

"A CONSPIRACY" says JOCK HASTON

SOCIALIST APPEAL

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Twopence

CASE REMANDED ANOTHER 3 WEEKS

THE ARREST OF THE THREE COMRADES, ROY TEARSE, HEATON LEE AND ANN KEEN UNDER THE TRADE DISPUTES ACT, IN CONNECTION WITH THE APPRENTICES' STRIKE, HAS BEEN FOLLOWED BY A FURTHER ARREST.

Jock Haston, the General Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist Party, was arrested in Edinburgh while touring the area on behalf of the imprisoned comrades.

The four comrades appeared at the Newcastle City Police Court on April 28th on a charge that "they did conspire, combine, confederate and agree together to act in furtherance of a strike declared by the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act of 1927 to be illegal."

Comrade Haston made a written statement when the warrant was read over to him containing the following three points:

"Firstly, that he voluntarily surrendered as soon as he heard that there was a warrant for him.

Secondly, he denies the charge. Thirdly, he declares it to be a frame-up.

I would like to say that the conspiracy would appear to come from the top. This trial appears to be a case of political victimisation."

No evidence was offered by the police but the accused were remanded in custody until May 18th, or 19th. Despite the fact that Comrade Haston is very ill and that Comrade Ann Keen was arrested just after she had risen from bed after a serious illness and has not fully recovered, bail was refused to all the accused. This in addition to the fact that three of them had already been in custody for nearly 3 weeks. Mr. Gerald Rutledge, the solicitor representing the accused comrades, stated that he had no objection to a

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JOCK HASTON —

Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist Party — speaker, writer and organiser for the party. Joined the labour movement at an early age — member of Y.C.L. at the age of 14. Seaman and steeplejack, he participated in all the struggles of the workers in his union, including the bitter struggles against the P.C.5. Has been an organiser of the Trotskyist movement since 1938.

BROAD DEFENCE COMMITTEE FORMED

THE DEFENCE OF OUR IMPRISONED COMRADES WAS SET ON A SOUND BASIS LAST WEEK WITH THE FORMATION OF THE "ANTI-LABOUR LAWS VICTIMS DEFENCE COMMITTEE".

A great send off for the Defence Committee is expected at a big meeting to be held at the Conway Hall on May 9th. The formation of the Defence Committee will be a big step towards unity of the Left in defence of all militants arrested under the Trade Disputes Act and Regulation 1AA. The formation of the Committee has already met with an enthusiastic reception in all sections of the Left. The campaign about to start will be a real encouragement to thousands of militants threatened under the New Regulations. Local defence committees should be established and where these are already formed, should immediately link up with the national committee.

PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE:

Chairman: J. MAXTON, M.P.
Secretary: P. SASTRY,
(Federation of Indian Associations).

Treasurer: W. G. COVE, M.P.
Rev. R. SORENSON, M.P.
S. SILVERMAN, M.P.
RHYS DAVIES, M.P.
J. McGOVERN, M.P.
FENNER BROCKWAY,
Independent Labour Party.
WALTER PADLEY,
Independent Labour Party.

TED GRANT,
Revolutionary Communist Party.
G. PITTOCK-BUSS,
London Area P.P.U.
BOB TURNER.
DON MCGREGOR,
London Workers' Committee.
M. KAVANAGH,
Freedom Press.
ARTHUR BALLARD,
Common Wealth.
D. BEECH.
D. BALLANTINE.

See Statement of Committee—Page 2

BUDGET—Cost of Living To Increase

BY BOB ALLEN

AFTER REGULATION 1AA, THE BOSSES' DECLARATION OF WAR ON THE MILITANT WORKERS, COMES THE 1943-44 BUDGET, THE SIGNAL FOR OPEN ECONOMIC WAR AGAINST THE WHOLE BRITISH WORKING CLASS.

The speech of Sir John Anderson in introducing the Budget, gives a picture of a capitalist class, defeated economically on a world scale, with an industry lagging far behind modern requirements, desperately searching for a way out, and finding it only at the expense of the working class.

Budgets of the last few years have become the main means whereby the capitalist class as a whole sets out its grand policy year by year.

This Budget, coming towards the end of one phase of World War II, represents the plan of Monopoly Capitalism, expressed through its mouth-piece the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

"THE RUIN THAT ONCE WAS ROME"

The old days of super profits from the colonies and overseas markets are

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RESOLUTIONS OF SUPPORT FROM T.U. BRANCHES

The growing indignation over the arrest of our four comrades can be seen by the resolutions of support which have been passed at trade union branches and by the money which has been coming in from all parts of the country.

The Slough Trades Council passed a resolution protesting against the arrests, condemning the action of Bevin in using the Trade Disputes Act, and calling upon the T.U.C. to launch a national campaign for the repeal of the Act and warning the government against further encroachments on the rights of the workers.

The Slough E.T.U. passed a similar resolution as also did the Merthyr Vale Lodge, largest

miners lodge in South Wales. The Thornton Heath, London Branch of the A.E.U. passed a similar resolution and donated £5 towards the defence of the comrades. The Edmonton Trades Council sent £1 towards the defence of the victims of the Trade Disputes Act. The Glasgow District Committee of the A.E.U. passed a resolution protesting against the arrest of Roy Tearse and condemning the use of the Trade Disputes Act and the introduction of the new regulation 1AA. ...

All supporters and sympathisers should press for resolutions of protest in their branches demanding the release of our comrades and pledging support for the Defence Committee.

London Bus Workers and Soldiers Fraternise

The Government's attempt to bring hatred between the London Bus Strikers and the soldiers, met with complete failure. Instead, there prevailed throughout the strike a spirit of "live and let live" and complete mutual understanding.

The strikers maintained an attitude of friendliness to the soldiers, and attempted to explain, with great success, the reasons which had forced them to take the step of strike action. "We don't blame the soldiers;

they have been forced to do this by the bosses and their officers", was the general attitude. The soldiers, on their part, explained to the bus workers that they could not individually disobey orders, because of the severe penalties under military discipline. But in a thousand ways the soldiers let the bus workers know where their sympathies lay.

One soldier was reported to have said; after three days' work, according to the *News Chronicle*: "I would not do this job for £1 a day." It was reported at another garage that after the days' work, the soldiers pooled all their takings they had collected for fares, and treated the strikers to a sing song in the local pubs and cafes.

The London bus workers are probably the most hard driven of any section of the workers. It is a fact that the heavy traffic and long journeys involved, put an enormous strain upon the physique of both drivers and conductors. Since the outbreak of the war the strain has increased tenfold. Leaders of the busmen have stated that women conductors are taking up three times as

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From the Imprisoned Comrades



Durham Prison,
20.4.44.

Number 1055 Ann Keen
Dear Comrade,

You can't imagine what it was like to see Ted's smiling face on Tuesday. Yesterday was a red letter day. I received about 9 letters as well as a visit.

We are allowed daily newspapers and periodicals—no bound book, because these would have to remain behind in the prison when we go out. I am also allowed to write three letters a day (provided I have the postage stamps) and allowed to receive the same amount per day.

They certainly gave our party some wonderful publicity. The most important step to be taken is the defence. We should manage to put up a good show. Don't worry about another remand, we can take it.

I see there is a strike of busmen in London. I wonder how this happened with the "mystery man" now captured?

All we are praying for now is that we do at least come out for a little bit on bail. I have only seen Heat and Roy once with the lawyer's clerk and may now not see them again before Friday. Jock has fixed it so that we now receive "Times", "Herald", "Telegraph" and "Chronicle". He also sent in some stout and a good dinner a day so we are pretty comfortable for the moment.

I am busy reading "State and Revolution" again. It is wonderful stuff. What a giant Lenin was.

If you don't write I'll know it is because you are too busy. Revolutionary greetings to all comrades.

Ann.

Durham Prison,
18th April, 1944.

Number 5662, Heaton Lee
Dear Comrade,

Your very welcome letter dated 14.4.44 has just arrived. News that so much is being done for us, and particularly that in the execution of this work, no more important work is being hampered, is very good for the morale.

I am confident that you can count on all of us to maintain the high standards that have been set up by all of you. The local lads are looking after us very well and we receive frequent visits. Somehow I don't feel the least bit like a class "martyr". To me all of you are the heroes.

I get plenty of time to read and am thoroughly absorbing Lenin 1914-1917 and Trotsky's "Third International after Lenin." This is the first opportunity I have had in 12 months to get down to some serious study.

I am positive that all of us are capable of maintaining the best traditions of Bolshevism. In the event of the magistrates

still insisting to refuse to grant bail, we will arrange with our legal adviser to apply to a Judge in Chambers. If he refuses it should be obvious to all the world that the "conspiracy" is not our but the state's.

In every respect this fantastic episode has so far had fortunate results. I have had plenty of time to read and have availed myself of every moment. If I do have to stay here on remand I should be able to contribute theoretically to our literature when I am eventually released. Roy looks quite happy and Ann is very bucked by the letters of solidarity.

Fraternal greetings,
Heaton.

Durham Prison,
19.4.44

Number 5688 Roy Tearse
Dear Comrade,

I have just received your letter and hasten to reply. Thanks for the messages of solidarity, etc. You can tell everyone that my spirits are high. I've just received a telegram from Rugby G.M.W.U. stating they are with me. I suppose you heard that Glasgow A.E.U., D.C. passed a resolution of support. I hear also that Barrow is solid. All news is good re the general feeling.

The point that gets me, though, is that it is practically impossible to work out a good defence in prison. I need data, as you know, and haven't got it. However, you and all our friends know that you can rely on me to do my very best—I'm fighting fit. I think I should worry to my dying days if I let the party down. Ask Jock to sift out all the necessary stuff and bring it with him. I have received permission to have relevant documents. I applied for permission to discuss with Heat, but so far we have been kept apart. Send stuff on the Trade Disputes Act.

When we go up on the 28th I suppose the idea is to remand us further. I intend to apply for bail again—it was refused last time on the motion of police who said that I might not show up for the trial and that I may repeat my crime, which would be very undesirable! This, although I haven't been convicted! If we were granted bail it would give us the opportunity of preparing our defence properly. As you will appreciate a lot depends on this. Filing this I will make the best of it. I'm certain I'll do alright, despite the difficulties, and even though a lot of it will have to be spontaneous.

Space makes it necessary to draw to a close. Give everyone my greetings—tell them I feel just the same as usual—only more so, and that, allowing for difficulties, I'll do my very best.

Fraternally,
Roy.

Anti-Labour Laws Victims Defence Committee

c/o 318 Regents Park Road,
London, N.3.

Dear Brother,

Roy Tearse, Ann Keen, Heaton Lee and Jock Haston have been arrested under the Trade Disputes Act of 1927 and are awaiting trial.

The four arrested people are the first victims of this vicious anti-labour Act which the entire Trade Union and Labour movement has repeatedly condemned and demanded its repeal. If the Government is successful in these prosecutions, a precedent will be established whereby a general drive against all militant trade unionists and working class organisations can be made. Already the new Defence Regulation 1AA (most vicious since the Combination Acts) has been promulgated thus further cutting down the liberties of the working people.

The Anti-Labour Laws Victims Defence Committee has been formed for the purpose of:—

Providing legal aid to the four people arrested under the Trade Disputes Act, and to any other working class prisoners who may be arrested under this Act, or under the new Defence Regulations; sustaining the victims and their dependants, and making clear the anti-working class character of the legislation under which they have been charged.

We appeal to all members of working class organisations and to those who stand for the protection of democratic rights, to contribute generously to the fund. Mobilise the entire labour movement to form Local Defence Committees to collect money and to expose the Trade Disputes Act and the new Defence Regulation 1AA. Rally to the aid of the imprisoned people.

Send your donations to:—

V. SASTRY,
Secretary, A.L.L.V.D.C.,
c/o 318 Regents Park Road,
London, N.3.
Phone: FIN. 4398.

POLICY FOR RAIL WORKERS

By SID BIDWELL

Meetings between representatives of the N.U.R., R.C.A., A.S.L.E.&F. and the Railway Companies are going on to consider the claims jointly presented by the Unions for an increase in war wage of 12s. per week, twelve days holiday with pay, and that all war wage advances should be taken into consideration for pension and superannuation purposes. A similar claim is being advanced on behalf of Railway Shopmen who have separate negotiation machinery.

Approximately half a million men and women are affected by the claims. The three Unions now have an agreement to present all major claims together instead of, as in the past, making separate and conflicting demands which have led to friction between the various grades. The joint agreement represents a stride forward and can be conducive to achieving not only one Union but also places an insurmountable barrier in the way of the exploiters of railway labour if wielded correctly. When this appears in print an offer by the Companies may already be public.

It is the feeling of the N.U.R. rank and file who have always stood for industrial unity and many of the sectional union members as well, that in the event of fusion there would be much redundancy at headquarters—many good jobs abolished—and that is why the idea is only faint-heartedly propagated by the N.U.R. bureaucrats and staunchly opposed by the sectional leaders.

Figures reveal that railways are now carrying 60 per cent more traffic than before the war with greatly depleted experienced male staff. Black-out conditions with all its attendant difficulties on train operation has greatly added to the strain on staff concerned.

At the same time revenue, largely made possible by the war-time plight of the nation and the government's rental of the railways, in 1943 reached the all-time record breaking figure of £105½ millions from which £62 millions went to the government. Meanwhile the following wage rates gathered at random are the common lot of the workers: Guards 1st and 2nd years 77/-, Firemen 1st and 2nd years 77/6, Class 4 Shunters (industrial areas) 76/-, Grade 2 Porters (industrial) 73/-, and Checkers (industrial) 79/-. All are inclusive of the total war wage increase viz. 20/6d.

Under these wage rates a bare existence is made possible only by subsidies

in the form of cheap wood and coal where it is obtainable, uniform clothing where and when it is supplied, and cheap travel if it is required. Also it is freely admitted that a living would be impossible but for extensive overtime and Sunday work. A 7 day week predominates amongst the operating staffs in particular. Such a situation is bound to have its effect in the toll of sickness, accidents and absenteeism.

The discontent of the workers both with their miserable lot and the "miserable lot" as they call their leaders, is manifesting itself through the National Grade Conferences. But these Conferences are restricted to grade considerations and cannot by themselves build fighting policy and a fighting leadership.

Far too little attention is given by those who desire a changed leadership and policy to Union elections, to the Annual General Meeting which is the governing body, and the work of Branches and D.C.'s. The National Grade Conferences have revolted against the policy of waiting until after the "cessation of hostilities". Assuredly there will be some mighty problems confronting the rail workers after the war if the owners have their way, but the present problems require a war-time solution NOW.

Between the salaries of the N.U.R. officials and the workers a wide chasm exists. The position is all the more disgusting when it is considered that these salaries are made up from the coppers collected from the most exploited section of workers.

In order to get a new leadership expressive of the will of the workers, it is necessary not merely to voice opinions on the job but to get into the Branches, demand the re-election of all officials every two years, and a scaling down of salaries to make them more commensurate with railway wage rates.

The N.U.R. of which I have personal experience, is a hive of job seeking. The most sought after are naturally the most lucrative. If salaries were scaled down, instead of being presented with a long list of candidates for positions, we would get a shortened list of the best comrades desirous of not only lifting themselves from their economic rut but the whole of the workers with them. We would have a lot of the most self-sacrificing comrades fresh from the sweat, rigours and grime of industry with the freshness of rank and file temper. ...

FIGHT THE NEW LAW

(Continued from page 3)

Bevin:

"I did consider this Regulation a long time ago. I thought it would become inevitable. That was when this war was called an imperialist war, and I was getting strikes all up and down the country, without provocation, and by design. (An Hon. Member: 'Were they Trotskyists?') No, they were a majority, who suddenly decided that this war was not an imperialist war. The Trotskyists were 'wee frees', who did not accept that. At the critical moment this change came, and, in my anxiety not to introduce anything else, we went on without taking any further steps. Until this development took place, when the second front was really in danger, and when at the moment—and I say this with a great sense of responsibility—we cannot afford to have our industrial machine upset by the changes in diplomacy or anything else that is going on between Governments. I say that with emphasis. We cannot afford to have shop stewards and other people turned on to us at a critical moment in this country's history, whichever side it comes from. ..."

"I regard the life of this country as being at stake in this, because I believe that this country has the right to govern itself, and not to be governed by anybody else outside. ..."

Bevin has introduced this Regulation

after consideration with the T.U.C. tops, as he explains it "democratically" and because it "affects them." But as usual, he has not consulted the rank and file trade unionists who are the ones to be affected. Thus, this Government which has no mandate from the electorate passes this new tyrannical legislation into effect. ...

The endorsement of the Regulation was a foregone conclusion. What was important was the number of Labour M.P.'s who voted against—23. And the number who abstained—14. That is one third of the Labour M.P.'s. This is a reflection of the pressure and indignation of the Labour workers. But by itself a vote in the House of Commons is worthless, without a struggle to extricate the Labour and Trade Union movement from the stranglehold of Big Business. The coalition is responsible! Wage a campaign to end the coalition, must be the answer.

If the trade union movement is not to be destroyed, the workers must fight to restore democratic control over their officials. No trade union official should have a life-long job but must come up for re-election every two or three years. It is because the Trotskyists struggle for this programme that they are hated by the trade union bureaucrats. They fear for their jobs if it is left to a democratic decision of the workers.

Fight in the unions, factories, and branches for the repeal of this, and all other anti-working class regulations, including the Trade Disputes Act!

SOCIALIST APPEAL

Organ of the Revolutionary Communist Party, British Section of the Fourth International.

256 HARROW ROAD, LONDON, W.2
Phone: CUN 2526.

EDITOR: E Grant.

MAY DAY

May Day has always been conceived by the conscious workers as the day of solidarity for the working class and oppressed of all nations and countries. May Day 1944 comes at a time when the second world war is rapidly approaching its climax and when the ruling class of all countries has made systematic and concerted efforts to poison the peoples with the foul virus of chauvinism and national hatred.

This war began with the masses of working people being dragged with dread and unwillingness into the new holocaust. But the masses of the people could find no way out. The mighty organisations they had formed, far from giving a lead for an international solution to the problems of the workers, had succumbed to merely disseminating the most foul and virulent chauvinism—a process which has become more and more vile as the war has dragged on.

Some of the Labour leaders, and particularly the Stalinists, have exceeded Vansittart in their propaganda against the German working class. The Stalinists even protested against the fraternisation which had taken place on the Italian front at Easter between German and British soldiers when an army chaplain ran a service in which he said that all men were brothers, which was taken to include the German soldiers.

Now on the occasion of May Day the Labour Party has issued a hypocritical International appeal, which in the most cowardly and shameful way slanders the German workers. The Labour Manifesto warns the German workers of their fate if they continue to act as "submissive tools" of the Nazis. The deceit and hypocrisy of these "submissive tools" of Anglo-American imperialism is beginning to reveal itself to the working class. The class struggle is overshadowing the national struggle. Already events in Germany are giving the lie to the corrupted slanderers of the German workers. The *Daily Telegraph* of May 1st reports:

"After a revolt recently by anti-Nazi elements in Dresden the bodies of hundreds of rioters who had been shot were left lying in the streets as a warning to others."

Only the "Labour" papers remain silent on these heroic acts of the German workers.

Meanwhile in Britain too, all the attempts of the Labour and Stalinist leaders to damp down the class struggle is also suffering shipwreck. The wave of strikes among the miners and other sections of the working class will be the beacon of Socialist hope for the German workers—if the news gets to them through Hitler's censorship.

This May Day, beneath the imposing facade of power of the Nazis and Western imperialism, there is a rumble of class forces awaiting the favourable moment to erupt into explosions. The class solidarity of the workers is not dead. The masses have yet to say the last word. The message of fraternisation and international solidarity will break down the artificial barriers of frontiers and states perpetuated by a decadent capitalism aided by the traitors in the labour movement. The words of Marx "Workers of all lands unite" will echo on a wider scale than ever before.

On this May Day the Revolutionary Communist Party rededicates itself to the cause of international socialism. The coming years will witness the triumph of this ideal of Marx and Lenin under the banner of the Fourth International.

BEVIN DEFENDS HIS ANTI-LABOUR LAWS

BY TED GRANT

There is a conspiracy in Britain at the present time, a vicious conspiracy by the capitalists to take away the rights of the working class under the guise of an attack upon Trotskyist "agitators". And in this they have the whole-hearted support of the top strata of the trade union bureaucrats.

Hand in hand with the lynch campaign against the Trotskyists, has gone a campaign of slander and vilification against the miners, engineers apprentices and other workers provoked into taking strike action by the policies of the employers and their Government.

The debate in Parliament on the new anti-strike, anti-Labour laws has shown the meaning of these new regulations very clearly. Any miner or engineer knows that the recent strikes were not caused by "agitators" but by the stupid and arrogant attitude of the employers and of the Government departments concerned. And not least by the high handed and undemocratic actions of the trade union leaders who made agreements bristling with anomalies and provocations without bothering to consult the men they were supposed to represent, to find out if they were in agreement with the conditions or not.

In preparing to launch an attack on the workers in 1924, the ruling class framed the leaders of the Communist Party in the

of hon. Members who do not like trade unionism and think it should not be permitted. It was they who cheered when the Trades Disputes Bill was brought into the House, who welcomed it and voted into law. Their successors are likely to walk into the lobby today and vote for the continuation of this Regulation which has already been established."

But the peculiar feature of this new Regulation, and one for which it would be difficult to find an exact parallel in British Trade Union history, is the open recognition of the gulf that now exists between the union bureaucrats and the working class. A gulf which is to be bridged, not by the bureaucrats attempting to regain the confidence of the workers, or consulting the workers before committing themselves to signing agreements with the employers, but by calling in the aid of the police to protect the bureaucrats from all "militants" and "unofficial" movements in the workshop.

Aneurin Bevan, who is close to these trade union bureaucrats was compelled to say:

"It is an astonishing situation to see Conservative members giving special legal protection not to trade unions but to trade union officials, because it is trade union officials who are invoking the law against their own members. Do not let anybody on this side of the House think that he is defending the trade unions;

in the performance of essential services, or any lock-out of persons so engaged." The effect of this is to make any expression of sympathy or support for workers on strike punishable by five years imprisonment and a fine of £500. Further, anyone who takes, or advocates any action which can be construed as leading to a strike in any industry, at any meeting or discussion which is not an officially convened union meeting, makes himself liable to the same penalty. If the union bureaucrats, continue to sign agreements with which the rank and file disagrees, a protest expressed other than through the official machinery of the union would make any worker voicing it guilty of the same offence. Any workers who protest outside a union branch against any agreements signed by trade union officials whether they have been consulted or not, could be proceeded against under the new Regulation, if it could be said that this might lead to strike action.

This is only one aspect of this vicious Regulation. It is intended to place the workers in the power of the employers bound hand and foot. But the Tories could never, at the present time, have succeeded in getting away with such legislation without the active assistance of the trade union bureaucrats. The bureaucrats are calling in the assistance of the police against their own membership. If the trade union bureaucrats genuinely represented their members, or signed agreements they were confident would get the support of the workers, how could such a nightmare situation arise in the Labour movement?

It is clear that the union leaders are expecting storms in industry in Britain in the future, not because of "agitators" but because of the unbearable strain and conditions to which the workers have been subjected. They propose to cure this, not by demanding "sacrifices" from the rapacious bosses, but by siding with the bosses and calling in the police to whip the workers into line. That is how they have degenerated!

THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Because of the alarm and fear within their own ranks, and because of the tremendous opposition of the rank and file trade unionists throughout the country, the Stalinists have been compelled to offer demagogic opposition to the Regulation. Mr. D. N. Pritt, Stalinist stooge in Parliament analysed many flaws in the Act, but went on to say that it was not necessary to pass new laws against the Trotskyists. In reply to a jeer from Ernest Bevin, who asked if he wanted 18B, Pritt answered:

"Not only 18B but also 2D. The Government, instead of supplying paper for the 'Socialist Appeal' should stop the paper itself."

Thus, these traitors, who have sold out to the boss class, ask for police aid against their revolutionary opponents. This attitude of the Stalinists is particularly despicable in view of their agitation against 18B and the use of the emergency regulations to suppress the "Daily Worker". Then we opposed with all our forces the use of reactionary legislation against any section of the Labour movement, even if we disagreed with them completely. Because a blow at one section, is a blow at the whole Labour movement.

But these renegades will resort to any measure to stifle the voice of revolutionary communism which tells the truth to the workers. 18B used against one section of the Labour movement, the Trotskyists, could just as easily be used against the working class as a whole, once the precedent is established. Bevin made this clear in his speech when he showed that this legislation directed against Trotskyism today could be used against Stalinism as well, if Stalin changed his foreign policy, and his British flunkies switched the line once again. Indeed, Bevin attempted to justify the Regulations as much by the future danger of the Stalinists as against the Trotskyists.

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ANTI-LABOUR LAWS VICTIMS DEFENCE COMMITTEE

Secretary, V. SASTRY, c/o 318 Regents Park Road, London, N.3.

PROTEST MEETING

against the Arrest of

ROY TEARSE
ANN KEEN

HEATON LEE
JOCK HASTON

Under the infamous Trade Disputes Act, 1927

CONWAY HALL,

TUESDAY, MAY 9th, 7 p.m.

SPEAKERS:

JAMES MAXTON, M.P.

JOHN McGOVERN, M.P.

W. G. COVE, M.P.

TED GRANT.

V. SASTRY

Chair: REG. GROVES.

now notorious Campbell Case. This was a preparation for the General Strike which the ruling class was provoking. Today, in preparing to beat down the workers, the capitalists once again prepare to jail those who represent the interests of the workers—the communists, the genuine revolutionary communists are being arrested and persecuted.

Thus, this new Law, Defence Regulation 1AA, as has been openly stated, is aimed at the Revolutionary Communist Party because of the fear of the power of the ideas of revolutionary socialism which must gain greater and greater support from the working class in the days to come. Nevertheless, the wider implications of the new regulation reveal it as one of the biggest blows against the working class since the Combination Laws, and beside which the Trade Disputes Act seems a piece of amateur bungling in its efforts to hamstring the working class.

Mr. Neil Maclean, Labour member for Govan assessing the position stated:

"All you need do now is to put into the Regulation authority for a judge to transport people overseas to penal settlements and we shall be back to the days of the Tolpuddle martyrs. The Minister of Labour is one of those who took part in a demonstration to celebrate the place of the Tolpuddle martyrs in trade union history, but he is now taking part in throwing back the trade union movement. Of course, the regulation satisfies a large number

he is defending the trade union official, who has arterio-sclerosis, and who cannot readjust himself to his membership. He is defending the official who has become so unpopular among his own membership that the only way he can keep them in order is to threaten them with five years in gaol. Whenever you get the rank and file at trade union meetings this Regulation will be opposed. The General Council of the T.U.C., at the top, supports it, but the worker at the bottom opposes it. The further you get away from the trade union official to the rank and file, the less support the Regulation gets. The more you move away from reality, from the robust, dignified, normal worker, to the jaded, cynical, irresponsible trade union official the more support the Regulation gets. That is the situation."

The effect of this law on the shop steward and trade union organisation in the factories, if carried out, would make any worker liable who suggested strike action—after negotiations have failed to give the workers any satisfaction. Any reaction by the workers to victimisation of shop stewards or convenors would make the workers liable to five years. If any worker indignantly threatened strike action against an arbitrary wage reduction, he would be immediately liable.

The new Regulation declares "No person shall declare, instigate or incite any other person to take part in, or shall otherwise act in furtherance of any strike among persons engaged

OUR COMRADES WITHOUT BAIL

Continued from page 1

remand until May 18 or 19 if there had not been an objection to bail, but having regard to the time that had already elapsed since they were arrested, he thought it most unjust to ask for a remand in custody without any evidence except that of arrest.

This refusal of bail in a case of this sort is completely unprecedented. Even in the notorious Campbell case of 1925, when leaders of the "Communist" Party, which was then still a revolutionary party, were framed by the Tory Government of the day on charges of "conspiracy", bail was allowed before the accused were brought to trial.

The police did not even pretend that there was a danger of the accused absconding but gave no reason whatsoever for their refusal. Aneurin Bevan in Parliament, exposed the background of this trial, when he said:

"The other day a number of so-called Trotskyists were arrested. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary might look up what he was being called in the last war—also the right hon. Gentleman the Minister of Labour. The language, or its content, remains the same; the individuals differ. These poor people were imprisoned in Newcastle, kept on remand for 21 days, and then tried in camera, and the explanation was given that they were tried in camera because the police had not completed their investigations against other alleged offenders.

These poor people had none of the benefits of any democratic code, and at the moment when they were in prison, before they had been tried, the newspapers were permitted, without any action being taken against them at all, to commit contempt of court, to an extent which had never before been seen in Great Britain. They piled up public hatred, they vented indignation and they slandered and abused these people at the very moment when they were committed for trial. No action was taken by this venal Government to protect them in any way. The whole thing is disgraceful, and shows the extent to which public morale has degenerated under the leadership we have at the present time."

The legislation under which our comrades are being tried is the vicious anti-Labour Trade Disputes Act which the Labour movement has fought since the day it was placed on the statute book. In this war Bevin, Citrine and the trade union leaders have endeavoured to get the Act repealed or amended by agreement with the ruling class, without success. In a speech at Falmouth, May 21st, 1927, Ernest Bevin had this to say of the Act:

"All I can say is, let there be a strike and let any one of us be arrested. Sir Douglas Hogg will soon discover what the attitude of the Trade Unions is. . . . That this Bill was particularly designed to put into servitude the transport workers more than any other class. . . . To carry out the Bill this Union would have to split into 180 different parts. . . . He knew for a fact that for a long time there had been discussion in London clubs as to the best way to thwart Labour's chance of regaining office. If the Bill was passed and did not succeed in its object of thwarting Trade Unionism and industrial political power, the next idea was that of a dictatorship. It was not merely Trade Unionism that was at stake—it was democracy."

"Daily Herald", May 22nd.

During the same period, Herbert Morrison, speaking at Woolwich, quoted in the "Daily Herald" May 2nd, 1927, declared:

"That the Bill was so bad and wicked that it was bound to impress the people of the country as a declaration of class war by the well-to-do on the poorer section of the community."

"If the Government hoped to crush the Trade Unions by this measure, it had made a great mistake. They would thrive on it and grow stronger than ever. This Bill

is the most colossal piece of cheek ever perpetrated by any Government."

And today Bevin uses this very legislation against working class militants!

This is the first time that the ruling class has dared to use this Act against the workers since it became law. Our comrades have the honour to be the first to suffer persecution under this Act for standing up for working class rights. But what a sorry state of affairs when the ruling class uses the

The following resolution was sent by the workers in the shop where Roy Tearse previously worked to the editor of the "Daily Worker" as well as to the editor of the "Socialist Appeal." Naturally, it was not printed in the "Daily Worker".

"We, the undersigned protest against the statement made by J. R. Campbell in the "Daily Worker" that Roy Tearse was a second rate shop steward, but on the contrary have always found that he did his best to defend his fellow workers against the bosses. Although there were plenty of reasons for taking action, Tearse was never an "agitator" for strikes.

Signed by the workers of the Engine Shop, Test Beds, De Havillands.

Trade Union leaders to enforce anti-Trade Union laws!

On the question of responsibility for the strikes among the apprentices and others, Kirkwood said in parliament:

"I am satisfied that a proper man, with the courage, would go and face the workers. I have asked the Minister (Bevin) time and again but he has said, 'No, I am not going.' I asked him to go to the Tyne but he said, 'No.' I said, 'You can take it from me that they will strike.' He said, 'Let them strike. If they want a showdown, we are ready for them.' Who, I ask, are 'we'? Ready for whom? What a disgrace! The Minister of Labour is a man who has lost his soul."

Our comrades have been gaoled under this anti-working class legislation. Protest in the union branches and Labour organisations against the arrests. Rally round the Revolutionary Communist Party which is being attacked as the spearhead of the working class. The organised workers should redouble their efforts to demand the repeal of the Trade Disputes Act and the even worse new regulations which have been introduced. Elsewhere is published the appeal for money for the defence and maintenance of our imprisoned comrades. Give as generously as you can!

London Bus Workers and Soldiers Fraternise

(Continued from page 1)

much in fares as was taken by male conductors before the war. In a hundred ways the bus workers have experienced more than their fair share of the "blood, sweat and tears" which Churchill promised.

The policy of the L.P.T.B. has aggravated an already bad situation to almost breaking point. The aim of any transport operating company is to run as few buses for as long a time as possible, to cut down standing times, and to cram as many passengers as is mortally possible into the available transport space. The L.P.T.B.—ostensibly under public control—is no exception. Since the war began they have taken advantage of the Ministry of Labour's and Army's manpower drives to cut staffs to the bone. On one excuse or another, they have cut down operating times and introduced practices which pile up super profits for the L.P.T.B. and which are now

Budget—Cost of Living To Go Up

(Continued from page 1)

gone. "Before 1914," said Sir John Anderson, "the United Kingdom was the world's leading creditor country." The British boss class was able to buy raw materials from abroad because of a huge foreign trade, and over and above this a huge volume of investment income flowed in to enrich the already richest capitalist class in the world. But now, a short 30 years later, Sir J. Anderson is forced to say: "The broad fact is already sufficiently clear, that when the war is over, we shall have ceased to be a large scale creditor country."

You err on the side of understatement, Sir John! Britain will be a large scale debtor nation at the end of the war!

Anderson goes on: "To finance our purchases in the United States before Lend Lease . . . we have already parted with overseas assets to the extent of £1,000,000,000 and we have incurred undischarged overseas liabilities (i.e. debts. B.A.) amounting to £2,000,000,000."

War or no war, the life and death struggle goes on between the capitalist nations. The war for markets, they call the "war for democracy."

Sir John then goes on to say: "We have parted with all this, not to neutrals, but nearly all of it, nearly 90 per cent. to our Allies and associates, most of whom will emerge from this war with their overseas financial position greatly strengthened as a result, just as ours is greatly weakened. . . . No one must suppose that a country can wage a war on this basis for several years and emerge at the end without a price to pay. We have not yet paid that price."

THE WORKERS WILL PAY THE PRICE!

Who is going to pay the price? The monopoly capitalists through their state servant, have given the answer: the working class of Great Britain!

Having in previous Budgets taxed the workers to the limit, Sir John has now thought of an even more drastic method of attack on living standards. He has given the signal for a general rise in the cost of living. The present rise over pre-war, according to the Chancellor of the Exchequer is 25 to 30 per cent. It is proposed to raise the range to 30-35 per cent. The working class knows that the official cost of living index is only a fraction of what it really is. A rise of 5 per cent on the official index will mean much more than 5 per cent on the real cost of living.

The Budget proposal is nothing less than a direct wage cut to the workers.

The Budget makes it clear that the whole aim of the Government is to protect and help a ruined capitalist

economy at the expense of the workers. Exports, exports, exports, is the cry. But in order to export industry must compete with the other capitalists abroad. In order to compete with more efficient foreign industry, the only solution for British capitalism is to cut real wages, reduce taxes on industry, and give huge subsidies. All this, it is plain will be at the expense of the living standards of the workers.

About half the Budget is given over to post-war financial policy. And this entire section gives not a single real hope of improvement for the workers in the future.

But the capitalists are promised every help. 20 per cent of E.P.T. will be paid back after the war, and huge income tax reliefs are promised to manufacturers. In some cases complete exemption from income tax will be given to certain types of industry. It is significant that all the Tory M.P.'s were most enthusiastic about the Budget. Lieut. Col. Sir Walter Smiles congratulated the Chancellor on having tried to erect an Anderson shelter over industry.

The workers will reply to the monopoly capitalists and their Government. Already large sections of workers are demanding increases in the wage rates to meet the rising cost of living. The engineers, in particular, are demanding 10/- on the rate. The British workers are not going to be kept on short rations because the bosses have ruined the once great industries of the country.

After the first world war, British capitalism could give only unemployment and the Means Test to the workers, in spite of the fact that they still retained a large part of their overseas investments. After this war British capitalism will be in a far worse state than even after the last war. The plans they have in store for the workers have been revealed in the Budget. Already Sir J. Anderson has issued the order to raise the cost of living for the benefit of a ruined industry.

The Labour and Trade Union leaders have kept quiet. They have remained shamelessly silent while the bosses prepared an open attack on the living standards of the workers. Their job was to fight this Budget at every stage, but they have failed the workers and acquiesced, while the bosses put their burden directly on the shoulders of the workers.

FIGHT THE BOSSES' PLANS

The British workers are facing the greatest struggle of their history. On the one hand capitalism offers a bankrupt economy and a standard of life which will be the worst in memory. On the other hand, socialism offers a planned economy and a workers' state operating in the interests of the working peoples.

We demand that the Labour leaders fight the Budget—An end to the acquiescence in this Tory legislation against the workers! The Revolutionary Communist Party believes that only a struggle for power by the working class can prevent the nightmare of unemployment and malnutrition again descending on the workers!

conferences with the Board officials.

The T. & G.W.U. leaders have consistently advised the bus workers to soft pedal, while they themselves have sold out the workers' interests in secret conferences with the Board officials.

Is it any wonder, then, that in April 1944, with new and harder schedules on the way, that the patience of a large section of bus workers became completely exhausted? The policy of surrender to the Board by the T. & G.W.U. officials has betrayed the bus workers' interests. The workers took the only road open to them. To look for "agitators" as the reason for the strike, as suggested by the *Daily Worker* will be a very unprofitable task for Mr. Bevin's police. The "agitators" for this strike were those who direct the policy of the L.P.T.B. and the chicken hearted traitors who have sold the bus workers to the Board.

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