Party member for 40 years and a trade union official for over 30'. The old relation between the reformist Labour Party and the trade unions is going, never to return.

The executive committee of the Bakers' Union, meeting on November 28 carried a resolution which included the following words:

'We are dismayed to see our government—because we are lifelong socialists—ranged on the side of big business against our tiny union!' ('The Times', November 29, 1965)

Writing to 'The Times', Mr. George H. Elvin, general secretary of the Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians, had this to say on commenting on the bakers' statement:

'A government elected with

JANUARY 26 LOBBY OF PARLIAMENT

A vital stage in the fight against capitalism

From page 1

fore, a major political break was introduced. The 2,000 unemployed youth and Young Socialists who marched did not carry slogans appealing for the direction of 'new industries' to areas of high unemployment as did those under the influence of the 'official' Labour and Communist Parties.

They called instead for unity of the employed and unemployed, for class action to bring down the Tory government, and socialist policies of nationalization to take away the control of the economy from the capitalists.

LEARNED A LOT

These thousands of workers fought all day against the continuous efforts of hundreds of mounted and foot police to remove them from Parliament Square.

On that day many workers, young and old learned a great deal about socialist roads to parliament, if not parliamentary roads to socialism!

The lobby had a very large impact on public opinion, and strengthened militant workers everywhere.

The Trades Union Congress responded with new regulations confining the organising rights of Trades Councils to their own localities. Somebody was scared.

The Young Socialists went on, even after the pre-election Tory boom brought unemployment down, to fight for socialist policies. While the other 'left' groups were lining up behind Wilson and telling the workers not to 'rock the boat', the Young Socialists and the Socialist Labour League warned that Wilson would

sell out to big business, and called for the labour movement to insist on socialist policies.

The working class retained its fighting strength, but narrowly returned a Labour government in the hope that it would provide better conditions for their struggle than the rule of the Tories.

The call of the Lambeth Trades Council and the response to it are a vital stage in the turning of the tide.

All those who said 'don't rock the boat', and even helped the right wing to witch-hunt the Young Socialists, are caught in the trap of 'loyalty' to a government which acts in the interest of the employers on all questions from Vietnam to Rhodesia to the incomes policy.

While Gunter and Brown prepare laws against the independence of trade unions, just as the Tories are doing, the traditional 'left' not only hesitates, but actively obstructs the fighting back of the working class.

On the Liverpool Trades and Labour Council, for example, a resolution of support for the lobby on January 26 was narrowly defeated.

Many 'left-wingers' of the 'Tribune' and 'Voice of the Unions' type spoke against legislation—but against action!

Nothing must be done to embarrass the government! Action now could be 'pre-mature' and an 'adventure'!

They used the same excuses to stand by and watch the witch-hunt of Young Socialists.

Gentlemen of this sort, in the Labour Party Constituencies in several parts of the country, are piously passing general resolutions expressing 'concern' about

proposed anti-trade union legislation, while studiously avoiding any action of workers against the Labour government, which prepares this legislation.

When one of their own men, Ken Coates, of the Nottingham Labour Party, was recently expelled even for going as far as he did, his 'friends' in several places could only mutter about his 'wildness' in provoking the right wing.

Meanwhile the Communist Party Congress lurches to the right, and issues an 'appeal for left-wing unity', which cannot even mention the working class!

But these left-overs from the hey-day of boom and British reformism, when protest noises could make a reputation, will be swept aside contemptuously by the working class as it now begins to move and test out a new, revolutionary leadership.

RESISTANCE

While our 'left-wingers' were talking about an 'incomes policy' with socialist trimmings (i.e., socialist words to conceal a capitalist policy), the workers were resisting and fighting as before.

Since the 'Declaration of Intent' of the bosses and trade union leaders, they have pushed up wage rates, through struggle, by 8 per cent this year.

The capitalists cannot tolerate this.

To compete internationally in manufactured products, they need to modernise industry.

Having lagged behind for years, content to draw their profits and rest on protected empire markets, they cannot now keep up with their competitors unless they accumulate profits more quickly.

To do this they must drive down wages; and for this to be done, the government must be called in to weaken the workers' organisations, the unions. This is the job Wilson, Brown, Callaghan and Gunter are doing.



2,000 Young Socialists marched on March 26, 1963. Not bound by Labour or Communist Party policies, they called for the unity of employed and unemployed around socialist policies to bring down the Tories.

'Stabbed in the back'

—allege bakers

By Sylvia Pick

'WE have been stabbed in the back.' This was the verdict of rank-and-file bakers on last Friday's (December 3) announcement of the calling off of their campaign of strikes to win a decent living wage.

On November 28, in Birmingham, their leaders rejected George Brown's request that the bakers' claim be referred to the Prices and Incomes Board.

They declared there would be a national strike by midnight December 7, unless the employers entered negotiations for an interim pay settlement of £1. Five days later the strike was called off and the claim referred to the Board. The demand for the £1 interim increase had been dropped.

The strike was called off after a meeting between the bakers' leaders and Ray Gunter, Minister of Labour. The bakers' leaders announced that it had been accepted 'because as trade unionists we do not want to fight the government'.

Bakers throughout the country were solid and militant in support of their claim for a wage increase to a basic £15 for a 40-hour week.

Such was the militancy of the rank and file that their leaders were pushed into showing fight in the early stages of the struggle.

There was immense public support for the bakers' case. Television interviewers had found it virtually impossible to get any man or woman in the street to condemn the strikes. Tory newspapers had dropped all attempt to work up public indignation on behalf of 'the housewife'.

SATISFIED?

It is reported that Gunter 'hinted' to the leaders that the bakers might get their interim increase at the end of the year. Is the executive satisfied with the Minister of Labour's hints?

Naturally enough Gunter and George Brown are highly gratified by what has happened.

It has been hailed as a 'personal success' for Gunter.

Brown has praised the 'public spirit' shown by the leaders in calling off the threatened strike and referring the claim to his Board.

The union executive has made much of the fact that they shrink from fighting 'their' government.

But if a Labour government ranges itself on the side of the employers by intervening through the Board to hold back wage increases, then every claim for better wages must inevitably involve 'fighting the government'.

Shock and profound disgust have been felt by Midlands bakers, among the most militant in the country.

Mr. D. J. Daniels, union secretary of the large Wimbush bakery branch at Small Heath, Birmingham, said workers were 'warning round like ants bitterly protesting' when they heard the first news of the strike being called off.

Their indignation was the greater in view of the fact that the previous night at the Birmingham Trades Council there had been solid support by all unions for the bakers' struggle, including offers of financial support.

It had been loudly declared that 'if a Labour government doesn't do its job satisfactorily, then it deserves to have its behind caned'.

Bakers also say that though the price of bread has been frozen for three months on the recommendation of the Board, in fact, employers have been raising the prices of many bakery products,

such as confectionery.

Rank-and-file bakers must call their leaders to account for this latest act.

The union's annual conference is to be put forward to a date early in January, in place of the normal June meeting.

Members must make it plain that such 'blow hot, blow cold' tactics will no longer be tolerated. Either the leadership must be prepared to reflect the militancy of members and fight for their interests, or they must make way for another leadership which will do so.

Birmingham Trades Council supports bakers

Newsletter Correspondent

A RESOLUTION pledging maximum support for the bakery workers 'in their present struggle to achieve a reasonable rate throughout the industry' was unanimously passed at the Birmingham Trades Council meeting on December 2.

The resolution further rejected all suggestions that this should mean an increase in price of bread in view of the 'large profits made by the miller-bakery combines'.

Brother Childs, area union official of the Bakery Workers' Union, in moving the resolution said:

'We have no faith whatsoever in the Prices and Incomes Board. Nor are we prepared to concede our right to strike to anyone.'

He and other delegates severely attacked the role of Economics Minister, Brown, and Minister of Labour, Gunter, in their intervention against the bakery workers' demands.

Childs commented: 'If this is to be the pattern of the future, the Labour government is going the best way to political suicide.'

£51m. PROFITS

Profits of the three main flour combines—Garfield and Weston, Rank-McDougal and Spillers—were given totalling £51,000,000 last year.

'Where are the so-called fruits of automation?' one delegate asked.

'Five years ago nine men produced 1,300 loaves per hour. Today, seven men produce over 4,000 loaves per hour. Yet we have a paltry £11 10s. per week rate.'

Another delegate said the actions threatened against the bakers and the attempts to force them to put their claim before the Incomes Board showed how correct the Trades Council was in opposing the Prices and Incomes Board right from the beginning.

'This Board is nothing but an employers' Board,' he said.

Whilst this debate was proceeding the top union leaders of the bakers were, in fact, 'reluctantly' agreeing that the bakers' claim go to the Board.

SHOWDOWN ON DOCKS

CANNOT BE POSTPONED

From Bill Hunter

A SHOWDOWN between the dockers and the docks modernisation committee—set up as a result of the Devlin Report—cannot be long delayed.

That is what is behind the crisis on the national modernisation committee reported in the press last week-end. The committee is reported to have withdrawn the second issue of its broadsheet after 70,000 copies were already printed and ready to be circulated to dockers this week.

According to last Monday's 'Financial Times', the broadsheet was withdrawn after union leaders objected to a statement in it by Lord Brown—Labour peer and businessman, appointed by the government as chairman of the committee.

He had implied that the modernisation committee had already ruled out a minimum wage of £18 a week for dockers.

Breaking point

The union leaders' response to this statement certainly does not mean that they support the £18 demand. The 'Sunday Mirror' reported that their demand was for £15 10s. and revealed that the negotiations over this were near breaking point.

Union leaders panicked because they are afraid of the reaction of dockers to Lord Brown's statement. They are afraid it will heighten the demand for the £18 and make the opposition to Devlin sharper among the dockers.

Now that present wage negotiations are breaking down, the union leadership are in a crisis.

Have they got to go to the dockers and tell them they have nothing?

That would mean breaking from the modernisation committee and organising a fight.

There must be some other way. So, it is reported, they are calling on Gunter, the Minister of Labour.

Union officials must have known that wage talks were near a breakdown; didn't they know, in any case, that even if they got concessions from the employers those concessions would be nowhere near rank-and-file demands?

Not logical

Thus, is it not logical to assume that the aim was to prevent any independent struggle for wages and to keep the wages movement safely in official hands?

The union leaders are angry with Brown because he broke the rule: 'Keep it dark until we get it sewn up.'

If they find it difficult to 'sew it up' now it is because they are now coming right to the tough heart of their problem.

They are coming closer to the point where they have to directly attack the dockers—attack 'restrictive practices', manning scales, the 'welt', and operate the plans for mechanisation.

So they face exposing what the Devlin plan is all about, without being able to sugar the pill with a few concessions.

An accounting!

These leaders must be brought to book. 'Blue' and 'White' dockers must immediately demand an accounting from them. Lift the iron curtain which surrounds the modernisation committee and the wage negotiations!

There can be no illusions now as to the nature of these modernisation committees and the role of trade unionists who sit on them.

Dockers can have only one demand in regard to them: pull the union leaders off the national committee and refuse to participate in the regional committees!

Break the unions from the modernisation committee!

Unity for a real fight for wages and nationalization with workers' control!

in the coalfields where there is growing support for the paper.

In this way we make the political preparation for the launching of a daily communist newspaper.

There was a long, serious discussion about the election of the Yorkshire Area Committee of the Socialist Labour League.

A place on the League's leading committees is not a reward for hard work and devotion. The test of leadership is the ability to develop others politically.

This was far from being a complacent conference. During the last year the Socialist Labour League has mobilised workers and youth on demonstrations and campaigns—both nationally and locally—in a way that no other political organisation in Britain can approach.

Nevertheless, the emphasis at the Yorkshire conference was on a rigorous examination of the difficulties and problems of the organisation.

The conference was a serious step forward in the creation of a revolutionary leadership in Yorkshire.



9,000 face rent increases in Islington

Newsletter Reporter

TWO months after it was claimed Housing Minister Richard Crossman told Islington tenants they need not worry about rent increases, 9,000 families living in council dwellings have been told their rents will go up in April.

As little as a week ago Crossman announced that there were plans for government subsidies to local councils. Islington Council, however, has said that if rents do not go up, the housing account will be £900,000 in the red by 1967.

A council representative stated this week that the rents would not be affected by the new subsidies and that they would still have to go up.

That, however, is hiding the real issues.

Islington tenants must follow the demands made by the Lambeth Trades Council (see story front page).

Support others

They must support the fight of tenants in other areas and not see rent rises as being the shortcomings of this or that council. To do that is to divide the struggle into local areas.

The question of housing is a national one. The fact that rents go up is directly linked to the drive for more profit by the leading building industries—it is these monopolies which the tenants' councils must be forced to wage a struggle against.



Crossman: accused of misleading tenants

The Minister, he said, has made it clear that the subsidies should not be used to keep rents low.

Islington Borough Council Tenants' Rents Protest Association has accused the Housing Minister of 'misleading' them and giving 'false hopes' at a meeting in September.

Crossman, they allege, told them not worry about rent increases because they might be pegged by his plan for subsidies.

Now, Crossman has told the Islington Council that this claim is 'not entirely accurate'.

Faced council

Islington tenants have already faced their local council with the issue of rent increases—in August this year. At that time they were being ordered by the council to pay increases of up to 38s.—the first amount to be paid then and the second stage to be paid in April next year.

Leaders of the tenants' movement at that time laid the blame for the increases on the alleged 'incompetence of the Islington councillors to run the finances of the Borough'.

Merseyside builders to march through Liverpool

Newsletter Correspondent

MERSEYSIDE building workers are to stop work on Friday, December 17, and march through Liverpool. The demonstration has been called by the Mersey District Committee of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trades Workers.

This is in protest against the increasing use of 'labour-only' sub-contractors, and the demonstration will take place at the same time as a building firm—Emerald Construction Co.—is seeking an injunction in the High Court against three officials of the union—the General Secretary, G. Lowthian, the Mersey District Secretary, J. Cousins and the District Organiser, Jack Rogers.

The injunction is meant to restrain members of the AUBTW from officially picketing a building site near Warrington.

There, at the Fiddlers Ferry power station, the AUBTW have been in dispute with Higgs and Hill since last June over the

employment of 'labour-only' sub-contractors.

A circular issued by the district committee of the AUBTW declares that there is only one reason for the firms' intention to employ 'labour-only' and 'that is to break down the traditional organisation that has existed on Merseyside'.

The attempt to obtain an injunction is seen by building workers as another attack on the legal rights of unions.

It is expected there will be a 100 per cent stoppage of AUBTW members on Friday and that they will be joined by a large number of workers from other building trades.

Building workers who want to continue the fight against the attempts to shackle the unions legally should also join the demonstration and lobby of Labour MPs on January 26, called by the Lambeth Trades Council.

Revolutionary leadership the important question at Yorkshire area conference

By Newsletter Reporter

the working class. In particular, the British working class would hesitate before accepting revolutionary leadership because it carried a weight of non-revolutionary political tradition on its back.

It is this which enables the revisionists, who adapt to the existing bureaucratic apparatus, to exert a conservative influence on the working class.

HESITATION Any hesitation by the Marxists in building up the youth movement, any refusal to develop Marxist theory, any failure to fight politically for the programme of the Socialist Labour League, reinforces this hesitation in the working class.

The conference stressed that the building of a powerful

Marxist youth movement remains in the forefront of the work of the Socialist Labour League. The struggle of the youth against the right wing and the fake lefts had been the most advanced stage of the struggle against social democracy.

The conference decided to support the campaign for the January 26 lobby against anti-trade union legislation. The support that has been won should not stop at resolutions but should be translated into action.

It is also necessary to increase the circulation of The Newsletter and build up support for its policies amongst the working class.

The paper must be used to penetrate the contradictions revealed by developments such as the Rhodesian crisis, which created a split inside the Communist Party, and the situation

Resolution on Vietnam

THE following resolution was passed by the Southampton University Socialist Society at a meeting recently.

'The Southampton University Socialist Society condemns the war in Vietnam as being an imperialist war, carried on by world capitalism against a section of the world working and peasant class.

'We condemn American-led world capitalist intervention in Vietnam as being a blow struck by world capitalism against the oncoming world proletarian socialist revolution. As socialists we fully support the great fight that the vanguard of the Vietnamese workers and peasants are carrying out against world capitalism.

'We fully support the fight of the Vietcong. This Socialist Society says Victory to the Vietcong—as soon as possible.'

THE Yorkshire Area Conference of the Socialist Labour League, held in Sheffield last week, discussed the serious problem of the development of a revolutionary leadership.

It dealt with the political responsibility of all members of the Socialist Labour League to study and fight for the perspectives of the party.

The political report stressed that the perspectives of a revolutionary party flow from a study of the development of the class struggle. This does not mean that a party working correctly can avoid crises and conflicts.

On the contrary it can only develop through conflicts—provided they are consciously understood. Activity alone is insufficient. It is necessary to understand and learn from this activity.

Experience has to be linked with a study of developments in

HOUSING POLICY...

From page 1

'It nowhere mentions the high interest rates, the fantastic price of land, the extortionate private rents which are driving all workers—not only immigrants—to seek ever-cheaper and more crowded accommodation.'

The Trades Council statement added that the borough council document does not mention the profits which add to the cost of building and building materials.

Yet the council was aware of these things and two months ago had imposed substantial rent increases on council tenants, to reduce the Housing Revenue Account deficit.

The Trades Council statement added: 'While the government is preparing to support the profits of the banks and monopolies in their crisis by a wage freeze enforced by laws against the trade unions, the Borough Council conceals the burdens imposed by these same banks and monopolies.

Immigrants blamed

'While the government strengthens the Immigration Act and blames immigrant workers for the effects of its actions and the actions of big business', the Lambeth borough council blames Commonwealth immigration for its housing problem.'

The borough council document could very well lead to race riots between white and coloured tenants who are desperate for houses, the statement adds.

'Its talk of the "redistribution of the population" . . . is reminiscent of the South African Apartheid regime,' it says.

The Trades Council demands that the local council:

- Does not disperse immigrant workers.
- Opens its financial records for tenants to see the profits paid to the banks, landowners and building industry.
- Refuse to pay high interest rates. Use the money for housing.
- Take over empty and under-occupied property to ease housing shortage.
- Campaign for municipalisation of all property, except owner-occupied, and nationalization of the land, banks, basic industries.
- Do all building by direct labour.
- Publish the Minutes of a meeting on March 31, 1965, with the Joint Parliamentary Secretary of State, Department of Economic Affairs and Mr. Robert Mellish MP, also the meetings of June 22 and July 20.

Right wing fear lobby

THE fear of the right-wing dominated executive committee of allowing an Amalgamated Engineering Union resolution giving support to the Lambeth Trades Council lobby against trade union legislation and the linking of this with such struggles as the Bakery Workers' Union was fully revealed at the Birmingham Trades Council on December 2.

The EC had not put this AEU resolution on the agenda on the grounds that it was 'controversial'.

A fight was made on a reference back but was lost.

A letter was read by the Trades Council secretary from the Trades Union Congress to Lambeth Trades Council asking them not to proceed further with their lobby until the TUC Trades Council Joint Consultative Committee had investigated the matter at a meeting to be held on December 13.

Obviously all these moves are feeble attempts to stop working class action against anti-trade union legislation.

If union members fall into the trap of allowing these 'procedures' to stop them seeing the real issues, heavy blows will descend in the near future.

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