

LABOUR PARTY

IN CONFERENCE

# The Newsletter

WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

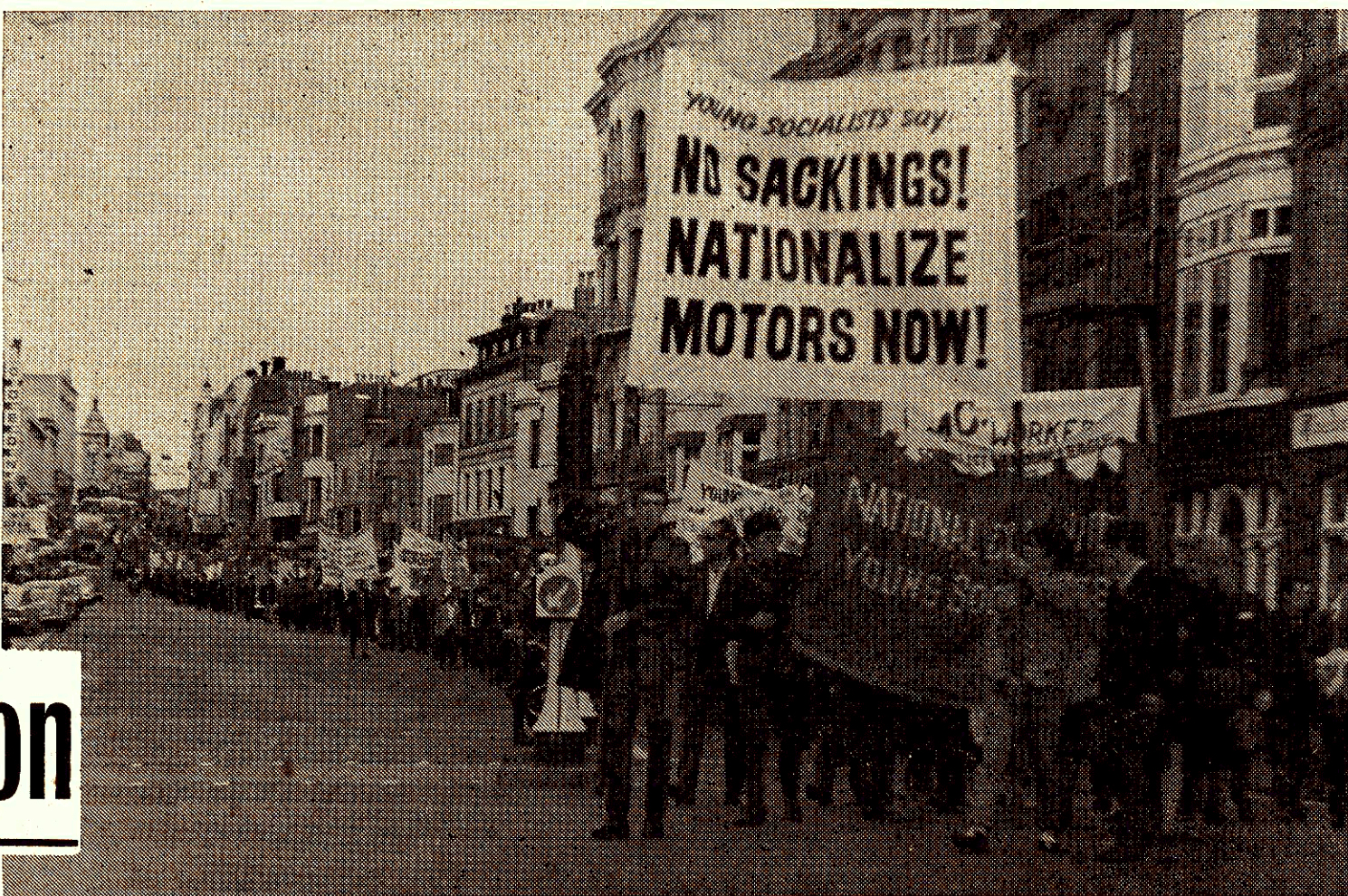
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# WILL COUSINS FIGHT?

## 1,200 march in Brighton



## Car workers praise political lead of YS

Newsletter Reporter

SHOP STEWARDS and workers from the motor industry last Sunday praised the Young Socialists for giving the only political lead in the present crisis.

They had just marched in a colourful 1,200 strong demonstration through Brighton past the Labour Party conference hall and Harold Wilson's hotel chanting 'Nationalize BMC—Unemployment Out!'

This was just one of many hard-hitting slogans shouted by the quarter-of-a-mile long procession of Young Socialists, students and adult trade unionists from all over the country.

The increasing number of adult members of the labour movement on Young Socialist marches emphasises the political impact of the youth—their policies continue to mobilise more and more workers each time they turn out on the streets.

The convenor of a leading Liverpool factory connected with the motor trade summed this up when he said:

'I have seen something this weekend to make me realise there is somebody prepared to act—with patience there will be hundreds and thousands who will come and act at your request.'

A steward from BMC's Tractor and Transmission factory in Birmingham hoped that the YS would continue its campaigns with the 'same zeal' as it had in the past 12 months.

He was glad to see young people interested in politics. They soon found a road through politics, 'and the only road to socialism is through the Young Socialists and the Socialist Labour League,' he said.

Several others at the meeting after the march (reported on page three) similarly praised the lead given by the YS.

Factory and shop stewards' committees represented on the march—many of them officially delegated—came from Lucas-CAV (Liverpool); Shardlows, Tempered Springs and Daniel Doncaster (Sheffield); Rootes Pressings (Linwood), BMC (Bathgate), Albion Motors and Singers (Clydeside)—(all in Scotland); Morris Motors (Cowley, Oxford); and representatives from major factories and sites in the Midlands, London, the North East, Yorkshire, the North West and South Wales.

Almost every union—from woodworkers to clerks, from construction workers to shop assistants, from seamen and dockers to teachers—had members on the march.

Hundreds turned out to watch the demonstration—most of them delegates to the conference—as it wound its way along the Brighton front, into the town, then back again along the front.

It was the most highly political highly-organised and disciplined demonstration ever held by the YS.

It was another great stride by the youth towards mobilising thousands more in the present crisis behind a revolutionary leadership against the betrayals of the Wilson government towards the taking of power in this country.

### Mersey dockers strike

BY WEDNESDAY, 7,000 Mersey-side dockers were on strike against non-union labour following a call for a show of cards by Transport and General Workers' Union branch committees.

Both T&GWU and National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers' (Blue Union) members

## Conference endorses legal wage freezing

BY SYLVIA PICK

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE on Wednesday endorsed the Cabinet decision taken in Harold Wilson's hotel room in Brighton the previous night, under which the government took legal powers to enforce the Prices and Incomes Act. This means that conference has approved the compulsory freeze of wages, with fines or imprisonment for workers who resist.

But had conference rejected the iniquitous Part IV, Wilson had given them fair warning that their views would be ignored. He said on Tuesday that it was the task of the government to govern for the nation, and the conference viewpoint was therefore secondary.

James Callaghan, Chancellor of

the Exchequer, asking for endorsement of the government's economic policy, gave very plain warnings that after August 11, next year, when the prices and incomes legislation is due to lapse, the government would not cease to interfere with the rights of trade unions to free collective bargaining.

'These issues,' he declared, 'concern the future of collective bargaining, the right to which was painfully won by the pioneers of the last century. The document also indirectly raises the question of what role the trades unions are to play in a full employment society in which we forever use to the very limit of our resources in manpower and materials.'

'I hope that no one is going to suggest that he is more concerned than anyone up here on the platform for the preservation of full employment . . . or is more anxious to maintain the freedom of the trade union movement, than we are.'

But later came the pill hidden beneath the sugar.

'The best prospects . . . lie in the recognition that any group of people who are arguing about their incomes . . . must accept that the bargaining strength of the two parties is not the only

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## Rachmanism continues

THAT RACHMAN-TYPE excesses against tenants in certain areas of London still continue, in spite of the 1965 Rent Act, was revealed by Ed Rhodes, the delegate to the Labour Party conference from St. Pancras North.

He heard that 'big boys' were taken along by landlords to overcome opposition from tenants, and that in one case a pistol had been flourished. There was no doubt that, though illegal, these practices still continued.

The delegate was pressing for an urgent review of the 1965 Rent Act, in particular the operation of the Rent Assessment Committees.

George Lowthian, the delegate for the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers, wanted the government to create a Public Building Corporation, though 'not at this stage asking for total nationalization of the industry.'

Even so modified a step in the direction of public ownership proved too much for Tony Greenwood, Minister of Housing, who said the government could not support the resolution since there had been nothing about public building corporations in the Labour Party manifestoes of 1964 or 1966.

## OR IS IT JUST 'LEFT TALK'?

BY THE EDITOR

LIKE THE TRADES UNION CONGRESS the Labour Party conference was split right down the middle. Wilson and the right wing won a majority for their Prices and Incomes Act and Cousins defeated them by a narrow majority on the issue of work-sharing and unemployment.

The labour movement may well ask; where do we go from here? The one thing that was conspicuous by its absence from the conference was bold decisive leadership. It is all very well for Frank Cousins to say that the trade unions will fight the laws if the laws are unjust, but this is not a simple question of unjust laws.

A Labour government which included Cousins in its Cabinet for well over 18 months has now legally invoked Part IV of the Prices and Incomes Act which instructs the employers not to pay any wage increases until the middle of August 1967.

All wage struggles from now on are not simply industrial struggles but political struggles against the government.

This was in fact the precise meaning of the seamen's strike. It was a fight against the government and because of this was political fight from the start.

Yet Cousins stayed a member of the Cabinet right throughout the whole of the strike. When he did publicly speak about the strike it was in the form of criticism—he blamed the strike leadership for making it a political issue with the government.

Yet, the government was only doing in the operation of Part IV of the Prices and Incomes Act against the unions.

Is Mr. Cousins and his union now prepared to fight the government? Because if they are then the question of power is posed, and not just a fight against laws. If the T&GWU is proposing to defeat the government then it should be calling on its members and the working class as a whole to replace the government with a real socialist government pledged to the application of socialist policies.

### Crunch for the 'left'

But this is not Mr. Cousins' intention—he wants to retain a Labour government operating capitalism with the Prices and Incomes Act removed from the Statute Books.

Here is the crunch for all the 'left' talkers. British capitalism needs the Act if it is to survive. Wilson and the right wing, who stand four-square for bolstering up capitalism, have no intention of removing the Act.

Even if they had been defeated at the conference this week they would have gone ahead, just as Gaitskell went right ahead supporting the H-bomb after conference defeated him in 1960.

Unless Cousins and his union are prepared for an all out political struggle against the government then his opposition is simply 'left talk'.

Then there were others at the conference who imagine that because they have made one or two 'left' noises on the platform that means they have acquired great power and are now speaking on behalf of and to the working class. This is an old centrist illusion. The same people glibly talk about the 'isolation' of the Socialist Labour League when they themselves have no organisation of any sort to fight the right wing.

They get carried away with the publicity of a few minutes speaking time on the platform, and completely overlook the vital necessity for training a revolutionary leadership to politically expose and fight the right wing on a programme for power.

Any 'left' delegate who spoke at the conference and overlooked or rejected this fact is simply talking 'left' in order to avoid reality.

Only those who fight for and believe in revolutionary organisation can organise the break which the working class is now called upon to make from the MacDonaldite leadership of the Labour Party.

It is not the Socialist Labour League which is isolated but them. The magnificent 1,200-strong demonstration on the Sunday before the conference in Brighton proved for anyone who cares to see that hundreds of young leaders are now being trained as Marxists for work inside the trade unions and later, when the split deepens inside the Labour Party.

The only way to fight the right wing and their compulsory wage freezing is to build up this organisation to fight in an organised revolutionary way inside the trade unions and both inside and outside the Labour Party.

This was partly achieved by the Young Socialists between 1960-1964 until they were expelled by Wilson without Cousins or the 'lefts' lifting a finger to help them.

Here is the reason why we do not accept the Cousins line wholeheartedly as the 'left' fakers do. Is he prepared to fight Wilson recognising that it is a political fight against the government?

We do not think so, and whilst we are prepared to support him and his union insofar as they mobilise the working class against Wilson's line we insist that the real issue is the building of the alternative leadership inside the labour movement now—otherwise we are on the road to further defeats at the hands of the right wing.

This is the time for purposeful action and not merely 'left' talk as a substitute for such action.

Book now for

**liege** OCTOBER 15  
AGAINST NATO AND THE  
WAR  
IN  
VIETNAM

There is still time for our readers to sign up to go to Liege with the Young Socialists of Britain to meet socialist youth from Belgium and countries all over Europe.

They will be protesting against the war in Vietnam and against the capitalist alliance of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which has its headquarters near to Liege.

The cost of the round trip to Dover-Ostend and Liege is £8 10s which includes a free meal at Liege and dancing on board ship there and back.

Do not delay write now to Dany Sylviere, Liege Organiser, Young Socialists, 186a Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4, for further details or send a deposit of £2 with your name and address.





