

DANGERS AHEAD FOR DOCKERS AND TRADE UNIONS

The Newsletter

WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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Youth call lobby

Demonstration against anti-union law and Devlin Report on May 25

Newsletter Reporter

YOUNG SOCIALISTS SAY — ALL OUT ON

MAY DAY, Sunday May 1

MARCH (from Whitehall Place, near Charing X tube 1 p.m.) to a MEETING IN HYDE PARK

This May Day sees the Labour Government returned with a decisive majority

LABOUR HAS NO EXCUSE THIS TIME

- Defeat all anti-trade union laws
- Make the bosses pay for the crisis—not the workers
- Defeat US imperialism in Vietnam
- Nationalize all the basic industries without compensation
- Smash the Smith regime in Rhodesia—arm the African workers

Workers all over the world unite to end imperialism

TENS of thousands of working people will this year gather on May 1 to celebrate this traditional day of international labour. They will march with their banners to the various meeting places demanding an all-out struggle for socialism in Britain.

On this May Day we will also be commemorating the 40th anniversary of the General Strike, the strike that could have been won had it not been for the cowardice and treachery of the right-wing Labour leaders. Trade unionists and members of the labour movement had in fact power in their hands only to find that those whom they trusted betrayed their trust to their most bitterest capitalist enemies.

Wilson's government which now enjoys an overwhelming parliamentary majority is completely subservient to the international banks and the imperialist politicians of Wall Street and Washington. It cannot and will not bring socialism. Those who have trusted Wilson, Brown and Callaghan, will find themselves, when confronted with difficulties, betrayed in the same way as they were in the General Strike.

The right-wing bureaucracy of the Labour Party and the trade unions have not changed. They still remain the greatest obstacle to socialism in Britain. They can only be removed through working-class action, and the building of an alternative revolutionary leadership which, when supported by the working class, will go forward to take the power out of the hands of the capitalist class, and firmly establish socialism in Britain.

This is the main task before the working class in the coming period. The Labour leaders are once more occupying the majority of seats in parliament but real power rests in the hands of the banks and big business. How to take the leadership that will finally take this power away and place it under the control of the working class—that is the question of the hour.

There are four fundamental conditions for building the revolutionary leadership in Britain.

Firstly

We must have no illusions regarding the reactionary role of the Labour government and the right-wing trade union leaders. We must participate in every struggle of the working class through the experiences of this government's policies and tie-up with big business practice. This cannot be done however by adaptation to the government like the fake Labour 'lefts'. It can only be done by leading struggles on behalf of the working class which will expose the government.

Secondly

By realising that the development of Marxist theory, beginning with the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, is the only real education for the working class and especially for youth in building the alternative revolutionary leadership.

Thirdly

By supporting all of the struggles organised and led by the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists, such as the January 26 Lobby of Parliament against trade union legislation and the recent Morecambe 6th National conference of the Young Socialists, attended by over 1,000 delegates and visitors.

Fourthly

By establishing the maximum unity in action between the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists with members of the Labour Party, Communist Party, trade unions and the Young Communist League.

On this May Day we should pledge ourselves to work for unity in action on the following issues:

An all-out opposition to the government's plans on legislation against the trade unions. This is now the most serious danger before the working class because it opens wide the doors to further legislation and reactionary measures.

Do not let the dockers fight the Devlin Commission Report alone. The government is preparing to legislate along the lines of this report. Such legislation will mean unemployment, speed up and the placing of the dockers

at the complete mercy of the monopoly employers who will have full control over hiring, firing and discipline.

The struggle against the anti-trade union legislation and the Devlin Commission Report are closely related to each other, both represent an attack on the working class by a Labour government, both measures will have to be fought together.

If the labour movement allows the dock workers to be chopped down by the Labour government then they will have suffered a serious defeat and have taken a big step backward towards allowing the introduction of anti-trade union legislation. There is a real danger that this will take place unless the labour movement is roused to action.

The National Committee of the Young Socialists has called a mass lobby of Parliament on May 25. It should be supported by all sections of the labour and trade union movement. Make it the centre of a united action against the anti-working class policies of the Labour government.

Vietnam

It is not enough to call for peace in Vietnam. The labour and trade union movement must work for the military defeat of the American armed forces in Vietnam and for the victory of the National Liberation Front.

Break the unholy alliance between Wilson's government and Washington on the question of Vietnam.

Force the Labour government to withdraw from the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance.

We send our warmest fraternal greetings to the peoples of the colonial and semi-colonial countries in the struggle against imperialism. We pledge to redouble our efforts to fight for socialism in Britain and to force the Labour government to withdraw all British troops from overseas.

The time has come to struggle resolutely for socialist policies. The labour and trade union movement is today much stronger even than it was during the General Strike of 1926. We are passing through a most important period of political experience for the working class but let the lesson of 1926 never be forgotten. Build the alternative, revolutionary, Marxist leadership.

Morning STAR ★ No change

from Daily Worker

By JOHN CRAWFORD

A PART from its name, the 'Morning Star' of Monday, April 25, looked just like the 'Daily Worker' of the previous Saturday.

Not only the type faces, but also the political flavour were much the same.

But the rise of the 'Morning Star' does mark an important stage in the degeneration of the organisation that, as yet, still calls itself the Communist Party of Great Britain.

Moving ever further from the working class, the Communist Party directs its main efforts towards winning allies in the Parliamentary Labour Party. At a time when these gentlemen are themselves travelling fast to the right, this involves making a big show of middle-class respectability.

The first issue of the 'Star' featured the latest 'revolt' by the 'left' MPs, as its lead story. Pictures of two of them appeared on the front page.

SPARKS REJECT DEAL

ALL electricians, mates and apprentices, members of the Electrical Trades Union, on the Holloway House site, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, voted unanimously last Friday (April 22) to reject the proposed three-year package deal for their industry.

Many voiced the opinion that nationalization was the only answer to the efficiency of the building industry, not 'grading' for electricians, which would divide the electricians, destroy unity and increase profits for the employers.

They instructed their steward to move a resolution at Thursday's Area 27 shop stewards' conference demanding the executive committee of the union to reject these proposals, and go forward for an immediate increase of 1s 3d an hour, without any conditions.

An interview with Harry Nicholas, acting general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, was found on page 2, together with two columns about pop music. Page 3 was devoted to films, television and an article on 'Slimming the Sensible way'.

But even measured in its own opportunist terms, this policy will achieve no real results. Workers in Britain can see too clearly the results of compromise politics in the actions of the Wilson government.

FORTUNES DECLINED

An indication of how far the decline in the fortunes of Stalinism in Britain has gone may be seen by comparing the launching of the 'Star', with the opening of the 'Daily Worker' presses in Farringdon Street in 1948.

20,000 workers, many of them members of the Young Communist League, took part in a torchlight demonstration when the first copies of the enlarged paper came off the press.

The editorial of November 1, 1948, hailed the event as 'something for the Carlton Club, Trans-

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Harold Wilson at Scottish TUC last week:

'THE TIME HAS ARRIVED FOR ACTION'



Dockers can smash new scheme

— Meeting told

Newsletter Reporter

YOU must go back on the docks and tell your fellow dockers what is going to happen to you in the next two months,' Joe Cubbin, chairman of the Merseyside Portworkers' Committee, told a meeting of Merseyside dockers last Saturday morning.

'Go back and tell dockers that the aim of the employers is to change everything. The only way for big business to straighten the country out is to take it out on us,' he said.

'To pay the bosses' debts, to carry on with the Americans in Vietnam, the Labour government intends to whip us into line.'

The meeting was called to discuss recent amendments to the Dock Labour Scheme, which are being put through to implement the Devlin Report. The amendments have met widespread opposition in the ports.

The recent docks delegate conference of the unions decided by 80 votes to 4 that the amendments should not be referred to union branches, evidently because of fear of that opposition.

Further meeting

The Merseyside meeting decided that another and bigger meeting should be called next Saturday.

Peter Kerrigan told the meeting that the rights of dockers would be taken away by these amendments.

'While telling us there will be no redundancy if Devlin is carried through,' he said, 'they have now introduced provisions for registered workers to be given notice. If there is to be no redundancy, why have they amended the Dock Labour Scheme to give a formula for compensation?'

Another speaker from the Portworkers' Committee, Larry Cavanagh, declared there was a conspiracy against the dockers.

Trade union leaders had been discussing for months and there had been no reports back to union branches.

'We have the amendments to the Dock Labour Scheme and there are laws going through to obstruct wages. The government is preparing to take on the dockers. But dockers smashed Order 1305 in 1950 and they can smash anti-working class laws now,' he said.

THE National Committee of the Young Socialists elected at the 6th Annual Conference held in Morecambe on April 2 and 3 held its first meeting in London on April 23 and 24.

Arising from the conference discussion and decisions on the fight against anti-trade union legislation, the Committee discussed the serious situation on the docks in relation to the Devlin Commission Report.

It was unanimously decided to call a national lobby of parliament on May 25 against the Devlin Report and the anti-trade union legislation.

Adult support

The National Committee proposed to launch campaigns organised from Young Socialist branches in each area in a way that will continue to draw adult trade unionists into action in support of the dockers and against the proposed legislation.

Sixty thousand leaflets are to be distributed and local demonstrations held. A regular feature of the campaign will be factory-gate meetings.

Members of the National Committee stressed in particular the need to build up the widest possible unity in action between the Young Socialists and members of the Young Communist League on the basis of the lobby.

Joint action

It was felt that a joint demonstration of members of the Young Socialists and Young Communist League would have a powerful influence in mobilising young people and adult trade unionists to force the government to retreat and withdraw its reactionary proposals.

Arrangements were made for a number of May Day demonstrations in the important cities.

Bid to end piecework in pits

THE National Coal Board and National Union of Mine-workers are attempting to foist a national power-loading agreement on thousands of pieceworkers in Britain's pits. This agreement will undermine all union rights and hit at the miners' wages.

It is claimed that the agreement does away with piecework and guarantees a weekly wage based on average piecework earnings for each area.

At present rank-and-file workers have some say on their wages. Contracts are made as each new face opens, and the union branch says how many men are required and what the expected production will be.

But the new agreement will remove all local control.

Production will be decided, says the schedule, by management method-study teams. Managements will appoint face charge men (shop stewards) and working teams.

A miner told our reporter that acceptance of the scheme would be the signal for victimisation on a major scale, and the elimination of all conscious and militant workers.

LONDON AMENDMENTS MEETING

'ADJOURNED'

Newsletter Reporter

A MEETING of National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers ('Blue Union') members in Poplar Town Hall, London, on Wednesday, was 'adjourned' until next week by the platform.

Two motions

The meeting had been called to discuss the new amendments to the Dock Labour Scheme.

The meeting was 'adjourned' after two motions were put from the floor; one to reject the

amendments; the other to join a one-day strike next Monday, decided on by Hull dockers last Saturday.

Feeling against the amendments was very high at the London meeting and the platform made no attempt to push through any decision. An official said that top-level discussions were still proceeding.

It is believed that Merseyside dockers may decide to follow the Hull dockers' call for strike action.

AEU BRANCH BACKS DOCKERS

A RESOLUTION passed by Birmingham AEU No. 9 branch last Friday (April 22) called on the local Trades Council to support 'the dockers in their opposition to the proposals of the Devlin Commission'.

The resolution said these proposals 'would virtually do away with the present Dock Labour Scheme and would put complete power back into the hands of the big port employers, interested only in making huge profits at the expense of the dockers'.

VIETNAM

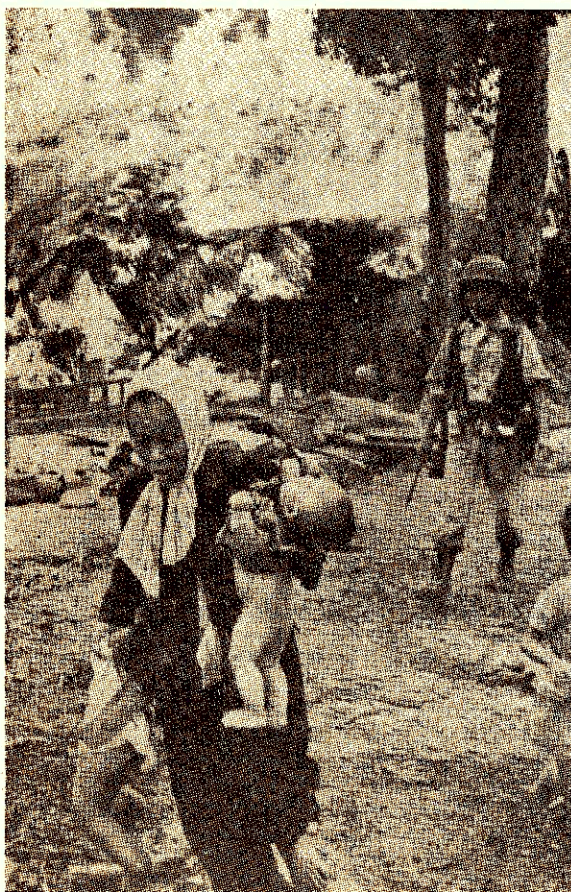
WE SUPPORT THIS

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT

SUPPORTS THIS

AND THIS

Torture, Brutality, Destruction and Executions



Shameless capitulation to U.S. imperialism

BY MICHAEL BANDA

THE undisguised contempt and disregard shown by Stewart and Wilson to Michael Foot's miserable amendment to the Queen's Speech once again reveals the shameless capitulation of the Labour leaders to U.S. imperialism, as well as their profound hostility to the just and progressive struggle of the Vietnamese people.

Stewart's reply to the debate in which he expressed the view that the Labour government was in favour of negotiations provided the Vietcong called off the civil war, is a typical example of the sort of statement that the Labour leaders resort to in order to sustain their support for the barbaric landlord-bureaucrat-capitalist regime of Marshal Ky.

They also hope to justify the genocidal war of aerial bombardment carried on by the U.S. against North Vietnam.

Blithely ignoring the presence of 235,000 U.S. troops, a massive arsenal of weapons and planes and as well as the world's biggest fleet, Mr. Stewart blames the Vietcong for the horrors of war!

Everyone knows that the Vietcong has more popular support in Vietnam today than the Labour government has in Britain. And it is precisely in order to undermine and smash this support that the American imperialists and their local allies have resorted to such inhuman measures—some of which are depicted on this page.

BOMB SHORTAGE

The U.S. air force unloads more than 50,000 tons of bombs each month in South and North Vietnam. For a country like Vietnam, this is a phenomenal figure—and it is not surprising there is a shortage of bombs.

The annual cost of this enterprise—and this is what U.S. big business considers it—is something in the vicinity of \$4,175 million, that is, of course, assuming a U.S. commitment of not more than 235,000 troops (which is hardly likely).

The major cost of this burden will have to be borne by the American working class in the form of higher prices, increased taxes and greater regimentation of civilian life. Hence the demonstrations and struggles of U.S. students and workers against the war.

The escalation of the war—which was officially endorsed by Wilson after the failure of the infamous Davies mission—has not solved a single logistical or political problem for the war hawks in the White House. On the contrary, imperialism's problems and headaches have been compounded by the increased military effort.

Mr. Wilson probably doubts this, but the publishers of 'Life' magazine have little reason to:

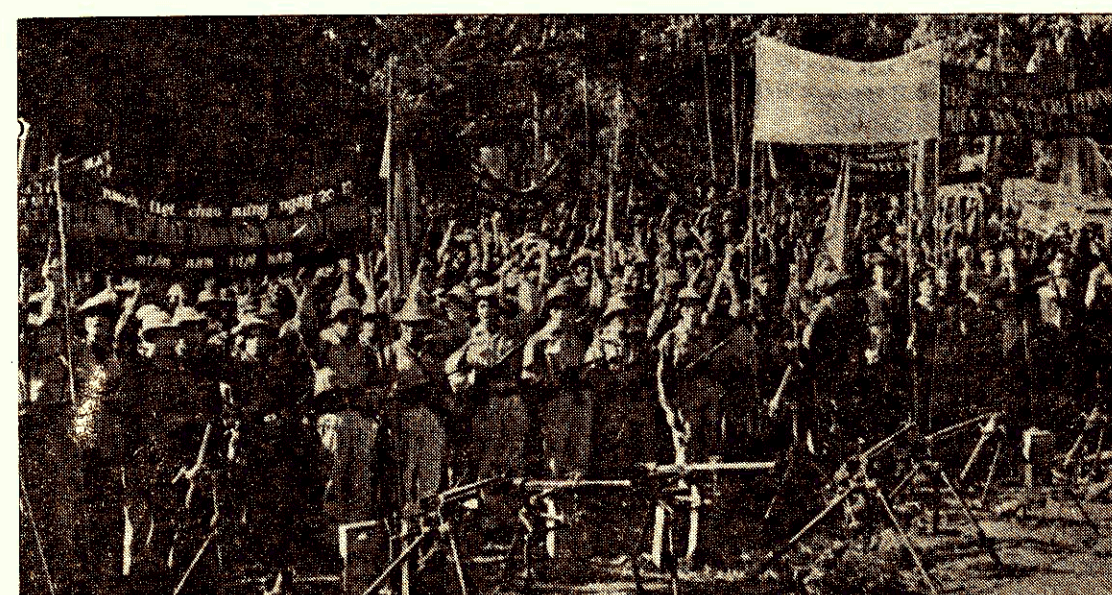
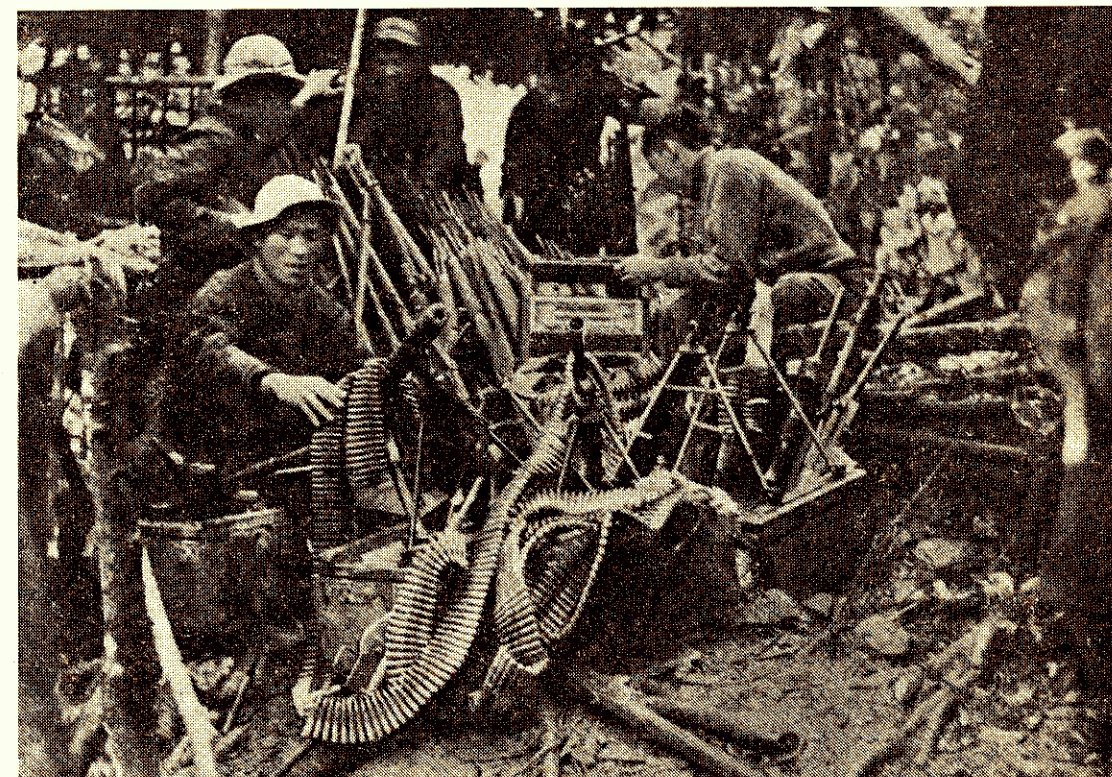
By mid-April, however, the political crisis was having an effect. From Saigon 'Life' correspondent Sam Angeloff cabled that while U.S. ground operations remain, on paper at least, close to normal, Vietnamese troops are particularly affected. Battalion operations have been reduced by one-third, possibly more. Worse, say American advisers, even though the battalions go out, chances are that they aren't doing much. "When there's political trouble, they come to a bouncing stop—like a big truck with all the brakes locked."

The disorder has also touched U.S. air operations. Beginning in mid-March, Vietnamese dock workers in the port city of Da Nang began refusing to unload American ships, and Vietnamese troops followed suit. Within days there was a shortage of bombs.

Continued page 3



Victory to the heroic Vietcong fighters



THE TWO SIDES OF A WAR

Pictures on this page show (top) a Young Vietcong fighter is blindfolded and brutally interrogated; (left top) a South Vietnamese mother and her children are driven from their blazing village home, blasted by U.S. incendiary bombs; (left middle) the body of a Vietcong fighter is for no apparent reason dragged behind a U.S. troop carrier across a battlefield; (left bottom) 'You may shoot me, but others will come against you', the last words of the heroic Tran Van Dang at his execution by a South Vietnamese firing squad. On the right of the page are pictures of Vietcong fighters and some of the arms captured from U.S. and South Vietnamese troops. The top picture shows a section of the liberation fighters. Many are obviously still in their teens. The middle picture shows captured machine guns and rifles being sorted out. At the bottom is a parade of the National Liberation Front in the South Vietnam jungle. They also have captured U.S. arms.

This shortage, plus severely reduced calls for air strikes from Vietnamese ground forces and less target intelligence, resulted in a cut in sorties flown. The daily average dropped from more than 400 to around 300.

LUNATIC RAVINGS

If the spokesman and planners of U.S. imperialism were amenable to logical persuasion and rational discussion then perhaps some other solution short of all-out war against Vietnam and China might be possible.

However, neither the system nor its spokesmen can be considered sane. The lunatic ravings of the American leaders are nothing more than the reflection of the anarchy of the world market and the irrational and uncontrolled lurchings of a doomed economic system in the minds of its representatives.

Those whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad! Whether Wilson and Stewart know it or not, the fact is that U.S. strategy, philosophy and diplomacy and overall policy is driving inexorably towards a major war in South-east Asia.

Already the signs of the impending struggle are evident: the increase of Chinese military personnel in North Vietnam; the aerial battles involving Chinese pilots, and the manifest determination of the U.S. High Command to spread the war to Laos.

The policies of Johnson if they haven't scared Mr. Wilson, have certainly worried leading representatives of U.S. imperialism to the point where they have begun to articulate their fears and doubts in public.

One such person is General Matthew B. Ridgway, commander of the UN and U.S. forces in Korea after the dismissal of General MacArthur, and—like Johnson—a devout Christian and dedicated anti-Communist.

NO COMPARISON

Many people, he alleges, like to compare Vietnam with Korea and hope that the war will be won with a brilliant strategic manoeuvre like the Imchon landing.

This, comments the general, is too facile. In fact there are few parallels (no pun here) between Korea and Vietnam.

Writing in the 'Look' magazine the general says:

'Relatively little terrorist activity occurred in South Korea. United Nations personnel rode in open jeeps throughout our zones without ever drawing an assassin's fire. Our power easily contained guerrilla activity, even though our forces were neither as well equipped nor as mobile as they are in Vietnam. A unified military command kept both United States and ROK armies under the direct control of the U.S. commander. In short, our line of battle was well defined, the enemy clearly identifiable, and the political divisions were sharp.'

'None of these conditions holds for Vietnam today. Yet we do have a "right" to be there, for our treaty obligation is clear and specific. I think we should take care, however, not to mis-read history in an effort to justify unlimited military effort. Most people will agree that we face confused, complex and unpredictable situations. Most people will agree that each contains potential perils of great an undetermined extent.'

Continuing his analysis of the Korean war Ridgway, on the basis of first-hand experience, warns the Johnson regime not to push its luck too far in Vietnam and refers to the Korean events:

'Both China and the United States operated under self-imposed limitations as to the bombing of hostile bases. The Chinese air force in Manchuria was strong enough to have done us major damage, not only in South Korea, but in Japan. Similarly, Red China now may possess the power to destroy Saigon and inflict heavy damage on our South Vietnam port facilities in one swift strike, should we carry our air attack close to her own vitals.'

'China has strength, too, to reopen the Korean front.'

WARNING

A final word of warning to those like Wilson who believe the Vietcon will be forced to the negotiating table by high explosive and incendiary bombs. Here again let me quote the General:

'Korea also taught that it is impossible to interdict the supply routes of an Asian army by air power alone. We had complete air mastery over North Korea, and we clobbered Chinese supply columns unmercifully. Unquestionably, we inflicted serious damage upon the Chinese and greatly complicated their problems of reinforcement and supply. But we did not halt their offensive nor materially diminish its strength....'

'In Korea, I saw whole sections of railroad bombed into scrap iron by aircraft, and yet the enemy rebuilt tracks in a single night, and the trains ran the next day. After the Chinese repulsed the ill-fated advances to the Yalu, General Douglas MacArthur himself expressed disillusionment with the value of tactical air power. It could not isolate the battlefield, he said, and its effectiveness had been greatly overrated. It is easy for the civilian mind to be seduced with talk of "easy" conquest through air power. But the crucial battles are still won by foot soldiers.'

It is time Messrs. Wilson and Stewart realised that the workers and peasants of Vietnam are fighting for the greatest and most progressive aims that any colonial

Continued page 4, column 5

PAMPHLET REVIEWED BY JOHN CRAWFORD

Stalinism and Trotskyism in the USA

Stenographic report dated June 1940, of a discussion with Leon Trotsky

Price one shilling and sixpence from:

New Park Publications Ltd., 186a Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4

THE reprint in pamphlet form of the discussion between Trotsky and leaders of the Socialist Workers' Party is of great interest to all Marxists and especially to those in the USA.

It gives a verbatim report of an exchange of views in Mexico in June 1940, not long before Trotsky's assassination. Trotsky is urging Cannon, Dobbs and other leaders of the American Trotskyist movement to reconsider their tactics in relation to the Communist Party.

Trotsky here exhibits his grasp of Marxist method at its highest point of expression: tackling the problems of constructing revolutionary workers' leaderships. In probing the possibilities for joint action with rank-and-file Communist Party members, he also exposes the deeply ingrained pragmatism of Cannon and the others.

They are seen to be quite bewildered when Trotsky suggests proposing a common campaign for a workers' candidate in the Presidential Elections.

It should be recalled that the Communist Party had been backing Roosevelt between 1935 and the Stalin-Hitler Pact of 1939. Now their line had changed.

For Cannon, this turn to the left posed a difficult problem: how to distinguish his party's line from that of the Stalinists.

But Trotsky sees instead an opportunity for the Marxists to intervene in the election campaign with an attack on the war preparations of US imperialism and, at the same time, draw closer to the best militants of the Stalinist party.

When Trotsky asks: 'What do we tell the workers when they ask which president they should vote for?', all Cannon can reply is: 'They shouldn't ask such embarrassing questions.'

Cannon had just led the SWP through the split with Shachtman and Burnham. In the course of this dispute, over the necessity for Marxists to defend the USSR against imperialism, Trotsky had raised the question of a fight for dialectical materialism against American pragmatism.

He had urged the SWP to place the questions of philosophy and method in the forefront of their educational work. They never really accepted his advice, as their recent history makes only too obvious.

In this pamphlet, we see this failure exposed in their attitude to trade union work.

The Trotskyists had led important trade union struggles, especially in the Teamsters' Union. Dobbs himself was a leader of the 1934 Minneapolis Strike.

This work had tended to lead to alliances with various 'progressives' in the unions, often in opposition to the Stalinists in their right-wing period.

Trotsky, in now raising the questions of (a) a turn to the Communist Party rank and file, and (b) intervention against Roosevelt in the election, touched on a very tender spot.

Straight from the heart

REVIEWING Joseph Hansen's article 'Adolfo Gilly, Fidel Castro and the Fourth International', which appeared in 'World Outlook', Harry Ring, writing in the April 25 issue of 'Militant', the paper of the Socialist Workers' Party of America: 'Politics, particularly radical politics, can often be a complicated business. This is particularly true of the political and factional disputes within the radical movement. A current example of how complicated radical politics can get centres around the Tri-continental Conference recently held in Havana and Fidel Castro's attack on the Chinese regime and "Trotskyism".'



Stalinism and Trotskyism in the U.S.A.

How correct he was is shown in this prophetic exchange:

Trotsky: Tobin, for instance, is a faker combined with a reactionary stupid petty bourgeois, but would we vote for him if he was running on an independent ticket for president? Yes.

Kay: But Tobin or Lewis wouldn't kill us.

Trotsky: I am not so sure. Lewis would kill us very effectively if he were elected and war came. It is not a sentimental question.'

Within a few months, Tobin, bureaucratic secretary of the Teamsters' Union, had persuaded his friend Roosevelt to jail Cannon, Dobbs and other SWP leaders and had smashed the Minneapolis Teamsters' local. Because there had not been a political struggle in the union, this witch-hunt was successful in defeating the Marxists in the Teamsters.

Trotsky is able to make a clear and objective analysis because he never loses sight of the struggle for international revolutionary leadership.

This pamphlet should help readers to understand the details and problems of day-to-day work from this same standpoint, as well as throwing considerable light on the later degeneration of the SWP.

LETTER

Kremlin mourns Baghdad butcher

BY ROBERT BLACK

THE cynical and counter-revolutionary nature of Stalinist politics stands exposed after the homage recently paid by Soviet leaders to the late president of Iraq, Abdul Salam Aref, following his death in an air crash on April 13. A high-powered Soviet delegation headed by Ivan Spiridonov, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, attended the dictator's funeral, and, according to 'Soviet News' of April 18, 'on behalf of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, the Soviet government and the Soviet people, expressed condolences at the death of the former president'.

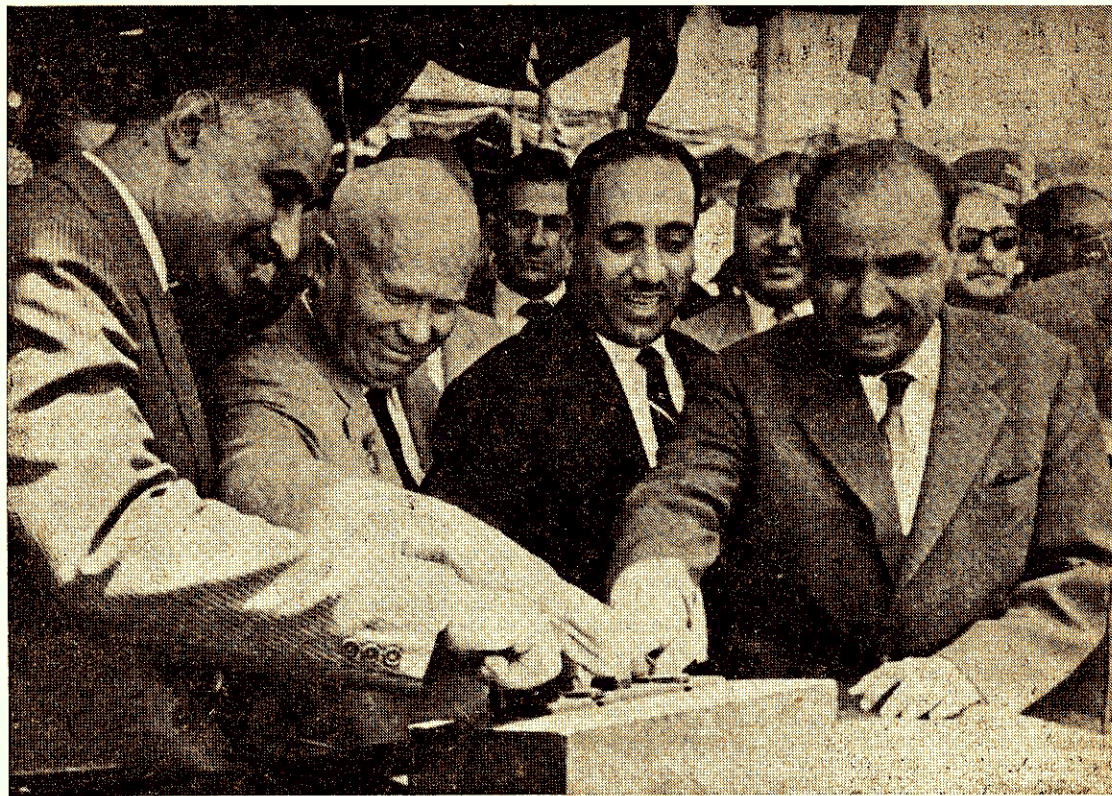
If the 'Soviet people' had in fact been consulted on their opinion as to the death of Aref, there is little doubt that the vast majority would have preferred that he had lived to meet justice at the hands of the outlawed Iraqi Communist Party and brutally repressed Kurdish minority.

Organised coup

It was none other than Aref (whose 'tragic death' is mourned by 'Soviet News' and Stalinist diplomats) who organised the Ba'athist coup in March of 1963 which brought down the 'left' nationalist government of Kassem and triggered off the massacre of thousands of worker-Communists in the streets of Baghdad.

From 1958, when the left wing of the army and the petty bourgeoisie overthrew the feudal regime of King Faisal, Kassem was forced to lean more and more on the Communist Party for mass support against pressures to unseat him from the ultra-nationalist right.

In order to maintain the Kassem regime (deemed 'progressive' by the Soviet bureaucracy as it conformed to their 'State of National Democracy' as laid down in the 'Statement of the 81 parties'), the Iraqi Communist Party, with some reluctance, supported all its actions, including its compromising dealings with the foreign oil monopolies, its slowness in carrying out the land reforms and most shameful of all, its war of suppression



The present Soviet bureaucracy carries on the method of an earlier period when Khrushchev made friendly visits to Nasser (left), Aref (centre) and Sallal (right).

against the Kurdish minority in the north.

By becoming increasingly identified with the Kassem regime, and less and less recognisable as a class party in opposition to the interests of the landowners, the military and the national bourgeoisie, the Iraqi Communist Party became exposed to the demagogic agitation of the reactionary Ba'athist party.

In the coup of 1963, the Communist Party was isolated from both the vast mass of the peasantry and the Kurdish minority through its opportunist course in relation to the land and nationality questions, and, by systematic terror, was hunted down and massacred, under the personal supervision of Aref.

and rural poor to the class interests of the nationalist ruling groups. The aim is to win these regimes as bargaining counters for the bureaucracy's dealings with the imperialist powers, particularly in the United States.

These policies, because they undermine the class strength of such Communist Parties, lead to either their destruction by terror (Iraq, Iran, Indonesia and Brazil), domestication (India) or even voluntary liquidation (Algeria, Egypt).

Having successfully destroyed these parties by various means, the Soviet bureaucracy is then compelled to enter into direct relationships with their jailers and executioners. Thus, after a few sympathetic bleatings on the un-

Zakharov in honour of the Iraqi army chiefs.)

So disastrous has been the line of Soviet diplomacy in the Middle East that even prominent members of the Stalinist apparatus attempt to modify, if only slightly, the extreme right-wing course of the Kremlin.

Khaled Bagdash, general secretary of the Syrian Communist Party, in an article in the December 1965 issue of 'World Marxist Review' raised, in a very guarded way, deep misgivings about the strategy of the Communist Parties in the Middle East.

'Workers' mission'

Aware of the dangers of liquidating his Party into the left wing of the nationalist movement, he states:

'Be the objective conditions what they may, and no matter how weak numerically and poorly organised its working class, no other social group, no other class, and no individual can take over the historical mission of the working class.'

And further on: 'But we must be on our guard against attempts to justify such alliances [with nationalist leaderships] by spurious theories repudiating the role of the working class both now and in the future on the pretext of developing Marxism-Leninism to meet the new conditions.'

Clearly this is a reference to past disasters in the Middle East—a point he underlines in saying 'we do not consider it permissible to go so far as to deny the role of the Communist Parties and to call for their dissolution'.

This is in fact what has happened in Algeria, where the Algerian Communist Party liquidated itself into the FLN in the spurious interests of anti-imperialist 'unity'.

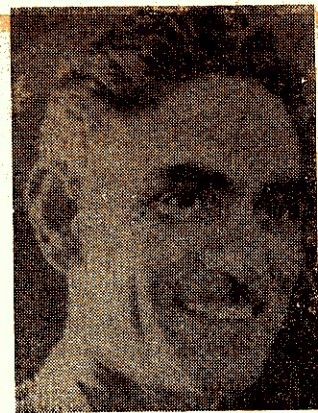
Bagdash also casts doubt on the Stalinist characterisation of nationalist regimes in the Middle East as 'non-capitalist' querying whether nationalization itself warrants 'the conclusion that this is already a socialist revolution, or that the given country is moving towards socialism.'

Continued page 4, column 1

Cannot learn

Far from these events serving as a warning light to other Communist Parties operating under similar conditions, the even greater tragedy of Indonesia proved to the hilt the inability of Stalinism either to learn from its experiences or defend its own cadres.

The betrayal of the national liberation struggle by the Soviet bureaucracy is therefore a double one. First it lays down a line of action for its brother parties in the ex-colonial areas, which is explicitly designed to subordinate the struggle of the working class



CP leant on Kassem

timely removal of Redeemer Nkhroma, the new regime is duly recognised with full diplomatic honours. We can quite easily imagine the reactions to these cynical manoeuvres by the Communist militants still fighting inside these countries for a revolutionary and not conciliatory road to national liberation and socialism.

What can these survivors of the Baghdad terror and Nasser's torture chambers feel but contempt for the Stalinist funkeys who court their persecutors, and who wine and dine with the leaders of the same armed forces that seek to enslave the Kurdish people? (See 'Soviet News' April 18, on the visit of the Iraqi military delegation, whose climax was a banquet given by Marshal

BELGIUM Women strikers win wide support

WOMEN strikers at Herstal, an industrial suburb of Liege, Belgium, have won tremendous support from workers, not only in their own country, but from other European countries.

The women, from an arms factory, are demanding equal pay with the men workers.

Strike committee members Josephine Bart and Maguy Gaspar told reporters: 'We should have received the salaries we are demanding now at the end of last year. This increase would have allowed us to earn 3 francs 90 centimes an hour and 4 francs 29 centimes an hour on piece work.

This would bring us in line with the wage of a male labourer, while we have superior skill. Therefore, equality with the men's wage will not even be reached—the increase we are demanding now is only a stage.'

They claimed that the management, through a 'sly move', had laid down two wage scales—one

for men and one for women.

A union official confirmed this, and added:

'In the firm 80 per cent of the women work machines in terrible conditions. The factory is not modern and work takes place, nine hours a day, in the middle of a deafening noise, oil and tar.'

'It is not unusual, especially in the summer, that some women feel ill.'

'Also there is a terrific speed-up—each woman worker runs between five or six machines.'

'This strike has been building up for a long time. I was not surprised when it all blew up on February 16. It has the backing of the two trade unions and the movement will go very far. Its importance reaches beyond the Belgian border.'

He said the slogan for equal pay is written into article 119 of the Treaty of Rome, of which Belgium, as a member of the Common Market, is a signatory. Messages of support had been

received from the labour movement in Italy and France.

'This international solidarity is very important for the women,' he said.

Now other women workers in Belgium, at the ACEC factory in Herstal and the 'Schreder' in Ans, have also come out on strike.

Said the union official: 'The employers are afraid of this snowball movement. They have good reason to be. You have to see the women marching in the streets of their town and their enthusiastic meetings to understand they are resolute.'

'The employers attempted to create a division by laying off 4,700 workers in the factory. But the men understood. Working-class solidarity outplayed the employers' manoeuvres.'

The women are very conscious of their importance and strength, and answered the employers' charge of 'absenteeism' by demanding that some of the firm's profits be used to create better conditions and social facilities.

Students and Internationalism

LAST week's Newsletter reported the recent meeting of the National Union of Students at Exeter, and particularly the right-wing victory in affiliating the NUS to the cold-war, US-dominated International Student Conference.

This decision was carried against an 'opposition' led, or rather misled, by members of the Communist Party.

One of their leaders, Mr. Alan Hunt, of Leeds University, received a certain amount of publicity last year when the NUS Council was persuaded to vote against affiliation either to ISC (American-backed) or the International Union of Students (IUS with Communists as the dominant influence).

The change from one NUS meeting to the next within such a short space of time has some important lessons for students, and for Marxists in particular. Hunt and his friends appeared to have scored a victory in preventing affiliation to ISC. The main argument used was that the British NUS should remain uncommitted to either international organisation.

At that time, Communist Party students were considerably embarrassed by the public announcement of the resignation from the Communist Party of Margot Kent, a leading member in Leeds University, and leader of the Leeds NUS delegation.

We do not have the information to comment on all Margot Kent's differences with the Party, which involved the Sino-Soviet dispute as well as the NUS campaign led by Hunt.

However, in view of the recent

right-wing victory, special interest is attached to a statement published by the Leeds University Union Communist Society.

After attacking Margot Kent, and denying many of her statements, this declaration gives the following reason for not supporting the NUS affiliation to the Communist-led IUS:

'The demand of IUS for a policy of anti-imperialism from all its members would not serve to advance one of the most important and immediate needs of British students in ensuring that NUS is an effective campaigning organisation in the field of grants, loans, and student working conditions.'

When this was written, it must have appeared that renunciation of anti-imperialism has helped to win 'allies' and hold back the extreme right. In fact the line of this statement is downright reactionary, and a damning example of the Communist Party's turn to the right.

Somehow, 'allies' who are not anti-imperialist are going to be consistent fighters for grants and conditions? Students, of course, have to fight for these things against the state authorities, and even a minimal level of struggle involves politics.

It is echoing the line of the worst trade union bureaucrats and nationalist reformists to put aside a fight on international and colonial issues for the sake of narrow 'national' interests and 'unity'. Students least of all can be won to socialism on such a platform.

As last week's report showed, the Communist Party in fact

USDAW Conference

Centrists confuse anti-union law fight

A CALL to all those in the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers who oppose legislation against the trade unions to unite in a campaign to defeat the government's proposals was made at the union's annual delegate meeting at Eastbourne this week.

V. Mendelson (South East London) moving a resolution opposing TUC and government policy declared that the introduction of the incomes policy and the legislation was necessary for the employers to increase their rate of profit by taking more from the workers.

On the crucial question of improving shop workers' wages the delegates settled for the executive's promise of 'jam tomorrow'. Conference carried the executive's proposal for an application for a 'substantial increase' and instructed them to work towards a £15 minimum wage, but defeated by 97,000 votes to 134,000 a demand for an immediate application for £2 a week.

Defeat prepared

This defeat for the rank and file was prepared by those 'centrist' delegates who in the composing meeting opposed a proposal to combine the £2 a week demand with the call for the £15 minimum, so allowing the executive to appear progressive on wages, while committing themselves to nothing.

The feeling of delegates for a wage increase now was very strong and a demand was made that those officials and MPs who opposed a pay rise should declare how much they earned.

A powerful contribution was made by the delegate from Chester Co-operative branch who listed the dozens of wages agreements USDAW has signed accepting less than £9 a week for men and £7 a week for women. The question of a decent wage for union members remains an explosive issue in a union which has to recruit 120,000 members each year to make up for losses.

By confusing the discussion on legislation with the wages resolutions the executive was able to defeat the opposition to legislation. But there was no confusion in the minds of the 70 delegates who responded to the call of South East London to unite in action against the right-wing legislation.

Vietnam victory

The executive received a major defeat on Vietnam.

Once again they had received the assistance of the fake lefts, who had worked might and main over the weekend to persuade the movers of the resolution to withdraw.

A full-scale attempt has been made to bring the union, which last year called for the withdrawal of American troops, into line with government policy.

A resolution from North London calling on the Labour government to cease support for American aggression in Vietnam, was opposed by an amendment from the president's own branch aimed at securing support for Wilson and calling for UN supervision of 'free elections and social and economic rehabilitation' in both South and North Vietnam.

On this question the issues were clear and the amendment was decisively rejected by 110,000 votes to 78,000. The resolution was carried.

The 1966 annual conference of USDAW brings out once again that to fight and effectively defeat the right-wing clique which controls the union, the rank and file must unite behind a socialist policy and bring forward new leaders to break with Wilson and his policy of betrayal.

Kremlin mourns

From page 3

ing towards socialism, regardless of the class nature of the governmental power.

He concludes: 'To take this view would be tantamount to saying that the leading role in establishing socialism no longer belongs to the working class but has passed over to the nationalist groupings and the small bourgeoisie.'

Bagdash makes his points abstractly and without citing examples, but even so, his position indicates the deep ferment that must be taking place at the base of the Communist Parties in the Middle East as a result of the disastrous policies criticised in such an evasive fashion by this Syrian Stalinist.

What the betrayed members of these parties have to understand through their experiences is the international character of the

Discipline in the docks

DEVLIN, in his report on the docks, stressed the need for stronger measures to discipline workers. This has been echoed by the employers. In fact, the only measures left that are stronger than the measures now in force are the whip and chains.

When a docker commits an offence he is, like the Serviceman, placed on a charge. This is known as D8. His explanation, which is written on the back of the D8, is then considered, in his absence, by the local board.

In the event of him being suspended, he can appeal. This is heard by two dockers and two employers. If they cannot agree, then an independent chairman is called in.

Dockers are required to work a reasonable amount of over-

By Hull dockers Terry Rogarty and Tony Fee

time. What this amount is nobody seems to know. Refusal to work overtime during the week brings the postman with a D8. A recent case involved a gang refusing to work from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. They did not consider it reasonable on the cargo they were working. Some of these men had also worked the previous day, which was a Sunday.

Reasonable overtime

They considered that eight hours' overtime in any week was reasonable. The local board felt dif-

ferently and gave them three days' suspension. This was later reduced to one day by the appeals board. They also received a warning that their records would be reviewed in six months. This not only punishes them, but their families as well.

Men have found to their cost that unless they involve the whole docks in their disputes, then they will be suspended. The employers appear to exercise great power over the board in matters of discipline.

When men complained about the severity of the suspensions to the union leaders they were told: 'We have to abide by the decision of the majority of the board.'

As there is equal representation on the local board of both union and employers, this statement is baffling to the dockers, and leads to much conjecture and rumour as to how they achieve this majority.

Scottish TUC opposition to Wilson on major policies

HAROLD WILSON hustled past an angry railwayman waving a £12 a week pay packet in front of the Prime Minister when he arrived in Aberdeen for the Scottish Trades Union Congress last week.

Speaking at the Congress later, Wilson warned: '... let us be clear that if incomes rise faster than productivity, then unemployment is threatened.' The thwarted railwayman had merely been demanding what Wilson would do to get railwaymen that £18 a week promised at the beginning of the year.

But Wilson had not visited Aberdeen to listen to workers' complaints. His purpose was to protect the interests of the banks against the British working class.

Congress actually attacked the Labour government's policies on Vietnam—with only eight delegates defending the position. It also called for the nationalization of the shipbuilding industry and the extension of nationalization in transport.

By a small majority, a resolution opposing the government's incomes policy was rejected, but a further resolution expressing hostility to all interference by the state in the affairs of trade unions was passed overwhelmingly.

BRUTALLY FRANK

At the end of the conference, Wilson was brutally frank:

'When we have finished intoxicating each other with oratory... let us be clear that if incomes rise faster than productivity, then unemployment is threatened.'

He called for an end to 'bloody-mindedness' in industry and clearly indicated that the Labour government intends to act on the numerous reports prepared in the last 18 months—Devlin on the docks, Plowden on aircraft, Geddes on shipbuilding.

'The time has arrived,' said Wilson, 'for action.' Everyone knows that his government has been told by the international bankers that the unions must be curbed and wages held down.

In Aberdeen he clearly showed that 'action' he does not mean action against the employers. His contempt for the trade unions and the working class was also shown when he stated:

'At the end of the day this question will not be settled by

But be wary of blind-alley militancy

By Our Glasgow Correspondent

a card vote, whichever way the vote may go. It will be settled much more grimly than that.'

If the balance of payments continued to go wrong, costs rose and there was under-capacity working, there would be redundancies, unemployment and short-time working.

Opposition to the Labour government's prices and incomes policy was led by STUC President Alex Kitson. 'Underpaid workers,' he said, 'in agriculture, road haulage and shops, stayed underpaid.' If the legislation on wages was introduced, then the jails would not be big enough to hold those who would oppose.

RESENTMENT

The vote on the anti-trade union legislation showed not only the deep resentment against Wilson's preparations to attack the unions but a considerable confusion. It was Wilson's intention to play on this confusion. He was aided by the reservations held by the 'lefts'.

The Labour government will try and use the threat of unemployment to try and frighten the trade unions into acceptance of government control of wages.

But the issue is not one of a law against wage increases now or unemployment later. Rather it is the intention of the government to hit at workers with its budget measures at the same time that it pushes through parliamentary legislation which will be used to attack all those who fight back.

The major sections of industry have already advised Wilson that for the anti-trade union law to work at all it must be accompanied by a large increase in unemployment.

TORY GAMBIT

Wilson may have thought that Scotland was a good place to begin such an attack in view of the rise in unemployment to 130,000 after the Tory government of 1962 had introduced policies of wage and credit freeze. His move is the same old Tory gambit.

But the working class fought against unemployment and part of this fight was the intervention of the Young Socialists and the Socialist Labour League who raised the demands of the unity of the employed and unemployed in a fight for nationalization.

One thing was clear at the STUC—unionists consider that with a large majority the Labour government is powerful enough to take nationalization measures.

Numerous demands for the take-over of industry showed that the working class is conscious of its power and that given leadership it will press its attack for the full removal of capitalism.

However, it is necessary to include a decision to act against the policies of Wilson and Brown with this demand. Kitson said that there could be no question of an incomes policy in an unplanned society, leaving open the door for a leftist retreat to a position where some demagogic slogan could be produced which could 'justify' acceptance of Wilson's policies. The delegate of the NUR stated that his union may well revise its

policy on the liner trains in response to the introduction of an integrated transport system.

It should be noted that Wilson has placed in charge of transport the ex-Tribune-ite Barbara Castle who is busy building up a progressive image by riding around on electric trains and by rescuing a few lines so that the extensive plans for 'modernising' transport can be pushed through in the Wilson manner, i.e., with widespread redundancies and with the parceling out of vast sections to the private hauliers.

The STUC did not deal with the docks, where the most direct threat is being made. This is a dangerous situation and could leave the small but important section of dockers in Scotland isolated. The dockers have been

SHEFFIELD TENANTS WIN SUPPORT FOR ASSOCIATION

Newsletter Correspondent

ON Monday over 70 tenants from the new Stanington Estate, Sheffield, packed the only available hall near the estate. The meeting was organised by a group of tenants who are working to establish an association, helped by the Young Socialists (as reported in last week's Newsletter).

Mr. John Smith, the acting chairman, said that the meeting was called to get the backing of the tenants for the formation of the association. He dealt with the appalling conditions of the houses, where permanent damp causes fungus to grow on walls and ruins furnishings, as well as being a constant danger to health. He also spoke of the lack of facilities for shopping, entertainment, children's playgrounds and telephones.

Mrs. Olive Sykes, one of the founders of the association, said that the tenants needed to build a powerful organisation on the estate. Individual action, she stressed, would not lead anywhere.

Neither the contractors nor the council seemed prepared to take any responsibility, she alleged.

Large rent rise

The houses are classified as luxury dwellings and, as another tenant pointed out, there has already been a large rent increase this year.

A Labour councillor, Mr. Billy Mead, attended the meeting and said that he was prepared to work with the association to fight for the rights of tenants'. He also stated that he had seen the dampness in several houses and it was disgusting.

Attempt to set up 'official' council adjourned

NEWSLETTER REPORTER

AN attempt to set up a 'new, official' Lambeth Trades Council was abandoned by right-wing officials of the London Federation of Trades Councils after left-wing supporters of the existing Lambeth organisation—banned by the TUC last year—were elected as officers. Unable to prevent the campaign against anti-trade union legislation getting off to a successful start on January 26, the TUC withdrew recognition from the Lambeth Trades Council for organising the campaign.

Last Friday (April 22), the London Federation officials went ahead with the meeting to set up a new Trades Council in spite of protests from unionists that the meeting was not representative, but later, and for the same reason, said the elections were null and void.

Letters were received by some branches in the area informing them of this meeting, only two weeks before. As many meet only fortnightly, or even monthly, a number of them did not have time to discuss it or elect delegates.

Even more disturbing was the number of branches which had received no notification at all.

The London Federation claimed they had written to all union area offices asking for addresses of branches with members in the area, and that letters had been sent to all branches which had replied. If some had not been notified, this was a matter to be taken up with the area office of the union concerned.

They must have known, however, from their own list, that many branches were excluded—there were no AEU branches, no ASW or ASSET branches, no Bakers, no Postmen, all of which had been affiliated to the existing Trades Council.

Allowed in

Many delegates, however, came along to the meeting with letters from their secretaries asking that they be admitted. After some hesitation they were allowed in.

Mr. Holt, Chairman of the London Federation of Trades Councils, chaired the meeting, flanked on the platform by Mr. Levene, Secretary of the Federation, and two representatives from the TUC.

Holt announced that he intended going right through the agenda and would accept no objections.

The proceedings, however, began to descend to pure farce.

The faces on the platform grew longer as nominations were received for the officers, and left-wing supporters of the existing Trades Council won position after position.

Vivienne Mendelson (USDAW), president of the existing trades council, who chaired the 1,000-strong meeting at the Central Hall, Westminster, after the Lobby on January 26, was elected secretary unopposed. A right-wing delegate who was nominated hastily declined to stand.

President

Carmel Dersch (C&AWU), a supporter of the campaign against anti-trade union legislation, was elected president with a 10-6 majority against a right-wing opposition. Peter Hendrie (AUBTW), secretary of the existing trades council, was elected Treasurer unopposed.

There were two nominations for the position of vice-president: Joe Mighty (ETU) and C. Sainain (Bakers' Union), both of them supporters of the existing trades council. As Bro. Sainain was working that night and unable to attend the meeting, the chairman announced, after much whispering on the platform, that he would accept nominations of people not present. Bro. Mighty was elected.

When, however, it came to hensible, when he told the Czarist court: 'It is not in their capacity to kill, but in their readiness to die, that distinguishes a revolutionary people.'

On this historic occasion let us all proudly salute this indomitable spirit of the Vietnamese workers and peasants and renew the struggle for Vietnamese independence and freedom by fighting even more strenuously against the social-democratic and Stalinist traitors and their imperialist backers.

● Victory to the Vietcong!
● Death to imperialism!
● Down with Wilson!

elections for the eight places on the executive committee, the chairman announced that only people who were present could stand. When an attempt was made to nominate Bro. Sainain, this was ruled out of order—in spite of the fact that if he had been elected previously he would by then have been vice-president!

Collapse

Five left-wingers were elected from the floor. The collapse of the right wing was complete, and they did not even attempt to stand for the executive committee.

The platform, fully aware of the danger of a new trades council which would fight for the same policies as the existing one, gasped at the only straw they could see.

As some branches had not been informed of the meeting, the chairman explained, the meeting was not truly representative and perhaps it should be adjourned until more delegates could be present. Until that time, all elections would be null and void. This was accepted by a narrow majority. 'We live and learn,' he said sadly as he sat down again.

Unrecognised

So the Trades Council in Lambeth remains unrecognised by the TUC. Delegates at the meeting were speculating afterwards on how long it would take for the London Federation to risk calling another meeting.

But if these gentlemen think that by these administrative manoeuvres they can halt the struggle to defend the trade union movement against anti-union legislation, they are very much mistaken.

The campaign is safe in the hands of the Young Socialists and their supporters throughout the country, and militant workers will be mobilised in their thousands to defend their organisations.

★ STAR

From page 1

port House and Fleet Street to think over.

The appearance of the 'Morning Star' over 17 years later was a very different affair.

Two Tory Sunday papers gave it a big write up and several thousands of pounds worth of free publicity.

ANGLICAN STARTS PRESS

The launching ceremony was covered by BBC and ITV. The 'Sunday Citizen' wished the 'Star' success.

When Dame Sybil Thorndyke started the presses last Sunday night she said: 'Besides being an old socialist, I am also an Anglican Churchwoman and a pacifist!'

Not only was there no demonstration of workers. There are instead signs that the ruling class will try to use the Communist Party's turn to the right to hold back resistance in industry to the attacks of the Labour government.

No wonder the constant stream of sacrifice which kept the 'Worker' alive for 33 years has shrunk to a trickle.

No wonder several of the leading members of the staff have found other jobs.

(The departure of Alan Hutt, one of the world's most important typographers, who has worked on Communist papers for 40 years, is itself a tremendous blow.)

And no wonder Communist Party militants, who have faithfully followed the twists and turns of Stalinism over the years, are taking an increasing interest in the activities and policies of the Socialist Labour League and Young Socialists.

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