

# Labour MPs treat pensioners with contempt!

## The Newsletter

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### SLL MEETING — LEEDS

## Build an alternative

### RAIL UNIONS ANGRY WITH LABOUR

LIKE many other workers inside the trade union movement, the railwaymen are beginning to demand that the Labour government does something about implementing the promises made to the working class before the election.

In the editorial of the National Union of Railwaymen's newspaper 'Railway Review' for January 29, a warning is given to the Labour leaders of the growing feeling amongst railway workers over closures of stations and lines.

The Labour leadership will ignore the growing feelings of disappointment amongst active railway trade unionists at their peril,' it says.

'We warned last week that the issue of the future of the Great Central Line and the Minister of Transport's apparent lack of decisive involvement, are creating a great deal of disquiet in the ranks of the most valuable and important sections of the trade union movement in the railways.'

#### RESOLUTION

Wilson and company would indeed be wise to heed the warning of 'Railway Review'. Last week a resolution passed at a joint meeting of representatives of the three rail unions, National Union of Railwaymen, Amalgamated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, the Transport Salaried Staffs Association and the Amalgamated Engineering Union, was carried unanimously.

The resolution requested the withdrawal of railway unions' affiliation to the Labour Party until the pre-election pledges on the railways are redeemed.

Local branches were advised to withdraw local affiliation and the union executives were asked to give the resolution urgent attention.

Reflected in this resolution is all the frustration and anger of many sections of workers who, on voting Labour at the election, expected a fight to be put up to improve their wages and living conditions.

#### REACTION

Although the action of withdrawing the political levy is in itself an anti-labour move, it is hardly a surprising reaction to the weak, belly-crawling policies of the Labour leadership.

Instead of withdrawing their political levy the railwaymen should demand that the Labour leadership stop using party funds, to which the unions pay a large amount, for witch-hunting Young Socialists and members of the Socialist Labour League.

## leadership

NEWSLETTER REPORTER

THE crisis of the Labour government is not due to its small parliamentary majority, but to the capitalist economic crisis, which is so severe that not even the increased Bank Rate can bring stability, said Gerry Healy, national secretary of the Socialist Labour League, speaking in Leeds last weekend.

Labour leaders had failed to expose the Tories over the Profumo crisis, when the ruling class was openly divided. Wilson had declared just before the election that there was no economic crisis. So Labour took over the Tories' dirty work with no socialist policies.

They were not prepared to nationalize the aircraft industry but allowed the armaments industrialists to plunder the Treasury to the tune of almost £2,000 million. This confused the aircraft workers and led them to march through London hostile to Labour and in support of their bosses.

The only substantial result of this government has been to reduce the value of the wage packet, said Healy. 'They have not threatened the monopolists, but have permitted the big banks to determine what the pensioners shall get, just as they dictated the reduction in unemployment benefit in 1931.'

This was why racialism was emerging now.

People were beginning to condemn Labour leaders, so it became necessary for the ruling class to split the workers. Smethwick showed that racialism was a force that can confuse the working class.

#### Nationalist

It was encouraged in the Tory Party and existed in the Labour Party.

The big show of Churchill's funeral was connected with this. The ruling class hoped workers would forget Tonypan and the General Strike. The big show was nationalist propaganda—part of the development of racialism.

The failure of the Labour government was paving the way for the return of the Tories, Healy went on. 'Without nationalizing property, they could not stay in power.'

But the Tories were not anxious to return to power yet. They wanted the Labour government to bring in a form of incomes policy which they could develop.

But the workers were not sheep. They would come back in an enormous wages movement. The Socialist Labour League had great confidence in the power of the working class.

Many workers were incensed at the shabby treatment of the old age pensioners. The League supported the lobby of parliament called by the Young Socialists National Committee Majority be-



Healy: 'Labour paying way for Tories'.

cause this could establish the unity of the working class. It was necessary to establish an alternative leadership to Wilson, Woodcock, Gollan and Co.

#### Fight

It was not enough to have a correct policy, it was also necessary to know how to fight for that policy. The Socialist Labour League intended to continue to speak out and expose the Labour leadership which had no mandate to increase the cost of living, no mandate to retreat before the banks.

Because of this policy, the Socialist Labour League's programme was supported by the overwhelming majority of the Labour youth.

The Socialist Labour League was a leadership movement, said Gerry Healy in conclusion. People who joined it did so in order to be changed and become leaders. Over 120 people, almost all of them youth, attended the meeting and five people applied to join the Socialist Labour League.

#### LABOUR MPS CALL FOR NATIONALIZATION

MANY workers in the aircraft industry are demanding the nationalization of the industry. The motion by five Labour MPs, put down on Thursday, that aircraft companies giving misleading information to the press should be nationalized is aimed to head off the workers' demand, which can only be won in a real struggle for nationalization of the basic industries.

## After Churchill

OLD age pensioners can die of cold but there was no shortage of taxpayers' money for the massive display of medieval pomp over the week covering Churchill's funeral.

The ruling class called in its stage managers and they really put on a show for the 'little people'. The arch-bishops and their flunkys had a field day.

Perhaps the most nauseating spectacle of the lot was that of the Labour leaders, who crawled on all fours as it were, behind the cadaver. There they were with their top hats and black striped trousers paying homage to a man who so far as the labour movement was concerned was its greatest enemy.

#### ADVENTURER

The siege of Sidney Street, Tonypan, the pointless butchery of tens of thousands of young people in World War I, the General Strike of 1926 and lastly the swash-buckling adventurer of World War II.

Churchill really represented the high and the mighty of his class.

All the Labour leaders did was to demonstrate to the world at large that, despite the fact that they are the government, they remain the real servants of this class.

Coming at a time when millions of workers are embarking on a class struggle against the employers, this circus of mourning was nothing more than a gigantic attempt to build up a feeling of national unity in order to offset the growing class consciousness.

Churchill died almost immediately after the disastrous result of Leyton.

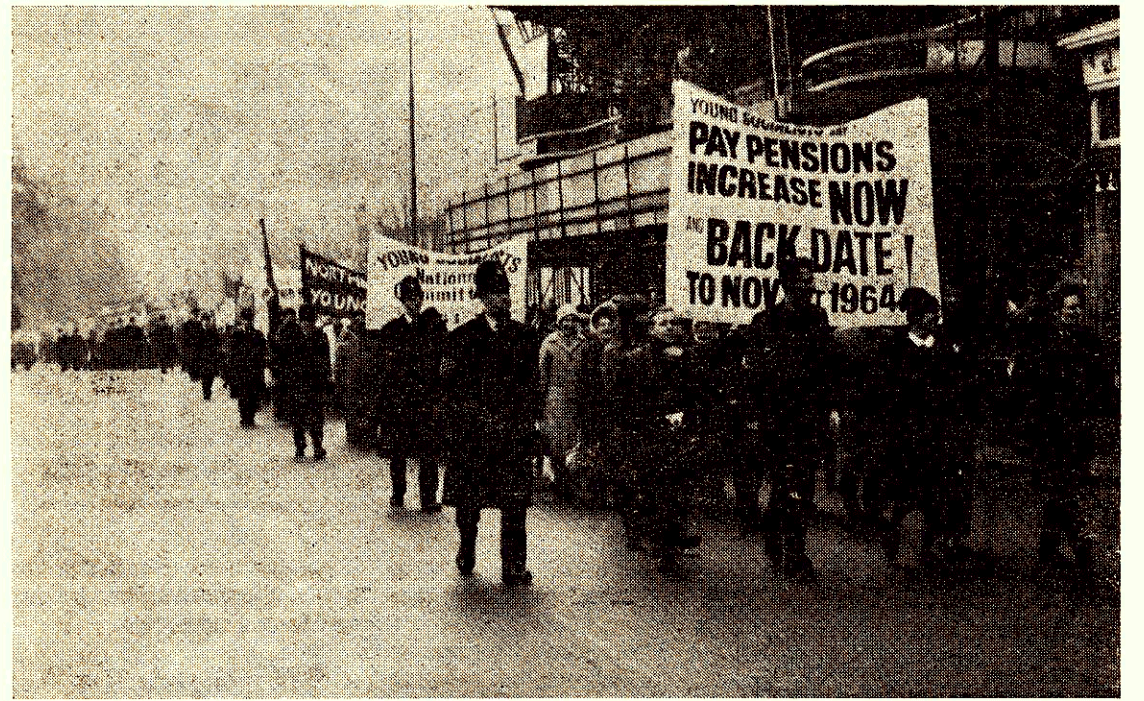
#### SERVANTS

There, the intervention of the racialists was also designed to offset this growing class consciousness.

What happened at Leyton, Smethwick and Churchill's funeral are all examples of how right-wing Labour assists, in practice, the Tories and the most reactionary trend of monopoly capital.

The Newsletter says—Out with these servants of the ruling class.

We have every confidence that the great movement of English Labour with its proud tradition of class struggle will assert itself in this way in no uncertain terms in the next period.



Above is the march leaving Marble Arch. In front of the banner are YS National Committee Majority members (from l. to r.): Mike Farley, Dave Ashby (chairman), Sheila Torrance (vice-chairman) and Bob Hamilton. Below are some of the pensioners who joined the march.

## Pensioners march to lobby Parliament



London, Thursday

**HUNDREDS** of old people demanding an immediate rise in their pensions were treated with complete contempt when lobbying MPs at the House of Commons today.

The old people had joined in the 1,000-strong march and lobby with Young Socialists and trade unionists organised by the Young Socialists National Committee Majority.

Earlier Young Socialists, trade union and old age pension delegations had marched 1000-strong from Marble Arch to the Embankment, then walked to Parliament.

Outside Parliament lobbies formed a long queue, while inside, irate and angry pensioners and youth attempted to see MPs. Only two MPs came out to see the first 350 allowed into the lobby hall and others were seen to leave the House.

The MPs said it was not a matter of what was fair, but what was possible.

One said that by the time computers could be arranged to work out the rise, the country was in an economic crisis.

Both said backdating of the pensions would be impossible.

#### Hostile reaction

When asked why Labour would not nationalize, one MP said: 'Don't be silly. We're talking about serious politics' (!) Lobbyists had similar reactions from other MPs who came out later.

The Young Socialists National Committee Majority led the march, which began at Marble Arch. Behind them came a contingent of 30 old age pensioners, many of whom insisted on joining the long march which stretched for several hundred yards as it moved into Oxford Street.

Behind the massive banner, 'Pay the Pensions increase NOW! Backdate to November 1st, 1964,' were banners and placards carried by youth, workers, trade unionists and pensioners from north and south.

A second banner demanded that the Labour government nationalize the monopolies, oppose conscription and bring the troops home.

Interspersed with the bright

## by Newsletter reporting team

red banners, placard after placard demanded 'Backdate and increase old age pensions', 'Don't beg from the bankers, nationalize them', 'Raise the Pensions Now', 'Make the Bankers Pay', 'No more Leytons—Labour must raise pensions at once, stop wage freeze! Stop rising prices! Fight racialism!'

It was an impressive and colourful sight as the march wound its way from Oxford Street, into Kingsway then to the Embankment.

Old people on the march told Newsletter reporters they could not manage on their pensions.

Mr. Walter Williams, from Birmingham, aged 72, who receives £4 7s. 6d., pays rent of 15s. said: 'I have what food I can buy, but heating comes first, especially in winter.'

'I have voted Labour all my life, and I voted to get them in at the last election. But I think it's disgusting that we haven't had an increase yet.'

#### Promise

Mrs. Richmond from Nottingham, aged 73, gets £3 7s. 6d. pension, pays a rent of 32s. 9d.

'I live on my own in a rented house. I could not get a council house. I can manage to buy food, but when it comes to buying clothes and shoes I can't do it out of my pension.'

'I eat meat once a week, only most of the time it's a boiled egg, beans on toast or just toast. I can't buy bacon any more. At the last election our Labour MP said he would raise the pensions but now they're in power he's got his rise but we haven't got ours.'

Among those on the march were many of the old age pensioners who had travelled for hours from all over Britain. Others, too old for the march, went straight to Parliament.

From South Yorkshire came 30 old people with Young Socialists from Sheffield, Wombwell, Doncaster, Barnsley and Rotherham.

Forty-five Young Socialists, engineers and clothing workers from Leeds were joined by 10 pensioners. Last night the Crossgate Tenants' Association passed a resolution of support for the lobby.

Three dockers from Merseyside representing thousands of fellow workers were on the march. They arrived with three pensioners, unemployed youth

and Young Socialists from Liverpool, Wigan, Bolton and Manchester.

Twenty Young Socialists had travelled overnight by plane from Belfast, and from Scotland came 35 YS members, young workers, students and a delegation from the Anchor Mills at Paisley.

#### Busmen's delegate

From the Midlands, Young Socialists brought AEU and TGWU delegates from Leicester and Coventry.

Along with the North-east contingent came Mrs. Joyce Wilson, a delegate from the Tynemouth busmen.

In the London area, hundreds of Young Socialists rallied tremendous support from old people and trade unionists.

The whole of a Wimpey building site in the centre of the city stopped so that 100 men could join the march and lobby.

Over 40 pensioners were rallied from Lambeth and the large Lambeth Trades Council delegation marched behind its banner.

The Indian Workers' Association from Southall, where the recent strike victory at Woolfs Rubber company was made, sent a delegate.

Later a large and successful meeting was held in Central Hall, Westminster, with speakers from the YS National Committee Majority, old age pensioners and trade unions.

## MEETINGS

**Labour Must Stop Retreating!**  
No Wage Freezing!  
Backdate the Old Age Pension Increase Now!  
Full Support for the Dockers!

#### Leicester

Co-op Hall,  
168 Belgrave Gate  
Sunday, February 7, 7.30 p.m.  
Speaker: C. Slaughter

#### Glasgow

Partick Burgh Hall  
(Lesser Hall)  
(near Merkland Street underground station)  
Sunday, February 14, 7.30 p.m.  
Speaker: G. Healy

## NEW BOOK ON SOUTH AFRICA RELEASED SOON

SECRETARY of the Dr. Alexander Defence Committee at the University of Tübingen, Germany, Franz J. T. Lee's book 'Gloom Over South Africa' will be published towards the end of February.

The book contains 16 political and economic analyses of conditions in South Africa, South West Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Rhodesia, Bechuanaland, Swaziland and Basu-

toland and about the liberation movements in each country. Thirty pages are devoted to the Cape Town trial of Dr. Neville Alexander and 10 other non-white South Africans who were jailed for periods of five to ten years for alleged sabotage against Verwoerd's regime. (News of the appeal on March 2 by the Alexander Eleven was reported in last week's Newsletter.)

The 150-page book costs 6s. and can be obtained from Pioneer Publishers, 116 University Place, New York, 3 NY in America, and in Britain from Mrs. Connie Kirkby, secretary of the Alexander Defence Committee, 27 Thursley House, Holmewood Gardens, London, S.W.2.

Orders for the book from Africa and Asia can be sent directly to Franz J. T. Lee, 74 Tübingen, Christopherstr. 2, c/o Miss Bolle, West Germany.



# It is dangerous in the middle of the road

**Comrades,**  
In your news bulletin, 'World Outlook', Volume 3, No. 5, January 29, 1965, you publish a statement on what you term 'the Wandsworth incidents'. The statement criticises the role of S. Mani, a leading English supporter of your organisation.

**Wandsworth Constituency**  
Early in December 1964 Mr. Mani, a member of the Labour Party, proposed a motion for the expulsion of three supporters of the Socialist Labour League. He did not protest when the right wing, who supported him, called for the police to evict these members from the meeting hall.

This man, who is an old supporter of yours, has in the past on a number of occasions supported the Labour Party right wing.

In March 1963 a delegation from your organisation joined with us and roundly condemned him for having done this against a supporter of the Young Socialist tendency 'Keep Left'. We are pleased to note that after some delay you have now once again criticised him.

## We agree — it is a matter of principle

'In our opinion,' you say, 'it was a grave error on his part to have anything to do with these expulsions.'

We agree. Mani deliberately and consciously violated a fundamental principle of the ~~revolutionary movement~~ He joined hands with the common enemy in an action against our movement. Like Osmund Jayaratne and the rest of the coalition crew in Ceylon, he joined the enemy.

We regret that you appear unable to analyse why it is that so many traitors to the principles of Marxism are now beginning to appear inside your movement.

This is the case with Leslie Gunawardene, Colvin de Silva and N. M. Perera and now Mani and Jayaratne.

The Socialist Labour League has not only condemned them, we have analysed the political reasons which lay behind their actions. In doing this, we have sharply criticised yourselves, because we believe that what happened is due to the wrong policies which you have pursued over the past 12 years.

Yet we are happy to record this limited agreement over Mani, although we regret that you still try to occupy a middle-of-the-road position between such deserters and our supporters.

For example, in separating yourselves from him, you imply that the youth paper 'Keep Left' was in fact responsible for creating the conditions under which he betrayed.

You criticise our young people for having dared recruit 30 new members to the Young Socialist branch in Wandsworth. You suggest that perhaps they were 'going beyond boisterousness'.

Really, comrades, what a terrible thing for young people to be young. No wonder your organisation has recruited so few of them in England.

Small wonder either that your supporters such as Mr. Mani manage to live and work as a sympathiser of your organisation without you discovering over the last four or five years that he is a traitor. The only time he is 'boisterous' is when he is joining hands with the right wing expelling our supporters.

## Mani used the Unified Secretariat as a cover

On every occasion in the past when youth supporters of the Socialist Labour League fought back against the right-wing

## An open letter to the Unified Secretariat

witch-hunters of the British Labour Party, you, together with Mani, have denounced them as 'sectarian'. It was such irresponsible political charges that provided him with cover for his present opportunist capitulation to the right wing.

Of course, we understand your dilemma. You are well aware that the Socialist Labour League has called for the Marxist movement to outlaw this man. You also know that your English organisation has split into two separate groups over the issue. You are aware that a majority of this so-called organisation supports Mani and would not agree with your comrades when they recently visited London.

The so-called leader of this majority speaking in a northern city on January 31, said publicly: 'I solidarise myself with the right wing in Wandsworth in this case, you can have my statement on that.' So you try to occupy a halfway position between us and them.

## Why not break from Pabloite policies?

Your political experiences at the moment as a result of implementing in practice Pablo's policies are extremely harsh. All the chickens are coming home to roost.

In France, for instance, Pierre Frank is discovering that the Pablo supporters of his organisation are in fact for the complete liquidation of the organisation into the Communist Party in France.

Why don't you try to draw some political conclusions from what is taking place in Ceylon, France and Britain?

From even a sketchy reading of the works of Leon Trotsky on the role of the middle-of-the-road centrist movements, you should be aware that such a position is untenable for Marxists.

The Socialist Labour League does not ask you to agree with its political policies, strategy and tactics. We ask you to denounce and expel Mani and the group who support him.

Any self-respecting Trotskyist movement would immediately take such steps. Yet you hesitate and try to foist the blame on the policies of the supporters of the Socialist Labour League just as you hesitated over the expulsion of Gunawardene and de Silva in Ceylon.

You throw away a valuable opportunity to arrive at a principled agreement with the Socialist Labour League in order to maintain an untenable position in relation to Mani and his fellow renegades. Do you not see what a ridiculous position you are in?

## The witch-hunt in Belgium

In the same issue of 'World Outlook', Volume 3, No. 5, you report the split of the Belgian left-wing socialists from the Social Democratic Party of Leo Collard and Henri Spaak.

'Some 600 left-socialist militants,' you write, 'meeting in Liège, December 27, decided to lay the basis of a new party... the Socialist Workers Party.'

'This decision was made,' you say, 'in reply to the motion railroaded through the Congress by the right wing, suppressing the right of the left wing to form tendencies inside the Socialist Party.'

The left-wing papers, 'La Gauche' edited by M. Ernest Mandel, and 'Links', the Flemish organ, were in the vanguard of those who decided to form the new party. There is no doubt that the right wing of the Social Democratic Party in Belgium, like the right wing of the Labour Party in Britain, were conduct-

ing a witch-hunt, and that the left wing decided to break away and form a new party.

## Belgium and Britain

We leave aside for the moment the immediate correctness or not of their decision. There is, however, a very close connection between the actions of the right wing in Belgium and Britain. It is a sign of the growing crisis of Western European capitalism.

A correspondent of The Newsletter has been in Belgium for the past few weeks investigating the background to these developments. His despatches will be published in full in The Newsletter within the next week or so.

What we find difficult to understand is how you can so suddenly change course and support the formation of a new independent party in Belgium and condemn the Young Socialists for carrying out, after a long struggle, a similar decision in Britain.

You publish and criticise as 'ultra-left' the following quotation from The Newsletter of September 26, 1964:

'At the moment it is imperative that the National Committee majority continue their offensive on the policy decided at their Brighton Conference and prepare immediately to continue with the Young Socialist as an organisation of a national scale, should it be closed down by the right wing.'

'Those who say that it is not possible to build a Young Socialist movement unless it is tied to the Labour Party talk nonsense. The success of the youth paper 'Keep Left', that has now been proscribed for over two years, shows that the main drive must be towards young people coming into politics for the first time.'

'Only centrists maintain that these young people must of necessity get their experience in and around the Labour Party. Youth are a thousand times nearer to the revolutionary movement today than they are to the right-wing leadership of the Labour Party.'

'... If the Young Socialists do not fight now, then they will be cut to pieces as they were in 1955.'

'If they fight, in all probability they will be closed down but with their organisation intact advocating a clear socialist policy they will be able to organise their forces and train hundreds of new leaders for re-entry into the Labour Party in preparation for the coming crisis.'

## Why attack the Young Socialists?

You are aware that behind this statement by The Newsletter there lie four years of bitter struggle by the Young Socialists against the right wing.

You are aware that their youth paper was banned in May 1962 by the Gaitskell leadership. Yet you did not protest against this ban although you know full well that 'La Gauche' and the Belgian left are now facing a similar witch-hunt on the part of their right wing.

Ernest Mandel refused to capitulate to the right-wing ultimatum and you applauded him. If we were to use your method we could reply by saying that he was off on an ultra-left 'sectarian binge', but clearly this would be no answer to the question.

Those who try to change the policies of social-democratic parties must expect the right wing to fight back. The Young Socialists fought stubbornly for over four years with their youth paper 'Keep Left' to build an opposition to Gaitskell, Wilson and Company. They won a clear majority in the leadership of the youth movement.

We are certain that their struggle to stay inside the

Labour Party was much more prolonged than the struggle waged by Mandel, yet you denounce them as 'ultra-left'

Presumably, they should have avoided this struggle and capitulated. Then why did you not give this advice to Mandel?

Are there some special conditions governing what took place in Belgium different to that which took place in Britain.

Pompously you demand to know whether or not the 30 Young Socialists who wanted to join the Wandsworth branch lived in the area. Your consideration for the geographical boundaries of the right wing of the Labour Party is most touching.

In that superior tone of voice usually associated with Joseph Hansen, you demand to know 'who organised all this?' 'What was done about consulting the leadership of the Wandsworth Constituency?' Such absent-minded naivety appears to spring from the fact that you must live on another planet.

Permit us to say, dear Comrades, that the right wing of the Wandsworth Constituency Labour Party are a witch-hunting, despicable, bureaucratic group who will not hesitate at any time to call in the police against the left.

Any left-wing organisation who told them about their plans would earn the right to be certified for insanity.

You attack the 'Keep Left' comrades for not having 'consulted' this group. You speak of other 'left-wing' tendencies. Who are they? The weekly 'Tribune' supports the right wing in its witch-hunt. Your supporter, S. Mani, and the majority of your so-called section also support the right wing. Where are these other left-wing tendencies you talk about?

## Think again about Britain

Back to Belgium. You write about the numbers of comrades who wanted to form this new party — 600 in Liège, 200 in Brussels, 400 in Charleroi.

But these are relatively small numbers in comparison to the number of Young Socialists who have demonstrated against the witch-hunt in Britain.

On September 27, 1964, over 3,000 marched behind the banner of 'Keep Left' through the streets of London supporting the policy decisions of the Easter 1964 Young Socialist Conference. At Trafalgar Square, an audience of over 4,000 was in attendance — very many more than your meetings in Brussels.

Possibly you have lost the ability to count in Britain and retain it only for the happenings in Belgium. Not once throughout 1964 did you report any of these events to your readers. Because you solidarised yourself with Mani and his friends you suppressed the real news about what has happened in Britain.

You see where your untenable middle-of-the-road position leads to.

Not once during the four long years of the Young Socialists in Britain have you attacked the right wing who have proscribed these young people. There is not a single article in the United States paper, 'The Militant' or your small circulating European journals which have protested about this.

Yet this movement of young people in Britain is the most significant thing that has happened on the world scale at any time in the history of the international Trotskyist movement.

And all you can do is to blame the Socialist Labour League and its newspaper 'The Newsletter' for telling these young people to fight back against the right wing.

We fully support the struggle of all left-wing socialists in Belgium against the right-wing traitors, although we will in all probability disagree with the way the struggle was organised. Your ambiguous middle-of-the-road position is, we repeat, untenable.

We ask you to break from this and join the Socialist Labour League in fighting the renegades from our movement such as Mani and others whilst at the same time we unite to defeat the right wing of the Belgian social democracy and of the British Labour Party.

The Newsletter,  
Editorial Board

**OPPOSITION** to the Emerson 'Linwood Plan' is growing at the Linwood, Scotland, factory of Pressed Steel Ltd. because of attempts by the management to tie in with the bonus plan a new agreement covering redundancy.

Under the guise of protecting workers against sackings, the firm is pressing for the acceptance of a package deal which creates a division between workers who are required by production schedules and those who are 'pooled' awaiting work or awaiting the sack.

As many as 350 workers may be sacked during the next few weeks unless the management can push through its plans. The firm claim that this is inevitable due to cuts in production of car bodies for Ford Motors and Rovers and the ending of a contract for rail hopper wagons.

Both craft unions, the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the National Union of Vehicle Builders, have rejected the new revisions to the Emerson 'Linwood Plan'.

In spite of pressure from the national officials of the National Union of Vehicle Builders, workers on the production line have strongly resisted attempts to operate the labour 'pool' which is the central part of Emerson's new version of how to get unions to co-operate in sweating out more profit for Pressed Steel.

Production line workers refused instructions to work overtime since they knew that men who had been transferred to the 'pool' were still waiting regular jobs.

## Potential split

Compare this action with that of Gallacher, Assistant General Secretary of the National Union of Vehicle Builders who called two meetings of the union's district committee on successive days in order to get agreement pushed through to operate the management's 'pool' scheme.

**The position in the factory is, therefore, one of a potential split between the craft unions and the National Union of Vehicle Builders by means of which the Pressed Steel management can hope to push through its plan.**

This is how the first version of the Emerson Plan was manoeuvred in — by first frightening craft workers with possible and some actual redundancies and then getting the co-operation of some pliable shop stewards who thought that all that had to be done in order to defend their wages and jobs was for Pressed Steel to sell plenty of car bodies.

The same weak stewards now stand in the way of a united factory struggle which is the only way to prevent mass sackings.

What is essential at Linwood is a united fight for a reduction of working hours with no loss of pay. When this demand was raised by militant stewards at a recent meeting, sneering reference was made by the convenor to a reduction to 35 and then to 25 hours.

## 'Education' for the poor

A RECENT report on education issued by the Department of Education and Science (Report No. 17) deals with 'Education under Social Handicap'. This report arose out of a meeting held recently of 32 headteachers who had experience with children from poor social and physical environments.

These include children from broken homes, children whose parents are in prison, children who had experienced evictions, who lived in slums, etc.

In addition, many mothers who live in such conditions have large families and are forced to go out to work for long hours in bad conditions. Not surprisingly, these women are so worn out that they are unable to attend properly to their children.

These are then labelled 'problem homes' and the parents are accused of showing 'little interest' in their children's education.

Report No. 17 reveals that children from such homes lose

**The Pressed Steel Company at Linwood, Scotland, are aiming another paralysing blow at their workers**

# Points system — next step in Emerson Plan

Bob Shaw reports

Exactly! This is the only way in which workers in a plant such as Pressed Steel can protect their livelihood from the ups and downs in the market demand for the firm's goods. It is also the only way in which such schemes as the one now brought forward by Emerson can be fought.

The Emerson amendment to the 'Linwood Plan' states that short-time working and work-sharing schemes are acceptable as temporary measures to deal with redundancy.

At the same time an elaborate 'points' plan is outlined on the basis of which the company will decide who is to be sacked and when. As with the Emerson bonus plan, all attempts by the factory workers to conduct a united struggle for all workers in the plant are then abandoned in the hope that each one will benefit by getting more 'points' than his mate.

Not even the craft unions would survive for long such a scheme. Factory organisation becomes simply a rubber stamp for the management's decisions.

**Unless the whole of the Emerson 'Linwood Plan' is thrown out, then the redundancy package deal will be brought in at a later stage after 350 workers have been sacked.**

## Bound

Once the scheme has been forced through and endorsed by the unions, then all workers would be bound by its provisions despite the fact that none of those were brought forward for factory discussion.

It is very probable that Pressed Steel can get the support not only of the trade union leaders but also of the members of the Labour government since what they aim to introduce at Linwood is completely in line with the plans which have been advanced by such Labour leaders as Gunter, Brown and Wilson, for modernising industry.

The Labour leaders have made speeches in which they

promised workers they would receive 'severance pay', jobs would be guaranteed provided the workers accepted the need to move from job to job, to accept 'mobility of labour', and to drop restrictive practices, by which Labour and Tories alike, mean craft training, control of piece-work rates and other hard-won rights in the workshops.

A year ago Ray Gunter, then Shadow Minister of Labour and now a member of Wilson's cabinet wrote in 'Socialist Commentary', the right-wing Labour journal, that either the unions would undertake the disciplining of their members or this function would have to be undertaken by the courts.

## Discipline

He forecast that special industrial courts would be set up for the job. 'The unions,' he said, 'are not eternal. They will exist just as long as they are relevant to the times in which they seek to exist.'

The trade union leaders have done their worst in seeking to discipline their members at Linwood, at both the Pressed Steel and Rootes plants. Emerson Consultants Ltd. are ready to work out for the Pressed Steel management the plans they need to use their workers to the maximum.

The state, says Gunter, must intervene. Under the Labour government that means Gunter's own department, the Ministry of Labour.

**The aim of Emerson's phase two of the 'Linwood Plan' is to get workers to drop all ideas of independent class struggle, so stress is laid on the 'mutual interest in the Plan and in jobs, profits and bonuses'. This point is hammered home several times.**

Sacking is a word not liked by Emerson, who substitutes such terms as 'employment reserve', 'technological displacement', 'relocation' and 'redeployment'. The Plan talks about allocating jobs through the firm's other plants and drawing in the

of old furniture because it takes up less room than the new type, and they are short of equipment because they have nowhere to store it.

They also have a high proportion of poorly-qualified, untrained and part-time teachers.

This report also reveals that these so-called 'problem families' are often left till last when it comes to re-housing, and when they are re-housed they are usually sent to pre-war council houses. In this way many councils practise a hidden form of social segregation.

Because of these conditions, it is not to be wondered at that there is a high rate of truancy amongst these children. This is encouraged by the fact that many of them are given casual employment at abysmal wages by small employers, shopkeepers, etc.

The Ministry of Education is concerned at the 'lack of communication' between teachers and these so-called 'below-average' children, but this report has nothing to offer apart from a few clichés about 'instilling a

(Cont. back page, col. 1)



'distressed customer' into a search for fresh employment.

Prominent labour leaders have also talked about the need for workers to change their jobs and to move to new areas. Emerson have drawn this point into their Plan.

Pressed Steel claim it is 'beyond the economic capacity of the company to guarantee full security of income and employment to its employees'.

For such 'natural' causes as slumps, the company proposes that workers join the management in lobbying the government of the day and Members of Parliament.

(Pressed Steel workers should reply that the demands which they will put before the Labour government and before the Labour MPs is that Pressed Steel be nationalized.)

More or less normal fluctuation in production in the firm would be met by having an employment reserve to which workers who are surplus to planned manning of production lines would be transferred.

This is what has happened to workers of the Imp car body line where production fell during 1964 much faster than manning.

**'Thin out'**

The 'pool' thus created would be used to 'thin out' the number of workers on a given job. Since the shop stewards do not have access to the management's books and cannot study its production schedules then there is no check.

Workers in the employment reserve would be instructed to take other jobs or remain as trainees or substitute for absenteeism with reduced wages.

Two groups of workers would be established—those required by manning tables of the management and those redundant.

An elaborate 'points' system would apply for those in group 2 who would be in the employment reserve. Points could be earned by service, timekeeping, recommendation by supervision, and having expert knowledge. Thus a non-craft worker with four years' service and average time-keeping and work record would rate at 60 to 65 per cent.

Only long service workers, those with special craft training, or those with spotless time-keeping and work records could expect to survive for long in Pressed Steel under the Emerson package deal.

The rest would be pushed out, maybe to another Pressed Steel plant, perhaps to some other firm, or to spend time on the dole.

Workers in group 2 would not be eligible for the Emerson bonus payments which are made each month and would not be permitted to work overtime.

Severance pay would be given to those who were sacked on the basis of £10 for each completed year of service. This is known in Emerson language as the 'scale of Terminal Benefit'.

With the help of plans such as these, the Pressed Steel has greatly improved its profits over the last two years.

The management are anxious that not too much of this information be allowed to seep out. At a recent meeting of the factory Works Committee the manager is reported to have said that due to the activities of a certain 'low' paper no more figures would be issued to shop stewards.

**No deception**

What are the directors of Pressed Steel afraid of? What are they trying to hide? The manager knows very well that even the 'high efficiency' of Emerson Consultants Ltd. would not deceive workers as to the extent to which profits are being sweated out of the Linwood car workers and that 350 workers are to be pushed out for the purpose of forcing the pace of production even more.

The shop stewards should press their attack and demand that the management allow a committee of rank and file trade unionists to inspect the firm's books.

Figures showing the profits of the Pressed Steel and the extent to which their profits benefit from the Emerson 'Linwood Plan' should then be published and used in a campaign in the labour movement for the nationalization of the firm.

Not joint lobbies of the Labour government and MPs with the management for the purpose of raising profits, but a workers' lobby to demand that this and other car firms be nationalized.

This is a struggle in which the whole factory can unite with many other sections of the motor industry.

**WORLD NEWS ROUND-UP**



**Piecemeal agreements breaking US dock strike**

By A Newsletter Correspondent

**PRESIDENT JOHNSON** intervened in the East Coast dock strike in the United States on Monday when he called on the dockers' union, the International Longshoremen's Association, to put its men back to work.

Dock bosses are said to have lost over £24 million a day during the strike, which began at the beginning of January.

Johnson says, according to Tuesday's 'Times', that the 'public interest must be protected', but the union leaders say all 40 ports will remain idle until agreements have been reached at each one.

The 60,000 members of the ILA are striking against recommendations of the Wirtz Commission, appointed by Johnson, which are similar to those contained in the 'new deal' which British port employers have attempted to impose on dockers throughout Britain.

They include the reduction of gangs from 20 men to 11 and flexibility of labour.

The strike was also against what dockers name as 'the pink regime of ILA president Thomas Gleason', who, together with leaders of the AFL-CIO, is pushing the contract down the throats of the men.

**CONSCIOUSNESS**

But, as the *Bulletin of International Socialism* (published by the American Committee of the Fourth International) said on January 25: 'Many dockworkers are showing a militancy and consciousness which is symptomatic of a new mood of struggle beginning to develop throughout the American labour movement.'

On January 5, men voted against the new contract, but this vote was reversed last week.

Now agreements are being made piecemeal in New Orleans, Boston, Norfolk (Virginia) and Mobile (Alabama), and other ports are expected to follow.

This reversal for the militancy of the dockers must be laid at

**Price of gold to be raised?**

WITH the European economy in a very shaky position, the U.S. may be facing a dollar and gold crisis.

The imperialists' financial boat was upset by the recent demand by de Gaulle for gold for 150 million dollars.

This may be used by Washington as a pretext for increasing the price of gold.

A new Bill from President Johnson will remove the gold backing from internal reserves and test public feeling to the whole problems of the dollar and gold.

As the quarterly review of gold shares in the 'Mining Review' says, the American nation has a feeling about the price of dollar gold which almost amounts to 'religious fervour', based on the 'erroneous' assumption that a changed gold price would be a devaluation of the dollar.

But, as the 'U.S. News and World Report' says: 'When this same dollar is loaded down with burdens of aiding other countries and supporting much of the defence of the non-Communist world, then it is found to be under real strain, and its future is open to question.'

It further comments: 'Let confidence in the U.S. dollar be shaken, and a world-wide 'run' from that dollar into gold could get under way with serious effects.'

Therefore, a rise in the price of gold would be very helpful to the U.S. economy at the present time.

the feet of Gleason who, backed by the New York Ship Owners, Reynolds, Assistant Secretary of Labour (which is also Federal mediator in the dispute), and the 'New York Times', at the height of the strike, called his members 'ignorant' and 'misinformed' people.

They had turned down the most glorious contract in the history of the labour movement, Gleason claimed, and he organised a 'truth squad' to tell his members just how glorious it was. As the *Bulletin* comments the squad would probably 'be using many of the techniques of "truth" that Madison Avenue uses to sell toothpaste'.

The strength of the U.S. dockers, whose picket lines were honoured by friend and foe, is obvious. But the loss of £24 million a day to the U.S. economy, already shaken by events elsewhere, cannot be allowed in Johnson's eyes.

So, with the aid of 'leader' Gleason, the American state begins to whittle away the dockers' solidarity by arranging agreements in each port separately, paving the way for mechanization and automation, intensification of labour and speed-up.

**Second General Strike hits Paris**

THE struggle against the French government's policy of holding back wages in the nationalized and public sector continued last week with a 48-hour rolling strike.

The miserable offer of a 4 per cent annual increase was answered by a powerful strike movement before Christmas. Last week workers came out on the railways, Paris transport, Air France, post office, power and gas supply, local government and schools.

The government did not hesitate to use military lorries and troops to bring commuters to work in the capital. Moreover, Pompidou, the Prime Minister, threatened the power workers with restriction of their right to strike.

This threat was real in so far as air traffic controllers at Air France were cajoled into selling their right to strike for higher pay. The ground crews came out alone last week.

**BOOMERANG**

On the other hand, it is unlikely that the government would seek a showdown with power workers at this stage.

A showdown could boomerang against its fairly successful strategy of playing off the privately-owned sector against the public sector and provide the issue around which all these workers could unite against the policy of price stabilisation.

Over the past few months, deflationary policies have resulted in partial employment for several hundreds of thousands of workers in private industry, particularly textiles.

The policy of price stabilisation is not something new dreamt up by the bureaucrats of the Fifth Plan. It is part of a 20-year attempt to 'control prices', which has led to seven devaluations of the franc.

It has always resulted in wages chasing prices, pools of partial unemployment, long hours of overtime and arbitrary sackings. In the past, the nationalized and public sector bore the brunt

THE Sri Lanka Freedom Party and other reformists, whilst seeking to make it appear that the defeat of the coalition is a victory for the reactionary forces led - by the United National Party (UNP), state that under the circumstances all 'progressives' must unite under the leadership of Mrs. Bandaranaike to defeat the UNP and other reactionary elements.

This is a mere repetition of a well-known Stalinist argument, the essence of which is that the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) is the party of 'progressive' bourgeoisie and the UNP represents real agents of imperialism and compradors.

There is no doubt about the

of the wage restrictions necessitated by the 'price controls' agreed to by the monopolies. Feeling is now very high against this.

But so long as trade union leaders remain content and simply chase after the wages attained in private industry, they will never be able to attack the roots of the problem.

The post-war boom has ended. Wage levels are being reduced in private industry. It will be impossible to maintain living standards if there is not a widespread awareness that these strikes are political.

It is more and more apparent, with every successive strike wave, that very little will be achieved unless a political leadership is developed which can lead the workers to the power they are struggling for.

**SPAIN**

**Students, workers demand free trade unions**

THOUSANDS of students and workers demonstrated for an hour outside the headquarters of the government trade union organisation in Madrid last week demanding free trade unions, the right to strike and a minimum wage of 175 pesetas (about 22s.) a day.

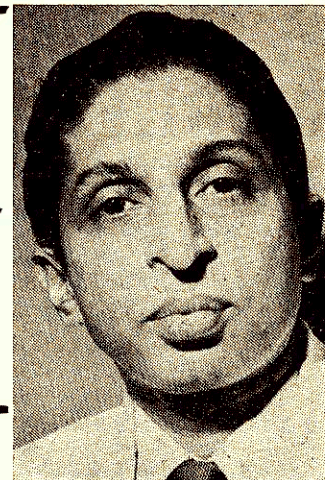
Three hundred police using clubs charged the demonstrators, and several arrests were made. As the crowd was dispersed, they shouted at the police. Leaflets laying out the demands of the workers and students were distributed in Madrid several days before the demonstration.

The leaflets called particularly on the city's building workers to demonstrate outside the union headquarters while the National Congress of Construction Workers held a meeting inside. Underground movements, who

**Edmund Samarakoddy**

(Secretary, Lanka Sama Samaja Party Revolutionary)

**puts the question**



**What issues do the Ceylon elections pose?**

fact that the UNP is reactionary; that it is in sympathy with imperialists; that it is anti-working class and anti-democratic; and, therefore, it is the enemy of the working class and oppressed people.

But on the basic question with which the masses are confronted, it is erroneous to say that the SLFP is different from the UNP.

Both the UNP as well as the SLFP have proved that they are prepared to work as agents of the capitalist class and the imperialists.

Both these parties undoubtedly protect and defend capitalist property relations.

**SLFP sprung up**

It is true that UNP still enjoys the confidence of economically more powerful capitalist sections. But, at a time when the working class and the oppressed masses are making an effort to rise against capitalist oppression, the SLFP has sprung up as the capitalist party that is more capable of protecting the capitalist class.

The SLFP has much more craftily harnessed Buddhist clericalism and Sinhala chauvinism to serve the needs of imperialism and capitalism.

Particularly, the SLFP cannot break away from the imperialists. Neither will it happen. By remaining in the so-called Commonwealth of Nations for the so-called 'protection' of Ceylon, the SLFP has accepted a military alliance with the British imperialists.

Nationalization of insurance companies and the import and distribution of oil does not constitute anti-imperialist struggle on a question of principle, but a series of steps taken in order to accumulate necessary funds to strengthen capitalism in Ceylon.

The establishment of diplomatic relations with the socialist countries and obtaining aid from these countries does not mean that this party is bent towards socialism, but illustrates its need to obtain aid from every source, and also its political opportunism.

It is because of these reasons that this party has been able to achieve class collaboration and

socialist colouration.

The SLFP which is the party of the Ceylonese bourgeoisie hopes to obtain foreign aid and foreign investment to ensure the existence of a capitalist system in Ceylon.

In order to establish capitalism in Ceylon, the SLFP has accepted British and American imperialists as partners.

In the under-developed countries so-called 'middle of the road' governments such as the SLFP in Ceylon are instruments of capitalist class rule.

This type of government will sooner or later shift towards a military dictatorship, which is the only means by which capitalism in these countries could be preserved.

Parties like the SLFP, by their opportunism and deception, endeavour to maintain their rule over the working class and exploited masses as long as possible.

They will, in fact, open the door to reaction.

**Reaction**

Capitalist reaction, which takes the shape of a military dictatorship, does not necessarily come into being through forces outside the government. It can develop within and without the government.

Beginning with anti-democratic and anti-working class measures, postponing the parliament, it can move towards emergency rule.

Today it is well-known that a section of those responsible for

the abortive coup of 1962, were inside the Sirimavo government.

The erroneous conception that a military dictatorship can arise only through forces outside the Sirimavo government will inevitably help deceive and disarm the working class.

In the event of a failure on the part of the working class to overthrow this type of so-called 'middle-of-the-road' capitalist government at the appropriate moment would lead to the establishment of a reactionary regime in the form of a military dictatorship.

**Deceive**

By stating that capitalist reaction is represented only by the UNP and not the SLFP, Sri Lanka Sama Samajists and Stalinists are deceiving the working class. If this deception is not exposed, the working class and oppressed people would undoubtedly be caught in a trap.

Therefore, in this election, the working class cannot directly or indirectly help to establish either a UNP or SLFP regime.

The contest between the UNP and SLFP is a contest to determine who will, with the help of the imperialists, safeguard capitalist property relations.

The need of the hour is the independent intervention of the working class and oppressed people through a united front of the working-class parties and organisations.

This is the only politically correct objective available for anti-capitalist democratic elements of Ceylon.

**IMMIGRANTS PROTEST AGAINST INDIAN COMMUNIST PARTY ARRESTS**

THE 150 people present at a meeting called by the Indian Workers' Association in Birmingham recently passed a resolution condemning the arrest of Communist Party members in India and called for their release.

The meeting demanded that the prisoners, who were arrested under the Defence of India Act, should be released or, if there is any evidence against them, they should be immediately brought to trial.

It also called for military aid for the Indian government to cease as long as the people were in jail deprived of civil liberties.

**NO LESSON LEARNED**

Doctor Ranjana Sidhanba gave a history of India since 1947. She showed that persecution of Communist Party members had been a constant feature and that the Indian government was a capitalist government tied closely to foreign imperialism and operated on behalf of big business in India.

However, all the speakers failed to analyse why it was that most Communist Parties boosted Nehru as a 'champion of peace and progress' for so long while Communists were being arrested at the time.

**NO CONTROVERSY PLEASE**

Towards the end of the meeting, a Birmingham Communist Party member moved a motion calling for the Soviet Union to cease all military aid to the Indian government. This caused the die-hard Stalinists in the audience to rise in protest.

Mr. Joshi, secretary of the Indian Workers' Association said: 'It is a pity that controversy is introduced into a meeting which should be united in solidarity with the Indian prisoners.'

The resolution was then incorporated in another which called for all governments to cease military aid for India. The Communist Party members accepted this.

It is obvious that this avoidance of the fundamental issues for the sake of an appearance of unity will, in fact, hinder further action by the Indian Workers' Association on behalf of the Indian Communist Party prisoners.

The actions of the Indian government in trying to smash all opposition, must be protested against throughout the British labour movement. But this must not, under any circumstances, be a cover up for the actions of the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union in arming bourgeois governments of the ex-colonial world.



## ENV WORKERS VOTE TO GO BACK AFTER PAY DISPUTE

BY a close majority of one or two votes workers at ENV, North London, voted to return to work after walking out on strike for three days over a pay dispute.

Workers in the industrial section, members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, refused to do jobs that were normally progressed by the clerical department.

When the stacker drivers carried out this policy they were immediately clocked off the job and the industrial section of the firm then walked out in protest against this action.

### CLAIM NOT MET

After pressure was put on by a union official to return to work, the clerical workers, members of the Clerical and Administrative Workers' Union, who walked out after their claim for a 15s. rise was not met by the management, decided to return on Thursday morning.

Although the clerical workers had been promised rises in wages by the employers, the increase only amounted to 9d. in some cases.

ENV's shop stewards' committee have donated £5 towards the lobby of February 4 at the Houses of Parliament on the pensions increase. They promised a delegation from the factory would go on the lobby.

## Brodsworth miners strike

MINERS at Brodsworth colliery, a highly mechanised pit in Yorkshire, returned to work on Wednesday after a two-day stoppage over a pay dispute.

Involving the 2,800 men who work there, the strike was called at a meeting on Sunday, January 31. 7,000 tons a day are reported to be lost.

The stoppage was to continue until there was a meeting with the Yorkshire Area National Union of Miners over the Meco-Moor (cutting machine) rate and wages bonus for men involved in a strike last week.

There was a dispute last week when pit officials claimed that the men were operating signals which stopped the conveyor belt. A number of men on the night shift were ordered out of the pit at 2 and 3 a.m. with no transport home.

## 'Education'

From page 1

sense of service to the community' (though why such children should feel any sense of service to a society that treats them in this way is not explained).

Neither will introducing a house system to develop a 'sense of responsibility', nor training more social workers, do any good.

In fact, research shows that these allegedly 'below-average' pupils are concerned with the real problems of life and seek some purpose in it.

But they reject the middle-class values of most teachers, especially as these values suggest that they ought to be ashamed of their parents and background.

What these educational 'experts' cannot understand is that young people from these 'problem families' can be involved in real struggles over their conditions of life and through such struggles can make tremendous personal developments.

Many such youth are involved now in the campaigns of the Young Socialists in industrial towns all over Britain.

Many of them are proving that, despite being written off as useless at school, they can work in an organised, disciplined way in the struggle for socialism—without which none of the problems of education can be solved.

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## Northern Ireland young workers face MPs on pensions increase

# Apprentices strike in support of pensions lobby

Willesden's rebel councillors receive support on housing issue

FOUR weeks ago Labour-controlled Willesden Council agreed in committee to spend £210,000 on 'Pharomond', a block of 36 luxury flats in Willesden Lane.

The flats are being let by a private agency on behalf of the council at around £10 a week.

This, of course, does nothing to solve the desperate problem of the 5,000 families on the housing list, some of whom have been waiting more than 30 years for accommodation.

The decision to buy the flats has caused a big rift in the Labour group on the council. Three Labour councillors opposed the plan, 13 abstained and only 11 joined with eight Tories to carry it through.

The three 'rebel councillors' are receiving strong support from the Ward Labour Parties. Last week Stonebridge Ward passed a resolution which 'strongly deplored' the action of the council in buying the flats for selected tenants and regarded it as a 'serious and retrograde step'.

### 'Done before'

Confirming that two opposing motions on this issue will come before the next West Willesden General Management Committee, Labour agent Andrew Campbell blithely stated: 'To talk of a split is absolute rubbish, it is merely a division of opinion.'

Condoning this 'Tory' plan, Alderman Reg Freeson, leader of the council and Labour MP said: '... it has been done before by other Labour councils.'

Labour rank and filers and trade unionists should demand a reversal of this Tory policy and call for the nationalization of land, the building and building supplies industries, the banks and the finance houses, as the only way to solve the chronic housing problem.

Tenants demand repairs and rebate

PREFAB tenants on the Westcroft Estate, Cricklewood, London, are demanding that the Tory-controlled Hampstead Borough Council carry out necessary repairs and decoration and that people who do their own painting and repairs should be given a rebate on rent.

Mr. J. Hill, a railwayman, who is secretary of the Tenants' Association, told The Newsletter that the council 'have not put a drop of paint on the prefabs since the Coronation'.

Most people have had to do their own repairs. The council ignored complaints until the tenants organised and publicised their case in local papers.

### CHANGES

Last week the tenants held a packed meeting to which Labour councillors Mr. Bonafont and Mrs. Campbell were invited. They promised that when the area comes under the new Labour-controlled borough of Camden in April 'there will be fundamental changes for the benefit of all tenants over the whole area'.

But the assistant secretary of the Tenants' Association said they would continue campaigning to make sure their demands were won.

The Hampstead Council has spent large sums of money on cultural schemes whilst neglecting the needs of people in working-class districts who have some of the worst housing conditions in London: copings fell from roofs in Iverson Road last week and there are complaints about rats infesting houses in Abbey Road.

Council rents in Hampstead are among the highest in London.

By our Irish Correspondent

APPRENTICE draughtsmen in Harland and Wolff, the Belfast shipyard, walked out on strike at 2 p.m. on Tuesday in support of a lobby of Stormont, the Parliament of Northern Ireland.

Organised by the Northern Ireland Young Socialists, the lobby was part of the campaign for the backdating of the old age pensions increase.

Not one of the 35 apprentices was left in work and most of them joined the busload of old age pensioners and Young Socialists in lobbying MPs.

This linking of the two most exploited sections of the working class produced a highly successful lobby.

MPs were battered with facts on the rising cost of living, which has meant severe hardships to so many.

The four Northern Ireland Labour MPs, W. Boyd, T. Boyd, D. Bleakley and V. Simpson agreed to send a telegram to Prime Minister Wilson demanding immediate payment of the pensions increase and the backdating of the increases to November 1.

This was also agreed to by Fitt and Diamond the Republican Labour MPs.

Success of the lobby was a tremendous smack in the eye for all those fake lefts who said, 'don't rock the boat' and those Communist Party shop stewards in Short and Harland, Belfast's aircraft factory.

### Refused support

Despite the fact that the apprentices committee in the firm had passed support for the lobby on February 4 at Westminster, the stewards absolutely refused to distribute collecting sheets.

The Amalgamated Engineering Union-Convenor is reported to have said that the lobby was 'going against the Labour government' when refusing his support.

In reply, the Young Socialists issued a special leaflet to all the workers pointing out that the Labour government had gone against the working class and that it was necessary to fight back.

The Belfast Communist Party

has trailed behind the apprentices' movement and this move to discourage support for the lobby was a futile and belated attempt to smash the growing strength of the young workers' movement.

The action taken by Harland and Wolff apprentice draughtsmen reflects the growing class consciousness of the youth on which a real leadership can be built.

## Loscoe family win one concession

FOR many weeks now The Newsletter has been given interviews by the Cresswell family of Loscoe, exposing the terrible housing conditions of the village and how they affect the lives and health of this and many other families.

Now, at last, it appears that the Cresswells will get some attention from local officials.

Their daughter Susan, who has been unable to attend school for three months because she has been ill, was called to an education committee medical examination and she is being sent to a convalescent home for two weeks.

But these two weeks out of a whole year can only be a temporary measure in solving the difficulties of the Cresswell family. In order to ensure that their health does not suffer continuously, they need to be rehoused in decent homes.

The Featherstone Council has offered some old age pensioners flats for £2 a week. All the old people have had to refuse because they cannot afford the rent. Houses have been offered—at a rent of £3, which is far too much to pay from the allowance of an old person.

With the help of the National Assistance Board the Cresswell family could afford to move into one of these houses, but they have not been offered one.

ALL over the country busmen in many companies are becoming more and more frustrated over the delay in negotiations between their trade union leaders and the employers over rises in pay. Many busmen are taking militant strike action, demanding that something be done about their low wages. Here The Newsletter presents reports from various areas in the country where such stoppages have taken place.

MIDLAND 'RED' bus workers gave a magnificent reply last week-end to threats from their employers and pleas from Transport and General Workers' Union officials to call off their third unofficial Saturday strike.

Two days earlier Mr. D. M. Sinclair (general manager) had issued a threat that busmen taking part in the Saturday strikes were breaking the terms and conditions of their employment and were prejudicing its continuity. Notices to this effect were put up in all the company's garages.

The same day union leaders appealed to bus workers to call off the strikes pending the outcome of conciliation talks at the Ministry of Labour.

The emptiness of the company's threat must have been obvious to all bus workers.

Because of poor wage rates the Midland 'Red' is chronically short of bus crews. The possibility of the company being in a position to sack anything up to 5,000 workers, and then to find trained drivers and conductors to take their places at short notice in an area of generally high employment like the Midlands, was too absurd to be taken seriously

# Mounting anger from busmen over wage negotiations delay

By NEWSLETTER REPORTERS

even for a moment.

Bus workers demonstrated their contempt for such tactics by coming out in more solid and extensive support of the strike than on the previous Saturday. Thirty out of 34 garages joined in the strike. 4,472 workers out of just over 5,000 came out in support; 1,555 buses out of 1,786 were off the roads.

At a packed delegate meeting at Sutton Coldfield on the previous Wednesday, attended by bus workers from 26 of the company's 34 garages, there was a unanimous vote to continue to strike every Saturday until a satisfactory offer was made for better pay and working conditions.

The meeting also sent a telegram to the trade union side of the National Council for the Omnibus Industry demanding that it did not accept anything other than a substantial increase in wages.

Midland 'Red' busmen are striking in support of a demand for a substantial pay rise, a 40-hour week, sickness and bonus payments and a holiday bonus. They have indignantly rejected the company's offer of 8s. 6d. a week rise in settlement of all claims.

Saturday's strike was supported by Digbeth garage, Birmingham, the largest of the company's garages, which the week before had worked as usual throughout the day of the strike.

On the Thursday a mass meeting at Digbeth carried a resolution that the garage support the strike for the two ensuing Saturdays.

Mr. A. E. Turner, secretary of the garage committee, said the committee was under strong pressure from the rank and file to join the strike. He stressed

that London busmen got pay amounting to 53s. a week more than Midland 'Red' workers.

There is to be a mass meeting of all Midland 'Red' crews at the Civic Hall, Digbeth, on February 7, when an impressive display of solidarity is expected in support of the fight for a long overdue improvement in these workers' pay and conditions.

During the week there were confused statements by union officials to the effect that a ban on overtime would be more effective than Saturday strikes.

These were made by Harry Urwin, TGWU Midlands chief and A. J. Burrows, chairman of the Digbeth garage committee who admitted that he did not agree with the unofficial strike.

Bus workers should not let these things damage the solidarity of their strike action.

Money was found out of striking busmen's own pockets for petrol for an unofficial taxi service to get nurses to work at Oldbury, Stombridge and Sutton Coldfield. One bus only left Bearwood, Birmingham, garage—to take visitors to Romsley Hill Hospital. The driver is giving the pay for this journey to union funds.

LEEDS busmen are now preparing militant action over the national demand for a substantial increase in pay, a reduction in the 42-hour week to 40 hours and the introduction of a bonus scheme based on the number of passengers carried.

After an official meeting of the

Transport and General Workers' Union on Sunday, January 31, over 300 men attended an unofficial meeting and decided on a one-day strike on Saturday, February 5. They also moved an immediate ban on overtime.

A union official has opposed this action and the men have been accused by Alderman John Rafferty, Labour Chairman of the Transport Committee, of 'unofficial guerrilla warfare'.

The busmen, however, are sick of the long, drawn-out official negotiations which are getting nowhere.

An overtime ban operated by workers of the West Yorkshire Road Car Company has spread from Leeds and York to Harrogate.

Workers of the Yorkshire Traction Company, which has its headquarters in Barnsley, are also operating an overtime ban.

IN LEICESTER the failure of the Transport and General Workers' Union leaders to declare the bus strike official is deeply resented by the busmen.

Claims by the union officials that 'the only reason the union does not call an official strike is because we appreciate the effect this would have on the public' is a feeble attempt to evade responsibility.

The unofficial strike last Saturday affected at least a million people in the Midlands.

Strikers know that they have a very strong case and are on their guard against any attempt by the union leaders to sell-out.

A busman in one of the

# Industrial Newsletter

## Sheffield engineers angry attack on package deal

OVER 300 Sheffield engineering workers noisily disapproved of John Boyd's attempts to sell them the package deal at a meeting in the City Hall last Friday night.

'Johnny' Boyd, as he was introduced by George Caborn, President of the Amalgamated Engineering Union District Committee and a Communist Party member, spoke at length of the 'benefits' that would come from the package deal.

'They would,' he said, 'be able to establish the 40-hour week, the weekly basic wage of skilled men would go up by 12s. a year for the next 3 years, and in addition there would be two increases of 5s. over the period and two extra days' holiday.'

(This meant that by January 1968 the basic minimum wage for a skilled man would be the princely sum of £12 17s.)

### NO RISE NOW

But as angry workers were quick to point out during question time, most Sheffield workers received above the basic minimum rate now and so would only receive 10s. in the next 3 years, in exchange for guarantees of increased efficiency—in other words more work by less men.

But those who came out best, went on Boyd, were the apprentices. By July 3, 1967, apprentices at 15 would be getting £1 0s. 4d. extra and at 20 45s. extra. What he did not say was that apprentices were demanding a rise of over £2 at 15 NOW in order to be able to manage, not in nearly 3 years time.

Boyd continued by saying that he had to 'confess that the deal had its negative aspects' and that it did mean a degree of restraint!

Boyd then came clean and said: 'We would have to

bring in either a wage freeze policy with attending unemployment or we would have to expand out of our difficulties.'

In other words the workers must go short in order to help the bosses in an efficiency drive to increase their exports and solve their balance of payments crisis—not 'ours' Brother Boyd.

### ALTERNATIVE

But as Leyton shows, the working class are not going to accept such policies. This reaction, which can also be seen in the growing anger of engineering workers against the package deal and the income policy of the Labour government can only mean anything if a socialist alternative is fought for and an alternative leadership built.

Militant stewards and convenors stood up one after the other and showed Boyd exactly how the package deal tied them down, but no resolution of rejection of the deal was put to the meeting—no national campaign was started from Sheffield aiming for the support of all engineering workers against the deal—no vote of no confidence on the leadership which negotiated the deal—no demand for nationalization of the engineering industry—in fact, no politics at all.

Only one speaker, a young engineering worker, tried to show how this deal related to the Labour government and how it had to be fought, and he was snapped at and humiliated by the chairman who kept referring to him as 'sonny' and finally told him to sit down as they did not want a political speech.

IN SOUTH WALES on Saturday, January 30, 7,000 busworkers employed by seven South Wales private bus companies staged a one-day strike in protest against the employers' rejection of their claim for higher wages, a 40-hour week and a sick pay scheme.

Members of the Transport and General Workers' Union, National Union of General and Municipal Workers and the National Union of Railwaymen, employed by Western Welsh, Red and White, Neath and Cardiff Luxury Coaches, United Welsh, South Wales Transport, Rhondda Transport and Thomas Brothers came out on strike and affected the whole of south and west Wales.

The busmen want parity with workers on London Transport's country services. This would increase the basic wage of drivers from £11 to £13 6s.

The strike, which was called by the South Wales and Border Counties Busworkers' Council, representing members of all three unions met on Monday and voted unanimously to strike again this Saturday.

As well as vicious press attacks from the employers, the busworkers have seen their union organisers making public attacks on the strike.

Mr. F. Tyrell, a full-time official of the TGWU, is reported to have criticised the busmen for 'holding a gun at the head of the employers' during the course of negotiations.

ESSEX—In protest against the offer of 8s. 6d. increase made to provincial busmen, workers from Essex staged a strike on Monday.

Included in the stoppage was the central depot at Chelmsford.