

## Engineers' Strike



# A GREAT VICTORY

BY THE EDITOR

### EDITORIAL

#### All Tories Together

HOW long can the Labour Party continue under the leadership of the right wing and Mr. Gaitskell?

Surely their behaviour during the defence debate should make it plain to every left-wing member of the Party that, to all intents and purposes, Gaitskell and company are tied hand and foot to the capitalist governments of Kennedy and Macmillan.

The leader of the Labour Party has declared that Mr. Kennedy's policy on foreign affairs is similar to that of the Labour Party.

During the debate on defence, he attacked the Liberal leader, Mr. Grimond, for criticizing Macmillan.

Right-wing spokesmen accused the Tory government of not having sufficient interest in matters of defence. They were more warlike than even the most ultra-conservative.

All this is the logical outcome of the reversal of the 1960 Scarborough conference decisions.

The longer the left wing maintain their silence and refuse to take the struggle into the constituencies and the trade unions, the more Gaitskell and company will snuggle up to the Tories.

We repeat once more what we have said many times in the past—the future of the Labour Party depends upon the sharpest break with Gaitskell, even if it means a split.

Those who avoid making such a decision are in effect guilty of providing a left cover for the right wing. 'Tribune' and Victory for Socialism please note.

Tom Kemp  
writes:

## ALGERIAN TRAGEDY

p. 3

## Civil War in Central Africa?

By Our Foreign Correspondent

WHILE the smooth-tongued hypocrites in the British government juggle with the constitution of Northern Rhodesia to maintain the rule of imperialism, Sir Roy Welensky—who at least is not a hypocrite and does not conceal the knuckleduster with a velvet glove—openly threatens to use force against growing African nationalism.

The very real possibility of civil war in Central Africa is of the utmost importance for the British Labour movement, for the forces behind Welensky are linked with the most reactionary elements in the Tory Party.

**Rhodesia can become Britain's Algeria.**

#### CLASH

Since Central African Federation was imposed in 1953, against the clearly expressed wishes of the African population, a head-on clash has been inevitable.

What is at stake here is not just the privileged position of the tiny minority of Europeans.

In the Northern Rhodesian copper belt, millions of pounds of British and American capital is invested. Mining companies pay rich dividends each year to shareholders in the City and on Wall Street.

The growth of the nationalist movements, representing the aspirations of millions of workers and peasants for a decent life, becomes a threat to those dividends.

As Macmillan's 'wind of change' speech showed, the imperialists were trying to change over from depending on the settlers to resting on 'reliable' elements among the African leaders.

#### JUGGLING

The problem for the Tories was to make this shift smoothly and without interrupting the flow of profits.

The process of juggling with election proposals for a Northern Rhodesian constitution reflects these efforts. The latest amendments put forward by Maudling would still ensure a majority of European and stooge African representatives.

**But even this is opposed by Welensky and his supporters. To prevent any chance of an**

**African majority government in Northern Rhodesia, or the break-up of the Central African Federation, he is ready to 'go the whole hog'.**

That this will involve the use of force is made quite clear in reports of a speech by Julian Greenfield, Federal Minister of Law and a leading member of Welensky's United Federal Party. In this he said that 'unconstitutional means will inevitably be necessary'.

Military action by Federal forces will receive backing from the South African government, from Union Miniere in Katanga and from the Portuguese in Angola.

Welensky is reported to have had further discussions with the



Sir Roy Welensky

Belgian stooge Tshombe last week.

All those sections of the Tory Party tied up with African investment will come to Sir Roy's aid in the event of a showdown. That is why liberal politics, both in Africa and in Britain, can be so dangerous for the workers of both countries.

The tendencies towards pacifism and compromise on the part of the nationalist leaders like Kaunda, Nkomo and Banda can leave the African people unprepared in this situation.

The Congo and Algeria should be terrible warnings to the African masses.

Imperialist armies can never act as a protection against the Central African 'colons'. The British Labour movement must remain firm on this question and fight against the use of British troops.

Instead, we must exert all power possible to aid the fight of the Rhodesian and Nyasaland people against imperialist domination. Their enemies are ours: the Tory government and its monopolist backers.

THE one-day stoppage of engineering workers on March 5 was a magnificent success. Even the capitalist press and TV propagandists had to concede that the strike was totally successful. Workers employed in giant factories in the Midlands joined with their brothers in the shipyards and in the steel industry to stage a powerful demonstration of unity and solidarity.

The aftermath of the strike is equally impressive. Because one man reported for duty at the English Electric Company's Liverpool works, 5,000 workers have withdrawn their labour.

At the British Timken Roller Bearings factory near Northampton, 600 stopped work because the management refused to suspend for two days non-unionists who worked during the strike.

At Chrysler Motors in Kew, 250 workers staged a half-day protest strike because 42 others had ignored the strike call.

#### 'Leaders'

The men are ready and willing to fight the government and the engineering employers. All that is lacking is leadership.

The right-wing leaders of the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the National Union of General and Municipal Workers want at all costs to avoid a strike and to settle for a 3 per cent wage increase.

Every engineering worker knows that such an increase is totally inadequate today and will become farcical as soon as the April Budget is announced.

#### Ballot

But as the results of the strike ballot will not be known until after the budget, so it is impossible for Carron and Co. to settle for 3 per cent beforehand.

The next round in the fight is the ballot itself. Every effort is being made by the right wing to discourage workers from voting and to see that there will not be the necessary majority for strike action.

#### Vote!

**There are some trade union leaders, however—particularly those who head the smaller unions—who are playing a magnificent role in urging their members to vote for action now rather than leave it until it is too late.**

**Every engineering worker who values his future in the industry should vote for a strike realising that in the course of such a struggle we can expect the right wing to attempt to sell out.**

There are some bitter memories of Mr. Carron's behaviour during the 1957 engineers'

strike. Such a betrayal must not happen again.

There is in our opinion only one way to prevent this. Engineering workers should form without delay strong rank-and-file bodies in every major centre.

#### Fight!

These committees would co-ordinate the activity within the local bodies of the trade unions in the Confederation and ensure that real leaders, responsible to the men, are appointed in each area to lead the fight to a victorious conclusion.

From the ranks of such men can eventually come a new leadership of the trade union movement in the not too distant future.

## Booker's Man Backs Jagan

A LETTER printed in last Tuesday's 'Times' blows sky high the Communist Party's attempt to whitewash Jagan and brand the recent strike in British Guiana as an 'imperialist plot'.

The letter is signed by Mr. Jock Campbell, director of Booker Brothers, McConnell and Co. This London firm controls a large share of British Guiana's industry.

Campbell makes it clear that he thinks that Jagan's budget measures 'were broadly necessary'. 'For the Government the situation demands that they explain effectively to the people why a period of austerity is necessary for their country.'

#### 'Trust'

He concludes: 'Certainly in striving to recreate confidence I know the Government can rely on the full cooperation and understanding of the international companies which operate in British Guiana. But, like everyone else, they can only play their part successfully where trust and goodwill have been nurtured back to life—inside and outside the country. This is surely Dr. Jagan's pre-eminent responsibility—and one in which he needs the help of all concerned with the future of British Guiana.'

# More Signatures for Letter to Khrushchev

THE appeal to N. S. Khrushchev, printed below, calling for a full investigation into the trials and executions of the leaders of the October Revolution during the 1930s and, in particular, demanding an enquiry into the allegations against Leon Trotsky and his murder in Mexico in 1940, is sponsored by The Newsletter. We are pleased to publish a further list of the signatories to the appeal.

Copies of this appeal are available for further signatures and we urge all our readers and sympathisers to write in for them at once.

TO: N. S. Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Sir,

At the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on October 27, 1961, you spoke about the murder of S. M. Kirov in 1934. The remarks you made indicated that this assassination was nothing to do with the former leaders of the Communist Party who were executed in 1936 after 'confessing' to organizing it.

You referred also to the way in which innocent people were forced at that time to confess to all sorts of crimes.

A full enquiry into these events is imperative. Men who had devoted their lives to the building of the Soviet Union were not only unjustly punished but were made the objects of an international campaign of slander.

Leon Trotsky, especially, was alleged on the basis of these confessions to have been acting in league with the Nazi government to overthrow the Soviet Union. These lies must be exposed.

Trotsky's widow, Natalia Sedova, before her death, demanded an enquiry also into the murders of her husband and of her son, Leon Sedov. The murderer of Trotsky, now resident in Czechoslovakia, should be questioned about his connection with Stalin's regime. Natalia Sedova offered to return to Moscow to assist any such enquiries. Her death should not prevent them taking place.

In 1956, statements made by leading members of the CPSU implied that full investigations of these questions were to take place. Six years later, they are still awaited.

We urge you to ensure that these enquiries be undertaken at once.

Yours faithfully,

John Daniels, M.Ed., Nottingham University.  
E. A. Thompson, Professor Classics, Nottingham University.  
Brian Pearce.  
C. Slaughter, Lecturer in Sociology, Leeds University.

# Terror Regime in Greece

By G. Demetriades

NEWS from Greece paints a horrifying picture of the terror that the Greek reactionary government is carrying out against the working class. In this new, all-out assault, no oppressive measure is being spared by the neo-fascists.

In the larger towns, police spies and KYP (Central Information Service) agents are everywhere. Midnight arrests in true Gestapo style have now become commonplace, often followed by torture and subsequent 'confessions' of subversive activities.

## Fascist

Armed bands of the fascist 'Blue Column' parade openly up and down the countryside, terrorising villagers and shooting down political opponents of the government. When the gendarmerie arrives—invariably too late—it usually finishes the job by arresting the villagers for 'disturbing the peace'.

In the northern districts the TEA, an official para-military organization, carries out regular raids. They invariably discover yet another 'spy ring', and hundreds find themselves en route to overcrowded concentration camps.

## Stabbed

In Crete, pressman E. Carellis has been stabbed in public by a well-known fascist thug, brother of an ERE MP, Kefaloyiannis. This ERE 'brave' has since 'disappeared'. Early in February a leftist

lawyer, Mr. N. Kirkis, was savagely attacked and beaten unconscious in broad daylight by the head of the gendarmerie in Aegina.

To prove that 'justice' is impartial, a sergeant of the Komotini gendarmes, P. Vourlias, appeared in court on February 12, accused of unlawfully arresting and torturing FDA supporters during the last elections. He was found guilty and... fined.

## Disease

The situation in the concentration camps is beyond description. Serious diseases are widespread, with tuberculosis claiming the highest number of victims. Hundreds have already died from lung, heart, liver or kidney diseases.

Here is a report which was smuggled out last January from one of the camps, St. Efstratios.

**George Kappos:** Serious case of neuropathy; 4 nervous breakdowns; hospitalization recommended 8 times but he is still kept on the island.

**C. Sapountzis:** Suffers from stomach ulcers, liver and kidney diseases, chronic rheumatism and very serious neuropathy. Five hospitalization orders have not been carried out; each time he is being presented with the dilemma "either you stay or we lock you up in the nut-house".

**Michael Charalambides:** Ex-old age pensioner, suffers from a serious case of TB; on the "danger list".

**G. Bardoulis:** Suffers from TB; according to the police doctor himself he should have been receiving "iron lung" treatment.

**Peter Coroneos:** Dangerous heart disease. He has had many attacks in the past and according to heart specialists who saw him during a temporary transfer in Athens he should be under constant specialist observation, as a fresh attack could prove fatal. He has nevertheless been returned to the island.

## Starvation

Apart from the illnesses and the acute shortages of medical supplies they are now faced with the ugly shadow of starvation. According to the law the government is not responsible for their food which the prisoners have to find for themselves. For this they are paid 7.50 drachmas (approx. 2s.) a day which enables them to place orders for small quantities of foodstuffs.

The sum, unaltered since the end of the war, can buy them a few ounces of rice, a little bread and a few olives. They are sometimes sent parcels

through the International Red Cross but these often get 'mis-laid' by the guards.

## Torture

The detained trade unionists and political enemies of the oligarchy are constantly subjected to savage and degrading humiliations and tortures by the guards who have been specially chosen for their brutality and savagery.

This campaign of slow death has reduced these victims of neo-fascism, most of whom are in the eighteenth year of their detention without trial, into walking skeletons, but has not conquered their militant fighting spirit.

## Symbol

Each one of them has stubbornly refused to sign a declaration of 'reform' and an undertaking of obedience to the 'lawful' authority of the ERE thugs, though a signature can automatically buy their freedom.

Their sacrifices and defiance has become a symbol of the coming struggles of the Greek working class, whose revival of militancy is already taking place slowly but with an ever-increasing pace, despite the ruthless bans, proscriptions and terrorism of the ruling class.

# How to Fight the Pay Pause

GERRY HEALY answers readers' queries

## QUESTION:

There seems to be no end to this fight for more wages. The Newsletter was correct in its leading article last week when it pointed out that those who obtain the 3 per cent increase will in all probability have it taken away from them by the April Budget. Can you suggest any way in which the working class can win wage increases which will enable it to maintain its standard of living under capitalism?

A.S., Glasgow

## ANSWER:

The struggle for more wages is the class struggle in practice. The Tory government is now endeavouring to reduce production costs so that the British employers may compete with their West European rivals more successfully when they enter the Common Market.

Lower production costs, so far as the Tories are concerned, mean essentially a drive to reduce wages by high taxation, increases in the cost of living and speed-ups on the job.

Just now, when a number of large capitalist firms are having to content themselves with a reduction in profits, the ruling class as a whole has decided that if profits are to rise again then it must be at the expense of wages.

So far as the working class are concerned, the wages they receive under capitalism are only a part of the value of the goods they produce.

The fact that the capitalists own and control the means of production enables them as a class to extract surplus value in the form of profit. The working class must, therefore, fight to win a decent standard of living at the expense of profits.

The question that arises is what sort of wage increases are necessary to enable the working class to achieve a decent standard of

living. How can the real cost of living be ascertained?

The Tory government publishes a fraudulent monthly index. It does not take into account all the items which a working-class family needs in order to maintain a reasonable standard.

There is only one sure way to ascertain increases in the cost of living and that is for the trade union movement to examine the family budgets of a cross-section of its membership in order, first of all, to find out what wages are necessary to establish a decent minimum.

Such an investigation would take into account all the expenditure of a working-class household not catered for by the government cost of living index.

Once a minimum has been established in this way, then the trade unions should negotiate for a rising scale of wages based upon the real increase in the cost of living to be regularly ascertained by the unions.

Then it would be possible to fight for wage increases that would have some direct relation to the real cost of living.

As it is, the trade unions have no real wages policy. They simply fight section by section in accordance with decisions from their conferences. Sometimes these decisions are taken on the spur of the moment, without any real examination of the position of members.

Of course, the rising scale of wages is only a transitional demand in the struggle for socialism. As long as capitalism continues, the workers will be in effect wage slaves. The problem of wages can only be resolved through the struggle for socialism.

This means the fight for the nationalization of the basic industries and the establishment of a planned economy through a system of workers' control.

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Labour Party.

Harry Selby, Govan LP.

Myra Morrison, Woodside Labour

Party.

H. Sergeant, Rutherglen Borough

Councillor.

Mary Sergeant.

K. Clark, Treasurer, Rutherglen

CLP.

A. Proudfoot, Secretary Corstorphine

Labour Party.

James K. Stocks, Labour Parliamen-

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James Cook, Treasurer, Edinburgh

City Labour Party.

Ronald J. Taylor, Pelton Labour

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A. Stocks, Corstorphine Labour

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Robert Goven, Chairman, Castle-

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C. Ross, Handsworth Labour

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T. Green.

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A. M. Carey.

Mansel Randles, Middlesex

County Convenor and member

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R. Garnham, Chairman Willesden

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P. N. Thompson.

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M. M. Archer.

P. Bangs.

N. La Bastide.

J. McNees.

P. Rosenberg.

G. Barnham.

A. Bux.

B. Robinson.

E. Adler.

N. Adler.

A. Taylor.

R. Halberstadt.

M. Klineberg

R. H. Sedler



# Algerian Tragedy

**T**HE Algerian national movement derives its strength from the struggle of the people for land and the right to the full dignities of human beings. The achievement of either is impossible under colonial rule.

For over seven years the Arab and Berber people of the once so-called 'three French departments of Algeria' have suffered great sacrifices and privations for their cause.

Scarcely a family has not had a member killed, tortured or imprisoned. Bitter combats have been fought and killings still go on.

The announcement of a cease-fire will be greeted with relief and enthusiasm; but it is nonetheless tragic that the settlement with the French cannot justify the sacrifices which have been made.

**This settlement is the most cynical deal which a nationalist leadership has ever made with a colonial power.**

While questioning the privileges of a large part of the 'poor white' population—from whom the gangsters of the OAS are largely drawn—it preserves the essential positions of French capital and of the big land-owners.

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It provides for the merging of the partisan fighters with French-financed mercenaries who were their worst enemies. It will set up an 'independent' Algerian state—if the OAS permits—under men pledged to work with French administrators and conserve ties with France.

The leadership which has negotiated this settlement has won certain concessions from the French; it has ensured, for the time being, its control over the national movement and the new state.

It gets most of what it has always asked for. But as it has never asked for much, acceptance can hardly be seen as a betrayal.

The real dupes are those on the left who tried to draw a distinction between the 'plebian' FLN and other bourgeois politicians.

In fact, the weakness of the Algerian bourgeoisie, reflected in the political leadership of the national movement, made it not more responsive to the pressure of the peasantry and urban proletariat, but more pliant to the demands of imperialism when the latter showed itself



ready to make concessions.

The leadership of the FLN was largely drawn from the moderate faction in the former MTLD (Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties) led by Messali Hadj.

After the rebellion began in November 1954 a series of political manoeuvres took place which brought various tendencies together in the FLN in opposition to Messali Hadj's MNA (Algerian National Movement).

Not only did Messali have a long record of uncompromising struggle which had earned him almost unremitting imprisonment by a series of French governments, he also had an important proletarian following, especially among the emigrant Algerian workers in France.

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The adoption of a revolutionary social programme gave it a distinctly socialist and proletarian character. For this reason it deserved support from Marxists outside Algeria.

Unfortunately a series of events followed which changed the character of the MNA.

The general background is provided by the attitude of the official leaders of the French working class, who did not want a common struggle against imperialism. At the same time the FLN pursued a campaign of annihilation against the trade union wing of the MNA and the latter fell increasingly under the influence of petty bourgeois and opportunist elements.

By 1957 this could already be seen in the attitude of some of

its leading representatives abroad and in the ambiguous nature of some of its policy declarations.

No doubt those who had supported the MNA should have realised sooner than they did that they were no longer dealing with the same movement and that its continued degeneration was inevitable.

When Messali greeted de Gaulle's return to power in

FLN as 'plebian' or as any more revolutionary than many other national movements.

Indeed, by accepting and supporting the actual leaders, Ferhat Abbas, later Ben Khedda, and the others, the possibility of developing a genuine proletarian current inside the movement was blocked.

If an understandable mistake was made by those who sup-

ported, for too long, the MNA, those who made themselves the indefatigable propagandists of the FLN placed themselves in a position where they became the mouthpiece of the most opportunist leadership in the history of bourgeois national movements.

Of course, part of the FLN was carrying on an armed struggle—not to speak of terrorism—which, for the impressionist, was all the evidence he needed of its 'revolutionary' character.

But the tests of social basis, ideological background and practical and programmatic moves left no doubt as to where the FLN was heading.

The Evian negotiations, and what leaked out about the subsequent secret conversations with the French, prepared the way for the compromise to which the FLN has now committed itself.

Many 'lefts' in France, whose own impotence led them to centre their activities around the slogan of 'Peace in Algeria', are happy at the settlement.

They congratulate Ben Khedda and his colleagues on their moderation and responsibility.

Since their own conception of a solution to the Algerian question was precisely one in which French capital conserved its essential positions, they now congratulate themselves on their foresight.

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As shamefaced supporters—at least in every crisis—of the de Gaulle regime, they hope that they will now be able to return to their cafes and studios to discuss 'neo-capitalism' or the 'anti-novel' without having their consciences troubled by tortures in Algeria.

History has been unkind to such people in the 20th century. In the troubled atmosphere of doubt, uncertainty and violence in France today it looks like being equally cruel in the future.

## By TOM KEMP

June 1958 with fulsome praise there was no room left for doubt.

In the meantime the FLN had both strengthened its control over the liberation forces and attracted to its banner all manner of politicians, or place-seekers, who had formerly been in favour of compromise.

The FLN thus became a 'broad' national movement, under a petty bourgeois leadership, but incorporating diverse trends. No doubt there were 'lefts', but there were also advocates of a Muslim theocratic state and of compromise with the French.

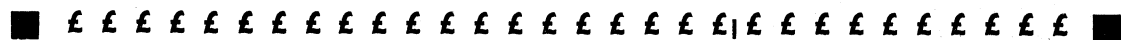
At any rate, no one ought to have been deceived into accepting the leadership of the

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The Evian negotiations, and



## City Slants by colin chance

### Foretaste

Does the Chancellor's announcement that estimated government expenditure during 1962-63 is to exceed the target by £111 million 'in real terms' (that is, after due allowance has been made for price increases) signify a change in direction?

It will be remembered that the government had pledged an effective freeze in public spending yet here is an apparent change of course. The facts, however, would indicate that the government's destination is unchanged.

The actual increase in expenditure compared with 1961-62 is expected to be some £345 million, of which £100 million represents increased arms expenditure.

But, in spite of courting the antagonism of Tory back-benchers, the government have apparently decided not to cut down on civil expenditure which includes agricultural subsidies, national health service and public service investment.

There is, in fact, no change of policy foreshadowed by this announcement. The key question

is, how is the money to be raised? Who is to bear the burden of increased taxes?

Selwyn Lloyd does not want to embarrass the trade union leaders who have seen fit to join N.E.D.C. by cutting social services or making people pay for hospital beds at this stage. A less blatant form of extortion is obviously the correct policy at this moment.

Any policy will be avoided which could have the effect of united action by the workers against an obvious attack on living standards.

Far better, the Tories consider, to divide and rule. Small permitted wage increases in one industry, not an inch conceded in another. The pattern emerges clearly. Do nothing to allow any united action of the working class.

When Peter Thorneycroft resigned in 1958 due to a £50 million gap in government expenditure, circumstances were very different. Company profits were beginning to rise. Tax yields were accordingly expected to rise as well.

This time the position is very different. Companies in January were paying 1961-62 income tax

on the high profit they had made well over a year ago, since the basis of assessment of the current year is the profits 'earned' in the previous year.

But the £6,500 million projected expenditure for 1962-63 must be viewed in the light of current economic circumstances. Falling profit margins and rising unemployment means that all government expenditure—higher though it is—must come from a smaller cake.

Now it is inconceivable that a higher volume of taxes will be paid on lower profits. So the answer to the question, 'Whence comes the money?' must be 'From the mass of the people in the form of increased indirect taxation and reduced personal tax allowances' (child and marriage relief, etc.).

Any inflationary tendency of increased government expenditure is to be counteracted by repressive taxation on the workers. The slight increases in pay conceded to the railwaymen, for instance, will be taken back and more.

We can expect the Budget on April 9 to give us the first taste of government 'planning'.

## Say 'No' to Kennedy

**T**HE American State Department is now doing everything it can to starve out the Cuban Revolution. Mr. Walt Rostow, chief of the State Department's office for dealing with this problem visited Paris recently in order to raise the question of Cuba at a meeting of the NATO Council.

Washington officials insisted that he would demand stronger support from America's NATO allies against Castro.

Concretely this means an attempt to tighten up the economic screws on Cuba in a way which the imperialists hope will lead to starvation on the island.

There is a real danger that the Tory government, which is amenable and accommodating

to the rulers of the United States, will cut off trade with Cuba. At the moment this runs at approximately £4 million a year—both ways.

The British Labour movement must be wide awake about the intentions of the Kennedy administration. The Cuban people are a mortal threat to Yankee imperialism and nothing will be left undone to undermine them.

It is essential that every effort is made to extend trade with the Cuban government in every way possible. Labour must be on guard as to the real dangers of the American blockade. A defeat inflicted by such methods on the Cuban Revolution would be a most serious blow against the international working class.

# Industrial Newsletter

## Coal Board

### The Mystery of the Missing Millions

By Our Industrial Correspondent

THE appeal by the TUC to the government to write off the £90 million accumulated deficit of the National Coal Board has revealed once more the real source of the losses of this nationalized industry.

Since the mines were nationalised in 1947, millions of pounds have been pumped into private industry and finance.

£388 million has been paid to former coal mine owners as compensation. Of this, £352 million is still owed to the Exchequer by the Coal Board.

In addition, £658 millions has been borrowed for modernisation purposes, of which £621 millions were still an outstanding debt at the end of 1961.

#### Big Business

The cost of borrowing these huge sums has drained the resources of the Coal Board by £40 millions. This has been used to re-invigorate big business and discredit nationalization.

In fact, the industry has been

making a working profit of over £20 million a year and the total surplus is estimated at over £270 millions.

#### Miners Suffer

Mineworkers should be warned now that the appeal by the TUC for the burdens of the NCB to be transferred on to the government will only result in the burden being placed even more firmly on the working class—directly in the continued stagnation at an abysmal level of miners' wages and indirectly in taxes or reductions in the social services.

Miners should demand the suspension of interest payments to the moneylenders. This would place the burden where it belongs.

The wage claims of pit workers have too often been turned down to line the pockets of big business.

### Mr. Byrne Writes Again

By Reg Perry

THE vitriolic pen of John Thomas Byrne, General Secretary of the ETU, has been busy again.

This self-styled champion of democracy is now threatening to suspend the many branches of the union which have objected to his balloting methods.

The right wing of the union is conducting a ballot to change the rules in order to hold a conference with every branch of the union equally represented, regardless of size.

In the preamble to the ballot, Byrne tells members to vote for the change. Many branches have included in the ballot envelopes to members a statement objecting

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# 'Now Let's Have a Real Fight' say Engineers

Engineering workers report on the second one-day stoppage on March 5, called by the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions.

## Birmingham

ALL large factories and hundreds of small ones were at a complete standstill on March 5.

Many employers put up notices themselves declaring the factories shut, remembering the strikes over blacklegs after the last stoppage.

Since February 5 a tremendous recruiting drive has been made and reports show that far more workers were out on strike last Monday.

Hundreds of posters declared the feeling of Birmingham workers: 'Smash the Pay Pause—Cut Profits Not Wages'; 'The Tory Plan is a Wages Ban—A Pay Pause is a Wages Cut'; 'Solidarity — Railwaymen, Miners, Postal Workers, Civil Servants and Engineers—All Together to Smash the Pay Pause'.

The speaker from the Confederation Executive, Mr. L. Green, of the Heating and Domestic Engineers Union, was as cold and icy as the grass on which we had to stand in the park at the end of the march. (To save money, the leaders had not booked a hall this time.)

The only spark Bro. Green raised was when he said, 'If a vote goes against a national strike then your negotiators' hands will be severely weakened. Vote the right way and strengthen our hands.' But this was said so mildly that engineers really wondered if he meant what he said.

In a statement to The Newsletter, Harry Mason, ETU steward and chairman of shop stewards at Morris Commercial said, 'We must see that everybody now votes for the national strike for our claim. We must do our best to see to it that the leaders accept nothing but the £1 increase, 40 hour week and full adult male rate for women workers.'

Brother Joe Lowe, Foundry Workers' Union shop steward, said, 'I think we can confidently say that our EC will recommend to all our members that they vote "Yes" for national strike action.'

## Liverpool

'OUR report is that Merseyside is out 100 per cent,' said the Merseyside Confederation secretary, addressing Monday's demonstration on Liverpool's Pier Head.

The demonstration, itself, was not a true reflection of this hundred per cent response to the strike call.

In comparison with last month's strike demonstration, the march was only half the size. This can mean that having shown their strength in one token strike, engineers and those involved in the claim want to get on with the real thing.

Much support for the demonstration and for 'Yes for the ballot' could have been rallied,

particularly amongst women workers, who have even more than the men to gain from the claim. Women were conspicuously absent on the march.

The first speaker from the Merseyside Confederation repeatedly said that we want a reduction in hours and a significant rise, without once mentioning the £1 claim and the 40 hour week.

He also thought there was every likelihood of the unions meeting the employers before the ballot. Does this mean that preparations are being made for industrial peace at the gain of some very small concessions—3 or 4 per cent perhaps?

There is a new mood of militancy in the factories since the first token strike. This will make it difficult for union leaders to sell-out for any sort of miserable offer.

Organisation has been going on at a good pace since the last strike. 'For a Closed Shop' has been the call.

At Liverpool's largest factory, Automatic Telephones, employing over 7,000 productive workers, shop stewards too friendly to the management have been removed and feeling has been bitter against those who wouldn't come out on strike against the blacklegs who went in during the February one-day stoppage.

Preparations must be made for the strike now. Links must be forged between shop stewards' committees and a real campaign carried on for a resounding 'Yes' to the ballot.

## Coventry

COVENTRY's token demonstration against the employers' rejection of their wage and hours claim was a very poorly attended and organized affair.

Only 300 of the area's 100,000 engineers took part. But such was their enthusiasm that more than a hundred of them answered the call for a lunch-time picket of the local GEC works.

It seems that the local union officials had been taken in by the press statement that Jaguar, Bristol Siddley and GEC were closing their plants for the day to avoid any trouble arising from employees not answering the strike call.

GEC did in fact close its telephone works, but transferred large numbers of women and girls to its radio and television works in the centre of the city.

The pickets soon sealed off all three entrances to the factory. Only after a large detachment of police were called to the works were the strike-breakers able to enter the plant.

The engineers who took part in the picket line, though few of them work at GEC, recognise the challenge thrown down by the management and intend to fight back by calling for a blacking of all work from the factory and for trade unionists to boycott GEC products in the shops.

Union leaders do not intend calling any more meetings to press for the Confederation claim until after the national ballot. But there is clearly a need for meetings to

## Roberts Removed from 'A' List

AFTER being refused endorsement by the Labour Party National Executive as Parliamentary candidate for Horsham, Mr. Ernie Roberts has now been removed by them from the 'A list' of union-sponsored candidates.

He was put on this list by the Amalgamated Engineering Union, of which he is Assistant General Secretary. He has still been given no reason for the actions of the Labour Party.

AEU-sponsored candidates are elected by the Union's National Committee, after nomination from the branches, passing an examination and being approved by the Executive Council. This is the first time that any name put forward by an affiliated union has been taken off the Labour Party's list.

#### Union Candidate

Roberts, who stood for Labour in 1955 in Stockport, has also been nominated as an AEU candidate for selection at both Poplar and South Bedford, in each case by a District Committee of his union.

John Boyd, AEU representative on the Labour Party NEC has opposed the Party's decision on each occasion. Despite George Brown's statements to the contrary, the AEU was not consulted.

Eighty constituency labour parties have already protested to Transport House about Roberts' non-endorsement for Horsham.

Now, however, the whole question of the relations between the Party and affiliated unions is raised. Trades union organizations must protest about this move to keep from becoming Labour candidates all except those who toe Gaitskell's line.

deal not only with future problems similar to the GEC one but to also prepare the general body of workers for the ballot.

It is now up to the hard core of militants who demonstrated on Monday to give a clear political lead and transform the Coventry district.

## Scotland

MORE than 1,500 workers took part in the demonstration from Glasgow Green to St. Andrews Halls. The size of the demonstration was remarkable, considering the fact that it was held at 9.30 in the morning and there was virtually no preparation to mobilize the rank and file.

The right-wing leaders of the Clyde Confederation District Committee did not intend calling a demonstration but were compelled to do so just a few days before the strike.

Bro. Chalmers, assistant general secretary of the Boilermakers' union, who deputised for Ted Hill, bored his audience to tears with a statement designed to avoid evoking any militant feeling.

'The conceding of a moderate wage claim,' he said, 'is the best alternative to strike action.'

A resolution put to the meeting by J. Service, an AEU official, recommended the workers to vote for militant action in the forthcoming strike ballot.