

SOCIALIST APPEAL

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British Trotskyist Conference

The Revolutionary Communist Party, British Section of the Fourth International met in Annual Conference in London on September 7th, 8th and 9th. 35 delegates from the national branches and 13 consultative delegates assembled to debate a heavy agenda which included numerous resolutions on international and national problems facing the working class.

The Conference hall was crowded with workers from all parts of the country, who listened to the discussions and debates which took place in an atmosphere of complete democracy.

The principal resolution under discussion is reproduced in this issue of the "Socialist Appeal", edited for publication. It is a review of the economic and political perspectives of Great Britain, and a statement of the facts to be adopted by the Revolutionary Communist Party in the coming year. Every regular reader of the "Socialist Appeal" will study this resolution with the object of gaining a clear and comprehensive picture of the attitude of the R.C.P. towards the Labour Government and its future.

A representative of the Executive Committee of the Fourth International was present and conveyed fraternal greetings. He gave a report on the work and progress of the various national sections of the Fourth International, which in no less than 30 countries owe allegiance and are in direct contact with the International. Of especial interest was an encouraging report of the re-formation of our German section inside Germany despite the years of terror under the Nazi regime.

A resolution demanding the repatriation of the German P.O.W.'s to their homes was adopted with acclamation. Resolutions of condemnation of the Labour Government's activities in the colonies, Palestine and Greece were also adopted.

Much of the discussion at the Conference centred around the amendments presented by the Central Committee of the British Party to the international resolution adopted by the recent International Congress of the Fourth International.

Members were enabled to freely discuss and participate in the adoption of a Bolshevik policy for the national and international working class. The British Party, fulfilling its international obligations adopted a series of amendments to be presented for international discussion dealing with economic perspectives in Europe, the role of Stalinism and Social Democracy and the tactics of the Fourth International; the economic, military and diplomatic situation of Russia as a result of the outcome of the war. These will be issued for publication in our theoretical organ "Workers' International News."

After full and lengthy discussions in the Party, the Conference ended with a spirit of determination to carry the banner of the Fourth International to the widest possible sections of the working class, to participate actively in the class struggles of the working class and win the most advanced sections of the British workers to the banner of Trotskyism.

Long Live the Revolutionary Communist Party!
Long Live the Fourth International!

BEVIN ENTHRONES GREEK KING

By means of terror and intimidation against the Greek masses, and with the direct assistance of the military forces of the British Labour Government, King George of the Hellenes has regained the throne of Greece.

The result is no more a reflection of the real feeling in Greece than the Royalist plebiscite of 1935 when the restoration of the Monarchy was carried with 97.5 per cent. in favour. This too, was achieved under the shadow of the bayonets and revolvers of the army and police controlled by General Kondylis. Yet three months later in a genuine parliamentary election, the Republican Parties together with the working class parties obtained a majority!

Before the plebiscite even the British Capitalist press was daily carrying reports of attacks on trade unions and the workers' organisations. Terror and murder, particularly in the country districts have been systematically carried on by Royalist bands. There has been interference with the free circulation and propaganda of the workers' press. Under these conditions the so-called plebiscite was a complete mockery.

Thousands and tens of thousands of the most militant workers and peasants have had to flee to the mountains to escape the terror and conditions bordering on civil war exist in the mountains, especially in the districts of Macedonia.

Meanwhile it should be remembered that nearly half the officers of even the Regular Army were members of the Security Battalions—the Greek S.S. which served under Hitler. The conditions under which the elections were conducted are indicated by the fact that the

Deputy Prime Minister, Gonatas, declared openly to a delegation of E.A.M. that he could not guarantee their lives if they conducted election propaganda for the plebiscite in the provinces.

Since the announcement of the plebiscite result, despite hypocritical appeals for unity, the terror has been intensified. Emergency "security" measures have now been proclaimed throughout the mainland of Greece. Conditions similar to martial law have been established. On the other hand, step by step, the suppression of the working class increases.

The latest news is of the raiding of the Stalinist headquarters, and the arrest of 25 of the leaders of the C.P. The unions are being forced into a virtual "Labour Front" under the control of the Government. All the genuine workers' leaders go in fear of their lives.

The Greek masses cannot achieve their liberation while the Labour Government in Britain backs Greek reaction with the armed might of British Imperialism. This stain on the British Labour movement must be wiped away.

The British workers must assist the Greek workers in their struggles by forcing the Labour leaders to end their war of intervention against the Greek people.

END THE BETRAYAL OF THE GREEK MASSES!
WITHDRAW THE TROOPS!

SUPPORT THE SQUATTERS

TAKE OVER THE EMPTY MANSIONS

End the Prosecutions in Defence of Landlord Property

LABOUR MUST OPERATE ITS MANDATE

Policy Statement by the R.C.P. Political Bureau

THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY WELCOMES THE INITIATIVE SHOWN BY THE SQUATTERS IN THEIR ACTION, AS A STEP TOWARDS SOLVING THE HOUSING PROBLEM. IT CONSIDERS THAT THE ACTIVITY OF THE SQUATTERS, WHICH PLACES THE HOUSING NEEDS OF THE HOMELESS FAMILIES ABOVE THE REACTIONARY RIGHTS OF LANDLORD PROPERTY OWNERS, IS ENTIRELY A PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT, IN LINE WITH THE STRUGGLE FOR THE SOCIALIST EMANCIPATION OF THE WORKING CLASS.

The Revolutionary Communist Party pledges full support to this movement by all means at its disposal, and will aid in the extension of the squatters' movement locally and nationally.

We protest against the police assistance and protection given by the Labour Government to the landlords against the homeless workers and consider that this action is a violation of the mandate given to the Government by the mass of the organised working class, which included the finding of homes for the homeless. We also protest against the prosecution of the members of the Squatters' Committees, or those trade unionists or working class political activists who have assisted the squatters in finding homes.

The R.C.P. regards the fact that the Labour Government should seek to formulate new legislation to protect the reactionary property owners, instead of legislating to aid the homeless and thus helping to solve their problems as a monstrous betrayal of the socialist workers' mandate.

It calls upon all sections of the organised working class to bring pressure to bear upon the Labour Government to put a stop to the prosecution already commenced; to reverse its role as protector of landlord property against worker homeless; to heed the voice of the mass of the organised workers and

(Continued on page 4.)

THE OCCUPATION BY HOMELESS WORKERS OF MANY OF THE EMPTY LUXURY FLATS AND DEREGISTERED HOTELS OF THE RICH, IS A MEASURE OF THE DESPERATE NEEDS OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF WORKING CLASS FAMILIES. THIS DETERMINED AND WELL ORGANISED ACTION OF THE "SQUATTERS" IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION: THE TAKING OVER OF EMPTY HOUSING PROPERTY OF THE CAPITALIST LANDLORDS.

The landlords are concerned only with protecting their profit interests at the expense of the needs of the working class. The Labour Government is to be condemned for its refusal to aid the squatters and rallying to the assistance of the capitalists and landlords.

ANEURIN BEVAN APES TORIES

Aneurin Bevan, Labour Minister of Health, recently returned from his holiday in Switzerland, blatantly attacked the disciplined and organised occupation of the luxury flats as "A campaign of violence and organised lawlessness". He sent the police to stand guard on other empty capitalist-owned property, and instructed the local authorities to cut off supplies of light, heat and water to the "squatters".

A Tory Minister of Health could not have shown more concern for the protection of reactionary property rights of the wealthy landlords! Bevan further accused the squatters of queue-jumping in an attempt to create hostility towards workers, waiting for houses. This is a falsification of the real position. The occupied flats and hotels were to be handed back to their wealthy owners and let to those who could afford to pay as many guineas as the working class family can pay shillings.

Profits Before Workers' Needs

The Duchess of Bedford Flats at Kensington, London was offered to the Kensington Borough Council for requisitioning to house urgent cases. But the Tory dominated Borough Council preferred to return it to the owners, the fabulously wealthy Prudential Assurance Company in order that the flats could be let to rich tenants at from 10 to 15 guineas per week. This scandalous state of affairs was tolerated and condoned by the Labour Government, who made no attempt to enforce the requisitioning of this and similar luxury places for the provision of homes for workers' families. Under such conditions the actions of the "squatters" in occupying such places is a hundred times justified.

As we go to press the news comes that as a result of the Government's court action, the squatters have been given notice to quit or threatened with eviction. As a consequence, the squatters announced their intention to vacate the Duchess of Bedford Flats.

In evidence before Justice Wynne-Parry the horrible conditions under which the squatters had been living, were revealed. One woman reported that she had to take her children to hospital for typhoid, and illness caused by the housing conditions.

Others reported of leaking roofs, overflowing lavatories, and unhygienic overcrowding.

The Judge expressed deep sympathy. But great as was his sorrow, the rights of private property come first. The homeless workers were "trespassers" and must vacate the luxury flats, so that the very foundations of capitalist society should not be undermined!

Thus, the Government which could not take emergency measures to house the people, has acted very speedily in defence of the capitalist landlords. This is a slap in the face for the working class who swept Labour into power in order to take action against the capitalists and the landowners, not to protect them.

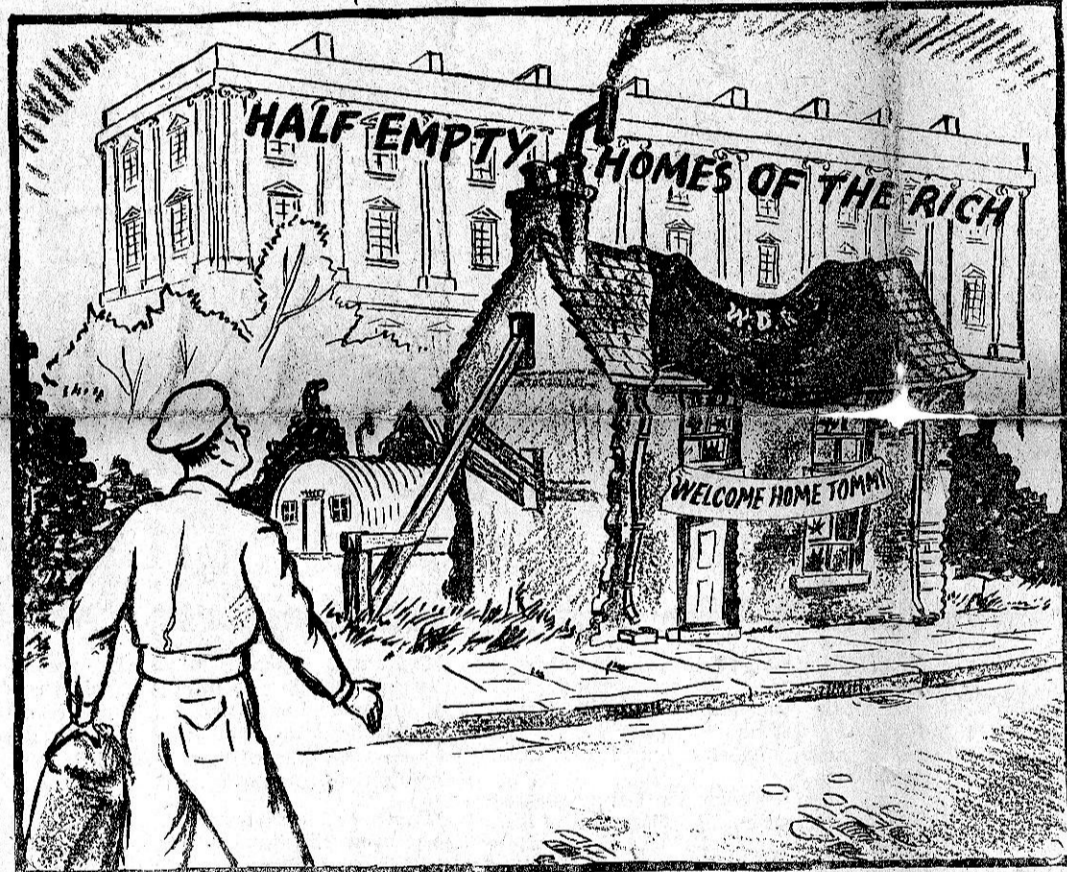
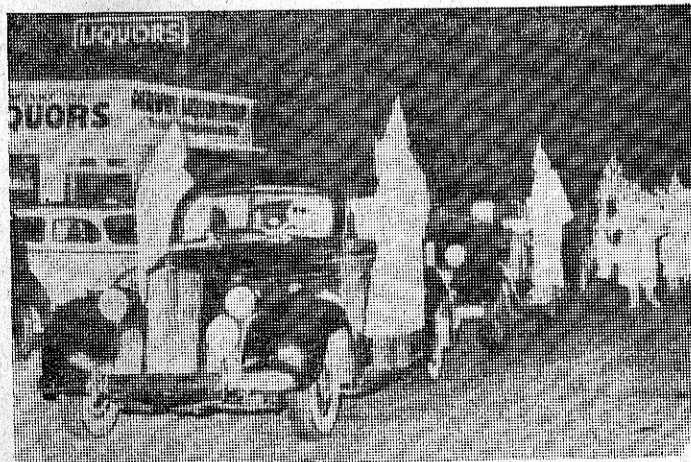
The Labour Government waxes indignant about the "rights" of private property in the best Tory style, and uses Tory methods to evict the workers from the houses of the rich. This lick-spitting to the capitalist tradition is covered by accusations of "agitators" and "anarchy" levelled against the leaders of this movement.

The arrest of five members of the Communist Party is an attempt on the part of the Labour Government to break down the determination of the squatters to continue their occupation of the luxury buildings.

The working class is in no mood to tolerate any further refusal to requisition capitalist property. The initiative of the squatters is to be welcomed and supported by every working class organisation.

Workers! Rally to the Support of the Squatters!
Demand that all Charges Against Members of the Communist Party be Withdrawn.

**ANTI-LABOUR,
ANTI-NEGRO
KLU-KLUX-KLAN**



TAKE OVER THE MANSIONS!

NEW LYNCH WAVE IN U.S.A.

Reactionary Whites Terrorise Negroes

LYNCH LAW IS ON THE MARCH IN THE UNITED STATES. ALMOST EVERY DAY THE AMERICAN PRESS PUBLISHES NEWS OF FRESH ATROCITIES AGAINST NEGRO CITIZENS BY REACTIONARY ELEMENTS UNDER THE DIRECT LEADERSHIP AND OPEN INCITEMENT TO MOB VIOLENCE FROM THE FLOOR OF CONGRESS BY SUCH PEOPLE AS SENATORS TALMADGE, BILBO, AND RANKIN—ALL MEMBERS OF PRESIDENT TRUMAN'S "DEMOCRATIC" PARTY.

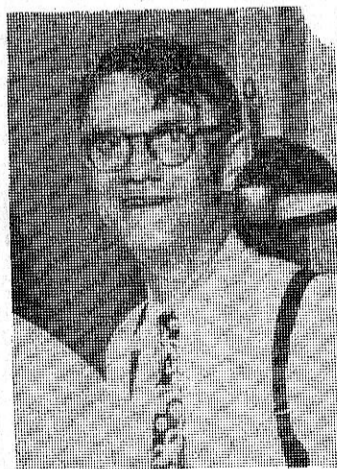
The chief instigators of this wave of violence against the Negro people are the big corporations. Their purpose: to set the stage for an anti-labour offensive in all parts of the country.

An ugly feature of the present wave of lynchings is that it is no longer confined to the reactionary South, as in the past. Tennessee, New York, Chicago, California, Georgia, Mississippi—all have been the scenes of brutal acts of terror against Negroes. In not a single case has the law taken action against the lynchers and their instigators in high places. In fact, in many instances, the police have themselves been guilty of these bestial assaults upon innocent negroes.

We give the following extract from the "Militant", organ of the American Trotskyists, who have issued a call to the Labour movement to "Halt the Lynchings":

Arson and Murder

"On the floor of Congress the Bilbos and Rankins openly incite mob violence against Negroes. Both Republican and Democratic administrations have consistently refused to enact anti-lynching legislation. Federal and state investigations have uniformly failed to bring a single culprit to justice. In Columbia, Tenn., where



REACTIONARY SENATOR TALMADGE "Save Georgia for the white man."

lynchers aided by state troops murdered Negroes and terrorized the whole Negro community, the victims are being prosecuted while the criminals go scot-free. In Freeport, N.Y., the killer of two Negro veterans walks the streets in police uniform. Dewey's "investigation" of these murders is an outrageous farce. In Aiken, S.C., officials refuse even to discuss the fendish

atrocities of the police who gouged out the eyes of Isaac Woodward, Negro veteran with five-years service.

In Fontana, Calif., local authorities refused to investigate the arson murders of O'Day Short and his family who resisted efforts to drive them from their home.

In Chicago, Ill., 59 separate arson bombings and shootings have taken the lives of three Negroes during the last 27 months. Only four of the terrorists were apprehended, and not one convicted.

And now in Georgia and Mississippi five more lives have been brutally snuffed out, with no sign of effective federal or local action against the lynchers.

American Trotskyists' Call to Action

For these reasons the labour movement should demand of President Truman:

1. Immediate and vigorous steps to apprehend and prosecute the lynchers in Georgia and Mississippi.
2. Immediate indictment and prosecution of Bilbo, Talmadge, Rankin, Eastland and the others who instigated these lynchings.
3. Reconvene Congress for the express purpose of enacting effective federal anti-lynching legislation.

To back up these demands, the unions should take independent

action along the following lines:

1. Set up a broad committee composed of representatives of the unions, Negro and veteran organizations. This committee should conduct its own investigation of the lynchings at the scene of the crimes. It should offer a large reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the lynchers.
2. Set up Defence Guards to protect the lives and homes of Negroes and other minorities in danger of attacks by the terrorists.

National Committee Socialist Workers Party."

PERSPECTIVES IN BRITAIN AND THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE ORIENTATION

Resolution Adopted at the 1946 Conference of the R.C.P.

R.C.P. CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS, 1946.

The result of the Second World War was a veritable disaster for the British imperialists. In Europe, having defeated the Frankenstein which they helped to create in the shape of Nazi imperialism, the British capitalists are faced with an even greater menace in the domination of half Europe by the Soviet Union. The immediate cause of Britain's declaration of war on Germany was to prevent her domination of the Balkans and Eastern Europe—which could only be a stepping stone to the Empire. Now, not only in this region, but in the Middle East and Asia, Britain is faced with a refurbished version of her nineteenth century nightmare—a Balkans dominated by Russia with control of the Middle East and India at her mercy. She is today faced with a power, not only stronger than Czarism, but, an even greater threat than either the Kaiser's Germany or Hitler's Third Reich. A power, which, because of its revolutionary traditions and an economy based on state ownership of the means of production has a social

appeal to the Asiatic peoples oppressed by British imperialism.

Britain is compelled for this reason alone, to try and arrive at a compromise with sections of the colonial bourgeoisie. That is the significance of the treaties Britain is attempting to negotiate in Egypt and in India. She is faced, however, with a development of national consciousness and a ferment on the part of the masses far greater and more profound in its implications than after World War I, and this is the principal reason why she must make concessions to the colonies.

In addition, the masses of Britain have lost all zest for the glories of Empire and could not be relied on in a long and protracted struggle against the uprisings of the colonial peoples.

Another factor is the pressure of American imperialism which seeks to break the bonds of Empire in order to gain a freer channel of trade and to make Britain absolutely dependent upon her. Britain's economy is not strong enough to maintain her hold on the Empire by the old methods of economic control, nor has she the military force to guarantee and maintain her old colonial military oppression. Thus, while preserving the formal framework of the Empire, in reality the liquidation of the Empire is taking place.

The tame acceptance by the Tories of the policy of the Labour Government is dictated by their recognition of the real changes in world relations. Thus, by concessions to the bourgeoisie hope to disguise the process of empire disintegration and by some miracle, to delay it. The sun is setting on the British Empire. It can look forward only to further disturbances and decline. Insofar as it continues to exist, it will do so largely by the gracious consent of Wall Street.

Long-Term Economic Perspective

The economic basis of this process was long ago analysed and foreseen by Marxism. Britain's acquisition of wealth and power and her domination of half the world was gained at the period of the rise of capitalism and at a time when there were no real challengers in the race for world supremacy. Her advantages, as Trotsky has shown in his book "Where Is Britain Going", have become her disadvantages. Her technique fell behind that of Germany and the United States. Because of her incapacity to compete, the British capitalist class—above all the monopolists—deliberately sabotaged the development of technique hoping to entrench themselves, like the Empire of France, on their huge resources and their own backwardness. Basing themselves on a semi-closed-in system of the sterling bloc, with assured markets, British capitalism had no incentive to begin a large scale rationalisation of industry, which could only lead to increased production without the possibility of finding increased markets.

This privileged position has been lost for ever by the war. The vantage economy of Britain, which, through her investments abroad, extracted tribute from her Empire and semi-colonies and spheres of influence, has been undermined through the loss of foreign investments through the war. The unfavourable balance of trade, which was formerly a weapon in the

Short-Term Economic Perspective

This long term perspective of British imperialism is indisputable and has been long foreseen in the documents of the Fourth International and the Conference documents of the R.C.P. However, a mistake in conjuncture which was made by the Party at its last Conference was the telescoping of the inevitable long-term crisis with the immediate perspective for Britain.

We anticipated that British imperialism would be faced with a crisis as soon as the war was ended. However, the concatenation of circumstances has served to screen the disastrous results of the war for Britain: the huge markets created by the destruction of the war can be utilised, because of the temporary quiescence of the proletariat; what was an unfavourable relationship of forces has been turned into a temporarily favourable one; Germany has, for the time being, collapsed as a competitor; America has been faced with a series of unprecedented strike struggles in basic industry; Europe and the world need tremendous quantities of capital goods, above all, machinery.



The desperation of British imperialism compels the introduction of new capital equipment into the coal mines and steel industry. Rationalisation and streamlining of cotton and other industries is being pressed as a measure of survival. The housing shortage and the destruction in the blitz creates a boom in the building industry. The fusion of finance capital and the State inevitably results in increasing measures of regulation, and of "planning". The tendency towards State capitalism and State control is shown by the projected nationalisation of the mines, steel, transport and fuel, and by the blocking of export of capital and partial control of investment. At home, six years of war has created a huge market for consumers' goods. These measures will undoubtedly temporarily aid the capitalist economy as a whole in the economic upswing. The lavish subsidies of the State, directly and indirectly, rebates of excess profits

tax, subsidies to the cotton barons, subsidies to the food and chemical trusts, etc., help to prop up the structure. All these burdens of course, will be carried basically at the expense of the British masses.

In addition, U.S. imperialism, anxious to use Britain as a future base against the U.S.S.R. has granted a huge loan. This will tide Britain over the next few years. Even without it, her export-import position has improved with amazing rapidity. The export rate now exceeds pre-war levels and is reaching record figures. The loan, however, will be swallowed up by the needs of capitalist economy. Despite the increase in exports, it is impossible to bridge the unfavourable balance of trade.

All these factors, however, lead to the situation where British capitalism temporarily attains a relative stability; only later, we repeat, to be faced with a catastrophe greater than she has ever

experienced in the whole of her history.

The inevitable crisis, however, will not be immediate. It will be delayed for a time. The orientation and strategy of the Revolutionary Communist Party is firmly based on the long-term perspective of crisis and decline; but its eyes are also wide open to the immediate conjuncture and its meaning. For it is on the basis of the economic upswing and the political and industrial moods it will engender, that the immediate evolution of the proletariat will depend. Before a new radicalisation takes place which will hit the workers onto new and higher levels of struggle, deep economic and political transformations will come into being. The growth and building of the Revolutionary Party, the strengthening of its ties with the advanced sections of the working class will depend to a considerable extent, on a correct prognosis of this period.

Politics of the Capitalist Class

The perplexity of the capitalist class and lack of confidence in the future was reflected in their policy during the war and during the General Election. While the "Times", organ of the basic section of the British bourgeoisie, regarded the election with an air of impartiality, the Tory Party tried desperately to make use of the Churchill mascot, and to frighten the more backward workers and the petty bourgeoisie with the spectre of a Gestapo-like dictatorship under the Labour Party. But the change in the psychology of the workers was too deep seated for the success of such tricks. This was also true even for the petit bourgeoisie.

However, the result of the election indicates that capitalism still has many heavy reserves in the backward sections of the population, who still live in the past. The Tories and Liberals together received a vote equal to that of the combined working class parties. It was the peculiar electoral system of Britain which gave the tremendous majority at the polls to the Labour Party. Nevertheless, 12 million votes for the Labour Party is a sign of the tremendous radicalisation that has taken place. The Tories are seeking to gain agreement for the defeat of the Labour Government. But such an agreement and such a defeat is not

a perspective which is likely to mature without a crisis. At present, the ruling class, through the Tory Party, prepares to bide its time, and whilst utilising every opportunity to discredit the Labour leaders, it relies upon them to carry the burdens of imperialism. Both at home and abroad, in the present relationship of forces, it is more suitable to have Labour leaders do the dirty work of capitalism. At this stage they have no intention of disturbing the present relationship of forces and thereby rousing the masses to discredit the present standards under a Labour Government, but would not accept these under the Tories.

At this stage the bourgeoisie has no need for the fascist bands, even as an auxiliary weapon to discipline the proletariat. Nor, it must be added, could they immediately succeed in forming such bands. But moods within the Tory, Labour and the Right wing of the petty bourgeoisie indicate the possibilities, at a later stage, of a swing towards the formation of Royalist-dictatorial or fascist movements.

The Liberal section of the capitalist class tends, at this stage, to lean towards the Labour Government and to support the reforms or semi-reforms which it is introducing. But the Liberals, already a dwindling and vanishing force, have only a perspective of further decline.

Of course, in the event of a serious crisis, all the forces of the bourgeoisie will gather together, with a big section of the Labour M.P.s—a majority of whom are petty bourgeois, even bourgeois in origins and outlook—to try and refurbish a new version of the national government. However, such a development is not an immediate perspective. The Labour Government of 1929-31 was a government of crisis right from the start, having come to power at

a time of the world slump. On this basis the bourgeoisie was enabled to manipulate the situation because of the incapacity of the Labour Government to cope with the crisis, to precipitate its downfall and prepare the victory of the national government in the panic election of 1931.

The economic situation today is entirely different to that of 1929-31. The bourgeoisie does not wish to disturb the present relationship of class forces, and by rousing the proletariat to action, precipitate an anti-capitalist movement among the masses, which would have serious consequences for the economy.

The bourgeoisie is waiting for the inevitable slump, when they will use the crisis against the Labour Party and the working class. However, they dread the possibilities latent in such a situation. A collapse of the Labour Government, onto which a section of the petty bourgeoisie and backward workers might be temporarily stampeded to the Right, would prepare the advanced workers for a sharp swing Left and thus polarise the two camps, bourgeoisie and proletariat. In addition to which, such a victory would have different consequences to that of 1931, which, in the background of a temporary upswing of British capitalism, led to a comparative tranquillity of class relations up to the period just prior to the war. Far from tranquillising the class relations, such a victory for the Tories would precipitate the working class onto the road of open class battles. Those sections of the population, temporarily stampeded in the direction of the Tories, would swiftly react even more violently both to the Left and to the Right.

The collapse of that traditional capitalist parties would be accelerated and the Conservatives suffer the fate of the Liberals. But this is the perspective of the future.

The Labour Government

Despite the difficulties at home and abroad, the Labour Party has attained power at a favourable period from the standpoint of short-term perspective. At our last Conference we anticipated that the coming to power of the Labour Government would precipitate tremendous struggles on the part of the

working class. We anticipated large scale battles on the industrial field, with tremendous pressure on the Labour Government. Had Labour come to power under conditions of industrial crisis and slump, the pressure of the workers for measures in their interests, would undoubtedly have been insistent

and immediate. Political developments would have been speeded up inside and outside the Labour Party.

It is necessary to make a correction in this short-term prognosis. As in the economic field, where the long-term perspectives were telescoped with the short-term, so this was reflected in our political prognosis. We anticipated that the coming to power of the Labour Government would almost immediately open up a situation of

political crisis in the country. On the international and national arena, the class struggle has developed on a slower tempo and the decisive clashes have not yet taken place. Consequently political trends have developed in a somewhat different fashion from what we expected. Because of the circumstances outlined above, the crisis in fact, will have a more drawn out and delayed character.

The long term perspective remains that of crisis and collapse for the Labour Government. But unless we correct our previous analysis and prognosis, the Party will be disoriented in the coming period. While a series of minor and even important crises are inevitable, these political crises will not be of such a fundamental character as to shake the Labour Party from top to bottom, or pose the question of the down-fall of the Labour Government because of the movement of the masses in a revolutionary direction in the next immediate period. Consequently there cannot and will not be a speedy polarisation within the Labour Party.

That the masses—especially the advanced elements—are critical of the Labour Government is undoubted. But they are tolerant and are prepared to extend a large credit of time to the Labour Government. The British masses are traditionally slow to change. Only big events will cause them to break with reformism. The masses feel keenly the burden of food shortages and rationing, the vagaries of the Black Market, etc., and they are well aware that the bourgeoisie are still doing quite well under the Labour Government. But they largely accept the argument of the Labour leaders, that these conditions cannot immediately be alleviated because of the inheritance of the war and its aftermath.

Despite new restrictions which cause grumblings and a certain exasperation with the Labour Government, these are not sufficient to provoke a real movement of revolt against the Labour leadership. Meanwhile, the acute shortages can only be temporary. Conditions will undoubtedly improve over what they have been in the war years. Already, clothing, household utensils, other consumers' goods are appearing on the market in increasing quantities. This process will be accelerated in the next few years. Notwithstanding the decrease of wartime earnings, the conditions of the British working class remain on a bearable level.

The undoubted economic boom masks the fact that no fundamental measures against capitalism are being taken by the Labour Government. We are in a classic period of reformist illusions—a

reformist government coming to power at a period of economic boom. Small reforms and semi-reforms tend to lull the masses with the perspective of a slow but steady improvement in their conditions.

In 1929, the Labour Government operated in a period of slump and could not carry out anything of its declared programme, but on the contrary was forced to initiate counter-reforms on the pretext that it was not in a majority. Today, the Labour Government rides in power at the crest of a tremendous wave of radicalisation seldom seen in British history; when the bourgeoisie lack confidence in their own future. The Labour Government, with the agreement of sections of the capitalist class, is proceeding, to nationalise coal and other industries for the purpose of modernising and preserving the structure of British capitalism. It is actually carrying out in part, its declared election programme. In the eyes of the masses, this reconciles them to sacrifices because they have illusions in the "theory" of a gradual and painless transition to socialism.

The fact that the illusion of "full employment" can be maintained in the present period of boom, that apart from the nationalisation measures other reforms and semi-reforms have been introduced by the Labour Government—National Health Bill, Old Age Pensions, the Housing Plan, abolition of the Trade Disputes Act—these have served to assure the masses that the Government is making a serious effort to do the job for which it was elected.

The policy in Greece and Indonesia aroused trepidation and misgivings among the workers. But the weakness of British imperialism which dictates concessions to the colonial bourgeoisie in Egypt and India, enables the Labour leaders to cover their reactionary policy as though it was a genuine liberation of these peoples and a blow against imperialism. This is especially the case, since the Tories have in vain, greeted with criticism and dismay, this "liquidation of the Empire."

Because mass unemployment will only begin towards the end of Labour's term in office, and because of all the other factors referred to above, it is quite likely that not only will the Labour Government see through its term of office, but that we may see a second Labour Government. The likely course of events, therefore, would appear to be a slow tempo of development. But this is partly dependent upon events abroad. The development of the class struggle in France to the point of civil war, or the outbreak of revolution in India, could speed the process in Britain.

Swing to the Right in the Labour Party

The conjunction of circumstances has resulted in a deep political lull among the masses. This is reflected in the Labour Party as a political swing to the right.

The Labour organisations, which tended to revive after the election, are largely quiescent or dormant. The Left wing leadership has fused with the Right wing, the most prominent leaders taken into the Cabinet and given government posts. Even the incipient Left wing has been dispersed at this stage. The "Victory for Socialism" group has collapsed. The circulation of left Labour publications such as "Tribune" and "Forward" has sharply declined. There is much less political life in the Labour Parties than before the war. This is the general tendency while there are exceptions mainly in the rural areas. Until the economic situation changes and a Left wing with prominent Labour figures develops inside the Labour Party, the general tendency will be for political life in the Labour Party not to increase but to remain at a low level.

This is the honeymoon period for the Labour bureaucracy. A symptom of the processes within the Labour Party was the overwhelming defeat of the Stalinist application for affiliation, largely

on the grounds that it stood for "red revolution and communism." It was not mainly because of the reactionary features of Stalinism that the swing against C.P. affiliation took place, although this undoubtedly assisted the Labour leaders; it was because of the reactionary campaign of the Labour leaders against communism and the renewed illusions in reformism. Only a handful of Labour Party branches throughout the whole country supported affiliation resolutions.

In our last Conference document, we stated:

"It is quite likely that the leaders of the Left wing such as Aneurin Bevan will go over directly to the side of the Right wing, accepting posts in the Government. Thus the Left wing completely scattered and disorganised will get even less of a national expression in the immediate period ahead. However, events will lead to the crystallisation of a new Left wing in which sections of the newer and younger M.P.s in Parliament will play a leading role."

Such a crystallisation is inevitable and will most likely take place at a time of political crisis of the whole regime which will come with the development of the economic slump.

*Unabatedly the anti-Russian campaign had a certain effect which was helped by Stalin's policy in the occupied areas.

Class Struggle on the Industrial Field

Meanwhile, the struggle between the workers and the employers will largely take place on the industrial field.

These struggles will, in the long run, reflect themselves in the political field, inside the Labour Party. But not immediately; not as a direct and automatic process. The most important industrial struggles for many years—the Dock Strike, the movement of the London Building Trades Workers, the Engineers, and more recently, the Tin-Plate Strike in South Wales—all of these movements passed by without affecting the

internal life of the Labour Parties on a local or national scale.

While tolerating the Labour Government in the hope of benefits to come, and satisfied that nearly all have work, the economic boom will invest the workers with confidence. They will attempt to improve their hours and conditions by a direct struggle against the employers. The epidemic of little strikes, even in those industries where no strike struggles have taken place for a generation, (tin-plate workers), and among the most exploited sections (dairy workers), is an indication that hitherto, unaffected strata of the workers will

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