

# STOP CUBA BLOCKADE!

## EDITORIAL

### Frightened Men of Fleet Street

THE Press is beginning its annual vilification of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament as Easter and the Aldermaston march draw near.

Alarmed by the ever-increasing growth of this great anti-H-bomb movement which, if turned to the Labour movement, could seriously threaten the rule of the cold-war warriors, the mouthpiece of the ruling class spares no effort in spreading unpleasant rumours about the thousands of young people who support CND.

Last year the gimmick was promiscuity and free love. This year it is drug-addiction. The 'Daily Mail' fired the first salvo on Wednesday with a banner headline 'Yard acts against "weedies"'. Scotland Yard, it told its readers, has started a big comb-out of members of CND who drug themselves with reefer cigarettes.

Seamen and (of course!) immigrants smuggle the dope into the country, the Mail says. Much of it is sold in the university cities, where many young people are enrolled in CND.

Police have information, it goes on, that another sit-down demonstration, soon to take place in Trafalgar Square, will be joined by many 'weedies'.

The conclusion it leaves its readers to draw is obvious: you have to be 'hopped-up' to sit down or march against the bomb; respectable young people should not take part in demonstrations against such respectable institutions as the hydrogen bomb and the threat of nuclear war.

This squalid sensationalism from the gutter press will not deter the supporters of CND from turning out in their thousands this Easter.

At the same time a mass campaign should begin to recruit new members to the movement.

Socialists have a vital role to play. They must seek to turn CND into a movement that will fight the H-bomb on a political basis.

A real drive must be made in the coming months in the trade unions and Labour parties to return to the historic decisions of Scarborough and pledge a future Labour government to unilateralism and withdrawal from the capitalist war alliances.

That would give the frightened men of Fleet Street something to really write about.

## Fight Imperialist Plans with 'Food for Cuba' Committees

A STATEMENT BY THE  
 NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE  
 SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

THE Cuban revolution is in danger! The announcement by Fidel Castro that foodstuffs in Cuba, such as meat, butter, eggs, milk, fish, beans, rice and potatoes are to be rationed, along with soap, detergents and toothpaste, is a challenge to the international working class. After the failure of its military invasion last April, the brutal blockade introduced by the White House can only be described as an operation to starve out the revolution.

This cynical act enjoys the support of influential Tory circles in Britain. An editorial in the 'Daily Telegraph' of March 14 reminds its Tory readers that 'the hard facts are that Cuba has not got the money to purchase food'.

Here is the united front of capitalism in action. Deprived of American markets by the Kennedy administration, blockaded by the influence of the Yankee dollar in the Latin America countries, the Cuban government is denied the possibility of doing legitimate trade.

### Hypocrites

Then along come the Tory hypocrites with the statement that the Cubans have no money.

What an excellent way out for the Macmillan government!

Of course the Cuban people have no money. World imperialism is straining all its military and economic resources to strangle their revolution.

The only hope for the Cuban working people lies in the action of the international working class.

Certain aid has come from the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe, but it should not be left to them alone to to organize assistance for Cuba.

Here is where international socialism should take a hand in a most practical way.

During the Spanish Civil War a similar blockade existed. At that time the international labour movement came to the assistance of the Spanish people.

### Vital Supplies

Food ships were organized, vital medical supplies were purchased from the money raised by the trade unions and working-class organizations.

The Labour and Communist youth movements played a leading role in collecting food, week by week, from sympathetic Labour supporters.

The international Labour movement can and must defend the Cuban revolution. If we do not come to its assistance now, it may well be defeated.

Here is a task which the British Labour movement must start at once.

'Food for Cuba Committees' should be set up in every part of the country. The purpose of these committees would be to organize the raising of cash to purchase food and essential



medical supplies. Non-perishable foodstuffs would be transported to Cuba to break the blockade.

There should be no difficulty about transport. Today there are plenty of ships available from the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union which could easily transport all the goods that can be collected in Britain.

The National Committee of the Socialist Labour League denounces the effects of this new American aggression against defenceless women and children. It is the Cuban youth above all who will be affected in the years to come.

### Brutal

American capitalism and its British allies have once again demonstrated to the entire world that imperialism is a bloodthirsty, brutal and oppressive system.

We appeal to all those Labour MPs and others who have visited Cuba on various delegations to come immediately into the forefront and begin the organization of the Food for Cuba Committees.

We appeal to young people in particular, both in the Young Socialists and the Young Communist League, to consider themselves as the vanguard of such a movement and to commence campaigning immediately.

## SLL Pledges Support

M. Stolik,  
 Charge d'Affaires,  
 Cuban Embassy,  
 22 Mount Street,  
 London, W.1.

Dear Sir,

The National Committee of the Socialist Labour League strongly protests against the shameful attempts of the forces of Yankee imperialism to starve the Cuban people. We pledge ourselves to do everything in our power to assist



## Talks and Bloodshed Continue

by Tom Kemp

WHILE the negotiators drive their hard bargains at Evian, the OAS steps up its offensive in Algeria in an atmosphere of racial war and hysteria. And in France, a farcical note enters the activities of the 'leaders' of the working class who called a half-hour general strike in protest at the latest OAS atrocities in Paris.

### Picket US embassy Saturday

'LIFT the Blockade', 'American bosses starve Cuban Workers' and 'Defend the Cuban Revolution' were some of the slogans displayed by a picket at the US Embassy on Wednesday morning.

The picket, organized by the London Area Committee of the Socialist Labour League, was the immediate response to the speech of Fidel Castro which disclosed the serious position in Cuba.

The windows of the embassy and the US Marine headquarters in Grosvenor Square were soon filled with onlookers as the picket marched in front of the embassy escorted by apprehensive policemen.

The London Area Committee is organizing a further picket at the embassy this Saturday, March 17, starting at 10 a.m.

It appeals to all workers and students to demonstrate their support for the Cuban revolution and their hostility to the American attempt to starve it into submission.

These are the first stages of a 'Food for Cuba' campaign planned by the Area Committee for the coming weeks.

Organizations and individuals wishing to join in the campaign should write for further details to: R. Perry, 186a Clapham High St., S.W.4, or telephone MACaulay 7029.

The unwillingness of de Gaulle to hammer the OAS reflects the weakness in his position. He is unable to control the European population in Algeria and is uncertain of the allegiance of many high-ranking officers and civil servants.

Technicians in the Sahara oilfields, for example, have declared that they will not work under a fifty-fifty arrangement with Algerians after 'independence' and will join the OAS if dual management is forced upon them.

### NEW CRISIS

But, while an attempt at a putsch seems out of the question for the present, the turn of events in Algeria may lead to a new crisis in which the existence of the de Gaulle regime will be brought into question.

The OAS is weak in metropolitan France at present, but it would be wrong to think that a cease-fire will diminish the threat of fascism.

The OAS will redouble its efforts to win support from the middle layers of the population which may be inclined to move towards the stronger party—especially when they feel threatened from the working class.

### MASS MOVEMENT

The repatriated colons and returned veterans from the Algerian war may form the nucleus of a mass movement of a fascist type. De Gaulle, or his successors, may thus use these forces to defend capitalism or be swept aside by them.

The lack of any effective link up between the struggle of the Algerian people and the working-class movement in France remains the key to the situation.

There is, however, a strong  
 (Continued page 2, col. 1)

# Labour Movement Key to Anti-Bomb Struggle

## - Pat Arrowsmith is wrong

**S**PEAKING in Trafalgar Square last Sunday, Pat Arrowsmith called for nuclear disarmament candidates to contest parliamentary elections. 'It is time this campaign stopped hanging on to the coat-tails of the Labour Party,' she said.

Only a few days before, the increased Labour majority in the Lincoln by-election had signalled an anti-Tory swing.

The week had begun with a solid one-day strike of three million engineering workers. Here was the beginning of a revival of action by the working class.

Pat Arrowsmith chose this moment to turn her back on the political expression of that class. Despite her undoubted devotion to the cause of nuclear disarmament, she ignores the only force which can get rid of the H-bomb.

### EMPTY

It is true that her speech also contained a reference to the need for industrial action against nuclear weapons. But such calls remain empty and abstract unless they are connected with economic and political struggles.

Someone else at the meeting said 'the Labour Party let us down'. What he meant was that the Tories-in-disguise who lead the Party continued to back the H-bomb even after the Scarborough decision in 1960.

But this should not have been a surprise. After all, as Gaitskell once proudly reminded a TV interviewer, it was the Labour government that began the work on the bomb. Gaitskell and Brown retained their grip on the Party machine, but

By OUR POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

only because no alternative leadership was shown by the 'left' MPs when they got the chance.

Now, the growth of a new left wing makes it possible to reorganize the fight to break the Labour Party from its NATO leadership.

More than ever, society is divided into two social powers: Capital and Labour. Their



Pat Arrowsmith

struggle over the division of the wealth produced by the workers, determines every other social process.

Among the groups which lie between these two great forces, the illusion is often found that individual action can be more powerful than either of the organized economic classes. It is imagined that the consciences and wills of isolated human beings, operating independently, can overcome the conflicts and stresses which tear capitalism

apart and threaten the destruction of humanity.

While we salute the courageous actions of people like Pat Arrowsmith, their ideas stem from this social fantasy.

The horror of the H-bomb expresses the insanity of the capitalist mode of production in its decline.

The Tory government and its US allies need such weapons in order to protect the right of Capital to exploit workers at home and in the colonies.

In the trades union and labour movement lies the power which will destroy this social system. But this power can only be effective if the workers become conscious of it.

At the head of the movement are men whose political function is to tie it to the capitalist framework. They fight to prevent the growth of the workers' consciousness of their ability to reshape society.

Marxists are those who organize the struggle to show the working class its strength.

### EXPRESSION

The Labour Party, despite its leaders, is the political expression of the trades unions, and the Labour vote, reflecting opposition to the economic politics of the Tory government, is one manifestation of working-class power.

Those who want to fight against the dangers of nuclear war must throw their weight into the battle to develop working-class consciousness. Their campaign must be linked with the struggle to break the pay pause, the demand for more nationalization and the ejection of the Tory government.

Pat Arrowsmith should think again.

## Greek workers prepare for action

By G. Demetriades

**T**HE Greek working class has traditionally identified each struggle for better wages and conditions as a political as well as an economic struggle. The general slogan has always been: 'For higher pay and better conditions! For the downfall of the government!'

Since the disastrous Stalinist betrayal of the workers' revolution however, the heavy and fatal wounds inflicted on the working class have held back its force considerably.

### Long Apathy

With its most militant leaders imprisoned, its structural organization smashed and its fighting spirit shattered by a series of disillusionments, it fell into a long apathy, occasionally broken by explosive, but short-lived, outbursts and by sectional struggles on an economic level.

Once again the younger generation, which had not suffered the defeats and bitter disappointments of its older comrades, revived the movement. As the fresh blood was gradually introduced into the class struggle there came the inevitable re-birth of militancy and willingness to fight.

### Sharp Increase

So in the period 1955-60 we saw the youth-inspired anti-imperialist demonstrations and street riots, the almost weekly clashes with the police and a sharp increase in the workers' participation in union activities.

More recently, every single strike since the beginning of the year has been an open challenge to the government and its policies.

As the proscriptions and the arrests of militants are stepped up, the willingness to fight seems to increase. Thus fresh from a lost strike and less than 48 hours after the arrest of their leader, the workers of the French-owned Lavrion mines unanimously demanded the release of Mitsikakos who was arrested for preparing for yet another strike.

### Bitter End

The men backed their demand with a 48-hour strike and declared that they will continue their preparations for further action 'to the bitter end'.

These men work under deplorable conditions. Their wages are among the lowest in the country and the French employers can — by law — enforce as much compulsory overtime as they see fit.

Most of the men are compelled to work 12 and 14 hours a day during the whole of the Greek six-day working week, despite the fact that they

are fast approaching a point of near-exhaustion.

The leaders of the Civil Servants employed at the tax offices called for a national ten-day strike on February 19 to force the government to bring an end to their plight. Their pay is just over the official subsistence level.

The strike paralyzed all the tax offices throughout Greece, despite the threats of the Ministry of National Economy to make use of the law that prohibits such action by Civil Servants.

### Condemned

At an unofficial mass meeting the engineers of Piraeus strongly condemned the refusal of their union's executive to organize strike action to back their claims. Finally, the bus workers union is to hold mass meetings this month and the men will undoubtedly vote for a strike.

In its attempt to check this revival of working class militancy, the ERE government has introduced a series of laws aimed at making it impossible or useless to take strike action. The main weapon is the notorious Law No. 3259.

According to this, the procedure for arranging wages must be through collective agreements of employers and workers, and failing this the dispute must be settled by arbitration.

### Farce

However, a series of clauses and sub-clauses within this law make it a farce.

For example:

From the moment a dispute is referred to the arbitration courts, a strike becomes illegal and if continued it can be broken up by the use of the army and the police.

The Minister of Labour has the power to refer any dispute to arbitration at any time; thus he is able to break up the most militant and — from his point of view — dangerous strikes.

The Minister can also extend for a year already-expired collective agreements; thus he can arbitrarily keep wages 'static' year after year, regardless of the continuous rise of the cost of living.

### Check Inflation

Finally, the Ministries of Labour and Co-ordination can cut down any wage increases that have either been collectively agreed upon or have been granted through the arbitration courts. This is allegedly a measure to check inflation.

Despite its obvious limitations, this open defiance by the Greek workers of the bans and repressions, testifies to its willingness to come to grips with the ruling class for a final showdown.

(A further article will appear next week.)

### FRANCE

From page 1

link between the interests of the Algerian Provisional Government and the French government. Both need peace in Algeria; neither can achieve it without the aid of the other.

The French government, however, is unable to deal with the OAS because, in the last analysis, the difference between de Gaulle and Salan is about methods, not ends.

The hope that de Gaulle will 'solve' the Algerian question — and would solve it quicker if only their advice were followed — is the fond hope of many 'lefts'.

### NOT WORKABLE

Their main criticism, therefore, is not about the agreement itself but of the delay in finalising it and the possibility that, in the teeth of OAS opposition, it will not be workable.

The working class is seen as an adjunct to arrangements made between leaders, a force to be used against the OAS and to be held back from struggle on its own behalf.

The French working class, which has so recently shown its force and solidarity, will be led to new defeats and the Algerian people will remain within the sphere of imperialist exploitation unless such policies are reversed.

## How to Fight the Pay Pause

GERRY HEALY answers readers' queries

### QUESTION:

Isn't the substantial vote for Labour in the Lincoln by-election an endorsement of Mr. Gaitskell's policy?

H.T., London

### ANSWER:

The voting at the Lincoln by-election reflects the growing uneasiness in the ranks of the working class over Tory policies.

Taken with the results of the Blackpool North by-election, this opposition also stretches into the ranks of the middle-class who have normally relied upon assistance from the banks to help them with their small businesses.

The Tory pay pause, whilst successful insofar as it has brought right-wing trade union leaders to heel, is nevertheless invoking constant and growing hostility throughout the working-class movement. It was this hostility which resulted in the victory for Labour at Lincoln.

The vote was not so much a vote for Mr. Gaitskell's policy as an anti-Tory demonstration

from the electorate. If Mr. Gaitskell were to take power tomorrow at the head of a Labour government, he would have substantially the same policy as the Tories in relation to matters such as the Common Market and the growth of monopolies.

The working class want to fight the Tories and this can be seen from the victorious one-day stoppages by the engineering workers, and now the Lincoln by-election.

These results also emphasize the important fact that industrial struggles do not remain confined to industry but take on a political form.

This will have undoubted repercussions in the ranks of the Labour Party.

The policy of the Socialist Labour League is to build a Marxist left inside the Labour Party to guide this struggle towards a socialist Britain.

Here is why we encourage all members and supporters of the League to be active along these lines in the Labour Party and the trade unions.

# Hot air at Lancaster House

**M**UCH hot air is being produced by the politicians who are attending the Kenya Constitutional Conference in London. It began on February 14 and is likely to go on for several more weeks.

Ostensibly the discussions centre around the kind of constitution to be operated in a politically independent Kenya. KADU stands for a federal constitution and the decentralization of power. KANU, which is in opposition and which so far has the support of the workers and peasants of Kenya, stands for a strong unitary form of government.

## 'FREEDOM'

The British colonial minister, Maudling, set the line of the conference when he referred in his opening remarks, to 'a constitution that will give to individuals freedom from oppression, and an assurance of equality before an impartial law'.

These are the hypocritical, cant phrases one expects from capitalist politicians.

But behind the scenes some realistically hard bargaining is going on. It is being conducted

# House

recently threatened to call a general strike over arbitrary dismissals of workers for 'failing to salute a European'. Many workers are now saying to their

by **JAMES BAKER**

bosses, 'We will show you when uhuru (independence) comes'.

Kenyatta has demanded that a date should be set for independence immediately. But in an interview to the Nairobi 'Sunday Nation' before he left for the conference, Kenyatta made it clear that he did not stand for socialism nor was he for nationalization.

In a maiden speech to the Legislative Council on January 25 this year he denied reports that he had told Kenyans they would get land free after independence.

He favoured a scheme similar to that prevailing in Denmark where townspeople are given a cottage and 6-12 acres of land.

He has always insisted on the need to preserve the confidence of foreign investors so that agricultural production may be developed and increased. 'Kenya is primarily an agricultural country,' he stated.

## EXCLUDED

There are, however, much more radical demands being made. There is, for example, Mr. Paul Ngei: he is a member of KANU but he has been excluded from the Lancaster House conference. He called for the taking over of European land without compensation.

The Land Freedom Army has been re-established recently in Kenya. According to 'The Times' it has between 2,000-5,000 members.

This consists of small groups of landless and unemployed peasants and agricultural workers who have decided that they will get their proper share of land when Kenya becomes independent, even if they have to fight for it.

There have been a number of attacks on European farms recently organized by bands of this Land Freedom Army in search of money, food and arms.

**Kenyatta has gone out of his way to denounce the Land Freedom Army. 'I do not know who they are. We cannot say that they are something which has a root in the country. Maybe they are people without a centre . . . their kind of action can bring no good to Kenya . . . I am not afraid of being killed by them . . . My duty is to see that law and order is maintained.'**

('Sunday Nation', 11.2.62)

## CONTROL

One of the bargaining counters Kenyatta no doubt uses to support his claim to be the first Prime Minister of an independent Kenya is that he is the only person who can control these malcontents among the workers and peasants.

There have been many warn-

ings of the possibility of a breakdown in the economy of Kenya. Already damage caused by floods has caused severe hardship. Unemployment among farm workers has reached serious proportions.

Conversations between rival groups of self-seeking politicians in London will solve nothing

except the survival of imperialism in Kenya.

Only by taking power into their own hands can the workers and peasants of Kenya guarantee a sure future for themselves.

## LETTER

Dear Comrades,

I send you a resolution adopted recently by the African Students' Federation in France. This protests against Sekou Toure's repression and completes my article ('End of an Illusion') on the same subject.

I think it is worthwhile publishing this resolution in The Newsletter. You can mention that the French Communist Party, 'left' papers like 'L'Express' and 'France-Observateur' and, of course, all other 'bourgeois' papers have not published a word on it.

Paris MAMADOU KEITA

The Federation of North African Students in France at their 14th Congress held on December 27-30, 1961, in Paris:

Reaffirmed their active solidarity with the trade unionists on trial and the patriots who are imprisoned.

Reaffirmed their loyal support for the people of Guinea in their struggle for liberty, dignity, prosperity and justice.

Demanded from the PDG and the government of Guinea—

1. The liberation and rehabilitation of the patriots in prison.
2. The halting of all other repressive measures.
3. The re-opening of the second-

## Face-Lift for a US Puppet

# 'Democracy' for Viet Nam

By **CYRIL SMITH**

**I**N their efforts to disguise counter-revolution as 'defence of the free world', the US State Department runs into frequent difficulties. Dependence on regimes like that of Ngo Dinh Diem in South Vietnam can sometimes bring embarrassment for a 'progressive' administration like Kennedy's.

Everyone knows that Diem was installed as a US puppet after the French were ejected in 1953 and their play-boy stooge Emperor Bao Dai was finally pensioned off. Everyone knows that Diem rests on American

financial, military and technical aid.

Last October, Frederick Nolting, US Ambassador in Saigon, had suggested that a few minor reforms in Vietnam's administration might improve its democratic camouflage.

Perhaps one or two fewer of Diem's relations in lucrative government jobs would give the effect of 'broadening the base' of the regime.

Diem denounced such proposals as 'foreign interference'. Clearly, innovations such as free elections or the release of a few political prisoners, whatever their propaganda value, would not suit this representative of the 'democratic camp'.

Now, however, when Diem's regime is threatened with overthrow, some slight changes have been announced.

These include 'a broad social and economic programme' and the establishment of an Internal Security Council to co-ordinate the war against the Viet Cong rebels.

## Praise

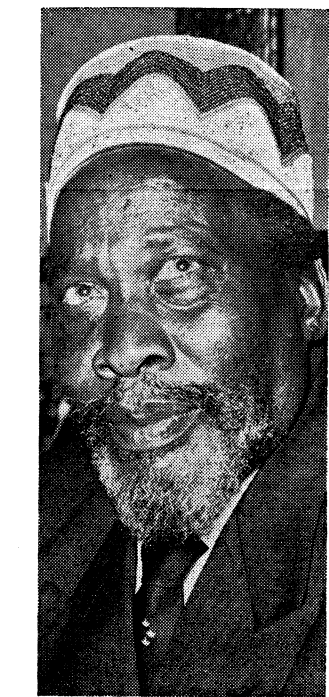
In return, US officials are giving more support to Diem. Ambassador Nolting recently praised his 'dedicated and courageous leadership'.

Newspapermen have been told that President Diem is greatly respected among his own people.

Meanwhile, 40,000 US troops are reported to be training on Okinawa, ready for large-scale intervention in South-East Asia. Considerable forces are already in action in Vietnam and Laos.

Equipment in the Okinawa base includes nuclear missiles and nuclear-armed fighter bombers.

This is American imperialism's answer to the Asian workers' and peasants' struggle against corruption and exploitation.



Kenyatta: Confidence for foreign investors.

by power hungry politicians who are divided not by any principles or policies but by their personal ambitions.

These discussions are taking place against a background of rising discontent in Kenya. The workers organized in trade unions are taking an increasingly militant line.

## HAND OVER

A conference of railway workers in Mombasa recently demanded an increase of wages to a minimum of £12 10s. per month. The conference demanded also that all jobs now held by Europeans or Asians should be handed over to African employees before the end of the year.

The union has drawn up a blacklist of non-Africans who should be dismissed immediately because of their past bad behaviour towards African workers.

The Tobacco Workers' Union

## City Slants by colin chance

### Cycle psychology

The Bank Rate was reduced last week to 5½ per cent. The reduction according to the government is due 'not simply because of the continued strength of sterling but in light of the general economic situation'.

As far as the general economic situation is concerned we now know that capital spending (that is investment on building, plant and machinery) is down by 10 per cent compared to December.

The Ministry of Works, commenting on the reduction in orders placed with builders, stated, 'Results of the Board of Trade inquiry into the capital investment intentions in 1962 of firms in industry had suggested that a levelling-off in expenditure on industrial buildings was to be expected this year, but the fall in orders was sharp'.

So one reason why the Bank Rate is cut is because of the danger signs on the horizon. Falling profit margins inevitably cause a reduction in the sums available for new investment. There is the growing feeling that the weapons used to keep wage rates down are also bringing about stagnation in industry from which it will not

easily recover. The token reduction in the Bank Rate is partly a recognition of this factor.

But there are more compelling reasons for the reduction. There is a certain body which meets regularly in Paris called 'Working Party No. 3'. Its personnel is composed of American and leading European Treasury and central bank officials.

The role of this body is to enforce monetary co-ordination between the main capitalist powers. If interest rates favour one country more than another, this body uses considerable pressure to cause the necessary 'readjustment' to be made.

It can be reasonably suggested that there is American dominance on this committee. With the American bank rate at 2 per cent less than over here, the movement of funds out of America and into London is a natural corollary. The dollar 'weakens'; sterling 'strengthens'.

The reduction in the Bank Rate is primarily due to the wish of the Americans not to be priced out of the market so far as currency rates are concerned.

It has been estimated that foreign money has been coming in at the rate of £3 million to £4 million a day. But what a price

has to be paid for this hot money! What a drain there is on the balance of payments so far as interest charges are concerned!

The Bank Rate at 5½ per cent is still considerably higher than most European rates. It determines the rate at which banks lend money on overdrafts, and all other interest rates are influenced by it. In particular, it influences the rate at which the government borrows money to finance budget deficits.

With record expenditure facing the government it may be that it plans a record budget deficit. One way of reducing the cost of servicing a deficit is to lower the Bank Rate.

The dilemma facing the Tory government can be summed up in the following way. Continue with a high bank rate and (a) antagonise foreign governments faced with a weakening of their own currencies; (b) face a financial crisis when foreign deposits are withdrawn; and (c) further depress economic conditions.

Alternatively, bring the Bank Rate into line with foreign rates thus starting the cycle that led to the last financial crisis: making money cheaper, the demand for labour higher and the pay pause weaker. There is no capitalist cure for economic ills.

# Industrial Newsletter

## Grim Prospects for Miners

By BOB SHAW

OVER 700 miners took part in the Parliamentary lobby organized by the Scottish NUM last week and expressed their feelings on the subject of pit closures. Scottish miners are both angry and frustrated. The pit closures are to go on, and the prospects of alternative employment are grim.

Since 1947, 128 pits have been closed. The Coal Board's plan is for a further run-down of the Scottish coalfield. New pits such as the Rothes pit in Fifeshire, a £14 million scheme begun only in recent years, are to close now, as well as old, worked-out ones.

### Not Profitable

The Rothes pit stands over rich coal seams which the Coal Board experts say cannot be worked profitably. Scottish officials of the NUM predict that it will in fact close in May this year and that the 1,000 men who are working there will face a 'very difficult future'.

Lord Robens describes their plight as 'redundancy'. In other words, they face the sack.

Miners who are retained in the industry will have to travel to England and may only be offered jobs at lower rates of pay.

In Scotland the prospects of other employment are almost non-existent, with unemployment standing at 3.8 per cent in Glasgow and as high as 10 per cent in other areas.

### Do Nothing

Once the Rothes and other pits close, some miners will have no option but to throw themselves on to the labour market and to take any job they can get. This is what the Tory government wants.

The right-wing leadership of the National Union of Mineworkers is determined to do nothing about this situation which will upset its close co-operation with the NCB.

It intends also to see that all the areas of the union are kept in line. It condemned the lobby

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Published by The Newsletter,  
186a Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4  
Printed by Plough Press Ltd. (TU), r.o.  
180 Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4

which was organized by the Scottish area on the grounds that an approach to government and Parliamentary leaders was the right of the national leadership only.

The leading members of the Communist Party in the Miners' Union are not prepared to challenge the right-wing control of the union, organize the rank and file to replace them and lead a militant fight against the Coal Board.

Will Paynter, since his election to top office, has condemned every form of independent militant action in Yorkshire and Scotland.

### Condemned

When the Scottish pits spontaneously called one-day strikes against pit closures earlier this year, Alex Moffat, secretary of the Scottish area, condemned them.

On the instructions of the National Executive the threatened one-day stoppage for March 7 was called off and only the march of 700 miners to Parliament was held.

The right-wing leadership has called a halt on demonstrations. What do Paynter and Moffat propose? Are the miners to wait for Robens to 'return to his socialist past', as one poster called for on the Scottish march?

### Sit-Down

At the Rothes pit the men are talking of staging a sit-down strike against the closure. Scottish miners are ready to fight against the Coal Board. What is needed is leadership and a policy.

The policy for the rank and file is not hard to find. It must be a call for an extension of nationalization, the complete lifting of all interest payments by the nationalized industries, and the control of the pits at national, regional and pit level by the miners unions through rank and file committee.

A leadership must be built by the rank and file to fight inside the NUM for this policy.

## PUBLIC MEETING Glasgow

Christian Institute,  
70 Bothwell Street,

Saturday, March 24, 7 p.m.

### 'PLAN TO BEAT THE TORIES'

Speaker: G. HEALY

# Mr. Cousins' Double Act Ned-man and striker

By ALAN WEST, Our Labour Correspondent

THE Executive Council of the Transport and General Workers' Union will strongly advise its members in the shipbuilding and engineering industries to vote for strike action in the ballot being organized by the Confederation unions.

The Executive will also take steps to counteract the move by the National Union of General and Municipal Workers to increase its affiliated membership on the Confederation.

Jim Matthews, extreme right-wing leader of the NUGMW, is opposed to strike action and is increasing his affiliated membership by 45,000 as a further attempt to avert the strike and re-open negotiations with the employers, who have already turned down the claim for a wage increase and a shorter working week.

### INCREASE

Frank Cousins announced after the TGWU meeting last Friday that his union would also increase its affiliation by 4,500. The new total will be 175,000, compared to the NUGMW's new figure of 180,000.

Declaring his executive's decision to recommend strike action, Mr. Cousins said they would have preferred the leaders of the Confederation to have made a definite decision in favour of the strike, rather than the ballot of the members.

These militant phrases from the Transport Workers' general secretary compare rather oddly with the actions of the Mr. Frank Cousins who attended the opening meeting of the National Economic Development Council two days before.

Along with leading employers and industrialists, Mr. Cousins and other trade union leaders began their discussions on how to plan the economy and stem the growing crisis.

The council meets at the height of the pay pause, as large sections of the Labour movement have their wages and conditions



frozen and are threatened by redundancy and unemployment.

Mr. Cousins, the press was pleased to note, conducted himself in a restrained way. Wages policy was not raised at this first meeting.

On Friday, Mr. Cousins, who is nothing if not agile, led the call for strike action against the government policies.

### CLEAR-CUT

But while Mr. Cousins performs his neat double-act of responsible trade unionist and militant Tory fighter—sips tea with NEDC and bangs the drum at Transport House—the rank and file of the Labour movement prepares for a clear-cut fight with the Tories.

On the shop floor, in the mines, on the railways there are growing demands for action.

These demands must be linked up in a united front against the Tory offensive, in a political struggle to oust the government.

There is no room in this struggle for quiet talks with the ruling class.

Mr. Cousins must choose his role with care and stick to it.

## Gas Workers to Fight Pause

Newsletter Industrial Reporter

THERE is a strong possibility of unofficial strikes in the nationalized gas industry after the breakdown in the negotiations between union leaders and the Gas Council on Monday.

The union leaders, spurred on by the rank and file and the memory of the electrical supply workers' serious breach of the pay pause last November, turned down offers of 1½d. and later 2d. an hour extra for their 75,000 members.

The unions claimed 2½d. an hour more, to bring wages into line with the national average of £9 16s. for electrical and water workers.

80 per cent of the gas workers belong to the NUGMW, which has a poor record for militancy. But even these right-wing leaders have been angered by government intervention into the negotiations and admit that they may have to resort to strike action to push home their claim.

### SIGN OF THE TIMES

'I HAVE been asking the chiefs of several companies that have found their profit problems persistent what sort of economies they have introduced, writes our City Editor.

Here is how they summed up the position:

Shell: We are on a slimming diet. It makes us healthy. Central office staffs have been pruned by nearly 2,000.

And vacancies when people retire or move are left unfilled.

P. & O.: It means cutting down on telephone calls, reducing office waste, and dropping staff bonuses.

Cunard: Staffs on both sides of the Atlantic have been cut by 10 per cent. Two departments in Liverpool have been closed and we are selling off warehouses.

English Electric: Vacancies are being left unfilled where possible.

British Petroleum: Mechanisation helps. We are still expanding but the rate of increase of staff has slowed.'

—London 'Evening News', 13.3.62

## Foulkes Fights On

Newsletter Reporter

THE news that Frank Foulkes, president of the Electrical Trades Union, is to continue his fight against the right-wing executive has been welcomed by the rank and file of the union which is becoming increasingly disgruntled with the witch-hunting tactics of the High Court-imposed leadership.

The decision by Mr. Foulkes is a direct challenge to the executive to take disciplinary action against him, in conjunction with the four other members found guilty of conspiracy by the High Court last year.

Should the executive suspend him from membership, he has the right of a ballot of the membership.

### PRESSURES

In a statement, Mr. Foulkes said, 'Even before my appeal to the High Court, and with increasing intensity since the appeal was rejected, I have been subjected to pressures through third and sometimes fourth parties, either to retire sick now or to continue on full pay on sick leave until I can finally retire at the age of 65 in two years' time.

'The point being made to me is that I can safeguard my future financial position, but this would obviously be interpreted as acceptance of the decision of the court. My reply to the overtures was that although my future financial position is important to me, my character and integrity are even more important. Immediately I have a clean bill of health, it is my intention to fight within the constitution of the union to prove my innocence of the charges of conspiracy, and to establish my right to continue to serve the members and movement for the next two years, when I automatically retire in accordance with rule.'

### WRIT AGAINST EC

It was also announced this week that Mr. L. W. Dawson, president of the London Press branch of the ETU has issued a writ against the Executive, seeking an injunction to restrain them from holding a special conference to be attended by a delegate from each of the union's 700 branches.

Mr. Dawson stated that it was undemocratic to hold a conference with one delegate per branch, when some branches had 50 members and others 1,000.

### ADVERTISEMENT

## One-Day School

Saturday, March 31

Langley Labour Club,  
Middleton, nr. Manchester

School opens 10.30 a.m.

Admission free

Speaker: FRANK GIRLING

Morning session:

Trade Unions Today—A  
Crisis of Leadership

Afternoon session:

Racialism and the  
Working Class

Sponsoring the school are: NUM (Bradford); NUR (Ardwick No. 1); AUBTW (Middleton)