

THE NEWSLETTER

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BRITAIN'S FIRST STRIKE AGAINST H-BOMB Stevenage Building Workers in Token Stoppage

By FRED GREEN

BUILDING workers at Stevenage New Town are to be asked this Friday to down tools in a one-hour token stoppage against the manufacture of guided missiles. This will be the first strike action in Britain against nuclear weapons.

'It is essential to get rid of the H-bomb,' said John Marney, secretary of the Stevenage branch of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers, telling me of the growing feeling among his members that a stand must be made against murder weapons before it is too late.

'Black the H-bomb and the rocket bases!', the slogan first put forward by The Newsletter in January 1958, is now bearing fruit in a town where over half the industrial workers are engaged on destructive work.

The AUBTW branch and the local branch of the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers are to press the Development Corporation to set up peaceful industries to replace this destructive work.

A resolution to this effect was carried unanimously at the AUBTW branch, and will be put to a mass demonstration

MACMILLAN SHOOK THEM

'Harold Macmillan, British Prime Minister, shook both President Eisenhower and President de Gaulle with this statement:

'If it's to be war, decide now so that I can send our British children to Canada to preserve our families. My experts tell me that nuclear war will mean 20 million dead in Britain.'

—U.S. News and World Report, April 6, 1959.

called for 4 p.m. this Friday in the Town Centre.

There will be speakers from the branch and from the Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War, which has been carrying out field-work in the New Town.

The men on R. A. Neal's contract at the Town Centre have taken the initiative in calling for a one-hour token stoppage by all building workers in Stevenage, to last from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday.

The Direct Action Committee has been canvassing in the area since Easter. About a dozen are at work at any one

(Continued on back page)

FIVE HUNDRED DOWN TOOLS ON OIL REFINERY SITE AT GRANGEMOUTH

By Edward Knight

A STRIKE of 500 tradesmen employed by George Wimpey and Co. has brought work to a standstill on the refinery plant of the Distillers Co. Ltd. and British Hydrocarbon Chemicals Ltd. at Grangemouth (Stirlingshire).

The dispute follows the management's rejection of a claim for sixpence per hour blanket payment to compensate for abnormal working conditions encountered on the job by all the trades concerned.

A similar claim had been submitted last September by the trade union signatories to the agreement covering working conditions on the job.

After several months of its passing through the recognized procedure no satisfactory results were obtained.

In the stewards' hands

A move to have the claim submitted to arbitration was rejected by the men on the basis of their previous experiences of this method.

Following a mass meeting this latter claim was submitted, and it was decided that the negotiations should be conducted by the shop stewards. When the employers again refused the strike was called.

On April 3, at a further meeting, a move to hand the negotiations over to the full-time trade union officials received little support, and a decision to leave them in the stewards' hands was endorsed.

The history of the job is one of a continual struggle by the workers to maintain and attempt to improve site conditions.

SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE: PUBLIC MEETING

AGAINST NUCLEAR WAR AND MASS UNEMPLOYMENT! FOR COLONIAL
FREEDOM AND SOCIALISM!

Denison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, S.W.1

Sunday, April 12, at 7.30 p.m.

Speakers: BRIAN BEHAN, PETER FRYER, GERRY HEALY

MORGAN PHILLIPS'S LETTER IS A SMOKE-SCREEN

By Gerry Healy

THE letter sent by Morgan Phillips to local Labour Parties and affiliated trade unions last week-end avoids a political reply to the Socialist Labour League and The Newsletter.

Instead it rehashes stories about Trotskyism which are reminiscent of the kind of 'polemic' engaged in by Stalin and his followers.

Thus a quotation is given from an unnamed source; it does not come from The Newsletter or from any other publication of the Socialist Labour League; indeed none of us knows anything at all about it.

The overwhelming majority of those who support the Socialist Labour League and The Newsletter had nothing to do with any of the Trotskyist organizations mentioned in Morgan Phillips's letter.

Sauce for the gander?

On the other hand, there are a number of prominent ex-members of the Trotskyist Revolutionary Communist Party who today vigorously support Morgan Phillips and the Right wing of the Labour Party. But these people are not being subjected to bans and proscriptions.

It is only former members of Trotskyist organizations who support Left-wing socialist policies, together with former members of the Communist Party who have repudiated Stalinism, who are being proceeded against.

Clearly, the argument about past associations applies only to Left-wingers, not to those who today support the Right wing.

The Socialist Labour League and The Newsletter have no connexion with any centre in Paris or anywhere else. We have not set up 'cells' in local Labour Parties. Nor have we impaired the functioning of these parties in any way.

We have no connexion with John Lawrence or with other ex-members of the Labour Party in St Pancras who have joined the Communist Party; while disagreeing with many of their policies we did oppose their expulsion from the Labour Party, since we believe there must be provision for minority opinions inside the party.

Morgan Phillips's statement that our 'ideas are incompatible, not only with Stalinism, but also with democratic socialism' is a confession that the so-called 'democratic socialism' of Morgan Phillips has at least this much in com-

mon with Stalinism: that both expel minorities in order to avoid a democratic discussion of policies.

Morgan Phillips's reference to the Militant Workers' Movement in Birmingham is totally inaccurate (he cannot even get the name right!).

This informal association of shop stewards existed long before the Socialist Labour League was formed; far from being a 'front' organization, most of its members were not supporters of The Newsletter until the National Industrial Rank-and-File Conference last November showed that our views and theirs on industrial questions had converged.

In short, Morgan Phillips's letter is a farrago of nonsense and half-truths, without a shred of evidence or political argument, designed only to distract people's attention from the issues of policy that are involved in the proscription of the Socialist Labour League and the banning of The Newsletter.

SALFORD CITY LABOUR PARTY PROTESTS

BY a large majority trade union and Labour Party delegates at the April meeting of the Salford City Labour Party adopted this resolution:

'We protest at the proscription of The Newsletter and Socialist Labour League by the NEC of the Labour Party.

'Their only crime has been to fight for socialist policies in the trade unions and in the Labour Party.

'Ideas cannot be fought by bans and proscriptions. This ban is an attack on the rights of any militant minority in the movement and weakens the fight against Toryism at a crucial moment.'

The resolution came from the Broughton branch of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, which has also sent it to its Manchester district committee.

PARK ROYAL STRIKERS SEEK SUPPORT

Strikers at Aircraft Steel Structures, Park Royal, London, have staged two big demonstrations in the past week.

At joint meetings, one with ENV workers (the first to support them financially), the other outside the main Simms factory at Finchley, convener Ted Edwards spoke of the 'ruthless and brutal action' of the new managing director, Ayres, who forced the men out on strike in defence of elementary trade union principles.

The management seems to be waiting to see if the strike will be made official at national level before making a move. So far none of the thirty men on Ayres's redundancy list has received his cards.

The Socialist Labour League Looks to the Future

The following draft political statement has been drawn up by the Editorial Board of The Newsletter in preparation for the Whitsun conference of the Socialist Labour League.

It is submitted for general discussion by all workers. Between now and the conference The Newsletter will

I. WHAT IS THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE?

1. The Socialist Labour League is an organization of Marxists within the Labour and trade union movement, dedicated to fighting for socialist policies in place of the present policies of class betrayal.

2. As distinct from others who call themselves socialists, Marxists do not believe that it is possible to reform capitalism out of existence or to change it into socialism by peaceful means.

The experience of over a century of working-class struggle shows that the capitalist class will use all its strength to retain its control of the State machine and its ownership of the means of production.

publish contributions to discussion; contributors are asked to keep their letters as short as possible.

Members of the Socialist Labour League will also be able to contribute to a discussion bulletin, and will have the right to submit amendments to the draft statement through their branches, for consideration by the conference.

3. Marxists hold that only through the struggle of the working class for the achievement of State power can capitalism be overthrown.

Capitalism cannot be destroyed merely by securing a parliamentary majority. Participation in Parliament and in local councils by workers' representatives can help the struggle for socialism, but only if the fight of those representatives is linked with direct action by the organized working class.

4. The present leaders of the trade unions and Labour Party are not determined to end capitalism, achieve working-class power and build socialism.

One of the chief tasks of the Socialist Labour League is to help trade unionists and members of the Labour Party and Communist Party, through joint activity and political discus-

sion based on their own experiences, to build a new leadership devoted to socialist principles.

II. THE PRESENT PROBLEMS OF THE WORKING CLASS

1. At a time of deepening economic crisis the employing class is determined to preserve its system at all costs, and to put the burden of the crisis on the backs of the workers.

2. The growth of unemployment to an official figure of over 500,000 (or about one million according to estimates by reputable economists) confirms in a striking way the socialist indictment of capitalism as a system unable to guarantee full employment and a rising standard of living.

New techniques are available to make more goods and make them more cheaply. Yet workers are unemployed and go without.

These new techniques could raise the workers' living standards to a level undreamed-of a few years ago. But capitalism is unable to utilize them to benefit mankind.

3. Instead, vast resources are squandered on the production of murder weapons: the hydrogen-bomb, rocket bases and the botulinus toxin.

The very testing of the H-bomb is poisoning our food, spreading cancer and putting a question mark over the health of unborn generations.

4. These problems which face the working class, and which spring from an obsolete and bankrupt social system, cannot be solved by reformist leadership.

Such leadership weakens the working class. The reformist leaders betray the workers at a time of crisis, as MacDonald did in 1931.

III. THE END OF CAPITALIST EXPANSION

1. The basic contradiction of capitalism is the contradiction between the social character of capitalist production and the private appropriation of the product.

For a long time this contradiction was obscured by the post-war boom and the raising of living standards that accompanied it.

The boom also obscured class antagonisms and strengthened the grip of reformism in the Labour movement.

2. War-time destruction, and subsequently the rearmament programme, made necessary the expansion of production. This provided immense profits for the capitalist class, which at that stage found it in its interests to give certain concessions and make efforts to avoid all-out clashes with Labour.

Joint conciliation and consultative committees became a regular part of industrial relations. Both the Right wing and the Stalinist leaders of the Communist Party supported the introduction of these methods into industry, thus preventing the working class from using its power to make still greater advances in wages and conditions.

3. In the political field this policy of restraint tended to isolate the Left in the Labour Party. The party shifted steadily to the right—a process that culminated in the return of a Tory government.

4. But this state of affairs has now come to an end. Capitalism has failed to expand the consuming power of the working class. Yet overproduction and the tendency of the rate of profit to fall remain.

The harnessing of new productive techniques in the scramble for profits makes labour redundant.

At the same time the sharpening competition among capitalist nations forces ever greater technical advances within capitalism, accentuating still further the tendency towards mass unemployment.

5. The increasing power of the government to control credit has not solved the basic problem. Such measures as cuts in hire purchase restrictions and easier facilities for credit have left the hard core of unemployment untouched.

Whatever zigzags there may be the economic difficulties of capitalism will persist and will very likely get worse. At present the capitalist economy is neither in a boom nor in a slump, but in a state of stagnation that could be the prelude to still steeper economic decline.

IV. THE STRATEGY OF THE CAPITALIST CLASS

1. To meet competition and retain its position in capitalist markets is the central aim of the British employing class. This aim determines its class strategy.

2. Whereas in the period following the war the expansion of production was consistent with high profits, this is no longer the case.

Now the capitalist class has to break the resistance of the working class by smashing both 'official' and 'unofficial' strikes. It has to seek, by legislative and other means, to cripple trade union organization in the workshops.

Nowhere have the aims of the employing class been set forth more nakedly than in the document issued by the engineering employers, 'Looking at Industrial Relations'.

Their disclosure that twice in four years they sought a show-down with the engineering unions is an arresting contrast to the honeyed tones used by the employers just after the war.

3. The capitalist class offers the working class the prospect of helping it engage in a cut-throat trade war with other capitalist nations.

This could end only in a wholesale worsening of working conditions, and, finally, in total economic collapse or war.

4. Thanks to the intensified struggles of the colonial peoples and the fiercer competition offered by the USA, Germany and Japan, the present capitalist offensive will be still fiercer than in the past.

Class struggles in industry are likely to be more bitter, and more far-reaching in their effects, than those of the twenties.

5. But British capitalism is confronted by a working-class movement which, if properly led, is big enough, experienced enough and strong enough to destroy capitalism. With this fact the capitalist class must reckon.

Up to now it has been unable to defeat decisively any section of the working class, let alone the working class as a whole.

What progress it has made in sackings, victimizations and wage cuts has been made as a result of betrayals by Labour leaders.

Indeed, the employing class was disagreeably surprised by the capacity of the busmen, dockers, engineers and building workers to remain solid and fight back, even when hampered by bad leaders. Nothing has been settled yet in industry.

6. Likewise in the political field the Tories have been unable to secure a swing to the Right, though, thanks to the lack of socialist leadership and a socialist policy, they have held their own.

7. The Tories want to avoid any all-out struggle with the working class until after the General Election; then, with a working majority, they hope to pass anti-trade-union legislation.

Failing this, they hope for the return of a Right-wing Labour government which will, as in 1931, pave the way for a Tory government.

V. THE PROBLEM OF LEADERSHIP

1. Neither in the industrial field nor in the political field are the Labour leaders making preparations to meet the employers' attacks, or to evolve a counter-strategy to that of the capitalist class. On the contrary, they are trying to lead the workers.

2. The Labour Party's election pamphlet, 'The Future Labour Offers YOU' does not challenge capitalism. It scarcely mentions the word 'socialism', and then only in a perfunctory way.

Although the Tories have been discredited to a great extent

by the growth of unemployment, the mass disillusionment and discontent have not been harnessed behind Labour, as recent by-election results show.

3. No fighting socialist alternative is put forward by the leaders of the Labour Party.

Labour stands committed to continue the manufacture of the H-bomb, the construction of rocket bases and the continuation of the arms programme; there is to be no extension of nationalization to any industry except steel, and even here Labour is not seriously answering the steel barons' propaganda campaign. There is no effective policy for ending unemployment.

4. The trade union leaders have turned their backs on any real struggle for higher wages and shorter hours.

In the mines and the building industry, in face of the employers' point-blank refusal to grant anything, the leaders go to arbitration.

On the railways, a new claim is submitted only under rank-and-file pressure.

In engineering, Carron's only reply to the bosses' arrogance is that their statements are unwise.

In hosiery, the union leaders defy their members' mandate by accepting a cut in wages.

5. Despite their reformist leaders the trade unions and Labour Party command the support and loyalty of the overwhelming majority of the working class.

The leaders use this support and loyalty in a constant effort to prevent those they lead from getting to grips with capitalism. No advance to socialism is possible while these leaders are in control.

VI. MARXISTS AND THE LABOUR PARTY

1. Marxists work in the mass organizations of the working class with the aim of winning the working class from reformism to revolutionary socialism.

The British Labour Party is based on the trade unions, and grew up as the political expression of the organized working class.

Since the party came into being the dominant Right-wing bureaucracy has fought the Left by means of bans, proscriptions, witch-hunts and purges. So far the Right wing has been generally successful in this, for three reasons:

(a) The Communist Party has zigzagged in its attitude to the Labour Party, from sectarianism to opportunism.

At one time the Labour Party was called a 'social-fascist' organization and no distinction was drawn between leaders and rank and file.

Today the Right-wing leaders are wooed, and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress is praised by Palme Dutt.

(b) The concessions made by capitalism since the end of the war in the fields of education and health have buttressed reformism inside the Labour movement.

(c) Left-wing movements inside the Labour Party hitherto have not been led by Marxists, have not based themselves on the working class as the decisive force for change, have seen alliances and manoeuvres as the key factors, and have collapsed as soon as their leaders went over to the Right wing.

The weakness of the present Victory for Socialism is that it leaves the trade unions and the factories—the decisive places for any serious struggle inside the Labour Party—in the hands of the Right wing.

2. The Socialist Labour League has come into existence, not in order to repeat the experiences of such Centrist groupings, but to lead a new kind of struggle against Right-wing leaders and Right-wing policies in this new period.

An organization of Marxists is necessary, not only for the purpose of theoretical education and the discussion of policy, but also to give help and leadership to the workers in their immediate struggles against capitalism.

3. The proscription of the League within a month of its establishment is a tribute to the way the Marxists and their journal *The Newsletter* have helped the workers in struggle in

the transport, docks, building and engineering industries.

The Right wing sees what serious repercussions the alternative presented by the Socialist Labour League could have for the exponents and practitioners of class collaboration policies.

The witch-hunt against the Socialist Labour League and *The Newsletter* will not succeed in its aim of smashing our organization and our paper. We shall conduct a determined struggle against the expulsion of socialists whose only crime is that they recognize and perform their duty of working for a genuine socialist policy.

We shall continue to demand the right of the Socialist Labour League to be affiliated to the Labour Party.

VII. THE INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

1. Marxists are working-class internationalists. They take the side of the workers against the capitalists in Britain and in every other country where capitalism still exists.

They believe that the working class in every country in the world has more in common with the working class of other countries than with its 'own' capitalist class.

All over the world the workers are part of the same class, with the same class enemy.

2. The working-class revolution of October 1917 which overthrew the power of the capitalist class in Russia and established the power of the working class was the greatest blow yet struck against the capitalist class.

To the Socialist Labour League the unconditional defence of that revolution is the duty of every Marxist; and the extension of that revolution till socialism has been achieved all over the world is our central strategic aim.

The Socialist Labour League will by every means open to it defend the Soviet Union, China and the countries of eastern Europe against imperialist attack.

But by defence of the gains of October, defence of the workers' States against imperialism, we do not understand the defence of Khrushchev and his clique, nor the whitewashing of whoever happens to be in power in the Kremlin at a given time.

Khrushchev himself pointed out to the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party how Stalin's policy betrayed the interests of the Soviet people.

What Khrushchev failed to show is that the roots of Stalin's crimes lay in the departure from Marxism and working-class internationalism by the bureaucracy which seized power in Russia during Lenin's illness and after his death.

3. This bureaucracy gave ideological expression to its seizure of power in the theory of 'socialism in one country'.

Just as the expansion of capitalism at different periods helped the spread of Bernstein's or Strachey's revisionist ideas, so the defeat of the revolutionary movement in Germany and China in the 1920s, and the weariness of the Russian people after years of civil war and wars of intervention, made possible the victory of Stalinist revisionism over Marxism.

It was to preserve and extend their privileges and power that the new bureaucracy in the Soviet Union replaced working-class internationalism with narrow nationalism, the extension of the socialist revolution with its containment inside the national boundaries of Russia.

4. Linked with this anti-Marxist theory of 'socialism in one country' there developed the theory of 'peaceful co-existence', equally anti-Marxist, which repudiated world revolution and subordinated the revolutionary needs and interests of the workers of the capitalist countries to the short-term diplomatic interests of the Russian rulers.

This policy led to all kinds of unprincipled alliances and manoeuvres both by the Soviet government and by the leaders of the communist parties, whose chief task became that of acting as pressure groups to work for a climate of opinion favourable to the current line of the Russian bureaucracy.

The communist parties thus became frontier guards for the Soviet bureaucracy, basing their policies not on a Marxist analysis of the conditions which operated in their countries, but on the temporary needs of the Soviet bureaucracy as expressed by Stalin.

5. The international communist movement remains under Stalinist control today, and continues to operate policies which sacrifice national communist parties and the interests of the workers of particular countries to various diplomatic moves by the Kremlin.

6. Because of its failure to give solidarity and support to revolutionary movements Stalinism is unable to solve the problems that face the international working class. Only by the taking of power in the hands of the working class in the advanced capitalist countries can peace and the defence of the Soviet Union be guaranteed.

7. The Socialist Labour League rejects the false idea that the Soviet bureaucracy will gradually 'liberalize' itself.

The defeat of the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and the creation of a genuine Marxist leadership can be accomplished only by the independent struggle of the working class inside and outside the Soviet Union.

Only the creation of such a leadership on the basis of a Marxist programme can ensure the development of socialist democracy in the Soviet Union.

8. One of the main tasks of the Socialist Labour League is to combat the false ideas of Stalinism; to show in particular that the best contribution British workers can make to the defence of the Soviet Union is to struggle for the achieve-

TRIBUNE'S SONG

The 'mindless militant', I find,
Belongs to the Newsletter kind.
I don't mind being militant—
If the Right wing doesn't mind!

W. F. W.

ment of working-class power in Britain; while at the same time our members engage in joint anti-capitalist activity with rank-and-file members of the Communist Party, who in many cases still sincerely believe that the policies of 'socialism in one country' and 'peaceful coexistence' are really in the interests of the working class.

VIII. THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE AND THE COLONIAL REVOLUTION

1. Without any qualification or condition, the Socialist Labour League stands for the right of every nation to self-determination.

We fully support the struggles of all colonial and dependent peoples for independence from imperialism, not out of charity, but because for the British workers this is a common fight against a common enemy.

2. We recognize in particular that in Britain the working class bears a heavy responsibility to fight alongside its class brothers in the colonies.

The linking of the struggle of the British workers with that of the colonial workers is for us one of the keys to social advance.

3. But we recognize also that political 'independence'—as in India and Ireland—can mean freedom for native and foreign capitalists to exploit. We therefore stand for working-class leadership of the national liberation struggles and for the growth of strong socialist organizations that will seek to extend the national revolutions into socialist revolutions.

4. We oppose the chauvinistic attitude taken by Stalinism in relation to certain national struggles, which has meant, for example, the abandonment of socialist principles (and even the term socialist) by such organizations as the Con-

nolly Association, and the submerging of the socialist aim in the Arab nations.

5. We bring to the fore the common class interests of immigrant workers in Britain with the white workers.

The splitting of the working class on racial lines can only be in the interests of the capitalist class. We therefore urge united opposition by white and black workers to all forms of racialist propaganda, incitement or violence.

IX. FOR A WORKING-CLASS STRATEGY

1. The Socialist Labour League has the duty of preparing the working class for the impending industrial and political battles, since the employers have declared war on the workers.

There is no other voice in the Labour movement that is being raised to warn the workers, to prepare them, mobilize them or lead them into struggle.

2. The preparation of the working class for struggle implies the following: the exposure of the Labour leaders' policy of class betrayal; the winning of masses of workers for an alternative socialist policy; the waging of a consistent, united campaign in industry in defence of jobs and workshop organization, for higher wages and shorter hours; the linking of the struggle in industry with the struggle for an alternative policy and leadership in the Labour Party.

3. The Socialist Labour League frankly recognizes that the fight for socialist policies demands a struggle against the Right-wing leaders of the Labour Party and the trade unions, and that this struggle must be waged, persistently and patiently, in the mass organizations of the British working class.

4. Against the inability of the present Labour leaders to fight unemployment or the H-bomb, against their refusal to engage in any serious struggle with the capitalist class, the Socialist Labour League advances this socialist policy:

(a) For a vigorous fight against unemployment, under the slogan 'Not a single worker on the street. Share the available work with no loss of pay.'

(b) For the defence of shop stewards, including legislation by the next Labour government to protect active trade unionists from victimization.

(c) For the nationalization of basic industries under workers' control, without compensation to the ex-owners.

(d) For the withdrawal of British troops from the colonies.

(e) For an end to the manufacture of the H-bomb, the construction of rocket bases and the preparations for germ warfare.

5. The Socialist Labour League warns the working class that, in the future as in the past, the employing class aims to challenge and defeat section after section of the working class separately.

If this strategy is to be resisted and smashed, there is a great need to spread the understanding that the common class interests of the workers necessitate common class action in defence of each section under attack.

6. Experiences such as the London bus strike, the Smithfield meat market strike, the South Bank and Belvedere lock-outs, the BOAC dispute, the Harland and Wolff strike, and the disputes at Ford's and Morris's, all show that a defensive strategy of limited struggle is totally inadequate to meet and beat back the employers' offensive.

7. For any leadership to call a body of men out on strike without aiming to bring the full strength of the organized working class behind the strikers is to court disaster.

A prolonged struggle by one factory or one section in isolation, against which the whole might of the employing class and its State machine can be focused, stands less chance of success today than in the 1945-56 period.

8. In every major struggle today the need from the outset is swiftly and boldly to develop solidarity action of all kinds with the workers engaged in the struggle.

Every effort should be made to extend the strike while the initiative remains with the workers; financial aid and

token stoppages after the initiative has passed to the employers are no substitute for resolute action to 'black' an employer's other establishments, his raw materials and finished products, as soon as battle is joined.

The employers must be made to feel that by sacking a single militant they are challenging the whole might of the organized working class.

Either the workers reply to arrogant employers in language they will understand, or the working class will see its organization and its gains whittled away piecemeal.

9. But this objective of taking the offensive in every strike, of waging each dispute from the outset with the aim of winning a decisive victory, implies efficient, thorough and conscious preparation.

Every encouragement must be given to the development of rank-and-file committees in each industry, consisting of the most experienced and trusted militants, and to the linking-up of these committees on a local, area and ultimately national scale.

10. In rank-and-file committees, built by the workers themselves, directly responsive to their needs and wishes, the working class possesses all the means of preparing for major industrial struggles.

They provide the machinery for exchanging information and experiences; for bringing the trade unions and trades councils into action more speedily as each issue arises; and for the production of all kinds of strike bulletins and broadsheets that are indispensable if the lies of the capitalist Press are to be answered.

11. Rank-and-file committees are in no sense 'anti-union' or 'outside the unions'.

On the contrary they are a traditional means inside the British trade union movement of rousing the members to force the leaders to fight.

If in present-day circumstances the leaders refuse to fight, then the rank and file, since they and not the paid officials are the union, have the right and the duty to replace their leaders with men who will adhere to trade union principles.

12. The Socialist Labour League must explain to the working class how every partial, immediate struggle in industry today raises, in no matter how embryonic a form, the key question of power, of control.

The moment the workers in a given factory challenge their employer and seek to prevent his depriving men of their livelihood this is a rehearsal on a local scale of the eventual national challenge to the whole employing class for control of the factories.

That is why every strike experience, particularly the work of strike committees and other rank-and-file organs of struggle, must be carefully studied and generalized, and the necessary lessons drawn from every victory and defeat.

13. The Socialist Labour League regards the barriers that the Right wing seeks to set up between 'industrial' and 'political' activity as quite artificial.

It is of the utmost importance to link the struggles in industry with the political fight inside the Labour Party; to make local Labour Parties into working-class campaign centres that will help strikers in their areas by every means in their power; to strengthen the Labour Left by drawing into the party fresh forces from among the most active and militant trade unionists.

The fight for a socialist policy means the linking of the industrial and political fights against capitalism, as two sides of the same coin, just as the employing class and its Tory government are two expressions of one and the same social force.

X. WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MARXIST

1. Marxists are the most conscious of all workers. They do not look upon socialism or the struggle for its achievement in an idealistic way, but in a scientific way.

They base their policies and programme on a study of the objective class forces operating in society, on a study of

the real position and needs of the working class. Marxism is the science of working-class struggle and working-class power.

2. Since Marxism is a science, it must be studied as a science. The Socialist Labour League therefore carries out systematic and through education of all its members in Marxist theory, in the experience of the working-class movement in all countries, showing the laws and lessons of that experience.

3. But Marxism is not merely a theory, but a theory of human action, and first and foremost of class struggle. To be a Marxist is therefore not merely to study, but to study in order to be better equipped to fight and work on behalf of the working class.

4. But to fight and work as an individual is not enough. Marxists fight and work as a disciplined team, with agreed policies based on democratic discussion, with a division of labour, and under the guidance of elected and accountable leading bodies.

5. One of the principal responsibilities which membership of the Socialist Labour League entails is that of extending the sales and influence of the League's publications, which are a bridge between our ideas and the militant workers who are seeking an alternative to reformism and Stalinism.

The higher the circulation of The Newsletter and Labour Review, the more workers can be won for Marxist ideas and mobilized in anti-capitalist activity.

6. The Socialist Labour League is not an independent revolutionary working-class party. But its work and activities are laying the foundations for a future party of this kind, which is essential for the overthrow of capitalism and the achievement of working-class power in Britain.

Meanwhile the Socialist Labour League aims to win to its ranks all those workers in the Labour Party and Communist Party who want to build a revolutionary alternative to the betrayals of reformism and Stalinism, together with all other workers of like mind.

XI. THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE'S FUTURE ACTIVITY

The Whitsun conference will be asked to consider proposals for extending the activity of the Socialist Labour League on a number of questions. Among these proposals will be the following:

1. That we strive for a united campaign for increased wages, shorter hours, the defence of jobs and the defence of stewards.

2. That we strive for the most extensive distribution of propaganda on these questions, by means of leaflets, factory-gate meetings and similar forms of activity.

3. That particular efforts be made to arouse resistance to the wage cuts imposed on the hosiery workers, which are a threat to workers in every industry.

4. That we urge the maximum resistance to the coming redundancies on the railways and in the aircraft and engineering industries, under the slogan 'Work or maintenance'.

5. That we urge the fullest support for strikes against non-unionism, so that every gap in trade union organization can be sealed up and trade unionism strengthened.

6. That we advocate a real drive for the third week's annual holiday with pay.

7. That the industrial struggle be brought into the heart of the Labour Party with the demand that the party pledge its full support to the workers' struggles on wages, hours, jobs and workshop organization, the aim being to inundate the leaders of the party with demands from trade union branches and jobs for the necessary policy changes.

8. That the demand be raised for Labour's policy to include the slashing of the arms programme, the ending of British manufacture of the H-bomb, the ending of the construction of rocket bases, and the closing down of the germ warfare establishment at Porton (Wilts.).

9. That full support be given to the campaign of Stevenage branch of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers for the cessation of work on the construction of nuclear missile factories; and that every encouragement be given to the setting up of anti-H-bomb committees in the trade unions to win support for the idea of 'blacking' work on the H-bomb and rocket bases.

10. That the demand be raised for the next Labour government to withdraw British troops from the colonies and give their peoples immediate and unconditional independence.

11. That towards the end of this year the National Industrial Rank-and-File Conference should be recalled, with the participation of local Labour Parties and other organizations

of the Labour movement, in order to consider the further development of the campaign for socialist policies in the trade union movement and Labour Party.

The Socialist Labour League, recognizing that the Labour and trade union leaders will never move of their own volition, will work for the building of a powerful rank-and-file movement in the trade unions and Labour Party, which alone can guarantee the winning of these demands.

This movement can be completely successful only under Marxist leadership. That is why the strengthening of the Socialist Labour League in numbers and in influence is essential.

April 7, 1959

EDITORIAL BOARD

After Aldermaston, What Now?

By AUSTIN UNDERWOOD*

I am glad to be able to respond to the request of The Newsletter to contribute this article on the role of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament after Aldermaston 1959.

The action of the national executive of the Labour

IN Trafalgar Square, 26,000. On Good Friday, 4,300 turned their backs on the death factory at Aldermaston and marched eastwards. Three thousand were still marching through pouring rain on Sunday evening as we entered Chiswick. On Easter Monday it was a column of 15,000 that took two hours to pass into Trafalgar Square. What political party, even with the coffers of big business or the trade unions behind it, could have inspired this record gathering of the century? And what other cause?

For each one who marched, one other could have been there, ten others were whole-heartedly with us, a hundred applauded and a thousand had begun to think hard about nuclear weapons.

Yet the British workers continue to manufacture the bomb, the rocket and the guided missile in our name.

McAlpines, Chivers and a host of subsidiaries are hard at it, manufacturing nuclear death. How many radioactive corpses of innocent men, women and children should we lay at the door of each firm if the rockets are ever fired? How many at the door of each shareholder? How many at the door of each worker in the nuclear death industries?

Certainly none of the children of these workers would escape in the retaliation raids that would follow. But how do we get this over to them? This is the most important task of the campaign in the coming year.

The lie has been given to Transport House, which has plied the line that nuclear weapons will not be the most important issue of the election.

The prospective candidates who have been tipped off to make education and agriculture the main issues must think again. Time perhaps for a rewriting of the Labour Party's Election Glossy. For what other issue would bring even a tenth of the 26,000 to the Square, but the one which the Election Glossy dismisses with a pompous sneer?

Executive can choose now

When Bob Willis, chairman of the Trades Union Congress, climbed on to the plinth in Trafalgar Square on Easter Monday, did he mean to carry through to the logical end a development of the present fumbling Labour Party policy of promising merely to suspend the tests?

Or had the 26,000 impressed and perhaps worried him and did he just follow the professional politician's reflex of climbing on the wagon in time?

The campaign executive should lose no time in putting his personal standing to the test.

The leadership against the bomb will not come to

Party in proscribing this young Left-wing publication is completely asinine and will not only drive more active elements from the party, but will weaken it further and doubtless result in increased circulation for The Newsletter.

the Labour movement from above. It will come from the 26,000. It will come from the mass support, which must be properly directed to open the flood-gates and sweep away the political compromise that has bedevilled the careerist-led Labour movement of post-war years and betrayed conference after conference.

The Labour Party executive can choose now whether to be in the vanguard or the wake of the movement.

'Where do we go from here?' In 1959 this is a crucial and vital question for the campaign. Any lack of courage now to take over leadership might well end in failure—for the human race.

In 1952, when we first demonstrated at Aldermaston, a bus and two cars sufficed to carry us there and a handful of people attended our afternoon meeting. In 1958 there were 12,000. In 1959, 26,000.

This 26,000 will look for more than an extension of the meetings, the debates, the doorstep canvass and the exhibitions.

No time should be lost in enlisting all those efficient and tireless workers who made it 26,000 but could have made it 50,000.

These things are urgent:

The efficient consolidation of all organizers, marshals and workers of this year's march who are willing to serve in this field-unit for peace;

A general meeting of the supporters of the march to sound their opinion, to tell us why we received such tremendous support from bystanders and the crowd in the Square;

A closer liaison between the new executive committee, which includes regional representatives of the Campaign, and the co-ordinating committee to heed this opinion and work out a new strategy.

It is obvious that with the potential size of the movement now revealed, secretarial work will increase and organizers should be sought in the London area to devote more time to the task of organizing the field-work necessary in the trade union movement, particularly in those industries working for nuclear death.

Money must be collected regularly in provincial, political and industrial groups.

Publicity must be stepped up and new methods devised for an era where the men who make the bomb also control the BBC and the largest section of the Press.

* Austin Underwood is leader of the Labour group on Amesbury (Wilts.) Rural District Council and chairman of the Southern Region of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. He was deputy chief marshal of the 1959 Aldermaston march.

The campaign can learn much from the field-work of the Direct Action Committee. Twice as many people taking part at North Pickenham would have threatened the established order which has imposed American Thor rockets and H-bombs on the British people.

Critics of 'voters' veto'—fundamentally correct but unfortunately tactically negative—should seek first the beam in their own eye and realize that with a more uncompromising political stand a different outcome at Scarborough could have been possible.

Campaigners should work in their constituencies to prevent the adoption of pro-bomb candidates or to have them changed.

Let this be clearly realized: it is in the interest of big business and industrial profits that this country should keep the H-bomb and guided missiles.

On March 18, Mr. Duncan Sandys admitted in the House of Commons that 'equipment to the value of some £6,500,000 has been ordered ahead of the normal time in order to assist in relieving unemployment'. Would George Brown have done anything different?

Must not become cat's-paw

A Tory government will certainly never give up the bomb of its own volition. Would a Labour government? Without pressure from the rank and file, no. The campaign has now the heavy responsibility of leading that pressure.

It must guard against becoming the cat's-paw of compromising politicians who fear its growing strength and forthright declaration of aims.

It must guard against becoming an appendage to the rump policy of any political party. For it may well have the responsibility of directing trade union action to end the building of missile bases and manufacture of the bomb.

To this end, intensive propaganda must be carried out within the trade union movement. Men like John Horner must be included on the executive committee of the Campaign.

The best brains must be employed, respected and militant trade union shop stewards and conveners won over, and those in public office who covertly support the Campaign brought into the open.

Time is not on our side. It is the ally of the bomb. While we were marching from Aldermaston the chairman of the American Joint Chiefs of Staffs, General Nathan Twining, jumped the gun on any British declaration on the rocket bases they have planted in our country and declared that the Thors were 'sitting there, ready to go'.

In the last resort, should the campaign fail to overcome in time the drag of political apathy and the inertia of compromise, it must be ready to ensure that by the time the politicians have backed the military demand for the buttons to be pressed, the workers shall have said 'No'.

ECONOMICS

IT'S A BIG BUSINESS BUDGET, DESPITE THE DRESSING UP

By Tom Mercer

It's an election year Budget—a Tory election year Budget. No matter how dressed up—twopence off the pint, cuts in purchase tax and a concession on post-war credits—it's still a rich man's Budget.

Not so pleasing to the rich as that of two years ago, when tens of millions of pounds were handed over to the surtax payers. That benefit, of course, continues year after year: they got it last year; they get it this year, next year and every year until it is withdrawn.

Nevertheless Tuesday's Budget was designed to help the rich get still richer.

A large part of the purchase tax concession is on commercial vehicles. Post-war credits were based on income tax: so the higher the rate of tax, the higher the credit.

Out of £366 million tax concessions in the current year there is nothing for the old age pensioners. That could be more than hard-faced indifference: it could be a fatal electoral blunder.

But the most significant thing about the Budget is not the concessions, but the failure to do anything about Schedule A, or property tax, as it is usually called.

Almost everyone was certain that it would be abolished, at least on owner-occupiers. But no. Perhaps Amory considers that the property-owning democrats in the dormitory suburbs will vote Tory anyway.

Perhaps he is right. But it just proves that the Tories' real friends are the big business men of the City of London. The bank clerks and other middle-class people who comprise the bulk of the property-owning democrats are merely their dupes.

How will the Budget affect the economic crisis?

The additional demand being pumped into the economy this year is £366 million. Undoubtedly such an increase will have some effect.

It is not just an arithmetical question, however. Had this total been arrived at by further concessions on indirect taxation, and such improvements in social services as increased family allowances and higher old age pensions, approximately £366 million more would have been spent on consumer goods.

Motor-cars and holidays abroad

But the bulk of the £366 million goes to a different class of consumer. It cannot be assumed that this will be spent in the same way.

There will be increased demand for such things as motor-cars and holidays abroad. But it is problematical to what extent this will reduce the number of unemployed.

Last week's Economic Survey showed that in the industries where production has increased between 1956 and 1958 the number of workers employed has not increased correspondingly.

In fact in the vehicle industry, where the increase in production has been greatest—11 per cent.—the number of workers engaged actually fell by 2 per cent.

In the industries where production has fallen over the same period the reduction in the numbers employed has not always been in proportion. Thus in mining and quarrying production fell by nearly 5 per cent., but the number of workers employed fell by less than one per cent.

In the metal manufacturing group of industries, where the fall in production has been greatest—almost 8 per cent.—the number of workers employed is down by only a fraction of one per cent.

These are the industries that the Chancellor hopes to stimulate. He can do so without materially increasing the numbers employed.

And to do that has, of course, been the whole driving aim of big business and the Tories for the past few years.

That is precisely what the Tory offensive against wages and conditions is out to achieve. So far it has been at least partially successful.

STEVENAGE (Continued from front page)

time, and so far about eighty people have been involved in the campaign.

Most of them are teachers or students; but some are local housewives.

They go from door to door asking people to sign a letter to the Development Corporation's general manager calling for peaceful industries in Stevenage. So far 500 have signed.

The canvassers also ask for donations to the proposed Stevenage Relief Fund, designed to help any worker who decides to quit his job at de Havillands or English Electric; over thirty offers of support have come in.

The AUBTW branch has decided to give help out of branch funds to any brother who refuses work in connexion with the guided missile projects.