

Trotskyism in Britain

TROTSKYISM IN BRITAIN is approximately 37 years old. It was born out of the historic struggle between Trotsky, his supporters of the Left Opposition inside the CPSU, and Stalin.

There are today no survivors from this great conflict. Most of those involved were brutally put to death by Stalin, a small handful, including Stalin himself, died from natural causes.

The struggle between Trotskyism and the Soviet bureaucracy is much more sharp today than it was even in those early days.

Stalin's disciples who still dominate Kremlin politics are becoming more and more subservient to the pressure of world imperialism. They are even more prepared than Stalin was to join hands with the imperialists in crushing revolution in all parts of the world.

The major issue in world politics now is the behind-the-scenes preparations for an unprincipled deal between the Soviet bureaucracy and US imperialism over Vietnam.

Kosygin and Brezhnev are prepared to betray the Vietnam revolution as part of the price for 'peaceful co-existence' with United States imperialism and its satellites.

More and more these political left-overs from the Stalin regime are being exposed as traitors to the international working class.

The difference between the situation now and when 'the great genius Stalin' was doing the dirty work for imperialism in the 1930s is that the working class in the metropolitan capitalist countries are no longer a defeated force as they were in the years after the First World

War. They are no longer on their knees.

Fresh from 25 years of full employment and a consistent struggle to improve their living standards they face the degenerate imperialists and their corrupt bureaucracies with confidence.

Because of this revolutionary buoyancy of the working class the Trotskyist movement is today entirely different from what it was when it was founded.

Ninety-five per cent of the delegates present at the special conference of the SLL held on November 26 and 27 were either not born or were babies when Stalin assassinated Trotsky in August 1940. Of the remaining five per cent, three per cent had just joined the movement whilst two per cent were pre-war Trotskyists.

British Trotskyists more than any other organisation in the working class movement reflect the revolutionary confidence of the working class.

We fought for a majority Labour government in order to expose the role of the right-wing leaders such as Wilson. Now they stand exposed for all to see as just the same type of leader as Ramsay MacDonald.

The main task before the Socialist Labour League is not only to expose the right-wing Labour leaders but the fake-left MPs and the Soviet bureaucracy which they slavishly support. The programme adopted by the special national conference of the SLL is a guide to action for thousands of militant trade unionists in the months ahead.

Trotskyism is emerging more and more as the only Marxist-Leninist leadership in the struggle against world imperialism.

The future lies with the SLL

INTRODUCING the document on British Perspectives at the special delegate conference of the Socialist Labour League last weekend, Gerry Healy, national secretary of the SLL, said:

WE DECIDED to hold this conference in order to discuss the new political situation which has developed so rapidly, not only in Britain, but internationally, over the past three months.

Since the beginning of November unemployment has increased by well over half a million. The cost of living has gone steadily upwards. By the New Year it will have increased something like an additional 25s. to keep a family of four over and above what it was previously costing them to live.

The Prices and Incomes Act is, of course, in full operation. Trade unions are legally tied to the capitalist state under conditions where it is now no longer the question of negotiations and collective bargaining that decides the relationship between the employers and the working class but an Order given out by the Cabinet.

At least this much must be said about the right wing of the Labour Party and the trade unions; they are not hypocrites in their class position.

With eyes open

What the Labour government has done it has done with its eyes wide open. It has a real class purpose in mind. It hates the working class, it is frightened of the working class, it is tied hand and foot to the employers and to the party of the employers the Tory Party.

Trade union leaders from time to time make vague criticism of the policy of the government. Generally speaking they are on the side of the government.

The experience of two years functioning of the TUC shows that all of the right-wing leaders are if anything only making their criticism of the Labour government in order to justify, when the time comes, lining up solidly with that government.

Their criticism is an attempt to divert the attention of the working class in order to prevent a real struggle against the government.

When they talk 'left' they do so in a calculating way so as to leave the working class without leadership and in order to turn them from any kind of preparation.

Fear one thing

If there is one thing that the Labour Party, the trade union leaders and the employers fear in this country it is a movement to arise which will prepare the working class in a series of decisive class battles against the government and the employers.

It would be a great mistake not to understand this very serious weakness of the employers at this time.

They are living by virtue of an agreement with a Labour government. They could not function today without this agreement. Even though it seems to provide them with all the things they want there is still within that agreement a fatal flaw. It will work just so long as it is challenged by nobody.

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Next step for YS -

Morecambe and international conferences

THE MORECAMBE CONFERENCE of the Young Socialists was the next important stage in preparing for an international youth conference and international youth movement, said YS national secretary Sheila Torrance at last weekend's special conference of the SLL.

In the struggle for such a movement, the forces that would defeat the social-democratic and Stalinist bureaucracies and lead the working class to victory against imperialism, would be developed, she said.

The YS and SLL based their analysis on the class struggle, not on the idea that the crisis of capitalism could be staved off for a period.

The present crisis, now leading to mass redundancies and over half a million unemployed, had



YS secretary: Sheila Torrance

developed since 1962-1963, and was reflected in the working class in a deep hatred for the Wilson government.

'Even when selling programmes for our bazaar in a dock area, workers would only buy them on the basis that the Young Socialists are in opposition to Wilson's policies,' she said.

Unprincipled

At the same time the employers would fight back through other agencies against the development of working-class leadership—the

The Newsletter

WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

Vol. 9, No. 471 December 3, 1966 Price 6d.

B/OSL FILE

SPECIAL CONFERENCE CALL

MAKE THE LEFTS FIGHT

AT THE SPECIAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE of the Socialist Labour League held in London last weekend a call was made to make the left-wing MPs in parliament fight against Wilson and the Labour government's policies. The following demands were carried unanimously by conference in the main document discussed by delegates on the **British Perspectives:**

- Conference calls upon the rank and file of the labour and trade union movement to demand that all left MPs break publicly from Wilson and immediately begin a campaign inside and outside Parliament for socialist policies.
- These policies must include the nationalization of all the major industries, without compensation and under workers' control; repeal of the Prices and Incomes Act; an end to wage freezing and unemployment. Withdraw all British troops from overseas; full freedom and independence for all colonial peoples. Arm the Africans against Smith's Rhodesian regime. Break immediately with US imperialism over Vietnam. For the victory of the National Liberation Front.
- We call upon the left MPs to place a resolution before the Parliamentary Labour Party calling for Wilson's Cabinet to resign.
- Such a demand should be supported by a national demonstration and lobby to be held in London early in the New Year.



A section of the delegates at last weekend's special conference listening to G. Healy speak on British Perspectives

YOUNG SOCIALISTS

GRAND XMAS BAZAAR

★

Saturday
December 10
at
THE CORN EXCHANGE
LEEDS 1

Christmas Gifts : Prizes
Galore : Special attractions
for all the family
Be sure to see the wonderful
range of stalls

PUBLIC MEETINGS

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Union-boss link claim

ARRANGEMENTS between Midlands firms and trade unions, which impose minimum wages and no-strike restrictions on workers, are emerging in Coventry and Birmingham, a shop steward delegate to the SLL special conference claimed last Sunday.

The car delivery employers in Birmingham had learned from this, he thought.

In Coventry there was a 'labour only' firm which came to an arrangement with an engineering union that all the workers should be in the union. A cheque was sent each month to the union headquarters to cover the subscriptions.

The firm supplies labour—at a minimum union rate—to any factory.

He also knew of aircraft factories where the management was using surplus labour to flood cer-

Ironies in Israel-Jordan clash

By John Crawford

THE IRONY OF the Middle East situation is that none of the actions of the forces involved leads to its intended results.

When Israeli forces attacked the villages of Es Samu on November 13, Prime Minister Eshkol hoped it would force Washington to support the effort to stop Arab border guerrillas. Instead the Americans backed the United Nations resolution condemning Israel.

More important, the effect of the raid has been to unleash a movement inside Jordan which now threatens the regime of King Hussein. And with this stooge of imperialism will fall the stability of the region, which has allowed Israel to survive for 20 years.

The anti-Husseini movement has been encouraged by Nasser, through both Cairo and Damascus radios. The Palestine Liberation Organisation, which enjoys Nasser's backing, has called for Hussein's overthrow and is banned in Jordan.

The feeling in Jordan, especially its Western areas, is not just a matter of the Es Samu raid. Many of the people demonstrating in Jerusalem and Nablus once lived in what is now Israel.

When, in 1947, the United Nations, supported by both the Americans and the Russians, set up the state of Israel, these Palestinians were forced to take refuge in Jordan and other Arab countries. Many still live in squalid refugee camps.

The Israelis, claiming to provide a solution to the Jewish problem, in fact are no more than imperialist pawns. The misery of hundreds of thousands of Jews was used as a weapon against the rising tide of revolution in the Middle East.

On his side, Nasser plays with the anti-Israel feelings of the Arab masses; but he too unleashes forces he cannot control.

Hussein's British-trained Arab Legion is not deployed against Israel, but against the Jordan workers and peasants.

All able-bodied men in Jordan have been called up—to keep them under control. Damascus Radio reports that Saudi Arabian troops have entered Jordan to give an additional prop to Hussein.

The development of revolution in the Middle East can go beyond the bounds laid down by Arab politicians. A Marxist movement must fight to unite the Arab masses with the Israeli workers in a struggle against imperialism and all its agencies.

FREE HUGO BLANCO!

(Resolution of the special conference of the Socialist Labour League, London, November 26-27, 1966.)



THIS SPECIAL conference of the Socialist Labour League demands that Hugo Blanco, leader of the revolutionary peasant movement in Peru, be immediately freed.

It calls upon all organisations and individuals in the labour and trade union movement, and all those who fight to defend elementary democratic rights, to protest in every way possible to the Peruvian government and its embassies and consulates in every country.

Hugo Blanco was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment on September 8, 1966.

His 'trial' was conducted by a military tribunal, in which military police acted as judge and prosecutor at the same time. When Hugo Blanco appealed against the sentence, his case was considered by the Supreme Council of Military Justice.

This Supreme Council is now considering answering the appeal by imposing the death penalty on Hugo Blanco.

International protests at the time of the trial created a situation where the prosecuting counsel did not ask for the death penalty, even though it was recommended by a consulting judge. We are convinced that international solidarity, together with the support for Blanco within Peru, can again intervene successfully.

Blanco did not even get the right to trial before a civil court. His appeal is entirely justified; we believe it is for this reason that the death penalty is now demanded.

But this threat will not intimidate the workers and peasants who support Blanco and demand his release. On the contrary, it can only strengthen the opposition to a regime which perverts elementary justice so blatantly.

Hugo Blanco and 28 others were held in prison without charges for over three years awaiting trial. This act, together with the sentence itself, and the committing of Blanco to a military court, were political acts aimed by the government of Peru at the suppression of all political opposition in that country.

The fact that the authorities are now considering the death sentence is proof in itself that all these repressive measures have failed to stop the forces which Hugo Blanco represents.

A mighty campaign of protest can deter the authorities from their plan to execute Hugo Blanco. Such a campaign can encourage socialist forces and their democratic allies in Peru and together with them force an amnesty for Hugo Blanco.

Free Hugo Blanco and his comrades immediately!

Carried unanimously by SLL special conference, November 26-27, 1966.

WANTED

EXTRACT FROM the minutes of the Electrical Trades Union executive council meeting held in the Hotel Metropole, Brighton, on October 1, 1966:

(144) LEGAL ACTION—A. COURTNEY AND P. RAFTER V. ETU.

RECOVERY OF COST.

The general secretary reported that a letter had been received from the union solicitors advising that they had been attempting to enforce a judgement for costs against A. Courtney but that he had moved his address.

They seek the directions of the union as to whether an enquiry agent should be employed in an endeavour to trace his whereabouts.

Bros. W. P. Blair and D. Sheasby moved:

'That the solicitors be instructed to take the necessary steps to trace the whereabouts of Mr. A. Courtney.'

Agreed.

