

The Newsletter

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THE TUC HAS BETRAYED

ALL OUT ON JANUARY 26 LOBBY

Majority agrees to union law

TUC bans Lambeth Trades Council

Newsletter Reporter

THE Trades Union Congress has withdrawn its recognition of Lambeth Trades Council, which is organising a mass demonstration and lobby of parliament against anti-trade union legislation on January 26.

The TUC said that the lead on such matters must be given by Congress or the General Council, and that if, or when, legislation on price increases and wage claims was introduced, the General Council would advise the trade union movement about it.

Last Wednesday (December 22), less than a week later, the General Council gave Mr. Brown the go-ahead for a law which, if his schedule is maintained, will be on the statute book by next April. It contains provisions which can make individual trade unionists engaged in wage-strikes liable to fines of £50.

The Newsletter understands that the Lambeth Trades Council will fight for the restoration of TUC recognition.

It has no intention, however, of abandoning its campaign, which is receiving support throughout the country from trade union branches and District Committees, Trades Councils, Works Committees and Constituency Labour Parties.

NO SURRENDER

It is determined to give all workers in the area the opportunity to show the government that they have no intention of surrendering their rights as trade-unionists.

The overwhelming support which the Lambeth campaign is receiving shows that workers throughout the country are waiting for a lead.

But the TUC suspends Lambeth Trades Council.

It supports legislation which will hold back wage increases while profits and the cost of living still go up.

It supports legislation that can make trade union action in support of wage claims a crime.

In the meantime, the Wilson-Brown government, now openly moving against the working class, is destroying the power of trade unions to fight back against the attacks of the employers.

AFL-CIO backs U.S. Vietnam policy

PRESIDENT of the AFL-CIO, George Meany, speaking at the sixth national convention in San Francisco this week, won support for a resolution giving 'unstinting support' to US policy in Vietnam.

President Johnson had spoken to the convention by telephone, and made a special appeal on the Vietnam question.

Meany said: 'We must stand firm, accept the burdens, and bear the sacrifices', adding that the large number of demonstrations by students, and the labour movement, were speaking for Moscow, Hanoi and Peking.

Meany later ordered stewards to oust 50 students who appeared in the balcony carrying anti-war placards after police had failed to remove them.

*The merger between the American Federation of Labour and the Congress of Industrial Organisations.

By The Editor

1966 will be a year of great crisis for the working class.

The Labour government of George Brown, Callaghan and Harold Wilson, is to legislate against the trade unions on matters concerning wages.

The Trades Union Congress majority has decided to support this legislation.

It is proposed that it becomes law before April, that is, before the budget, which, it is anticipated, will raise taxes and the cost of living, thus rapidly decreasing the value of wages at a time when it will be against the law to improve them.

Brown's anti-trade union proposals are the result of a conspiracy between the right wing and the employers.

The strength of the working class has driven wages during 1965 up by 8½ per cent, as against a 2½ per cent increase in prices.

Brown's legislation is meant to encourage the employers, with the backing of the state, to stand firm against the working class.

Instead of organising the working class to put an end to capitalism, and take the power, the Labour government turns its attention towards organising the capitalist class against the working class.

The Trades Union Congress last September endorsed Woodcock's proposals for a voluntary 'early warning system' on prices and wages.

Turn around

Then, at the Labour Party Conference, early in October, the same trade union leaders who voted for a 'voluntary' system at the TUC, turned around and voted for Brown's compulsory proposals.

In other words, the TUC talked about a voluntary system simply as a method to blindfold the working class as to the real dangers ahead.

Meanwhile, the fake-left MPs kept their mouths shut in order not to 'rock the boat', and Brown went ahead preparing his legislation.

Only the Socialist Labour League and The Newsletter warned the working class of what was in store for them.

Under the new law on wage restriction, the working class will be brought more and more into conflict directly with the state.

Thus issues of wages will be-



WOODCOCK: His 'early warning' system now rejected by TUC majority.

come political issues, transforming the struggles from what have been previously economic in form, into political confrontations between capital and labour.

Such struggles will raise more and more the problem of power.

If the working class is to defeat the state, then it can only do so through the building of the revolutionary party, the only alternative leadership which can destroy and replace the state with working-class powers.

Building this alternative leadership will only be accomplished during the course of bitter class struggles.

In every trade union, from the factory floor upwards, through the branches and district committees, there must be an



BROWN: His legislation proposals will encourage employers.

all-out campaign for the January 26 lobby of Parliament.

Let this be the start of a nationwide campaign to force the right wing Labour leaders to retreat and abandon their anti-trade union legislation.

The Newsletter Nineteen sixty-six

Saturday, January 1 1966

BEHIND the smokescreen of a right-wing Labour government, the employers' offensive against the working class is now in full swing. It is timed to hit the most important sectors of the labour movement during the first four months of 1966.

Firstly, there is the legislation against the trade unions on wages.

Secondly, there is the Devlin Commission report of the docks.

Thirdly, there is the Geddes report on shipbuilding due out in February.

What has happened at the Fairfield shipbuilding yard in Glasgow is a pointer as to what we can expect from this report.

Under the threat of unemployment over three thousand shipyard workers have been forced to abandon their union rule book and work under automated conditions on the bosses' terms.

Fourthly, we have the authoritative rumour from City sources that the April budget will be a harsh one, in other words the cost of living is going up.

Fifthly, the maintenance of a high bank rate, which has already led to increased unemployment, is expected to bite more deeply in the spring.

The treachery of the TUC, Brown, Callaghan and Wilson, knows no bounds. These gentlemen constitute the executive body which guides the policy decisions of the ruling class.

Like MacDonald in 1931, they propose to split the working class under conditions where the Tories must eventually return to power.

The excuse for their betrayal, which is popular in 'Tribune' circles, is that 'they have a small majority'. This is irrelevant. It would not matter whether their majority was six, or sixty, they would still have carried out the same policy.

The Labour leaders of today are the henchmen and bootlickers of the big monopolies. They wine and dine with the most reactionary and corrupt representatives of finance capital. They hobble into the White House in Washington to kiss the boots of Johnson in their eagerness to support his brutal slaughter of the Vietnamese people.

Now they sell out the interests of the British working class to the Tory capitalists.

Even if they call a snap election in March and win, their policies must inevitably lead to a split in the working class and a Tory victory.

But these gentlemen do not have the last word. The British working class can and will defeat them.

This is not the hungry thirties, when the defeat of the 1926 General Strike was still fresh in our memories.

This is 1966, when wages over the past 12 months have been driven upwards in relation to prices. With revolutionary leadership, the working class can defeat the Tories for ever. Here is the question of the hour.

Only the Socialist Labour League has called for such a leadership.

The 'Tribune' Labour centrists and the Communist Party remain silent.

We say again: What is the alternative to Wilson?

Do we now go all out to fight him or do we capitulate to him?

If we fight him, what do we put in his place?

The Socialist Labour League and The Newsletter say that it is necessary to join with us in the fight against Wilson.

The new revolutionary leadership can only be built when the importance of a Marxist party for the British labour movement is recognised.

This is the only way to defeat the employers' offensive, and replace Wilson.

Support pours in from the unions

NEWs of support for the January 26 lobby of parliament continues to pour into the Newsletter offices.

All sections of the trade union and labour movement are expressing tremendous opposition to the proposed legislation, especially after last week's action by the TUC majority in backing Brown.

The Glasgow South West branch of the Draughtsmen's and Allied Technicians Association are so incensed by these moves that they are calling on their union to end financial support to the Labour Party.

The branch's resolution, which will be submitted to DATA's annual conference, reads:

'This Conference is opposed to any attempt by the Labour government to legislate against trade movement.

'Until this conference receives

the assurance of the Labour Party's National Executive Committee that the proposed legislation will be withdrawn, and that Labour will take up a position of opposition to such legislation, then we agree to suspend payment of all political levies and dues to the Labour Party.'

The branch agreed to send at least one delegate to the lobby.

Also in Glasgow, Beattie's Biscuit works' committee and the Clydebank No. 10 AEU have passed resolutions supporting the lobby.

At its last meeting, the Birkenhead branch of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers (Blue Union) unanimously voted their support for the lobby.

In the London area the Tottenham No. 7 AEU; the Harringay Trades Council; Edmonton No. 3 AEU; British Oxygen (Edmonton) Shop Stewards' Committee; Southall No. 1 ASW; Putney and Fulham ETU; and the Waddon Ward, Croydon South Labour Party, have added their support.

On Wednesday the Edinburgh radio and television engineers branch ETU voted support.

Leeds Trade Council voted to support the lobby by 21 votes to 6.

Hobson's choice for Fairfield men

It was Hobson's choice for the 3,000 Fairfield shipyard workers at their mass meeting on Monday; either they accept joint management of the yard by the government, private enterprise and unions, or face unemployment.

But Mr. Iain Stewart, the chairman of the new management, also forced home terms which attack all the workers'

strength, which, over several generations, has been built up to defend their conditions and standards of living.

End rule book
Stewart said the union rule book should go by the board, and that future working conditions would be based entirely on what was best for productivity, that is, output per man hour.

He added that the yard would be seen nationally as the proving ground in which the management would be free—with the full co-operation of all the unions—to apply, on a trial and error basis, new systematic techniques.

These would include time study, work measurement, handling of job cards, recording of lost time, payment of an up-standing wage and the commitment of all concerned to make a profit. Many of these were contained in the infamous Emerson agreement at Rootes.

'Proved productivity performance by these methods will be the only yardstick by which wage increases would be awarded.'

He claimed that 'protection of employment' and 'protection of income' would be provided in other ways.

End demarcation
The yard would be 'unfettered' by local and national agreements, and he envisaged the ending of all craft restrictions, go-slow and, of course, demarcation.

If there were redundancies, he claimed that re-training would be given and surplus labour would be re-deployed. But no one would become unemployed.

The majority of capitalist newspapers claimed that the workers received this plan rapturously and voted for it unanimously.

But 'The Times' admitted there were a few 'dissenters', and television shots of the meeting certainly did not show a swarm of hands in the air.

'Reserve rights'
The boilermakers' official, Mr. Harry Gallacher, who is also chairman of the Clyde district committee of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, said after the meeting: 'We will always reserve our right to negotiate conditions at a domestic level. There are some domestic agreements that will have to be kept.'

'I must say this, that under no circumstances are we prepared to give a blank cheque to any establishment under any management.'

See 'A Pattern to end demarcation', a report from Peter Arnold in Glasgow. (This article was written before last Monday's meeting.)

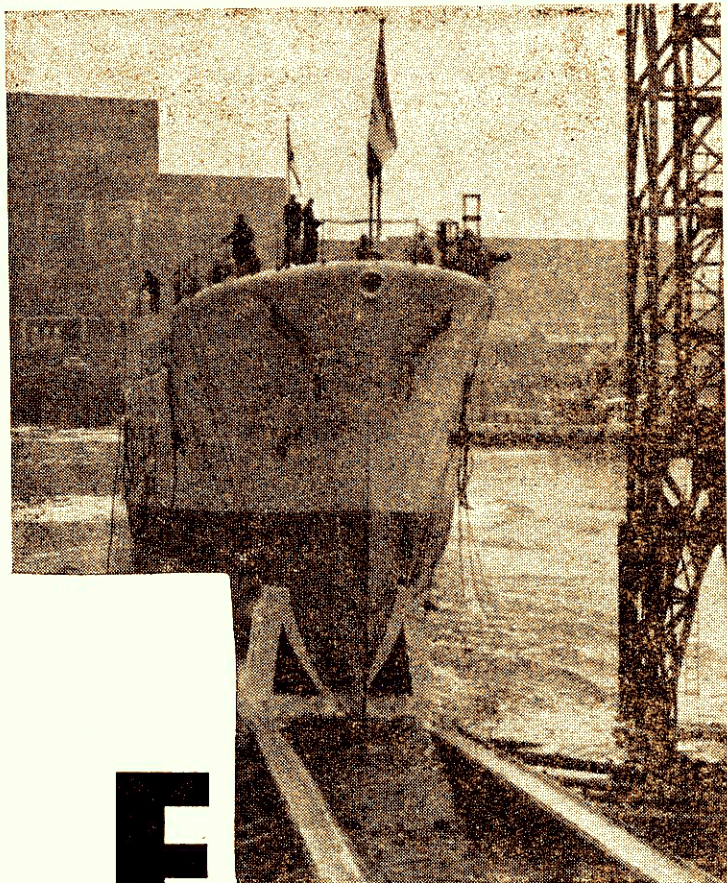
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FAIRFIELD

The future of the Fairfield shipyard still hangs in the balance, but the recent proposals of the government and the employers, with all their implications on the question of demarcation, provide a warning for the whole of the shipbuilding industry.

PETER ARNOLD
reports from Glasgow

for long periods for the assistance of other craftsmen, without whom they cannot end a job.

In an old yard, managements simply 'lose' the man's wages during that period.

In a modern yard, where there is a lot of modern plant, with heavy depreciation and interest costs, the loss to the management is far heavier. It is precisely the heavy costs of this modern plant which drives the management, willy nilly, into squeezing more and more out of their labour force: for every minute a man is 'idle' the capitalist sees thousands of pounds flying out of the window.

Thus it was the £4 million modernisation programme in Fairfield, combined with the old craft practices, which brought about the crisis in the yard. The efficiency of the management was a side issue—

ist class itself.

His intervention in Fairfield means to cut through the lengthy and costly negotiations—which are completely inadequate given the rapidity with which the crisis is developing (again, as shown by the Fairfield affair).

Big stick

Instead of 'buying the book', Brown seizes the opportunity of the Fairfield crisis to use the big stick. End demarcation immediately and unconditionally, or be out of work, the workers are told bluntly.

In this way work can be speeded up and considerably cheapened for the capitalists.

This meets with opposition from various sections of the capitalists themselves.

Not unnaturally, other shipbuilders oppose it as they can

been aided considerably by union officials.

By placing the blame on the previous management, they create the impression that 'more efficient management' would be able to solve the crisis. But, by the very nature of the process, no management, however 'efficient', could solve the crisis without ending demarcation.

Thus, this line enables Brown and Stewart to appear as 'saviours', whereas, in fact, they are very hard-headed gentlemen acting with foresight on behalf of the capitalist class.

Had the Communist Party any analysis of this government it could have warned its stewards in the yard that any intervention by the government could only be in the interests of capitalism, and attacking the workers, in line with all its other activities.

Instead its 'united front'-line has led to co-operation between the government and the Communist Party stewards, who actually sponsored the call for government to intervene.

CP stumped

Finally, their lack of any perspective beyond the framework of capitalism leaves them stumped once closure is raised by the employers.

Unless one has the perspective of taking power there is no answer to closure. Nationalisation must remain a 'Utopia'.

In fact, the Utopians are those who think that government intervention has solved anything for the shipyard workers.

The employers will be greatly strengthened by the move: Fairfield will be 'a proving ground for new ideas, new methods, and for the elimination of restrictive practices' (Mr. Stewart's own words).

If the experiment fails the loss will not have been too great, as the yard would close anyway, but the employers will have gained considerable experience. In either case, this will enable them to proceed even more ruthlessly in the other yards.

The fight in the yard can only be won in the context of the broader fight against the growing attacks of British capitalism against the working class.

The old slogans of the boom are no longer valid.

The fight now must be for nationalization of the shipbuilding industry.

Let it be put under the control of the workers, so that committees of the workers themselves can run the industry.

Only they can find a solution to the problem of demarcation which will not lead merely to harsher conditions of work and unemployment.

The negotiations that are taking place over the future of the Fairfield shipyard, Glasgow, are of much more than local interest. One section of the Labour government, led by George Brown, is determined to set a pattern in the yard, which could affect workers throughout heavy industry.

To get a clear idea of what is at stake, it is necessary to go over briefly the events since last October.

In the last week of that month, it was announced that because of the yard's heavy debt (£3 million), the Bank of Scotland had appointed an official receiver to investigate the accounts to see if the firm could remain in business.

No surprise

Not many people were surprised that such a crisis should occur in the shipbuilding industry. This statement came after a month of predictions of woe from the chairmen of the major yards, notably Swan Hunter's (which owns Barclay Curle's yard in Glasgow), which had announced a loss of £1.2 million, and Hawthorne Leslie, which had announced a loss of £200,000.

What did seem surprising, at first glance though, was that it should be Fairfield that was hit first. The yard is one of Britain's 'Big Six', it had just completed a modernisation plan to the tune of some £4 million and it has its order books full for the next three years.

As we hope to show later in the article, these were precisely the reasons why the yard was affected before many of its more old-fashioned rivals.

A mass meeting of the workers was held after the announcement, at which all kinds of fakers competed to put forward plans which would merely lead to defeat (one MP, for instance, called upon the 'people of Govan' to save the yard by pouring their money into it 'in this time of difficulty').

Finally, the meeting sent out a call to the Labour government 'to find out where the profit had gone' and to draw up 'a national plan for shipbuilding'.

Nationalization

Some of the union officials called for nationalization, but this was not taken up in any serious way as the subject of a campaign.

The call of the meeting was seemingly answered by the government when Callaghan announced barely a week later that the government was to loan the yard £1 million to prevent a closure before the publication of the Geddes report on shipbuilding in February 1966 (presumably this would be the national plan for the industry, also demanded at the meeting).

In mid-December, a new proposal, sponsored by George Brown, was put forward. This was that the government and private industry should take over the management of the yard on a 50/50 basis. Brown proposed that Ian Stewart, chairman of Thermotank, another Govan firm, should be the chairman of the new company.

Stewart declared that he could save the yard from closure and, indeed, make it into one that could compete with Japan, on condition that all demarcation in yard be ended.

If he could not get that guarantee from a mass meeting of the workers (a guarantee from the union officials or from the stewards would not do), then the yard would have to close.

A mass meeting of Fairfield workers voted to accept the plan on Friday, December 10.

But two things should be borne in mind.

Firstly, the workers did not want to vote for the plan. There was considerable opposition and the vote was passed only after a threat from union officials that the yard would be closed after a meeting of creditors on the following Monday if the plan was rejected. (As the 'Daily Record' pointed out the next morning, there was no such meeting foreseen for the Monday.)

Work guarantee?

Secondly, they voted on the clear understanding that Stewart would guarantee three years' employment to all present workers.

But, when questioned on this later, Stewart said that he could give no such guarantee, and that the most he could say was that there should be full employment in the yard for the next two years—or in other words for the period already covered by present contracts!

Behind this outline of events lies the crisis which runs throughout British industry: automation and modernisation in the face of severe competition, involving attacks on the working class.

The British shipbuilding industry is old and inefficient.

Because of this, it is quite unable to compete with its foreign rivals, especially in Japan. The reasons for the present full order books are the government's generous terms for foreign buyers, the fixed cost contracts signed by the yards with their prospective clients, and also the hope in many a foreign shipper's heart that the Labour government will devalue the pound and make the ships even cheaper.

Nonetheless, the fact remains that in 1963, 39,078 Japanese shipyard workers built 2.4 million tons of shipping, whereas 37,800 British ship workers

only built 1.1 million tons. In other words, a Japanese worker produces twice as much as his British equivalent.

For the employers, the only solution to this crisis, rendered even more acute in the case of shipping by the world surplus capacity in the industry, is modernisation.

Since it came to power in October last year, the role of the Labour government has been to carry out the preliminary steps, demanded by the banks and by the large employers, to modernise British industry.

Common thread

This led to the Devlin Committee Report on the docks, the establishment of the Scamp Board of Enquiry into the motor industry, and the proposed legislation against the trade unions.

One common thread has run through all these moves.

As the British employers are forced by international competition to modernise or go under they are brought up against one major stumbling block: the British working class.

Modern equipment is extremely costly, has a very short effective life, and operates at a low profit margin, relying on accumulated profits from large-scale production, rather than on high profit per item.

In such conditions, for profit to be made, the worker must work to the rhythm of the machine—and not vice versa. As the car industry demonstrates, even going to the toilet when you want to loses large sums of money when modern equipment is involved.

Strike action, or any independent action by the workers is a major threat to the employers in modernised industry.

Hence, the first steps in 'modernising' British industry under private ownership, must be to ensure that the workers' freedom of action is restricted or removed altogether.

Demarcation

One of the constant points of contention in the yards between management and workers has been the question of demarcation.

For years, the managements have been trying to do away with divisions between the crafts which, although they once had a real basis in different craft functions, are less and less relevant to modern production.

These moves have been met stubbornly by the shipyard workers, who have much experience of mass lay-offs when times are hard (and the last time occurred was as recently as 1962). The fight against the ending of demarcation is a fight to ensure employment.

Also, it is a fight to maintain wages in that skilled

labour has always been more difficult to obtain than unskilled, putting the workers in a better bargaining position with the managements.

In recent boom years, the managements had been making some progress.

The Electrical Trades Union in John Brown's had agreed to some diluting of labour among the electricians, and Lithgow's had managed to end demarcation amongst the boilermaker trades (welders, tack welders, caulkers, burners, platers) thus, incidentally, eliminating one complete trade—tack welding.

But the process was a slow one—every practice had to be negotiated separately and every breakdown had to be paid for. This is the process known as 'buying the book'.

In a modernised yard, demarcation becomes more than an irritant to managements. It cuts into profits and causes a financial disaster.

This is because one of the products of demarcation is that workers have to wait around

not the primary cause.

But modernisation, combined with the old practices, led to disaster, thus strong action was needed.

The intervention of the government then takes on a different aspect. It is intervening on behalf of the British capitalist class.

No accident

It is no accident either that it is George Brown who is pushing the plan, in opposition to Callaghan, some of the bankers and the other shipbuilding employers.

As his plans to crash in with anti-strike legislation show, Brown is determined that nothing shall stand in the way of the ruthless modernisation of British industry.

Strikes in heavily capitalised industry are even more disastrous than demarcation practices: action must be taken against both, even if this action hurts some parts of the capital-

see that making Fairfield into a 'model' yard, with no demarcation and government finance, will mean the end for many of the inefficient yards.

Hence the righteous clamour that it is only right for Fairfield to close as it 'went to the wall first'.

The banks and Callaghan are wary of the affair because of its very daring nature: it aims to turn one of Britain's backward industries into a spearhead one. They are naturally concerned about the amount of money involved.

If Brown can pull his plan off, it will have repercussions throughout shipbuilding and heavy engineering.

Fairfield will become for this industry what Ford is for the auto industry: the pioneer firm which introduces the most intensive forms of production as a pattern for all other employers.

One major consideration that all parties are wondering about is 'can the workers be made to swallow it?' In this, Brown has

Trotskyists denounce murder of Aidit

Hands off the Indonesian Communist Party

THE unconfirmed, but authoritative, report ('Observer' December 19, 1965) about the capture and summary execution of 41-year-old Dipa Nasuntara Aidit, in a village in Central Java, is a tragic and grim reminder of the fate awaiting all those labour leaders in the 'non-aligned' countries who collaborate with their own ruling classes and sacrifice the independence and leadership of the working class on the altar of 'national democracy' and 'anti-imperialism'.

Communists throughout the world must denounce the murder of Aidit as a foul and barbarous deed—no matter what mistakes and treason to the working class this Stalinist leader committed.

UNIVERSAL PROTEST

In particular, the Trotskyist movement, which has spent a whole epoch in defending itself against the lies of the Stalinists, and in fighting against the reformist policies represented by Aidit, will find no difficulty in, and will not hesitate to solidarily itself with the universal protest against his murder.

We denounce his killing as

genuinely as any, and more correctly than most.

Like the murder of the reformist socialist deputy, Matteoti, by Mussolini's assassins in a previous epoch, the murder of Aidit signifies the beginning of a new epoch in the history of Indonesia: an epoch of bloody, class battles in which there will be no room for the advocates of 'peaceful co-existence' and 'peaceful transition to socialism'.

All the plausible clichés and passwords of international Stalinism, all the rosy Utopias evoked by the Indonesian Gollans and Campbells, have been brutally and pitilessly shattered by the guns and bayonets of the hated Siliwangi regiment.

SILENCE

For international Stalinism this has been a traumatic experience. It is therefore not surprising that both Peking and Moscow are unable to comment and prefer to remain silently astonished.

Now that the dream has turned into a real nightmare, it is time to draw a balance sheet.

While Sukarno makes feeble attempts to restrain the generals, and tries to postpone the dissolution of the Communist Party nationally, the officers and soldiers, aided by right-wing Moslem civilian vigi-

lantes, have unleashed an unprecedented terror against the working class.

The rivers of Java and Sumatra are, literally, red with the blood of communists.

This is how 'Time' magazine describes it:

... Communists, Red sympathisers and their families are being massacred by the thousands. Backlands, army units are reported to have executed thousands of Communists after interrogation in remote rural jails. . . . Armed with wide-bladed knives called parangs, Moslem bands crept at night into the homes of Communists, killing entire families and burying the bodies in shallow graves. . . . 'The killings have been on such a scale that the disposal of the corpses has created a serious sanitation problem in East Java and Northern Sumatra, where the humid air bears the reek of decaying flesh. Travellers from those areas tell of small rivers and streams that have been literally clogged with bodies: river transportation has, at places, been impeded.' ('Time' December 17, 1965.)

Massacre and mutilation, however, are not the only weapons being used against the working class. A policy of massive retrenchment and deflation has been be-

gun by the central government.

The rupiah has been revalued (unofficial rate was 45,000 to the dollar; official 451) ostensibly in order to stop galloping inflation, but primarily to attract foreign investment in the ailing economy.

In addition to arbitrary arrest, banning of strikes, dissolution of unions and parties, the working class is now faced with the prospect of large-scale unemployment, wage cuts, higher taxes and a chronic food shortage.

The situation can be summed up tersely: Profits rise while working men fall.

The stage is now being set for a rapprochement with Anglo-US imperialism, no matter how much Sukarno screams about 'Konfrontasi' in Malaysia, and about the 'revolution' keeping to the left.

SYMBOLIC GESTURE

The removal of Dr. Subandrio from his position as deputy commander of the Supreme Operations Command is a symbolic gesture to Washington that the old facade of 'anti-imperialism' is being changed. The props that have all been removed—all that is left is the ailing stage-manager: Bung Karno.

When the execution squads have finished their grisly work,

Continued back page

Police violence is 'imagined'

says McCone report on Watts' revolt

ONE week after the Los Angeles' riots of last August, the governor of California appointed a commission of enquiry. Its eight members were chaired by John A. McCone.

This choice was very appropriate—Mr. McCone is a former director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

In that capacity, he worked to defend the interests of American capital against every possible revolutionary danger throughout the world.

In August he was given the job of investigating a rebellion against the capitalist state in America itself.

Whitewash

Naturally the report, issued by the Commission after three months, is a whitewash job. It inevitably evades any discussion of the causes of the events of August.

Seen against the background of the actual conditions of the inhabitants of Watts, the Negro quarter of Los Angeles, McCone's recommendations are ludicrous.

This slum area has become a black ghetto in the midst of one of the most prosperous cities in the world.

California's highly advanced space and aero industry has little demand for unskilled labour.

The desperate overcrowding of the effectively segregated Negro schools means that few Negro children get any education worth the name.

Most of the teenagers in

Watts are unemployed, and, as things stand, are unlikely ever to get a job.

About 40 per cent of households have to receive some kind of welfare relief payment.

McCone says that reports of brutality by police are 'imaginary'. In fact one in ten of Los Angeles' police force was penalised in 1964 for 'maltreatment of citizens'.

'Maltreatment'

This statistic, which must surely reveal the highest figure of such 'maltreatment', can give only the slightest impression of the way the workers of Watts, especially the youth, are treated.

The report's admission that police chief William Parker is 'mistrusted by most Negroes' is a masterpiece of understatement.

How must Watts' residents have received the news of McCone's main recommendation?

He suggests an inspector general should be appointed to watch over police behaviour. This inspector should be responsible... to the chief of police!

To the Commission, what happened last August was a breakdown of the 'law and order', which 15,000 national guards and police fought for several days to restore.

They killed, in the process, 31 Negroes.

Reports that over a thousand were injured underestimated the true number by a large margin.

An analysis of the 4,000 arrested was published in November. It showed that 43 per cent of them were under 17 years old and 70 per cent under 18.



Yet one in ten members of the Los Angeles police force were penalised last year following 'maltreatment of citizens'!

A poor vote for the S.W.P.

(Compiled from 'The Bulletin', New York)

IN the recent elections, the Socialist Workers' Party of the USA contested the major offices for Mayor, City Council President and Comptroller for New York City.

They also contested the offices of Manhattan Borough President and Councilman at Large. The candidate for Borough President, Paul Boutelle, got approximately 2,700 votes, and the candidate for Councilman at Large about 2,400.

The vote for the Mayor offices, at the time of writing, has not been made available. It appears that the citywide total will be under 5,000 votes.

East German-Soviet trade differences exposed

Newsletter Reporter

THE suicide of Dr. Erich Apel, who was East Germany's Minister for Economic Planning, has revealed big differences between the country and the Soviet Union over trade.

Apel's diary was reported by George Vine, the 'Daily Mail's' Berlin correspondent on December 1, to be in the hands of West German socialists.

Prices reduced

The diary, Vine claimed, spoke of extortionate prices being charged by the Soviet Union for raw materials sold to East Germany, and price reductions of 30 per cent to 40 per cent on manufactured goods sent from East Germany to the Soviet Union.

In 1964 East Germany had to subsidise her exports to the Soviet Union by £280 million. Vine also reported that East Germany had been deceiving the Soviet authorities for two years.

Sold to West

They had slowed down deliveries of manufactured goods,

claiming there was a shortage of raw materials and production difficulties, but had, in fact, been selling goods to Western countries—this trade had increased by one-third in 1965.

Vine reports that to cover up this trade 'scandal', Apel was given a state funeral. His suicide was explained officially as being the result of overwork.

Secret police are said to have made a number of arrests of young technocrats engaged through Apel to streamline East German industry.

West orientated

In a speech to the Socialist Unity (Communist) Party Central Committee's plenary conference on December 16, a leading member of the Politburo, Erich Honnecker, said that some State leaders, scientists and engineers had been orientating themselves too much to the West.

Since the trading with the West was discovered, Moscow has ordered that all outstanding deliveries of goods ordered under a trade treaty, which runs out in 1970, be met.

LOWER POLL

This would be lower than the SWP poll in 1961, which was 7,000 votes.

The SWP made little impact on the Negro and Puerto Rican communities.

Its votes were obtained primarily from the middle class.

As a result a number of SWP members are questioning the value of spending such a tremendous effort, in time and money, to run election campaigns geared towards the liberal and 'progressive' voter.

THE LATEST 'TACTIC'

THE latest 'military' tactic being used by U.S. forces in Vietnam is the spraying of rice crops in S. Vietnam in Vietcong-held areas with weed killer. It is claimed by U.S. spokesmen that the spray is harmless to animals and humans, but is intended to force the Vietcong to rely more on supplies from North Vietnam.

MORE SOVIET AUTHORS ARRESTED—IN ASYLUMS

FURTHER arrest of Soviet writers has followed the jailing of authors Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuri Daniel.

Three people, writer Vladimir Byovskiy and poets Leonid Gubanov and Julia Vishnevskaya, are being held in lunatic asylums. Vishnevskaya is a 16-year-old school-girl.

Daniel and Sinyavsky have been held for three months in jail without a trial.

Demand trial

The three others are believed to have been in a group demanding a public trial for



Shorter notice for Spanish trials

Growing support for free trade unions

FROM OUR SPANISH CORRESPONDENT

A FRAID of international protests over the arrests and trials of militants, the Spanish authorities are now holding trials at short notice—often within 24 hours.

The trial of four members of the Workers' Trade Union Alliance (ASO), arrested in Barcelona on April 27 after distributing leaflets calling for the tremendously successful May Day demonstrations, was recently postponed.

José Pujol, Ignacio Carvajal, José Elhombre and Antonio Martínez were due to be tried on October 7 at the Tribunal of Public Order in Madrid.

Provisional release

But, due to pressure from the international labour move-

ment, the trial was called off and the four men released provisionally.

On December 10 the trial of two other members of ASO concerned in the May Day preparations was held in Madrid. Sentences on Salvador Domenech and Juan Valdenebro have been postponed.

A third defendant, Cipriano Damiano, who was due to be tried at the same time as Domenech and Valdenebro, escaped from police custody, and is still free.

It was thought that the Spanish authorities would ask for 18 year's jail for Damiano and four years each for

French Presidential Election De Gaulle wins — only just

DE GAULLE'S 55 per cent vote in the second round of the presidential election marks a big decline in his influence over French politics.

But, due to the criminal opportunism of the Communist

Party, no clear working-class alternative was presented.

Mitterand was claimed by the Stalinists to be a 'left' candidate. His substantial vote was hailed by them as a victory for 'progress'.

DUBIOUS ALLY

Instead of standing its own candidate, the Communist Party put all its resources behind this extremely dubious ally.

Calling for the 'the unity of all democratic and republican forces', they printed thousands of pro-Mitterand posters. They poured hundreds of thousands of pounds into the campaign for a man who had played a big part in the suppression of the Algerian liberation struggle.

De Gaulle succeeded in holding nearly a million votes in the industrial areas which had once been Communist Party strongholds.

RIGHT BACKING

On the other hand, the 'progressive' Mitterand received, and never disowned, backing from the extreme right.

A large number of the Conservative supporters of Lecanuet on the first ballot followed his advice and switched to Mitterand.

Some who had voted for the even more reactionary Tixier-Vignancour also joined the ranks of Communist Party leader Waldeck-Rochet's 'democratic forces' in supporting Mitterand a week later.

Thus, in working-class districts like Lille, Arras and Cherbourg, de Gaulle got big votes, while Mitterand's support was found in backward regions south of the Loire, where many former Algerian settlers are living.

DISORIENTATION

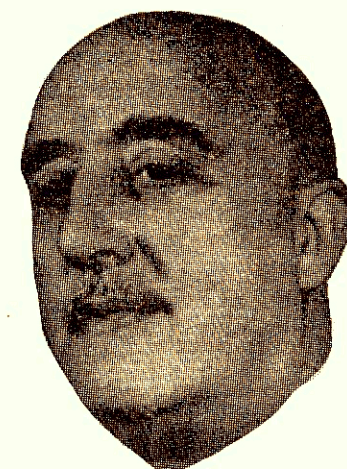
But in France the Stalinist shift to the right can disorient the labour movement at a critical period.

French Marxists must fight to build an alternative leadership to prevent this happening.

Only then will there be a real unity of the working class in struggle against capitalism.



A negro woman shouts her protest at baton-swinging police



Franco: Favours monarchy

Domenech and Valdenebro.

The state has become more and more concerned at the growing demands for better living and working conditions and for free trade unions. These demands are being taken up more frequently by students and youth in the country.

Franco's successor

At the same time there is much speculation about a successor to the ageing dictator, Franco. He favours a monarchy under the young 'pretender', Juan Carlos, to replace him.

Juan Carlos, who is backed by the Opus Dei, a reactionary faction of the Catholic Church, is reported to have broken with his father, the pretender, Don Juan, who is in exile in Portugal.

Juan Carlos is educated in the ways of the fascist state, and those at the head of the regime want to remain in charge—with a puppet king as a figurehead.

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Possibility of 40 per cent increase in three years on Merseyside

YOUTH BEGIN CAMPAIGN AGAINST RENT RISE

Councillors refuse to meet Wandsworth tenants

Newsletter Correspondent

OVER 100 Wandsworth council tenants held a meeting on Wednesday, December 22, outside the town hall to protest at the Labour-controlled council's proposals to increase rents by 20 per cent.

The meeting was called by Earlsfield and Southfields and Henry Prince Tenants' Association and was supported by the North Battersea Tenants' Association, the Wandsworth Federation of Council Tenants and Wandsworth Trades Council.

The Labour council refused to meet delegates from the tenants to discuss the proposed rent increases. Two Labour councillors did leave the town hall and one, who is opposed to the proposed rent increases, may vote against them on February 9.

The tenants' meeting was confused and came out with no real policy to fight the proposed rent increases.

Instead, one speaker put forward the Communist Party line, which makes no demand for the nationalization of the banks.

Since it is the high interest rates which have made a big contribution to the £900,000 housing deficit, it is clear that unless this demand is put forward, there can be no clarity on how to fight the rent increases.

HURRIED CLOSE

The meeting was brought to a hurried close, excluding speakers from the Wandsworth Trades Council and the Earlsfield and Southfields and Henry Prince Tenants' Association.

After the meeting Mr. S. Piper made the demand for a mass demonstration outside the town hall on February 9, when the council discusses the proposed rent increases.

Despite the confusion at the meeting there is bitter resentment among the tenants at the proposed rent increases. A movement must be built in Wandsworth among the tenants by the Young Socialists, the Socialist Labour League and the trade unions around the demands put forward in The Newsletter leaflet.

Aidit murdered

From page 2

when the corpses have been buried, and when the rivers flow clean again, then Sukarno will be forced to retire. This is the logic of the repression and terror.

For the working class, salvation lies only in and through civil war led by a Marxist party—a party adhering to the programme of the Fourth International.

There is little doubt that the most revolutionary sections of the Indonesian Communist Party, having assimilated the lessons of the last six weeks, will turn neither to Moscow, nor Peking, but to authentic Marxism: Trotskyism.

We can make their allegiance even more secure by redoubling our efforts against the ruling class and the social-democratic traitors in this country.

Once again:
Hands off the Communist Party in Indonesia!
Withdraw British troops from Malaysia!

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By Our Liverpool Correspondent

LIVERPOOL council tenants face the prospect of a savage increase in rents in 1966. The council's housing account is £11,000,000 in deficit.

It is estimated that this can mean a 12½ per cent increase in rents by February—an average increase of 10s. a week—with the possibility of a 40 per cent rise over the next three years.

Leader of the Labour Council, Alderman William Sefton, and Liverpool's Labour MPs met George Brown, James Callaghan and Richard Crossman, the Housing Minister, before Christmas.

They asked for special government help. They pointed out that the burden on the council from the rate of interest on old loans would be crippling despite the subsidies which the government has already proposed.

The Ministers agreed to write to Alderman Sefton.

Alderman Sefton has since reported that Callaghan informed the council that next year's budget was already fixed and there would be no more allowances to local authorities. Crossman declared it was impossible and 'illegal' to give special help to areas like Liverpool.

'Average'

The rent increases for Liverpool, said the government Ministers, would not be higher than the national average.

The international bankers who have paid out the loans to prop up British capitalist economy would not look kindly on the Labour government increasing its expenditure on housing.

It is they who determine the Labour government's housing policy, not the working people.

Already, in discussing the latest subsidies, themselves inadequate for Liverpool, the Minister of Housing's recent White Paper said: '... subsidies should not be used wholly even mainly to keep general rent levels low.'

It can be expected, then, that early in 1966, the Labour council will be carrying out the policy of drastic rent increases that the Tories in Liverpool have been demanding for some time.

The former 'lefts' who lead the Liverpool council may squeak about the toll of the moneylenders being responsible for the housing deficit. But when they raise rents, they act for those very moneylenders.

The housing deficit has been mounting owing to the failure of the Labour government to take action against finance capital, and owing to its attempts to save British capitalism by raising the bank rate.

At least one city councillor supports the government as a 'Liberal government with some radical points of view.'

Speaking to a meeting of managers and executives, he was reported by the 'Guardian', (November 23) as saying: 'We have got to realise that we could not have a socialist government because people do not want a socialist government and so we have the best government we can get.'

No advances

According to this man the working people—the 'people' who put the Government in—don't want decent houses and cheap rents; they don't want the advances that could be brought about by socialist policies directed against the financiers and big business.

Decisions made by the international bankers reach right down into the pockets of workers on the bleak housing estates in Liverpool. Forty per cent increase on rents will be a tribute to bankers, the big building firms and real estate sharks.

At its annual general meeting this year, the Liverpool Trades Council and Labour Party passed a resolution opposing rent increases.

If the socialist words of

these Liverpool Labour leaders really mean something, then they will refuse to increase rents.

The Liverpool Labour Council and the Trades Council could unleash a mighty movement.

A refusal to raise rents, a call from them to defend workers' standards against the moneylenders would find a ready reaction from the high level of socialist consciousness among workers in vast estates such as Speke and Kirkby.

Point way

In Liverpool, however, it is the Young Socialists who are pointing the way. They are already visiting council estates, docks and factories with a petition declaring that the preservation of housing is more important than interest payments to a minority of parasites and demanding that the payment of high interest rates be suspended immediately.

'We call on the Liverpool Trades Council and Labour Party to implement the decision of its annual general meeting to oppose rent increases,' says the petition.

'We call on the Trades Council, in conjunction with its affiliated organisations and tenants' associations, to organise a campaign to defend the living standards of working-class families in Liverpool. The time to fight is now.'

Several Labour councillors declared at the Trades Council meeting that they would vote against any increase on rents. Opposition to the rise is to be welcomed, but their resolution ended weakly by calling for a campaign for assistance to Liverpool from the government.

Only the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists are fighting a real campaign against these increases, canvassing with their petition, organising tenants' meetings striving to unite tenants and workers in the factories and on the docks, in resistance to the increases.

DIRECT LABOUR SCHEME ATTACKED

Newsletter Reporter

DESPITE assurances that the direct labour scheme would be worked, the Camden Borough Council, London, has recently sacked 10 electricians and mates and signed contracts with outside electrical firms.

The department came out on strike when the men were sacked. Twelve men are still on strike.

On December 7, the ten men carried out a practice of 17 year's standing by taking their tea break before starting the morning's work.

Report

Supervisors told the men to report back to the depot. After waiting there for an hour, the men went to work, the steward remaining behind to see if he was wanted.

He was then told to report to the town hall in the afternoon with the other men.

There, all the electricians were expected to answer questions without any witnesses, before a board of seven supervisors, including the borough engineer.

When the steward refused to answer questions without

Industrial Newsletter

Midland signalmen suspended

By Sylvia Pick

LEADERS of the unofficial pre-Christmas strike of West Midlands signalmen have been penalised by the National Union of Railwaymen.

The Signalmen's Grade Committee, which organised the 24-hour protest strike, has had all its officers suspended and barred from holding any office in the NUR.

'I don't think they will be expelled from the union, but we will not have them in office,' declared a right-wing member of the NUR West Midlands District Council.

A signalmen's leader says: 'The signalmen just couldn't care less. The NUR has never supported our case. We shall continue to fight. I am confident that we are going to get a great deal of support from signalmen in many other parts of the country.'

WARNING

Their committee had given warning that further strike action might take place and that it could get national support.

The signalmen came out on December 22 in support of a claim for a 25 per cent increase in basic pay. They are demanding this in lieu of bonuses paid to other grades of railwaymen which, because of the nature of their work, cannot be applied to signalmen.

The NUR district council considered the question of signalmen's pay in November and voted against strike action.

The morning following the strike, members of the council hastened to 'dissociate' from the activities of the signalmen's committee, and to declare that so far as the NUR was concerned, the committee 'no longer existed'.

The penalties against the committee officers were announced on Christmas Eve.

'We are not going to tolerate this sort of unofficial action by signalmen and we have taken steps to put a stop to it,' declared the right-wing spokesman.

It is clear that in the New Year the so-called 'Labour' government of Wilson, Brown and Gunter intends to step up its attack upon the workers by passing anti-trade-union legislation.

TAKING SIDES

It has been suggested that the railwaymen might be the first section of workers against which the government might 'take its stand'.

This is the moment chosen by NUR officials to discipline and attempt to silence militants in the union's ranks. Is it not a fact that these union bosses are taking sides with the state machine against the interests of the members they are supposed to represent?

Unless the working-class organise now to resist, within a short time it may well be a 'crime', punishable by fine or imprisonment, to press a wage claim, except through 'official channels', and by permission of the government.

The conduct of union officials now hardly suggests that under such conditions they would show much fight in pressing for improved standards for their members.

SACK LEADERS

The present union leadership must be sacked. A new leadership must be built which will fight on behalf of, not against, the workers whose subscriptions pay their wages.

As a first step towards this, signalmen should join with other workers in supporting the Lambeth Trades Council's lobby of parliament on January 26 against anti-trade union legislation.

This will be a great demonstration of working-class strength, and will serve notice to quit on traitors in the so-called 'leadership' of the labour movement.

The living standards of the signalmen and all other workers will suffer unless the unions remain completely and unconditionally independent of the state machine, whether the government wears the 'Labour Party' label or that of the Tories.

DOUBTS ABOUT DOCKERS' WAGES

Newsletter Correspondent

A RUMOUR has been going around Liverpool and Manchester docks that the rise offered to dockers in recent meetings of the Docks Modernisation Committee was 14s 8d. a week.

There have been angry and derisive comments on this figure.

Dockers have become more heated as they spoke about the sealed lips of trade union leaders.

After press reports about a breakdown of wage negotiations on the modernisation committee, and after a long period of rumours, not one trade union leader has thought fit to tell his members anything about their wages.

There is a general expectation among the dockers that a big struggle is looming up early in the new year. In any case, over the holidays, dockers showed their protest at conditions by taking days off before and after Christmas.

KERRIGAN SPEAKS

Peter Kerrigan, member of the Merseyside Area Committee of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers 'Blue Union' spoke to the The Newsletter about dockers' wages and the crisis on the modernisation committee.

'All the docker can do is speculate about his wages' he said 'he has had no report from his trade union leaders. Wages were obviously a big issue in the crisis on the modernisation committee, but I think there is another aspect that should be stressed and this is a warning, particularly to the London docker.'

'The modernisation committee is obviously finding it very difficult to line up a package deal. The bosses want it lined up hard and fast. They are not going to give out a pound or two and then find they have to try to get something off the docker.'

'In particular, the employers want to alter manning scales in London and push ahead with mechanisation. London is their major target.'

'The London port employers might be willing to throw in an extra few shillings if they could get similar manning scales in connection with mechanisation as those which exist in Liverpool.'

'The London docker has resisted, but the Liverpool docker has paid for the sell-outs of union leaders on Merseyside who made agreements behind the men's backs.'

'In 1960, London and Liverpool manning scales were similar.'

'In Liverpool, on a ship discharging, the previous manning was eight holdsmen and twelve quay hands. Now it is done with palletisation and stacker trucks—with four holdsmen, and only three men on the quay. In many cases, tally clerks are not employed.'

'London port employers have yet to impose such agreements on London dockers and evidently, here, and in other ways, they want big concessions tied up.'

'Perhaps now some of the employers and government representatives, seeing the stubborn militancy of the docker, will be considering the advice of the authoritative writer in the "Docks and Harbour Magazine", seven years ago.'

'He proposed as the remedy on the docks: "There is much to be said for the strike to end all strikes. It is a fact to be remembered still that the General Strike ushered in the longest period of peace within living memory."

'Certainly, the employers and the government are preparing for battle with the dockers. They can be hoping for assistance from the legislation that the government is preparing. That could be one reason why they allowed a crisis to develop in the modernisation committee.'

'The dockers also must prepare.'