

SEAMEN'S STRIKE IS IN DANGER

'Red' scare a cover for deal

by THE EDITOR

THE seamen's strike is in danger. All the most reactionary forces from the bankers of Wall Street and Zurich, the Tory Party, the right-wing Labour leaders and the TUC are now working might and main to smash the strike. Wilson has launched his 'red' scare about outside political interference.

Outside political interference there certainly is, but it does not come from those movements on the left which have fought for the strike to be victorious. It was organised at the bankers' meeting in Basle which gave Wilson his marching orders. These bankers are the most 'militant' representatives of capital who live by exploiting workers in all parts of the world.

In order to cover up for his capitulation to these forces Wilson shamelessly exploits the propaganda techniques of Nazism, the infamous red bogey.

On guard

There appear to be sections of the Executive Committee of the Seamen's Union which accept what he has to say, and these sections are now talking about a settlement other than the immediate application of the 40-hour week. Not only the seamen but the whole labour movement must be on guard against these moves.

Victory for the seamen would be a powerful blow against the prices and incomes policy of the Labour government, in fact everything centres on this. The seamen are the first victims of the Brown-Wilson anti-trade union legislation which is now being rushed through parliament.

No lobby of parliament can replace the powerful class action which is involved in the seamen's strike. If it is defeated, then the Prices and Incomes Bill, when it becomes law, will endanger the functioning of every shop steward throughout the country.

Black ships

Meanwhile, at sea, foreign ships in conjunction with British shipowners, are being organised to break the strike. British vessels are used for coastal transport in Europe and their goods are being unloaded and re-loaded into foreign ships trading with British ports.

To make the strike effective it is essential for the seamen and dockers to black all ships, foreign and British, immediately, and so far as the dockers are concerned this cannot be done without unofficial action. The Transport and General Workers' Union is just as anxious as Woodcock to force the seamen to settle on the Pearson Report.

The Communist Party, sponsors of the lobby of parliament on June 22, have miserably failed to provide leadership in the coming days. They talk about a national conference to discuss the situation.

But what is there to discuss? The time for action is now.

If the seamen are defeated, such a conference would be useless and it would take weeks to organise. At the end of all this the Communist Party will no doubt propose more conferences.

Mobilise

Certainly to back up the seamen, the trade unionists of every industry should organise committees to mobilise support for the seamen through demonstrations, local meetings, and deputations.

These committees should do more. They should organise a one-day stoppage throughout the country on the day that the Prices and Incomes Bill is presented for its second reading.

What is needed is just such a stoppage and not a national conference. Let that come later, to discuss the lessons of the present struggle.

We repeat, a conference now would be nothing more than a useless diversion.

The time for action is now, otherwise the seamen may suffer a serious defeat.

'Lefts' evasive yet again

By Newsletter Reporter

IN a special committee room at the House of Commons, five 'left' MPs met some 300 lobbyists. Later one worker expressed the sentiments of many when he said: 'I've never heard so much flannel and whitewash in my life!'

Tilbury speed-up angers dockers

A SCHEME for 16 'permanent' dockers to do the work of 89 men on a Tilbury wharf was attacked at a meeting last Monday.

Modernisation is still proceeding, despite the temporary relaxation of the attempts to end the Dock Labour Scheme through the recent amendments, and Tilbury's No. 34 shed is now ready to handle palletised cargoes (compact cargoes moved faster by fewer men than ordinary cargoes).

Monday's meeting of Tilbury dockers was told by the liaison committee chairman that it had been custom and practice for only casuals (dockers who take a job every day) to handle cargoes on ships.

This was now being ignored by the employers.

Previously the Port of London Authority 'perms' (men employed on a permanent basis, worked only on the quays).

Now, said the chairman, 'perms' would be allowed to work the ships and consequently 16 'perms' would replace 89 'casuals', and would be paid a guaranteed wage of £27 a week.

AGREEMENT?

He claimed that an agreement had been signed in March behind the dockers' backs without any discussion in divisional committees.

A delegate was shouted down by the meeting when he said that it had been custom and practice to give any scheme a three-month trial.

Another liaison committee member suggested that the men accept the new working conditions only if the employers guaranteed every docker a £27 basic wage, but rank-and-file members pointed out that the greatest danger of the scheme was the breaking of the 'continuity rule'—this allows casual labour to follow a job right through and is the backbone of the casual labour scheme.

The meeting carried a resolution saying the men should refuse to work ships in No. 34 shed and should continue customary working until the new scheme had been put before them and discussed.



Young Socialists and adult workers march with the main YS banner calling for the 'blacking' of ships.

DENISON HOUSE MEETING

Mass action on July 20 - call

All out at second reading of anti union law

STERLING ON THE SLIDE

By JOHN CRAWFORD

LESS than a week after the foreign bankers' new credit arrangements had pushed the pound back over 2.79 dollars, the slide in sterling began again.

Monday night's close in the foreign exchanges saw the lowest level since early 1965.

The main factor was the failure of Wilson to defeat the seamen, or to look as though he will do so in the near future.

As discussed in last week's Newsletter, the new credit facilities, granted by a number of central banks, were arranged only on condition that Wilson carried through an attack on workers' living standards.

This was made quite plain by the annual report of the Bank of International Settlements, published in Basle on the same day as the credit agreement.

Reduction

The report calls openly for 'a major reduction in the size of wage increases, and specifically urges the need for 'forceful action to increase the rate of gross national savings, both through measures in the public sector and through an effective incomes policy'.

The way in which Wilson's policies are dictated by the international bankers has never been made clearer.

Channelled through the Bank of International Settlements, 1,000 million dollars are now available to the Bank of England under the new agreement, but only on a three-month basis. A renewal is necessary next September.

Another 1,000 million dollars are still available from the United States under last September's agreement.

Unlike previous operations of this kind, last week's deal was supported by the Bank of France.

But de Gaulle instructed his representatives to make this agreement directly with the Bank of England and not through the Bank of International Settlements.

Thus all of this backing for sterling is of a purely conditional kind. If Wilson does not do his job to the liking of the financiers, the renewal may not be forthcoming in September.

Cuts in the social services, as well as a wage freeze, are demanded of the Labour leaders. The determination of the seamen to fight to a finish is thus decisive in this situation.

There can be no peaceful solution to the problem. Either the workers are beaten, or the crisis of British capitalism will deepen.

The preparation for the kind of struggles, of which the seamen's strike is the prelude, cannot stop short of challenging capitalist power in this country and internationally.

This is well known, both to the British ruling class, and to the world financial circles. That is why the foreign speculators are so sensitive about the seamen's struggle and its leadership.

An answer to Wilson

SEAMEN at the head of Wednesday's lobby make plain their attitude to Wilson's 'red plot' witch-hunt. There were several ingenious banners with ribald and unprintable comments.

Others said: 'In Spite of Wilson, seamen will win!', 'We won't be sacrificed on the altar of George Brown's incomes policy!', 'Seamen say to Wilson—Hands off our union!', and 'Wilson—Socialist or ship-owners' lackey?'.

YOUTH BOOST LOBBY

By Newsletter Reporters

YOUNG Socialists and their supporters from factories, docks and building sites swelled the ranks of Wednesday's demonstration and lobby of parliament against the government's proposed anti-trade union legislation and in support of the striking seamen.

They accounted for nearly half of the 1,000-strong demonstration, called by the London Joint Sites Committee, which moved from the Barbican building site through Smithfield Market, Farringdon Street, to Blackfriars and along the Embankment to Temple.

Seamen in their hundreds headed the march, and immediately took up the chant 'We want 40!'. They were followed by building workers mainly from London sites, plumbers, boiler-makers and individual representatives from other trades.

Unite

Merseyside building workers marched towards the rear with Young Socialists from all over Britain, whose main banner called for 'Seamen and Dockers Unite. Black all ships, Foreign and British'.

Also in this section were Mersey dockers, aircraft workers, constructional workers, engineers, transport workers, students from Leeds, Sheffield and Hull, and Socialist Labour League members.

The youth took up the slogan of their main banner, and for the first time in a similar demonstration, workers seriously took up chants of 'Anti-union laws—Out!'.

Unlike March 1 lobby, the Communist Party supporters who attacked the youth for 'politicising' that demonstration, were unable to hold back almost a thousand voices shouting protests and demands.

Although there were many Party members present, and a handful of Young Communist League members, there was no sign of any Party banner or slogan.

'Not alone'

Despite attempts to prevent seamen talking to Newsletter reporters, one said: 'We will strike 'till we get the 40-hour week. This has been a very good demonstration. It shows we are not alone and have the support of other workers.'

Secretary of the building workers' movement in Liverpool said the lack of support for the seamen from some unions was 'scandalous'.

An official of the Bristol Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions said it had been a very effective demonstration. 'The seamen's strike is our strike and that of all trade unionists,' he said. 'We have to smash the prices and incomes policy.'

The marchers went on to lobby MPs, but the demonstration began so late that there was little time for this action. Five 'left' MPs saw 300 lobbyists inside the Commons, but after a two-hour wait police were only allowing some workers into the actual lobby when MPs came out of St. Stephen's entrance to collect them.

'ALL illusions trade unionists may have had last year about the Prices and Incomes Bill have most certainly been swept away now,' said Reg Perry, speaking on behalf of Liverpool building workers at a meeting held in Denison House following the lobby. He called for mass action on July 20 when the Bill comes up for its second reading.

It is clear that the trade unions have been the victims of a conspiracy between the right wing of the trade unions and the Labour government. This was hatched in Transport House three years ago when a document was circulated to every major trade union, he added.

NO SUPPORT

At the present time Wilson was mobilising the state to smash not just the seamen but the trade union movement, and at the same time the TUC had said it could not give support to the seamen.

Yet the TUC had passed a resolution on the 40-hour week for many years, a thing which the seamen had a right to fight for, he said.

When George Brown stated that there was no road back from the incomes policy then the time was dangerous for the trade union movement.

The new proposal to introduce fines from the wage packet would affect not only the man concerned but his whole family.

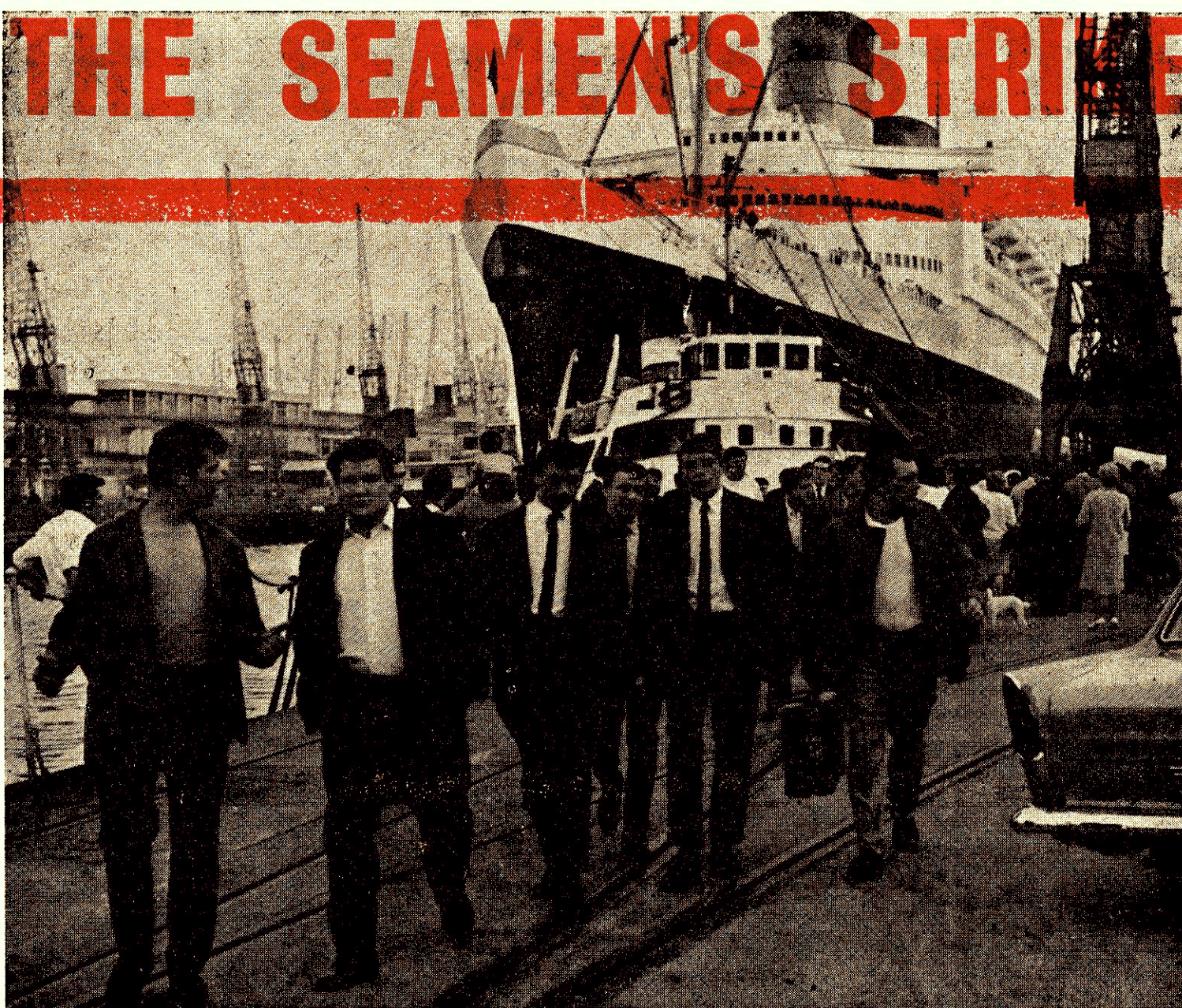
DISGUSTED

Referring to a meeting held in the afternoon between four Lancashire Labour MPs and the North-West delegates, Perry said he had never been so disgusted in all his life.

'We were hoodwinked today,' he said. 'We were taken to the quietest corner of the House of Commons—even shown a convenient door to leave by.'

Perry was the only speaker from the platform to call for mass action by the working class to stop the Bill. The meeting was full of confusion on the part of the Communist Party and the lobby committee.

This article analyses the role of the Communist Party's 'Morning Star' in the strike



BY CLIFF SLAUGHTER

ON the eve of the seamen's strike, now in its sixth week, Prime Minister Wilson made it very clear that, in siding with the shipowners, the Labour government was acting against not only the seamen, but the whole of the working class.

The Labour government has set itself the task of carrying out the 'Incomes policy', which means imposing a ceiling on wage increases, to enable the bosses to accumulate larger profits. The seamen were sorted out in order to prepare to teach a lesson to the whole of the working class.

The seamen have fought with firmness and solidarity, and they have received financial support from many thousands of workers in other industries.

The government and the capitalist class, on the other hand, proceed ruthlessly to try and isolate and smash this section of workers.

In this way they have received the help of the Trades Union Congress General Council. George Woodcock, the general secretary of this highly respectable body, spent most of the early days of the strike lying on the sand in Majorca, muttering to reporters that he didn't think the strike, or even the government's taking of emergency powers, as particularly important.

He returned—and the 'inner cabinet' of the TUC General Council moved into 'action'—only when the executive of the National Union of Seamen rejected the findings of the Pearson Commission as a basis for negotiation.

The Socialist Labour League and its supporters have carried out a consistent campaign against the government's Prices and Incomes Bill. The most dangerous aspect of the Bill is that it subordinates the workers' basic organisations, the trade unions, to the state.

In all capitalist countries there is this tendency to integrate the trade unions into the state, and since the founding of the Fourth International Trotskyists have fought against this as an attempt by the capitalists and their agents to atomise the working class as a class.

The TUC General Council has actually accepted its role as one of the instruments of the capitalist state by using all its resources to try and drive the seamen back to work.

Foretaste

When Wilson uses his Labour majority to attack the seamen and the rest of the working class, he is giving a foretaste of the meaning of the Prices and Incomes Bill. The seamen are having it applied to them even before it goes through the Commons.

The great danger in this situation is that, while all the weapons in the capitalist class's armoury—press, television, the armed forces of the state, the agents of the employers in the trade unions and the Labour government—are brought into action against the seamen, the power of the working class is not used, because of the treachery of the leadership of the working class.

We know that the Labour leaders long ago accepted the lie about there being a 'national interest', which is used to impose upon the working class the discipline of those who in fact rule the nation, the capitalists.

We have now reached a point where this so-called 'national interest' demands that even the 40-hour week and a living wage is too 'extreme' a demand. Against this basic demand of the seamen, the Labour government moves in with the Navy and the Army.

Workers have every right to demand that a Labour government should immediately nationalise the shipping industry and give the 40-hour week by law to the seamen.

Why not? Much bigger industries have been nationalized, even in the post-war years which we were told were so 'difficult' for Attlee's government.

Even before there was a Labour Party, reductions in the working day were passed by parliament. Why is it impossible now? Isn't this just the kind of thing a Labour government was elected for? Have not the reformists of the Labour Party, right and left, always claimed the allegiance of the working class on the grounds that in Britain it was possible by peaceful, parliamentary means to improve the conditions and living standards of the working people?

Attack

Yet here we have a Labour government, just returned with a large majority, using its power not to improve conditions, but to smash the seamen and to prepare to attack the whole working class.

The same question was raised by the proposed legislation against the trade unions. Having been founded by the trade union movement, the Labour Party in power proceeds to attack the elementary basis of working class organisation in trade unions.

All this signifies one thing, which first seamen and then other workers are going to be forced to realise in bitter experience: capitalist rule can no longer continue on the basis of 'peaceful' and 'democratic' relations between the classes in the advanced industrial countries like Britain, France, Germany and the USA; the rights won by the working class, to have freely operating trade union organisations, to participate in the representative institutions of the capitalist state, to arrive through bargaining at a whole series of concessions—all this becomes too expensive a burden for the capitalist system.

In order for the capitalists to set about their increased profit-making on a new basis, unhindered by the strength of the organised working class, it is

necessary for them to use the state machine and every other weapon they have to discipline the working class.

It is not possible to defend these past conquests of the working class by the old 'peaceful' methods.

The reformist Labour leaders, as well as the 'Communist' parties, stand in the way of the working class in this situation. Far from mobilising the working class against the attacks of the capitalists, they serve as instruments of capitalist policies.

It was for this reason that the Fourth International was founded in 1938. In its founding programme, the Fourth International insisted above all on the need to build a new, revolutionary leadership in the working class, which could defeat the bureaucratic leaderships of social-democracy and Stalinism.

Alternative

It is because that programme was correct, was the continuation of Bolshevism and Marxism in our epoch, that today Trotskyism (the Socialist Labour League in Britain), is coming forward as the real alternative leadership in the struggles of the working class.

Once it is accepted that we start from the revolutionary role of the working class, subordinating every partial and temporary struggle to these long-term, revolutionary interests of the class, then we arrive at policies opposed to those of the bureaucrats of all varieties.

This has been the position taken up by the working-class revolutionaries ever since Marx's 'Communist Manifesto' (1848).

In our day, because we live in the period of the highest stage of capitalism (imperialism), and because the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism is the key to all other problems, the position has arrived where not even the elementary demands of the workers—on wages, hours, rents, etc.—can be fought for consistently without revolutionary leadership. In a fight on any one of these issues, the employers more and more rely on the forces of the state and not just on economic pressure or local strength.

This is what is involved in the seamen's strike. In the experience of this strike, workers will be forced to learn that their traditional leadership has become an instrument in the hands of the class enemy, and that if politics are left in the hands of these people, then capitalism will

proceed to destroy one bastion after another of working-class organisation.

But the working class has not suffered any major defeat in the advanced countries for many years. Their fighting capacity is an enormous obstacle to the plans of the capitalists, and to the ability of the bureaucrats to sell them out.

The great task is to match this fighting capacity with political leadership.

The dominance of opportunist leadership in the working class is a fundamental weakness which requires solution, otherwise the great strength of the organised working class cannot be preserved and mobilised against the

enemy. That lesson is already becoming clear from the seamen's strike.

In the columns of the 'Morning Star', organ of the Communist Party, it has been repeatedly asserted that the seamen's strike is not a political strike, not a strike against the state.

This line is treacherous, and it has the effect of preventing the working class from preparing for the great political struggles facing it in the next period, of which the seamen's strike is only the first.

Editorial

For example, the 'Morning Star' of May 19 said in its editorial:

'This dispute is not between the seamen and the nation. It is between the seamen and the shipowners. The seamen are not attacking the state. By choosing to say they are, Mr. Wilson is trying to justify the use of the state against the seamen on behalf of the shipowners.'

But if the state is being used by a Labour government on behalf of the shipowners, then how is it possible to say it is not a political strike?

It IS a political strike

Even Bill Hogarth, the seamen's union general secretary, considered by all and sundry as an even-tempered centrist, has finally been forced by the tremendous strength of his members' determination, to announce that the strike is now a fight with the government.

It has taken a long time for him to say it—he denied it up until last Saturday—but the increasingly tense situation, with the government's witch-hunt and imminent threat of the use of emergency powers, makes such a statement unavoidable.

In saying it is a purely industrial dispute, which can be won by simple industrial organisation, the 'Morning Star' gives the government invaluable help in preventing the working class from organising against the seamen's enemies. These enemies are not only the shipowners but, much more important, the employing class as a class, and the Labour government which is managing the state on its behalf.

Of course the seamen are not striking against the nation. But the answer to Wilson is to clarify the working class about who the seamen are striking against.

Fight

The seamen's fight is every worker's fight, because the Labour government, at the command of capitalists at home and abroad, is using the seamen's issue to impose the whole programme of the capitalist class on workers in every industry.

The state is the organisation of all the armed forces and resources of repression and 'law and order' in capitalist society, all of them bureaucratically controlled by chosen representatives of the ruling class, specially trained as military experts, security and intelligence agents, chiefs of police, judges and lawyers, senior civil servants, all of them highly paid and functioning without any question of 'democratic' control over their actions and plans.

Does anybody doubt that this state is being used to prepare the defeat of the seamen?

Is it not the duty of working-class leaders to prepare the working class to fight against this

the government as somehow 'neutral' or standing above the classes.

As always Stalinism plays the role of a left cover for the social democrats in the Labour leadership. In a dispute which gives unprecedented opportunities for the political development of a real communist movement as an alternative to the opportunists, the Stalinists devote all their efforts to prevent this political education. They cover this up with their talk about purely industrial solidarity, condemning as 'ultra-lefts' those who raise the political questions.

Once having set out along this road, it becomes impossible to take up a struggle against those

who openly betray the strike.

After the seamen's rejection of the Pearson Commission report, the Transport and General Workers' Union leaders continued only to give the same support they had already agreed to, and refused to agree to the requests of the NUS to black all British ships and all foreign vessels plying the British coast.

Every capitalist newspaper, British and foreign, treated this for what it was, an act by trade union bureaucrats to refuse the seamen the support they needed to win the strike.

But the 'Morning Star' (June 11) began its main news story as follows:

'Powerful backing for the seamen's strike poured in yesterday from the giant Transport and General Workers' Union—£50,000 from the boiler-makers, and pounds and pence galore from the rank and file.'

In point of fact the T&GWU had very decidedly refused to go further than it had previously gone.

Opinion

Writing in the 'Morning Star' of June 11, Mr. Jim Slater, member of the seamen's executive, expressed the following opinion, even at this late stage:

'... our struggle is a trade union one against the owners, not against the government or the people.'

With this outlook, the seamen would be defeated. Certainly the strike is not against 'the people'. The people are divided into two classes, however. The strike is against the employing class, and because the government serves this class, it is also a strike against the government.

Many seamen learned after the unofficial strike of 1960 that even if they were temporarily defeated, their unofficial action had prepared the way for work inside the official union machine.

Many of the militant leaders of 1960, including Slater himself, overcame the disciplinary action taken against them by the official leadership and won positions on the executive, within which they now conduct the struggle.

But they are being forced to go further and learn the political lessons of the fight in which they are engaged.

The Labour Cabinet is composed of the same kind of employers' agents against whom they had to fight in the union, and it is wrong to regard the state and

the million-strong T&GWU executive confirmed that its members would continue to back the seamen... the lightermen's union took a similar decision.'

On the following Monday (June 13), came the measure of this support. Because of the real line of the Transport and General Workers' Union, dockers in three major ports, whose unofficial leaders had agreed on blacking at a meeting the previous weekend, either refused to black, or give very little support to the call.

Hull stopped almost completely for two days, Liverpool stopped partially for three days, but in London, where Mr. Jack Dash allowed T&GWU official Bill Mundy on his platform, there was no blacking at all.

As reported in last week's Newsletter, the whole matter was confused and confusing by the attitude of the National Union of Seamen in not making a clear cut call and, in London, by the attitude of the 'Morning Star', the Communist Party and Jack Dash.

Dash claimed support for blacking from the T&GWU and Lightermen, but on the same platform Mundy put forward the actual line of the transport union. He also urged the dockers to go to their jobs and not do anything unofficial, and added a rider that the 40-hour week could not be won all at once, anyway!

So the chance of united action was lost temporarily.

Only clear calls by local NUS strike committees, acting in union with organised dockers, can assure the success of such actions now.

Support

(Here again, if the Communist Party was at all intent on strengthening this strike, it could call on sympathetic blacking by dockers and seamen from the Soviet Union. The Kiev Port and River Workers were some of the first to cable their support to the NUS headquarters. But no-one has heard Jack Dash or the 'Morning Star' call for the Kiev-based workers to show their support in concrete terms that can give a lead internationally.)

These sections of workers will need to act in such a way that they understand clearly the role of the Labour government and the trade union bureaucrats. The 'Morning Star' stands in the way of that, with its talk of 'non-political' strikes and the 'support' of reactionary trade union leaders.

All this is intended to lull the workers to sleep on the real issues of a fight against the Labour government.

The Communist Party has a programme of 'peaceful, parliamentary roads to socialism'. According to Gollan and Co., socialism will be legislated by a majority of Communist and Labour MPs in the seats of Westminster.

The political struggle for socialism is therefore more and more confined to purely electoral activity. Party members in the factories are restricted to industrial and trade union issues. The Communist Party is accepting the opportunists' insistence on the separation of industrial and political struggles.

Marxists regard the struggles for economic gains as taking place within the context of preparing the working class for a struggle for power, which requires the building of a revolutionary party.

Successes in the industrial field are essentially by-products of the degree of success achieved by the working class in building up its whole class strength. The real importance of any reform or concession won is the confidence and strength it gives to the working class in preparing the winning of power. The most important aspect of this is the building of an alternative leadership.

CP 'logic'

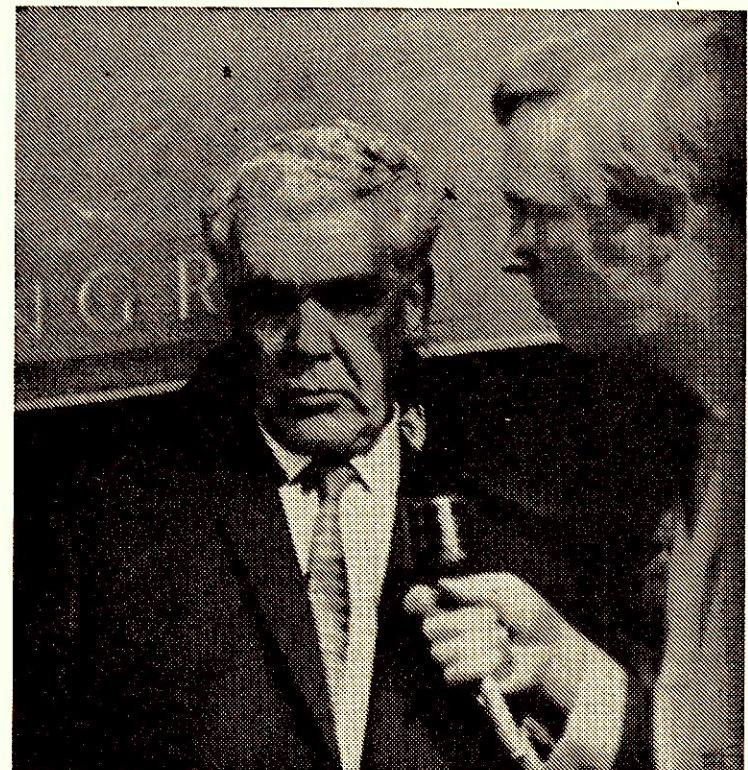
When the Communist Party insists that the strike of seamen is not political, therefore, it follows out the logic of the whole programme of peaceful and parliamentary roads to socialism.

For them the role of the working class in struggle is not to challenge capitalist power and expose the agents of capitalism in the labour movement, but to lie in the background as some vague 'pressure' to support the gradualist work of the 'political' members in parliamentary elections and local councils.

But in the course of this seamen's strike millions of workers will be forced to recognise in practice that the seamen face the same class forces as those which lay behind the Prices and Incomes Report, and that only a united class action behind revolutionary leadership can win anything in this period of history.

The shipowners can be defeated; the anti-union legislation can be halted; the Devlin Report can be thrown out. But to do this requires that the capitalists are more and more threatened with losing everything.

That is the meaning of our epoch. That is why the victory of Trotskyism, which means the victory of the Socialist Labour League, over social democracy and Stalinism is a necessity for the whole of the working class.



A worried-looking George Woodcock rushed back from his Majorca holiday after the seamen rejected the Pearson Report.



Seamen's Union secretary Bill Hogarth says the strike is against the government.

At the same time the Lightermen's Union, with Communists prominent in the leadership, took exactly the same decision as the T&GWU.

Here the Communist Party very deliberately acted to weaken and hold back the struggle against the government. Instead of exposing the reactionary trade union leaders, the editor of the 'Morning Star' wrote:

A LETTER TO THE NEWSLETTER

Chou and Rumanians play their own cards

THE visit of Chou en Lai to Bucharest is a remarkable manifestation of the international crisis of the Stalinist bureaucracy, and the different kind of opportunist reflections of it.

The representative of the Chinese Communist Party, which loudly criticises the Soviet leaders from the left, is greeted by the Rumanian chiefs, whose quarrel with Moscow is that its revisionism does not go far enough.

Ceausescu, the Rumanian Party secretary, has made a number of statements recently calling for the disbandment of 'all military pacts'.

CRITICISM

This implied criticism of the Warsaw Pact, and of Russian domination within it, expresses that tendency in the bureaucracy which favours the closest connections with world imperialism.

The Rumanians look for support from the Chinese Communist Party, despite the fact that, at any rate on paper, their opposition to Moscow is from the other side.

Chou's brief reference to the Rumanian's fight 'against all attempts to control or intervene from the outside, to defend their independence and sovereignty', shows that he is prepared for some kind of deal with the Rumanian leaders.

The latter, however, have been careful not to give the slightest sign of involvement in the ideological dispute between the Russian and Chinese Parties.

When Chou made a reference to 'modern revisionists', the Rumanian press decorously omitted it from reports of his speech.

Interest is concentrated, on both sides, on the coming summit meeting of the Warsaw Pact, due to start in Bucharest on July 5.

The preparatory foreign ministers' talks in Moscow only finished on June 18, 12 days after they began.

NO COMPROMISE

The Rumanian representative, Manescu, is reported to have held up the proceedings by opposing moves to centralise the Pact organisation and refusing to compromise on an agreed communiqué. He also demanded that the Albanians be restored to full membership of the Warsaw Pact.

Chou's visit will be used to strengthen the bargaining position of the Rumanians at the Bucharest meeting.

In return, the Chinese will hope to weaken Soviet support among the world communist parties.

Ten years ago, the Chinese Communist Party denounced the Hungarian workers and backed Khrushchev in sending the Red Army into Budapest against them. Now it finds itself in alliance against the Russians with the most right-wing trend in world Stalinism.



Bertrand Russell seen at the recent seamen's meeting in Trafalgar Square

Electrical Contracting Package Deal

Plan to aid bosses' exploitation of sparks

BY NEWSLETTER CORRESPONDENT

AT a recent shop stewards' conference held in Colwyn Bay to discuss the new contracting agreement for the electrical industry, a number of papers were presented by the right-wing leaders of the Electrical Trades Union which indicate more clearly than previously the policy which they are pursuing.

One of the papers: 'The Future of Electrical Contracting and Retailing', which was presented to the employers the previous week, begins with an assessment of what is required from the electrical contracting industry if George Brown's National Plan is to be fulfilled. It concludes that output must increase by 4.6 per cent per annum, employment by 0.9 per cent per annum and output per head by 3.7 per cent per annum until 1970. 'Output per head must increase at a rate of 15 per cent higher than that of the national increase... we would have to expand our labour force by some 12,000 by 1970'.

The next paragraph swiftly returns to reality. '... If this [increase in labour force] is not possible, how do we use our labour force more effectively to cover the expected deficiency in manpower?' In other words, how can the existing (or even reduced) labour force be made to turn out more work without a commensurate increase in wages?

CO-OPERATION

There is no need to speculate. The answer is contained in the document itself:

'... we were forced to the conclusion that only the closest co-operation between the union and your Association [Employers' Federation] could produce the circumstances that would make possible on the one hand greater efficiency and on the other hand the wages and conditions we desired.'

Just as the Labour government seeks to rally the employing class to fight the working class, so the right wing of the ETU proceeds solely from the long-term interests of capitalism.

Their criticism of the em-

ployers is only on the grounds that they are failing to achieve the level of exploitation that is possible.

The ETU negotiators call for the development of monopoly: '... we cannot have the effective use of manpower or improvements in efficiency if the existing competitiveness continues.'

They also call for the introduction of modern techniques in order to intensify exploitation: 'Greater use must be made of business efficiency and method study in order to bring a degree of planning into the price... Untrained and inefficient management cannot get the best results from the capital they use or the labour force whose efforts it is their duty to co-ordinate.'

And they 'advise' the employers: 'Time spent waiting for work is unproductive.'

There is also a call for collaboration at all levels with employers: '... provision [must be] made for consultative committees drawn from all sections of men employed for the purpose of examining any weaknesses...'

'LESS SKILLED'

Open racism is introduced in the concluding section of the statement.

The effect of not increasing productivity resulting in the need to expand the labour force 'will mean that we will need a greater supply of less skilled immigrant labour to supply the increasing labour intensiveness of the industry. It goes without saying if such circumstances apply throughout British industry, there will be increasing social problems from such circumstances.'

This must surely rank as one of the most despicable statements ever made by any leadership of any trade union.

The ETU documents and statement fall in very closely with the aims of capitalism, indeed the contracting agreement itself could well have been planned by Gunter or even by Devlin or Pearson.

The claim to have broken through the incomes policy norm of 3 per cent is a fallacy. Providing productivity increases are achieved in excess of wage in-

creases, then there is no real conflict.

In any event, the unemployment which will shortly develop as a result of the payroll tax, which takes effect in September, the cutting in local authority grants, and the application of new techniques and the introduction of mobility of labour and speed-up, will soon place in the hands of the employers a big stick with which to beat back any advances in pay.

The grading proposals, with the increasing wage differentials for different grades, are a continuation of the divide and rule

Continued page 4, column 5

AFTER all these years King Street has issued a public statement criticising Soviet policy towards the Jewish minority.

The British Communist Party appeals to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to give 'sympathetic consideration' to:

- Stepping up the ideological struggle against the remnants of anti-semitism;

- Exercising greater care in ideological work on religion and nationalism 'so as to avoid the impermissible cruelties which have nothing to do with a principled Marxist position and which could be exploited by anti-semites to further anti-semitism';

- Guaranteeing religious freedom.

The statement makes reference to 'the crimes against socialist democracy between 1948 and 1953 (when leading Soviet Jewish intellectuals were murdered by Stalin's police), but praises the progress made in the USSR in eliminating anti-semitism, while admitting that 'remnants of anti-semitism remain.'

It was of course the Church, nobility and Tsarist police that cultivated medieval anti-semitism to divert the bitterness of the masses in pre-revolutionary Russia. The Bolsheviks always fought racism and after the October Revolution outlawed it.

Culture encouraged

They opened all jobs and professions to the Jewish workers, ran an educational campaign against prejudice; and encouraged the growth of a thriving Yiddish culture.

They set about liberating the Jewish masses in this way both from pogromists and from their own chauvinist and religious superstition.

The Stalin faction, in turning away from Soviet internationalism, towards Great Russian chauvinism, had no compunction against reviving the Tsarist weapon of anti-semitism in the struggle against Trotsky and the Left Opposition.

In the 1930s large numbers of Jewish communists were singled out for the 'blood purges' and in 1938 the bureaucracy began

from the VIETNAM SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

13th June, 1966

MANY PEOPLE who had hopes of opposition at last within the Labour movement will be disappointed by the Vietnam Manifesto. It does not constitute a contribution to the cause of justice and peace in Vietnam, but is a different formulation of Wilson's policy of complicity.

The United States is a blatant aggressor in Vietnam and it is impossible to expect the Vietnamese to permit the aggressor to be the arbiter of a provisional government. It only promotes confusion if we slide over our moral responsibility to stand side by side with the victim against the aggressor.

People should be clear that the United States' experimental war in Vietnam is in keeping with their exploitation and oppression of people in most parts of Latin America, Asia and Africa. The demand for peace in areas where people are struggling for liberation against brutal dictatorships backed by American military power is empty, because it is impossible for the people concerned to live under the old regime. They are compelled to revolt by those who suppress and torment them.

The only moral position for socialists is one of solidarity with those struggling for their economic and political emancipation.

In Vietnam, the United States is using gas, chemicals and napalm. They are bombing hospitals and sanatoria. They have no more right to use their occupation of Vietnam as a basis for suggesting terms of a settlement of their own aggression than had the Nazis in Yugoslavia.

The issue is as clear as the Blitz, but it is more grave. Nazi Germany did not invade Britain, nor did Nazi Germany commit war crimes against Britain involving gas, chemicals, fragmentation bombs or the placing of sixty per cent of the rural population in concentration camps. Yet, Churchill declared that Britain would fight on the beaches, fight for decades, if necessary, but would never surrender. Churchill went further, calling for the unconditional surrender of the Nazis and for a conquest of Germany.

The Vietnamese do not propose occupation of Washington. Their demand is simple: that the aggressor get out.

It is an unwarranted concession to the brute force of imperialism for socialists in the West to bargain with the rights of the oppressed by demanding that the Americans, who perpetrate such terrible war crimes and who have been in occupation of Vietnam for 12 years, should now determine a provisional government or set their conditions for an end to their own aggression.

Britain is guilty of complicity in the use of experimental weapons and poisons.

All of us have the duty to struggle for the defeat of the United States and the victory of the Vietnamese, just as we had that responsibility in support of those resisting Hitler a quarter of century earlier.

The Vietnam Solidarity Campaign is seeking to make clear the basic issues in this struggle and to organise a series of actions in Britain supporting the National Liberation Front and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam against the Americans.

We hope people in Britain will join with us in action aimed at the defeat of the United States' present government, the exposure of their war crimes and the national liberation of the people of Vietnam.

Yours faithfully,

SIGNED

President, Vietnam Solidarity Campaign

Hypocritical appeal to show sympathy for Soviet Jews

Newsletter Correspondent

closing down Yiddish language schools.

In 1941, following the Nazi invasion, the bureaucracy modified its policy, setting up a 'Jewish Committee Against Fascism' including such leading Soviet Jewish intellectuals as dramatist Mikhoels, poet Itzik Feffer and Peretz Markish, violinist David Oistrach and writers David Bergelson and Ilya Ehrenburg, to issue a world call to the Jewish people to aid the Soviet war effort.

Meanwhile, however, the trend toward chauvinism was getting worse, and in 1948 it took the form of a drive against 'cosmopolitans'.

The Jewish Committee was disbanded and most of its members arrested. In 1952, leading members of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party were arrested as 'Zionist agents' and in 1953, nine Jewish doctors employed at the Kremlin were charged with plotting to poison Red Army generals.

They were alleged to have worked for an 'international Jewish bourgeois nationalist organisation' of which the principal agent was Shlomo Mikhoels, described as 'the well-known bourgeois nationalist'.

According to Khrushchev, Stalin was planning a mass deportation of Soviet Jews.

After Stalin's death, the doctors were released.

At the 1956 Congress of the Soviet Communist Party there was a gesture towards Lenin's policy on national minorities, and his 'Letters on the National Question', written in 1922, which attacked Stalin for Great Russian chauvinism, were republished.

The Warsaw Folks-Shtymme broke the silence over the Jewish intellectuals, Mikhoels, Feffer, Bergelson, etc., revealing that Soviet police had murdered them in 1952.

The same year, however, Khrushchev intervened at the meeting of the Polish Communist Party Central Committee and, among other things, demanded that they should not appoint Jews to leading positions in the Party, but should appease anti-semitic elements in the country.

Khrushchev's intervention in the Polish Party struggle expressed the basis of present-day Soviet anti-semitism. The bureaucracy, faced with hostility from the workers and peasants, looks for scapegoats for its economic failures, and particularly in areas where there is a tradition of anti-semitism amongst the peasants, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, uses this.

The Soviet press in such areas uses the old method of the British press (when dealing with Jews before the war and with immigrants today). Whenever a Jew is arrested on black market or similar offences, he is privileged with extra column inches and bigger headlines; and if his name does not sound 'Jewish', he gets a 'real name' supplied in parentheses.

Another form of anti-semitic writing is in the guise of 'scientific', 'anti-religious', works such as the notorious Kycho thesis, issued by the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, 'Judaism Unmasked'.

The bureaucracy has nothing in common with the Marxist-Leninist approach to the religious issue, otherwise it would not close down secular institutions such as Yiddish theatres and choirs.

In books such as 'Judaism Unmasked', there is not a Marxist historical analysis of the Jewish religion, but the myth of 'eternal Judaism', used to peddle crude anti-Jewish racialism.

Prosecutors challenged

Kycho's book was withdrawn only after world-wide protests which were reflected by various Communist Parties; similar books are published, their authors need not fear the treatment given to Yuli Daniel and Andrei Sinyavsky.

At the trial of these two Communist writers, the prosecution even alleged that they were anti-semitic! Sinyavsky rose to this slander and challenged his prosecutors about their own guilt—for remaining silent when Jewish writers like Isaac Babel and David Bergelson were murdered by Stalin.

to the leaders of the British Communist Party, who all supported Stalin's crimes.

Even at the end of last year, Ramelson, who is Communist Party spokesman on Jewish affairs, was claiming that anti-semitism did not exist in the Soviet Union, that it was all propaganda—even after the Prestwich and Oxford students branches submitted resolutions to the Party Congress in November on equal treatment for Soviet Jews.

Why has Ramelson now changed his mind all of a sudden? Maybe it had something to do with the collapse of the Communist Party student work, and the petition signed by thousands of British students demanding cultural rights for Soviet Jews.

There is a division of labour now. The Soviet bureaucracy continues to fail in running Soviet agriculture, so has to use anti-semitism to try and appeal to the most backward elements in the countryside.

Sell 'image'

The British Party has to attract those who are repulsed by such aspects of Stalinism and sell its new 'liberal' image, so it issued occasional 'protests' which, when examined, prove to be a cover-up for the bureaucracy, suggesting that it just makes mistakes which 'might be exploited by anti-semites'.

King Street hopes to satisfy discontented Party members in this way, and hold the Party secure to Stalinism; but any genuine Communist will demand a real explanation for Soviet anti-semitism, and try to understand the denigration of the Soviet Communist Party after the death of Lenin.

It was Leon Trotsky who analysed and fought Stalinist degeneration, and who kept alive the internationalist tradition of Bolshevism by founding the Fourth International.

The particular problems of the Jewish workers in the Soviet Union depend for a solution, as they did in 1917, on the general victory of the Soviet working class—this time, the overthrow of the bureaucracy and a return to the course began by Lenin and Trotsky.

The King Street 'Communist Party' has not even the right to its name. The Fourth International and its parties are the Communist International of today.

MAIN TERMS OF THE THREE-YEAR PACKAGE DEAL FOR THE ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING INDUSTRY

1. The Agreement will come into effect from July 1, 1966, for a period of three years two months to August 31, 1969.
2. A National Joint Industry Board with related area boards will be formed:
 - (a) Composed of representatives of the National Federated Electrical Association and the ETU.
 - (b) The functions of these Boards which will be set up during the second year of the agreement will be:
 - (i) Improving skills.
 - (ii) Increasing productivity by improved methods of work.
 - (iii) Improving the welfare of the employees.
 - (iv) Increasing the profitability of the industry.
 - (v) Measuring output to ensure increased productivity and making corresponding benefits to employees.
 - (vi) Regulating and controlling overtime and eliminating all unauthorised stoppages of work.
 - (vii) Providing for a right of appeal by either employers or employees from decisions of the board to an independent authority.
 - (viii) The functions of the area boards shall be laid down by the Joint Industry Board.
3. Grading of Operatives: In order to increase productivity, and improve skills, the labour force

will be made more adaptable by grading of electricians into four groups:

- (a) Technicians;
- (b) Approved electricians;
- (c) Labourers.

Grading will be carried out by individual employers, but must be confirmed by the Joint Industry Board, at the beginning of the second year.

4. Wage Rates:	
1st year	
Charge hands	9s. 0d. per hour
Journeyman electrician	8s. 6d. per hour
Adult mate	6s. 11½d. per hour
2nd year	
Technicians	10s. 6d. per hour
Approved electrician	9s. 3d. per hour
Electrician	8s. 9d. per hour
Labourer	to be decided
3rd year	
Technicians	12s. 0d. per hour
Approved electrician	10s. 0d. per hour
Electrician	9s. 0d. per hour
Labourer	to be decided

5. In the third year increased production and other factors will be assessed by the Joint Industry Board for the purpose of evaluating wage rates and conditions of employment in subsequent years.

NO FIGHT FOR LOBBY BY CLYDESIDE CP

FROM BOB SHAW

Apprentices shatter Fairfields' 'peace'

By Newsletter Reporter

COLLABORATION between workers and management at Fairfields, Glasgow has been rudely shattered by 80 apprentices who began a strike on Thursday (June 16).

The apprentices, members of the Boilermakers' Society, are demanding the payment of 1s 1d and hour increase on the rate and £30 bonus already paid to adult journeymen for the agreement on job flexibility and interchangeability, signed recently.

On Monday the apprentices demonstrated at the yard gate as workers streamed out for the lunch-hour. Their posters were short and sharp: 'Shop at Fairfields, the cheapest in the country, 'Don't try and soft soap us, we don't lather, 'Slavery has been abolished, except in this yard, 'We stay out until we get paid, or until Fairfields shuts.'

They told Young Socialists how more and more supervisors were being appointed in the yard. It was becoming so bad, they said, that there would soon be more foremen and 'white hats' than workers.

DETERMINED

Many of the apprentices were in the walk-out of November, 1964, and agreed that on that occasion they were unorganised and not prepared for a tough fight with the management. Now they were determined not to go back without winning their claim.

When the yard shop stewards' convenor came out, he was greeted by ironic cheers and banter.

The recent record of collaboration between management and trade unions at Fairfields has made it clear that none of the workers' representatives are thinking of a fight with the management, let alone with the government.

Later apprentices discussed the role of the government and the June 22 lobby when a YS speaker explained the fight against the anti-trade union law.

Workers grinned sheepishly as they walked back to work through the lines of apprentices.

Many adult workers also are dubious about the headlong rush at Fairfields to relinquish all the hard-won protective rights that have been established in the last 50 years.

They fear that the drive which is now being intensified in the yard for 'productivity' means much more intense work and large-scale redundancies later.

Other sections of workers in the yard have expressed their dissatisfaction with the productivity agreement.

Six hundred semi-skilled and unskilled men, members of the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, have protested that the 1s 1d an hour increase has upset the differential between themselves and the tradesmen.

Painters paid off at Fairfields

Newsletter Correspondent

THE other side of the Fairfield situation is that regardless of work for two to three years when Iain Stewart, the new chairman, took over, men are being paid off in considerable numbers each week.

The latest of these sackings was on Friday, June 17, when 118 painters and 10 red-leaders were paid off.

Many of these men worked long hours of overtime, some from 8.30 on the Thursday night until 8 a.m. on the Friday, to get the ship ready to launch on June 23, only to find as their reward—a payoff on the Friday afternoon.

Iain Stewart states that his aim is to see the full implementation of the Geddes report on shipbuilding.

This report will mean the formation of big shipbuilding combines and monopolies and, with this concentration of resources, a big reduction in the labour forces in the yards.

Many of these men being paid off now will not find jobs again in the industry. This applies especially to the militants and those workers who have led struggles against the shipbuilding employers in the past—these men will be kept outside the gates for good.

At a meeting held in Glasgow to co-ordinate support for last Wednesday's lobby, Communist Party members shouted down a Young Socialist speaker when he called for a united demonstration with socialist slogans to expose the Labour government and to defeat the anti-trade union law.

Earlier a seamen's strike committee spokesman had emphasised that the seamen were fighting the government and that the whole future of Wilson's prices and incomes policy was at stake.

If the seamen were defeated, he said, this law would go through.

He said the seamen had received tons of sympathy and collections of money and food were now coming in, but what was needed more than anything were practical measures to block the ships on the Clyde.

This indicated that behind the front of sympathy, many prominent trade unionists in the Clyde were trying to isolate the strike and minimise its effects.

The seaman said it had been impossible to make contact with officials of the Scottish Transport and General Workers' Union to obtain their co-operation in stopping work on several ships which were 'black'.

Clyde strength

One ship had been diverted to Glasgow and its crew refused permission to sign off. On another ship a scab cook had been engaged to serve officers who had brought their families on board.

Young Socialist speakers continually pointed out in the meeting that a serious struggle must be undertaken on the Clyde to strengthen the seamen and to link their fight with that against the anti-trade union legislation.

Communist Party policy was expressed when the convenor of Connell's shipyard, a well known CP member on the Clyde, stated that the object of lobbying the MPs was to persuade the Labour government that 'it is in their best interests to withdraw the law'.

Small campaign

The campaign for the lobby was kept to the minimum by the Communist Party. Only small delegations were organised from branches. There was no evidence of any leaflets or campaigning to make workers aware of the significance of the campaign.

Young Socialists, on the other hand, held regular meetings at factories and shipyards to explain the meaning of Wilson's policies and the urgent need for action to stop the anti-trade union law going through.

So afraid were the CP officials of allowing the politics of the YS to be discussed that they refused to take a booking for YS members on the bus to London for the lobby.

Sparks' cash for seamen

ETU MEMBERS employed by New Ham, London, Council collected £5 last week and have donated it to the seamen's strike fund at Green Homes (West India Dock branch of the National Union of Seamen).

SOLIDARITY

AN EXPRESSION of the solidarity felt by the sacked painters with the striking seamen was a collection of 10s a man taken out of their last wage packets. As one painter said: 'The seamen's fight is our fight—if they go down we will all suffer'.

The fight to end sackings and the apprentices' fight for higher wages are not two separate struggles. They reflect the sharpening-up of the employers' drive to force down conditions in the yard. The employers are backed up by the Labour government which set up the Geddes committee and is now pressing for its implementation.

To defeat these plans, the shipbuilding workers will require to begin a fight for the nationalization of the shipyards and the placing of them in the control of committees of shipbuilding workers. This means a fight inside the unions against those 'leaders' who are consciously preparing, along with the Labour leaders, to sell their members out to the employers and the bankers.

East London tenants stage rent strike

By Newsletter Reporter

OVER 600 Waltham Forest, East London, tenants voted on Tuesday to withhold rent increases, demanded by the council, for the whole of July. The strike will be taken up by 12,000 council tenants.

The proposed increases range from 40 per cent to 60 per cent and represent a considerable cut in tenants' wages. The average increase is 10s and will come into effect on July 4 with a further increase due next January.

As Dan Leff, secretary of the Waltham Forest Tenants' Association, pointed out to the mass meeting, their struggle is not an isolated one as council tenants all

over the country face similar increases.

These are due to the rise in the bank rate, which has meant higher interest rates to be paid on loans to the council for re-development schemes.

Despite the fact that there was great emphasis from the chairman to 'keep politics out of the tenants' struggle', a Young Socialist speaker who pointed out the connection between the wage freeze, incomes policy and higher rents, received support from other speakers from the floor.

It is obvious that the kind

of pressure which the tenants have decided to impose on the council is unlikely to get the kind of response they expect. The attitude of the government towards the seamen is likely to be extended to local councils.

The Prices and Incomes Board has already told them that 'we cannot interfere, because it is a local matter'.

Tenants must make their fight a political one by linking up with seamen, dockers, and all workers who will come under stronger attack from the Prices and Incomes Bill. With this strength they must then put forward the demands for the nationalization of the land, building and building supplies industries and the banks.

AEU to witch hunt lobbyists?

BY A MIDLANDS CORRESPONDENT

A BIG witch-hunt by the right-wing of the Amalgamated Engineering Union is expected following an appeal by union members in Birmingham for support for last Wednesday's lobby of parliament.

Earlier the AEU had warned members not to support the lobby 'as this is contrary to union policy'.

The press has latched on to the witch-hunt—last Saturday's (June 18) 'Birmingham Mail' said that if the three convenors involved in the appeal are reported to the union executive, they may face penalties which would be 'expulsion from the union, the withdrawal of his shop steward's credential, or a fine'.

The three convenors are from the Tractor and Transmission, Rover and Austin factories.

Real issues

The real issues of course are that the shop stewards' committees and convenors at these factories laid on meetings for seamen, organised collections for them, then appealed for workers to lobby their MPs on Wednesday against the anti-trade union laws. (Seaman Gordon Norris has a further meeting this weekend in Birmingham.)

Even if these stewards did not see the connection, due to the Communist Party isolating seamen and dockers in certain areas from the Young Socialist's successful May 25 lobby, the connection is there.

If the seamen and dockers are defeated, then the government, with the full backing of the AEU right wing, can turn its attention and Prices and Incomes Bill towards another important target—the car workers.

Although the AEU 'officially' supports the incomes policy, 16 divisions out of 25 have previously gone on record opposing the government's proposed laws.

Could have turned

It must be repeated that if the Communist Party had campaigned for a monster, united lobby on January 26 against the laws, the AEU decision could have been turned the other way at its conference held soon after.

Birmingham Federation of Young Socialists countered the witch-hunt this week by leafletting Rover's, Austin's and Tractors and Transmission's calling on workers to rebuff the attack on their stewards' committees by making the June 22 lobby the biggest turn out from the factories.

Introducing honesty, purity, unselfishness and love (!) to the class war - MRA

BY BRISTOL CORRESPONDENT

A MORAL Re-Armament Association industrial conference held in the Bristol Transport and General Workers' Union headquarters last Saturday revealed the Association's attitude to industrial relations—and its hostility to the working class.

It was organised by two ex-members of the Bristol Port Liaison Committee, one of whom said that MRA should be applied to the docks to ensure a 'happier, more prosperous dock'. There followed a succession of ex-rank-and-file militants—all eagerly confessing to their past 'sins'—who alternated with employers to tell how MRA had benefited them.

A Coventry builders' leader attacked the seamen for 'tearing the guts out of the nation'. He had been a member of the Communist Party for 22 years, but found MRA 'more revolutionary, a greater challenge'.

He had increased productivity on his job by 45 per cent, he said, but omitted to mention any wage increase for the workers he represents.

A Bristol managing director said since he joined MRA, productivity of his employees had been increased by 33 per cent and their wages by 20 per cent—it is obvious whom MRA benefitted most in this case.

Halfway through the conference there was a 'sing out' by 40 children, which included such blatantly nationalistic songs as 'We're going to give our best to Britain', and 'Wake up Britain'.

Later a speaker said that MRA was needed in Germany, because German youth could find no other national purpose.

FANTASIA

WATFORD Communist Party members who responded to last Saturday's 'Morning Star' advertisement waited in vain for the publicised Vietnam motorcade and demonstration. For there was not one single banner or poster in sight. Neither was there a meeting.

Instead there appeared two dozen grown men with bells around their knees, waving handkerchiefs and branding sticks. They performed Morris dances in the finest traditions of rural idiosyncrasy.

The leader of the group, dressed in a large green horse's head, emitted an occasional 'neigh'—presumably a well-designed protest against the Vietnam war.

On the fringes of this ritual there appeared half a dozen bearded Young Communist League members with collecting boxes and leaflets; these called for the implementation of the 1954 Geneva agreement on Vietnam—all of this added to the prevailing air of fantasia.

In contrast, a successful meeting was held in the same square by Watford Young Socialists when 80 copies of 'Keep Left', the Young Socialist newspaper, and 30 copies of The Newsletter were sold, and a number of people contacted about the June 22 lobby.

At Carpenter's Park nearby, three Young Socialist members who addressed a large audience about the lobby were man-handled by the police and threatened with arrest.

Midland Red ban breaks into strike

BY SYLVIA PICK

THE overtime ban by Midland Red's 5,000 busmen in support of their 40-hour week demand, is slowly breaking out into a full-scale strike.

They began operating a ban on all voluntary overtime on Monday, but by Tuesday several garages were on strike.

At Harts Hill, Brierly Hill, garage the men struck when, it was claimed, the company attempted to pair off odd conductors and drivers telling them that unless they took a bus out, they would not be paid.

The men considered this as blacking. They also claimed that the Harts Hill garage was being singled out as a 'scapegoat'.

Other Black Country garages were being asked for support, and the Hinckley, Leicestershire, Worcester and Wolverhampton garages stopped in protest.

From Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, came reports that passengers on Monday's depleted bus services expressed sympathy with the workers.

Like the seamen, the Midland Red busmen are showing their frustration at what they considered an inadequate agreement last year.

Exactly a year ago they were forced, after a long struggle, to accept a settlement proposed by a committee of enquiry, set up by Minister of Labour Ray Gunter.

Another fight

Isolated and sold out, in spite of their militancy and solidarity, they found themselves in the position of having to take a wage increase of 15s instead of 35s claimed, with the promise of a 40-hour week in 12 months.

They are now having to wage another fight for the 40-hour week.

Solid support is coming from garages in Birmingham and the West Midlands for the guaranteed 7 hours 36 minutes over a five-day week—the company insisted on a guaranteed day of 6 hours 20 minutes.

The company says that duty rostering means that some busmen work a short day but still get a guarantee of 6 hours 20 minutes. If, the company claims, they agreed to the busmen's demand, they would be paying for 'unproductive' time which would cost them £100,000 extra. They complain that this would be 'contrary to the spirit of the agreement'.

Busmen insist that their action is to ensure that they work a reasonable day instead of one short day followed by long hours to make up the working week.

During the weeks of negotiation before the company issued their final refusal, busmen staged a lightning strike on Easter Saturday which left thousands of holidaymakers stranded.

In bitter frustration after the sell-out last year, many drivers and conductors, particularly from the militant Black Country garages, left the company.

In particular, these workers resented the comparison between their own wages and conditions and those of Birmingham Corporation busmen who have a guaranteed eight-hour day, five-day, 40-hour week.

Seamen motion blocked

By Newsletter Reporter

OFFICIALS of the Sheffield University Union of Students used deliberate blocking tactics on Tuesday to prevent a general meeting discussing a resolution backing the seamen's strike.

Members of the Marxist, Communist and Labour Societies, and of the Labour Club, were particularly enraged when the union president ruled the motion out of order on the grounds that it was not in the interests of students.

Over 200 signatures had been collected calling for the meeting and attendance showed there was wide interest in the question.

A Young Socialist student challenged the ruling, saying that the question involved in the strike—whether the incomes policy could be defeated in a situation favourable to workers—affected everybody, students included.

Meeting closed

But constitutional points were continually raised in order to prevent a real debate. These points were the only means by which the officials closed the meeting, after final voting on the challenge showed a majority in favour of the motion being put.

The officials' talk of 'keeping politics out' was based on a very firm reactionary political standpoint.

Issues were confused at one stage by a supporter of the International Socialism group who continued to argue merely on constitutional points, finally offering to withdraw the motion so that an opposite one could be debated.

However, many students not previously involved in politics but interested at the meeting can now help widen the campaign for the seamen and against the incomes policy—a number of Sheffield students in fact attended last Wednesday's lobby of parliament.

ELECTRICAL PACKAGE DEAL

From page 3

policy of the employers.

Long-established rights to bargain locally over wages and conditions are to be removed. Wilson's anti-trade union legislation is to be imposed by means of the agreement before it becomes the law of the land.

Complete control will be handed over to the Joint Industry Boards—supra-industry organisations—consisting of employers' and union representatives.

A few extracts from the agreement will illustrate very clearly the functions of those proposed organisations; 'increasing productivity... increasing the profitability of the industry... eliminating all unauthorised stoppages of work'.

PISTOL

Just in case the Stalinists might offer any resistance to the agreement, hardly likely in view of their record in the union, the speaker at the shop stewards' conference held a pistol, thereby discussed as an olive branch, at their heads.

... for those who want a stick to beat the EC, then ill-informed opposition presents a temporary opportunity at least.

'But I warn all those so disposed not with threats of discipline, not in any sense of being fearful of the Executive's position or that such behaviour will harm prospects of agreement. No, my warning is a friendly one, given because I feel that all of you could do much to help us improve this industry.'

'At the last National Contracting Conference several powerful contributions were made for the need for us to work together in this industry... But the worth of the noble words of unity, of reconciliation, is vested when we are confronted with these radical means to achieve these desirable ends.'

In a nutshell, the Stalinists are being told: 'You prepared the way for us. You handed the union to us on a plate. We

banned you from holding office. So most of you resigned from the Communist Party because your jobs were more important than your principles. Now, be good boys, complete the process. Join us, the right wing, and there will be plenty more jobs—after all, many of us were in the Communist Party as well!'

The ease with which the agreement has been signed may appear to indicate that the right wing is securely established in the ETU.

It may appear that the union is so degenerated that it is beyond reform. This would be a dangerous illusion.

It is this kind of impressionism, which comes from seeing the union outside the context of its historical development and separate from the present crisis of British capitalism and reformism, that leads to ideas now emanating from the same quarters of a break-away union.

NO CONFIDENCE

This is essentially the idea of pessimistic elements in the union who, in terms of ideology, are little different from the right wing. They all have no confidence in union members to fight and develop a revolutionary leadership.

This is where they make their big mistake. What is left out of their reckoning is the working class, which, given leadership, can, must and will fight to create the most powerful revolutionary movement in the unions.

The fear of a real struggle by members of the union is made doubly clear in the contracting statement.

'This (3½ per cent) we would have had to accept or fight. As this is a private conference I can ask you, what with? And how effectively?'

'As a fighting instrument our contracting industry, with one member in five represented by a shop steward, is a pike in the jet age...'

'Do you really think, having in mind the experience of the railwaymen and the seamen, that we would win an industrial war?'

This was said, of course, before the tenacity and determination of the seamen had been demonstrated.

If ever there was a lesson for the ETU members, then it is written in the history of the National Union of Seamen.

BREAK GRIP

Seamen have demonstrated the real possibility of breaking the grip of the right wing inside what was, until recently, one of the most right-wing and notoriously backward unions in Britain.

Leaders thrown up in the unofficial strikes, especially the 1960 strike led by the Reform Movement, have skillfully won leadership within the union and are now able to release the frustration and bitterness developed inside the union in the 55 years since the last official strike.

The process of developing new leaders in the union is only just beginning. In the coming period it will be taken to a higher stage with the development of Marxist leadership.

The process that has begun in the NUS must now be repeated in the ETU.

The issue was never more clearly stated than by Trotsky:

'The trade unions of our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers, and obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat.'

This is precisely the question which the Cannon-Chapple leadership poses before the ETU membership.

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