

The Newsletter

WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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PUBLIC MEETING

SAY NO: To anti-trade union legislation and Devlin Report
VICTORY: To the Vietnamese National Liberation Front

Speakers:

G. HEALY, national secretary, SLL
AILEEN JENNINGS, Editor, Keep Left
and prominent motor car workers

Sunday, July 10, 7 p.m.

Digbeth Institute,
Digbeth,
BIRMINGHAM

THE ECONOMIST, Journal of big business, says it (June 25)

'THE P.M. HAS BECOME A STRIKE BREAKER'

Seamen's anger swells

by THE EDITOR

NEWSLETTER INDUSTRIAL REPORTER

INCENSED seamen hurled posters and insults at the doors of their union's Maritime House, Clapham, headquarters, on Wednesday night as they were told their six and a half-week strike had been called off. The date was set for midnight Friday.

'Where's the dirty Judases,' 'What did you sell out for—40 pieces?', 'You gutless lot, you've sold us out!' were among the more printable angry shouts which interrupted a statement issued after a four-hour meeting of the executive council.

The statement, passed as a motion by 29 votes to 16, read:

'That this Executive Council being aware of the hardships caused to the citizens of the United Kingdom, accept the shipowners' improved offer of June 28.

'Therefore, in the knowledge that the court of inquiry will fully investigate our other grievances and allow other negotiations to take place, strike action will be adjourned for a period of 12 months to allow the inquiry to proceed.'

REDUCTION

So 26,000 of the union's 70,000 members are being told to go back to work after being on strike since May 16 for the 40-hour week. They have been granted an immediate reduction in hours to 48 a week this year and 40 next year, and nine days extra holiday added to the 39 proposed in the Pearson Report, set up by Minister of Labour Ray Gunter.

Previously they had been working a 56-hour week for 14.

This nine days is tied to an agreement on productivity for manning watches and Bank Holi-



'JUDAS HOGARTH' were the words scrawled in indelible paint on the steps of the seamen's HQ, during the hubbub of the sell-out statement on Wednesday.

Hogarth (see above) claimed the settlement a 'definite victory' and it had been a 'worthwhile strike'.

But the rank and file certainly don't think so.

'Wilson won the strike,' said one London seaman. 'I'm choked up. We've been flogged down the river,' said another.

A warning note came from a Tower Hill seaman: 'We changed the executive before. Now we are going to have to change it again and get rid of the 29 men who've let us down.'

Another said that their executive council should have 'backed all ships and accepted the offers of solidarity action from the foreign dockers right at the start.'

'By the time they woke up and called for support it was too late. The international banks and government had already organised to beat us.'

In Hull hundreds of dockers gathered round the Postern gate HQ shouting 'sell-out'. Vice-chairman of the disputes committee, John Meekin, said: 'I am very disappointed at the decision.'

Gale denies 'Sunday Times' story

In an interview with The Newsletter, Mr. George Gale has denied an allegation made in last week's 'Sunday Times' that he had been thrown out of a seamen's meeting in Hull and left shouting 'You're all illiterates and communists'. Vice-chairman of the Hull Disputes Committee, John Meekin, has also said that no such incident took place.

AFTER six and a half weeks, the most militant strike since the end of the war has been called off by the Executive Committee of the National Union of Seamen. Let us examine what happened.

The rank-and-file seamen are entitled to be angry, but it is necessary to direct this anger to the quarter responsible. Those really responsible for breaking the strike were the Labour Cabinet, and there is no doubt that the anti-red witch-hunt campaign of Wilson figured prominently in the background of the retreat made by the seamen's leaders.

Harold Wilson, the Labour Prime Minister, is now strike-breaker number one and we can confidently say that the role of the Labour government in the coming years will, in fact, be breaking strikes.

The anti-trade union legislation implies just that. Behind the scenes there is now a vast campaign under way led by Wilson's right-hand chief George Wigg, to investigate shop stewards and those organisations on the left who oppose the legislation.

This explains why the left wing of the NUS executive committee have to face some very bitter problems.

Firstly, if they embark on unofficial action they will immediately open the door to the right wing to witch-hunt them out of the union.

This would be a mistake because it would prevent the rank and file of the union getting rid of this right wing when the elections take place next year. So Joe Kenny, Jim Slater and others have to tread very carefully lest they be isolated.

An unofficial movement now would be used to get rid of them so that the right wing could romp home in next year's elections.

A sell-out has been forced on the union by the Labour government. Therefore it is necessary to understand the political role of Wilson during the strike.

Diversion

He took his strike-breaking orders from Wall Street and the international bankers. The seamen's leadership had to be crushed so far as the government was concerned.

The launching of an attack against the Communist Party was only a pretext, a diversion behind which the strike could be smashed.

Everyone knows that the role of the Communist Party during the strike was one attempt after another to confine it to the seamen and prevent port workers from joining. The Communist Party talk of unity of the working class, but they effectively fought against establishing unity in action between the dockers and seamen.

When the decision was taken by the National Liaison Committee in Hull to black all ships, foreign and British, Mr. Jack Dash and others passed the buck to the full-time officials of the Transport and General Workers' Union knowing very well that they would keep the men at work.

The handful of Communist Party members on the London docks, with some exceptions, are nothing more than the running dogs for the full-time officials of the T&GWU.

In this way they maintain a left face and at the same time allow these officials to betray one struggle after another.

The strike could have been won at least two weeks ago had it been backed up by a solidarity strike of port workers. If this had been done the concessions which the shipowners were prepared to give would have been greatly increased. Indeed, Wilson admitted that Jack Dash had a 'moderate' line on the docks.

Therefore, the responsibility for the fact that men were kept out on strike for practically nothing must fall on the shoulders of the Communist Party.

Naturally, it suits the Com-

munist Party to follow Hogarth and call the men back to work. That lets them off the hook so far as the government is concerned. They are embarrassed by this witch-hunt lest it isolate them from the fake-left MPs.

The lessons for the seamen is to understand the role of the political forces at work during the strike, ranging from the right wing Labour to the leadership of the Communist Party.

The Communist Party, by isolating the strike on the docks, prevented it from winning and the Labour leaders broke the strike.

It was only natural that the right wing of the National Union of Seamen under these circumstances would crumble before such an onslaught.

Mr. Gordon Norris, the Communist Party seaman, says that the calling off of the strike was achieved 'democratically'. This is nonsense. The strike was called off because of the pressure of the Labour government.

The seamen's strike was a political strike. Without these political lessons, it cannot be understood.

The Pearly docker

DURING the past period of full employment, as a result of an inflationary capitalist boom, there has emerged on the scene in a number of industries the fake militant.

This man is, generally speaking, a member of the Communist Party who enjoys being interviewed by the press and television and having his photograph taken while the Fleet Street press informs the world what a good fellow he is.

He likes using left words in his speeches, but when it comes to a struggle, he invariably retreats.

Mr. Jack Dash, a member of the Communist Party, and the Transport and General Workers' Union, is just such a man, a sort of pearly king on the docks.

By all standards he is filled with his own importance and the publicity he has received.

He naturally hates the Trotskyists, although they are fellow dockers in Liverpool and other ports.

He would much prefer to be in the company of people like William Davies, the financial editor of 'The Guardian'. He likes to sit in fashionable restaurants signing his autograph under that of Danny Kaye.

Another story

When it comes to waging a fight on the docks against the Devlin Commission and in defence of the seamen's strike, it is another story.

Mr. Dash recently attended the millionaires' club to speak under the patronage of anti-trade unionist Lord Thomson of Fleet. He speaks to these people rather than discuss with Trotskyists.

Naturally, when he attended the millionaires' club he was treated as a 'communist' buffoon, a paper tiger on the docks.

Mr. John Gollan, general secretary of the Communist Party, and Bert Ramelson, its in-



dustrial organiser, beam approval on Dash. He is the kind of public enemy the Party wants.

In 'The Guardian' of Saturday, June 25, Mr. Dash reveals himself for what he really is, a salesman for his own paintings, a speaker at Lord Thomson's millionaire club, hostile to Trotskyism, refusing to call a strike on the docks, 'even if the troops are brought in' to break the seamen's strike.

On May 24, Mr. Dash was praised by the Tory newspaper the 'Evening Standard', when he tried to weaken the national lobby called by the Young Socialists for the following day.

To the capitalists and their newspapers Jack Dash is a joke, but to the working class and to us, he is a poor joke. He uses left words, speaks to the dockers in the morning and hob-knobs with the press and

Wilson 'protests' over Hanoi bombing Vietnam deception exposed

by MICHAEL BANDA

PRESIDENT Johnson's decision to blitz Hanoi and Haiphong will come as no surprise to socialists in Britain. Ever since the first troops landed in Vietnam, it has been patently obvious that American imperialism is determined to carry the war into the north, no matter what the cost in U.S. and Vietnamese lives.

Not satisfied with killing, maiming and burning thousands of innocent women and children in South Vietnam, U.S. imperialism, in its desperate drive for profits and military superiority, now intends to incinerate the major cities of North Vietnam.

They see this not only as a means to end the heroic resistance of the Vietnamese people, but, if the maniacs in the Pentagon have their way, this must surely be a prelude to a general war in south-east Asia, whose chief object is the Chinese People's Republic.



President Johnson

FEARFUL

U.S. imperialism, fearful of losing its nuclear superiority, would like to find a pretext for devastating the atomic energy resources of the Chinese Republic and gaining a new area for markets and investment.

In this deadly and sinister game, they have so far had the wholehearted and unconditional co-operation and support of Mr. Wilson's government and, it must be stressed, of the flabby, unprincipled and thoroughly fraudulent 'left' wing in parliament.

Only a few months ago these miserable wretches on the 'left' withdrew a censure motion on Wilson when he assured them in his typically cynical way that Johnson was not intending to bomb Hanoi and Haiphong.

Now their combined deception has been unmasked by Johnson's latest actions. The mask is off, and the truth is out.

Mr. Wilson's belated disavowal from Johnson is pathetically irrelevant in the present situation and the 'left' wing motion is as pathetically inadequate as all previous gestures of these parliamentary cretins.

The working class must act now and decisively.

DEMONSTRATIONS

Only massive demonstrations of workers on the streets and industrial action through all the major industrial countries and particularly American and the USSR, under the slogans 'Hands off Vietnam', 'Victory to the Vietcong', will bring real peace to the Vietnamese people and the withdrawal of U.S. and other imperialist troops from this martyred land.

One thing is certain: it will be criminal to place any confidence in the witch-hunter and strike-breaker Wilson, or, for that matter, in his tame 'left-wing rebels'.

Spanish police attack workers

POLICE made several charges with truncheons against workers walking near the Ministry of Labour in Madrid on Tuesday following leaflet appeals for a demonstration to demand higher wages, improved working conditions and the right to strike.

It is estimated that 10,000 workers turned out on the streets. They were met with a barrier of foot and mounted police, and plain clothes men, set up around the Ministry buildings.

There were warnings in the newspapers that any demonstration would be illegal and that those taking part would be arrested, but workers mingled for hours in the street, occasionally being attacked by the police.

Hull's 'red' scare

THE 'HULL DAILY MAIL' had its local 'red' scare on June 28 and 29 when it carried stories of 'plot' allegations by two seamen. One is said to have been in touch with the Home Office, which took a statement from him.

A disputes committee spokesman said that there were no communists behind the strike. 'If we get support from Communists or Trotskyists, we accept this so long as they don't try to put pressure on us.'

Of Wilson's speech he said: 'He told us nothing. Joe Kenny and Jim Slater are on the EC because they're good militants with the support of the rank-and-file seaman.'

A Solidarity Committee consisting of seamen, dockers and other Hull trade unionists, including Trades Council members passed a resolution welcoming support for the seamen 'from wherever it comes'. The committee would be proud to associate with supporters in the Labour Party, Communists, Trotskyists and Liberals. A copy of the resolution has been sent to Prime Minister Wilson.

Walker acts

Doncaster's MP, Harold Walker, who was one of the 'left' MPs in a meeting with 300 lobbyists on June 22 is going into action—not on the question of anti-union laws, but on reducing the number of stray dogs in Britain. He is to ask what is being done about this. Among other things, he suggests oral contraceptives.

Gordon Norris

day arrangements, and holds the 'award' within the cost of the Pearson Report.

The blatant and abrupt statement from the executive council shocked seamen into the eruption seen outside Maritime House, and their anger will reverberate throughout the ports—within minutes of the 'strike-off' news being relayed came angry messages from Hull, Liverpool, and later the other ports, including Dover!

The abruptness of the decision also lay with the determination of the right wing, which had been strengthened by Wilson's 'red' scare revelations of the previous day, to call off the strike.

Similarly, militants on the executive and outside were retreat-

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on the wages front

BY TWO LONDON BUSMEN

Busmen and miners speak out against their 'deals'

BY TREVOR PARSONS AND BRIAN LAVERY

ON June 10, the joint delegate conference, which is made up of delegates representing London Transport central buses, country buses and Green Line services, voted to accept the Prices and Incomes Board recommendations with regard to pay and conditions.

A resolution to defer acceptance until the matter had been referred back for discussion in the union branches was rejected.

The new conditions, which were put into effect as from last Sunday (June 26), are:

• A pay rise of 6.6 per cent, that is £1 for drivers and 19s for conductors, 'since the basis of the settlement had already been agreed between London Transport and the Union'.

• An agreement that standing passengers should be carried at all times permitted by the regulations, and that new notices should be posted in the buses declaring that standing passengers should be carried outside compulsory times 'at the discretion of the conductor, where he considers that undue hardship would otherwise incur'.

• The acceptance of one man operated buses on Green Line services.

By voting to accept these conditions, the delegates also by implication accepted the Board's scrapping of the Phelps Brown Report, under which busmen in London were to receive automatic yearly pay reviews geared to the cost of living and conditions in 'comparable' industries.

In future, the Incomes Board states 'we recommend that the use of the formula in London Transport be discontinued and that pay proposals be related to long term manpower policies... which seek continuously to adapt staffing practices to changing techniques and requirements of the bus industry'.

Before examining any of the details of the new pay award, or of the new conditions that accompany it—the five-day week agreement and the new schedules—we must make a general point about the very fact that the Transport and General Workers' Union has accepted any proposals of the Prices and Incomes Board.

At last year's Labour Party conference, and at the TUC, Transport and General Workers' Union delegates voted against the government's incomes policy. On many occasions since then, Harry Nicholas and other leaders of the union have made militant-sounding speeches attacking the incomes policy.

Indeed, the union refused to take part in or to give evidence to the Prices and Incomes Board examination of busmen's pay on the grounds that to do so would be against the union policy.

COVER UP

The vote of the joint delegate conference shows that these actions of the leadership really were: hot air and demagoguery, to cover up for their true acceptance of the Labour government's policies in the service of capitalism.

The militant speeches and votes were aimed at confusing rank-and-file members, while the real policies of the union bureaucracy continued: the struggle to implement the Devlin report in the docks, the vote against the seamen's call for the blacking of British ships all over the world in the International Transport Federation, and now the acceptance of the Prices and Incomes Board plan.

Since the conference, the right wing has been trying to convince rank-and-file busmen that the report grants a wage rise 'with no strings attached'.

'By accepting it, we please everyone,' they say, 'the government, the employers and the busmen. It is the best of all possible results.'

But the report itself rejects this for the lie that it is.

The wage claim was 'allowed to go through' because 'the basis of the settlement' had already been agreed between London Transport and the Union. So this was no longer in question.

What was in question, and what the right-wing delegates at the joint delegate conference sealed with their vote was—does the T&GWU stand by its own conference decisions and by its past votes and reject the incomes policy?

Or does it accept the outside interference (and real outside interference this time, not the 'red' plot concocted by Wilson) of the



'Militant' speech from Nicholas

government that serves the international bankers, into matters affecting the welfare of the union's members?

The right wing has shown where it stands. It is quite happy to hand over all the hard-won trade union rights and allow the future wages and conditions of the union membership to be dictated by the representatives of the enemy class: the bankers and big businessmen.

This is amply confirmed by the report of the Incomes Board. First let us examine the conditions accepted by the conference vote.

As well as the acceptance of the incomes policy, two of the conditions are directly contrary to agreed union policy, which is: to eliminate standing passengers altogether, and to eliminate the wage differential between drivers and conductors. These are relatively small details.

The agreement follows swiftly on the heels of two others: the recent schedule cuts and the 'five-day week agreement'. All of these have one aim: reduce the number of buses and busmen, but make those who remain work very much harder.

MAIN ROLE

At the same time, it should be clear that this cannot be done without doing away with all pretence to 'serve the public' and to gear the bus service more openly to what is its main role as far as capitalism is concerned—getting workers to work in the mornings and, incidentally, getting them back home at night.

Thus, schedules are reduced to almost nothing during the 'off peak hours', whilst concentrating on the peak periods.

Increased headway between buses means much more work for the conductor. The longer the period between buses, the more people collect at the stops, the more fares he has to collect. Also, and this is not a negligible factor, the passengers become more bad-tempered.

It also means worse conditions for the driver: the more passengers at the stops, the longer the bus has to stay there, the harder it is to keep to time. This means that he drives faster between the stops. This, combined with the ever-worsening traffic conditions in London, increases the strain on the driver,

and must also lead to increased accident rates.

Already, the incidence of stomach ulcers and heart disease is higher among London bus drivers than in any other occupation, including company directors; the new schedules will make this worse.

Already, every garage has among the 'inside staff' drivers who have had serious accidents and who can no longer drive. The new schedules and conditions will increase their number.

They also add to the danger and discomfort of the passengers. Faster driving means that the passengers are thrown about more. When there are standing passengers, it means that if the driver has to brake suddenly, and faster driving combined with more traffic make this more likely, they will in all likelihood be thrown on the floor.

Needless to say, this adds to the strain on the driver, as he is held responsible for any such accidents and has to spend his own time filling in reports, or even attending court, etc., in connection with these.

UNPLEASANT

When there are standing passengers, the conductor's job becomes extremely unpleasant, if not impossible. He has to struggle up and down the bus, trying to avoid banging people's heads with his ticket machine.

At all times, according to regulations, he is responsible for seeing that no one 'over-rides' their fare, and he should, again according to regulations, be on the platform at every stop.

If he does not do these things, he can be, and often is, booked by an inspector, and the offence is entered on his record.

The right wing is trying to convince busmen that the concession on standing passengers is giving away nothing that does not already apply.

It is true that it is written in the rule book that conductors may use their discretion to take standing passengers outside the stipulated hours.

The difference now is that this will now be written on the back of every bus for everyone to see and the conductor's 'discretion' will in future be his will power, or his physical strength to resist the attacks of intending standing passengers, when he does not want them.

The right wing also says that there are not many requests for standing passengers outside the rush hour anyway, when they are already allowed. This may be true at present, but clearly the agreement is part of London Transport's plans to reduce the service even further.

The five-day week agreement supplements these attacks. Under it, scheduled meal breaks may be reduced to 40 minutes if buses are running late, to 'minimise the chain-reaction that one spell of late running can have'. Also, staff reporting for their normal job can be switched on to another job with no warning.

FUTURE PLANS

But the real attacks are still to come. The Prices and Incomes Board Report contains a whiff of the plans the employers have for the future.

They complain of 'restrictions which limit the time actually spent on the road by rigid allowances for breaks of one sort or another'; of 'limitations imposed by the union on the speed of vehicles'; of 'rules controlling the employers' freedom to split up working periods'; and of 'restrictions on the interchangeability of staff for example on the use of drivers as conductors'.

All of these and restrictions were hard won by militant action in the past to lessen the strain on bus crews. 'Efficiency' and 'flexibility' are to be achieved at the expense of shortening the lives of busmen and throwing away hard-won rights.

On standing passengers, the present agreement is but a prelude. The report states that 'the legal limits themselves warrant early examination'.

Finally, there is the demand for one-man operation. The report looks enviously at Stockholm where 'all buses have been one-man operated since 1960: 20 per cent of the drivers are women who drive double decker buses.'

'Extension of one man operation' the report states 'will require action by the government'. The vote to accept the report places the busmen in the front

line of the struggle against the Labour government.

It is a direct intervention of the government, on behalf of its capitalist masters, into the conditions of busmen. In this, it has the co-operation of the right wing and the trade union bureaucrats.

They intend to ensure that the bus industry serves private industry and the pursuit of profit. This too is made clear by the report.

REJECTS PAY

Clearly a substantial pay increase would attract workers to the buses. But the report rejects this, pointing out that industry in London is already short of labour and that therefore it would be wrong to attract this labour on to the buses!

In other words, it starts from the premise that an end to the staffing shortage would be undesirable, because it would conflict with the heads of private industry.

In the same way, despite all the statements of the right wing that the government has the right to intervene in the bus industry because it 'pours money into it' etc., London Transport made considerable subsidies to the private banks and to the government last year.

The so-called 'loss' of one million pounds was calculated after six and a half million pounds had been paid to the private banks in interest and four and a half million to the government in fuel tax.

If these two payments were eliminated, the bus and tube workers could receive very substantial increases and the fares could be reduced.

Leyland's, who own AEC, have a virtual monopoly of manufacture of London buses. This firm was held up last year by the Labour government as an example of a profitable 'go ahead' firm. Its manager is now 'super salesman' for the government abroad. What contribution has London Transport made to the great profitability of Leyland's? One might guess it to be considerable.

Clearly, the profitability of services provided cannot be assessed, nor their possibilities realised, without the nationalization of all



Paynter praises agreement

the capitalist institutions which gain from it at the moment.

But the main lesson of the June 10 vote is this: the struggle for conditions and wages on the buses is now a directly political struggle.

In this struggle, the trade union bureaucrats and the Labour right-wingers have demonstrated that they will sacrifice the busmen in the interests of private capital.

In such a struggle, the old trade unionist slogans and actions are inadequate. Thus, the policies of the 'Platform' which for all its correct analyses of the policies of London Transport and the Incomes Board, can only suggest 'a complete ban on overtime' will lead to the same betrayals.

Busmen will only protect what conditions they have by linking their struggle with other workers in an all-out fight against the betrayals of the Labour government, against the onslaughts which capital is making on workers in all sectors of industry.

To this end they must participate in the campaign against the government's Prices and Incomes Bill, which has its second reading on July 20, and start building on the buses a new revolutionary Trotskyist leadership, to replace the rotten degenerate traitors who at present hold the working class down.

Bernard's killer insane - no trial

Newsletter Correspondent

EDWARD WANIOLEK, killer of Detroit Socialist Leo Bernard, has been committed to a mental hospital and will not be tried for murder. The judge accepted the decision of a sanity commission on June 8 that Waniolek was insane at the time of the killing, while being quite lucid on other occasions.

On May 16, he announced to his wife that he was 'going to kill some communists'. Entering the Detroit headquarters of the Socialist Workers' Party, he opened fire with a revolver and rifle on three young members.

Leo Bernard was killed outright and Jan Garrett and Walter Graham badly injured. Garrett is now in a cast and Graham is still in hospital, after three major operations.

SCHIZOPHRENIC

Waniolek was alleged by the psychiatrist appointed by the court to be a paranoid schizophrenic. Coherent on every other subject, he was convinced, they said, that he was being persecuted by communists.

He had even left the Catholic church, because of 'Communist contact'. He had, over the past five years, visited several foreign embassies and made statements about his fear that the United States was being overrun by communists.

Two members of the sanity com-

mission found that Waniolek could not be legally tried for murder since his insanity would prevent him from offering evidence in his defence.

The third member, while agreeing that Waniolek was insane, thought that the trial could proceed since insanity would, in fact, be the main defence.

The judge upheld the majority view and committed Waniolek to the Iona State hospital until he is declared cured!

PLEAD INSANITY

However, if he is ever released from hospital and charged again, he could offer the present decision on his insanity at the time of the killing as a certain defence.

Waniolek has many times declared his intention of shooting communists, and this was known to the police long before the shooting took place.

His obsession with a 'communist conspiracy' is very much a part of American society.

His mental state expressed the extreme tensions inside the world's most powerful imperialist country.

The government of that country conducts a brutal war in Vietnam and manufactures the most horrifying weapons of mass destruction to stop revolution from ending the profits system. A huge propaganda machine tries to persuade the population of the dangers of communism.

The death of Leo Bernard cannot be separated from these features of US social life.

THE new national day-wage agreement for miners working on power-loading faces 'does more in one single step to get justice and equity for the men working in the industry than any other step in the history of coal mining'.

So says our National Union of Mineworkers' secretary, Will Paynter.

Let's look at some of the clauses written into this agreement.

Clause 3 states: 'Craftsmen will assist other members of the team as necessary in emergency'. What constitutes an emergency? If a stable-hole is not ready for the power-loading machine, will this constitute an emergency?

Under this clause, craftsmen who have served a five-year apprenticeship to learn a trade, can be called upon by the management to undertake any face-work duties.

There will be a struggle by craftsmen over this clause and miners must be aware of the splitting tactics that could be used against them. Craftsmen must fight together on this agreement.

Clause 4 refers to the number of men who shall comprise a power-loading team. This will be assessed by method study.

During the negotiations between our union and the National Coal Board, concern was expressed that the stop-watch method 'would be an obstacle to acceptance of method study'.

Nevertheless, the NUM swallowed the following assurance from the NCB:

The performance which may reasonably be expected in a shift from a power-loading face is primarily dependent on the following factors:

The available time at the face (Machine Available Time). The performance characteristics of the power-loading machine and its associated equipment within the ruling natural conditions of the face.

The adequacy of the coal clearance system, the supplies system and other facilities upon which the face performance is indirectly dependent.

The level of manning of all activities associated with the face and the diligence with which these activities are carried out.

The one factor which is fixed, however, is the performance of the power-loading machine.

Upon this all else (men included) are dependent; to this all others must be geared.

Now, if all that does not mean that men will be timed walking (or running) from the pit bottom to the coal face, then what does it mean?

Not taken in

They can talk till the cows come home about the 'physical study', 'synthetic times', 'work content', but militant miners will not be taken in by their high-faluting words, nor the substitution of 'method study' for 'time and motion' even if our union leaders are.

It will not be only the power-loading teams that will suffer under this agreement.

The clause on method study opens the door to what the National Coal Board has been trying to achieve for years: method study for all the pit, including the surface.

No comment from us is necessary on Clause 5, which says:

'The selection of men who are to comprise a power-loading team shall be made by the management, after consultation with the union.'

'If any team member is found to be unsatisfactory, the management, after consultation with the union, may transfer him to other work in keeping with his capabilities.' (Our emphasis.)

Clause 7 gives the different rates of pay per shift for each area, such as Yorkshire 82s 6d, Nottinghamshire 86s 9d, Kent 89s 3d.

According to Paynter, these rates will be subject to periodic reviews, in order to achieve uniformity by 1971. But that uniformity is interpreted as being realised when all, except Kent, equal the Nottinghamshire rate.

There is not a guarantee of £22 10s.

Subtle attack

If power-loading or other contract work is not available they can pay the National Standard Underground Grade I rate. Careful note should be taken of this at those pits where—through strong militant action—they now enjoy a fall-back rate of, say, 64s 11d, or 70s, no matter what job they are sent to.

We have to understand this new and subtle attack on the miner as part of an all-out offensive by the employing class against the working class.

Workers in other industries like the seamen, dockers, shipbuilding and engineering workers are all facing the same problems as the miners.

The Labour government and the employers are telling workers to work harder and not to put forward wage demands, while, at the same time, preparing anti-trade union laws, and attacking every working-class family, through the Prices and Incomes Bill.

In 1931 they cut the dole when thousands of workers were unemployed. Today they let prices rise while holding down wages.

But we are far stronger now than we were in 1931, not having suffered a defeat like we had in 1926. In addition, there is being built today a real revolutionary party—the Socialist Labour League—with its supporters in the Young Socialists—the party of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

Soviet leaders disown Lenin

Newsletter Correspondent

IN its attempts to woo President de Gaulle away from an alliance with American imperialism, the Soviet bureaucracy has gone to amazing lengths to prove to the French ruling class its hostility to the traditions of Leninism and the Russian revolution.

President Podgorny, made the opening move in his speech of welcome to the reactionary and anti-communist ex-general who came to power on the backs of fascists thugs in Algeria:

'The Soviet people know well the name of General Charles de Gaulle, one of the leaders of the anti-Nazi coalition, who today, as the head of the French state, represents the national dignity and grandeur of the people of France.'

De Gaulle's reply to this gambit was to assure his Soviet counter-part that he was 'deeply moved to see this Russia again prosperous, powerful and full of peaceful intentions'.

Later, at the customary banquet in the Great Palace of the Kremlin, Podgorny tried a more daring move.



de Gaulle wooed

Possibly overcome by the Tsarist grandeur of the surroundings, he praised the foreign policy of the Romanov dynasty:

'The peoples of our countries have a mutual friendship and a mutual respect which have existed for centuries. In the most tragic moments of history they have invariably found support in each other; their arms have served to defend common vital interests and, while speaking their own national languages, they have been guided by similar aims and intentions.' (Our emphasis.)

In one deft stroke, Podgorny swept away the four-year struggle of Lenin against the first imperialist war, which in reality saw the alliance of the Russian with the French people, but the Russian monarchy with the Paris bankers.

Uprising

These were the 'common vital interests' that millions of French and Russian workers and peasants were forced to die in the trenches for. And it was the uprising against this same war of dynasties and bankers that led to the October revolution and the establishment of the first workers' state in history.

De Gaulle, warming heartily to such chauvinism and anti-communism, expressed his solidarity with this conversion to the war aims of the Russian monarchy.

He cemented this anti-Leninist alliance in his reply by reference to 'the alliance between the two countries during the world wars' and by his apology for the invasion of Russia by Napoleon in 1812 and by French forces at the time of the Crimean war.

So deep is the gulf between the bureaucracy of today and the revolution of 1917 that men such as Podgorny can speak of support for the imperialist wars of the Tsarist regime without the least of shame or political discomfort.

'Solidarity'

In return, de Gaulle gives nothing except his political solidarity in so far as the present Soviet leadership continues on its present international course of stabilising the economic and political relations between the Soviet Union and American imperialism.

In this complex process, de Gaulle believes he can play the influential and lucrative role of go-between.

What both leaders have ruled out is the undoubted revulsion that such cynical politics will stimulate in the French and Soviet Communist Parties and working classes.

The political solidarity of de Gaulle and the Kremlin against the international traditions of both the French and Russian working classes brings closer the settlement of accounts with their bureaucratic usurpers.

Spanish trial date set

AUGUST 3 has been named as the date for the trial of Spanish trade unionists and intellectuals accused of the 'crime' of attending the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions congress in Amsterdam last year.

It is alleged they were there as representatives of the Workers' Trade Union Alliance (ASO) and demanded, through the conference, the right to organise and elect their own representatives in a big democratic trade union organisation in Spain.

The men are Jesus Gonzalez Quesada, a municipal transport worker, Mariano Nuero, a steel worker, Antonio Nogues, a Telefonken worker, Manuel Fernandez Montesinos, a lawyer, José Buñia, a clerk, José Pallach, a teacher, and Hermes Piquer, an electrician.

The fascist authorities are asking for three years' jail for Quesada, Nuero and Nogues, five years for Montesinos, and 13 years for Buñia, Pallach and Piquer. The last three are not in Spain and have written to the court asking to be allowed to defend themselves.

Trade unionists and personalities throughout the world have already sent letters and telegrams to the Spanish government demanding the release of all the men.

The Workers' Trade Union Alliance is calling on British trade unionists, students' organisations, groups and individuals to follow suit by sending letters and telegrams to Minister of Justice Mr. Oriol, Mr. J. Solis, secretary of the CNS (government-controlled unions), and J. Garralda (judge in the Tribunal of Public Order), in Madrid.

International Congress

The Fourth International and 'Spartacist'

THE most important single preparation for the present political struggles in Britain was the Third Congress of the International Committee of the Fourth International in April 1966.

At this Congress, the Trotskyist movement adopted resolutions for the rebuilding of the Fourth International.

It was only possible to achieve this strengthening of the political bonds between the national sections affiliated to, and sympathetic with the Fourth International, by waging a struggle against revisionists who accepted in words the need for a proletarian International based on Marxist theory, but rejected the struggle for Marxist theory and programme as fought out in the Fourth International in the past.

One of the groups which parted company with the International Committee at the Third Congress was the one grouped around the journal 'Spartacist'. Its editors have now devoted a large part of their latest issue to their own version of the proceedings at the Congress.

Squeals

Our struggle to take a step forward in rebuilding the International, on the basis of the gains made since 1963, is interpreted by 'Spartacist' under the heading 'Defeat for World Trotskyism!'

The articles in 'Spartacist' are, in fact, only a further confirmation of the conclusions to which the Congress was forced concerning the 'Spartacist' group. Instead of trying to learn the lessons of the Congress, they issue a series of enraged squeals, the protests of the petty bourgeoisie.

Robertson, leader of the 'Spartacist' group and editor of their journal, tries to pretend that they have political agreement with the basic position of the International Committee, but have been excluded on procedural grounds because Robertson 'stood up' to the leadership of the Socialist Labour League. 'Spartacist' refers to a 'grotesque, petty frame up'.

These condemnations are not explained and justified politically, but simply insisted upon by asser-

tions about organisational manoeuvres.

The middle-class, non-Marxist approach of 'Spartacist' is clearly brought out by this.

In the first place, Robertson and his friends deliberately and consistently refer not to the leadership of the International Committee or the Socialist Labour League, but to 'the Healy group', 'this Healy', 'Healy doesn't want any section in the International Committee that Healy himself does not control down to the last nut and bolt', 'the Healy-Banda machine', 'the Healy clique'.

'Spartacist' condemns the Socialist Labour League and the International Committee for what it calls 'a campaign of internecine warfare against those with whom, up to April, he proposed to unify'.

All this is a very deliberate avoidance of the political questions, by reference to personalities and organisational accusations. Such questions, questions of 'regime' and organisational questions, are the permanent stock-in-trade of middle-class opposition in the Marxist movement.

They think it is clever to combine these slanders with reference to the 'revolutionary determination' of other Socialist Labour League comrades.

Mistake

If we in fact come to the main political differences at the Congress, we observe a remarkable fact. The main dispute arose over the decision to amend the Draft Resolution submitted by the International Committee to the Congress ('Rebuilding the Fourth International').

The British and French sections recognised their earlier mistake in including in that Resolution phrases referring to the 'destruction' of the Fourth International by Pabloite revisionism.

A group led by the French 'Voix Ouvrière' group used this to reject the whole Bolshevik past and preparation of our movement. In order to make this absolutely clear, the British and French sections insisted that the Fourth International had, in fact, through the fight for Marxism by the International Committee sections, defended and developed the Marxist and Bolshevik programme necessary for the revolutionary victory of the working class.

Robertson chose to support a counter-amendment, moved by another section, an amendment which, in the opinion of the majority, made a bridge to the 'Voix Ouvrière' group and hindered the development of the International Committee forces as a unified international leadership.

Far from unity being 'smashed' at the International Congress, it was built on the foundations of a struggle against the 'Voix Ouvrière' group. Robertson and his delegation failed to take up this fight, working instead for a working relation with anti-Marxist groups.

Robertson was not excluded from the Congress on this point—indeed, he was deliberately kept

This article exposes the avoidance of political argument by the American 'Spartacist' group in attacking the Third Congress of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

BY CLIFF SLAUGHTER

in the Congress in order that we all see his position on this question. But the fact that his attack in 'Spartacist' ignores this central turning point in the Congress, instead concentrating on alleged organisational abuses, is the clearest possible indication of the unprincipled and petty-bourgeois character of the 'Spartacist' tendency.

Conference accepted the following amendment to the Draft Resolution:

'Delete the sentence referring to the destruction of the Fourth International by the Pabloite revisionists, and substitute the following:

'The Fourth International has successfully resisted and defeated the attempts of petty-bourgeois opportunism, in the shape of a hardened revisionist tendency which penetrated all sections of the Trotskyist movement, to destroy it politically and organisationally. The struggle against this tendency was and remains the necessary preparation for the rebuilding of the International as a centralised proletarian leadership.'

The rest of the resolution to be amended to reflect this change.'

Secondly, we must refer to 'Spartacist's' view that while they have worked towards unification of the Trotskyist movement, the leaders of the Socialist Labour League and the International Committee have gone back on the unification proposals of October 1965.

What are the facts? Here again, Robertson is guilty of a gross misrepresentation.

Last Autumn, the International Committee raised very deliberately the central question of the need for a Trotskyist party to fight for the leadership of the working class of the United States.

Since an International Congress was in preparation for April 1966, and since the two American organisations, 'Spartacist' and the 'Fourth International' professed basic agreement with our Draft Resolution, we insisted that the basic questions of a Trotskyist party in the USA could only be thrashed out, as they must be, at the level of the international responsibilities.

It was on this basis that we invited 'Spartacist' and the ACEFI to send representatives to our Congress and to discuss a united perspective for work in the USA.

Clarified

We are convinced that this approach has been fully vindicated. The actual political behaviour of the 'Spartacist' group at the Congress clarified the forces who now have the responsibility of building the party in the USA.

This brings us to the question of the 'Spartacist' delegation's actual departure from the Congress. 'Spartacist' presents unification as purely a matter of agreement on presents tasks, but more is involved.

Just as we insisted on a break with the 'Voix Ouvrière' group, because they rejected the whole continuity of the workers' struggle, and its conquests, so we had a similar basic approach in proposing unification to 'Spartacist' and ACEFI.

Again 'Spartacist' 'forgets' to mention that among the conditions for preparing unification in the USA was acceptance of the Founding Programme of the Fourth International (Transitional Programme) and of the first four Congresses of the Communist International.

It is essential to bear this in mind because of the immediate circumstances under which the 'Spartacist' delegation left.

Robertson was asked to accept the discipline of the Congress. He refused, saying that he had not been acquainted with the rules of the Congress, which was different from his experience in the USA.

the political basis of Robertson's attempt politically to make a bridge to that group.

It will re-emerge in a working relation between 'Spartacist' and 'Voix Ouvrière' as an international tendency against the International Committee.

'Spartacist', in order to cloud over this political basis of the split, lies about the departure of Robertson and his delegation.

Its editorial says: 'The issue which Healy cites to justify his strange actions is that 'Spartacist' editor, Robertson, refused to denounce himself before the Conference as 'a petty bourgeois American chauvinist'.

The article says: 'The break with "Spartacist" was accomplished, not a transparently organisational pretext. "Spartacist" editor James Robertson, a delegate to the conference, excused himself from one afternoon session, and refused later to "confess" that his absence was either a violation of principle or the expression of "petty-bourgeois

American chauvinism". His failure to make the "proper apology" was deemed a departure from democratic centralism. It was grotesque that an international split should be precipitated by an undeclared rule on attendance which was applied only to the Spartacist delegation; so grotesque, in fact, that no section of the IC has yet found the courage to make this fact public.

In the first place, 'Spartacist' need not worry about the issues involved not being made public.

The next issue of our theoretical magazine 'Fourth International' (now in the press) will contain all the documents adopted by the conference, the voting, the positions taken by the various delegations, and a full account of the behaviour of Robertson and his 'Spartacist' delegation.

Robertson was, of course, not asked to denounce himself as a petty-bourgeois, or anything of the sort. Such is not the politics of Bolshevik organisations.

Apology

The Congress was unanimous in demanding from Robertson an apology for his absence from its proceedings for the whole session during which comrades replied to his own remarks critical of the political positions of the International Committee.

Even the 'Voix Ouvrière' group voted to demand this apology. When Robertson refused, on the grounds of his unfamiliarity with the rules, it was then agreed to defer the question until after the whole political discussion and voting, in order to give him and his delegation the chance to reconsider their position. Of course, this was also a deliberate move to insist that Robertson stay to declare his political position on the

'Voix Ouvrière' question. 'Spartacist' refers to this 24-hour delay in this way:

'... the Healy group tried to create some political pretext for the expulsion.'

This tendency sees principled politics only as manoeuvres to find 'pretexts'.

In the intervening period, many delegates attempted to persuade Robertson and his delegation that to compel the Congress to exclude him, because he would not accept its discipline, was to join the long line of those who have rejected Marxist internationalism on the grounds of formal and 'prestige' questions, while of course, expressing political agreement.

Discipline

For Robertson now says: 'It was grotesque that an international split should be precipitated by an undeclared rule on attendance which was applied only to the "Spartacist" delegation.'

But if Robertson thought this was the only disagreement, how did it come about that he permitted himself to be excluded, in his opinion, on this pretext?

It would surely have been a small matter to accept the discipline and to set afoot a process of correcting what he thought a 'mistake'.

That would have been the behaviour of a responsible minority—to accept the discipline and fight for a change within the International Committee.

His very rejection of this, his insistence on personal prestige against this discipline, confirms our characterisation of this group as petty-bourgeois, dominated by the ideology of middle-class radical groups in American politics, their ideology subordinated to the US monopolists and American exceptionalism.

Robertson's 'experience' of American conferences was given priority over the first four Congresses of the Comintern, and over the opinion of the Congress itself.

From this account of the events at the Congress, together with the distortions resorted to by the

editors of 'Spartacist', it is evident that the leadership of the Socialist Labour League 'dissipated an historic opportunity for refounding Trotsky's Fourth International', as 'Spartacist' suggests.

On the contrary, this very statement by 'Spartacist' belies their claim that no political differences were involved. We declared precisely that it was not a question of 'refounding' the Fourth International, but of learning the lessons of and continuing the struggle to drive Pabloite revisionism out of the Fourth International.

On this basis we took a great step forward in the real unity of the Trotskyist forces united on a principled basis.

'Spartacist', in fact, gives no analysis of the politics of the International Congress, reverting instead to a conspiracy theory about a group of 'bad men' destroying unity by organisational manoeuvres.

What solution is possible, therefore, according to 'Spartacist'?

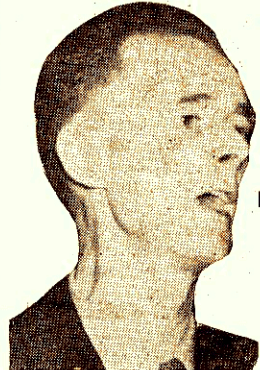
Inevitably, they must revert to the magical solutions. '... from Healy and Wohlforth, in particular, we will need evidence of an inner-revolution before collaboration would be possible.'

With this kind of judgement, we are supposed to take seriously Robertson's warning: 'We shall go forward, let our enemies beware!'

However, we do take seriously what that means: it means that the leaders of the 'Spartacist' group, having engaged in a debate and in struggle with the Fourth International, has resolutely rejected proletarian internationalism, and is determined to fight against the building of the revolutionary party in the United States.

Together with our comrades in the American Committee for the Fourth International, we shall remove them from the path of the working class.

(Next week: An analysis of the political criticism made by Robertson of the main report to the International Congress.)



Gollan attacks Chinese revolution

NO READER of the 'Morning Star' should be taken in by British Communist Party secretary John Gollan's belated conversion to democracy, voiced in the issue of that paper for June 15.

Posing as a well-wisher of the Chinese revolution and Communist Party, he takes advantage of the recent upheavals there to launch an attack on the political opposition carried out over a period of years by the Chinese Communist Party to the openly revisionist course charted by the leadership of the Soviet Communist Party.

Gollan's position on the recent events in China has to be understood as part of the rapid swing to the right by the reformist leadership of the British Party, and is part of a wider turn being made by the international Stalinist movement towards a closer relationship with imperialism.

Gollan's job, which he takes on gladly, is to attack and discredit the Chinese revolution, which has been singled out by American imperialism as the first target in its overall strategy of liquidating the gains of the Russian revolution.

This he does by denouncing the lack of democracy within the Chinese Party and state, and the all-pervading cult of Mao, and linking these deformations of workers' rule with the stand taken by the Chinese leaders against the Kremlin policy of collaboration with imperialism at the expense of the national liberation struggle, particularly in south-east Asia.

BY TAKING advantage of the undoubted crisis within the Chinese Party leadership, and the bureaucratic methods by which it attempts to smother it, Gollan makes his main point of attack

the left positions of the Chinese Party.

We ask all Communist Party members—has Gollan the right to come forward now, after 30 years as a Stalinist time-server and apologist for all the nauseating features of the bureaucracy, and present himself as an authority on democratic procedures in the life of a Communist Party and workers' state?

Nowhere in Gollan's article is there even an attempt to analyse the roots of the crisis within the Chinese Party and state.

As in the Soviet Union, purges and social convulsions on the scale now developing in China stem essentially from the isolation of working-class revolutions in predominantly peasant countries from the political and eventual economic support of the workers in the industrially most advanced countries.

Gollan, having neatly side-stepped this most important of questions, is then able to evade the conclusion that flows from it; that this isolation of the Chinese revolution is primarily the result of the policies of the Soviet bureaucracy and those communist parties that have slavishly followed its every twist and turn since the early days of Stalin's rule.

HOW DARE Gollan assert, as he does, that the Chinese took a 'negative stand' on the issue of peaceful co-existence with imperialism?

The very survival of the Chinese state was at stake in its rejection of this theory. Its revival of certain arguments of Lenin were nothing more than an instinctive protective reflex to the strategy of betrayal being mapped out by the Kremlin, starting in earnest with Khrushchev's Camp David talks with Eisenhower in 1959.

It reached a high point with the open support given to India in its border dispute with China, and continued right through to the signing of the test ban treaty with the US government in 1963, a treaty that was specifically aimed at preventing China from

developing its own nuclear weapons (these being denied her by the Soviet government).

GOLLAN, OF COURSE, fails to refer to these open acts of class betrayal. In fact he tries to present an opposite picture—that his party 'has always been a friend of the great Chinese revolution.'

How did this 'friendship' stand the test of the Sino-Indian border clash in the winter of 1962-63?

When the Soviet government declared its political and military solidarity with the capitalist Indian government by supplying Mig fighters to the Indian air force, these 'friends of the Chinese revolution' remained silent.

GOLLAN COMPLAINS that no party congress has been held in China since 1936—in violation of the party constitution which calls for a congress every five years. But Gollan managed to overlook Stalin's even more despotic over-riding of the Soviet party, which held one congress between 1934 and 1952!

Similarly, the Communist International held congresses annually until Lenin's illness in 1922.

The next congress took place in 1924, while under the rule of Stalin there were but two in the last 19 years of its life.

This once revolutionary international was finally wound up in 1943, both without prior discussion in any of its sections, or a vote by its elected bodies. In fact, the first person to be informed of Stalin's decision was none other than Roosevelt, the American President.

None of these violations met with so much as a single protest from Gollan, Dutt, Pollitt and company, and yet today, Gollan, who so easily swallowed the Camel of Soviet Stalinism, now strains at the Chinese gnat.

Gollan, along with Pollitt, made up the British party delegation to the long-awaited 19th Congress of

the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1952.

Far from voicing any criticism of the tardiness of this congress, or the elevation of Stalin to the level of a God, Pollitt outshone even the home-grown Stalinists in his sycophantic gratitude at being permitted to speak in the presence of the great one himself.

'Soviet Weekly' reported that both Pollitt and Gollan 'were proud of conveying on behalf of the Communist Party of Great Britain cordial and fraternal greetings to the historic 19th congress of the Soviet Party, and its leader, Stalin, the teacher and friend of the working people of the whole world.'

Pollitt finished up his grovelling speech with words that Gollan may well be reflecting on today:

'The 19th congress indicated the road to the achievement of communism—that great ideal of a completely free, happy and peaceful life which marked a new era, the Stalin Era, in the world history of mankind.' ('Soviet Weekly', October 16, 1952.)

Gollan, the other fraternal delegate at the congress, in whose name Pollitt also spoke, has at no time disavowed these servile words, spoken at a time when Stalin had reached the height of an anti-semitic frenzy, not only in the Soviet Union but the whole of Eastern Europe.

Pollitt and Gollan waxed lyrical on the 'Stalin Era' of peace and happiness when millions of Soviet citizens slaved in labour camps inside the Arctic circle for no other crime than being taken prisoner in the last war, or being selected as scapegoats for the economic bungling of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

Gollan complains that Chinese statistics are either unreliable or unobtainable regarding the progress of the economy, and yet no one can recall any protest from the leadership of the British Communist Party at the constant flow of obviously faked Soviet statistics which were used to bolster the claim that, as far back as 1934, a socialist society had been established in the USSR.

Continued page 4, column 7

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EDITORS—TOM KEMP, CLIFF SLAUGHTER

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Despite wrecking tactics by right wing

CAR WORKERS HEAR THE SEAMEN'S CASE

● GOLLAN

From page 3

TROTSKY, IN HIS WRITINGS on the Soviet economy, easily proved the bogus nature of these claims—and for so doing was roundly condemned as a fascist.

Now Gollan finds the courage and strength to speak out against forgery and distortions, bureaucratic suppression of democracy and the cult of leaders, but from an entirely opposed standpoint.

What gives him this strength is not only the abandonment of the Chinese revolution by the Soviet bureaucracy, but domestic policies of British Stalinism that drive closer and closer into collaboration with British and American imperialism in south-east Asia.

The phoney neutralist campaign of the party on the question of the war in Vietnam typifies the cynical indifference of the leadership of the Communist Party to the fate of the Chinese revolution, which is now indissolubly linked with the outcome of war in Vietnam.

★

WE DO NOT for one moment condone the politics of the Peking bureaucracy. The Newsletter has warned time and again over the last year of the dangers of its false theories concerning the nature of the national liberation struggles warnings which have seen such tragic confirmation in Indonesia.

But while we reserve our right to make this analysis and these criticisms of such policies, we stand unconditionally for the defence of the Chinese revolution—both against attacks from without and counter-revolution from within.

But at the present moment we denounce with even greater vigour those such as Gollan who come forward both as friends of the Chinese revolution and antagonists of bureaucracy, when the records show quite the opposite to be the case on both counts.

★

ON ALL THESE QUESTIONS, he seeks common ground with the Fabian elements that dominate the Labour Party 'left', paying the necessary admission fee to this ancient society through his criticisms of the actions of the Soviet and Chinese governments from a liberal standpoint.

Revolutions are neither defended nor extended by pious phrases and resolutions, but by the building of a movement to take the power from the ruling class.

The leadership of the British Communist Party long ago renounced this task, and it is only from that standpoint that we can judge Gollan's 'friendship' towards the Chinese revolution.



The real 'wrecker'—the trade gap

BY NEWSLETTER CORRESPONDENT

THE capitalist press, the Tories and the Labour government are trying to blame the seamen for the present economic crisis of British capitalism.

They all scream daily that the seamen, controlled by a small number of faceless militants and communists, are 'undermining the economy' and 'weakening the balance of payments position'.

It is necessary to nail these lies in the working-class movement. They are part of a deliberate attempt to isolate seamen from other sections of the labour movement.

The economic crisis in this country, reflected in an enormous balance of payments crisis, falling gold and dollar reserves, and a shaky pound sterling, is part of the general and deepening crisis of world capitalism and is not the responsibility of the working class.

What are the causes of the balance of payments crisis? Is this the responsibility of the seamen?

Ever since Labour first took office in 1964, the crisis has haunted the government.

Callaghan and company have declared that they intend to solve it by the end of 1967. All the measures of credit restriction, higher interest rates, increased rents and rates have been designed to do just this.

Labour has proposed that the working class shall pay for the crisis.

When Labour took office they found a balance of payments deficit of nearly £800 million.

What were the causes of the deficit?

IMPORTS

In 1964 the export of goods from this country was about £550 million less than the bill for goods imported into Britain.

The British capitalist class rely for their livelihood on importing raw materials and semi-finished goods, processing these materials and selling them abroad.

Such a deficit of trade of this type ('physical trade') has been a common feature of British capitalism. But increasingly the gap has widened as British exports have become less and less competitive.

Technologically, British industry is enormously backward in comparison with German, American and Japanese industry. Exports stagnate or grow very slowly and imports continue to rise.

In the past this gap in physical trade was closed by a surplus of 'invisible' trade—insurance, shipping, banking, and commercial services.

But because of the general decline of British capitalism, this income has been severely reduced. The City of London is no longer the leading financial centre of the world.

INADEQUATE

In 1964 only about £180 million was earned on balance from these services, which was completely inadequate to cover a £550 million gap. After counting this income there was still a deficit of around £370 million.

But this is not the whole story. Why was the final deficit nearly £800 million? This is accounted for in two ways:

1. Enormous export of capital abroad. Businessmen always searching for the maximum profit send their capital to any part of the world where they think they will make the most money from it.

In 1964, for example, British firms and institutions invested, or bought shares in, foreign companies to the tune of over £400 million.

This was to an extent offset by about £170 million invested in Britain, mainly by US firms.

Even in 1965—in some ways a more typical year—nearly £300

million was invested abroad (excluding foreign investment in oil, which is not included in the official figures) compared to an inflow of about £160 million worth of capital.

Thus the gap in 1964 was approaching £250 million, which added to the balance of payments crisis. What are London's remedies?

Callaghan in his last budget appealed to financiers not to send as much money abroad. His appeals have been ignored and the flow of capital has speeded up.

And no wonder! British firms now have around £5,000 million invested abroad, which earns them about £400 million each year. Much of this never returns here, but is re-invested abroad.

2. This deficit was increased by a large military expenditure abroad which currently runs to £300 million. There is increasing pressure each day from Wall Street and President Johnson for increased military effort abroad to support the US war in Vietnam, and defend the capitalist investment.

This is the root cause of the crisis. It reflects the long-run decline of British capitalism, once the leading imperialist power in the world, but now having fallen way behind the United States, Germany and Japan.

WORKERS' BACK

This decline now produces a first-class economic and political crisis.

Wilson attempts to solve this crisis from the point of view of the capitalist class and all his measures mean that the working class will have to carry the crisis on its back—through wage cuts, unemployment and higher prices.

Concretely, it means that the seamen must continue to work 56 hours for £14 a week. The crisis can, however, be solved in the interests of the working class on the basis of the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a socialist society.

Immediately, this means demanding the 40-hour week for the seamen, the nationalization of shipping, banking, the docks and all other basic industries under workers' control.

This can only be done through the building and development of a revolutionary organisation intent on the overthrow of capitalism.



Michael Foot, this is your government

By John Crawford

THE more clearly the Wilson government stands out as the enemy of the working class, the more closely the 'left' MPs become identified with it.

The front page of last week's 'Tribune' carried a picture of Michael Foot over the headline 'What's wrong with our government?'

Foot's government has just been given a loan by the European bankers, on the assumption that it will stop wage increases while prices rise.

'Tribune's government is engaged in a struggle to smash the seamen's union, conducting a witch-hunt in the process.

Allegiance

The government, to which one-time rebels owe allegiance, backs the brutal war of US imperialism in Vietnam, and negotiates with Ian Smith in Rhodesia.

Foot criticises this government's present actions, only to justify its past: '... Ministers have trundled

BY SYLVIA PICK

THE planned meeting of car workers with striking seamen was held in Birmingham last Sunday, in spite of a determined campaign by the press and right-wing elements in the trade unions and Labour Party to prevent it taking place.

Less than 100 workers were present to hear the seamen put their case and appeal for support—a fraction of the number who might have turned up if frantic attempts had not been made in factories and union branches to frighten them away from listening to the seamen.

Harold Wilson's infamous 'Reds under the bed' scare was, of course, invoked to bring pressure on workers not to give support to fellow trade unionists in a struggle for decent wages and conditions.

The campaign to get the meeting boycotted was taken into the quarterly meeting of AEU shop stewards the previous Thursday. A resolution to attend was narrowly defeated after sustained pressure by right-wingers and Labour Party stalwarts.

At Sunday's meeting, called by the joint shop stewards' committee at the Austin factory, Longbridge, reference was made to these wrecking tactics by some members of the committee. The spoke of an 'almighty furor' in the local press, and an 'organised attempt to try and prevent the rest of the workers from hearing the case of a particular section'.

Seaman Gordon Norris said: 'I have yet to hear anybody say we have not got a good case in asking for 14 quid and a 40-hour week, but look at the pressure to stop us getting it! The Prime Minister has been first in the line of attack; if there is any talk of political pressure let Harold Wilson look in the mirror before he accuses anyone else.'

Norris spoke of the Pearson report as 'the disaster report'. He asked: 'How many industrial workers have had to take a reduction in wages as the price of a shorter working week? Yet this is what we are offered—£34 less in a year.'

Interference

He was convinced that the shipowners would have agreed to the seamen's claims if it had not been for the interference of the Prime Minister.

Wilson had told the seamen's leaders that they could not ask for anything outside of Pearson.

Yet had anyone ever heard him attack a shipowner?

Speaking of the role of the TUC leadership, Norris quoted George Woodcock as saying to the executive council of the NUS: 'It takes people with more courage than I've got to challenge the government.'

John Prescott, seaman and Labour parliamentary candidate, speaking of the 'tremendous onslaught by the press and Labour government against the seamen', asked why the government had not focussed attention on the mishandling by shipowners of the industry, which had declined so tremendously over the past 50 years.

Nobody had shouted about 'the national interest' when the shipowners borrowed money from the government to buy ships abroad.

Throughout the strike there had been a direct political attack on the seamen to induce them to accept more or less what the shipowners offered, and to alienate sympathy from them.

Referring to Sunday's decision by the managing committee of the International Transport Workers' Federation to give the seamen financial support, but limiting it to that, Prescott de-

clared: 'We are getting increasing support and recognition from the trade union movement. We shall not be bound by the Pearson report.'

Replying to a question from the floor about trade union support for the prices and incomes policy, Norris said: 'The seamen are right out in front in the fight against the incomes policy.'

He turned suddenly coy, however, when a member of Birmingham Young Socialists, conveying greetings of solidarity from the YS to the seamen, said: 'We agree that the seamen are right out in front in the fight against the incomes policy; that is why the government is so determined to fight and break this strike. Will you join with us in calling for a mass action of the working people on July 20, the day the anti-union laws comes up for its second reading? These workers will then tell the government "If you won't listen to us we've done with listening to you." Don't you agree that this is the correct policy?'

Caution

Faced with this challenge, Norris picked his way with great caution. He welcomed solidarity and support from the Young Socialists, the Young Communist League, the Young Liberals (a voice from the hood of the hall asked: 'What about the Young Tories?') but asked: 'Who are we to demand a certain line of action from sections of workers? We can't make the call from here; it would be quite wrong. If the trade union movement was such that we could do this, it would be lovely, but it isn't.'

An AEU shop steward asked: 'What does John Prescott think of the "left" Labour MPs? Those of us who lobbied Parliament on June 22 asked them where they stood on the seamen's strike and on anti-union legislation, and we couldn't get a straight answer from them.'

It was Prescott's turn to tread carefully. Though admitting that if Labour MPs had had any guts 'they would have been in there voting against the emergency powers', he confined himself to assuring the questioner that there was to be a meeting the following day between seamen and MPs at which the MPs would be asked where they stood.

He thought they should have used every ounce of pressure against the shipowners.

There was no formal collection of funds for the seamen at the meeting, but many workers bought the NUS pamphlet 'Not Wanted on Voyage' and contributed to a collection outside the hall made by Gordon Norris.

The pamphlet declares that 'behind the government, in its resistance to our just demands, stand the international banks, the financial powers which really direct the government's anti-wage policy.'

The government was enlisting 'the goodwill of the bankers, the ill-will of the working class'. Workers say that the shipping industry's crisis should be solved by nationalization.

IRISH REPUBLIC

Anti-union laws break fitters' strike

By our Northern Ireland Correspondent

THE seven-week-old strike of Electricity Supply Board fitters in the Irish Republic ended last week. The settlement of the strike was based on the proposals of the unions involved, although these proposals fell far short of the original demand for wage parity with Electricity Supply Board clerks.

The main significance of this strike was that it precipitated vicious anti-strike legislation. As reported recently in The Newsletter, the Irish parliament passed, on June 9, a bill banning strikes in the electricity supply industry and providing heavy fines for strikers.

This bill could well serve as an additional encouragement to the Wilson government in Britain to enact similar legislation.

Considerable feeling exists among Irish workers against the anti-strike legislation.

Over 300 workers demonstrated against the bill in Dublin on June 18. However, at a meeting that preceded the demonstration, the Labour Party and trade union officials who spoke gave no real lead.

Despite vague references to the need for a general strike, no mention was made of how this should be campaigned for or prepared.

The outlook of the so-called leaders of the working class is typified by the response of Brendan Corish, leader of the Irish Labour Party, to a deputation of trade unionists and Labour Party members.

When asked to speak at the meeting, he replied that he was a family man and had to get home for lunch!

The fight against anti-trade union legislation is, of course, a political fight to throw out the present government.

This implies the need for working-class power. But the Labour Party and trade union leaders are not prepared to fight for this.

Unless a new leadership is built that can link the present struggles to the fight for working-class power, Irish workers will suffer heavy defeats.

Convenor sacked from recently organised shop

Newsletter Reporter

ABOUT 60 Amalgamated Engineering Union members at Stanmore Engineering, Stonebridge Park, London, have been out on strike for a week following the sacking of their convenor.

Workers picketing the factory claimed that the firm had sacked the man 'on no grounds at all'.

He had been off sick and, when sending in a second certificate naming his illness, he added 'and pulled muscle', which had been on his first certificate.

The management did not accuse him of trying to fake the certificate, but nevertheless said he had 'defaced' the document—and sacked him.

On June 23, foundry workers who had heard of the sacking refused to work after lunch, and decided to walk out at three o'clock.

The following day tool room and other workers joined the strike. Managers have been working some machines, but Transport and General Workers' Union drivers would not cross the picket line, and strikers are seeking to 'black' any castings which the firm does manage to take out of the factory.

Stanmore Engineering is actually part of Zenith Carburetors. The firm has been in Stonebridge for 20 years, but has only been organised into the AEU during the last year or so.

DISCREPANCIES

There is strong feeling about wage discrepancies—in one case, it was claimed, a toolroom worker was getting 2s below the average rate for the district.

Wage negotiations were due to take place on July 6.

In the view of one striker, the management might get tough because Ford has recently begun making their own carburetors, and because of possible uncertainty about the future of the industry, which might force the firm to diversify its activities.

Stanmore Engineering is one of a number of smaller factories in the north-west London area where workers have organised in the last year.

Many of these workers are beginning to realise that their newly-won position is threatened, not only by managements, but also by the government standing behind the employers, with the Prices and Incomes Bill, which will abolish collective bargaining.

At one engineering factory in Park Royal, where the management is trying to put over an unpopular productivity scheme, the manager began a pep talk recently: 'Now lads, you've all heard what Mr. Brown has said on television. . . . !'

Anger Swells

From page 1

ing in the face of the witch-hunt.

This was reflected in the statement of Communist Party member Gordon Norris, one of the men on Wilson's 'red' list.

Norris said that all decisions taken by the executive had been arrived at democratically, and he would abide by the Executive Council to see that men went back to work united.

Smears from the 'paint brushes' of Mr. Wilson would not stop British seamen advancing and would not split the ranks. Unity would continue behind the executive council.

'I shall fight for this decision of the executive council and hope the people who voted in favour will do likewise', he said.

His statement was echoed in the executive council by one of the militants named by Wilson, when an attempt was made to re-discuss the 'strike-off' decision.

STRONG LINE

It is understood that union secretary Bill Hogarth took a very strong line in the executive meeting on Wednesday morning and moves for a ballot of members on strike or a re-call conference were discounted. He insisted that a definite decision had to be taken that day.

Alf Gibson, head of the union's national strike committee, who abstained last week when the union accepted the terms for the basis of negotiation, moved the motion for the call off. He was seconded by G. Mallon from Liverpool.

Before the Friday night call-off, executive council members are to travel to the ports to hold meetings and arrange the smooth return to work. This is obviously a move to hold back unofficial action—but they may be too late.

Certainly reactions among rank-and-file members throughout the country has been of extreme and deep anger after having been on strike for so long for the 40-hour week.

Several outside Maritime House said they would leave the industry. One was heard to say 'It's the same union as before' (referring to the time when it

was considered a company union).

Another pointed accusingly at the official who read the statement, 'You won't be here next year.'

He obviously meant that the anger of the seamen could easily rebound on the port officials when the union holds its rules revision conference next year.

Then there will be moves to end the life-time secretaryship, proposals to make elected delegates subject to re-call by the members, and attempts to elect more so-called 'militants' on to the union's main body.

This was partly the reason for Norris's tame acceptance of the executive's ruling. He is playing an opportunistic waiting game until then.

But there is still a possibility and a need for further action in the ports to prevent the settlement which is even worse than the last offer of the employers before the deadlock—a three-year agreement bringing hours down to 40 and increased wages.

The men still want 40—they still see this struggle as a fight against the government's incomes policy—and many are prepared to fight for what would be worth considerably more than the 3½ per cent ceiling laid down by the government.

FUTURE ACTION

Their fight for these demands, though over 'officially', could be strengthened in future action, even before the final Pearson Report and other inquiry into the shipping industry, by them joining with their brother port-workers and all other workers who face a legal wage freeze and attack on their organisations in the proposed Prices and Incomes Bill.

Right stronger:

- For the 40-hour week;
- Against the ship owners, the Devlin Report and the anti-union legislation;
- For the nationalization of the ports and all basic industries under workers' control!

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