

The Newsletter

WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

Vol. 9, No. 472

December 10, 1966

Price 6d.

★ Against the Wage Freeze and Unemployment ★

London

MEETING

Thursday, Dec. 15
at 7.30 p.m.

ANSON HALL
ANSON ROAD
WILLESDEN

Birmingham

DEMONSTRATION

Saturday, Dec. 17
Assemble 2.30 p.m.

THE MINORIES
(near Lewis's)
followed by a
MEETING
DIGBETH CIVIC HALL

Newcastle

DEMONSTRATION

Saturday, Dec. 17
Assemble 2.30 p.m.

MORDEN ST.

followed by a
CONFERENCE and
DANCE

RHODESIA

Students say:

'Arm the Africans'

OVER 30 students from Sheffield University Marxist, Algerian and Labour Societies, as well as African students and Young Socialist representatives demonstrated in Sheffield on Wednesday afternoon shouting 'Arm the Africans', 'One Man, One Vote' and 'Smith Must Go'.

They attracted a lot of attention from Sheffield workers in the city centre.

The demonstration was highly successful despite the refusal of the Communist Society to take part.

On instructions from the local CP organiser these so-called communists decided it was better not to demonstrate against the Smith regime rather than march with Marxists.

They objected to the slogan 'Arm the Africans', insisted on by the Marxist Society and Young Socialists, and taken up enthusiastically by the whole demonstration.

This action by the Communist students in Sheffield re-affirms the counter-revolutionary role of the CP, revealed so clearly when they called the police against Young Socialists on their own demonstration in Leeds on November 5.

The Newsletter

We share the same bed now

BEAVER HALL, December 3, witnessed one of these peculiar political marriages which we may well have thought impossible during the period of the Hungarian revolution 10 years ago.

At that time the state capitalist group of Tony Cliff was busily denouncing Russian 'state capitalism' and its 'state capitalist' agents in King Street as the grave diggers of the Hungarian working class.

My, my, how times and relationships have changed.

Throughout 1966 the state capitalists and the Stalinists have been the closest of buddies. Whilst the Communist Party has been busy selling out one struggle after another the bedraggled followers of Cliff have tagged faithfully on behind.

Naturally they have found a common platform in their mutual hatred of Trotskyism, but it goes a little deeper than that. They have found it easy to share the same political roof, because each in their own way and for their own ends have now a common political affinity with the Wilson government and its 'left' hangers on.

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At the Beaver Hall, the state capitalist handful voted solidly with the Communist Party delegates against the 50-odd of SLL trade union delegates. When our people proposed a policy of action against Wilson their hands were raised against. When the Communist Party proposed that virtually nothing should be done, their hands were raised in support. How come this queer alliance? Our readers may ask. Simple, comrades, simple.

The ladies and gentlemen members of Cliff's group always support the Labour Party through hell and high water. They oppose the building of a revolutionary party.

True, on occasions they moan and groan about the effects of Wilson's policy to make capitalism work, but that is about as important as a sneeze in the editorial office of 'Tribune'.

During the Hungarian revolution and Suez crisis there was always the danger of a world war between the USSR and the USA.

History teaches us that if such an event had taken place the Labour leaders would have lined up solidly behind the Tory Party and Wall Street. With their usual reservations the Cliff group would have supported them. Hence their bold 'anti-Stalinist' front of those days.

Trotskyists maintained at that time that if the USA should attack the USSR over Hungary we would unconditionally defend the Soviet Union against such an attack.

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Today the scene has changed. Kossygin and Co. want a deal with the USA to betray the Vietnamese revolution. They would like to use the imperialist governments of Western Europe as a pressure force for such a deal. Hence they snuggle up to de Gaulle (Kossygin's state visit to France) and the French CP hails the general as a 'great peacemaker'!

The ultra right-winger George Brown spends several hours in friendly private conversation with Kossygin and Co. during his recent trip to Moscow.

So the British CP like the French CP take care they do nothing to anger Brown and Wilson.

At this juncture they meet up with the opportunist Cliff group who are unable to break from the reformist Labour Party.

If in the future war clouds overshadow the world and the danger of a conflict between the USA and the USSR grows serious, the present unprincipled alliance will immediately break up and Cliff's group will rediscover their old 'anti-Stalinism'.

Like the Labour leaders they will join in the crusade of their capitalist masters against the nationalized property relations which is the revolutionary basis of Soviet economy, despite the remnants of Stalin's bureaucracy.

Until that time they will go on sharing the same bed at the Transport House Inn.

SPARKS NEW JOBS CRISIS

BY THE EDITOR

'SAVE STERLING' was the battle cry of the Wilsonites last July. This became the excuse for compulsory wage freezing, high prices and a massive growth in unemployment. We insisted at the time that even if the British working class was to make further sacrifices at the behest of a Labour government, the solution to the economic difficulties of British capitalism did not lie in their hands.

We are dealing with a world crisis and the latest developments on Rhodesia prove this to the hilt. Prior to the Gibraltar fiasco unemployment had almost reached 650,000, the balance of payments had almost been closed and there was more gold in the vaults of the Bank of England than at any time during the year.

Yet a few days before the Smith-Wilson confab, the pound began to drop in value as against the dollar. World capitalism was losing confidence in British economy. Immediately after negotiations collapsed the value of the pound took a downward plunge on the world's money markets and had to be assisted by the Bank of England.

CAPITALISTS RUSH IN

It is reported that the main reason was the selling up of sterling holdings abroad by the capitalists of the City of London. In other words, these gentlemen, anticipating the threat of devaluation, were quickly rushing into the fray in order to secure hard currency which they could later re-sell for sterling and turn the crisis profitably to their advantage.

It is illegal for workers to ask for wage increases, but it is quite legal for the capitalists to make money by speculation. Not a single Cabinet minister has spoken up against this form of pocket-book patriotism, yet if a group of workers were to demand an immediate wage increase, the Cabinet would meet, as they did during the seamen's strike, and denounce them in no uncertain terms.

The Rhodesian affair now means that the present economic crisis will become more acute. The 'Financial Times' of December 7 remarked:

'Any reduction in Bank Rate will almost certainly have been delayed in the present circumstances. Nor is it easy to imagine Mr. Callaghan, Chancellor of the Exchequer, following up the hint he gave in the Commons last week of the possible need for "measured steps" to encourage consumer demand until some assessment can be made of the ultimate balance of payments consequences of the chain of events following the rupture with Rhodesia.'

In other words all those 'left' MPs who believe that Wilson and Callaghan would re-inflate the economy during 1967 have got another think coming. The position will in fact get worse, with the threat of more jobless and still higher prices.

It is in this light that we must scrutinise the weapon of sanctions. The Communist Party has come down heavily for the immediate application of the heaviest form of sanctions. The 'Morning Star' warmly commended in an article, also on December 7, the 22 'left' Labour MPs who are insisting on 'effective sanctions'.

Who will these sanctions effect most in Rhodesia, the whites or the majority native population?

We say unquestionably that the majority of the people of Rhodesia will be those who will suffer the most. In order to maintain their rate of profit under sanctions the Smith regime will grind down the wages and working conditions of the working population even more than they are doing now.

Tens of thousands will be unemployed with practically nothing to live on. Tens of thousands may well die from starvation, but the white overlords will take good care that they live off the fat of the land.

TWO-HEADED

Sanctions are a two-headed weapon. They will worsen the economic crisis in Britain, allowing the capitalist class to financially speculate more and more at the expense of sterling for profit while hundreds of thousands more are thrown on the dole.

They will hit the native population of Rhodesia who are the only real allies of the British working class hardest.

In other words, the working class will suffer in Britain and Rhodesia because sanctions are a capitalist weapon and have nothing to do with socialism.

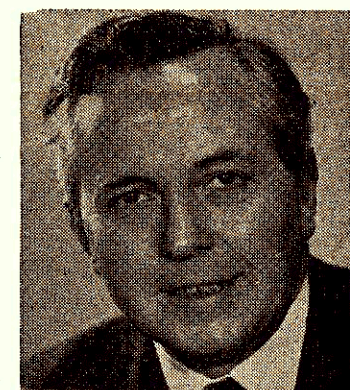
The continuous capitulation of the Wilson government to the bankers of the City of London and the failure of the 'lefts' to fight Wilson, has in fact led to the abandonment of the Rhodesian working class.

Without a determined struggle for socialism both in Britain, backed up by a re-

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The Tories fully support the six-point programme Wilson offered Smith



SATURDAY
December 10
YOUNG SOCIALISTS
GRAND XMAS
BAZAAR



Leeds follows London success

ALL THE FUN of a Christmas Fair was provided by the Young Socialists for East Londoners recently (see above). This Saturday it is the turn of Leeds.

The London bazaar was the biggest success—both financially and organisationally—the YS has had. In Leeds the same selec-

tion of wide-ranging, good quality and cheap provisions, toys, clothes (from baby's to boutique style), jewellery and everything for that extra special Christmas present will be on sale.

The very popular side shows will also be open for Leeds' people.

Father Christmas will be inviting children into his grotto to take a lucky dip in his bran tub, and a re-

Action is Clear say SLL unionists Make the lefts fight

Newsletter Reporter

THE IMPORTANCE of an all-out fight to win the working class to a programme of struggle against the Wilson betrayers and their apologists was illustrated again with increased force at the conference called by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions at the Beaver Hall, London, last Saturday (December 3).

For six hours 480 delegates and 150 visitors—not the 800 claimed by the 'Morning Star'—from trade union branches, shop stewards' committees and 'defence' committees listened to a torrent of words piously opposed to the wage freeze and the government's anti-trade union legislation.

But the only action taken by the organisers of this conference was against members and supporters of the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists.

Every manoeuvre that could be attempted, from the exclusion of delegates to the refusal to take resolutions and the selection of speakers, was used to try to prevent any discussion of real policies to defeat the wage freeze and the Wilson government.

Credentials refused

The conference opened with the refusal of the credentials committee to allow into the conference a number of delegates from the North-West. Only after the fight had been forced into the conference were these very important delegates allowed to take their places.

The chairman of the conference, former Communist Party member and now a member of one of Barbara Castle's transport committees, Bill Jones of the Transport and General Workers' Union, refused to allow the introduction of resolutions to the conference.

'Any resolutions that I want I will deal with in my trade union organisation,' he said.

The conference had been attacked by a number of unions who had issued instructions to branches not to send delegates—but this struggle against the right wing was not referred to by the conference secretary, J. Hiles, when he made his opening report, speaking about the 'magnificent response' to the conference.

Speaker after speaker talked about the need to change union and Labour Party policy, to get the 'right people' into office at local and national level, but only those amongst the delegates who were members of the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists were able to put forward a clear policy on which to fight.

M. Jenkins (NUT), called upon Labour MPs who call themselves 'lefts' to campaign in the Parliamentary Labour Party and to put down a resolution for the removal of Wilson and his Cabinet. Their policy should be to fight for the repeal of the Prices and Incomes Act and the nationalization of the major industries.

This call to action was taken up by Bill Hunter (representing CAV/Lucas workers) who had had to fight for the right to enter the conference.

He had come to the conference from the shop stewards' committee with a resolution putting forward a policy for action only to find that the conference would not have the chance to discuss this resolution.

Lesson No. 1

The Wilson government was a bosses' government. It had done a deal with big business, it was an enemy of the working class. That was lesson number one for the conference, he said.

How will this government's policy be changed? By an expression of opinion? By good speeches at a conference?

Only the mobilisation of the working class would change the government. We are prepared to fight, are you? There should be

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Trades Council says: Free Hugo Blanco

Glasgow Trades Council passed unanimously the following emergency motion on Wednesday:

'This meeting demands that the government of Peru immediately release Hugo Blanco, leader of the revolutionary peasant movement in Peru, and his comrades from prison.'

This resolution is to be sent to the Peruvian Embassy.

