

'To be with the working class is to build the revolutionary Party'

Socialist Labour League Congress call:

LABOUR TO POWER!

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The Newsletter

WEEKLY JOURNAL OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

Merseyside dockers strike for special unloading rate

By Alec Wright, secretary
no.2 branch NAS&D

WORK stopped for two days on a Panamanian ship in the Huskisson dock, Liverpool, last week while dockers pressed for a special unloading rate.

After long and laborious negotiations by reluctant Transport and General Workers' Union officials they returned to work under an unsatisfactory settlement.

The men claimed the special rate under the 1960 piecework agreement.

When this was heralded on the Mersey—to the accompaniment of the usual ballyhoo from the local press—a leaflet in the dockers' pay packet stated that the new rates meant a considerable increase in wages.

Rate reduced

An examination of these rates, in comparison with the 1949 Piecework Tariffs, revealed that the rate for common worked commodities had not been increased at all. In fact, in some cases, they had been reduced.

The significant point about these rates, however, was that they were 'fixed' in relation to a normal cargo discharging operation.

No consideration was given to cargo carried in deep tanks—normally used for water ballast—which are situated in a nearly inaccessible position in the hold.

Fairer deal

The agreement does, however, contain two clauses which, if operated in the spirit with which they were agreed, would aid the docker in obtaining a fairer deal when working in these aggravating conditions.

The truth of the matter is that the local Transport and General Workers' Union officials have only laughed and scorned dockers who have approached them in the past asking for the 'abnormal clauses' to be used

(as they are in London and other piecework ports) to obtain compensation payments in lieu of retarded piecework earnings.

Last week the men were involved in a dispute in the Huskisson dock over working a cargo of two-hundredweight bags of refined sugar stowed in deep tanks.

Conditions

They claimed that under normal conditions and working with the piecework incentive, they could discharge 250 to 300 tons of sugar in an eight-hour day and earn up to £3 2s. a day.

Due to the abnormal conditions they were lucky if they could average 100 tons a day.

This meant that if the special rate was not fixed, they would be going home with the basic £9 9s. a week, less stoppages.

When a TGWU docker complained to the union no attempt was made by any official to even visit the ship.

Disturbed

This inactivity so disturbed the docker that he reported this to the district secretary, Mr. P. J. O'Hare.

The docker claims that he was told he could make his complaint in writing to the next regional committee—this meets every three months!

The men stopped work last Tuesday morning. As members of the 'Blue Union' were involved, Mr. Peter Kerrigan, an official of branch No. 5 National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers approached the superintendent of the management and put forward the complaint.

He was told no discussion could take place until an approach was made on behalf of

the men by the TGWU.

All dockers engaged on the ship refused to go aboard on Wednesday morning.

But after a mass meeting of the whole area, attended by 800 men, a resolution was unanimously accepted that those involved should resume work. A further deputation would be made to Mr. O'Hare.

O'Hare said he would take action and report back later in the day. By five o'clock, when the men finished work, they had heard nothing from him.

On Thursday they refused to go aboard again and within half an hour 1,500 dockers had streamed into the dock road to support them.

When approached by a NASD representative the management superintendent said there was no decision in relation to the Panamanian ship. The question of similar jobs would be taken up by a future piecework committee.

The dockers learned that a committee had been called for later in the day and that the District Secretary would press for a 9.4 pence per ton man rate for the job.

In the afternoon the union accepted an increase of 50

Continued on p.4 col. 6

France paralysed by one-day strike

THE 24-hour strike in France of workers in nationalized industries and government employees on Wednesday had widespread effects.

Transport workers in the Paris area followed the strike call, causing major reductions in suburban rail and bus services. Army lorries giving free rides on 15 routes were used by the government in an attempt to minimise the effects of the strike.

Workers in the electricity industry also came out paralysing factories.

The government resorted to what it called 'exceptional measures in order to get power supplies to industry.

Orly, the main Paris airport, closed as all workers in Air France, the state-owned airline, came out together with traffic controllers.

The strike was widely followed in the coal mines, particularly in the large fields in the north-east.

DEMONSTRATION

Workers in the engineering industry in Saint-Nazaire and Nantes, held large demonstrations against redundancies and a new law to control wages.

Throughout the entire country teachers, postal workers, civil servants and municipal workers also joined the strike in large numbers.

Most schools were empty, government departments halted, there were no refuse collections and few postal deliveries.

The overall effects of the strike are likely to be felt for some time.

Unions involved announced that the strike had been a 'trial run'. Further action is likely to be taken at a later date.

General strike in Sweden?

AFTER THE breakdown of negotiations for a new two-year national wage agreement between the Trades Union Confederation and Employers' Confederation in Sweden on Wednesday, the country faced the threat of a general strike.

The unions rejected the employer's offer of an average wage increase of 2.75 per cent for next year.

The organisation of unions in Sweden has been praised by the Tories and even studied by Mr. George Woodcock, general secretary of the Trades Union Congress.

A small number of large unions are closely connected to the state and are, therefore, easily manipulated.

The government are obviously attempting to force a severe 'wage freeze' on Swedish workers and talk of strike action must only have been suggested by union leaders after strong pressure from the rank and file.

Fight for Socialist policies

by The Editor

THE Socialist Labour League was founded in May, 1959, just five months before the last General Election. The Tory Party won the election by a substantial majority. Under the leadership of the late Hugh Gaitskell, one of the most notorious right-wing leaders since the end of the war, the Labour Party suffered a serious defeat because it failed to present a policy to the electorate substantially different to that of the Tories.

The election revealed the complete bankruptcy of the reformist policy of the Labour leaders and saddled the working class with the government of big business for five long and weary years.

The Socialist Labour League was the only organisation within the labour movement which warned the working class of this danger. For this reason the right-wing proscribed the League on the day it was founded.

Since that time they have done their best to witch-hunt and expel our members and supporters from the Labour Party.

Fortunately, they have failed to prevent our organisation from growing stronger and stronger until today it has a decisive influence inside the ranks of the labour movement.

warning

The Sixth Congress of the Socialist Labour League, which has just concluded its work, had more than three times as many delegates and visitors in attendance as were present in 1959.

Our warning against right-wing treachery did not go unheeded. But the occasion, as the debates at Congress emphasised, is much more serious than in 1959.

Faced with an economic crisis which it cannot resolve, the Tory Party is torn with internal dissension and strife.

Scandal after scandal has rocked the stately homes of the aristocratic demagogues who in the past cynically promised all things to all men in order to grab votes.

But it is not scandals or the conflicts between personalities which is rocking the Tory Party.

trouble

Behind the scenes, they, as well as the Labour Party, have always had their share of this sort of trouble.

The agreed slogan of both parties during election time has always been, 'don't rock the cupboard, or the skeletons may fall out'.

The crisis of the Tory Party is a reflection of the crisis of British imperialism.

It can only be resolved by an all-out struggle on the part of the monopolies to reduce even the present inadequate standards

of wages and working conditions enjoyed by the working class.

During 1963, the Labour Party steadily gained support amongst all sections of the electorate, many of whom previously voted Tory.

But the policy of the party is still in no way different to that of the Tories as in 1959. The sharp swing to Labour is an indication of the deep crisis, rather than support for its reformist policies.

If Labour wins the General Election in a few months' time

Continued on p.3 col. 4

Deadlock in power dispute

THE ELECTRICITY Council had its last chance to prevent the work-to-rule and ban on overtime in the electricity supply industry when it met union representatives on Thursday.

On Wednesday both sides met for nearly two hours, but could see no answer to the deadlock.

The power men are claiming better pay and other improvements to the national agreement reached last year.

REJECT

Union representatives were expected to reject the employer's offer for the claim to be settled by arbitration. Even before they went into Thursday's national joint council meeting they had booked a room for a meeting of their own 'action committee' on Friday.

Mr. William Tudor, chairman of the trade union side has instructed that where men have arranged holidays in line with the work-to-rule, they should take them.

He alleged that some holidays had been arranged with one power station superintendent who had agreed to them, then changed his mind.

As The Newsletter has pointed out in the last few weeks, the power men did not benefit from last year's agreement and have had to work long hours of overtime to make up a decent wage packet.

Postmen set strike date

BRITAIN'S 120,000 postmen will stage a one-day strike on April 16 in their fight for better pay.

After holding back for a number of weeks the leaders of the postmen's union have been forced by the strong feeling of their rank and file to call the strike.

BAN

Following the stoppage there will be an overtime ban for two weeks, including Sunday duty.

Postmen working on telegrams, however, will not be included in the strike, the union leaders stated that they regard this as 'an essential service'.

Two days before the strike postmen will hold a mass rally at the Albert Hall.

DEMAND

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Maudling, has rejected the union's demand for an independent inquiry into postmen's pay.

His counter proposal for the matter to be submitted to arbitration was thrown out by the union.

Postmen will get support from the Post Office Engineering Union. Their executive passed a resolution expressing disgust at the way the Postmaster-General held the threat of loss of pension rights over the heads of the postmen.

TOKEN

It is obvious that this one-day strike can only be a token stoppage. The government can make ample preparations for one day's inconvenience in advance and suffer very little trouble.

In order to really bring their claim to the notice of the Postmaster-General and his Tory colleagues, postmen need to organise firm support in other unions and take more definite strike action.

Bill Hunter speaking at the SLL Congress. A report of the Congress appears on pages 2 and 3.



MEETING GREET THE NEWSLETTER

Leeds

Sunday, March 22, 7.30 p.m.

Leeds Art Gallery

Speakers:

M. Banda—Newsletter Editor

C. Slaughter

P. Kerrigan (NASD)

The Sixth Annual Conference

(i) The Socialist Labour League and the Labour Government

MARCH 14

THERE are no parliamentary roads to socialism. This argument was settled between communism and social-democracy 45 years ago. This is the clear attitude revolutionary Marxists must have towards social-democracy and parliamentarianism in view of the fact that the leading social-democrats in Britain will probably take power at the next election.

Cliff Slaughter, a leading member of the Socialist Labour League, made these points in opening the discussion on the main resolution to the League's sixth annual conference held in London last week-end. The resolution, which was adopted unanimously by the conference embodied these main points:

A Labour government will probably replace the Tories this year.

This comes, not because of the strong campaign by Wilson and the Labour leadership, but because Toryism is being rejected as the obvious protector of a big business minority incapable of solving any of the basic social and economic problems.

The Tory party crisis reflects the deep problems of British capitalism; part of the heightened class conflicts in all the advanced capitalist countries including the USA.

But the working class cannot use these contradictions to win socialism unless a revolutionary leadership is built in struggle against the official Labour and trade union leaders.

The significance of a Labour government must be grasped from the point of view of resolving this crisis of leadership and not from any point of view of it being better than a Tory government.

Since 1959 the big banks and monopolies have concentrated wealth and power into fewer and fewer hands through mergers and takeovers at an unprecedented rate.

Alongside this, the state machine intervenes more and more on behalf of capitalism and centralises its power into a single and inaccessible high command of big business representatives.

At this time the capitalist needs Labour leaders who will not change this concentration of power, only provide a parliamentary cover for it and

discipline the working class for the necessary industrial speed-up and cost cutting in industry.

Unless industry is taken out of the hands of big business Wilson's 'scientific revolution' means only unemployment and exploitation through automation.

The struggle of the workers against this exploitation will raise the question of nationalization.

The promises of Brown and Wilson to solve unemployment through investment are nonsense within the framework of capitalism.

Despite this treacherous leadership, the working class retains the enormous strength and fighting capacity of a generation of full employment.

The only alternative to the economic policies of the employers is a socialist one.

In the trade unions, there must be a fight every day against the plan of Woodcock and the trade union bureaucracy to integrate the trade unions with the capitalist state.

This goes under the name of reform of 'union structure' and 'participation in planning'.

But the real struggles of the workers can break the plan of the Labour and trade union bureaucracy. The imposition of a wage freeze is easily accepted by the trade union leaders but will not be accepted by the workers.

The campaign in the trade unions and Labour Party for nationalization must demand the immediate confiscation of the steel and road transport industries and preparation, through workers' committees

for nationalization of engineering and shipbuilding, armaments, chemicals, building and building land.

All of these are controlled by a few giant companies.

In addition, the election campaign must be made the opportunity for committing the Labour government to the immediate repeal of the Immigration Act, the Rent Act and the Police Act.

The growing socialist activity of young workers in Britain is the real source of a break from the conservatism of social-democracy and the building of a revolutionary leadership in the labour movement.

These young workers are without a future under monopoly capitalism. The only relief from grinding exploitation is unemployment and conscription.

In the fight against conscription and against the monopolies the youth can be won to revolutionary policies.

Youth, and all those compelled to fight against the system, have also to fight against bans and proscriptions in the Labour Party and trade unions.

The new Newsletter and the open campaigning of the Socialist Labour League are more and more providing the lead which the workers need.

We are a party struggling to lead the working class and not just a propaganda sect.

We have to give revolutionary leadership to the work inside the official organisations, sharpening the contradictions and opening up the prospects of

alternative policies and leaders instead of standing aside as mere commentators.

There must be committees for nationalization set up in all the main industries which put clear demands on the Labour government.

In the already nationalized industries programmes of workers' control over modernisation, wages, hours of work, transfers, and relations with private enterprise must be fought for.

The Labour government, in addition to these industrial questions, must be exposed by campaigns of clear demands on the building of houses, schools, and hospitals and health centres.

Any advance in such a programme requires an assault on capital and campaigns on these questions will inevitably pose problems of nationalization and the nature of the state machine.

Tenants' committees and even workers' committees on education will need to investigate the whole network of government finance and relations with private business.

All problems of housing, education, transport and social welfare will accumulate under a Labour government, from which the people will anticipate reforms.

The Labour Party must become the storm-centre of the demands of the working class and everyone of these demands must be linked to the struggle against employers by workers in the factories.

The election is then the beginning of a fight to unite the working class for the assault on capital.

into consciousness of their position.

We have a duty to expose the bureaucratic Labour Party leaders nationally and locally, not merely to elect more left leaders but to break the working class away from social-democracy and reformism.

Another young delegate said that members of the Socialist Labour League must see the fight against the Labour bureaucracy in day to day terms.

Retreat

Where the Labour Party had been witch-hunting in the past they would use the state machinery when in power.

Taking up one aspect of the resolution a London delegate said the scandalous retreat by the Labour Party on the Immigration Act had led to all kinds of repercussions and side effects.

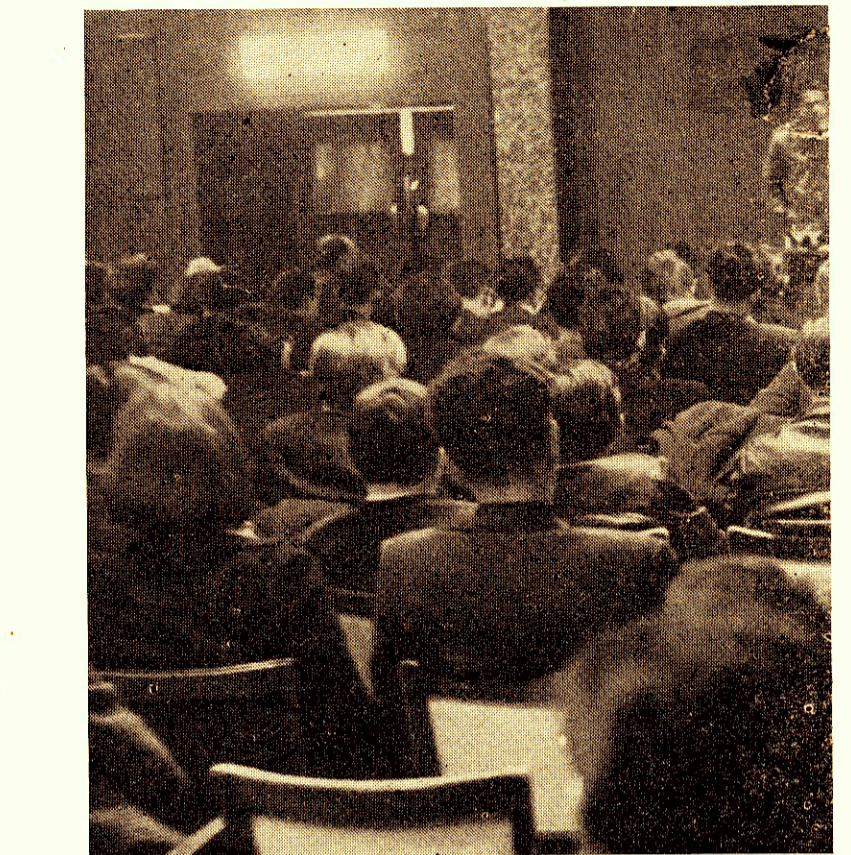
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Dangerous

Sir William Carron, said Peter Arnold, was the first man to link the labour movement to the 'scientific age' and demonstrated the dangerous bureaucratic thinking of trade union leaders.

He had said that because there was more automation, fitters at Steel Company of Wales needed more wages. This meant that for every 1,000 workers made redundant, one shilling would be added to the fitters' wages.

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unemployment' among youth in South Wales. The Socialist Labour League had to turn to this youth and link it with workers in the factories in a spearhead fight for conditions.

A Yorkshire delegate mentioned the use of the police against youth.

The ruling class is preparing

a war to defeat the youth, he said.

This was to drive potentially revolutionary sections into submission to the state.

We have to train a whole new generation in the working class as leaders of the labour movement to fight against this, he said.

(ii) The Trades Unions

TRADE union members of the Socialist Labour League must fight in their unions for revolutionary politics or end up as one of thousands of workers accepting unemployment, the mobility of labour, speed-up, and the drive towards reorganisation of industry.

Every struggle confronting the trade unions today, said Reg Perry, proposing the resolution on trade union work to the conference, poses the question of political power.

DOCILE

This is why we insist that work in the trade unions must start from the building of a revolutionary party.

Either we construct a revolutionary leadership for the working class or, with the assistance of the trade union and Labour leaders, the monopolies will destroy the militancy of the working class and create a docile labour force, he said.

The resolution confirmed the developments in British society in the past few months.

The drive of British capitalism to face the challenge of its competitors, demands increased efficiency in industry through a greater use of automation, new machines, rationalisation of production, streamlining of industry and above all by the intervention of the state to regulate the economy on behalf of the capitalist class as a whole.

CO-OPERATION

Trade union leaders believe in the continuation of British capitalism and in the defence of national interests. They are more and more drawn into co-operation with the state apparatus, said Perry.

This tendency of integration of trade unions with the state, and state intervention in industrial conflict will increase and not decrease.

The Labour government will have the responsibility of solving the Tory problems.

It will also be faced with the big task of solving these problems in opposition to the grow-

ing militancy of the working class.

We were able to foresee the development of this militancy and understand that the election boom, which the Tories engendered, has not led to increased apathy, but that it would and could lead to a growth of confidence in the class and to more resistance to wage freezing and speed-up on the part of the monopolies, said Perry.

MISCALCULATIONS

We have seen this opposition to capitalism, particularly in industries like steel and the docks.

This was something the monopolies did not bargain for. This was something upon which they made big miscalculations.

The Labour government will have to face the dockers who have shown that from the experience of the past they have learned many lessons about the criminal betrayals of the trade union leaders.

They will not accept the plans of the port employers without a tremendous fight. We all know Wilson's policies, geared as they are to the monopolies, cannot solve the problems in the working class today.

Wilson has already indicated his retreat in the steel and building industries.

He simply talks about giving bigger contracts to bigger employers and turning over developments to allow one contractor to do the whole job.

The experience in the United States with the 'scientific revolution' which Wilson talks about has gone a further stage than in Britain.

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This has resulted in more automation and in a five to six per cent level of unemployment. A whole section of the working class in America has been pauperised and reduced to starvation level, he commented.

Plans being put forward for the docks in Britain have been carried out in the United States.

Of 26,000 dockers on the west coast of the USA only 12,000 of them are now permanently employed. The remaining 14,000

are employed one day per week on a temporary register.

Reg Perry then spoke about conditions on the docks.

RECOGNITION

A few years ago when the 'Blue Union' fought for recognition, many dockers were driven away from politics.

The exclusion of the union from the TUC resulted in many dockers refusing to join their unions for a long time.

This weakness has now been reversed. The dockers of both the 'Blue Union' and the Transport and General Workers' Union are united in opposition to the TGWU bureaucracy.

With the drive of the monopolies and the TUC to integration of the unions into the state the dockers can be a source of embarrassment for trade union leaders and a source of strength for the revolutionary movement, said Perry.

UNDERSTANDING

The Newsletter must become an organiser of the workers and give the workers a much more all-round understanding of society and capitalism, the role of the state and the real nature of the bureaucracy.

It must give them, through expression of tactics, the strength to begin a fight against the trade union leaders and the employers.

International resolution

THE FULL TEXT of the international resolution passed at the Conference of the Socialist Labour League will be published in The Newsletter next week.

This document which is a vital contribution to the development of the Fourth International is entitled 'From Revisionism to Opportunism'.

It takes up the question of the 1963 split between the Socialist Labour League and The Socialist Workers' Party of America.

'Working class must prepare to meet betrayal'

INTRODUCING the resolution Cliff Slaughter said that in this country, as in every other capitalist country, there has been a concentration of capital in big business. The oil, chemical and steel industries are growing at a faster rate in this country than ever before.

Yet even with this situation British capitalists are not able to obtain a position in the world market.

All recent talk about modernising Britain really meant that the capitalists only wanted to find ways of breaking the working class and cutting production costs to make more profit.

Wages

When George Woodcock, general secretary of the TUC, said that the share of wages must go down he meant that he would help British bosses to do this.

And Chancellor of the Exchequer Maudling's talk of taxation being increased by £200,000,000 also meant, in effect, a cut in wages.

Discipline

Organisations like the National Economic Development Council and the National Incomes Commission aim to discipline the trade unions through the state machine.

The terrific scale of scientific reforms of modern capital investments require state planning,

state control, state control of the unions to prevent conflict and allow these plans to go through, said Slaughter.

At the same time the collaboration of the Labour leaders and trade union leaders with the state gives the impression that it is not so violent.

But in its attempts to crush the working class, modern capitalism will use the state machine even more bureaucratically.

Machine

Exclusive, highly paid specialists from the Civil Service, Police, Diplomatic Service and the banks would form a bureaucratic machine to which the public have no access or means of taking action against through parliament.

Wilson proposes to occupy the seats of government and any changes he makes must be conceived by a democratic government said Slaughter.

Objectives

He quoted Wilson as saying that the Labour Party had always rejected a revolutionary road to socialism and opposed industrial action for the achievement of political objectives.

Under a mask of respectability Wilson will take action to smash the working class as they had been crushed in the General Strike of 1926 and on the docks in 1924 and in the late 40s when troops were sent in.

The Socialist Labour League says the working class must

prepare for action now against those who will betray them in a Labour government.

The job of the Socialist Labour League is to mobilise the working class behind re-

prospect of any strong policies being put forward. Wilson will find himself in the same position of 1931 very soon after the election of a Labour government.

In discussion Peter Jeffries told the conference that the most obvious weaknesses of British imperialism were the complete inadequacy of technical forms of organisation.

An American had recently reported on the hopeless state of technical advance in Britain which coincided with the general slowing-up in the development and expansion of the world economy.

Contradictions

This sharpened the contradictions in British capitalism.

The outcome of a necessary technical change in capitalism would be an increase in the monopolisation and centralisation of capital.

Changes which have already taken place in the steel and motor car industry were only advanced forms of what could be expected generally.

Changes

Wilson would use the state in the interests of the capitalist class to make these necessary changes.

He will only speed-up the trends in British capitalism to his 'scientific revolution'.

A young North country delegate said it was the task of the organisation to bring the working class around struggles and



Slaughter: State control of unions?

voluntary politics and the building of the revolutionary party.

Slaughter outlined many aspects of future Labour government policy and commented:

Even on straightforward logical grounds there is no

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(iii) Organization of the Socialist Labour League

HAROLD WILSON does not have a single socialist answer for the problems that face the present Tory government.

A Labour government under right-wing leadership will act as a brake on the hopes and aspirations of millions of people, who desire socialism.

These points were most strongly emphasised by Gerry Healy, general secretary of the Socialist Labour League, at the organisation's sixth annual conference held last week-end.

The matters discussed at this conference are not just the future of the Socialist Labour League, but the future of the working class of Britain and the construction of the Fourth International, he said.

Vacuum

The inability of the Labour government to provide a leadership for the working class, said Healy, must create a political vacuum in the working class movement.

Who is going to step in and give this leadership? he asked.

We want to build and establish the Socialist Labour League as the expression of political independence of the working class, who will provide this leadership and go forward to the overthrow of capitalism. We have no other job in life.

Healy added that what was happening was the polarization of political thinking, hopes and expectations of the working class towards a Labour government.

Turn

This was so particularly amongst older workers and those in the later 20s and 30s, who turn towards a government which, they hoped, would solve their problems.

They want, if possible, to avoid full-scale industrial struggles because they have very little faith in their trade union leaders, he commented. To them, a Labour government seems the easiest way to get things done.

Whenever workers agitate within their unions they always meet the same answer: 'It is difficult now. Wait until we have a Labour government,' and that is what a considerable number are doing.

Healy emphasised that mem-

bers of the Socialist Labour League should be absolutely clear on the counter-revolutionary role of the leaders of the Labour Party, who are agents of imperialism.

Those who drag along by kow-towing to the popular feeling for a Labour government without understanding the reality of the situation are heading for disaster.

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To be with the working class is not to tailend behind them in their confusion, but to wage a constant struggle for Marxist theory and policies in the building of the revolutionary party.

Only those fighting for the construction of the party are with the working class.

All the professional confusionists, left, right and centre, are opposed to the Socialist Labour League. They hate our organisation because it is constantly facing them with the key political questions of the day, Healy explained.

If the League engaged itself in unity around specific issues with 'such diplomatic gentlemen' it was to expose their inadequacies in action and not 'look like them', as some renegade Trotskyists were advocating.

Expose

We are capable of entering into the most flexible relations with different tendencies in order to expose them and win over to our point of view people who can be trained to construct the revolutionary party in Britain.

Healy added that people must be trained to become revolutionaries.

Revolution was a profession, he said. When people joined the Socialist Labour League they were still unskilled in revolutionary work, and had to be trained as fighters and leaders who would carry forward the struggle for the revolutionary party.

The struggle to learn is inseparable from the struggle to change. This is not an easy experience. It is for many a bitter experience because it demands breaking from all that has been taught by the schools and institutions of capitalism.

This is now absolutely essential for the building of the party which will lead the working class to socialism.

Role of The Newsletter

ONCE the crisis develops inside the Labour government and the trade unions, the readership of The Newsletter will quadruple itself, said Gerry Healy when outlining the future of the newspaper to the conference.

This readership would build up because of the 'big vacuum' in thinking produced by the inadequacies of a Labour government.

The Socialist Labour League would pose an alternative leadership through its newspaper.

That is why we fight for this paper and fight to extend its sales, because we consider it as the highest point of development of our organisation, he commented.

BEREFT

The transitional stage from a movement posing a leadership to the working class to a mass party of the working class is carried through by a political newspaper providing an all-sided presentation of news.

If the right-wing labour movement has no daily paper, it shows how appallingly bereft of any policies or programme these people are, said Healy.

A newspaper is not merely a propaganda question—it is a requirement of the whole development of a communist movement.

The need for a daily newspaper is even more necessary in the coming crisis.

RESOURCES

Convinced of this need the Socialist Labour League would obtain the resources for such a paper from the labour movement.

This was the method used to enlarge The Newsletter to its present size and make it one of the best technically produced weekly newspapers in the country.

We should be proud of the technical standard we have achieved because it illustrates the high standard of political efficiency which we strive for, said Healy.

He added that this achievement also demonstrated that the Socialist Labour League took its ideas seriously and believed in them.

TECHNIQUE

In connection with the building of The Newsletter, the organisation did not dismiss the new technical innovations of capitalist technique.

Negotiations have already commenced for the best type of equipment for producing a daily newspaper.

We can only train journalists through a combination of work in the organisation and the experience they will receive from work on capitalist newspapers, he said.

It will be necessary to build up a large staff of such people for the daily newspaper of the Socialist Labour League.

A representative of the Bulgarian Revolutionary League and the Committee of the French section of the International brought greetings to the Conference and reproduced below his speech in addition to fraternal greetings from the French section of the International.

I must say that Marxists are aware of the historical meaning of the fact that a Marxist revolution in Eastern Europe is now represented by the supreme assembly of the western organisation. It is regrettable that there has been a break in Stalin's policy of support for the workers of the Socialist and Eastern European workers.

Since the assassination of Trotsky this break has been maintained by the revisionism and the Fourth International.

Therefore, we should guard the working class, this great breaking to be overcome.

I know, too, how Engels and later regarded the British the most decisive world revolution.

We also know of the mass strike and the consequent lack of leadership, the betrayal by Stalinist leaders.

In our opinion the workers' movement

SLI

from page

it will inherit the fruits of the Tory economic

Millions of people in the polls believing that for Labour is a vote for a better society and a better society find that Wilson, like has no more to offer the Tory Party.

In such a crisis difficult to speculate long a Labour government might last.

Since the appointment of Alec Douglas-Home as minister, there has been a conspiracy between the Tory Party and the City of London to allow the economic development in order to a future Labour government.

Conspiracy

Instead of a struggle against the monopolies Wilson has right-wing friends and accepting these impossible conditions.

If Labour is elected a conspiracy will continue to force its hand on the working class, thus driving it in the eyes of its



Healy: 'wage a constant struggle for Marxist theory and'

of the Socialist Labour League

1-16, 1964

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Healy: 'wage a constant struggle for Marxist theory and policies'

A representative of the Hungarian Revolutionary Socialist League and the International Committee of the Fourth International brought fraternal greetings to the Congress. We reproduce below extracts from his speech in addition to the fraternal greetings from the French section of the Fourth International.

I must say that we Hungarians are aware of the great historical meaning of the fact that a Marxist organisation in Eastern Europe is now represented before the supreme assembly of a western organisation.

It is regrettable that there has been a break, through Stalin's policy of socialism in one country, between the workers of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and western workers.

Since the assassination of Trotsky this break, which has been maintained by Stalinism, has not been wholly understood and has caused the revisionism and decadence of the Fourth International.

Therefore, we should realise that by our working relationship, this great break is beginning to be overcome.

I know, too, how Marx and Engels and later Lenin regarded the British workers as the most decisive part of the world revolution.

We also know of the history of the mass strike in 1926 and the consequences of its lack of leadership and betrayal by Stalinist and Labour leaders.

In our opinion the English workers' movement is today

FRATERNAL GREETINGS

the key to a world party. I am aware that I am speaking to that party.

It is understandable that the Socialist Labour League takes a leading part in the struggle for the reconstruction of the Fourth International.

This leading role derives from the responsibility and historical necessity concerning the rebuilding of the Fourth International, which is the same task as building Marxist parties in every country including the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Paris, March 12, 1964

To our great regret, our tasks, which are particularly demanding at the moment, due notably to the launching of the monthly printed supplement to 'Informations Ouvrieres' and to new developments which are taking place at present in the class struggle in France, do not allow us to send a representative to the Socialist Labour League Conference.

The struggle against revisionism and for the reconstruction of the Fourth International on the basis of Marxism, which we have waged together for over ten years now, has been raised to a qualitatively higher level since 1963, since the open rallying by the Socialist Workers' Party (and its satellites on the International Committee) to the Pabloite International Secretariat, for 12 years the centre of liquida-

tion of the international Marxist movement.

Far from constituting a step along the road towards the real unification of their forces, the "unification congress" of the revisionists was held during a phase of growing disintegration of the movement: violent struggle between tendencies inside International Secretariat No. 1 (between Germain and Pablo), the development of the Posadas split in International Secretariat No. 2 in Latin America, in South-east Asia and several countries in Western Europe, crumbling in Latin America and South-east Asia, general political confusion in the dependent organisations of International Secretariats Nos. 1 and 2, and of the autonomous organisations.

Trotsky taught us that without a conscious international struggle at the highest political level for the new Marxist world party, we could not construct anything but centrist organisations in each country.

It is to the International Committee, and to it alone, that this struggle now falls.

This is why on the one hand the setting up on an integral political base, that of the International Committee, of the Revolutionary Socialist League of Hungary and on the other the stage in our political development constituted by the International Conference in September 1963

hold so much political importance for us.

We must now prepare the political ground for the international conference of Marxists which was decided upon last September.

As the French section, we have worked out a draft report on the international situation, which was communicated to the sections of the International Committee some two months ago and on which discussion must be continued (as we for our part shall do especially at our next conference, at which we hope you will be able to take part)

The SLL, the most important section in the International Committee, is called upon to play, as in the past, a fundamental role in these political and organisational developments.

In the course of the coming historical period the fate not only of the international movement but also to a large degree of our two organisations depends on the accomplishment of the tasks fixed at the September 1963 international conference.

After ten years of work together we can write this with confidence: that your conference will prove to be equal to the very heavy responsibilities, not only on the national but on the international scale, which are those of the SLL.

May our best wishes be with you in your work!

SLL Congress call: Labour to power

from page 1

This is what happened in the case of the coal and rail nationalization.

After the 1945 Labour government nationalized these industries they were speedily subordinated to the private enterprise framework of British capitalism.

Several sectors were, in fact, administered by either the former owners or their representatives. So the Tories got the best of both worlds.

Predicament

They used the nationalized industry as a source of cheap transport and fuel for private enterprise and at the same time utilised its financial predicament due to heavy interest payments, to discredit nationalization.

The Tories are getting ready to blame the Labour government for the crisis of their system. The reformist right wing, who believe they can manage this system better than the Tories, will, as in 1931, be completely discredited.

Conflicts

Harold Wilson's policies pave the way not for the peaceful parliamentary transition to socialism but for an era of violent class conflicts. The labour movement will pay a

heavy price for his leadership just as it did for that of Ramsay Macdonald.

He is preparing to leave the working class leaderless just at the time when it will need leadership most. It is reformism and not Marxism which will be responsible for violent class actions in the coming period.

Vote

The Sixth national congress of the Socialist Labour League warned the working class that the Wilson government will betray it.

We vote Labour in order to carry on the fight against Wilson under conditions where the practical application of his policies will be exposed to millions of people.

A vote for Labour will be useless unless it is linked to building the Socialist Labour League as the alternative Marxist leadership.

Join

Congress appealed to all readers and supporters of The Newsletter to consider joining our organisation and helping us in this fight.

Join us and help smash the Tory conspiracy by a determined struggle for the adoption of socialist policies within the labour movement.

These decisions were unanimously approved by delegates, whose average age was approximately 24 years.

It was truly the most youthful and serious congress that has convened in Britain since the end of the war. The debates were frank and thoughtful.

Every effort was made to see that the congress was, in fact, a working body and not a rally of members to listen to their leaders.

Prepare

In adopting the resolutions, conference decided to continue the discussion and to prepare for a further conference in the late autumn so as to allow every single member of the SLL adequate time to consider our policies in relation to the major problems which confront the working class.

Clarify

Unlike other organisations in the labour movement the Socialist Labour League encourages the fullest discussion and if the problems are great, as they are now, we are prepared to go on discussing until clarification is achieved.

The fate of the working class depends upon the building of the Socialist Labour League as the mass revolutionary party of the future.

(iii) Organization of the Socialist Labour League

HAROLD WILSON does not have a single socialist answer for the problems that face the present Tory government.

A Labour government under right-wing leadership will act as a brake on the hopes and aspirations of millions of people, who desire socialism.

These points were most strongly emphasised by Gerry Healy, general secretary of the Socialist Labour League, at the organisation's sixth annual conference held last week-end.

The matters discussed at this conference are not just the future of the Socialist Labour League, but the future of the working class of Britain and the construction of the Fourth International, he said.

Vacuum

The inability of the Labour government to provide a leadership for the working class, said Healy, must create a political vacuum in the working class movement.

Who is going to step in and give this leadership? he asked.

We want to build and establish the Socialist Labour League as the expression of political independence of the working class, who will provide this leadership and go forward to the overthrow of capitalism. We have no other job in life.

Healy added that what was happening was the polarization of political thinking, hopes and expectations of the working class towards a Labour government.

Turn

This was so particularly amongst older workers and those in the later 20s and 30s, who turn towards a government which, they hoped, would solve their problems.

They want, if possible, to avoid full-scale industrial struggles because they have very little faith in their trade union leaders, he commented. To them, a Labour government seems the easiest way to get things done.

Whenever workers agitate within their unions they always meet the same answer: 'It is difficult now. Wait until we have a Labour government,' and that is what a considerable number are doing.

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bers of the Socialist Labour League should be absolutely clear on the counter-revolutionary role of the leaders of the Labour Party, who are agents of imperialism.

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Racialist hatred stirred up in Smethwick

New bonus scheme at Rovers

STOREMEN and internal drivers at the Rover Company, Solihull, Birmingham, who stopped production last week in a strike for a new bonus scheme have achieved some success.

They are to receive increases of up to 12s. and assurances have been given that a new scheme will be found to replace the existing one.

Fight

Although this dispute appears to be over, the fight with the Rover management is only just starting.

This issue is more than a question of higher wages for the factory workers.

The new clashes with Rover employers come from the company's attempts to speed-up production in line with many other car factories in the Midlands.

Because of the tough policies operated by these bosses in the past, it is believed that Rover workers now receive over £3 less than other car workers in the area.

Militancy

To continue to keep the men in their place and increase production the firm has to make sure that there is no militancy in the factory.

A Junior Executive of the factory is reported to have told the national press that the firm had to 'scrape the bottom of the barrel for labour and employ well-known trouble-makers'.

Obviously if the management already recognises the fact that there are strong militants in the firm it is going to make every attempt to stop strikes and disputes.

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By a Newsletter Correspondent
SUDDENLY last week a glare of publicity was turned on racialist activities in Smethwick. Harold Wilson on television declared that Smethwick Tories were, 'degrading politics to about the lowest level I've known in my lifetime'.

A leading member of the local Labour Party deplored the fact that the antics of the Tories were making the town 'notorious'.

There were demands that the prime minister repudiate the Tory parliamentary candidate for Smethwick, and counter threats by this candidate (since discreetly withdrawn) that he would sue for libel unless an instant apology was forthcoming from Harold Wilson.

What is the truth behind all this? What is going on in Smethwick?

The first thing to emerge is that this is nothing new at all. In fact a sustained campaign of racialist hatred and agitation has been going on in the place for the last three years.

It is only the nearness of the General Election which has suddenly focussed the attention of press and politicians on the situation.

Campaign

Councillor Ernest Lowry, leader of the Labour Group in Smethwick, told The Newsletter:

'This campaign has been going on for a long time.

'The Tories have been unnecessarily and unscrupulously playing on prejudices, first on one issue, then on another; they never let the question of the immigrants rest for one moment.'

Teachers in Smethwick dismiss as 'rubbish' what the Tories call 'the problem of immigrant children affecting the education of white children'.

They claim that they are quite able to manage the situation without any outside interference.

Valuable experimental work which has been carried out is 'being obscured by the controversy about immigrant children,' say the teachers.

Boycott

Dr. D. R. Prem, formerly a Birmingham Labour Councillor, now engaged prominently on work for the interests of Smethwick immigrants, has declared that if the Tories win power in the local election next May and start segregated classes for immigrant children, 'we shall have to ask parents to boycott such classes'.

Councillor Lowry says he has little doubt that fascist groups have also been at work in the district, inflaming feeling and working on unthinking prejudice.

He referred to an incident, nearly three years ago, when there was trouble among Smethwick council flat dwellers because a flat was assigned to a Pakistani family.

Workers in Smethwick, as elsewhere, live in a capitalist society and are constantly subject to its propaganda from television and press.

Prejudice

This undoubtedly has the effect of creating a basis of racialist prejudice.

The commonest form this takes is: 'I've nothing against immigrants myself, but they do come here wanting jobs and houses. We can't just let them all come in.'

The job of the labour movement should be to give firm leadership here, and explain the real causes of overcrowding and unemployment.

At the time of the incident of the Pakistani family in the

Christ Street flats, Smethwick Labour-controlled council acted with considerable firmness, refusing to back down before racialist agitation.

The trouble promptly subsided, though the flames had been well fanned by political groups and played up by the press.

Now, however, there are workers in the town who say the local Labour Party should have 'fought tougher' from the start against the racialist tactics of local Tories.

Majority

It is being said that matters have gone so far that the 3,544 majority of Mr. Gordon Walker, Labour MP for Smethwick, may well be in danger at the general election.

Last May the Tories actually won seats in the local elections, though almost everywhere else the Tory Party suffered heavy losses.

But local Labour parties have recently had no firm lead on the issue of racialism from the party at national level.

When the Tory government introduced their Immigration Act, Hugh Gaitskill's leadership opposed it outright.

Retreat

Now Labour leaders have ignominiously retreated. In the same programme in which Harold Wilson spoke of the 'squalid and degrading' tactics of Smethwick Tories, he announced that a future Labour government would keep control on immigration.

This is helping the Tories to make scapegoats of immigrants for the failures and miseries of the capitalist system.

Racialists in Smethwick and elsewhere are encouraged by the timidity of the Labour leaders to step up their poisonous campaigns.

All workers in Smethwick should unite to fight this move to operate educational apartheid against five and six-year-old immigrant children.

More backing for B'ham metal polishers

WORK for the British Motor Corporation Austin factory at Longbridge, Birmingham, may be 'backed' by the National Society of Metal Mechanics.

The proposed action arises out of the position of seven men suspended from the firm for over a month.

As the union represents 7,000 workers in key Birmingham factories such as Fisher and Ludlow, Wilmot Breeden, Sankeys, Hardy Spicer, Lucas and Perfecta, this dispute could have a big effect on the car industry.

Victims

The Metal Mechanics Union claim that the men are victims of a 'mobility of labour dispute' which began last April.

Sixteen polishers were transferred to Austin's body finishing section when their firm—Fisher and Ludlow—moved to the Merseyside.

They became members of the



WAGES BATTLE IN SCOTLAND

Motor and steel workers strike for more pay

TWO hundred and fifty workers on the main assembly track at Rootes car factory, Linwood, Scotland, staged a walk-out—the fourth in a few weeks—last Tuesday.

Immediately the management locked out 1,650 production workers and issued a statement saying:

'It is clear the strike is a deliberate attempt to intimidate the company into raising wages.

'The company will not be intimidated by unofficial strikes or threats.'

Support

Whilst members of the Transport and General Workers' Union held a strike meeting in the Elderslie village hall, locked-out workers waited outside.

They agreed to send a message of support into the meeting, after an Amalgamated Engineering Union shop steward spoke to them.

A joint meeting between the strikers and the locked-out workers was held later.

A recommendation that there should be a resumption of work on condition that all overtime be banned until decent rates of pay were secured, was carried unanimously.

Temporary

In spite of this decision, however, many Rootes workers feel that this is only a temporary peace and that more decisive action is needed before higher wages are won.

For four weeks negotiations have been conducted with the management to secure bonus payments. At the present time the whole factory is employed on a flat rate basis.

At a conference held by the Transport and General Workers' Union earlier this month, stewards presented a report on the factory on the basis of which it was felt that a rise in wages was justified.

Workers from the factory claim that they had been told higher rates of pay would be received when production level reached 2,000 cars per week.

In some departments production exceeded this target but other departments lagged behind because of break-downs which had not been allowed for, they maintained.

Steel claim

CRAFTSMEN at the Stewarts and Lloyds, Rutherglen, Scotland, steel works voted in favour of strike action for higher pay at a meeting last week.

The recommendation for a strike came from 40 shop stewards representing nearly 600 members of the Electrical Trades Union, Amalgamated Engineering Union and the Boilermakers' and Blacksmiths' Society, employed at the company's works at Bellshill, Coatbridge, Airdrie and Tollcross, Glasgow and Rutherglen.

At the moment the men receive an additional £1 16s. 3d. per week for nightshift working.

They claim that in other industries £3 10s. 7d. is given. The grievance over this payment is a long-standing one.

Feeling

Workers feel that it is time the employers were made to pay up the full amount of money.

The decision of the Rutherglen craftsmen will be reported back to a further meeting of the joint shop stewards in a week's time.

Although there is a lot of feeling amongst the craftsmen for strike action, the Transport and General Workers' Union have not recommended supporting action to their members.

However, it is understood that many of the rank and file members in the steel firm would be willing to come out with the craftsmen.

At the strike meeting of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, many of the Transport and General Workers' union members moved over to the left of the platform to signify their support for a walk-out.

Thanks from Marriott convenor

THE NEWSLETTER has received the following letter from Mr. C. W. Clark, convenor at P. A. Marriott, the Wembley firm where young West Indian workers fought for nine months against redundancy.

Dear Editor,

This letter, although being late in dispatch to you, is nevertheless just as sincere.

I wish to thank you for all the help that you gave us in the Marriott dispute.

I am sorry that it was not successfully resolved but at least we fought for trade union principles with all our resources, which unfortunately, were not enough.

I can only once again express our sincerest thanks.

The workers stood out for higher wages and a 42-hour week at the factory and showed that they could organise into a union.

During the strike other employers in the area received notices saying they would not be allowed to use immigrants as cheap labour without resistance.

The strike ended with the young coloured militants being forced to accept a few pounds compensation.

Union will fight Projectile move

WORKERS at the Projectiles factory, Battersea, London, picketed outside while union officials met the management last week.

The next day the management issued their version of the works conference to the workers which stated that the present factory was unsuitable for modern methods of production.

An improved supply of labour would be available in the North-east, said the report.

In fact the management had collected a whole number of reasons as to why production should be transferred to another part of the country.

The move 'would bring the company closer to the main sources of material supplies with a substantial reduction in transport costs'.

Suddenly the management has found 'difficulties with the transport in and around the London area'.

MISLEADING

At a mass meeting of the workers last Thursday, Amalgamated Engineering Union official P. McNally said that the union would fight the closure 'all the way'.

Referring to the management's letter he said that there were many misleading statements in it.

Severance pay was not discussed at the meeting with the management, said McNally, but the union was opposing the closure of the factory.

At no time during the meeting did the union officials state exactly how they would fight the closure.

POLITICAL

Union member Len Branscombe said that the closure was a political question and the Labour Party should take action against it.

'They must be asked what they will do about such closures when they get into the government,' he said.

Only seven people voted against action by the union over the closure.

On Monday 400 of the workers marched to the County Hall in support of a union deputation to Sir Isaac Hayward, Labour leader of the London County Council.

The LCC has first option to buy the factory site for £1,500,000.

Docks from page 1

per cent of the existing 2.7 pence making a rate of approximately 4.2 pence—a long way short of the demand for 9.4 pence.

Disgusted with the role played by the TGWU officials throughout the dispute, the men accepted the increase and returned to work under protest.

But they had been successful in forcing the employers and the union officials to invoke part of the piecework agreement.

gain

This could, in future, give dockers a considerable gain in wages when they are called on to work under similar abnormal circumstances in the future.

Liverpool dockers are now saying that the deliberate shirking by TGWU officials must have saved the employers many thousands of pounds and denied the same amount to the dockers' pay packets.

Nottingham toolmakers still out

STILL HEARTENED by their union executive's decision to 'black' work destined for the Raleigh cycle works in Nottingham, 400 toolmakers decided on Sunday to continue their strike to have 25 mates reinstated.

Trouble, however, is being experienced over 'blacking' work at Lockheed's factory, Leamington. The AEU executive's directive to black work would close the 4,000-worker factory.

Yet it is important that 'blacking' of work is effective, for on Tuesday the Raleigh management announced that 1,000 workers still laid off would be taken back shortly and that near full production would be achieved in three weeks.

Prominence

The press continues to give prominence to Mrs. Marion Handley, leader of the anti-strike wives, whose husband was laid off because of the strike.

In a further attempt to break the strike, she has now announced that she will have to sell her house because she cannot pay the mortgage. But The Newsletter understands that even when her husband is working he is getting £5 a week less than average.

As one striker remarked, 'she would do better, if she was serious about her house, to get out and find a job, instead of attacking the strike which can result in worsening conditions and further redundancies for all real workers—including her husband'.

Sharing

The Newsletter emphasises that support for the strike can only grow if the importance of the toolroom workers' fight against redundancies, with a policy of work-sharing, is realised and a big attempt is made to explain it to Lockheed workers and workers in other departments at Raleigh.

Increasing support for the strike is shown by large factory collections.

Only if the 'blacking' of work becomes successful and the strike spreads can it go on to a victory.

Building unions to merge

SEVEN unions in the building trade have come close to an amalgamation. On Wednesday representatives agreed to set up a committee to work out a constitution and rules for a single union.

The unions involved are the Amalgamated Union of Building Trades Workers, the English Slaters, the Scottish Slaters, the English Plasterers, the Scottish Plasterers, the Street Masons and Paviers, and the Asphalt Workers.

London readers are invited to GREET THE NEWSLETTER

Sunday, April 12, 7 p.m.

Cora Hotel, Upper Woburn Place, W.C.1

Speakers:

Gerry Healy (Secretary, Socialist Labour League)

Michael Banda (Editor, The Newsletter)