

# The Newsletter

WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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THIS WEEK

PRICES AND  
INCOMES BILL  
ANALYSED ON  
PAGE TWO

HULL DOCKERS'  
STATEMENT ON  
PAGE FOUR

## The next step

- One-day stoppage
- Lobby of Parliament on April 27

Statement by Lambeth Trades Council

THE publication last week of the Bill introducing legislation against the trade unions has proved the successful January 26 demonstration and lobby organised by the Lambeth Trades Council to have been timely and correct. It gives the lie to all those who claimed they did not believe the government would bring this legislation forward.

The right-wing members of the Trades Union Congress who have voted in support of this Bill are the same people who withdrew TUC recognition of the Trades Council. Now it is clear that they did this for one reason only—to try to prevent any organised opposition to this anti-trade union law.

Now is the time for the whole of the working class to mobilise its strength to defeat the Bill. We regret that some working-class organisations did not join in the January 26 campaign and some, notably the Communist Party, actively opposed it.

We reject any attempt to split the working class. We believe that unity in action is more important than factional differences. The Lambeth Trades Council joins with all those fighting against the legislation and will support the lobby called by the London Joint Sites Committee and others on March 1.

But it will take more than the usual lobbies of parliament to defeat this vicious class legislation. Only by mobilising the full strength of the working class can we prevent it becoming law.

The Trades Council therefore calls for a national one-day stoppage of work, combined with a massive and powerful march and lobby of parliament in London on Wednesday, April 27.

We call on all members of the labour and trade union movement to campaign to make April 27 show the determination of the working class to defend its rights. Local demonstrations and lobbies of Labour MPs, demanding that they vote against this legislation, must be organised immediately, leading up to the biggest demonstration ever of working-class unity.

The calling of a General Election may cause the march and lobby to be postponed until the new parliament, but during the election campaign all trade unionists must demand an unequivocal undertaking by Labour candidates that they will join their constituents in the fight to defeat this Bill.

January 26 was an indication of the strength of the working class. It was just a beginning. Make April 27 the next step in a campaign in which a united working class will succeed in throwing out the right-wing leadership and its Tory policies.

## WHY THE NEWSLETTER SAYS:

# VOTE LABOUR ON MARCH 31

by THE EDITOR

### The Newsletter

Saturday, March 5, 1966

### Some facts about the CP lobby

THE 'Daily Worker', in its reporting of the lobby of parliament last Tuesday, does the labour movement a great dis-service.

Its leading article of Wednesday, March 2, claims that nearly 2,000 marched and that there were 4,000 on the lobby. We only wish that this were so, since the more trade unionists who oppose Brown's anti-trade-union legislation the better.

The liberal 'Guardian' reports that 200 lobbied. Both of these reports are downright lies.

Not more than 800 marched and certainly not more than 800 lobbied. Included in that figure was a contingent of 80 from the Young Socialists to whom the police were called by the Stalinist stewards.

It appears that the only difference between the 'Daily Worker' and 'Guardian' reporters is that one saw four times as many people as were there, whereas the other saw four times less.

At the Caxton Hall, the organisers of the lobby booked the main hall which holds 600. They had to cancel their 5.30 p.m. report-back meeting, because only a handful turned up.

When the main report-back meeting was held at 7.30 p.m. not more than 350 to 400 attended at any one time. What happened to the 4,000? Simply nothing, they just were not there in the first place.

The 'Daily Worker' claims that the lobby represented three-quarters of a million people—Stalinist rubbish. Apart from three building sites, most of the shop stewards and others were selected or appointed without any mass meetings.

The 'Worker', of course, failed to report the disgraceful treatment of the Young Socialists by Communist Party stewards who called the police to have them removed, just because they were carrying Young Socialist banners. The policy of the Communist Party was that no political banners should be carried on the march. This shows the opportunist type of campaign they intend running against the legislation.

The fight against the legislation, we repeat, is a political fight and can only be waged under Marxist political leadership. In order to placate the fake-left MPs, the Communist Party wants to keep politics out of the campaign. This means that it will be defeated from the start.

The Communist Party official who called in the police against the Young Socialists, said over the loudspeaker van that it was 'in the interest of the police' to throw the Young Socialists out.

That does not surprise us. Long ago the Communist Party ceased to be a revolutionary force. Its leaders are today a left cover for the right wing of the Labour Party. As such, when it comes to a showdown they will betray the struggle against the legislation. That is the main lesson from the lobby.

AS the value of the pound slides slowly downwards, and the international bankers tighten their economic grip on the throat of the Labour government, Harold Wilson has declared a General Election for March 31.

Days before the announcement was made, the government published the text of the anti-trade-union legislation. This was an obvious concession to Wall Street and their agents, the Gnomes of Zurich. With an adverse balance of payments figure for January, the fate of the pound hangs in the balance. In order to economically tide them over the Election, Wilson published the Bill to keep the bankers quiet.

But no one should be under any illusions about these manoeuvres.

If Wilson wins the Election and continues with his present policy, the Tory bankers and businessmen have nothing to fear. The only people who really frighten them are the British working class who are now experiencing the bankruptcy of Labour policies in practice.

Once they break loose from such policies and take the road to independent working-class action, nothing can stop them in their efforts to achieve socialism.

### Real issue

This is the real issue which the forthcoming General Election poses for the Marxist movement.

For the past 18 months the working class has had a real taste of what right-wing Labour policies really mean.

Immediately after the October Election in 1964 they learned that it was not their votes which were deciding the policies of the government but the demands of the international bankers.

As a result the old age pensioners had to wait for their miserable increase for four bitter winter months during which time many of them died from malnutrition. The cost of living has sky-rocketed to an all-time high. Mortgage rates are up, rents are up, rates are up, the cost of transport is up.

### Students discuss Labour history

SEVENTY students from universities all over Britain attended a school in London last week-end on the theme: 'The Historical Roots of Labour's Crisis'.

The school was organised by the University of London Marxist Society.

The discussion was opened by a contribution from Cliff Slaughter, editor of the 'Fourth International' and Central Committee Member of the Socialist Labour League, on 'Social Democracy in Britain'.

He stressed the importance of seeing the history of the British labour movement in its international context and opposed empiricist methods of looking at history.

The latter point was the subject of the next paper, 'Empiricism and the Labour Movement', by Ian McAlman, of Oxford. He paid particular attention to the current discussion on this question in 'New Left Review'.

Geoff Pilling's paper on the question of the 'labour aristocracy' led to a lively discussion. (Continued page 4, col. 6)

Electricity charges are up and the price of coal is going up.

During the same period the profits of the Tory businessmen have never been higher. Property speculation is rampant. At the beginning of January 1966 the big five banks announced record profits, mainly from the higher interest rates which the Labour government introduced.

As Wilson encourages more and more profits, so he is forced to take action against wages. In the last instance, increased profits can only be achieved by reducing wages. Under a capitalist economy you cannot have profits and wages rising at the same time.

Hence one of the main reasons for the anti-trade union Bill is to re-pay the international bankers for their loans with a high rate of interest whilst providing the Tory businessmen with bigger and bigger profits.

### Experience

We emphatically believe that the working class must continue to test out the experiences of a Labour government. The more they stay in power, the more they will be exposed.

We say to all Labour voters today:

'You don't believe us when we say they are traitors. All right, let us go through the experience together.'

The Newsletter maintains that the General Election policy of the Labour government should be:

- Nationalization of all the basic industries, including the banks, without compensation to their present owners.
- Freedom for all colonial peoples, withdraw British troops from overseas.
- An end to the war in Vietnam. No more support for U.S. President L. B. Johnson's criminal massacre of the Vietnamese people fighting for their independence. No support for the H-bomb war policy of American imperialism against the USSR, China and Eastern Europe.
- Withdraw the anti-trade-Bill.

We ask you to fight with us for these demands on the Labour leaders, so that you can appreciate their record of betrayal. Then we ask you to join with us in the building of a real socialist leadership.

That is why together with you we are voting Labour on March 31.

## YS ATTACKED ON CP LOBBY BY STEWARDS

Newsletter Reporter

FISTS flew as stewards, aided by police, attempted to drag banners and throw 80 Young Socialists off Tuesday's march and lobby of parliament. The demonstration—against anti-trade-union legislation—had been called by four workers' committees and fully supported by the Communist Party and 'Daily Worker'.

Restricted to a mere 800 marchers—not the 2,000 claimed by the 'Daily Worker'—the demonstration went from London Wall in the City of London to Strand, then moved on to parliament.

Most of the marchers were from London building sites and docks and an engineering factory with a sprinkling of delegates from Scotland, Merseyside, Yorkshire and the Midlands.

How different was this whole affair compared with the magnificent, colourful, 1,500-strong, national lobby of January 26, called by the Lambeth Trades Council.

Most of the marchers walked silent and bannerless while the youth with their red banners kept up a constant stream of slogan-shouting against the government's anti-union Bill.

This was what the organisers had feared.

As the marchers congregated, stewards immediately surrounded the YS contingents, saying they could not march with 'political slogans'. They continually harassed the youth and representatives of the Lambeth Trades Council (who were welcomed in the 'Daily Worker' the same morning), while the contingents lined up, finally pushing them to the rear of the march.

### SCUFFLE

As the procession moved off, a chief steward asked the police to split the youth off from the march.

Some of the 40 stewards moved in. The police moved in. The YS marched on.

There was a scuffle and the stewards lashed out at banner carriers.

But still the youth marched on until the attackers gave up.

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE of the Young Socialists are organising local campaigns amongst trade unionists to lobby prospective Labour MPs as to where they stand on the legislation.

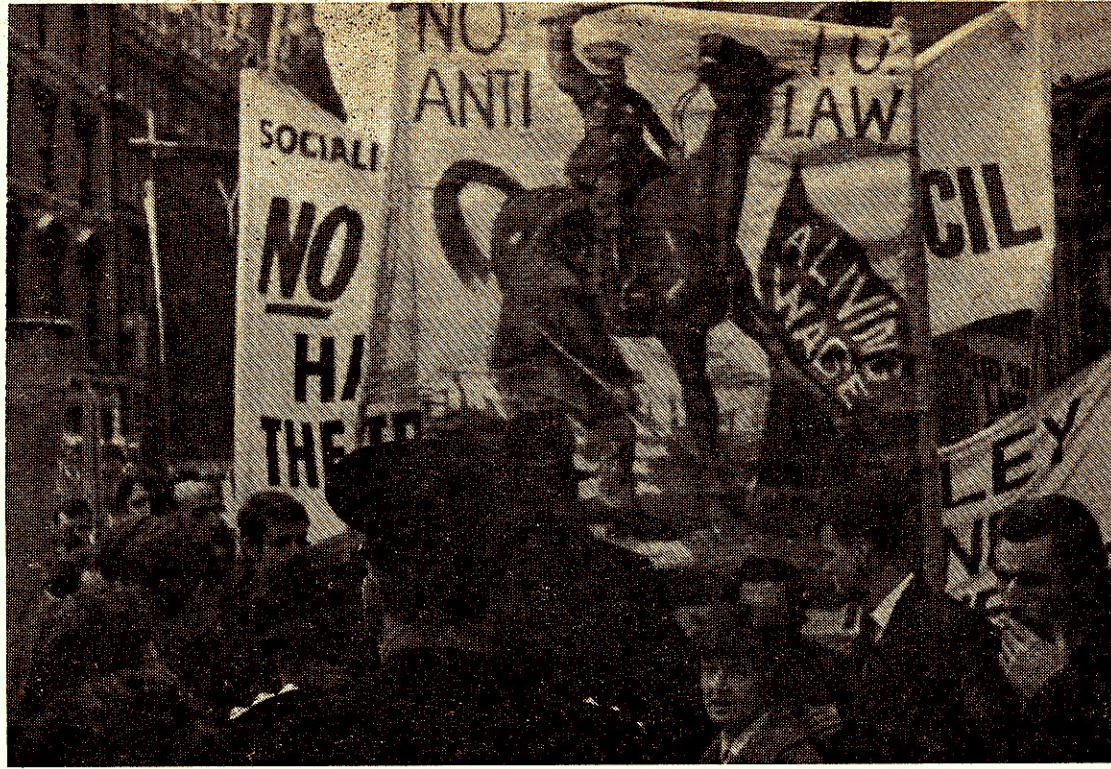
The Committee announce that there will be a special session of the Morecambe conference of the Young Socialists devoted to discussing plans on how to defeat the Bill. Adult trade unionists will be able to participate in this discussion.

The Morecambe Conference of the Young Socialists can become the rallying centre for national organisation of all those against the anti-trade union legislation.

During the march many workers took up the slogans of the YS.

In fact the stewards who so willingly aided the police—to the detriment of the demonstration—lost control of their 'peaceful' march.

Told this by a police officer outside parliament, a steward said: 'Oh yes, it's these Young Socialists you know' (!)—the same youth who had been proclaiming their unity with those militant workers honestly campaigning for trade union rights.



Police move in—on the instructions of Stalinist stewards—to push Young Socialists off Tuesday's demonstration. They didn't succeed.

### Anti-union Bill, housing, docks, Vietnam, etc.

## YS conference leads on all major issues

By Ann Gray

YOUNG Socialists lead into their sixth annual conference at Morecambe on April 2 and 3 with a big attack on the Labour government for its 'shameful' policy to legislate against the British trade unions on the question of wages.

### Deep concern

A large number of Young Socialist branches have submitted resolutions calling for a continuation of the campaign against such legislation, and they most certainly reflect the deep concern of the working-class youth at the attacks made on trade union organisation.

In particular the Lambeth Trades Council—now suspended by the Trades Union Congress—is given a lot of support for the

give their support to any action taken by the trade union movement in the future.

Housing is another issue which has prompted a big response from the Young Socialists. Walton YS reaffirms its support for tenants in their fight against the vicious rent increases being imposed on them, 'in many cases by Labour councils'.

### Nationalize banks

'These rent increases are caused by high interest rates', says the resolution, 'and the private ownership of the land and the building industry.'

'... trade unionists must unite with tenants to demand the nationalization of the banks, finance companies, land and building industry.'

(Continued page 4, col. 6)

stand it made in first organising a demonstration and lobby to Parliament on January 26. Young Socialists such as those in **Strafford** and **Leyton** demand: 'The re-instatement of the Lambeth Trades Council. We consider the suppression of this council by the Trades Union Congress is an act of betrayal of the rank-and-file workers'.

### Support action

Since the resolutions were first published, the Labour government gave the Bill on incomes its first reading in the House of Commons and from the feeling expressed in the resolutions the Young Socialists are certain to



**A STEP** towards capitalist state control of all wages; that is the guts of the Prices and Incomes Bill presented to the House of Commons on February 24.

According to the press, some members treated the formal reading of the Bill as 'a mildly humorous occasion' ('The Guardian', February 25). This is because the impending General Election means the Bill, in its present form, will be scrapped.

However, the Labour Cabinet, if they win the Election, are firmly resolved to implement the anti-trade union legislation. The Tories, at their Party Conference, have equally announced their intention to pass new laws of this kind. It was no 'humorous occasion'.

Brown's Bill was the logical outcome of years of work towards an 'incomes policy'. While hypocritical hopes of a 'voluntary' wage freeze have been expressed, there have been continuous threats of legal enactments to put wages under state control. Mr. Ray Gunter has been the principal spokesman.

In the so-called 'national interest', the independence of trade unions and of the working class would be abolished.

In the last year, earnings increased about five times as much as national production. The employers, and their representatives in both the Tory Party and the Labour government, are preparing a two-edged reply to this strength of the working class.

**State control**

On the one hand a tough Budget and new financial cuts will create unemployment and cut purchasing power; on the other, definite steps, beginning with the Prices and Incomes Bill, are taken towards state control of wages.

Look first at what the Bill actually provides for:

The Bill gives the government (Labour or Tory) the power to demand notification of any wage claim or any wage settlement or price increase. Furthermore, the government will have power to forbid implementation of any increase for up to four months. Failure to comply with these requirements will make offenders liable to fines of £50-£500.

In more detail, this means precisely that:

1. Any wage claim (local, district, or national) must be notified to the appropriate Minister within seven days. Failure to do so will mean a fine of up to £50.

2. Any settlement agreed for a wage increase must be notified to the Minister within seven days.

The agreed wage increase must not be paid until the Minister gives permission. He has 30 days to either grant permission, or refer the increase to the Prices and Incomes Board. If the increase is paid during this 30 days, then the employer is liable to a fine of up to £500, except for business corporations, whose fine may be unlimited. The same penalty applies for the three months during which the Prices and Incomes Board considers the settlement.

3. Here is the most threatening part of the Bill: If any person takes, or threatens to take, any action, and in particular any action by way of taking part, or persuading others to take part, in a strike, with a view to compel, induce or influence any employer to implement an award or settlement, he shall be liable:

- (a) on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £100, and
- (b) on conviction on indictment to a fine which, if the offender is not a body corporate, shall not exceed £500.

**£500 fine**

Mr. George Woodcock, General Secretary of the TUC, has suggested that the Bill as it stands removes most of the doubts of the trade unions about the legislation.

And yet the government takes powers, if the Bill goes through, to fine up to £500 anyone striking

**THE PRICES AND INCOMES BILL**



Brown's Bill the outcome of years of work

or encouraging a strike, or any other action, directed at making an employer pay out an agreed increase or improvement in conditions.

As 'The Guardian' noted, imprisonment 'could be the consequence of the non-payment of a fine, just as under any other law of the land'.

The draft Bill gives the impression of imposing harsher fines on business corporations than on workers. However, trade unionists will not be misled by that clumsy device—they have a good idea just what the likelihood is of employers rushing impatiently to grant increases before the Board decides!

**'Responsible' Bill**

The fact is, as 'The Times' summarised the penal clauses, 'an individual worker, shop steward, or union official is liable to as big a fine as a trade union or an employers' association'.

The press has attempted to present the Bill as 'responsible' and even harmless. Thus the 'liberal' 'Guardian', in its editorial, says:

'All the Government is asking is that, if necessary, it should be able to insist on a period of delay before wage or price increases are put into effect in order that these can be examined from the standpoint of

the public interest. . . . If, at the end of the day (four months), employers or unions disagree with the Board's verdict, they will still be free to disregard it. This is surely reasonable. It is no more than industry has already been asked to accept voluntarily.'

The last sentence is remarkable! If it is 'no more' than what has been asked for voluntarily, why take government power to enforce it?

This is like saying universal conscription is only asking men to do 'no more' than they were free to do before voluntarily—join up!

There is clearly more to it. Brown presented this Bill, and he will press again if successful in the election, because the capitalists whom he serves demand it. They insisted on it in 1965 before making renewed loans to the Labour government. It is not a question of what is reasonable.

**Corporate state**

Trade unionists should consider above all the long-term plan of the capitalists behind this Bill. It is a try-on. Brown knew when he presented it that the General Election would necessitate a later presentation of an amended version.

What the Bill says, as it stands, is serious enough, but it is a definite step towards cor-

porate state control of unions and wages. The present draft is not enough to satisfy the employers. As 'The Times' said on February 25:

'The merit of the Bill is that it has the power to hold up a wage rise. Its defects are that it has no power to enforce such a delay permanently, were that desirable.'

**Go further**

By bringing the Bill forward, Brown and Wilson hope to swing the middle class vote in the General Election on March 31, because the middle classes will accept the promise of a 'tough' line against the unions.

Once returned at the polls, the Labour leaders, unless challenged and defeated by working-class resistance and the struggle for a new leadership, will go further than this Bill.

Ever since the Trades Union Congress of September 1965, the TUC leaders have been pretending to have doubts about the legislation, finally giving their open support. But Brown knows he must 'box clever' with them, because of pressure from the rank and file, expressed most clearly in the response to the Lobby of January 26.

The defects noted by 'The Times' are only temporary, to avoid a frontal battle with the

**Government serves employers' interests**

ANALYSIS BY CLIFF SLAUGHTER



Continuous threats of legal enactments from Gunter

unions before the election. Thus Brown and Wilson are juggling to keep the working class anti-Tory vote, as well as the 'liberal' middle class, just as they did at Hull, while at the same time, pressing ahead firmly with the employers' interests.

tant trade unionists, following the lead of the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists, is to expose this fraud in a mighty struggle to defeat the legislation and build a new leadership which can unite the working class on socialist policies of nationalization.

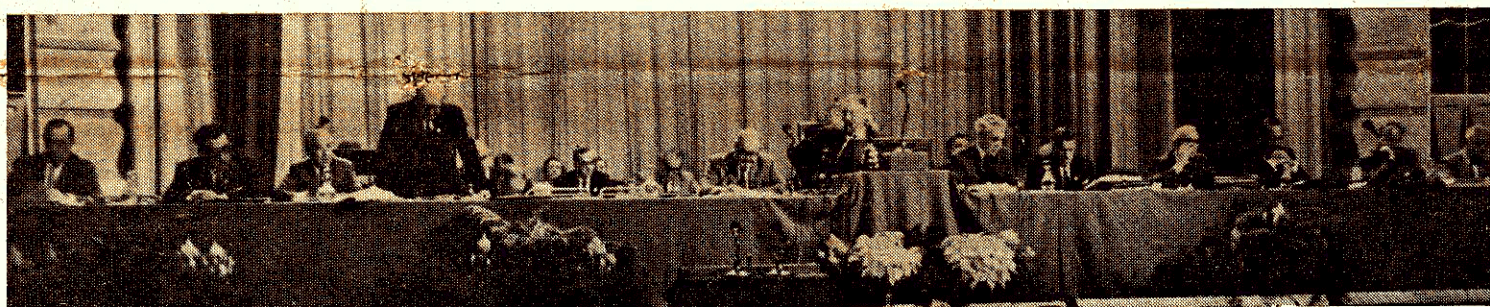
**READ**

**How the Labour Party began**

by BRIAN PEARCE

Price 6d.

Obtainable from  
186a Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4



Since last year's TUC, union leaders have finally decided to support Bill

**After the Taff Vale judgement**

**The case of Walter Osborne**

The second of two articles dealing with two court cases at the beginning of this century which threatened the freedom of the trade unions at a time when they were fighting to put more and more representatives into Parliament



Osborne

WITH the Taff Vale judgement, the employers had committed a major blunder, despite the fact that temporary advantages had been secured.

By pampering to the short-term interests of a waning section of their class (railway and mine owners), they had endangered the long-term interests of their class as a whole.

**CLEAR RESPONSE**

A new political awareness now gripped the minds of millions of workers. The Taff Vale judgement posed deep political questions to the trade unions and, as we have seen, brought a clear political response—the foundation of an independent working-class party to fight for and defend unions in parliament.

This was a grave threat to the entire political system carefully

elaborated by the capitalists for centuries. As a result, within the labour movement the rift between the Labour Representation Committee and the old guard bureaucrats like Richard Bell, Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (ASRS) grew wider.

He continued to appear on Liberal Party platforms even after the formation of the Labour Representation Committee, claiming that his candidature at Derby had been endorsed beforehand and that he owed the Committee no allegiance.

**BREAK CALL**

The Independent Labour Party group in the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, which had sponsored the historical Weymouth resolution, now demanded a complete break from the Liberals, but Bell called for support for Liberal candidates in by-elections and attacked the 'isolationism' of Kier Hardie.

At a by-election in Norwich he refused a request of the local union branch to speak on behalf of the Labour candidate. Bell's claim that the Labour candidate would 'split' the trade union vote received wide publicity in the capitalist press and, when the Liberals won, Bell sent a telegram which read 'Great triumph for progress. Hearty congratulations'.

As a result, the Labour Representation Committee called for members running on their ticket to 'strictly abstain from identifying themselves with any section

of the Liberal or Conservative Party'.

The decision to raise a levy for payment of Labour MPs enabled the unions to enforce discipline on their parliamentary representatives.

A Labour Representation Committee deputation, led by Ramsay MacDonald, was received by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants to discuss Bell's political activities in March 1904. When Bell still refused to accept the Representation Committee's constitution, a compromise was reached.

However, the effects of the Taff Vale decision brought new Labour victories in by-elections, including two new ASRS MPs, and Bell's position was more untenable.

After Labour's success in 1906, the union demanded all its MPs abide by the Labour Party constitution.

**COLLABORATION**

Bell now found himself in the opposite lobby to the other union MPs, notably on the question of hours worked by railwaymen.

Knowing that he would never be endorsed again, he went further in his collaboration with the Liberals.

At the union conference in 1908, he wanted his case discussed publicly so that his 'statesmanlike' activities would receive wide publicity.

But the union held the inquiry in camera.

On December 31, 1909, Bell resigned. His Derby seat was

taken in the following year by J. H. Thomas, who later became secretary of the railwaymen's union.

While Bell was fighting a rearguard action against the emerging Labour Party, Walter V. Osborne tackled the threat to the capitalist system posed by such a Party in quite another way.

Walthamstow branch of the ASRS was one of the few which expressed regret at Bell's departure. Osborne was its secretary.

He had started work as a porter on the railways in 1890 and had been a member of the Social Democratic Federation. By 1900, he was head porter at Clapton, and a member of the Walthamstow Liberal Association!

**OBLIGATORY LEVY**

What brought Osborne into action was the question of the political levy.

In 1901, his union had instituted a 1s. a year voluntary levy for parliamentary representation. Some of this levy was to go to the Labour Representation Committee. This brought no opposition.

However, the vicious Taff Vale decision forced the union to make this levy obligatory, and ensured that all candidates were endorsed by the Labour Representation Committee.

At past conferences, the Walthamstow branch had stood out in support of Bell's line of conciliation with the Liberals. This is important to remember for there are often attempts by

bourgeois historians to separate the Taff Vale and Osborne cases and present the latter as an issue of 'individual conscience' isolated from the class struggle.

What is remarkable about Osborne is the apparent indifference he showed to the Taff Vale judgement.

Consequently, the executive committee of the union received a long letter of protest from Osborne's branch in March 1905.

**OSBORNE'S APPEAL**

Osborne wrote to Bell mentioning he would appeal to the courts to question the legality of the political levy—the same courts that had made the Taff Vale case judgement!

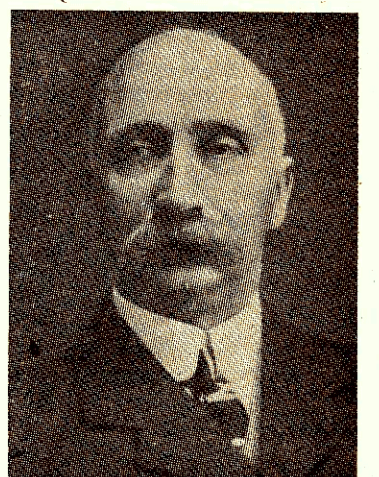
The union sought counsel's opinion. Sir Edward Clarke (Conservative) and Sir Robert Reid (Liberal), both eminent lawyers, found nothing illegal about the levy providing the union had agreed to it at an annual general meeting.

Accordingly the October AGM endorsed a resolution to meet the cost of providing parliamentary representation out of union contributions.

At this AGM, Bell came to Osborne's aid by warning that rules could only be changed every three years—a point Osborne used in the courts later.

Another attempt by Osborne to get the rule disallowed by the Registrar of Friendly Societies was frustrated. The Registrar used the rules in order.

Osborne might have given up at that point had it not been for a change in the attitude of



Bell: supported Osborne's action

the ruling class towards the 'alarming threat' from the Labour Party.

The election of 1906 resulted in 29 Labour MPs—largely a reaction to the Taff Vale judgement. The capitalist press now began to step up the attack.

In January 1906, the 'Daily Mail' noted:

'... these working men by the simple device of collecting one penny per month per man from their trade unions, place themselves on so firm a financial basis that they are able to meet the representatives of capital on even ground at the polls. . . . Their present success will be found to prove the beginning of a movement that will require much watching by capitalists of all conditions.'

How frankly they wrote in those days when the majority of workers were illiterate!

The 'Daily Express' took up the fight from there. Sir Alexander Henderson, chairman of the

**SLL**  
**pamphlet**  
**on anti-**  
**union law**

FOLLOWING the January 26 lobby of parliament, many union branches, building sites and factories will be discussing the next steps in the campaign.

The new Socialist Labour League pamphlet, 'No Laws Against Trade Unions', by G. Healy, is an important contribution to their discussions.

In a direct and straightforward way, the pamphlet states the dangers in store for trade unionists if the Labour government's proposals go through. It quotes from the Labour Party document of 1963, which already advocated legal restrictions on wages.

The most important point made in the pamphlet is that, while it is a Labour government that brings in the Bill, it could be a Tory government which uses it. The present situation prepares the way for a split in the movement, perhaps on the lines of 1931.

The pamphlet discusses the kind of campaign needed to defeat legislation and the political leadership necessary for this. It takes up the questions of loyalty to the Labour government, the role of the Labour 'lefts' and the attitude of the Communist Party.

Finally it calls for readers to support the building of the Socialist Labour League and to consider joining it.

The pamphlet should be sold widely throughout the unions and read by all workers who want to fight back against the employers' attacks.

**No Laws Against Trade Unions**  
by G. Healy Price 3d  
This should be read with:  
**A Socialist Policy for the Crisis**  
Price 3d  
They can be ordered together for 8d (including postage) from: The Socialist Labour League, 186a Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4



**WORLD NEWS ROUND-UP**



**Bold stand by Sinyavsky at trial**

By NEWSLETTER REPORTER

ONE of the two Soviet writers jailed in the recently world-publicised trial, Andrei Sinyavsky, made a bold stand in his defence statement to the court.

The route through which the Soviet authorities alleged Sinyavsky and fellow 'criminal' Yuli Daniel passed their manuscripts to be published in the West, has not been blocked. Soon after the trial this route supplied what is said to be Sinyavsky's address to the court.

It was printed in full in 'Il Giorno', a Milan centre-left newspaper.

One of his most telling points is quoted in 'The Guardian' of February 25.

It runs as follows:

'The court thinks it has in me a particularly subtle writer, one who hates not only Jews but Russians as well. But where, it should ask, could such monsters as we have sprung from? From somewhere else. Evidently from America. We must have been dropped by parachute, Daniel and I, and we have been demolishing everything.'

It appears that Sinyavsky expected to be called to give his statement to the court on the Monday of the trial, but, without warning, was told to speak on Saturday. He was surprised and unprepared.

He said that the prosecution had built a wall of deafness around him which no truth could penetrate.

The basis of his 'defence' was that many lines had been taken out of context from his writings to prove that 'I hate motherhood, my own countrymen, and Jews and that I am a fascist'.

The state prosecutor, he said, was not interested in Sinyavsky's creative ideas and would not explain them.

But, he went on, he would like to explain some fundamental things about literature.

'A word is not an act, it is only a word.'

'The author does not identify

himself with his main character. 'The artistic image has a conventional nature.'

Then he made the statement quoted earlier which lays the responsibility for his 'crime' of criticising the Soviet Union fairly and squarely at the feet of the bureaucracy.

His statement also said:

'The State Prosecutor has said "Even the foreign press says that these works are anti-Soviet". I think that this is a strange way to show the court's objectivity. If even the foreign press says this, then are we obliged to do the same? The word "even" sticks in my mind.'

Returning to his main argument again he said:

'Dozens of times my phrase "Because there were no more prisons, we have built new prisons" has been cited here. But next to that sentence I have written "Communism is a luminous goal", but this you have not wanted to read out ...'

He claimed that other writers who had criticised the Soviet Union by satire had not been arraigned before the courts because their works had been printed at home.

It was held against him that he had connections abroad.

'The prosecutor has even brought up some napkins which a French woman gave me for my baby son to show that behind my honest facade lurks a stealthy nature.' (1)



Kwame Nkrumah

**'REDEEMER' OVERTHROWN**

*Weaknesses of 'Third World' leaders revealed yet again*

By John Crawford

ONE of the most significant features of the fall of Nkrumah is the complete absence of the slightest protest from the Ghanaian workers and peasants. The victory for imperialism did not provoke a single demonstration in support of the Osagyefo.

It underlines the ending of an era of political illusion. For 20 years the idea was abroad that imperialism could be defeated gradually. Independence and self-government of ex-colonial territories like the Gold Coast would produce regimes which would move steadily to the left.

**'Third World' collapse**

According to this theory, an international Marxist leadership, preparing the workers both in the metropolitan and the colonial countries to take the power, was unnecessary.

But in the past few months left nationalist governments have collapsed in every corner of the 'third world'. From Indonesia to Algeria the complete inability of this type of movement to struggle against imperialism has been clearly shown.

Nkrumah was typical of the nationalist leaders who emerged from the mass struggles which swept Asia, South America and especially Africa at the end of the Second World War. A wave of strikes and demonstrations shook the Gold Coast in 1947-1948.

The Labour government ordered the arrest of Nkrumah and other leaders of the United Gold Coast Convention and sent a commission of inquiry.

Its report and the unrepresentative constitutional committee it

recommended led to further protests.

In the course of these events the United Gold Coast Convention split and Nkrumah formed his more radical Convention People's Party.

He denounced the Coussey Constitution as a fraud. But when, in 1950, the first elections were held, the Convention People's Party contested them and won overwhelmingly. Nkrumah was immediately released from jail and invited to form a Cabinet.

**Non-encroachment**

The imperialists and their 'Labour' government realised that Nkrumah would head off the mass movement. Despite his demagogic speeches, he would not go beyond certain bounds in encroaching upon imperialist investments.

By 1953, he was able to convince the Tory Colonial Secretary, Lyttleton, that complete self-government could be safely granted to the Convention People's Party administration.

By 1956, an independent Ghana could be set up under the benevolent eyes of both Prince Philip and vice-President of America Richard Nixon.

In this period, leaders like Nkrumah could be allowed considerable leeway by world capitalism. He was able to become a major figure in the 'progressive' circles of the 'non-aligned' powers.

Manoeuvring between the British and Americans on the one hand and the Russians and

Chinese on the other, he managed to squeeze loans and grants from all sides.

Meanwhile his regime became increasingly dictatorial, based on a nauseating worship of Nkrumah the Redeemer.

His attempts at theoretical work reflected his precarious position between the workers and peasants and their exploiters. His book 'Conscientism' presented an incredible mish-mash of ideas drawn eclectically from sources ranging from Stalinism to symbolic logic.

This gibberish was hailed as a work of genius, especially by the Stalinists. On another occasion, he is reported to have described himself as 'a Marxist and a non-demonstrational Christian'.

Nkrumah showed his real role

in world politics at the time of the Congo rebellion.

Let no one forget that it was he above all who persuaded Lumumba to accept Russian advice and allow United Nations forces to enter the Congo.

**Nkrumah UN force**

Nkrumah cannot evade his responsibility for Lumumba's brutal murder by the stooges of imperialism. It is ironical that the same army that Nkrumah dispatched as part of the UN force was later responsible for his downfall.

We must also recall his actions against the workers at the time of the strike in protest at the economy measures of 1961.

The type of regime of which Nkrumah's was an example was

based on the conditions of the post-war boom. In the case of Ghana it was bound up with the world price of cocoa, which soared to unprecedented heights during the Korean war and after.

The changed economic situation and, in particular, the near collapse of the cocoa market last year, drastically narrowed the room to manoeuvre between the class forces.

British capital, which had, with some grumbling, managed to co-exist with Nkrumah for so long, began to find his taxation policies unbearable. The U.S. authorities were increasingly irritated by his relations with Moscow and, even worse, with Peking.

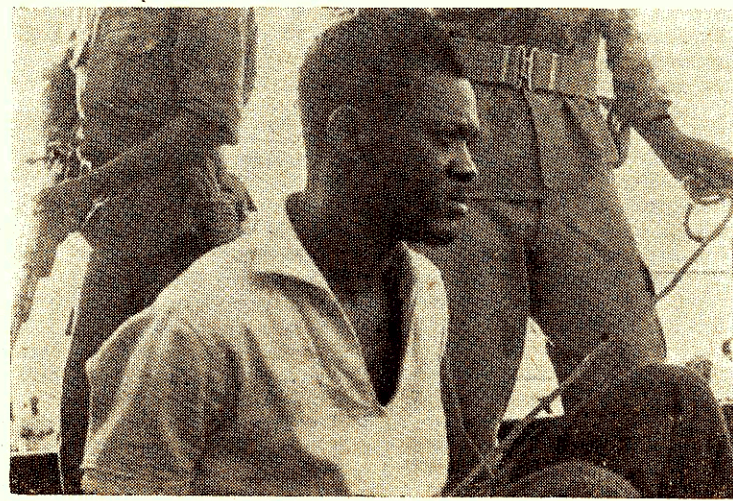
**Army rule**

In ways which will no doubt become clearer in the next few months, the imperialists decided he must go. As in half-a-dozen other 'independent' African states, army leaders took over the government.

Nkrumah and his like are as incapable of leading struggles which can smash imperialism as the German social-democrats were of fighting Hitler. In each case, their defeat was a defeat for the working class caused by their refusal to base themselves on its international power.

But the defeat in Ghana need not be decisive. The political maturity of the African labour movement can be very rapid.

Marxist leadership in West Africa can lead to a renewal of struggles against imperialism on a far higher plane than ever before.



Nkrumah cannot evade his responsibility for the brutal murder of Lumumba (above). It was he who persuaded Lumumba to allow UN forces into the Congo.

**More about Che Guevara**

By MICHAEL BANDA

LIKE Banquo's ghost, the mystery of Che Guevara continues to haunt Fidel Castro and his Stalinist henchmen.

Soon (in April) Cuba will be observing (?) the first anniversary of Guevara's 'disappearance' and the world will be waiting to hear what new 'explanation' the 'lider Maximo' will offer to placate the angry curiosity of Cuba's supporters.

This curiosity is not confined to those who support the Cuban revolution alone. Now the capitalist press, too, is beginning to ask some embarrassing questions about Guevara.

**DOUBTS RAISED**

Raymond Cartier, a prominent bourgeois journalist, in an article on Peking and Castro in the latest issue of 'Paris Match' not only raises doubts about the existence of Guevara but links his disappearance with Castro's split with Peking.

Cartier comments:

'The disappearance of Che Guevara, second man in the regime, was like the fading of a white mist at sunrise. He came from a journey of five months which, inaugurated by a speech at the United Nations, had taken him to Algeria, to Ghana, to Guinea, to the Congo, to Dahomey, to Egypt, to Dar-es-Salaam, then to China, then again to many countries in Africa. He went back to Havana on 15th April, 1965. He was last seen on 21st April. Then he was not seen again. ...'

For five months Castro remained silent on Guevara. At first he tried to dismiss speculation with an air of mystification, but when curiosity turned to scepticism Castro decided to act.

'On September 28th, 5,000 chosen people were quickly called to the Chaplin Theatre in Havana. Castro read out an undated letter which, he said, had been sent to him by

Guevara he didn't say when ... The touching letter and its strange publication raised doubts. Four more months passed without the presence of Che Guevara being known in any part of the world. ... In Washington the CIA is convinced that he did not leave Cuba—and that he is dead. ...'

**NOT PERSONAL**

The purging of Guevara was not a personal vendetta. It was the product of a struggle over the path which the Cuban revolution was to traverse. Castro wanted to abandon industrialisation in favour of agriculture, i.e., perpetuating Cuba's dependence on the world market and relying on the peasantry.

Guevara wanted a policy of 'state capitalism', i.e., a policy of vigorous industrialisation, less reliance on the Soviet bureaucracy, more independent and radical foreign policy and closer alignment with China.

Castro, relying on the Moscow Stalinists around Blas Roca and Rodriguez, and drawing support from the rural masses who had gained most from the revolution, won out.

Joan Robinson, the Fabian economist and right-wing apologist, in a recent article in

'Monthly Review', endorses Castro's policy and confirms the change:

'The grand strategy that has been adopted is to continue to develop sugar, and to push ahead with cattle-raising and fruit (as well as increasing home food production), thus building up foreign earnings from whoever will buy, using the proceeds for import-saving industrial investments, and so getting the spiral of development going. This is a sharp break with conceptions hitherto current in the socialist world.' (My emphasis)

There is basically no difference between Castro's economic policies and Wilson's in Britain.

**WORKERS' PRIVATION**

The upshot of this policy is increased privation for the working class. According to official statistics there is 11 per cent urban unemployment in Cuba today. A sad commentary on the first Declaration of Havana which reads:

'the right of the worker to the fruit of his labour; ... the right of the young to work. ...'

To return to Cartier, however, Guevara's disappearance, according to him, was not the end but the beginning of a new chapter of repression:



J. H. Thomas took over union secretaryship from Bell.

Great Central Railway, who had schemes for amalgamation and economising on labour costs, also had a strong financial interest in the 'Daily Express'.

This paper began a campaign on September 16, 1906, against the 'fraud of socialism'. It looked for 'honest trade unionists' and printed letters from 'sane and practical working men' who felt that their sickness benefits conditional upon paying a levy to a party they did not support.

Bell even granted the paper an interview which was publicised as an example of 'sober, solid trade unionism', and his plea for the independence of trade unions from all political parties was given great prominence though he found no difficulty in working very closely with Liberals and Tories.

**FINANCIAL AID**

Osborne then appealed for financial support in the 'Daily Express' on September 16, 1906. He made it clear to 'Express' readers that his object was legal action against his union and he claimed that the government had a duty to protect the political freedom of all subjects.

These financial appeals were repeated in the September 21 and 27 editions of the paper. By the end of the month, 'sufficient funds were forthcoming' for him to

begin his test case.

The writ was duly issued to the executive committee of the union in December 1907. It contested the legality of the political levy.

When the case opened, counsel for the prosecution, Mr. Jenkins, QC, took up two main points.

Firstly, he said that the rules could only be revised every third year, and secondly, that the funds were being handed over to a body what was 'frankly socialistic'.

Jenkins maintained that a union may have subscriptions for furthering its objects.

'What I say is they cannot use the funds for the purpose of furthering socialism.'

The judge, however, noted that the Registrar of Friendly Societies had found the rules in order and held that the case did not raise a question of principle, but merely a technical difference of political opinion as to which party would further the union's interests best. Osborne was ordered to pay costs.

It was probably the decision of the Miners' Federation to affiliate to the Labour Representation Committee in 1908 that led Osborne to appeal on November 12, 1908.

**'ULTRA VIRES'**

This time he raised questions of constitutional principle. He maintained that the levy was 'ultra vires' (beyond the powers) of the union and defended the 'constitutional rights of the ordinary citizen'.

He claimed it was contrary to the interests of the state if a parliamentary representative was to be a mouthpiece of those who paid him. Osborne won his appeal on these grounds.

It was a class decision. The union knew well that both the capitalist parties received large secret donations from industry and so they appealed to the Lords that the decision was unjust on the grounds of equity.

Railway companies, after all, paid huge salaries to their directors and there were 21 railway directors in parliament at the time.

Similarly, no one had question-

ed the legality of unions financing Lib-Lab MPs in the past.

The appeal came before the Lords on July 22, 1909 and on December 21 the union lost the case.

In the year that followed, dozens of injunctions were granted against unions to prevent their paying election expenses and MPs' salaries.

This serious blow at the working class and the trade union movement was no mean achievement for Osborne, a 23s. a week porter. Many in the labour movement suspected his financial backing. Certainly, the 'Daily Express' publicity was of great assistance to Osborne.

This onslaught on the trade unions had taken place under a Liberal government. Thus, when the elections came in 1910, Lloyd George's demagogic and much-vaunted reforms made little impression on workers.

**LABOUR BALANCE**

The Liberals' huge majority was wiped out and Labour and the Irish Nationalists held the balance in Parliament.

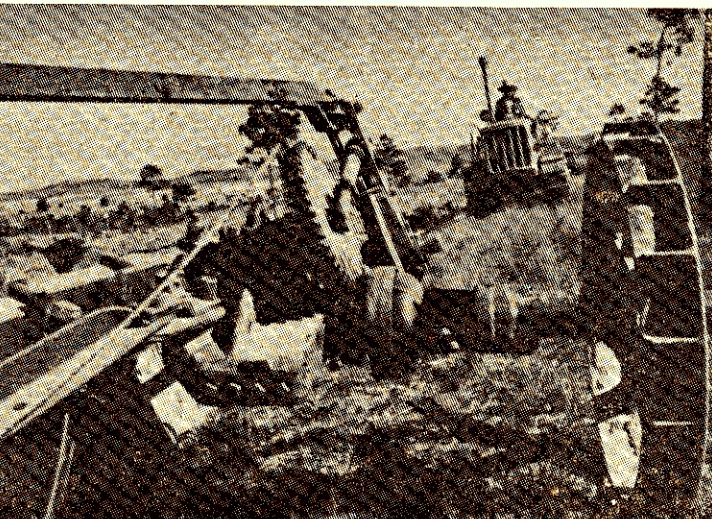
Against a background of unprecedented mass strikes, the Labour group was able to secure the Trade Union Act in 1913, which permitted political funds. But the ruling class was careful first of all to secure the allegiance of all MPs in the state by introducing a Bill to cover payment of MPs from Treasury funds. Thus the warning of Osborne was heeded.

The Labour Party was born out of struggles. The state power of the capitalists was used belatedly to strangle it at birth. Its historic task was the defence of the trade union movement.

When Brown and Wilson introduced legislation against the unions they strike a blow at the very basis of the Labour Party.

Only a party based on the class struggles as the basis of all political life can analyse this contradictory development.

Only with the conscious leadership of a Marxist party can the working class prevent the most disastrous betrayal in the coming months.



The purging of Guevara was connected with Castro's insistence on abandoning industrialisation in favour of agriculture.

Marx once said that the social development of a country could be judged by the status of woman in that country. Joan Robinson in 'Monthly Review' says of Cuba:

'The rate of growth of population is alarmingly high, and women in the country are oppressed with family cares; but birth control is only mildly encouraged and abortion is kept illegal (mainly with an eye to the "image" of socialism in Catholic America). Communist ideology, in spite of the militia girls, does not seem to have made much dent in the "male chauvinism" characteristic of Latin culture.'



## EXCLUSIVE STATEMENT

# WHY HULL DOCKERS CALL ONE-DAY STRIKES

THE Unofficial Portworkers' Committee in Hull has given The Newsletter the following exclusive statement concerning their recent actions in the port—one-day stoppages—which have brought a full-scale attack from press, television and the port employers.

### 1. We are fighting for a living wage.

We are holding a series of one-day stoppages in Hull because we are not getting a living wage. A Hull docker averages £12 per week for 40 hours.

The Port Employers' Association says our average is £18 1s. 3d., but this figure is misleading. They get this figure by only taking into account the best three months of the year—and they don't mention that even then a docker would have to work 16-20 hours' overtime to approach it.

Shipping clerks earn £3 18s. 4d. a day plus 15s. for general cargo and £1 for timber; foremen get £4 3s. 2d. a day plus average piece-work earnings; tallymen and lightermen get £3 2s. 6d. a day; but the ordinary docker gets only £2 4s. 4d. a day.

### 2. There is no incentive in the present piece-work rates.

In the 19 years from 1947 to 1966, the basic rate has risen by 133 per cent but piecework rates by only 78 per cent. This does not keep pace with the increase in the cost of living.

The tonnage demanded for piece-work payments at present means that there is no incentive left in these rates. Since 1947 many commodities have had no increase in piece rates yet the tonnage required has increased enormously.

To give some examples: in 1947, the piece-work tonnage for wool was 102 tons; in 1966 it is 133 tons; the piece-work tonnage for continental eggs was 70 tons in 1947, 95 tons in 1966; for continental bacon 90 tons in 1947, 133 tons in 1966; for butter barrels, 91 tons in 1947, 117 tons in 1966. These are but a few of the many commodities which have had no increase since 1947. The other rate increases which we have had are but a scratch on the surface.

### 3. We have tried constitutional channels for the last 15 months without satisfaction.

Fifteen months ago a lay conciliation committee, consisting of representatives from the Transport and General Workers' Union branches, was set up, but few rates have been raised.

All the employers do is avoid the issue and make negotiations harder. They have used delaying tactics to avoid putting rates up. They have missed meetings, causing them to be abandoned.

At the meeting at Bevin House (T&GWU headquarters) on February 18 it was stated that prior to the action taken under the leadership of this Unofficial Portworkers' Committee, the lay conciliation committee had in fact ground to a halt.

It was also stated that it is only since this committee came into being and this action began that the employers have started moving again. We know that one employer has said that if piece-work rates were put up he would not get the overtime he wants.

Ours is the only action that could bring any results in this situation.

All the major improvements in this port since 1947 have been gained by unofficial actions. We have had to fight for everything we've got. We are sick of the employers' false promises and disgusted with the union.

### 4. We repudiate the press and T.V. allegations of violence and intimidation.

We on this committee named ourselves straight away. We are not 'faceless men'. We are well known to the Hull dockers. There has never been any intimidation in this dispute and we defy the press and television to bring forward any evidence. In fact, intimidation would not be necessary because this committee has the following of every docker in Hull. We are all fighting for the same thing.

This is the best cross-section we have ever had on a committee in Hull. We have young and

old workers, we have equal representation of 'Blue' and 'White' union members,\* and we have representatives of every section of dock work—including warehousemen and lightermen.

### 5. The Hull dockers are not to blame for delays in wool traffic.

Mr. D. G. Price, Director of the National Wool Textile Export Corporation, has blamed Hull dockers for the slowness of wool traffic.

These delays are due to the bad organisation of the Hull docks, and lack of transport. They are not the fault of the Hull docker.

Hull is the fastest port in England for handling wool. What often happens is that employers will send men dinting when lorries are waiting and there is work available. They do this because they prefer using their regular gangs to taking men from the pool.

One exporter has threatened to take legal action, but he will have to sue 4,000 men, because that is the support we have.

### 6. Hull dockers feel bitter about the visit to Hull of the national T&GWU officials O'Leary and Jones.

When the secretary of the T&GWU docks section, Tim O'Leary, and acting assistant general secretary, Jack Jones, visited Hull, they aroused a bitter

### Unofficial Portworkers' Committee explains

and aggressive reaction from the Hull dockers.

O'Leary told the strike committee chairman that he was concerned about non-unionism on the dock. He said the membership of the 'Blue' Union was frozen and he asked if this committee would get the 'nons' into a union.

We say this is wrong. A man should be able to join the union of his choice. That is the unanimous opinion of both 'Blue' and 'White' men on this committee. This strike is not an inter-union dispute.

Jones said there was a lot to be desired in the port of Hull—but he is doing nothing about it.

These leaders are not in touch with the problems of the Hull docker.

### 7. The Hull dockers will decide.

We will call a mass meeting next week in which we will report developments. We have had 100 per cent backing and the future action is in the hands of the men.

We know the Hull dockers have no confidence in those local union officials who are held in such high regard by the employers. These men are selected over the heads of the dockers who have no part in the election of these officials.

\* 'Blue' and 'White' refers to the colour of the membership cards of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers and the Transport and General Workers' Union, respectively.

## CROYDON

### Threat to members of Labour Party in rent fight

By Newsletter Reporter

LABOUR Party members in South Croydon who are campaigning against the local Tory council's rent increases have been told by right wingers that there may be moves to inquire into their membership.

At the same time the north-west Croydon Labour Party has demanded a fight against the rent increases and last Friday they held a meeting on a local estate.

The rents campaign has been distorted in the past week by right wingers in the Labour Party and on the council.

Labour councillors have been busy at meetings telling tenants that the Rents Action Committee (which was first set up by Labour Party members and tenants in the Waddon Ward) is merely using the rents struggle for political purposes in order to advance the socialist policy of nationalization of the land, banks and building industry.

At a meeting of tenants in Waddon last Wednesday (February 23), a resolution was carried unanimously calling for all tenants and trade unionists to 'play their full part in the Labour Party and fight against any attempt to expel those campaigning against the rent increases'.

#### Councillors must fight

On Saturday (February 26), in the driving rain, 50 tenants, trade unionists, Labour Party members and Young Socialists marched through Croydon town centre with banners, shouting slogans demanding 'Tory Councillors—Out', 'Labour Councillors—Must Fight!'

Tenants were angry and disappointed when from the gallery of the town hall on Monday night they saw Labour councillors voting for an amendment to the Tory plan (to increase rents by amounts up to 25s. 9d.) to raise rents by a half now and review them again in six months time.

Not one Labour councillor wanted to reject the Party whip and stand by the tenants' struggle. One woman, a mother of eight, went home saying she never thought she would see the day when Labour would actually do such a thing to working-class families.

Another tenant from Upper Norwood said he had to work

70 hours a week now to enable him to live and pay his present £3 12s. rent. He could not believe that Labour councillors would support the increases.

The role of the Communist Party in Croydon has been to call for 'pressure on the Tories'. They have called the break with the Labour councillors 'adventurist'.

#### CPers concealed

On Saturday's demonstration, Communist Party members who turned up drove the whole length of the march concealed in a van. They did not even bother to sell the 'Daily Worker'.

Young Socialists, on the other hand, called a meeting after the lobby of the council on Monday, and leading members of the Action Committee, as well as Labour Party Young Socialists, were present and took part in the discussion.

Members of the Young Socialists were able to explain that the experience of the tenants was the same as their experience in the struggle between 1960 and 1965 for socialist policies against the right wing.

They said that if even one Labour councillor had refused to vote with the rest on the rent question, he could have rallied tenants in every part of the borough and workers in the factories in a clear and united campaign against the rent increases.

The main thing was to stand firm, refuse to give up the fight, and constantly recruit youth, tenants and trade unionists on clear socialist policies.

Everybody present was invited to attend the Morecambe conference of the YS to discuss the policies and strategy for defeating the Labour traitors and building a real working-class socialist party.

### RETURN AT LUCAS

THE 15,000 workers at the Lucas-CAV factory in Fazakerley, Liverpool, returned to work last Monday. They had been locked out by the Lucas management for refusing to work piece-work nearly three weeks before.

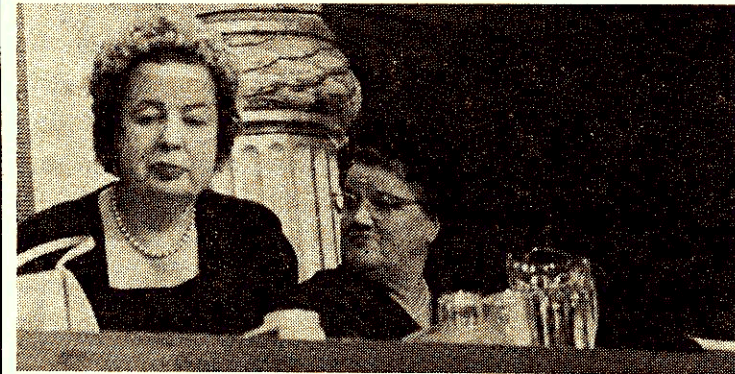
At a mass meeting on Friday (February 25) the workers accepted a recommendation of the Amalgamated Engineering Union district officials by a small majority.

The officials recommended a return to work on a piece-work basis and declared they would negotiate a guaranteed minimum equivalent to £14 10s. for shift work.

There is to be an investigation into the piece-work system by a committee of a representative from the Employers' Federation and a representative from the union.

## Campaign against anti-union Bill

### Manns' stewards to lobby Alice Bacon in Leeds



THE Manns' Shop Stewards Committee (Leeds) has decided to lobby Miss Alice Bacon, MP for south-east Leeds, on March 5, on the question of legislation against the trade unions. They have also agreed to

support a demonstration on the same question called by the Young Socialists on March 12, when there will be a large march through Leeds with workers from Leeds, Sheffield and possibly Hull joining the youth.

### We would be first hit

— says

Morris steward

LAST Friday (February 25) at Cowley Community Centre in Oxford, a meeting of trade unionists from the Amalgamated Engineering Union, Transport and General Workers' Union and Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers, Young Socialists and students unanimously passed a resolution calling for a continuation of the campaign against anti-trade union legislation.

George Myers, editor of the student journal 'Oxford Left', said that it was significant that a Labour government elected by 12 million workers was legislating against the interests of these workers. This showed the severity of the crisis faced by British capitalism and by those in the Labour government who support it.

Johnny Power, a shop steward from the Morris car factory, Cowley, said that militants like himself, fighting for the interests of the workers they represented, would be the first to be hit by this legislation. The unofficial strikes they led would be restricted, and the welfare of every worker attacked.

#### Workers disgusted

He said that many of the Oxford workers in the January 26 lobby were disgusted that 'left' MPs refused to commit themselves to vote against the legislation, and saw that the only way forward now was to build an alternative leadership for the working class. In this fight the Young Socialists had shown themselves to be playing a vitally important role.

It was agreed that problems like sick pay and redundancy payments could only really be solved when the workers themselves owned industry.

The need now was to make a political fight for alternative policies in the working-class movement. This was why it was so important to gain support among all trade unionists, workers, and youth for the Morecambe conference of the Young Socialists on April 2.

It was finally resolved to work in all union branches and other organisations to obtain support for the lobby of parliament called by the Lambeth Trades Council for April 27.

A.C.

## PAVITT WILL VOTE FOR LAW

By Newsletter Reporter

LAURIE PAVITT, MP for Willesden, told Young Socialist and trade unionist lobbyists on Friday (February 18) that he would vote for anti-union legislation.

On a previous lobby the MP had told a delegation he would not decide which way he would vote until trade union MPs had met to discuss the proposed legislation.

Faced with the decision of Transport and General Workers' Union MPs to oppose the law, Pavitt had to give a definite answer.

He would vote for any measure which the Wilson government brought in, he said, even if it were against the workers who elected him, rather than bring down the government.

#### Only 10 minutes

As a Young Socialist pointed out: 'If Mr. Wilson puts this law through, he's going to bring the Labour government down anyway.'

Although a previous delegation from the Communist Party had spent 20 minutes discussing Vietnam with Mr. Pavitt—to their mutual satisfaction—10 minutes was considered sufficient for the Young Socialists to raise the important question of anti-trade union legislation.

The self-appointed chairman of the meeting, a Willesden Labour Party official, declared it closed, and other officials threatened police action against the lobbyists.

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## Registration fight in dry dock

WITH the Geddes Report on shipbuilding and the ship repair report due out by the end of March, the bosses are already stiffening their resistance to the demands of the workers in the industry.

Cardiff dry dock owners have shown their hand by their recent refusal to agree to changes in the registration scheme proposed by the Transport and General Workers' Union dry dockers' Port Committee.

Under the present system, the majority of dry dockers are registered and have first claim to work before non-union labour is employed.

But a small number of union members are classed as unregistered dry dockers, and have second claim to work.

There has long been opposition to this division among members.

Recently the Port Committee demanded full registration for unregistered men. This would mean greater security for the present unregistered workers, and increase unity within the union.

#### REDUNDANCY

The management turned down the demand on the grounds that it would increase employment at a time when they want it reduced.

This shows clearly enough what the employers' plans hold in store, yet full-time union officials have entered talks with the employers on changing the dry docks' working practices . . . changes which the management have openly admitted will mean redundancy.

This casts doubt on the seriousness of full-time union officials who gave verbal support for the full registration demand.

Union members on the dry docks must continue the campaign for full registration. The management proposals for new working practices will be fully reported at a later date in The Newsletter.

## APPRENTICES STRIKE AGAINST WAGE CUT

MORE than 100 apprentices at Robb's shipbuilding engineers, Leith, Edinburgh, decided this week to strike against a proposal by the management to reduce their wage by 9s. a week. This cut is a result of the 'package deal' agreed on last year by the engineering and shipbuilding unions.

Up to now apprentices at Robb's have been paid above the national minimum weekly rate. From March 7 the management want to bring the wages in line with the national minimum.

The strike committee is demanding an increase of 4s. on the

## ASW branch opposes union law

THE EALING branch of the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers unanimously passed a resolution against the government's anti-union law on Wednesday. They will send it to the AGM of the Society. It calls on the Society to take what action it thinks fit in defence of its members' interests.

## Jenkins might abstain from vote on Bill

By Newsletter Reporter

HUGH JENKINS, MP for Putney, refused to commit himself on whether he would vote against the government's anti-union Bill when re-lobbied by Young Socialists and trade unionists last Friday (February 25).

Instead he became very hostile when asked the question. He said he would not commit himself at any time before the vote was taken in Parliament.

Finally, at the end of the meeting, he said he would probably abstain from voting on the Bill.

He refused to call any public meeting to mobilise workers in Putney to fight against this Bill.

#### LOYAL

He was not prepared, he said, to fight against the Labour Party right wing, and even denied that the right wing were controlling the Party.

Jenkins said he would be loyal to the parliamentary Labour Party.

When challenged that this Bill would effect the lives and living standards of millions of workers and was not a 'fruitcake' in which one could like some contents, but not others, he turned on the lobbyists and demanded that they be polite and not insist that he should answer them.