

The Newsletter

WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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THIS WEEK

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WILSON SWINGS MORE TO THE RIGHT

STATEMENT BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

LABOUR'S victory in the Hull North by-election changes nothing. Mr. MacNamara, the Labour candidate and now Member of parliament fought on the right-wing policies of Wilson, Callaghan and Brown.

In the opening days of his campaign he viciously attacked the Hull port workers who were on strike for more wages. He fully supported all proposals for legislation against the trade unions, as well as defending the American imperialist war in Vietnam. MacNamara behaved in every way as a loyal supporter of the right wing.

Naturally, Wilson and company have seized the opportunity to interpret the greatly increased majority as an endorsement for their policies.

The day after the election, he declared to a meeting of employers' organisations in Birmingham, that the budget would be tough and that the government would continue to implement its legislative policy.

In other words, he explained the results of the by-election as a mandate to continue a further move to the right by stepping up attacks on the working class.

In the next few weeks it is anticipated that legislation against the trade unions, together with legislation on the Devlin Commission Report on the docks and a tough budget on the workers will be introduced to Parliament.

The by-election itself, embodied a distinct contradictory process.

The Labour vote stood solid on class lines against the Tories. It was not so much the policy of MacNamara that decided the issues, but the fact that the working class want at all costs to keep the Tories out of office, and they knew that if there was a drop in the Labour vote, the slender parliamentary majority would undoubtedly open up the road for a general election.

CONSCIOUS VOTE

The Liberals, on the other hand, who make up the main portion of MacNamara's majority, voted quite consciously for the right-wing policies of the Labour government.

They support legislation against the trade unions because they hate trade unions. They are for attacking the working class because they have been misled into believing that the rank-and-file supporters of Labour are their greatest enemies.

This vote is not an anti-Tory vote on the same class basis as that of Labour's supporters, but it is rather deliberate support for right-wing pro-Tory policies.

Liberals believe that these policies have a better chance of being carried into practice by Wilson and company than they would have under a Tory government.

BREAK UP

This relationship of forces cannot continue for long; the right-wing policies will most definitely split the working class which supports the Labour Party. This means that the combination of votes that decided the election in Hull will also break up.

As Labour moves more to the right, it may well gain the support of dissident Liberals. The price it will eventually have to pay is a split in its own ranks.

It is no accident that Desmond Donnelly, M.P., an ultra-right wing opponent of steel nationalization, has claimed that the Hull North by-election endorsed the decision of the government to throw out steel nationalization.

He is in favour of a pro-radical alliance with the Liberals, similar to the Democratic Party in the United States. There is no doubt that Mr. Donnelly, has had some remarkable success in forcing Wilson to abandon steel nationalization. His comments on the Hull by-election should therefore be taken very seriously.

On the day before the by-



The front section of the march before the lobby of MPs on January 26. More pictures on page two.

not the rank and file, of whom many attended the lobby, was one of all-out sabotage of every effort to make the lobby a success.

Only two weeks before the lobby under instructions from the Communist Party leadership, the full-time officials in the trade unions toured job after job endeavouring to persuade workers not to support the lobby.

In its calls for unity with the parliamentary fake 'left' MPs, the Communist Party leadership is prepared to participate in every dirty deed in return for a few words of praise from these gentlemen.

Significantly, also, the so-called pro-Chinese tendency found itself completely on the side of Gollan and company in these activities. Their pathological hatred of Trotskyism and blind defence of Stalin re-united these so-called opponents.

NOT UNITY

Many active members of the Communist Party are now greatly disturbed over the role of their leadership. They are beginning to understand that the proposal from their November conference does not mean unity with the left who are in struggle for real communist policies, but unity with

the fake left who are busy covering up for Wilson.

We are convinced that in the coming days more and more members of the Communist Party will join with the Socialist Labour League in organising a real struggle against the betrayals of the right wing.

We should not lose a single day in our efforts to organise campaigns in all the important areas. The lobby was only a beginning. Immediately we must organise local demonstrations, lobbies of MPs in the areas and mass meetings.

We must win the trades councils and constituency Labour Parties over to our policies of opposing anti-trade union legislation. The next stage of the campaign is to win over the support of organisations of the working class in each area.

Already arrangements are in hand for a monster lobby during the next three months.

The next time we go to Parliament we want tens of thousands of workers on the streets.

We can and will defeat all anti-trade union legislation. The Central Committee of the Socialist Labour League appeals to every member of the League and every reader of The Newsletter to make this great national campaign a success.

VIETNAM

WILSON IGNORES LEFTS' PROTEST

IF the resumption of the bombing of North Vietnam by the US was a foregone conclusion, so was the obsequious reaction of Harold Wilson, and the feeble protest of the 'left' MPs.

Wilson cannot oppose President Johnson. Tied hand and foot by the generous loans of US imperialism, he grimly follows him as he staggers towards the brink.

Air strategy

Johnson believes he can win the war from the air, since he cannot win it on the ground.

Mr. Wilson, no military strategist, believes in the power of Johnson. As for the 'left' MPs, whose protests are as feeble as they are frequent, they do not believe in anything except the charisma of Wilson.

What a grotesque farce it is! Instead of taking the issue into their constituencies and trade unions, these faint hearts send a telegram to Senator Fulbright—a notorious opponent of the civil rights movement in the States.

'Full-blooded'

When Wilson insultingly told them that this was a 'tactical error', Michael Foot—who excels in this kind of shadow-boxing—got up to complain that the Foreign Office statement 'ought not to have been so full-blooded'!

As Kipling once said: 'We are not ruled by murderers; only by their friends.'

We say to the 'left' MPs: 'Stop ducking. Vote against Wilson.'

FAMINE SCAPEGOAT

MRS. INDIRA GHANDI'S government has arrested E. M. S. Namboodiripad, an Indian Communist Party leader and former chief minister of Kerala. In Kerala this week students rioted against the tremendous food shortages facing the already starving millions in India.

Namboodiripad is said to be a 'security risk' and is behind the riots.

Like her father, Nehru, and his successor, Shastri, Mrs. Gandhi is unable to solve the food crisis. Namboodiripad provides her with a temporary scapegoat.

BEN BARKA AFFAIR

LINK WITH CIA?

IN last week's Newsletter article on the Ben Barka affair, we suggested the possibility of a connection with the USA. This is strengthened by some further information.

A leading organiser of the abduction of Ben Barka, the Moroccan nationalist leader, was Antoine Lopez. As reported last week, he was a triple agent, working for the Moroccan secret service, the French SDECE spy network, and the narcotics squad of the Paris police.

The two police officers whose official cards tricked Ben Barka into entering the kidnap car were members of the narcotics squad. Lopez's ordinary job at Orly Airport gave him a useful position for obtaining information on the drug trade from Morocco.

But it is also likely to have brought him into contact with the US Narcotics Bureau.

This quite possibly led to relations with the US Central Intelligence Agency, which is well-known for its independent activity all over the world, from the deposition of Mossadegh in Persia, to the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba. It has a training centre at Landau.

U.S. FINANCED

American money might well have financed this affair. Ben Barka was about to leave for Havana to chair the Tri-continental conference when his kidnapping and murder took place. His pro-Chinese sympathies were well-known.

Moreover, the CIA would have an interest in damaging de Gaulle, especially his relations with nationalism.

This would bring them together with those extreme right-wing elements in the French state apparatus mainly responsible for the action.

The existence of such powerful forces, combining state officials and gangsters, and operating on an international level, must be seen as potentially dangerous, not only for the French, but the world working class.

Rail and bus workers unite To defend conditions

LONDON busmen have been operating an overtime ban for over two weeks, and it is unlikely to end for another week.

A special committee of union officials and London Transport Board representatives has been inquiring into the ban and will make an interim report next Monday (February 7).

The ban is an answer to the Board's new schedules which cut services by some 12 per cent on Sundays, and slight cuts in week-day services.

The schedules mean that 691 extra crews rest on Sundays, leaving fewer to rest during the week.

The Board claims that by reducing Sunday services, more week-day duties can be covered, thus improving the service.

No backing down

ON Wednesday, the National Union of Railwaymen's executive voted by 21-2 for the proposed strike on February 14 as an answer to the rejection of a pay claim by the Prices and Incomes Board.

The executive has taken a further step towards a national stoppage which, 'The Guardian' pointed out would mean 'taking on the government'.

Railwaymen all over Britain must back the call, but also insist that their leaders make full preparation for the strike to make it fully effective.

'LAST PERSON'

As 'The Guardian' also pointed out, NUR secretary, Sidney Greene is 'just about the last person who wants a national rail stoppage'.

In fact after meeting British Railways Board chairman, Mr. Stanley Raymond, on Tuesday, Greene and his negotiating committee undertook to ask the executive to call off the strike.



Greene: 'The Guardian' says he obviously does not want a strike.

Mr. Raymond says there cannot be any negotiations while this hangs over the Board.

But what can negotiations produce? The Prices and Incomes Board has made its case very clear, and the only way the railwaymen will obtain any more pay is 'by taking on the government'.

This is why half measures or a last minute backing down cannot be tolerated.

Railwaymen can strengthen their fight by uniting with the London Transport busmen.

'All out' call at Ford

SHOP stewards at Ford's Dagenham plant called on Tuesday for an official strike throughout the plant in support of the 130 paint sprayers who struck over the reduction of their relief time by nearly half to 50 minutes a day.

The new proposal would bring them in line with paint sprayers at the company's Halewood plant.

DELAY CONDEMNED

After hearing a report-back from the January 26 lobby of parliament, a meeting of Speke AEU No. 3 branch, unanimously backed the resolution carried at the Central Hall meeting which carried a resolution to be sent to the Liverpool Trades Council condemning the Executive for its delay in calling a mass meeting of council tenants against the proposed rent increases.

See page 4

Next Week
Jack Gale makes a further analysis of the Hull by-election

election, the lobby of Parliament, organised by the Lambeth Trades Council, took place. This revealed the nature of the conflict which is now developing inside the working class.

Firstly, it was one of the most representative gatherings of trade unionists which had lobbied Parliament since the unemployment campaign of March, 1963.

Not a single worker who went to Parliament was satisfied with the answers that he received. All the workers came away from that lobby believing more than ever that the Labour leaders had betrayed them. As a result, they are preparing to build up a movement in their areas which will either force the Labour government to fight on their behalf or bring it down.

The recognition of the need to build an alternative leadership to the right wing is being posed. In this respect, some remarkably important contributions were made by shop stewards and trade unionists at the Central Hall meeting which followed the lobby.

In addition to all this, the lobby posed one more important lesson. The behaviour of the leaders of the Communist Party,

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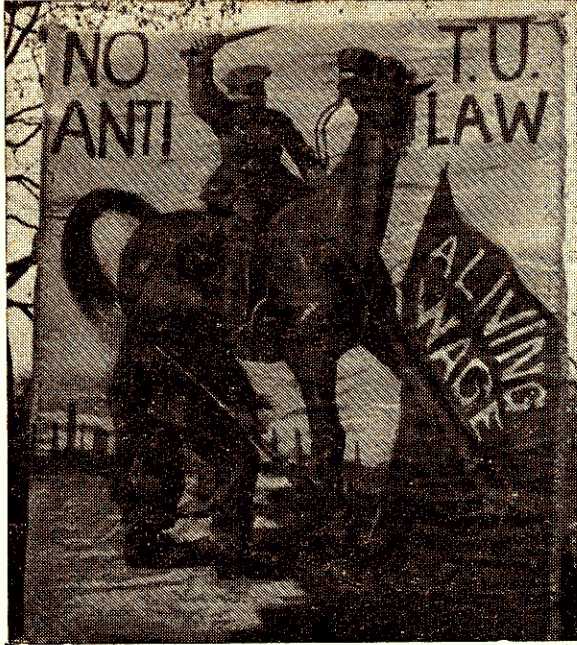
- The Socialist Labour League is the only organisation within the labour movement which fully support the national lobby of parliament, organised by the Lambeth Trades Council.
- Our paper, The Newsletter, had, since last October, campaigned each week for the success of the lobby.
- The Newsletter was the only paper to protest over the suspension of the Lambeth Trades Council by the TUC.
- Both the Socialist Labour League and The Newsletter pledge themselves to continue with the struggle until the right-wing Labour and trade union leaders are forced to abandon their proposals for anti-trade union legislation.
- We ask all our readers, old and new, to pledge themselves to support us in this fight. If you want to receive The Newsletter regularly, why not become a regular subscriber: 9s for 12 issues (including postage). If you want to know more about the Socialist Labour League, fill in the form below.

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JANUARY 26 - More pictures

It WAS a magnificent lobby



Above: One of the many effective banners on the march. Far right: Lobbyists crowded on St. Stephen's Green across the road from the usual lobbying point. (They were ordered there by the police). Right: The front section of the march.



There is no doubt about it, last week's demonstration and lobby against the government's proposed anti-union laws was MAGNIFICENT. This was the word used by many trade unionists, Young Socialists, students and Communist Party members on the day-long, 1,500-strong march, lobby and report-back meeting. Many also saw the lobby as the beginning of a massive campaign and have returned to report the lobby to their organisations throughout the British Isles to rally further support to the growing political opposition to the proposed legislation and the so-called Labour 'leaders' who intend to introduce it soon. The Newsletter and Socialist Labour League prints these photographs as a reminder (especially to Wilson and company) of the strength and militancy of January 26, and to urge all members of the labour movement to join in all activity against anti-union law in preparation for further national demonstrations later this year.

CP's mock fight on legislation

Campbell uses Keynesian argument

ALL supporters and members of the Communist Party who seriously intend to fight against the anti-union legislation to be brought in by the Labour government should have no illusions about the ability or intention of the Party leadership to take the lead in this campaign.

By Newsletter Reporter
this 'Communist' argued, by the government compelling the monopolies to modernise. They must introduce the most up-to-date management methods. The old school tie system must be abolished. Promotion had to be on merit. Out-of-date firms had to be forced to modernise their plant. All this need not be financed, Campbell claimed, by an attack on the living standards of the working class, but by a reduction in overseas investment and spending on foreign bases.

Party and its press for failing to support the Lambeth Trades Council lobby, which he considered to be a success and fully representative of the trade union movement. A member of the Socialist Labour League pointed out that the real reason for the active opposition of the Communist Party was that the lobby posed before the working class the building of a leadership to take the power. The Communist Party had no such perspective, and therefore was forced to oppose the campaign led by Lambeth Trades Council.

'WILSON SUSCEPTIBLE'
Concluding, Campbell thought that if Wilson could be made to realise how far to the right his government had drifted, he would be susceptible to mass pressure. A campaign along the lines of an attack on rising prices would meet with mass support and put the labour movement back on the right lines.

Campbell agreed that this was the real reason why the party had boycotted the lobby—that it was led by Trotskyists and that it was unrepresentative of the broad progressive and left movement.

KEYNSIAN ARGUMENT
He put forward the classical Keynesian argument that a restriction of incomes would only harm the British economy. An incomes policy that began with an attack on wages would never be accepted by the working class, said Campbell. Communist Party policy, he added, would be to hold down prices for a certain period, then approach the trade union leaders armed with this achievement and ask that they bear it in mind when putting in their claims for higher wages. Campbell then developed his plan for the modernisation of British capitalism. He waxed with indignant patriotism at the position of Britain in the capital investment league, one place from the bottom above Portugal. This could only be put right,

The other speaker, Jock Nicolson, a member of the London District Council of the National Union of Railwaysmen, thought that the overwhelming majority of the delegates to the Labour Party and Trade Union Congresses had voted for the incomes policy and the 'early warning system' in the belief that it would help the lower paid worker. Now that this could be seen to be a mistake, we could expect a change of heart by these people. Neither Nicolson nor Campbell raised the question of nationalization of the monopolies and the banks as a solution to the crisis of the British economy. Each put forward solutions that took for granted the continued existence of British capitalism and its role as an imperialist power. In the discussion that followed, a Party member attacked the

SUPPORTED LEAGUE
A building worker supported the League member, demanding to know why the 'Daily Worker' had Henry Cooper's photograph all over the back page the day after the lobby, yet hardly a single word about the lobby, which he supported fully. Another building worker said that on his site there were Communists and Labour Party members and Trotskyists, and that all had to unite in the fight against legislation. Yet another member of the audience demanded a clarification from Campbell on the Party's attitude towards Gott at the Hull by-election. Campbell very predictably accused Gott of splitting the left at a time when unity was required. Such actions as standing against the Labour candidate, when Wilson had a majority of only three, could only weaken the labour movement, and place the blame for any setbacks on the left wing. Furious heckling broke out at this point. Order was restored only when one of the builders walked out in disgust at what he correctly called Campbell's endorsement of Wilson's policy in Vietnam.

Canada: New parliament — old problems

BY A TORONTO CORRESPONDENT

CANADA'S new Parliament has re-opened with all the archaic trappings derived from Westminster, including a Speech from the Throne setting out the legislative proposals of the government. This speech was generally conceded to have been as dull as the election campaign which sent the Lester Pearson government back to Ottawa without the majority it had hoped to win at last November's election. The principal change in the party line-up is a growth in the strength of the New Democratic Party, the nearest approach to a labour party in North America, with a right-wing leadership which models itself on European social-democracy. With 18 per cent of the popular vote the Party has enhanced its national standing, while its 21 MPs can have considerable weight in a Parliament in which no party has a majority. Electorally speaking the main weakness of the NDP lies in the fact that its support is concentrated in only three provinces—British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario. It has failed to make a real appeal to the French-speaking working class of Quebec or to gain support in the Maritime Provinces, despite the fact that they have the highest incidence of unemployment and poverty in Canada.

CONTRADICTION
The weight of US capital in the economy is a central contradiction of Canadian development. Middle-class nationalists, businessmen and the financial press have to accept continued dependence upon American capital; still, they are uneasy and hanker after some alternative. Within the context of capitalist property relations, however, such a hope is purely Utopian. Canadian business has itself partly to blame for the situation. With a different policy it might have been able to utilise American capital without becoming subordinate to it. The Australian government, for example, has learned from Canadian experience to get better terms from US corporations. 'We don't want to become another Canada,' is the refrain of Australian businessmen. The Canadians, however, made their own bed by permitting the entry of US capital with practically no restriction or reserve. This inflow of US capital has permitted the expansion of the

Canadian economy, though with a one-sided emphasis on raw materials and semi-processed production for export. The current high boom reflects the close inter-relationship of Canada's economy with that of the USA. In Canada US business finds a labour force with a wage level some 75 per cent of that in the States. In Quebec particularly it has had a free field to exploit the cheapest labour power in North America. It has a captive market for the products of the industries it controls. It has been able to lay its hands on the mineral resources of Canada with the full co-operation of the provincial governments—Alberta, with its natural gas and petroleum, being a classic example of where every facility has been offered to the US corporations.

having a stable form of government in Canada which will protect its investment interests. It is not going to be restrained by angry letters or by polite notes from acting as it thinks fit in defence of its interests. This includes listening to the counsels of Washington with its overriding need to protect the dollar rather than to any politician, Federal or Provincial, in Canada.

ISSUES IGNORED
Like the 'old-line' parties, the NDP leadership kept the real issues in Canadian politics out of sight during the election campaign. These are, in essence, the stranglehold of the US corporations over the Canadian economy, the subservience of the Pearson government to US policy, despite hypocritical protestations to the contrary, and the question of Quebec. The first, and by implication the last, of these issues was raised unconventionally early in January by the indiscretion of a Quebec Minister, Eric Kierans. Going over the head of the Federal government, and without consulting the Provincial Prime Minister, the Acting Minister of Revenue for Quebec sent a letter to the United States' Secretary of Commerce strongly protesting at the restrictions which Washington was seeking to impose on the foreign subsidiaries of US companies. As a contribution to the US balance of payments problem, American-owned firms were asked to report quarterly on the effort they were making to solve it by repatriating profits rather than re-investing them in the countries of operation. Kierans angrily took issue with this policy, despite the fact that Ottawa had accepted it with its usual docility. He pointed to the extent of foreign ownership of Canada's manufacturing industries and mineral resources. He rightly pointed out that the course which the subsidiaries of US firms were being asked to take by the American government was likely to prejudice the economic future of Quebec, whose industrial development has been mainly due to the influx of US capital. He suggested that the 900 companies concerned should operate

DOMINATING FEATURE
The penetration of US capital into all parts of the capitalist world, wherever a profit was likely to be made, is a dominating feature of current world development. Nowhere has this penetration gone forward under such favourable conditions as in Canada. Nowhere else does US capital control 95 per cent of the motor car industry, 87 per cent of the rubber industry, 70 per cent of the petroleum and gas industry, 64 per cent of the electrical appliance industry, and so on. According to Kierans' letter, 56.6 per cent of Canadian manufacturing industry is foreign owned and 65.2 per cent of the mines, quarries and oil wells. US business is interested in

IRONIC
In fact it is ironic that politicians who have been facilitating the entry of US capital for years should now turn round and criticise it. As Professor Cohen of McGill points out, it is also absurd for Kierans to expect that 'in a generally free-enterprise economy, foreign investors should be guided essentially by the local government's views of investment programmes rather than by the investor's own estimates of profits and advantage in Canada and elsewhere'. This incident illustrates the vulnerability of the Canadian economy, despite the present prosperity. Its future has been traded for short-term profits and advantages by capitalist businessmen and politicians. Canadian workers will be the first to feel the onset of recession and may not have to wait that long if US investment in Canada is cut down to strengthen the US dollar. The deliberations of the new Parliament at Ottawa go on in full knowledge that major decisions affecting Canadians will be taken in Washington or in the board rooms of US corporations.

JUST OUT!

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A Journal of International Marxism
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Italian CP Congress

'UNITY with Rome.' This was the call of the Italian Communist Party Congress at its meeting last week. Signor Luigi Longo, secretary of the Party, opening the Congress and speaking for over four hours, called for unity between Communists and Catholics. He stressed that the Pope had bypassed the social democrats in his call for unity.

'LET'S UNITE WITH CATHOLICS'

Main points
Among the main points from his speech were:
● That Catholics and Communists should strive together to build a new society freed from poverty and exploitation. Communists could not hope to determine entirely the nature of socialist society.
● That the Italian Communist Party did not seek a united socialist alternative to capitalism, but rather a democratic transformation of the state to open up the path to socialism.
● He strongly attacked the Chinese, who did not send a fraternal delegate.
In essence, his speech represents the complete capitulation of the Party to the capitalist state and

— says Longo
By a Newsletter correspondent

Worker' heralded the Congress as an attempt to win 'broad left links in Italy'. This is in line with the proposals of the Communist Party of Great Britain for unity with the 'fake lefts' and a complete turn away from the working class. **Dropping name?** The Italians have openly gone further along the road to liquidationism than Gollan and company: they have discussed ideas for changing the name of the Party, dropping the 'offending' word 'Communist'! The Italian Congress demonstrates one fact even more clearly: that in a period when the working class is being propelled into revolutionary struggles the Stalinists turn their backs on the working class and towards the capitalists and their hangers-on in the labour movement. As the recent lobby in Britain against trade union legislation showed, Stalinism is a definite counter-revolutionary force. The need now is for a new international party of the working class—the Fourth International—which can lead the working class to socialism in the struggles which lie ahead.

Castro

at Tricontinental Conference

by
Michael

slanders

Banda

Trotskyism

The Tricontinental Conference which was held recently in Havana was in many respects no different from previous conferences held in Addis Ababa, Accra and Cairo.

Its main purpose was to provide a safety-valve for middle-class charlatans like Cheddi Jagan and upper-class demagogues like Allende to blow off steam against imperialism, neo-colonialism and what-have-you.

If this was all it achieved, there would be little reason for any further comment. But this conference was different in another way—and significantly so.

When the conference was in its final stage, and as delegates were getting ready to depart, Castro mounted the rostrum and, without hint or warning, launched a vile attack against Trotskyism. It was a diatribe without political conscience, without honour, without truth and without precedent—at least since the death of Stalin.

This is what the Cuban Bonaparte had to say about Trotskyism: [The extract is from the January 23 'Worker', organ of the American Communist Party.]

'STORMY APPLAUSE'

'Greeted by stormy applause was Castro's denunciation of the Trotskyites as agents of imperialism. What the Fourth International committed, he declared, was a crime against the revolutionary movement, intending to isolate it from the rest of the people by corrupting it with stupidities.

'He said his ire was aroused by Trotskyite articles "accusing Cuba of not giving Ernest Guevara a hearing and even making the vicious insinuation that Castro, his comrade in arms, murdered him."

'Castro cited articles by Adolfo Gilly in the "Monthly Review" of New York, in "Marcha", the Spanish Trotskyite weekly, and in "Nuovo Mondo", the Italian Trotskyite newspaper, as well as an article by Felipe Alba Guante, the Mexican Trotskyite, in "El Universal".

'Gilly, in his article of October 22 in "Marcha", had claimed that Che Guevara had left Cuba because of differences with Castro over the Chinese question. . . .

'Cuba's enemies, Castro said, have mounted a world-wide campaign to discredit Cuba by using Guevara's departure as a pretext. It was necessary for Che to depart secretly, he noted, and this

gave the imperialists a chance to use the circumstance. . . .

'Castro assailed the "infiltration" of Trotskyites into the Guatemalan revolutionary movement. One, he said, became the editor of a newspaper which copied the programme of the Fourth International "from head to tail".

'"What the Fourth International thus committed," he thundered from the rostrum to the delegates from three continents, "was a true crime against the revolutionary movement to isolate it from the masses by corrupting it with the stupidities, the dishonour and the repugnant and nauseating thing that is Trotskyism today within the field of politics."

'["If Trotskyism, at a certain stage represented an erroneous position, but a position within the field of political ideas, in later years it became a vulgar instrument of imperialism and reaction".] (Our emphasis.)

A fact that the 'Worker' omitted to mention was the execrable denunciation of Antonio Marcos Yon Sosa, a Guatemalan guerrilla leader, by Castro.

According to the 'New York Post' (January 19, 1966), Castro called him a 'Trotskyist' and a 'traitor to the revolution'.

Why Sosa was a 'traitor' Castro never bothered to explain (such piccadillos are often beneath the consideration of dictators).

When Castro accuses Trotskyism of being a tool of imperialism he lies—and lies knowingly.

DISTORTION

Let us not forget that this technique of Byzantine distortion and vilifying was originated and perfected by Stalin and his attorney Vyshinsky in the Moscow Trials. In order to do what? In order to conceal and mitigate their own crimes against their opponents in the working class.

If Castro wanted to criticise the Trotskyites why did he not study and quote from the journals of either the United Secretariat or the International Committee?

And, furthermore, where is the evidence that Trotskyism is an instrument of reaction? Where indeed?

By stooping to such filthy calumnies, Castro disgraces himself and stains the banner of the Cuban revolution.

For our part we are not afraid to discuss and polemicise publicly with Castro, or any of his co-thinkers. But we ask for only one condition to be fulfilled: that the traditional norms of socialist conduct be observed.

This is not the first time that the Cuban leaders have referred disparagingly to Trotskyism, but it is certainly the first time that Castro, as Prime Minister and leader of the newly formed Communist Party of Cuba, has used an international forum to attack 'Trotskyism'.

Why did he do it? Before answering this question it is necessary to remind ourselves that Castro was not speaking in an individual capacity, but as the head of a capitalist state machine, as the prime minister of

a Bonapartist government, as well as the leader of a party with a large proportion of Stalinists.

The Cuban Communist Party enjoys the complete and unqualified support of the Kremlin bureaucracy. That is its most important credential.

The other point to bear in mind—and this is equally germane—is that the Havana Conference was supposedly a non-controversial conference where both wings of Stalinism maintained a deceptive silence and a facade of unity was created by Castro.

There were plenty of traitors (real ones) to be denounced if Castro wanted to do so—the Soviet leaders, for instance, who were doing their utmost to bring the National Liberation Front of Vietnam to the conference table, or the bourgeois nationalists of Africa who refuse to help the Rhodesian workers in any way.

Castro, however, turned a blind eye on all this and chose instead to slander individual revolutionaries and distort and belittle the revolutionary theory of 'Trotskyism'.

CONDITIONED

As we shall try to prove, these false accusations are not an aberration of an individual, but constitute a system which is determined and conditioned by the present situation of the ruling regime in Cuba.

'Fear of criticism,' as Trotsky once commented on the Moscow Trials, 'is fear of the masses'.

It is precisely this fear, this uncertainty, that animates Castro and his Stalinist 'apparatchniks'.

For some months, the Cuban economy has been in trouble (see Newsletter October 30, 1965). Falling sugar prices, increasing shortage of foreign exchange, bureaucratic muddle and haphazard 'planning' have not only forced Castro to retrench, but have also forced him to rely heavily on Soviet aid.

The price paid for Soviet aid was so great that even Guevara rebelled and charged Soviet leaders as being 'accomplices of imperialist exploitation'.

Before Guevara could organise an effective opposition, Castro struck back ruthlessly, and Guevara vanished—mysteriously.

For three months nothing, absolutely nothing, has been heard of Guevara. Not a memo, not a letter, not even a note or word of greeting to the Tricontinental Conference, has come from 'el Compañero Ché'.

It is therefore no accident that the mention of Guevara's name should provoke rage and fear in Castro's mind. It is impossible to remain silent on Guevara any longer.

The Fourth International demands to know what happened to Che Guevara. Where is he? Why did Guevara relinquish his Cuban citizenship? Why did he 'free Cuba from all responsibility' in his last message?

What was the nature of the differences between him and Castro?

Is Castro prepared to allow entry to an independent labour delegation to inquire into and verify the truth about Guevara's disappearance?

Since Castro evades these questions, we are free to draw what inferences we can.

GUEVARA EXILED?

Either Guevara was killed or incarcerated in a special prison in Cuba or, and this seems more likely, he was exiled and his wife and child held as hostages in case he decided to do something rash—like speaking to the press, or writing his memoirs.

That Castro's fear of Guevara is real was demonstrated recently when the Cuban government decided to disarm the militia on the flimsy pretext that the guns were not being maintained properly!

Could it have been rather that Guevara's name was closely associated with guerrilla war in Cuba and everywhere else in the Latin American continent?

Castro can rave as much as he likes. 'Neither threats, nor persecutions, nor violations can stop us. The truth will triumph'.

Greater dictators than Castro have tried to threaten and silence the voice of authentic Marxism, with predictable results.

At this stage, it must be stated that in defending Guevara, we are in no way identifying ourselves with 'Monthly Review', an independent left-socialist journal, or 'Marcha', organ of the ultra-left Posadas group, or 'Nuovo Mondo', and certainly not with Guante, a self-styled 'Trotskyist' journalist with a penchant for sensational and unfounded revelations.

The Posadas group in particular is 'Trotskyist' only in name. In



Britain its most prominent leader when the group was founded has openly supported the right-wing witch-hunt against Young Socialists and councillors, while calling for world revolution! (Such political chameleons, it seems, can only be found in Posadas' menagerie.)

We learned that members of the Posadas group were recently released from Castro's jails after signing a loyalty oath to the regime. This was done against the wishes of Posadas, but it reveals the true character of his group.

All the signs so far indicate that the rich peasantry of the co-operatives, and the private farmers, together with the vast bureaucracy of the capitalist state, are looking for ways and means to enrich themselves and to curb the remaining power of the workers.

In this struggle, Castro, like Sukarno until recently, plays the role of arbiter.

(How long he will be able to do this is another matter, on which it will be pointless to speculate.)

This is why Castro has picked 'Monthly Review' and the Guatemalan liberation movement on which to vent his spleen.

'Monthly Review', it must be said to its credit, refused to support the Kremlin's attacks against China and Albania, it supported the Cuban liberation movement in its hour of need, and what's more, it began to take an increasingly critical view of the bureaucratic and undemocratic set-up in Cuba, particularly in relation to the trade unions and the right to strike.

MILD CRITICISM

These criticisms were articulated by Adolfo Gilly in the 'Monthly Review' in 1964. Even Gilly's criticisms seem mild when we recall that there has not been

The Fourth International demands to know what happened to Che Guevara (seen here talking to an American reporter shortly before his 'disappearance' from Cuba).



a genuine election—or even a referendum—in Cuba since 1960! Gilly also criticised the Cuban attitude to the Dominican revolt, but not too correctly, as well as making an analysis of the Guatemalan national liberation movement.

Castro and his clique, having consolidated their monopoly of political power, intend to keep it that way.

To give the ballot to the working class is just as dangerous as giving it bullets. Hence, the disarming of the militia and the lack of any representative national body.

Castro is extremely sensitive on this point and resents any criticism, friendly or otherwise, even from 'Monthly Review'.

Foreign policy is a continuation of home policy. In this sense there is no contradiction between Castro's elimination of Guevara and his unprovoked attack on Yon Sosa in Guatemala.

Castro would like to see revolts in Latin America, but only those he can control. He requires petty-bourgeois nationalist movements, which will not pose a serious threat to imperialism and native capitalism, and will help him to reach a *modus vivendi* with US imperialism.

Already the decision to repatriate relatives of exiles to the US has gone some way towards placating US imperialism, and shows which way Castro is thinking.

MORE DECISIONS

More such decisions are on the way obviously. The Guatemalan national revolutionary movement, that wing of it which is under Yon Sosa's leadership, refuses to accept the leadership of Castro and puts forward a more radical programme in contrast to the pro-Stalinist group led by Turcios, whom Castro supports.

Castro, uncertain of Yon Sosa's aims and motives, sees the movement as a threat to his aims in Central America. So he throws the weight of his authority against him in a most despicable manner.

We should not be surprised if Yon Sosa also disappears, like Guevara. We have been forewarned, and so we shall be

vigilant.

All over Latin America, military dictatorships are sprouting like mushrooms in the California sunshine. Every attempt to set up Castroite movements in Venezuela, Brazil, Peru and Ecuador, has met with setback or failure so far.

Thus the margin for manoeuvre for Castro is being reduced daily. At the same time, the crisis of imperialism increases the pressure against Cuba through the Soviet bureaucracy and its local agency.

Today Castro needs their help and their technique in eliminating opposition and dissent. The speech he made bore all the hallmarks of Stalinist coaching and was probably written by a Stalinist bureaucrat.

But tomorrow, when he finds no more need for the Blas Roca's, what then?

It does not require much perspicacity to predict that Castro's final reconciliation with imperialism will be accomplished over the dead bodies of hundreds and thousands of Cuban communists. This is the fatal logic of Castro's policy.

SMASH SKULLS

As in Indonesia, the ruling class first uses and compromises the Stalinists irrevocably before it decides to smash their skulls.

We, and all those who support the International Committee of the Fourth International, are concerned but not surprised by these developments. Three months ago The Newsletter warned the Trotskyist movement:

'The disappearance of Guevara is not an accidental event. It signifies the major turn in Castro's policy, a turn towards a new relationship with US imperialism.

'The working class will be the

first victims of this process.'

Confirmation has come, rapidly. Castro's attack on Trotskyism is nothing more than a declaration to imperialism and its Stalinist agencies that the Cuban government is prepared to play its part in suppressing any attempt to set up working-class power in Central and Latin America.

Needless to say, Stalinism endorses this policy wholeheartedly.

The Trotskyist movement, and here we include the revisionist United Secretariat and the Socialist Workers' Party of America, has nothing to be ashamed about in its record of sustained struggle for the defence of Cuba against the US imperialist monster.

The difference between these two tendencies, unlike the differences inside Castro's leadership, are written down for everyone to read.

Unlike the Stalinists, the Trotskyists have, and still do, stand for the unconditional defence of Cuba against the attacks and embargoes of US imperialism, which is the greatest enemy of the colonial peoples.

FIRST TO PROTEST

In Britain the Socialist Labour League was the first organisation to demonstrate publicly on behalf of the Cuban revolution. In Cuba Trotskyists were the first to raise the demand for the nationalisation of foreign-owned enterprises in retaliation for the blockade—a demand which even Castro acknowledged, despite the cowardly opposition of the Stalinists.

And during the missiles crisis, the International Committee of the Fourth International campaigned publicly against any attempt by the Kremlin leaders to withdraw the missiles in return for UN intervention in Cuba.

(The list is much longer, but we do not desire to tax the patience of our readers.)

We are not a part of Castro's bandwagon though—we fight for the emancipation of the working class throughout the world, including Cuba.

Dr. Castro objects to the independence of Trotskyism and its (Continued on back page)

THE EPTON TRIAL

ON December 20 Bill Epton, Chairman of New York's Progressive Labour Party, Harlem branch, was convicted of 'conspiring to overthrow', and 'advocating the overthrow' of the New York State Government and of 'conspiring to riot'.

These convictions arose out of the Harlem 'riots' of 1965 and are based on clearly unconstitutional New York State 'criminal anarchy' laws passed in 1901. The last conviction under these laws was that of Benjamin Gitlow, in 1919, then a member of the Communist Party, during the anti-red campaigns following the First World War.

Then, as now, these laws were used against those militants who fought in the interests of the American working class. The return to these type of 'frame-up' prosecutions put the lie to all those who claim that relations between the bosses and the workers have changed and improved.

It marks the beginning of the end of that phoney system of labour relations instituted by the American capitalist class in such laws as the 'Wagner Act' and others passed during the 'New Deal' administration of Roosevelt—operated with the collusion of the trade union bureaucracy.

At that time the capitalist class, on the verge of massive profits to be made out of the Second World War, could well afford to give certain concessions to the working class in exchange for which they obtained the legal institutionalization of the trade unions and were able, therefore, to chain the trade union bureaucracy to their side.

But now, under the conditions of a world economic crisis, they are forced to discard the old methods and brutally attack all those who show the slightest independence of the established trade union bureaucracy and who seek to fight in the revolutionary interests of the working class.

Bill Epton and the Progressive Labour Party must be counted on that side of the fence. That is why the State of New York has proceeded with this vicious frame-up which bears the marks of earlier frame-ups instituted by the capitalist class against workers fighting for better conditions.

One remembers the hanging of the Molly Maguires and the hanging of Albert Parsons, who was falsely accused of responsibility for the Chicago Haymarket massacre.

Early in the trial Epton's defence counsel charged that Epton would not be on trial if it were not for his political beliefs. This was denied by the prosecution who termed the charge 'ridiculous'. Yet all evidence bearing on, and the charge of 'rioting' was thrown out of court.

Epton was convicted solely on the basis of 'conspiracy' and 'advocating' violence and overthrow.

According to the January 4 issue of 'Challenge', the weekly paper of the Progressive Labour Party, the prosecution of Epton was based on four main points:

1. He associated himself with national liberation struggles to the black people of Harlem;
2. He attempted to bring the lessons of the world-wide liberation struggles to the black people of Harlem;
3. He helped lead an organisation which truly advocated a revolution in the US; and
4. He associated himself with the 'Chinese or revolutionary brand' of Marxism rather than the 'Soviet or evolutionary brand'.

The truth of the defence counsel's charge that the trial was really a political one was adequately demonstrated in this and the following questions levelled at Epton by the prosecutor.

Q.—Did you approve of the war in South Vietnam as it is being conducted?
A.—I think the South Vietnamese people could choose any method deemed necessary to free themselves.
Q.—(Did you state) that the people of Harlem were seeing the same police state tactics being employed against them as were being used against the Jewish people in Nazi Germany, against our Black brothers in South Africa, against our brothers and sisters in Mississippi and parts of the South had begun to resist in organised defensive measures—did you say that?
A.—Yes.

MAIN AIM

In his opening statement the prosecutor said: '... long before the riots in Harlem the Progressive Labour Movement had decided ... their main aim and goal was to form ... a revolutionary party dedicated to undermining the role of the State. . . . the defendant . . . decided to use police brutality as an issue . . . school boycotts . . . civil rights issues. Each of these issues was part of a programme . . . to undermine the authority of the state.

'... one of the tactics that they adopted to achieve their general purpose' was to 'set up schools to study Leninism and Marxism and communist philosophy. . . .

The extent to which the police and behind them their Wall Street masters went in order to trap Epton and the Progressive Labour Party are clearly indicated in the testimony of police agent and provocateur, Adolph Hart, who had infiltrated the Progressive Labour organisation:

Hart—'Scuse me, Dig, what about the Molotov cocktail leaflet? We going to make it or what?'

Epton—'Somebody else told me that they're going to do it. It might be downtown.'

'Challenge' says: 'The prosecution ignored the fact that it was Hart who brought up the subject. Instead, District Attorney Phillips argued, the remark meant that Epton had put out the leaflet!'

ARCHAIC LAWS USED AGAINST MILITANTS

BY JACK ARNOLD



During cross-examination defence attorney, referring to the same transcript, asked Hart: "Did you say, Mr. Hart, "Yeah, yeah, when people got that violence in them they got to get it out, man"?"

A.—'Yes, I said that.'
Q.—'Why did you say that?'
A.—'Keeping in context with the conversation.'
The defence attorney remarked: 'You were a little ahead of it, weren't you, Mr. Hart?'
At another point Hart was asked: '... you said: "Now is the time for (black people) to come through, these are impossible odds and now is the time." Now what did you mean by that?'

A.—'I meant that now was the time for the more respectable elements of the Negro leadership to come to the forefront.'

The courtroom burst into laughter. The reason for this switch on the part of Hart was that he saw the danger to the prosecution's case into which he was being led.

In American law if it can be demonstrated that the police are essentially agents in the preparation of a crime of which they accuse others, then they are guilty of entrapment and the judge is normally required to throw the case out of court.

As is very clear from the testimony this is exactly the role that Hart was playing—the manufacture of evidence against the defendants through his own role as a police agent.

FORGOTTEN PORTION

A portion of the manuscript that the prosecution forgot to include (the defence brought it out) quotes Hart:

'Like I was saying before. Now is the time! But it's still pathetic when you realise people are still throwing bottles, when all you got to do is put some gas (petrol) in the bottles. Certainly they're going to throw bottles anyhow!'

Bill Epton, commenting to 'Challenge', said:

'Maybe he meant the "respectable" leaders should throw Molotov cocktails, I don't know. I do know that nowhere on that recording does any person in Progressive Labour even suggest the things Hart was trying to get us to agree to.'

Obviously the evidence in this trial is manufactured and obviously under 'normal' circumstances the case would be thrown out of court on the failure of evidence, entrapment, or the several constitutional points that the (Continued on back page)



Antonio Marcos Yon Sosa (right), the Guatemalan guerrilla leader attacked by Castro.

RENT STRUGGLES GROWING

Unionists oppose Liverpool rent rise

From BILL HUNTER

THE right-wing leaders of Liverpool's city council have decided to increase council rents by an average of 11s 6d a week. Half of that increase is to be paid in March and the full increase will be imposed by July. There is to be an additional 6d rate.

They have decided to press ahead despite the mounting demands that they refuse to increase rents or rates.

Two meetings of the Liverpool Trades Council and Labour Party have opposed the increases. At the last meeting, resolutions were carried with the overwhelming majority of 75 votes to 24.

These resolutions condemned the Labour Group and called for a Trades Council-organised meeting of tenants to further the fight against the increases.

Nineteen councillors and two aldermen, including the chairman of the housing committee, have signified that they will vote against the rent and rate increases. This is almost a quarter of the Labour group. The right wing have threatened disciplinary action against them.

The same right wingers control the executive of the Trades Council.

EXPLOSION

Their activities are building up for an explosion on the Trades Council. The opposition of the 21 councillors and aldermen, the resolution in the Labour Party, and the response to the Young Socialists' campaign are indicative of the feelings of workers in the area.

That over 400 Liverpool workers went down to the Lambeth Trades Council lobby is itself a decisive pointer to the antagonism to right-wing Labour policies in the area.

Already trade unionists in the area are demanding that the leaders of the Trades Council be brought to book and replaced with leaders who will carry out the policies that the rank and file decide.

The big question for those opposing the rent and rate increases is how to organise tenants and trade unionists in the area. It remains true that this question is the dominant one only for the Young Socialists and the Socialist Labour League.

Some of the councillors still have the illusion that the problem of the housing deficit can be solved by appealing to the government for extra subsidies.

But Wilson and Callaghan are boasting about the tough budget that is being prepared. The international bankers are demanding it. There will be no assistance for Liverpool there.

FUTILE STATEMENT

Walton Labour Party has issued a statement calling on Walton Labour councillors to oppose rent and rates increases. But it then goes on to say:

'Should they not succeed in persuading a majority of their fellow councillors that this is the right course of action under present circumstances, we have asked our Member of Parliament, Mr. Eric Heffer, to raise in Parliament the question of Liverpool's rent and rate increase and the fact that they should be referred to the Prices and Incomes Board because such increased charges can only bring in their train further wage demands from those who are affected by them.'

Such futile propositions only avoid organising the tenants and workers in the area. The Prices and Incomes Board is not a body directed against them.

It is not appeals, but organising, that is needed. The fight against the increases can be all the more powerful now, because in the last few weeks the campaign for the Lambeth Trades Council lobby linked together factories and building sites in the area where industrial support against the increases can be developed.

Those Labour councillors who really want to fight the increases will now call meetings and help organise the tenants. In this they will have the assistance of the Young Socialists who have already been campaigning against the rent increases and for the nationalisation of the banks, land and building industry.

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Croydon tenants picket council

Newsletter Reporter

ON Monday, 200 angry tenants picketed Croydon Town Council and lobbied Labour councillors to demand their complete opposition to the proposed rent increases of up to 25s.

Over 70 tenants, Young Socialists and Labour Party members were permitted access to the public gallery to fully support a fight by the Labour councillors. But when the Tory chairman proposed their ejection, these Labour councillors remained silent and allowed police to herd the people out of the gallery.

At an open-air meeting after the ejection, speakers demanded that Labour councillors oppose not only the rent increases, but also any attempt to increase rates.

The meeting passed a resolution completely opposing both these measures.

It was agreed to lobby the general management committee of the Croydon South Labour Party on Wednesday (February 2) and demand it dissociate itself from the actions of its right-wing councillors, and to organise support among trade unionists in all local factories.

The resolution also called for the nationalization of the building industry, the banks and all basic industries.

REJECTED CP CALL

The meeting completely rejected a call by a Communist Party member to unite with the Labour councillors (who were refusing to organise any opposition to the proposed increases), and to 'put pressure' on the Tories (!), who had introduced the increases in the first place.

Afterwards, while tenants were waiting to lobby Labour coun-

cillors as they left the meeting, it was learned that the decision on the increases had been deferred for another month.

The Croydon Tenants' Action Committee issued a call to organise to bring out many more tenants and trade unionists to picket the next council meeting.

The Action Committee must refuse to have anything to do with the proposal of the one Labour councillor for a 'pilgrimage' to Westminster to see Richard Crossman, the Housing Minister.

NO ILLUSIONS

There can be no illusions on this score. Labour Ministers have already turned down a much more powerful lobby from Liverpool councillors for rent reductions.

Such a proposal would serve to deflect the whole campaign from the urgent necessity for more organisation and planned activity of tenants' organisations in Croydon.

The fight must be continued in Croydon to clear out the right-wing councillors and their supporters in the labour movement. These same councillors either refused to discuss their attitude with tenants, who waited in large numbers for them to come out of the meeting, or they evaded every question put to them.

Some of the councillors said they were opposing the increases, but supported the raising of rates on the grounds that money had to be found to cover the housing revenue deficit. Right-wing councillors said they actually supported some of the rent increases.

Croydon tenants can only win by continuing their campaign and uniting with rank-and-file trade unionists now engaged in a struggle to defend their organisations and wage packets against the attacks of the Wilson government.

Tenants and workers are confronted by one and the same enemy—they must make common cause against it.

DUBLIN

Dockers' strike in fifth week

THE strike of 1,000 Dublin deep-sea dockers in support of a demand for a reduction of hours from 45 to 40 with no loss of wages is in its fifth week.

With a background of the growing application of automation to many industries, including the docks, the fight for a shorter working week to offset the threat of unemployment is especially significant.

Industry and commerce in the Irish Republic has been seriously affected by the dispute, and several factories have had to lay off workers.

The Irish Exporters' Association has appealed to the government to intervene, however it does not seem to be in any hurry to reach a compromise.

This attitude must be seen in relation to the situation created by the Anglo-Irish trade agreement to form a free trade area between the two countries.

Wipe out firms

This will undoubtedly wipe out many backward and inefficient firms previously protected by tariffs.

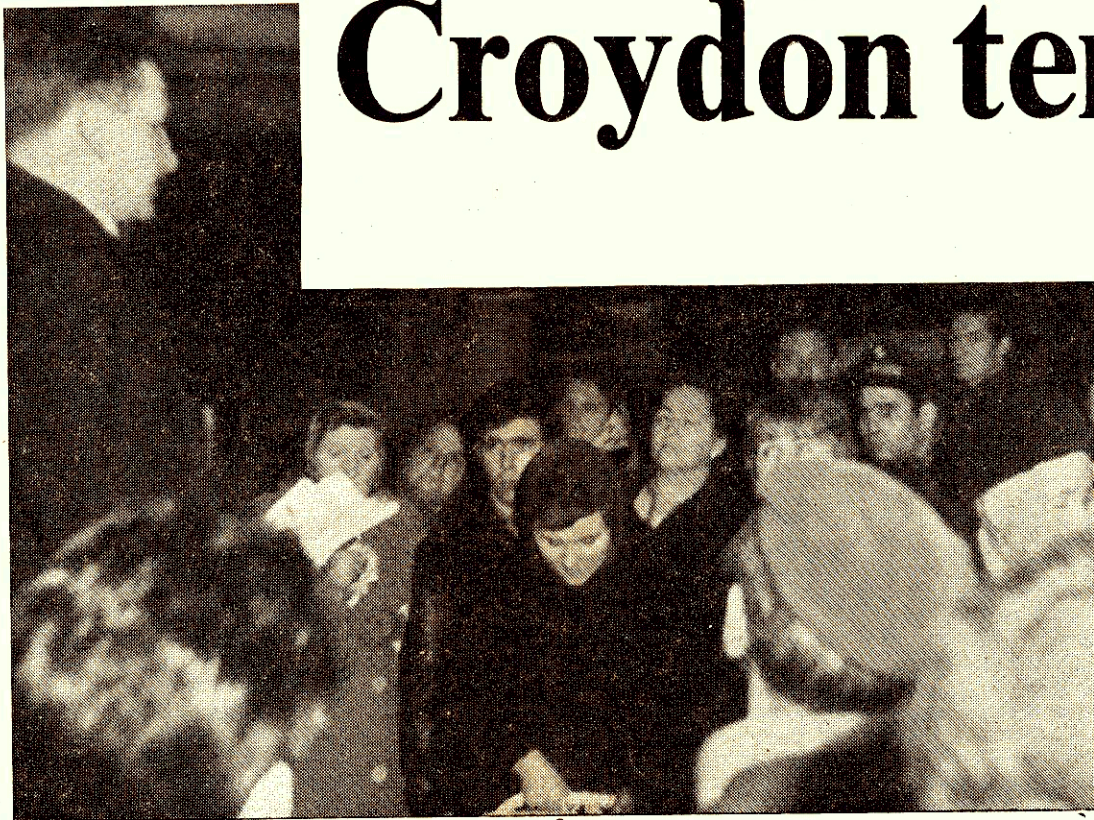
The government, representing the interests of the majority of the Irish capitalist class, realises that it is impossible to maintain an independent Irish capitalist economy in a world threatened by an ever-deepening economic crisis.

It therefore decides to act as the caretaker of foreign imperialist interests, seeking to lure British and other investors into the country with the bait of a cheap and docile labour force.

The need for a showdown with the Dublin dockers, traditionally one of the most militant sections of workers, is obvious.

If the dockers could be defeated then other sections of workers could be taken on.

As has been pointed out in The Newsletter previously, there is a great need for solidarity between the dockers and other workers—especially those who are affected by the strike.



Chairman of the Croydon Action Committee, Jack Webb, addresses the meeting outside the Council.

EPTON

From page 3

Supreme Court has ruled on previously.

One of these is the fact that the state right to legislate and prosecute for conspiring or advocating to overthrow the state has been pre-empted by Congress, most notably in the vicious Smith Act which has in large part been emasculated in previous US Supreme Court decisions.

But in the circumstance of the ever-deepening crisis of world imperialism, the war in Vietnam, the struggles of the Negro workers in the United States whose demands have ever more been turning from dignity to real demands for good, well-paid jobs and the removal and rebuilding of slums as well as good schools for their children (all of which the American government cannot afford), the need of the American ruling class is to suppress all such militants as Bill Epton and others who fight the system. In this sense there is a definite link with the New York transport strike and the jailing of union leaders.

It is imperative that those who wish to defend Bill Epton and to force a reversal of his conviction take the defence directly to the labour movement.

It must be pointed out to trade unionists that while today it is Bill Epton, tomorrow it will be the leaders of their unions who are jailed and the rank and file who are attacked on the picket lines, just as Negroes in Harlem are repressed for demanding things the capitalist class is not able to give.

This is what the transport strike in New York meant and is a forerunner of what is yet to come.

Socialists must begin a campaign of visiting union branches, holding factory-gate meetings, and in every other way building support for Epton amongst the working class.

There can be no doubt that an excellent place to start would be amongst the workers of the Transport Workers' Union in New York.

Here, in a union that has an even number of white and coloured workers, the question of unity between workers in the defence of a Negro worker victimised for his struggle against racist oppression becomes much clearer.

In this, revolutionary socialists can also begin to cut across one of the negative tendencies of the Progressive Labour Party which tends to idealise the 'black liberation struggle' on the basis of colour instead of class.

'Immigrants in Industry' conference

YOUNG SOCIALISTS PRESS QUESTION OF STRIKE PAY

MORE coloured shop stewards and more liaison committees were needed in industry to overcome racial problems, a conference on 'Immigrants in Trade Unions and Industry' was told last week-end in Southall, Middlesex.

The conference, which was called by the Southall Indian Workers' Association, and was attended by over 90 delegates representing 100,000 workers, was addressed by Jack Jones, acting assistant general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, and Mr. David Pitt, chairman of the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination.

Both put forward solutions within the bounds of capitalism. Pitt mentioned more coloured shop stewards and representatives to the TUC, and Jones spoke of more liaison committees and more apprenticeships for coloured youth—in other words, equality in exploitation!

But the problem of race is a

political one. The employers have to split the working class in order to defeat it. This is the reason for the Immigration Act which helps in the preparation of the introduction of anti-union laws.

ONLY WAY

The only way of uniting the working class against these laws is by struggling together. A perfect chance for this was the strike of immigrant workers at the Woolf rubber company in Southall.

Young Socialists in the conference began to press the point about the strike pay, but supporters of the Communist Party and the 'Militant' newspaper made no real fight on this issue or that of unity of the workers.

Many Woolf workers, recognising the need for an alternative leadership, joined the Young Socialists and other trade unionists on the January 26 lobby. They, and other workers in their area, should continue this campaign by joining a demonstration on February 19, beginning at Willesden Junction at 2 p.m.

500 DATA men walk out from Plessey factory

FIVE hundred draughtsmen have been locked out by Automatic Telephone and Electric Co. Ltd., Birkenhead, a section of the giant Plessey group following a walk-out over alleged 'sacking' threats.

It is claimed that the management refused to pay 15 of the men, members of the Draughtsmen's and Allied Technicians' Association, the union rate for the job they were doing.

Offer rejected

A leaflet issued by the strike committee explains that six of the 15 men were sent home and told they might be sacked. An offer to return to work of all 500 men if an immediate meeting was arranged and 'sack' threats were withdrawn was refused by the management.

The ETU convenor at the main Edge Lane factory has called for a meeting of all the unions' convenors to discuss how they can assist the DATA strikers. A meeting last Friday (January 28) of all the stewards at the Exchange factory supported the DATA members' actions, and called for a meeting of convenors.

London sparks bonus fight

GREATER London Council electricians attended a report-back meeting last Thursday (January 27) when a negotiating committee explained their discussions with the GLC over a bonus scheme and a lie bonus.

The GLC, they said, had agreed that a 33 per cent bonus scheme was feasible in 10 to 22 months' time.

They offered 10s a week increase as a lie bonus, but the negotiating committee has pressed for 6d an hour (£1 a week).

A motion was passed that a strike called for January 31 would be postponed until February 7. This would go ahead if the 6d an hour was not obtained.

Thirty-two out of the 150 present voted against this on the grounds that it would give the GLC time to arrange other labour to run essential plants.

'FAIRFIELD' METHOD FOR WELSH SHIPYARDS?

THE recent visit of Roy Mason, Minister of State at the Board of Trade to the South Wales' and Bristol ports was far more important than the usual ministerial publicity jaunt.

Mason spent several days touring ship repair yards at Swansea, Barry, Cardiff, Newport, Bristol and Avonmouth and meeting employers and union officials.

His statements to the press should serve as a grave warning to every dry dock in the country.

For seven months a committee at the Board of Trade has been investigating the ship repair industry, with the co-operation of the dry dock owners, he announced.

This committee is expected to present an interim report shortly. It will come out at about the same time as the Geddes Report on shipbuilding, which it is

clearly intended to supplement.

Many dry dockers are concerned about recent events at the Fairfield's ship yard on the Clyde where the union rule book, the safeguard for workers' livelihood in the industry, was thrown out of the window under the threat of unemployment.

The Geddes Report will undoubtedly recommend the Fairfield's pattern of 'labour relations' for the shipyards, and this will mean a drive to re-organise and modernise the dry docks on similar lines, at the expense of the workers.

The Labour government is taking a leading part in this attack. Mason and an employers' spokesman agreed that mergers between dry dock firms are necessary if the industry is to keep up with technological changes. But it is clear that the dry dockers will have to pay.

I have found over-manning and restrictive practices, and this region, as far as ship repairing

is concerned, must make strenuous efforts to become more competitive,' Mason said, adding that 'although they have tried to end restrictive practices in the dry docks, they had not been successful'.

Over the last year, Cardiff dry docks firms have attempted to introduce re-manning. Earlier this year, dry dock workers forced the removal of a charge hand who was alleged to have broken the work's practice.

This shows the strength of the ship repair workers, but it must be realised that they are up against more than one charge hand.

It is clear that the Labour government is using the power of the state to organise the employers against the working class.

For seven months, dry dockers have been kept in the dark about the existence of a government committee which is discussing their future with the bosses.

Dry dockers must fight back by uniting with workers in the shipbuilding and other industries in a campaign against the government's anti-trade union laws.

STEWARDS REINSTATED

THE shop steward of sixty painters employed at Mountstuart's Channel Dry Dock, Cardiff, has been reinstated following a five-day strike by the painters. The steward had been sacked after a week of disputes early in January over the refusal of two men to work overtime.

Painters had been putting in many hours of overtime—many working all night in some of the coldest weather this winter.

Now four shop stewards have been served with Writs for 'intimidation' and 'conspiracy' by a former charge hand who was removed after the Channel dry dockers refused to work with him. They allege he was trying to break down working practices.

When the men went on strike against the charge hand, it is alleged their union, the Transport and General Workers' Union, threatened to expel them.