

The Newsletter

WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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June 18, 1966

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YOUNG SOCIALISTS SAY

- Victory to the Seamen
 - Against the Devlin Report
 - Against the anti-trade union legislation
- ### LOBBY YOUR MP ON JUNE 22

Assemble: Rear Entrance Camden Town Hall (formerly St. Pancras Town Hall, off Euston Road, opposite St. Pancras Station) at 11.45 a.m.

Then on to parliament for lobby at 2.30 p.m.

Demonstrate with Merseyside trade unionists
Force the Labour Government to support the Seamen, Dockers and all Trade Unionists

LABOUR BACKS BANKERS AGAINST SEAMEN

STOP PRESS:

Steward assaults YS member

ON THURSDAY night, secretary of the London Joint Sites Committee, J. Hiles, assaulted a Young Socialist, and badly injured his arm.

Earlier 20 Communist Party members had pushed two Young Socialist members and a Socialist Labour League member out of a meeting. Hiles ran out after them and picked on a 21-year-old immigrant worker, who is a leading member of the Young Socialists, and has been prominent in the campaign against anti-trade union legislation.

The meeting, at Conway Hall, was called by the Sites Committee to discuss the June 22 lobby. 'All active trade unionists' were invited, but before the meeting began, the Stalinists declared that only building workers would be allowed to stay.

Appeals by Young Socialist members for united action on June 22 were met with jeers and expulsion from the meeting.

The injured Young Socialist member was active in support of the March 1 lobby, called by the Sites Committee itself, and he spoke at the Caxton Hall report-back meeting on that date.

SUPPORT AND CASH FOR SEAMEN

AN OFFICIAL of the National Union of Seamen and seamen from the Victoria and Albert strike committee attended the Barking Electrical Trades Union branch on Tuesday when it was decided to send a resolution calling for full moral and official support for the seamen's strike to the ETU executive. It was also decided to send the resolution to the local trades council, the local Constituency Labour Party and local MPs.

On the request of a Young Socialist, the Southall Trades Council decided on Wednesday night to donate £5 to the seamen's strike fund. A further collection in the council raised £4 6s. A resolution in support of the strike was carried unanimously.

Ship 'blacked' in Le Havre

LE HAVRE, France, dockers in support of the British seamen, refused on Tuesday to unload the 'City of Lancaster', which was carrying 80 tons of goods.

North-east solid

NORTH-EAST seamen are still 100 per cent in favour of sticking out for the 40-hour week.

A resolution passed at the Newcastle branch this week stated that the branch 'viewed with deep concern the conduct of the TUC's Finance and General Purposes Committee in this current dispute. We consider their refusal to assist us in our just cause aligns them with the employers and is a reversal of the role of trade unionism.'

On Tuesday, Jim Slater, reporting from the executive, said seamen were fighting not just the employers, but the games of Zurich and the government. The Pearson Report, he added, was seen from a chair in the sun on deck, not from the seamen's position—frozen stiff in winter or sweating in the engine room at 180 degrees.

DURING the past few days the issues involved in the seamen's strike have been made absolutely clear for the entire trade union movement. The proposed anti-trade union legislation on prices and incomes now being rushed through Parliament is already being acted upon in relation to the seamen.

The Labour government, elected by a majority of votes coming from the working class, has turned its back completely upon those who elected it, and instead takes its orders from the bankers of Wall Street and Zurich.

It is not the people who voted Labour that decide the policy of the government, but the international bankers and businessmen who are pledged in the interests of their class to fight the seamen and all trade unionists to the bitter end.

Tory support

In parliament, the Tories fully support the Labour leaders. During the debate on June 14, Mr. Heath, leader of the Tory opposition, asked Prime Minister Wilson the following question:

'Will you be absolutely clear and firm that the recommendations of the Pearson Report are a fair settlement and not a basis for further negotiations?'

In reply Mr. Wilson assured him: 'That is our position. Of course, the extent to which this can be accommodated without being an inflationary situation, depends on the implementation of the overtime recommendations in the Pearson inquiry.'

Right from the beginning of the strike The Newsletter has insisted that if the seamen are defeated then the anti-trade union legislation and the Devlin Report will become a real threat to the working class.

If the Tory's lackies in the Labour Party can get away with it on the seamen, they will use the big stick right down the line.

Those cowardly trade union leaders who are today busily handing over the rights of trade unionists to the capitalist state, are doing irreparable injury to the movement which maintains them.

Weaknesses

Yet nobody should, however, be surprised at what they are doing. The rank and file must build up their own leadership. In this respect we should say openly that there are some very grievous weaknesses in the strike.

The confusion over solidarity with the seamen on the docks which has gone on over several weeks has prevented dockers, in London especially, from joining the seamen and recognising that the fight against Devlin is the same as the seamen's fight.

The people responsible for this are the Communist Party leaders who are trying to ride two horses at the same time. They are trying to placate the Labour 'lefts' in parliament by keeping the struggle from spreading and at the same time keeping their militant rank and file in check with left-sounding phrases.

The reason they opposed the timely May 25 lobby organised by the Young Socialists was because they did not want the seamen's strike to spread.

Now when it comes to their own lobby on June 22, they do their very best to play down the significance of that lobby because they are opposed to a militant display of strength which would embarrass the 'left' MPs.

CP 'unity'

The conception of 'unity' which the Communist Party leadership has is with those fake-'left' members of parliament who are going to fight nobody but the rank and file and cover up for Wilson. What is the use of demanding an end to the anti-trade union legislation if the seamen's struggle and the Devlin Report are not made the central issue?

Continued page 4, column 6 →

Lefts show their face

THOSE 'left' darlings of the Communist Party who voted for the Emergency Powers are showing their true colours as the seamen's strike comes to the crunch.

● ERIC HEFFER, MP for Walton, Liverpool, who, according to the Prime Minister, played such an important role in the 1960 'unofficial' seamen's strike, said in the Commons on Monday that it was 'regrettable' that the seamen had not accepted the Pearson Report as the basis for negotiation—exactly what Wilson has been attempting to push down the throats of the negotiating committee!

● JOHN MENDELSON, MP for Penistone, is reported to have similar feelings.

● RAYMOND FLETCHER, leading 'Tribunite' and a renegade from the Trotskyist movement, speaking in his constituency in Ilkeston, Derbyshire, at the week-end said the seamen were being 'pig-headed'.

So clear in his allegiance now to the capitalist state, Fletcher is reported as saying:

'As any good exporter knows, when you lose a market, you lose it for good. This is the reason why my sympathy for the seamen is now being overlaid by a feeling of deep anger at their pig-headedness.'



Royal Dock workers raise their hands in favour of 'blacking' ships, but confusion prevented this being carried out.

AFRAID OF DEVALUATION— WORLD BANKERS RUSH TO AID THE £

by PETER JEFFRIES

THE loans negotiated by Lord Cromer from the European and American bankers have done nothing to solve the long-run crisis of British capitalism and of the pound.

This crisis has reached such proportions that sections of the ruling class are now calling for devaluation of the pound as the only way out.

In the latest issue of the 'Spectator', organ of a section of the Tory Party, there is a call to the Labour government to pluck up a little 'Indian courage' and devalue the pound in a similar way to the recent devaluation of the rupee.

'CORRECT' DEFICIT

Why does the 'Spectator', along with 'The Guardian', suggest devaluation in the present crisis?

In simple terms devaluation would reduce the price of British exports and increase the price of imports into this country, thus tending to 'correct' the enormous balance of payments deficit.

How would this work? At the moment, each pound is worth roughly three dollars. To give a concrete example: a £700 motor car, produced in Britain, will, at the moment, sell for about 2,100 dollars in the States. Conversely, a 3,000 dollar car produced in the States would, under present conditions, sell for £1,000 in this country.

Let us assume that Wilson took the plunge and devalued, so that the pound now became worth only two dollars.

This would mean that our £700 car would sell for 1,400 dollars, whereas an imported car, produced at 3,000 dollars, would rise in price to £1,500.

The pound is, of course, not only tied to the dollar in value, but to every currency: the general effect would be to raise all imported prices and reduce the price of all exports.

But would this produce such an apparently simple solution for the economic crisis in Britain? This is the crucial question.

They could not allow a situation to develop where their already shaky balance of payments further deteriorated.

This is the reason for the massive support for the pound from Wall Street over the last 18 months and why France earlier this week agreed to provide funds for the support of the pound.

Also, a devaluation of the pound would play havoc with the present international monetary system.

Continued page 4, column 2 →

Trades Council support for June 22

LEWISHAM, London, Trades Council decided on Wednesday to support the June 22 lobby of parliament against the government's proposed anti-union legislation. The Trades Council had considered an appeal from Young Socialists to join the lobby.

A resolution passed calls on affiliated branches to join the lobby and adds:

'It instructs its secretary and

Criminal Confusion

CONFUSION—generated by vague calls for support and perpetuated in London by dockers' leaders—ran amok this week, leaving the rank-and-file seamen almost isolated in their struggle for the 40-hour week.

At a meeting in Hull last week-end representatives of dockers' liaison committees from that port, Liverpool and London agreed to 'black' all British ships.

Their decision followed a period when the TUC, along with other unions, including the giant Transport and General Workers' Union, held back any national action in support of the seamen, followed by similar decisions by the International Transport Workers' Federation and International Confederation of Trade Unions.

Anger was caused among some dockers in London who did not know what position they were in.

on docks

by Robert James

Through a lack of an immediate call for total blacking when the strike began, and the reference of cases of individual ships to so many channels, confusion and anger has been increased.

VITAL HANGERS

(In one case, where the NUS allowed seamen to break their picket line and open the hatches of a ship, dockers found themselves unloading a cargo most vital to the country's economy—coat hangers!)

Seamen's leader Bill Hogarth has continually stated in press

conferences that certain cargoes must be let in to allow the country to breathe.

But the confusion created by this undefined position was worsened on the Royal Docks in London on Monday by 'unofficial' dockers' leader Jack Dash, when he held his meeting too near to 'ganging-up' time.

BACKING?

Dash claimed there was backing from the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Lightermen and Bargemen and the dockers' 'Blue' union, yet each has said it does not agree with unofficial action in 'blacking' ships, following the TUC stand, though backing the seamen morally.

Dash mentioned the amendments to the Dock Labour Scheme, then threw his meeting open to Gordon Norris, who called for dockers to 'black' ships; Harry Watson, president of the Lightermen, who said his union supported 'blacking' only when cases had been referred to a joint liaison committee of seamen, his union, T&GWU and the 'Blue' union, and T&GWU official Bill Mundy who advised the dockers to go to their jobs, 'do everything officially' and 'remember you can't get everything at once'.

Dash then returned to give a report back of the meeting in Hull the previous week-end, but by this time, many men had entered the gates as confused as those who were left standing to vote—roughly 1,000-17—for 'blacking' ships.

But there were no ships blacked that day, or since, even though Dash has held a meeting every day since.

The second morning Danny Lyons, on Dash's platform, admitted things had been confused. Clarification should be sought from the liaison committee of NUS, T&GWU, Lightermen and 'Blue' union, said Dash. No vote was taken.

CLARIFICATION!

The following day, Dash thought perhaps some dockers should go with him to Transport House to see T&GWU officials for clarification!

Hearing of no support from London, Hull dockers, who 'blacked' 100 per cent on Monday and Tuesday, returned to work on Wednesday. In Liverpool there has been partial 'blacking' on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

All this confusion is not necessary. It is quite plain: if the seamen are to win—and they are still determined to fight to the finish—then their most immediate support must come from portworkers generally through complete 'blacking' of ships. This is the seamen's responsibility too, and they must take a tough lead locally to show the way for the portworkers.

Seamen, Dockers and all Trade Unionists PUBLIC MEETING Liverpool

Don't Let the Seamen Fight Alone
Throw out the Amendments to the Dock Labour Scheme
Nationalize the Docks NOW
Fight the Anti-Trade Union Laws
Support the Mass Lobby of Parliament on June 22

Walker Art Gallery Lecture Hall on Sunday, June 19, 7.30 p.m.

Speaker: Gerry Healy
(National Secretary, Socialist Labour League)
and Seamen and Dockers' representatives

Pinpointed by Castro - arrested and assassinated

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY, the French section of the Posadas grouping, has released a statement announcing the jailing and assassination of several of their comrades in Mexico and Guatemala.

Several of those named were pinpointed by Fidel Castro in his attack on Trotskyism at the end of the Tricontinental Conference held in Havana earlier this year. The statement says that Adolfo Malvagni (Adolfo Gilly), Oscar Fernandez, Teresa Contrera Fernandez, Guaruro Isias Carranza, Ramon and Marta Elena Vargas Saiguero, Francisco Zapata and Sergio Garcia Estrada were arrested by the Mexican police towards the end of April. They were said to have promoted student demonstrations and strikes, when students occupied university buildings demanding the retirement of the rector.

A month ago, the statement adds, Francisco Amado, leader of the Guatemalan revolution, editor of 'Socialist Revolution', the organ of the Guatemalan Revolutionary Movement of November 13 (MR13), was assassinated in Guatemala City, together with Francisco Arce ('Chinto'), who was also a member of MR13.

Also, a Mexican student, David Aguilar Mora, has been arrested and tortured in Guatemala and, the statement adds, his life is in danger through lack of medical care. His family and lawyer have been banned from seeing him for four months.

The Revolutionary Communist Party statement continues:

First of all, we want to explain the meaning and importance of this campaign which will be carried out on a world scale.

These blows have been struck after a campaign of unprecedented violence by the Guatemalan Party of Labour, taken up by Fidel Castro in the speech made at the end of the Tricontinental Conference.

In this speech, Fidel Castro violently attacked and slandered the Guatemalan guerrilla, and its programme for socialist revolution. Hundreds of working class, peasant, soldier, and student militants from this guerrilla have been killed, imprisoned and tortured by imperialism and the dictatorship.

In the same speech, Fidel Castro denounced Francisco Amado as the man mainly responsible for 'Trotskyist infiltration' into the MR13 in Guatemala:

"Through this individual, who was a shop keeper, and who is in charge of the political side of the movement, the Fourth International took steps so that the leadership, ignorant of the profound problems of politics and the history of revolutionary thought, enabled this agent of Trotskyism—which as far as we are concerned is without any doubt, an agent of imperialism—to edit a journal in which was copied from one end to the other, the programme of the Fourth International."

Comrade Francisco Amado was assassinated by the Guatemalan dictatorship, upheld by imperialism, but with the complicity of the communists and Fidel Castro, using a double agent of the Partido Guatemalteco de Trabajo (the Stalinist Party of Guatemala). Together with Arce, he met the police at the time of his arrest arms in hand and

The vigorous and illuminating denunciation of the anti-Cuban propaganda of the Trotskyists, which Compañero Fidel Castro made in his speech closing the Tricontinental Conference, was indispensable.

Not of course because of any significance ascribable to the Trotskyists in themselves, but because of the relation their propagandistic campaign has to the action Yankee imperialism is developing against the Cuban Revolution and because of the damage which, under the circumstances created by the differences involving various socialist states in the international Communist movement, their confusionist campaign could cause in some incipient sector of the rising revolutionary movement in Latin America.

Trotskyism is, in itself, in its politics and its theory, a corpse. Extended internationally in opposition to Leninism and the Leninist thesis of the possibility of the triumph of socialism in one country, historic experience defeated all its major theses and reduced it to small groups isolated from the masses, whose principal function remained limited to combating the Soviet Union and the Communist parties.

The Yankee imperialists have found in the Trotskyists very active auxiliary forces in their efforts to destroy in the eyes of the Latin-American peoples the prestige of the Cuban Revolution by utilising slanders and confusionist propaganda.

These efforts are part of the imperialist campaign against Cuba: they complement the attacks by military means, the actions of infiltrated agents—sabotage, crime, espionage—the economic blockade, the breaking of diplomatic relations by the Latin-American countries, etc.

On the one hand, directly and in the name of its widely-known agencies, the Yankee imperialists carry out an intense campaign in Latin America to convince the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois sectors that Cuba, and not the United States, constitutes a danger to the independence of their countries; that Cuba and not the United States, is the interventionist power in the continent; that Cuba and not the conditions of national humiliation, under-development, backwardness, unhealthy conditions, lack of culture, reactionary coups d'etat, repression and persecution, conditions created, reinforced or maintained through the intervention and domination of the North American neo-colonialism, is the cause of the uprisings, guerrillas, protests and struggles of the Latin-American peoples.

On the other hand, through channels that are not easily identifiable as imperialist and groups that employ a super-revolutionary language, they carry out a campaign to confuse the intellectual, student, worker and peasant sectors, spreading among them slanders such as that the Cuban Revolution is a failure, that it is not socialist, that it is not granting the aid or solidarity due to the Latin-American peoples, that its leaders have been "purged" by tortuous means, that it is being consumed in internal quarrels between men and factions for power; that Cuba has been converted into a satellite of the Soviet Union, that Cuba's actions are determined by Soviet pressure, etc.

It is because the guerrilla movement of Guatemala has developed on the programme of socialist revolution that it is, today, attacked and slandered not only by imperialism and capitalism, but by all the bureaucratized and conservative sectors of the revolution: the Soviet bureaucracy, the bureaucracy of the workers' states, the Communist parties, Fidel Castro and his tendency.

But today, these crimes and these attempts to revive the methods of Stalin cannot hold up or break the revolutionary process wherever it is developing with enormous force. We call on the labour movement, the students and intellectuals in France and in Europe to maintain this attention and this vigilance to intervene continuously to denounce and bring to light the crimes, imprisonments and arrests, all the repression of Guatemala and Mexico . . .

Blas Roca

on behalf of Castro

vilifies

Marxism



Relevant extracts from an article entitled 'The Trotskyist Slanders Cannot Tarnish the Cuban Revolution' written by Blas Roca, one-time Secretary-General of the Stalinist Popular Socialist Party and member of the Secretariat of the ruling party of Cuba—the Communist Party. The article was published in the Mexican fortnightly journal 'Politica' in its May 1 issue. Blas Roca is one of the leading Stalinist leaders in Latin America and has been active in the Stalinist movement since the early thirties.

While the direct North American propaganda "justifies" its intervention in Santo Domingo with the pretended danger of a coup by "Communists" trained in Cuba, the indirect propaganda by way of the Trotskyists accuses Cuba of not having given active solidarity to the Dominican revolution.

While the Organisation of American States condemns Cuba for sending arms to the Venezuelan guerrillas, supposedly revolutionary propaganda is circulated throughout the continent accusing Cuba of 'turning its back to the Latin-American revolution'.

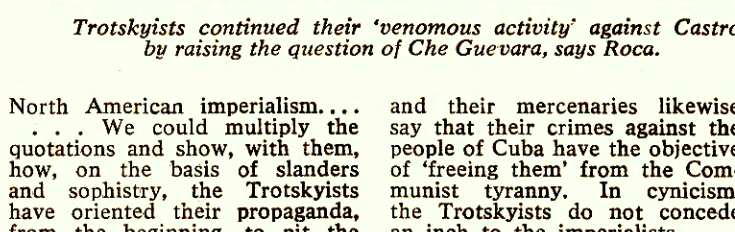
This is the dual aspect of the propaganda war which the Yankee imperialists are developing against Cuba. In this war, Johnson, Rusk, McNamara, the Central Intelligence Agency, the counter-revolutionary groups and groups are given the task, with the help of the Associated Press and the United Press International, of presenting Cuba as a revolutionary danger to the continent which must be smashed; while the Trotskyists and other pseudo-revolutionary elements undertake the dirty task of promulgating that the revolutionary power in Cuba is not revolutionary nor undertaking its duties of solidarity with the peoples, etc.; that is, the task of promulgating those things that help the imperialists in their effort to destroy the prestige and authority of the Cuban Revolution.

The firm and unconditional defence of the anti-imperialist and socialist revolution, triumphant in Cuba, is a duty for every honest revolutionary, whatever his party affiliation. . . . The Trotskyists and other elements of like stripe, while they speak an ultra-revolutionary language, instead of conducting a struggle in honest defence of our socialist state, to pit Che against Fidel, to sow division and disunity among the revolutionary forces united firmly in our country under the guidance of Compañero Fidel Castro.

This is the campaign which they are continuing today, to the profit of imperialism, as vulgar instruments of imperialism and reaction, since more than ever this expression arouses the ire of the Trotskyists of 'The Militant' and 'The Newsletter'. 'The Newsletter', the organ of the English Trotskyists, which Henies that Posadas or Albaguante are Trotskyists, hurls epithets and slanders against the Cuban Revolution no less venomous and false than theirs. They go to the extreme of brazenly calling for the overthrow of the revolutionary power in Cuba. With the typical phraseology of Trotskyism, they call Compañero Fidel Castro 'head of a capitalist state machine' and 'prime minister of a Bonapartist government'.

What the Trotskyist groups—including those of 'The Militant' and 'The Newsletter'—are spreading with respect to the Cuban Revolution are slanders, and very obvious ones. And that these slanders serve only the Yankee imperialists in their propaganda war against Cuba there is not the slightest doubt.

And this labour did not begin now, but from the time they became convinced that they could not infiltrate into the Cuban Revolution, as they tried, in order to carry out from within their work of provocation, confusionism and conspiracy, in favour of the aggressive plans of



Trotskyists continued their 'venomous activity' against Castro by raising the question of Che Guevara, says Roca.

North American imperialism. . . . We could multiply the quotations and show, with them, how, on the basis of slanders and sophistry, the Trotskyists have oriented their propaganda, from the beginning, to pit the masses against the leadership of our socialist state, to pit Che against Fidel, to sow division and disunity among the revolutionary forces united firmly in our country under the guidance of Compañero Fidel Castro.

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'So long as the Cuban state', they write, 'rests on capitalist foundations, our opposition to Castro will remain fundamental and inplacable. We shall support every attempt, successful or abortive, to replace the Bonapartist dictatorship of Castro with the power of the working class, with democratically elected Soviets led by a revolutionary Trotskyist Party.'

to Cuba is to assist the Cuban workers to defend themselves militarily and politically from the attacks of their own ruling class.

This is even clearer . . . and more repugnant. The principled 'defence' of Cuba against the imperialist attacks consists in organising political and military attacks against the revolutionary power.

This explains the coincidence between the most brazen attacks of Trotskyist propaganda with the practical aggressions of the Yankee imperialists against Cuba. That is, the propaganda attacks against Cuba is the 'defence' of Cuba carried out by the Trotskyists. The Yankee imperialists

of Compañero Ernesto Ché Guevara. This is logical if one keeps in mind the interest of the Yankee imperialists in the question. The Yankee imperialists were, naturally, the first to speculate over the absence of Compañero Guevara from Cuba. They, above all, wanted to know where he was to be found. No sooner did they kill him in Santo Domingo, than they had him travelling through Central America, gravely ill in a hospital bed or they put him in the heart of the Peruvian jungles.

At the same time, as was already their custom, they made up and spread all kinds of macabre stories of their own pure invention: Castro had killed Guevara; Ché was a prisoner or proscribed; there was a division among the Cuban leaders around the Chinese-Soviet differences; the Soviet Union had demanded Guevara's retirement, etc., etc.

The letter from Compañero Ernesto Ché Guevara to Fidel, written at the time of his leaving Cuba and read by the latter on presenting to the people the recently constituted Central Committee of the Communist Party, the first of October last year, was a crushing blow to all the tales woven by imperialism. For the genuine revolutionaries, the words that Fidel said on the subject on that occasion, and the moving and profoundly revolutionary letter from Ché, were definitive: they explained the absence of the stout and beloved comandante of the revolutionary war until it became necessary and possible to explain it.

For the Yankee imperialists and for the Trotskyists no. They needed to continue the tales about 'the mysterious disappearance', in order to continue the campaign to discredit the Cuban Revolution. It is by no means accidental that the declarations of the Trotskyist elements and newspapers which Fidel mentioned in his speech, were made after the first of October; that is, when the letter from Ché was fully known throughout the world.

'The Militant', in replying now, dwells on the theme and holds that what Castro ought to have done in face of the Trotskyist slanders is send a message to Ché so that he, in a letter, might quash the rumour of his death. But in view of the acts, of what use would it have been? If before, with the last letter from Ché, read by Fidel himself, the slanders and malicious speculations of these elements not only did not cease but multiplied, wouldn't they have responded in the same way to a new letter?

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The Newsletter, with greater cynicism, repeats the slanders. 'Guevara,' it says, 'was killed or incarcerated in a special prison in Cuba or, and this seems more likely, he was exiled and his wife and children 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,' it adds, 'was demonstrated recently when the Cuban government decided to disarm the militia on the flimsy pretext that the guns were not being maintained properly.'

The slanders of 'The Newsletter' are repeated by Gilly: 'The vertiginous political evolution of the Cuban leadership in recent months,' he writes, 'confirms the opinion that it is true that they have either assassinated Guevara or they are restraining him by some means or other from expressing himself politically.'

For them the Tricontinental Conference was prepared bureaucratically, it was only a rostrum for Cheddi Jagan and Allende or it was a failure. In all their slanders against Cuba their innate hatred for the Soviet Union stands out. All the Trotskyist slanders now being repeated have as one of their aims to discover, for the benefit of the North American imperialists, the place where Compañero Ernesto Ché Guevara is and, therefore, the concrete revolutionary activities which he is carrying on in accordance with his unshakable revolutionary vocation and his conviction as an anti-imperialist and socialist combatant.

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This does not, they add, 'in any way, cut across the principled defence of Cuba from imperialist attack. On the contrary, the best defence we can provide

In the replies attempted by the Trotskyists to the denunciation by Compañero Fidel of their venomous activity, they once more repeat the slanderous speculations on the absence from Cuba

A REPLY BY MICHAEL BANDA

Castro's Stalinist slanderer will not stop the advance of Trotskyism

It is extremely instructive that Fidel Castro, who launched a slanderous and unprecedented attack against Trotskyism at the Tricontinental Conference in Havana, should now, when faced with a principled reply, leave the task of defence to a Stalinist stooge like Blas Roca, whose unsavoury political record stinks in the nostrils of every self-respecting Cuban Communist.

Whether this indicates a lack of political sophistication on Castro's part or the indispensability of the Kremlin-trained liars, slanderers and double-talk merchants to the Cuban dictator, we are not quite sure. It is probably a combination of both.

Stench

What is quite certain to any observer of the Cuban scene, however, is that something is rotten in the state of Cuba, and that the slanders and third-rate amalgams of Blas Roca are nothing more than an attempt, by means of a discredited expedient, to dispel the foul stench of bureaucracy and corruption which pervades Cuba in the seventh year of revolution.

As Castro turns to the right in his domestic policy, so he strikes out increasingly against the left. As usual he finds the Cuban Stalinists a willing and useful instrument for this purpose.

However, a time will come when the inexorable logic of Castro's capitalist policies will lead to the repression not only of the extreme left, but of the moderate and reformist left as well. The purging of Ché Guevara is a warning. Woe to those who ignore it.

The more Blas Roca attacks Trotskyism, the more he plays out his role, the less indispensable he will become to the Castro-ite junta and the greater the danger of repression.

Thus, paradoxical as it may seem, the defence of Trotskyism against Stalinist slanders is the first condition of defence of the whole working class movement of Cuba and, incidentally, of the Stalinists as well, against future reprisals by the capitalist state of Castro.

For the benefit of this vulgar demagogue, as well as those who are not acquainted with the Socialist Labour League's attitude to Cuba, let us state briefly and simply what it is.

Change over

We consider Cuba a capitalist state which has passed through a political revolution in which one bourgeois government (i.e. that of Batista) was overthrown by an armed uprising and replaced by another bourgeois government of a special type which we call Bonapartist—this is led by Castro.

Unlike Batista's government which leaned on US imperialism and the most parasitic and unproductive factions of the native capitalist class, the Castro government leans alternately now on the newly arising capitalist forces in the town and countryside and then on the workers and landless peasants in order to fend off the US imperialist attacks.

In other words, Castro balances between the working class on the one hand, and the new capitalist forces who were suppressed under Batista and world imperialism on the other. In this sense, there is little difference between Castro and Nasser's regime in Egypt.

In both examples, whatever incidental benefits (and they are not small) might accrue to the workers and peasants, the real benefactor remains capitalism.

For this policy to be successful, however, two conditions must be satisfied.

Firstly, the working class must be leaderless and politically powerless.

Secondly, the state power, i.e. the army, the police, secret police, navy, judiciary, civil service, must be rigidly controlled by the capitalist class.

Thanks to the policy of Blas Roca, and international Stalinism, both conditions obtain in Cuba today.

The Stalinists by their consistent policy of class collaboration, first with Batista and now with Castro, have prevented the working class from seizing the reins of power and planning the Cuban economy in their own interests.

In consequence, the state machine in Cuba remains firmly in the hands of Castro and his petty-bourgeois supporters who remain hostile to the working class.

Basically there is little or no difference in the type of state set up by Castro or Batista. The state remains bureaucratic, centralized and responsive only to capitalist interests.

Thus every attempt by the working class to assert its political power either independently or through fissures in the Castro government is met immediately by powerful and violent resistance from the capitalist state machine.

It is from this point of view, and only this point of view, that the repeated purges within the regime (Salvador David, Escalante, Guevara), and the repressions directed against the pro-Chinese Communists and the Posadas group, acquire any meaning.

Furthermore, it is only from this standpoint that we can explain why Blas Roca pronounces Trotskyism as a 'corpse' and then in 5,000 words treats it very much as if it were alive and dangerous.

Lies die

Blas Roca tries to ascribe the growth of Trotskyism to two factors: the offensive of US imperialism against Cuba, and the growing conflict between Russia and China, which has created a deep and unbridgeable gulf in world Stalinism.

In the 'good old days' of Stalin and Yezhov, it was enough to state that Trotskyists were wreckers, spies, mad dogs, ampules of microbes, trained and financed by the Gestapo, etc., etc.

Today, however, the world is a different place, and such preposterous lies die quickly.

New times demand new techniques. So Trotskyism, if it does not actually derail trains, prevent hens from laying eggs, cows from giving milk, and bureaucrats from procreating, does, in fact, serve imperialism by 'confusing' workers and students about the nature of the Cuban revolution and its prospects by the use of 'super-revolutionary language'.

This, it must be said, is a far cry even from Blas Roca's own definition of Trotskyism in his report to the Eighth National Congress of the Popular Socialist

good faith. To a great extent their work is the work of mercenaries and adventurers in the pay of North American imperialism.' (Our emphasis.)

(Page 105 The Cuban Revolution, New Century Publishers, New York, 1961.)

If today Blas Roca does not repeat the absurd and despicable lie about 'mercenaries and adventurers' it is not for want of good taste or regard for the truth.

No, it is because the Cuban workers, and even members of his own party—not to mention sections of the Fidelista movement—have, since the Cuban Missiles Crisis and the split with China and Guevara, become increasingly sceptical, if not distrustful, of everything that Blas Roca says and stands for.

Distrust

Their distrust of this cynical bureaucrat and execrable liar (that is really a euphemism today) is not misplaced or mistaken. After all, the same Blas Roca did not hesitate to support the bloody regime of Batista and the bogus 1940 constitution at the behest of the Kremlin.

Let Roca indict himself:

'... the Party (the PSP that is) had a united front with Batista from the end of 1938 until practically the beginning of 1946 (1). In the course of this the party had achieved legality (1)... The Cuban Confederation of Labour (CCL) had been founded (1939); the Constituent Assembly (1939-1940) had been summoned and had met, and with the close participation of our Party, in a prominent place, had approved and promulgated the democratic and progressive (1) 1940 constitution.' (Our emphasis.) (Ibid. p. 9.)

It was precisely under the so-called democratic constitution of 1940 that Batista established the bloody dictatorship that led Cuba until 1956!

Unlike Blas Roca, however, the Trotskyist movement of Latin America never—we repeat, never—at any time, no matter how arduous and complex the situation, offered so much as a small finger of co-operation to the Batista dictatorship, nor did it confuse the Cuban workers about the class nature of the regime.

And yet this one-time accomplice of the butcher of the Cuban workers today dares to accuse Trotskyism of serving imperialism!

It is ironical, to say the least, that Roca, having set out to impeach Trotskyism before the bar of history should incriminate himself by proving too much. (Any shady lawyer in downtown Havana knows better than that.)

'Deviation'

Amongst other things, Roca finds Trotskyism guilty of a very serious charge: that we allege that the Cuban revolution is not socialist.

We have already stated our case for Cuba being a capitalist state, and there is no need to repeat or revise our analysis. What is curious though is that the unpardonable 'deviation' of Trotskyism, in fact the major 'crime' of our movement, was also, in many respects—though not in all—similar to the stated and democratically approved standpoint of the Stalinist Party

others, however... answer... with false arguments, like the phrase 'It is not a Communist revolution, it is Cuban'.

'This is an irrelevant answer, as irrelevant as the father who, when asked "Is your daughter a pianist?", answered "No, she is a Cuban, as I am".'

'Our revolution is not Communist, not because it is Cuban, but because it is not constructing or organising a Communist regime now, because it is carrying out anti-imperialist and anti-latifundist... [Landlordism] objectives, national liberation, agrarian and industrial objectives that the Cuban situation calls for...'

'The Cuban revolution is not a Communist revolution; it is anti-imperialist and anti-latifundist.'

'It is a revolution which, by virtue of the historical task that it is meeting and solving, can reasonably be called a national liberating and agrarian revolution, and patriotic and democratic revolution. It is a revolution that, by virtue of the class forces that support it and drive it forward and by the radical methods that it uses, may be considered as an advanced peoples' revolution (2). It is a revolution, as Fidel Castro said, referring to its social content and its perspectives, of the lowly, by the lowly, and for the lowly.'

Since this speech was made during the time when most of the

demonstrate to the working class that our internationalism and anti-imperialism is not a hollow slogan but a programme of action aimed at establishing a government of workers, by the workers, and for the workers.

In so far as the Posadas group opposes Castro, and advances the interests of the working class even in a small way, we shall defend them in the same way as Marx, despite his serious difference with the Blanquists, defended them against the terror of Versailles.

That is our right and duty and nobody, not even Roca, is going to stop us.

Of course, we have difference with Posadas and we debate freely with his group on all disputed questions, but since this formality is denied to the members of the present ruling party of Cuba, we think it is an intolerable impertinence for Roca to comment on the differences which separate Posadas and ourselves.

Not funny

The internal life of the Trotskyist movement has nothing in common with the hideous caricature of democracy which calls itself the Communist Party of Cuba.

Roca may think it 'laughable' that we should support and advocate soviets for Cuba. We do not think there is anything funny at all in this proposition.

Roca knows very well that



Under the 1940 constitution, supported by Blas Roca, Batista carried out vile repressions against the Cuban working class (seen above).

major economic and political transformations in Cuba were under way (and Roca even goes on to outline them in this section of his report) we are entitled to ask: when did the character of the revolution change, and how and why?

Roca is unable to answer the question satisfactorily if at all. And this is not surprising either. He had been forced to abandon his earlier and equivocal position in favour of his present attitude of uncritical support because of the joint pressures of the Soviet bureaucracy and the Castroite state apparatus.

Roca's diatribe against Trotskyism is, in fact, the hysterical lament of a political hostage who has lost every vestige of independence and integrity. It is not that the Cuban revolution has changed its character since 1960—it is the foreign-policy interests of the Kremlin bureaucrats and the domestic-policy requirements of Castro that have changed.

Thus the Stalinist Party—the PSP—which in 1960 was to some extent independent of the state apparatus, is today completely swallowed up in the Castroite machine.

The Trotskyists, and The Newsletter in particular, will retract nothing and offer no apologies for its attitude to Cuba.

Concrete truth

It is the only principled, logically consistent and historically vindicated analysis of Cuba. It is Roca, not us, who is guilty of betraying the revolution and distorting the truth. We repeat, with Lenin: The Marxist truth is always concrete.

Unlike Roca, who in 1960 implied that the Cuban state was an advanced form of capitalist state, only in order to support it critically, the Trotskyists, from the same premise, drew the opposite conclusion: If the state is capitalist, then the tasks of Communists surely is to replace the capitalist state machine with a socialist state machine.

And if we do support Cuba against imperialism, as during the Bay of Pigs and the Missiles Crisis, it is not because we have an abiding faith in the present Cuban state or the charisma of Castro, but because we want to

class power.

The Cuban Kautsky, Roca, who cannot see beyond the horizons of capitalism, is organically incapable of understanding the lessons of the October revolution—or even the Paris Commune.

His hatred of Trotskyism is not to be wondered at. It is a hatred for real working-class power.

When Roca accuses us of an 'innate hatred for the Soviet Union', he does so only in order to distort the real position of Trotskyism and conceal his own guilty conscience about the betrayal of the Russian Revolution by his Stalinist mentors. His defence of Castro, and Kosygin, are very closely related.

Supports reaction

In Cuba he stands for the capitalist dictatorship against the working class.

In the USSR he supports the bureaucratic dictatorship against a renewal of working-class democracy in and through the Soviets.

In both countries, he supports reaction against revolution.

As Trotsky remarked:

'The phillistine considers the gendarme an eternal institution.'

Roca even venerates the gendarme, whether of the socialist or capitalist type.

Now we can see why Roca is so obsessed with the Trotskyists

And there is little doubt that embarrassment and guilt is the main motive for the long rambling and incoherent statement on Guevara.

Roca points forlornly to the letter of Guevara to Castro released when the new Central Committee was constituted. 'A crushing blow' to the speculators about Ché, says Roca. 'Crushing'? Hardly!

Even if Guevara did *voluntarily* depart, why didn't Castro retain him on the Central Committee as an honorary member? It is a traditional, and moreover, a comradely gesture to someone who has given so much to the revolution.

What was ominous was not the disappearance of Guevara, but his omission from the new panel for the Central Committee.

This has never been explained by anyone in the leadership of the Communist Party of Cuba.

Referring to the 'Militant's' suggestion that Castro could have requested Guevara to send a short message to the Havana conference to dispel rumours about his death, Roca says 'what use could it have been?'

Commission

Speaking for ourselves, we should like to renew this suggestion. We even suggested an independent commission to investigate the rumours. We note, however, that Roca remains singularly silent on this constructive proposition. Why?

Everybody, including Roca, knows that Guevara disappeared after a violent conflict with Castro over the nature of Cuban-Soviet trade agreements which tended to perpetuate the semi-colonial status of Cuba. Yet Roca nowhere mentions this. Again we ask, why?

Because he dare not. Because there is no provision in the constitution of the new party for dissent—and even less for criticism. The only person who has the right to dissent from Castro is... Castro.

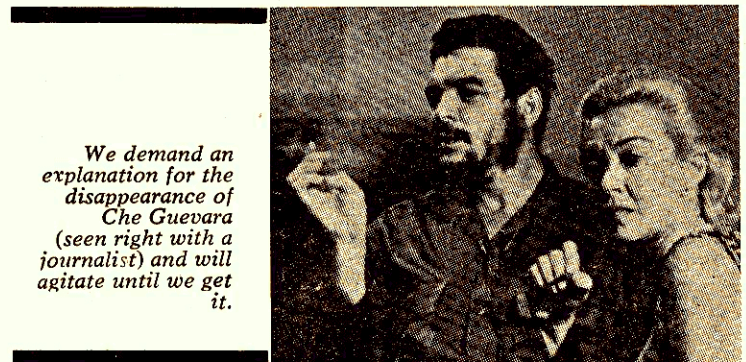
Roca must understand that in the absence of any satisfactory explanation and any concrete proof of the voluntary departure of Guevara, Marxists the world over are free to infer the worst.

The despicable attacks by Castro on the Guatemalan revolutionists who are facing greater hazards than he did and who are daily sacrificing their lives for the struggle against capitalist tyranny shows clearly that our doubts and suspicions are justified.

Yes, Mr. Roca, we demand an explanation on Guevara, and shall continue to agitate until we get it!

It is a vital part of our struggle for proletarian democracy and socialist power in Cuba. In this struggle there is a place for all except those who defend the status quo by means of slander and distortion.

The vilifying attack by Blas Roca demonstrates for the thousandth time that no successful struggle against imperialism is possible which ignores the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism. The smashing of Stalinism still remains an important tactical task in the struggle for world socialism.



We demand an explanation for the disappearance of Che Guevara (seen right with a journalist) and will agitate until we get it.

Party of Cuba (the Stalinist Party) in 1960.

Referring to the appearance of Trotskyite and anarcho-syndicalist groups in Cuba, Roca said:

'These groups have a special task: to spread confusion, to introduce divisions, to do everything possible to bring about errors that will deprive the Cuban revolution of forces and that will create disturbances and encourage the Batista conspirators and renegades.'

'These groups in most cases have direct connections with the espionage, provocation and subversive service of the United States. Their work is consciously counter-revolutionary work; it is not a product of errors and mistakes in

of Cuba at its Eighth National Congress in August 1960! Irony of ironies!

Let us listen to Roca again:

'It is not possible in our Congress to neglect the theme of the nature of the Cuban revolution...'

'When the sworn enemies of the Cuban revolution call it communist, they are not trying to give an honest characterisation of it (sic)...'

'All those who answer this campaign of the North American imperialists and their servants by saying, "The Cuban revolution is not Communist", are absolutely right(1)...'

'It is certain, completely certain, that the Cuban revolution is not Communist. Some

interest in the fate of Guevara. It is, after all a theoretical question, or shall we say, a forensic problem unprecedented in the history of state systems: how do you explain the total disappearance of a prominent minister in a 'socialist' country? How indeed!

Castro has already tried, and failed, to convince everybody, except possibly himself and Blas Roca. As head of state, Castro, can, at least, consider himself above such questions, but for Roca, whose responsibilities lie elsewhere, it is more awkward, even embarrassing.

Ministers in Cuba are responsible to the governing party, and not to a democratically elected body representing the workers and peasants and professional people of Cuba.

Prerogative

Governmental policy is the prerogative of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, in other words of Castro. Roca has possibly heard of a certain V. I. Lenin and his most celebrated work 'State and Revolution'—let him turn to page 58 (Lawrence and Wishart 1947 edition) and ponder on the lines:

'We cannot imagine democracy, not even proletarian democracy, without representative institutions... (What Lenin meant, of course, were soviets.)'

or page 136:

'Revolution means that the proletariat will destroy the "administrative apparatus" and the whole state machine, and substitute for it a new one, consisting of the armed workers. Kautsky reveals a "superstitious reverence" for "Ministries". But why can they not be superseded, say, by committees of experts, working under sovereign, all-powerful soviets of workers and soldiers' deputies?'

Kautsky, too, probably found Lenin's rhetorical questions about soviets 'laughable', nevertheless history records the fact that it was Lenin's programme—not Kautsky's—that transformed Russia and gave the world the first demonstration of working-



Castro now attacks the Guatemalan revolution whose leaders (like Yon Sosa seen above on the right) face torture and torture, as reported on page 2.

CAR WORKERS BACK JUNE 22 LOBBY



Anti-union laws passed in Ireland

Electricity workers are first victims

By a Newsletter correspondent

ON Thursday, June 9, the Electricity (Special Provisions) Bill was passed through the Irish Parliament.

This is the most extreme measure yet taken against strikers in the Republic. It provides for banning ESB (electricity authority) strikes and pickets and for the imposition of fines on trade unions. There has been a series of actions by electricity workers in the last few months.

Workers who strike or picket can be fined £25 and £5 a day thereafter and trade unions £5,000 and £100 a day.

The only party to oppose it was the Labour Party. Fine Gael voted with the ruling party Fianna Fail. This bill goes far further than any previous legislation against the right to strike and bargain freely with the bosses.

Engineers seek recognition

THREE hundred engineers are on strike at the Rotoprint factory, Queensbury, London demanding full recognition of their union, the Amalgamated Engineering Union.

Exasperated by present negotiations of 'individual chats' between management and workers, they want full negotiating rights for their shop stewards on wages and conditions—something they have not had since the firm began in the area 20 years ago.

Convener of the factory told The Newsletter that the employers had refused recognition throughout a six-month period of negotiations between trade union officials and the Ministry of Labour.

Since the strike began, the employers are said to have issued a statement calling for further negotiations on 'a form of recognition, preserving the rights of the non-union members'—terms which would split the workers on the factory floor.

A victory at Rotoprint would be a blow for trade unionism throughout this area of light engineering factories, dominated by non-unionism.

Rotoprint workers should decide to join the June 22 lobby of parliament against anti-trade union legislation, where they can unite with workers who have won trade union rights in hard struggles, and must now fight to keep them.

Donations to the strike fund should be sent to: Bro. A. Payne, 54 Dryburg Gardens, London, N.W.9.

250 redundant in Acton

LANDIS and Gyr, an Acton, London, meter firm, announced two weeks ago that it will have to make 250 men redundant. Originally English owned, this firm was taken over by its Swiss namesake.

The new actions have been proposed to restore profitability, by getting rid of a third of the labour force. Foremen in the toolroom have been given their notice after 26 years with the firm.

The shop stewards' committee replied by requesting that all overtime is cancelled to postpone redundancy pending negotiations, and have called a mass factory-gate meeting.

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TRADE unionists from the Midlands motor industry voted, along with students and Young Socialists, to support the June 22 lobby of parliament against anti-union law at a meeting in Oxford last Wednesday (June 8). They also decided to work for a one-day strike on that day.

CP Society discusses seamen

'LEFTS', CP AND CHURCH UNITE AGAINST YS

Newsletter Reporter

FULL support for the seamen's strike has already been expressed by Sheffield University students through their Marxist, Labour and Communist Societies—members of all three taking part in the May 25 lobby of parliament. This support was confirmed at a meeting called by the Communist Society recently.

A number of students and lecturers agreed on proposals to raise finance for the strike and to send messages of solidarity, firmly rejecting a suggestion that the seamen were 'blackmailing the nation'.

However, when Young Socialist students made the point that the seamen's dispute very clearly involved a struggle against the forces of the state, certain Communist Party members, 'Tribune' supporters, and the Anglican chaplain all joined hands to dismiss this as irrelevant.

A leading Sheffield Communist Party member held that the strike represented a 'struggle between the seamen and the seriousness with which the government is prepared to implement its incomes policy'.

But what is this seriousness? Wilson is 'serious' about defeating the seamen to the extent that the international bankers demand repayment of their loans off the backs of the workers. Doesn't that raise the question of which side the state is on?

On the same day as the meeting, the 'Daily Telegraph' said the stability of the pound was Callaghan's main concern. Thus every wage issue involves the state.

And for the seamen this involvement takes a very solid form, with the Navy able to move ships and the Army threatened on the docks.

NAVY ACTION

In any case these powers were passed with the help of those 'left' MPs which the Communist Party is always urging 'unity' with.

It is clear that the Communist Party uses meetings like this to confuse the issue as far as a real fight in support of the seamen is concerned.

The Sheffield Party member had nothing to say when it was pointed out that Callaghan is preparing a six-month compulsory wage freeze for the autumn if the seamen's strike produces any inflation, or when it was stressed that there were dangers of a sell-out through manoeuvres.

OPPOSED STOPPAGE

In fact, he admitted that the Communist Party had opposed a one-day stoppage of Hull dockers in support of May 25 lobby, which had been proposed by their brothers on Merseyside, because it might have involved seamen leaving their ship illegally.

He thus tries to set the value of a mass lobby uniting many important sections of workers in a fight against the whole incomes policy in an unfavourable light.

Only the uniting of seamen with workers under political leadership can help them because to win they must also help defeat the incomes policy.

At the same time, the Party member failed to mention the June 22 lobby, which is continuing the fight against the incomes policy and proposed anti-union laws of the government.

A few Communist Party members—in particular a leading local official—opposed the strike call.

An Amalgamated Engineering Union shop steward at Morris Motor's, Cowley, said that the working class had forced up the wages by 8-9 per cent over the past year. Because of this the state had moved in to attack wages at the request of the employers and international bankers.

The incomes policy was one of the weapons that they intended to use, he said.

However, before the Prices and Incomes Bill was on the statute books, its contents were being harshly applied to the seamen.

Called retreat

In the seamen's strike the Labour government had made it absolutely clear that it stood with the employers. When one section of the ship owners showed signs of weakening it was the Labour government that called a halt to the retreat—it set up a committee of enquiry to rally the employers.

The steward said that the labour movement must not wait until the Bill was introduced before fighting it.

He called for support for the June 22 lobby and for a campaign for a one-day strike in Oxford factories.

Other trade unionists pointed out that the Labour Party was built to defend the gains of the working class, not to solve the balance of payments crisis for the employers.

'British capitalism is at a crisis point, it can only survive if the trade union movement is smashed. Consequently we must fight for June 22 in a different way from the past,' said a steward.

'Masses of workers must be mobilised in a demonstration that will shake the Labour government to its very foundations. This is why we must campaign for strikes on June 22.'

First step

A Transport and General Workers' Union shop steward at the Morris factory argued that the proposed anti-trade union legislation was only a first step. The legislation would be on the statute books for amendment by future governments—especially Tory governments, he said.

Another Transport and General Workers' Union member, a leading member of the Oxford Communist Party, said that Britain had an excellent strike record. Australia, which already had anti-trade union laws, had three times as many strikes.

His approach as experienced throughout the country in the course of the campaign for June 22, is further evidence that the lobby was originally called by the CP to divert workers from the May 25 Young Socialists lobby.

'Left' McNamara supports Devlin & Emergency Powers

By JACK GALE

KEVIN McNAMARA, Labour MP for Hull North, was forced to admit on June 10 that he supports both the Devlin Commission's report on the docks and the introduction of Emergency Regulations during the seamen's strike.

He was speaking at a meeting organised by the Hull Centre for Socialist Education. He reveals not only his position but also the duplicity of a number of so-called 'lefts' around the Centre, and 'The Week'.

'The Week' a duplicated journal with pretensions to Marxism, carried an article in its June 9 issue entitled 'Parliament: The lefts begin to move'.

This said: 'Newcomers like Kevin McNamara, the Hull MP who won the famous by-election, are proving very sharp critics of the government's trade union policies'.

Yet just one day after this sycophantic article appeared, this 'sharp critic' declared:

'I do not agree that we should be anti-Devlin. We should go forward from Devlin. The efficiency of the ports is fundamental to the economy of the country.'

'Necessary'

Questioned as to why he had not voted against the Emergency Powers being introduced, he asked: 'Was there a vote?' When it was pointed out that there had been no vote because no Labour MP had been prepared to force a division, he finally admitted:

'We had to support the Emergency Powers. They are not strike-breaking. They are necessary to maintain essential food supplies.'

McNamara, it must also be remembered, was reported in the press as saying during his by-election campaign that Hull dockers who were on strike were 'enemies of the community'.

Yet 'The Week' lists McNamara as a 'left'!



Kennedy's South Africa trip

Old record with a new label

NEWSLETTER CORRESPONDENT

THE visit of Senator Robert Kennedy to South Africa last week was like a breath of fresh air to the 'liberal' bourgeoisie of South Africa. But it certainly had a nauseating political odour about it to the revolutionary-minded workers and peasants of that country.

For when this much-vaunted 'liberal' representative of US imperialism spoke out to his youthful and largely white audiences, at the various centres of learning, the Senator sounded like an old record issued under a new label.

The theme of Kennedy's speeches had nothing new in the ways of the much-tried and tested techniques of the 'friend of the oppressed people' approach.

Here was a personality with an inflated image of a 'civil rights leader', telling the oppressed and down-trodden people of South Africa that the solution to their problems lay in the application of the politically-castrated philosophy of non-violent passive resistance.

If the technique of 'struggle' advocated was something new to the South African scene, then one might be forgiven for following the Senator's advice.

COSTLY FAILURE

In view of recent memories, it is highly unlikely that any serious-minded revolutionary will heed Kennedy's advice, for 'passive resistance' as a form of struggle proved a costly failure to the liberation struggle in South Africa.

Most of the leaders and advocates of this kind of 'struggle' are busy licking their wounds in detention or exile.

The apostle of the 'almighty dollar' tried to foster the illusion that segregation or apartheid was due to some human folly or accident; that what was needed was some form of passive protest which will make the oppressors realise their folly and thereby mend their ways.

The experience gained through

passive resistance in the 1950s confounded all those who believed in the gist of Kennedy's message.

The victims of apartheid have also learned that it is a consciously-planned and essential philosophy which is at the root of their suffering and poverty; that the system of colour bars and segregation provide a psychological cover for the super-exploitation of the colonial and semi-colonial people; that it is capitalism and imperialism which is at the root of their oppression and backwardness.

CRISIS MIRRORED

The workers and peasants of South Africa must take heart in the intensified class struggles that are being waged throughout the world. This struggle, in turn, is intensifying the crisis of imperialism, which is now beginning to mirror itself in the weaker outposts of imperialism in Southern Africa and elsewhere.

The visit of Kennedy to South Africa, with Verwoerd's approval, can only be seen in the light of this crisis, for, herein lies the seeds of direct imperialist interventions in Southern Africa in the future.

It is now a matter of great urgency for the revolutionary-minded workers of South Africa to grasp the need for the building of a revolutionary Marxist party, untainted by Stalinism or nationalism, and led by the Fourth International, which will wage a relentless struggle against the Verwoerd regime and their imperialist masters. A defeat of the Verwoerd regime in South Africa will be a resounding blow against imperialism.

RUMANIA UPSETS WARSAW PACT

By Newsletter Reporters

THE Rumanian Communist Party leader Ceausescu again called for the disbandment of the Warsaw Pact in a speech near Budapest last Sunday.

Whilst attacking NATO and calling for 'the withdrawal of non-European troops from Europe', he went on to say:

'We believe that the time has come to disband military blocks and give the peoples an opportunity of developing relations based on unrestricted co-operation.'

A similar statement in a speech made on Saturday was reported in 'Pravda' without comment.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Manescu was holding up the Warsaw Pact meeting in Moscow. The meeting, which had originally been expected to be held in Bucharest, was reported to be still in session on Saturday, five days after it started.

It has previously been a two-day affair, but Rumanian objections had prevented decisions being reached on several points. Manescu is believed to have opposed a plan to set up a permanent executive for the Warsaw Pact.

The Rumanians had also argued that Albania, an original signatory

11 years ago, should be restored to membership of the Pact.

As with the much-postponed visit of Chou-en-lai to Bucharest, this is in no way an indication of sympathy with the political line of the Chinese and Albanians. On the contrary, it is part of the Rumanian bureaucracy's tendency to pull away from Moscow and towards the Western Powers.

The very close trading ties between Rumania and the capitalist countries is the key to the politics of Ceausescu.

His speeches against 'foreign interference' is part of the rapid trend to the right in world Stalinism as a whole, especially on the part of the Soviet leadership itself.

Seamen

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Why have not the Communist Party mobilised thousands of seamen to join dockers and other trade unionists in a united struggle? Why did they split the working class on May 25 when they refused to join the Young Socialists lobby? Yet the Young Socialists join the Communist Party lobby on June 22.

They avoid like the plague any form of unity which would bring large numbers of workers together to fight on common issues.

This is the difference between the Communist Party and the Socialist Labour League, which has sought on all occasions

during the seamen's strike to do this.

The seamen's strike is not an ordinary strike. It is being discussed continuously in the highest banking circles as well as by the heads of state in Whitehall.

It is a political strike and upon its outcome many things will be decided. Those who demonstrate and lobby on June 22 should be aware of the issues. Let the rank and file who come from the building sites and factories join hands with the seamen to fight the common enemy which is the government and the employers.

The Newsletter says: For an all-out victory to the seamen! Opposition to the Devlin Report! Opposition to the anti-trade union legislation!

The Labour Government must be forced to—Nationalize the shipping industry and the docks without compensation and under workers' control.