

MILITANT

FOR YOUTH AND LABOUR

NUMBER THREE JANUARY 1965 SIXPENCE

by Roger Protz

GALE-FORCE WINDS and heavy rain battered Brighton as the delegates to the Labour Party conference cheerfully and unhesitatingly voted support for the measures presented by Harold Wilson and George Brown.

If one dealt in mystical omens rather than hard political facts, the gales and storms could be represented as the economic crisis and the conniving financiers threatening to bring the Labour government tumbling to defeat.

Equally, the undignified collapse at the very start of the conference of a large wall banner proclaiming "Labour is building the New Britain" might be considered an unfortunate harbinger of the future.

Unity

The solid unity of the conference was almost indecent. Had Harold Wilson performed three backward somersaults instead of delivering an hour-long speech, no doubt the rank and file would have cheered him no less vociferously.

The mood of this year's conference is understandable. Labour is back in office after 13 inglorious but profitable (for some) years of Tory rule.

The rank and file of the labour movement will support, for the moment, the government's programme, despite its belated and meagre character.

Darken

But when Labour's attempts to bolster the economy start to go awry, then the idle cheering will have to stop, the mood of the ranks will darken and it could be Scarborough 1960 all over again.

Wilson and Brown in their set-piece speeches, proved that Labour is grappling with its problems in a way that can only quickly undermine its position in the country and weaken its chances of re-election.

They cannot indefinitely



WHEN THE CHEERING HAS TO STOP...

rest on their laurels and lay all the blame at the door of the Tories. Certainly, Labour has inherited tremendous problems from the late and unlamented regime, but what has happened to those Napoleonic one hundred days of dynamism and forward planning?

Brown tells us there will be no more "stop-go" but the economic traffic lights are still set firmly at red while Chancellor Callaghan fumblingly tries one Tory measure after another: an imports tax here, a free hand-out to industrialists there, mixed with that old legerdemain of giving the workers something with one hand while he takes it away with the other.

Burden

Who has to shoulder the burden of the crisis? The Tories' rich industrialist friends? No, of course not.

It is the workers who must tighten the belt and never complain. In a remarkable speech—remarkable as much for what he didn't say as for what he did—George Brown declared that inflationary wage demands must stop.

With a curious grasp of basic economics, he seemed to suggest that it is wage increases alone that are responsible for pushing up the cost of living.

Wilson, the previous day, had lashed out at restrictive practises "on both sides of industry" and roundly attacked trade union "luddites" with their "unofficial strikes, wasteful stoppages . . . long, weary demarcation disputes. . ."

These stalwart spokesmen for socialism make no attempt to understand the reasons behind industrial flare-ups. Perhaps they do know that it is the unceasing and ruthless quest for profit on the part of employers and industrialists that is responsible for the defensive attitude of the trade union rank and file.

Relentless

Perhaps they know . . . but hasn't Mr. Callaghan already declared that business men won't be impeded in their relentless pursuit of the fast buck at the expense of the community?

The conference was remarkable also for the and rapid scuttling to the right of the "official" left wing—the Tribunites, the Greenwood, et al.

Chairman Greenwood, in his opening address, said, "History will not lightly forgive any of us who make the task of the government more difficult—or its life shorter." This can scarcely be called a veiled threat: the velvet glove is off with a

vengeance and the knuckle-duster glints ominously for all to see.

The one-time darling of the left unequivocally stated not so much what history might but what the party will certainly do to any who demand more radical policies of the government.

At the CND meeting on the Saturday night, Michael Foot, Baron(!) Brockway and company stressed the importance of taking no action that might embarrass the prime minister—even though he may well throw overboard party policy by accepting the MLF and Polaris.

This miserable retreat of the "left" is of considerable importance. They have created a vacuum which must be quickly filled.

Forge

The real left-wingers, the real socialists—the militants of the YS, the trade unions, the apprentice movement and the constituency parties—should take immediate steps to forge the maximum unity around a programme of action and agitation designed to step up the demands for socialist policies.

There must be an uncompromising battle against every move financiers make to put pressure on the government which conflicts with the interests of the labour movement.

Demands for a socialist foreign policy with freedom for the colonial peoples and a refusal to jerrymander their elections, combined with sweeping nationalisation under workers' control at home must be the cornerstones of the left's campaign.

Sway

Education is of prime importance. Labour's rank and file sway from end to end of the political spectrum because of the appallingly low level of political understanding in the movement.

Bureaucracies grow, fester and gain strength from ignorance and apathy. The way to raise the consciousness of the rank and file is a dual one—a campaign of

action for socialist policies, combined with a sweeping programme of political education.

The plans for a nationwide socialist education movement are under way and must be wholeheartedly supported by all on the left.

Brighton, despite the ballyhoo and bombast, marked a turning point for the Labour Party.

With the retreat of the established "left," the way is clear for a tremendous revitalisation and realignment of forces in the party and movement generally.

If we make the fullest use of the opportunities before us, a fruitful period can open up for the Marxist left.

Help these prisoners of fascism

STUART CHRISTIE of Blantyre, Scotland, an 18 years old socialist, is in a Spanish prison, sentenced to 20 years on a charge of plotting to use explosives against the fascist Franco regime.

Christie was almost certainly framed by Franco's thuggish police. His name was on their files, for he had taken part in a demonstration at the Spanish consulate in Glasgow against the brutal treatment of the Asturian miners.

A petition to the government and a possible lobby of parliament are being planned by his comrades in Scotland. "Militant" readers are urged to write for details to: D.Y. Coull, 274 Renfrew Street, Glasgow.

'Militant' protests at the savage and barbarous sentences given in South Africa to Wilton Mkwayi (life), David Kitson (20 years), John Matthews (15 years), Laloo Chiba (18 years) and Sathyandranath Manaraj (12 years) for 'sabotage' and 'furthering the aims of communism.'

We urge our readers to support and participate in any activities against these sentences.

Raise old age pensions NOW!

THE DECISION to raise MP's salaries and put off an increase for old age pensioners until next April is a miserable one.

When Labour were in opposition they continually castigated the Tories for their refusal to aid the intolerably-treated old people of Britain.

Now Labour are in power—but they have thrown away the chance of giving immediate help to the aged. It is a decision that has

brought protests from all sections of the community.

It is not true, as George Brown suggested at Brighton, that the administrative changes demanded by increased pensions will take until April to sort out.

A leading member of the Civil Service Union has said that his members are prepared, if necessary, to work free overtime to push the increases through. But Mr. Brown did not think of consulting the rank and file.

Little upheaval would be caused, either, if OAPs were given a double payment every fortnight when they draw their pensions.

Labour's decision, under pressure from financiers to stop "inflationary" (read: humanitarian) measures is a shabby one. (The labour movement must put every pressure on them to immediately reverse the decision.

(See "The Scene" on page 6)

Wilson drifts towards disaster - emergency action needed

by Ted Grant

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT, in its first weeks of power, has been confronted by the crisis caused by the long-term decline of British capitalism.

Labour must take immediate and sweeping action to tackle the crisis with socialist planning before the situation grows worse and cripples and even defeats the government.

The Tories left the economy with balance of payments of £800 million. This called for drastic measures, either in the interests of capitalism or against it.

It is impossible to take half-way measures with a system so malignant as the British economy.

Events have demonstrated that there cannot be a middle way. Hardly had the echoes of the speech of the Chancellor, James Callaghan, to the bankers in the City of London died down before the crisis forced the government to raise the bank rate to 7 per cent. Callaghan has followed in the footsteps of Seywyn Lloyd.

The Chancellor and Wilson have promised to work hand-in-hand with the employers and big business. Callaghan, in his speech in the City, said, "Let me make it quite clear that we recognise your contributions to the national economy, and we recognise that you need to earn your living; it is not our job to make it more difficult for you to do so."

The only "contribution" the gentlemen of the City make is to live in great luxury on the wealth produced by the workers.

The *Financial Times* of November 28th commented, "The government, after the crises, has in fact completely altered its economic strategy. The priorities are now the defence of sterling, the boosting of exports, the review of overseas defence expenditure and the release for export industries of skilled men from prestige projects."

"It is hoped to avoid further deflation, but growth, and the 4 per cent. have been abandoned for the time being."

Having forced the Labour government to take the "traditional" measures, measures in the interests of capitalism, the City is preparing to demand further retreats. The *Financial Times*, the writer continues, "If the Europeans (OECD) press hard, however, the government may be forced to choose between postponing many of the measures on which it was elected to office and squeezing the economy hard, and going to the country for a fresh man-

date . . . There is certainly a strong case for cutting public expenditure in some way, since the 4 year programme drawn up by the Conservative government was based on the assumption that the economy would grow at a rate of 4 per cent.; since the assumption is no longer tenable, the programme ought to be revised."

Even the poor measures foreshadowed by the Conservatives are far too radical for these financiers, let alone the modest measures of reform suggested by Labour's election programme.

It is a sorry state of affairs when one of the richest countries in the world, with accumulated resources worth more than £100,000 million, is reduced to the paralysis of "stop-go" which Wilson and company so sternly condemned before the election.

The answer of the labour movement must be that if capitalism cannot afford even these reforms, they can't afford capitalism. If emergency measures are necessary let it be emergency measures against those who can afford it and are responsible for the mess.

There are already hints that steel nationalisation is now too controversial and must be dropped in the present climate of economic crisis. But it is not state measures the city gents are against, only state measures

that it is to be paid for by that even remotely threaten the existence of the capitalist system.

Under the Tories, major concerns, like the aircraft industry, was subsidised lavishly to the extent of £300 million. The state provided the money, ran the risks, paid for the losses, while the capitalist "free enterprisers" pocketed whatever profits were going.

Capitalist industry is becoming so parasitic that the capitalists have lost their former "pride;" they are eager to put out the begging bowl and ask greedily for "national assistance," not the beggarly pittance of a few pounds given to workers and old age pensioners "down on their luck" but hundreds of millions of pounds.

While the capitalist Scrooges are demanding realistic finance and the cutting of money to be spent on schools and hospitals, their brothers in industry are demanding subsidies. *The Times Review of Industry* of December shows the calculations of big business.

"Unlike previous Labour governments this administration is more concerned about the efficiency of industry than about its ownership" declares the review. "The cost of modernisation nowadays is often too great for individual firms and as the FBI (Federation of

British Industries) pointed out last year the state must prime the pump of research."

Even the suggestions of stringent capital gains taxes have now been repudiated in panic by Callaghan. The corporation tax and the capital gains tax will be no heavier than those of the American citadel of capitalism.

Even before the "hundred days" are up, Labour's programme of reform is in ruins. The miserable 4 per cent. rate of growth suggested by the Tories will not be reached next year in a capitalist economy; the Labour government will be lucky if it reaches 2 per cent.

Labour must either introduce drastic measures against the insurance giants, the big banks and the monopoly concerns that dominate the British economy, or the Labour leaders will become tools in their hands.

Yet the British economy is marvellously rich. All that stands in the way of a real plan of production is the domination of the market and the interests of the tiny handful of the owners of the means of production.

This is an emergency. Labour's stated intention to carry out their full programme was warmly received by the working class and the electorate generally.

The increase in old age pensions, in spite of the fact

the workers through higher national insurance contributions was widely welcomed. This reform, however small, heartened the workers, in spite of the justified criticism that it should have been introduced immediately or, at the worst, post-dated like the salary increase of the MPs.

The pressure of Labour backbenchers to backdate the pension increases had to be resisted because of fear of the reaction of bankers at home and abroad.

Nevertheless Labour has a tremendous fund of goodwill to draw upon from an electorate nauseated by 13 years of Toryism. The current opinion polls show growing support for the government.

If Labour proclaims an emergency and draws up a national plan to introduce sweeping socialist measures, based on control of the giant industries, the banks and insurance companies, with the co-operation of technicians, shop stewards, scientist and friendly civil servants, it will have the broad mass of the population behind it and can comfortably increase its majority at an early election.

If these steps are not taken, international finance will cripple the government and bring it tumbling to defeat, to be replaced by the enemy of progress and the ally of racketeers and slum landlords, the Tory Party.

Why socialist planning is so vital

by Alan Woods

ANYONE WHO thought that October 1964 and a Labour Government meant a fresh start on a clean ticket must have had a few nasty shocks.

That 15 per cent tax on imports and the bank rate escapade all helped to undermine the illusion that Labour, once in Westminster, merely had to crack the whip to get the economy moving.

This notion is one example of the illusion that politicians (and "technocrats") dictate to the economy. In reality, the Government proposed, but the market always disposes.

Maudling's recent comments are the most striking demonstration that Labour's methods of "dealing" with the economic crisis differ only marginally from those of the Tories. That we knew before even Maudling.

Many Labour canvassers have come across workers

who refuse to vote because as far as they can see, "they're all the same." Who can blame them?

Remember that famous TV debate between George Brown and Edward Heath on the issue of nationalisation? Brown's answers to Heath could only one of two things, either: (a) "You're a socialist, too" or (b) "I'm a Tory, too."

Labour has nationalised; so have the Tories. The mere fact of public ownership means nothing.

Whatever socialist must ask himself is *what* is nationalised. The "gradualists" in the party, led by the late Hugh Gaitskell, quite correctly, that mere indiscriminate nationalisation—nationalisation for its own sake—is not what Socialism is all about.

They are dead right. But their conclusion is that Labour must only nationalise where private enterprise fails to deliver the goods.

This has been the view of the leadership for quite some time.

Before the war, you could walk into any railway station and see the following placard: "Give us a break. Please ride our trains." The railways were losing money.

It is an inexorable law of the capitalist price mechanism that investment flows to those sectors of the economy which show the greatest field of profit. If it happens that an industry like the railways, which is necessary to the economy as a whole, begins to make a loss, then private capital leaves it in the lurch, the 'national interest' notwithstanding.

There are, in fact, only two countries in the world where the railways make a profit, and one of those is Japan, where the mountainous terrain rules out the possibility of extensive road travel. At this very moment, railway-owners in the

United States are demanding the nationalisation of the industry.

On the one hand, the tiny section of the capitalist class that controls the railways is anxious to get rid of their failing stock, on the other, the industrial capitalists, while unwilling to invest in an unprofitable sector, have a vested interest in maintaining the industry.

If this is borne firmly in mind, we can easily see why the railways were nationalised. The same applies to everything else that Labour nationalised.

The importance of cheap gas and coal to the private sector of the economy is obvious. The condition of the coal industry before the War was chaotic.

Individual pits made profits, but the overall state of the industry, with over 1,000 different owners



cont. on page 3

MILITANT

Editor: PETER TAAFE (Walton Young Socialists)

All correspondence to the business manager:
S. Mani, 5, Buckingham House, Trinity Road, SW 17

LABOUR'S INCOME POLICY

Under the Tories a wage freeze was openly attempted for the benefit of big business. The resistance of the trade unions, under pressure from their members, forced the collapse of this policy. Through the National Economic Development Council the employers and their government attempted to limit wage increases to the so-called 'guiding light' of increased productivity.

Now the Labour government has inherited this policy together with NEDC. During the last 8 months however the official figures of the retail price index have increased by 3.4 per cent, by the end of the year it will rise to at least 4 per cent. This means that all increases of wages up to 4 per cent are wiped out by the increase in the cost of living. Under these circumstances, an honest incomes policy would mean the introduction of a sliding scale of wages to compensate automatically for any rise in the price index. At the same time, pensioners too, would receive an automatic increase, as suggested by Labour before the election.

An incomes policy as outlined by the leaders of the Labour government is supposed to guarantee fair shares for all. But the limiting of the workers income does not mean the limiting of the income of the employers who exploit them. On the contrary it means an increase in their profits.

Last year, when the Tories carried out this policy, profits soared. The food processing firms for example showed a record profit of something like £24 million increase over the previous year. Similar examples can be given in most other industries. The workers felt they were being cheated. As a consequence they fought for wage increases and the recent increase of the dockers and postmen is a reminder that it was only the resistance of the workers which forced a break-through.

The Labour government is trying through Ray Gunter, the minister of Labour, to operate a policy of 'limiting all incomes' through taxation and other means. But the resistance of the employers and financiers is preventing the limiting of profits, even to their previous levels.

The *Times* Review of Industry for December recognises the impossibility of restraining the workers from demanding a share of the greater wealth they produce. Under conditions of mass unemployment in the past three employers ruthlessly used their position to extract the last ounce of energy at the lowest possible rate for the worker. Now that the worker is in a favourable position to sell the only thing he has to gain a livelihood in the open market,—his labour power—the employers resort to subterfuge to try and trick the working class from using the market in their interests. That is why NEDC was introduced by the Tories.

The most serious representatives of the capitalist class understand that they cannot prevent the working class using their solidarity and strength to gain wage increases.

The *Times* Review of Industry for November declared happily, "the Labour Party of 1964 is very different from that of 1945. It has avoided the we-are-the-masters-now class jingoism of earlier days. . . ." It goes on to add that unfortunately from their point of view, "It is not industrial bargaining at national level which determines the size of the pay packet but the relation of labour supply and demand. . . . The most that the NEDC could hope to do would be to work in with the other bodies who are trying to get industrial workers to accept essential change. It comes back in fact to a question of labour mobility, and this in turn to questions of security and training."

Workers should demand full pay for workers who are forced to move to different jobs or who are redundant. All retraining should be at the expense of the employers.

Similarly the labour movement must accept no limitation of incomes while the profits of the employers go unchecked and the unpaid labour of the working class is used not for the benefit of the economy but merely to enrich a tiny clique.

Signed articles in *Militant* do not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial board, which are given in editorial statements.

New Labour MP praises work of Young Socialists

DENNIS HOBDEN, THE Labour MP who won Brighton, Kemptown with a cliff-hanging majority of 7 votes at the general election, is fully of praise for the part played by the local Young Socialists in his victory.

"They were superb," he said and added that their work was undoubtedly decisive in overturning a Tory majority of 5,740.

Took over

The Young Socialists and their colleagues in the Brighton Federation of Socialist Youth, took over a Brighton ward in the local elections this year as part of a run-in for the general election in October.

So good was their work, said Mr. Hobden, a former post office worker, that they almost snatched a safe seat from the Tories.

At the general election, the YS took over half of Hanover ward, but so good was their work that they

were soon given control of the whole ward.

They turned out in force with a mass canvass of the ward, followed by interventions in in other weak wards in the constituency to help the Labour Party workers.

The Young Socialists delivered lorry-loads of electoral material and their knocking-up on election day was like a well-planned military exercise. At one stage, Mr. Hobden said, there were some 300 Labour supporters' cars on the road, taking voters to the polling stations.

New members

Not only did the YS play a vital role in his election but, declared Mr. Hobden, they have awakened interest in politics in the area and new members are hurrying to join the Labour Party and the youth movement.

But Brighton's Labour MP is not so enthusiastic about the House of Com-

mons. He finds much of the ritual long-winded, outdated and unnecessary.

"Some of the Tories who get up and preach about reform of the trade unions ought to start reforming parliament first," he said. "When the House wants to go into committee, not a word can be said until the sergeant-at-arms walks the length of the chamber, takes the mace off the Speaker's table and hangs it underneath from two hooks!"

Stroll down

He said it was clear that the House was designed for the benefit of City gentlemen, who liked to stroll down in the afternoons and evenings to see what was going on over a drink.

That, declared Dennis Hobden, is not good enough for this modern age. "The task of the Labour government is to turn parliament into a workshop of the people."

How the Brighton federation works

IN AN EFFORT TO forge unity between socialist students and the Young Socialists in Sussex, the Brighton Federation of Youth was formed earlier this year.

It brings together socialist youth groups in the area and co-ordinates activities on both the practical and theoretical levels.

Affiliated groups include student socialist societies and Young Socialist branches. The federation's main work revolves around the Labour Party and it has already gained much praise from the party for its work in the council and general elections.

Vital

The federation played a vital role in Dennis Hobden's victory. On election day it has been estimated that there were about 300 young socialists, both workers and students, connected with the federation, working in the Kemptown constituency.

There is no doubt that it was the enthusiasm generated by the federation that united so many young people, with differing political ideas, into concentrating their energy in the fight to get Dennis Hobden elected.

Affiliations to the federation are now growing and our sphere of work is broadening. One of our basic tasks is consolidating the Labour vote in Brighton, Kemptown.

With this in mind we started a membership drive for the Labour Party and Young Socialists. Other activities planned are a conference, weekend schools

From Bob Edwards

and more joint meetings.

All ready under way is the provision for apprentice representatives from differing trades to meet under the federation banner. Our aim is the creation of a youth trades council which would be closely tied to the adult trades council and could discuss the problems of young workers and organise effective action.

Active

The basic policy of the federation is to encourage as many of its members as possible to join the local Labour Party and become active within the wards and youth sections.

New avenues of activity are opening all the time.

The once shaky foundations of the federation are becoming firmer through discussions and activity.

The federation breaks down the barriers between young workers and students and gives all its supporters a healthier political outlook.

Not every town or area is as promising as Brighton for setting up such a federation, but from our experience and achievements over the past year, such a body can be strongly recommended for any district where there are a number of socialist organisations.

This is particularly important where there are student socialist groups. It is only through such bodies that students can be brought in to real political activity and play a role in the struggle for socialism.

PLANNING

from page two

working with no co-ordinating plan, was abominable.

In order to make the mines pay after the war, a new generation of pits would have had to be sunk. The amount of capital required for such an undertaking would have been far in excess of anything private owners would manage.

And Labour did not nationalise coal and railways. They were both taken over by the Tory-dominated war coalition government.

The question whether or not to hand back the industries to their previous owners was settled by Royal

Commissions, in the case of coal by Sir Charles Reid of Fife Coal Co., who presided over the Commission.

In fact, every committee that submitted a report in favour of nationalisation, was in each case appointed, not by Labour, but by a Conservative government or by the War Coalition with its Tory majority. Even the celebrated Groundnuts Scheme was originally recommended in a report by the mammoth monopoly, Unilever!

To be concluded in the next issue.

NOVEMBER: APPRENTICES IN ACTION

Strikers opposed by employers, trade union bureaucrats and — 'KEEP LEFT'!

Not forgetting the police, seen here watching pickets in Manchester



Harry Dowling

Treasurer, Merseyside Apprentices Committee

IN SPITE OF VICIOUS threats from employers and trade union bureaucrats, November 2 saw thousands of apprentices throughout Britain on strike in support of their demands for a thoroughgoing improvement in their wages and conditions.

A partial victory was gained when the union leaders agreed to take up one demand: full negotiating rights for apprentices.

By noon on November 2 the roll call was: Merseyside 1,200 out; Manchester 1,000; Dundee 600; and hundreds out in London, Stockport, Bristol, Sheffield and other centres. Battling against tremendous odds, every effort was made to pull out all the apprentices.

But intimidation from employers and outright refusal from officials of the Amalgamated Engineering Union to give the least help had the desired effect. Bert Rule, the Merseyside District Officer, publicly threatened apprentices in the *Liverpool Echo* with very serious consequences if they downed tools.

Challenge

This was followed by a point-blank challenge to the apprentices' leaders from the bosses. Their solicitors sent a letter to the chairman of the Merseyside Apprentices Committee two days before the strike threatening legal action should the strike take place.

Obviously heartened by the *Rookes v Barnard* judgement, they calculated that inexperienced apprentices would cringe at their threats.

Camel Lairds apprentices were told in no uncertain terms what lay in store for them if they walked out. A poster was displayed throughout Merseyside's largest shipyard, showing a large boat and the words "Don't Strike."

The weakness of the

union organisation led the lads to accept this blunt warning.

Not content with mere threats, the bosses did not hesitate to bring in the police and in Manchester police dogs were used on the picket lines. Apart from isolated areas, it was the same story everywhere of a coalition of union officials and bosses to prevent the spread of the strike.

The Electrical Trades Union circulated a letter of warning to all apprentices.

Sidelines

The employers and union officials were joined in their chorus of denunciation by a voice from within the ranks—or rather, the sidelines—of the apprentices themselves.

It was *Keep Left* and its supporters. From the outset, these "politicals" (which is a derogatory term used by apprentices and indicates the damage the Young Socialists have suffered because of *Keep Left's* activities) followed their usual pattern—"capture or destroy."

They pursued a twin course. They tried first to superimpose their political views from above on to the apprentices; then they attempted to destroy, not in debate but purely organisationally, the majority opposition to them.

Shadow

As they were not capable of taking the leadership of the movement, they attempted to create their own "pure" brand of apprentice committee. In Manchester two committees existed months before the strike, with a handful supporting the shadow committee.

The damage and confusion caused by this move was only shown in its criminal nature during the strike.

On Merseyside they did not even have nominal support and had to try to use the existing committee. One

of the supporters of the YS National Committee majority, L. Moores, with several cronies, attempted to barge his way into a meeting of the MAC.

This self-styled "apprentice butcher—unemployed" was rejected by the apprentices. After this failure, a new tactic was tried.

Rumours

Only a few days before the strike, it was discovered that these disrupters had created another separate "apprentices committee." Behind the scenes rumours were spread by this new shadow committee—which had no apprentices on it!—that the MAC was "communist controlled" and that it had no national support.

But at the pre-strike

meeting in Liverpool they had no success at all. Their ranting was spurned.

For individuals who parade under the banner of Marxism, the role of strike breaking seems criminally opposed to their own principles. On November 2, when they told pickets to return to work, they showed that adventurism leads inevitably to a position of extreme reaction. The two are opposite sides of the same coin.

Impact

The employers and their press allies underestimated the numbers involved in the movement. When the full impact was felt on the first day of the strike they deliberately played down its effects and even pretended

to believe it to be a one-day stoppage.

Keep Left found itself in the same camp, unwittingly rubbing shoulders with engineering barons and their lackeys, the union bureaucrats. Only the *Sun* reported that 20,000 out of 70,000 lads had downed tools.

Premature

It is clear that the strike was premature, that support had developed and matured only in pockets. But to rant and rave on the eve of a national strike that it was "not sufficiently organised" after they had done all they could to make sure that just such a situation prevailed, was a complete rejection of Marxism by the

National apprentices movement formed through the strike

Peter Taafe
Walton YS

PREVIOUS APPRENTICES struggles have seen the top union leaders either neutralised or forced into reluctant support.

This strike revealed that their co-operation with the industrial peace plans of the Wilson government meant that they would move quickly to break the back of the strike.

Gates

This was even demonstrated at shop-floor level, when convenors of some factories ordered the gates to be shut on pickets.

But in spite of this, the union leaders at York have been forced for the first time to take up one of our major demands: full negotiating rights for all apprentices.

The union leaders have been warned that if they accept the employer's straight increase offer of 23s. it will lead to immediate action again by the apprentices.

Links

Our percentage increases are fundamental. This strike has, if nothing else, created a national organisation of apprentices. We have strong links with all areas which are eager to see the acceptance of the AEU Youth Charter.

On Merseyside the organisation remains and we will take up the struggles of all apprentices and young workers. Unlike the cardboard Marxists of *Keep Left*, we will fight for our ideas inside the apprentices' national committee with patient explanation and argument.

The sectarian fringe has now started witch-hunting. At the Liverpool Trades Council meeting on November 19, a supporter of the majority on the YS National Committee, from Edge Hill constituency, moved a resolution condemning the Merseyside Apprentices Committee as a "subversive organisation"!

Lie

He held up the example of the shadow Manchester committee, which, he claimed, could attract over 200, while the MAC, according to the mover, could pull in only 30 apprentices. This blatant lie was too much for even Moores and Farley, the North-west member of the YS national committee, who both stayed away from the meeting along with their cronies.

The Manchester appren-

The battle of the East Lancs Road — solidarity wins vital strike



From Ted Mooney
Bootle YS

ON NOVEMBER 24, 6,000 workers at the English Electric factory on the East Lancs Road near Liverpool, in a tremendous demonstration of solidarity, pledged full support for the draughtsmen who had been on strike for two weeks.

The new management, by their dictatorial and arbitrary methods had gained in two weeks what senior stewards had patiently worked for twenty years to achieve — unity between manual and white-collar workers.

At a meeting on November 24, the management were warned that the draughtsmen did not stand alone. All the work which was produced after November 12, the date draughtsmen came out, was to be 'blacked.'

Endorsed

A resolution was unanimously endorsed which pointed out 'that conditions have considerably worsened since the appointment of a new general manager.'

Events at East Lancs over the past period have shown that the management have gone out of their way to discipline the union organisation. The draughtsmen's dispute was the culmination of a series of provocative moves.

The new general manager, Barlowe, first showed his teeth in a dispute involving tool-room workers. Arising from a strike over a wage increase, the senior steward for the Brass and Metal Workers Union left the factory to bring the tool-room workers back to work

Sacked

Although it had previously been a verbal agreement that senior stewards were able to do this without "clocking off," the management a week later interviewed the steward, J. Baxter.

After accusing him of 'defrauding the company' he was sacked. That it was a pre-determined move by the management calculated to intimidate other stewards is shown by the fact that his insurance cards and other credentials arrived at his home by the first post next morning.

Refuse

The management were unsuccessful in implicating another steward accused of the same 'crime' against the company. Mr. Baxter is still unemployed and the management refuse to reinstate him.

The dispute of the draughtsmen arose over the continued refusal to negotiate a general increase for all the men.

Pursuing a policy of

The draughtsmen returned to work in December when they had won all their major demands from the management. This victory — and the solidarity displayed by manual and non-manual workers — is of tremendous importance for the whole labour movement.

'divide and rule,' it had been the practice of the management to negotiate individual rises while splitting the staff between weekly and monthly paid employees. English Electric paid the lowest rates for draughtsmen in the area.

After exhaustive procedure at local and national level, the draughtsmen's union, DATA, commenced a work to rule.

Admiration

The management reacted by sacking 5 men; all DATA members came out on strike. Even senior stewards with long experience of struggle were full of admiration for the militancy and excellent organisation of the draughtsmen.

The management, realising the success of picket-

ing (300 lorries were turned away from the factory in the first two weeks of the dispute) resorted to their friends in need, the police. The chairman of the strike committee Mr. K. Tynan was arrested on November 20 and charged with obstruction.

In response to this toughening of the management's attitude, the draughtsmen decided to call for support for the first time from the shop-floor workers. The management in anticipation of this had a few days before again set a precedent by posting a notice through out the factory which gave their explanation of the dispute.

'Democracy'

They, of course refused stewards requests that the draughtsmen's case be posted alongside it. So much for the 'industrial democracy' that is the watchword of the Tories in parliament.

The employers were given their answer by the massive show of solidarity on November 24. The next day, draughtsmen at the English Electric sister factory at Netherton also struck.

The dispute at English Electric is both an example for and a warning to Merseyside workers. The forging of links between white-collar and manual workers is a giant step forward.

On the other hand, the hardening of the employers' attitude shows that they are out to tame trade union organisations.

Harsh

How hollow the pleas of Labour Ministers for 'industrial peace' sound against the harsh reality of disputes like the present one at English Electric. What the employers mean by 'abolition of restrictive practices' is the sole right for them to ride roughshod over the workers.

After record profits in the first six months of this year, the English Electric bosses still attempt to screw every last ounce of labour from the workers.

To these attempts at intimidation should be posed not the 'co-existence' of the Wilson leadership but the nationalisation of this giant combine along with the rest of the engineering industry.

political pygmies of *Keep Left*.

To suppose that even individuals with greater ability than the KL supporters could organise a 100 per cent. apprentices strike is to totally disregard the problems which beset apprentices and the way in which the movement develops.

Urgency

Apprentices who are moving towards a strike cannot be told "Hold everything, wait until next year when we'll be properly organised."

The militancy and enthusiasm of lads would drain away when constricted by a leadership that cannot offer more than a mystical "March 29."

ement

tices conference which *Keep Left* is bragging about was the usual highly-organised affair, packed with students and unemployed youngsters, with only a handful of genuine apprentices.

The chairman of their Manchester committee, Mike Hughes, was completely isolated in his own factory. The other apprentices ignored his call to stay at work, walked out and forced him to join the picket line.

Ejected

At the Merseyside pre-strike meeting, Moores, the chairman of the YS federation, was ejected by angry apprentices and his supporters were shouted down.

Their activities have not only damaged their "militant" reputation but have done grave harm to the YS and serious socialists.

Stop this dirty trade with South Africa

PRIME MINISTER Harold Wilson used the word "honour" when he said the government would let South Africa have 16 Buccaneer aircraft.

Britain, he said, must "honour her agreement."

This is a peculiar term to use in conjunction with the barbarous Verwoerd regime. There can be no honour between socialists and near-fascists.

And the honourable agreement which Wilson is anxious to push through was negotiated, in any case, by the last Tory government, which was not noted for its humanitarian outlook.

Disquiet

Wilson's decision is bound to cause disquiet among Labour Party supporters, including many who are prepared to accept his unhappy juggling with the capitalist economy.

The rank and file may be weak on economics, but they are red hot on international principles and the declaration "No arms for South Africa!" is a basic tenet of party policy.

The government can apparently draw some distinction between arms for Verwoerd which he will use to deter "external aggression" and those to be used against

"internal aggression." This is a subtle difference many of us find hard to perceive.

And many of us are not, like Wilson, prepared to accept the word of the butcher Verwoerd that the aircraft will not be used against Africans as well as mythical external enemies.

Neither will it do to plead, as one Labour MP has, that to cancel the contract would cause unemployment amongst aircraft workers in Hull. The socialist scales should not be

balanced by massacred Africans and jobless British workers.

A socialist government must stop all dealings with Verwoerd and take the necessary steps to ensure that no workers lose their jobs because of such action, through redevelopment of the aircraft industry and retraining of workers where necessary on full pay.

Every effort must be made to stop the government pushing through this squalid deal.

THE WEEK

A news analysis for socialists

Features articles on the industrial scene, the Labour Party, Young Socialists, the Colonial revolution and the American scene

Full details from the Business Manager, 54 Park Road, Lenton, Nottingham

Write for a free copy now!

IN VIEW

Behan - darkness all the time

WITH BREAST EXPANDED by Brian Behan (MacGibbon and Kee, 25s.)

'With Breast Expanded,' could have been an interesting and thought-provoking book. Its author spent many stormy and turbulent years in left-wing politics.

His trades union activity, whilst gaining him no personal accolades from employers and union officials, had earned him the respect and affection of his fellow workers.

To those who knew him well, his ready wit and iconoclasm seemed a guarantee that whilst cherished institutions and ideas would be prodded and pilloried, it would be done with humour and humanism.

Unfortunately, our hopes have not been realised. Brian Behan's book is an attempt to jettison his past, not to understand it. When he discusses politics or trades unionism, he presents an image of himself as the rough and ready, homespun philosopher, who was exploited by power-hungry men scheming for personal power.

The disgusting manner in which the trades union bureaucracy expelled him from two unions is explained not as the action of a privileged caste defending its interests but as 'the foretaste of the undemocratic state.' The closed shop is no longer the action of working peo-

ple defending themselves against exploitation, but as 'an evil tyranny.'

In June and July, 1959, at the time of the Notting Hill riots, we often shared a platform together, speaking out against fascism and racialism. Now he can refer to Indians in London's East End who 'never seem to do anything.'

He makes the cheap remark about an Indian who was sacked from a job he was working on and, because of a lack of support from his workmates, philosophically accepted his lot, 'How inoffensive the Indian is.'

His sharpest barbs are reserved for the Socialist La-

THE SCENE

DID YOU JOIN IN THE adulations on Sir Winston Churchill's 90th birthday? It is amazing how many otherwise sane and sensible socialists lose their reason at the mere mention of the British Bulldog.

Kingsley Martin, doyen of the *New Statesman*, reviewing a biography of Churchill shortly before the much-publicised birthday, admitted that much of his history before 1940 left a great deal to be desired — but, said Martin, all could be forgiven because 'Churchill won the war.'

How incredible that in a supposedly sophisticated society such myths are not only accepted by the broad mass of the people but are perpetuated by thinkers and intellectuals.

Although individuals can play a vital role, it is the masses who are decisive in the making of history. This is doubly so in times of great social upheaval, like revolutions and wars.

British capitalists, in defence of their profits and privileges, dragged the people into the second world war, with all its accompanying tragedy and misery. Memoirs of the top military leaders of the allied powers show that they spent so much time wrangling and feuding that is remarkable the 'enemy' was ever defeated.

The outcome was finally decided, almost in spite of Churchill and his constantly changing advisers, by the front-line troops. Churchill is presented as the great architect of a victory because it is vitally important in capitalist society for the role of the masses to be constantly downgraded.

'Not for them to reason

why, theirs is just to do or die' — how particularly true that cynical remark is in times of imperialist war, when the working class do all the fighting and the dying.

And, of course, Churchill's pre-war record cannot be forgotten, or forgiven, as Kingsley Martin suggests.

Churchill was the life-long enemy of the workers. He set out ruthlessly to crush the General Strike and even attempted to send gunboats up the Thames to shoot the unarmed dockers.

His war-time speeches that poured scorn and vitriol and Hitler and Mussolini sound rather odd in comparison with his sweeping praise for them in the early 30's. Mr. Hitler and Mr. Mussolini, said the great friend of the people had the best-organised states in Europe and were building a bulwark against Bolshevism.

When the true history of Sir Winston Churchill is written it may help to show the working class who their real friends are.

COLLEAGUE Roger Protz, having been ejected from the Labour Party for 'subversive activities,' seems now to be disrupting the Church of England.

When a fellow journalist, who edits a magazine inset which is distributed to parishes throughout the country, went on holiday he

asked Protz to stand in as film critic. Not one to pass up a free morning at the cinema, Protz hurried off to see 'Rattle of a Simple Man,' which he castigated as being once again the corny tale of 'the tart with the golden heart.'

A few weeks later, the press was full of reports of how the good Christians of Amersham, disgusted by his use of inappropriate words, had sent mutilated copies of the magazine to their priest.

The battle raged in the local Buckingham press over whether or not religious paper should mention the presence in society of whores, tarts and randy Mancunians.

In his simple ignorance, Protz concluded that the film was strictly 'one for a wet Sunday afternoon.' Surely the unkindest cut of all.

The Church has enough trouble filling its pews without atheists encouraging the flock to see 'dirty' films on the Sabbath.

MEANS TESTS are justifiably detested by socialists. But isn't there a strong case for one when deciding salary increases for MPs?

I accept that £1,750 wasn't much for a member who had to exist on that as his only source of income and pay considerable expenses out of it. The leap to £3,250, however, seems unjustified even for the poorest member at a time when the workers are being cajoled to exercise restraint when considering wage demands.

How many MPs live solely on their parliamen-

bour League, of which he was chairman from 1958 to 1960. The SLL he presents simply as an organisation of cranks and frustrated people.

This original contribution to the realm of ideas may be reassuring to publishers and liberals, but it renders a disservice to truth.

The role of being a poor man's Koestler ill befits a man who has twice been imprisoned for his socialist beliefs. Sadly we must record that Behan, who once made such a fine contribution to the socialist movement, has now betrayed himself.

B.P.

That war again!

KING AND COUNTRY directed by Joseph Losey (Warner-Pathe).

The first world war is now a safe subject. As it recedes further into the distance, all manner of liberals and quack progressives denounce it feverishly as an unnecessary bloodbath.

Joseph Losey's film does not set out to dramatically tear any more veils off the exhumed corpse. He knows, we all know, what that war was about and what it cost in human lives.

Losey is dealing not with the general canvas first worked by Joan Littlewood's 'Oh, What a Lovely War,' and now virtually kicked to death by umpteen programmes on BBC television.

He has taken instead one small incident and shows the effects upon the soldiers of all ranks of 4 year unrelenting, grinding squalor.

Here is the mud of Passchendale, littered with grinning, mutilated corpses. Here are the trenches, the duckboards and the improvised billets, awash with filth.

Here is the careful division between officers and men, with vintage wine for the former and rat bites for the latter.

Private Hamp (Tom Courtenay) is in prison, soon to be court-martialled for desertion. He is just another inarticulate victim of a war that caused havoc to men's mind as well as their bodies.

His aloof defending officer (Dirk Bogarde) is spurred into angry and eloquent action during the court martial when confronted by the arrogant indifference of Hamp's prosecutors, in particular the medical officer who prescribed a 'No. 9' pill for the mentally sick soldier who was already crippled with dysentery.

But Hamp had 'cold feet.' In the words of the commanding officer, morale must be maintained and so sentence of death is passed and Hamp is ritualistically done to death in the mud.

The director spoils this grim tale with a series of side shows that are glaringly inopportune. The private soldiers hold a mock trial of a rat at the same time as Hamp is being court martialled—and this awkward and amateurish interlude seriously detracts from the film's powerful main theme.

The direction itself is uninspired and the end result is a cinematic play, not a moving picture, but I can appreciate the difficulties facing the director who was attempting to present the tortuously slow passage of time.

But the weaknesses are minimal and it is a grim reminder of what happens to ordinary, decent people fighting in appalling conditions for 'their' King and 'their' country.

R.P.

John Lilburne

Could it be sabotage?

THIS ISSUE OF MILITANT has been delayed due to the copy being delivered to the wrong address by the post office. It finally reached our typesetter one week after it was posted.

The delay has, however, enabled us to include a report of the Labour Party conference.

THE WORLD

The terror and misery of South Vietnam

THE BERTRAND RUSSELL Peace Foundation has produced a 6-page dossier of facts and figures "Extract of Data compiled on War in Vietnam."

We are reprinting some of the most telling figures here as an indictment of the bloodbath caused by Yankee imperialism in order to drag Vietnam into its sphere of influence. Britain, too, is involved through membership of SEATO and demands that the government withdraw must be stepped up.

"The following figures are conservative as they were compiled before mid-1963.

Number dead in 1962 alone: 40,000. Source: General Paul D. Harkins, Chief of US military operations in Vietnam, quoted in *Sword of Free Vietnam*.

Numbers killed by late 1962: 100,000. Source: 1963 White Paper of right-wing Democratic Party of Vietnam.

Numbers held in concentration camps: Over 5,000,000 by mid-1962. Source: DPV White Paper.

Number of secret police: 300,000 by mid-1963. Source: DPV White Paper.

Number estimated held in "strategic hamlets": over half the rural population by mid-1962. Source: DPV White Paper.

The estimated number held in the hamlets by mid-1963 was over 6 millions. The hamlets are described as concentration camps, with spikes, moats and machine-gun turrets, with forced labour and patrols.

60 per cent of "enemy" casualties claimed estimated to be uninvolved peasants. Source: DPV White Paper.

Militant needs your help — urgently! Please ask your YS branch or Labour Party to take a standing order

THE NEW WAVE OF death and misery in the longtortured Congo has disturbed public opinion throughout the world.

But the manner in which the news has been presented in Britain shows the despicable depths to which the Tory press will descend. Pages have been filled with harrowing pictures of dead whites, with accompanying stories openly using such disgraceful terms as "primitives" and "savages."

One would think from these reports that the unfortunate victims of the latest upheaval in the Congo were the first people ever to die there.

Cockpit

As a statement from the neighbouring Brazzaville Congo government so rightly said, when one American missionary is threatened, the whole world is turned upside down; when 20 Congolese die every day, no one pays any attention.

For a century or more the Congo has been a cockpit of naked imperialist penetration, looting and murder.

At the turn of the century, the Congolese numbered some 30 millions. The figure stands now at between

12 and 14 millions.

Where have they all gone? It is rather a high death rate for natural causes. The Congolese have been slaughtered and butchered by the combined efforts of European imperialists and the United Nations-cum-United States.

The reaction of the press, outdistanced by the "fair, unbiased and objective" BBC, is an openly racist one. When black people are dying by the score, day after day from either bullets or malnutrition, they are ignored.

That's just part of the price the "natives" have to pay if they are to be given the advantage of the enlightened rule of western imperialism.

But when a few dozen whites indirectly or directly, unconsciously or consciously acting as the agents of imperialism, God or the state department, are threatened, Fleet Street is awash with cheap, hypocritical tears.

The blame for the deaths of the whites is, in any case, the responsibility of those powers who have connived to overthrow the legitimate Congolese government.

The first free leader of the Congolese, Patrice Lu-

mumba, was threatened by the armed intervention of the Belgians. Unable to remove him from office, they left the job to the "international peace force," the UN, who bundled Lumumba off to breakaway Katanga, where he was horribly beaten and killed by Tshombe and his cronies.

But still the slaughter went on, even with the "reliable" government of Kasavubu in power. The Congolese people carried on the fight so courageously lead by Lumumba and stepped up the struggle for freedom and independence.

Grip

Tshombe was pushed into the premiership in a vain effort to maintain the grip of the west on the Congo, but even this murderous stooge could not halt the march of the "rebel" (read legitimate) army.

In times of revolution and freedom fighting, people caught in the cross-fire often find themselves taken hostage. We accept that most of the white hostages in Stanleyville were quite innocent people and it was to be hoped that their lives would not be endangered.

Their death warrants were signed the moment the hated Belgian paratroopers landed and joined forces with the white mercenaries. (Of all the low species of human life on this planet, surely one of the lowest is a mercenary soldier, who will go anywhere and shoot anyone—at a price. But even lower, of course, are the social systems that nurture conditions in which mercenaries can breed.)

We condemn the imperialists, Belgian in particular, for being solely responsible for the terror and bloodshed in the Congo.

And—let us not be mealy-mouthed about this—we condemn also the decision of the Wilson government to allow the Belgians to use Ascension Island as a base for the paratroopers.

Unwanted

There can be no peace in the Congo while soldiers of any foreign nation are present, uninvited and unwanted.

The labour movement must spare no effort to join with the Congolese to throw out the troops and the Tshombe government.

It is time to close the long overdue history of rape, murder and pillage and to allow a free and independent Congo to flourish.

Racialism rears its head in Ceylon and India

S. Mani
Wandsworth YS

THE RECENT AGREEMENT between the prime ministers of Ceylon and India—both alleged socialists—on the repatriation of plantation workers of Indian origin in Ceylon, is a retrograde step and shows the reactionary nature of Asian nationalism.

It is intended to send 525,000 Indian workers to India over a period of 15 years, which means that some 35,000 will be repatriated each year.

A further 150,000 will be sent back in the following 15 years.

PRESSURE

It was stated that the remaining 300,000 would be given Ceylon citizenship, but this section of the agreement is being repudiated under pressure from reactionaries and the minority is to be put on a separate electoral role.

The old imperialist game of divide and rule is now being used by the capitalist class in the former colonial



Indian workers on a Ceylon tea estate

areas. They are using the Indian workers as a means of diverting the struggle of the Sinhalese workers and peasants against their own landlords and bosses.

In the Ceylonese economy, the tea and rubber plantations play a keyrole. A great part of the wealth of the country and, from an Asian point of view, the relatively high standard of living of the Ceylonese people is due to the labour of the Indian workers on these

estates.

The task of socialists is to unite all workers, regardless of "nationality." The Ceylon Marxist party, the Lanka Sama Samaj party (Equal Rights party), played such a role for many years.

Now one section of the party, led by Dr. N. M. Perera, has formed a coalition with Mrs. Bandaranaike's capitalist party.

One opportunist step leads to another. First they abandoned the independent

role of the working class; now they are silent about this attempt to disrupt the unity of workers by raising the ugly question of nationalism.

The repatriation scheme, which is an even more openly racist measure than the Tory immigration act in Britain, will work to the disadvantage of all workers in Ceylon, not just the Indians.

A strong and united working class is of paramount importance if socialism is to be built in Ceylon.

BRIDGE

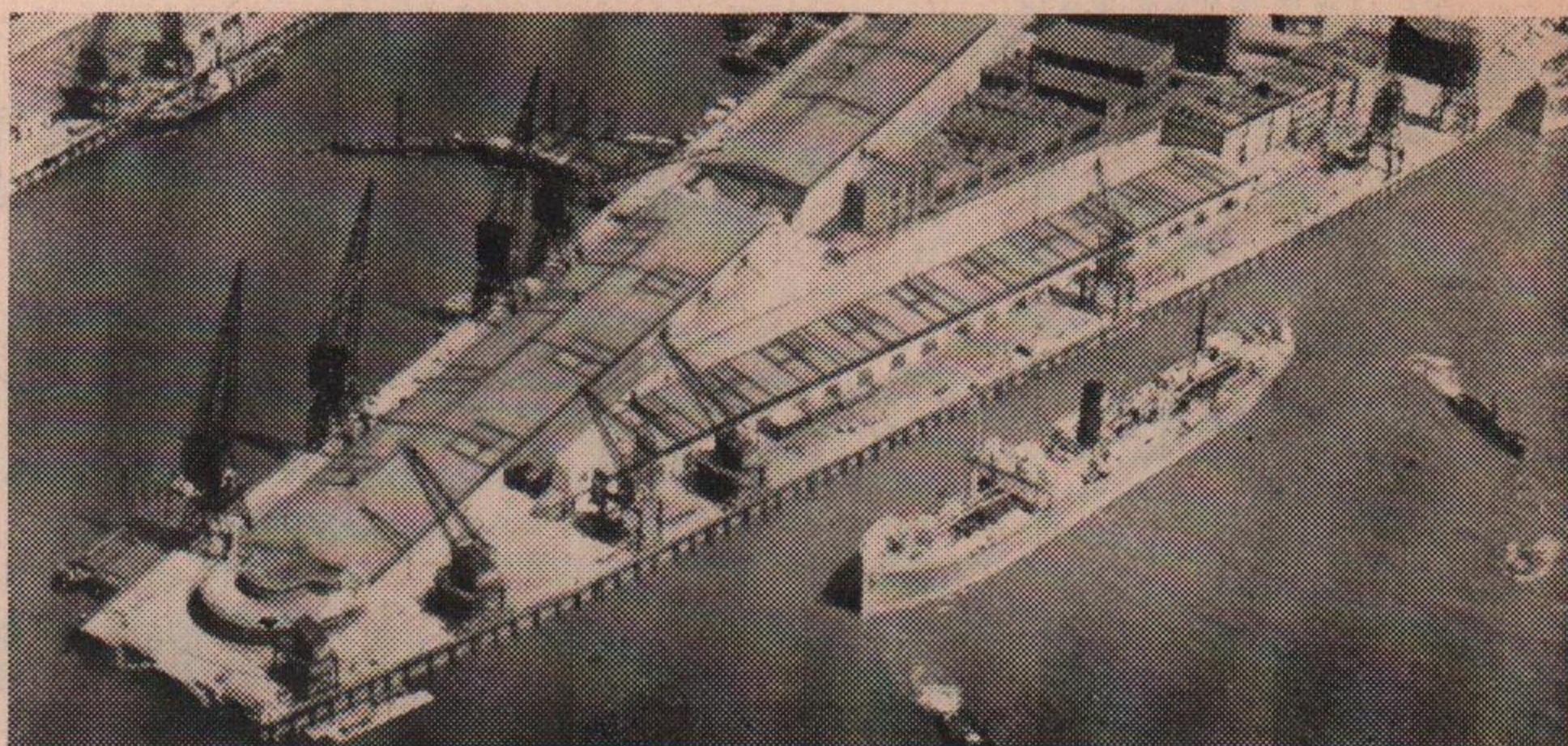
The Indian workers would also be a bridge to the Indian continent itself and an integral part of the plan to overthrow capitalism there.

We express our support and solidarity for the revolutionary section of the Lanka Sama Samaj party, which has refused on principle to join the coalition and is fighting to maintain an international policy and to win the Ceylon workers, both Indian and Sinhalese, to its banner.

THE DOCKS STRUGGLE

National movement needed to step up the fight

by BOB PENNINGTON



THE DEVLIN RECOMMENDATIONS of a 19s. 2d. per week rise for time-rate workers and five per cent. for pieceworkers have averted a national docks' strike, and have given the dockers a small, but welcome, improvement in wages.

There is no doubt, however, that the new increases fall far short of what the great majority of portworkers consider to be adequate. When Tim O'Leary, national docks' secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, first demanded the sum of 25s for time workers, resentment was rife.

Branches of the TGWU had overwhelmingly gone on record for a basic wage of £15 per week. Feelings ran so high on this matter that last October, TGWU general secretary, Frank Cousins (now in the Wilson cabinet) was compelled to close a "card-holders only" meeting in Liverpool Stadium after only one hour.

Cousins, O'Leary and the Union's assistant general secretary, Jack Jones, faced a constant storm of interruptions over the 25s and also on the issue of decasualization.

Remote

Despite widespread dissatisfaction, the possibilities of an unofficial strike are remote.

The National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers, the "blue" union, have come out in favour of a minimum wage of £15. Their leaders however, have painful memories of the overtime strike in 1954.

Under NASD leadership, most of Britain's dockers came out on strike against compulsory overtime.

This led to over 18,000 men in the northern ports leaving the TGWU and joining the "blue" union.

(NASD membership cards are blue, TGWU white)

In double quick time, the TUC expelled the NASD and the employers joined forces with the TGWU leaders to remove them from the industry's main negotiating bodies.

Still denied official recognition in the northern ports and debarred from the National Joint Council, they have played no role in the present official negotiations.

Power

The occasional militant speech has been heard from NASD general secretary, Dick Barrett, but his, and the union executive's main concern has been to regain their lost respectability and once again sit in the seats of power.

Most of the activity carried on amongst the rank and file dockers has been by the London Liaison Committee. An unofficial body, although many of its members are unpaid TGWU officials, the Liaison Committee favours the policy of changing the TGWU from within.

Bitterly opposed to the idea of "breakaway," their attitude towards the "blue" union members is an ambivalent one. Their insistence that the northern men should return to the TGWU makes genuine collaboration difficult.

Anxious to advertise the advantages of working in the TGWU, they have also been less critical of the watered-down wage demand and tend to claim that the Devlin recommendations are a victory for their policies.

Restricted

The only other force of any real consequence are the "blue" union northern members. These men are restricted by the conservative policies of their London leaders and they do not at

present possess the authority amongst London TGWU and NASD members to lead an unofficial strike.

What is required now is the organization of a national portworkers' committee which can produce a policy on both wages and conditions and which is prepared to subordinate the sectional differences to the main demands.

Such a body can only come into existence as a result of joint activity between the Liaison Committee and the NASD members in the north.

Prune

Wages are not the only problem on the docks. The employers are determined, and there is little doubt that the Labour government will support them, to introduce mechanisation, prune the labour force and thereby boost production.

Neither of the two main unions have offered an independent solution to the employers' proposals. The TGWU are content to place their trust in the Labour government ensuring that any changes will be "fair to all sides."

The NASD, meanwhile adopt an intransigent attitude against all change and because it is only defensive such a policy can offer no more than a permanent war of attrition.

Arduous

To oppose mechanisation with a simple no is insufficient. Dockers want a more efficient industry and mechanisation does not just mean more productivity.

It can also mean removing some of the arduous and backbreaking jobs dockers have to do.

What the unions must say is that they are prepared to accept mechanisation if wherever, and whenever, it is introduced, it will be done only with the agreement of

the men and that new wage rates will be fixed by the men's elected job committees.

If redundancy occurs as a result, then this will affect only dockers over a certain age and that they will be retired on a pension equivalent to the basic wage.

Naturally the employers will insist that they cannot afford this but the unions must demand that the employers make their accounts available to the unions for inspection.

Scramble

Not only is it necessary to insist that attendance money should be increased but it is vital that the system of hiring should be changed. At present men are compelled to engage in an undignified scramble for work.

Their hire is often subject to the whims and caprices of the foreman.

The answer to this is the union hiring hall, so that all

labour is supplied by the unions. Men could be elected by the members on a non-permanent basis to be responsible for supplying labour demands.

Surely, it is not beyond the wit of the unions to devise a scheme with in-built safeguards against its abuse, to do this? This would not only ensure a fairer system of hiring but places the control of labour in the hands of the men themselves.

Issue

An opportunity presents itself here to make workers' control a really understandable issue and to bring a campaign forward that inevitably lead towards a mass docks' movement in favour of nationalization.

It is such a policy that a national rank and file portworkers' committee should be taking to the dockers and propagating inside the unions.

S. African student released after London rally

David West
Clapham YS

ON NOVEMBER 7 some 500 students representing most London colleges, took part in a march on South Africa House in protest against the detention and general suppression of members of the National Union of South African Students by Verwoerd's racist regime.

One of those arrested and tortured under the 90-day Detention Act was Livingstone Miwetyana, a scholarship holder at University College Laws Faculty, the £2,000 for this being raised by U.C. students themselves to provide a S. African non-white student a place which he could not hope to obtain in his own country, and which even now Verwoerd's police have prevented him from taking.

At the meeting held near Trafalgar Square afterwards, speakers, including U.C. president Roger Lyons, organiser of the march, stressed the importance of British students' support for their S. African comrades in their stand against apartheid.

This march, arranged at a week's notice, and intended as a preliminary to a mass demonstration on November 30, has already had some effect. The Afrikaner Studentsbond, an all-white pro-Nationalist organisation, denounced the march, ironically, as "reminiscent of Nazi and fascist demonstrations in the past" and "shocking to all peace-loving and democratic people."

Such remarks from such a source show the march was on the right tracks. More important, since then, Livingstone Miwetyana has been released, a proof that such protests can obtain limited, short-term objectives.

But obviously such activities can only achieve short-term aims, for it is only by the resolute action of the S. African Students, workers and peasants to overthrow the Verwoerd regime and the capitalist system of exploitation which it upholds that the oppression and brutality which go hand in hand with the racialism of Apartheid can be ended.

ORDER FORM

To: S. Mani, 5, Buckingham House, Trinity Road, SW 17
Annual subscription (12 copies) 8s 6d (including postage)
Add 10 per cent for bulk orders to cover postage.

Send copy/copies for issues.

Name Organisation

Address