

# THE NEWSLETTER

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## IN COME STACKER TRUCKS OUT GO DOCKERS

### Joint 'Blue' and 'White' fight against cuts?

By BOB PENNINGTON

**S**HIPPING employers' demands for sweeping reductions in ship-side gangs are meeting a hostile reception from London dockers. On Monday, members of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers, representing all the union's dock section branches, decided to oppose the employers' demands for increased mechanization.

Meeting in Canning Town Hall, NASD branch officials decided to recommend to their members that they strengthen their organization to fight the reductions.

The shipping bosses are insisting that gangs unloading on the quayside be slashed from twelve to three men with a stacker truck. Gangs employed on delivery to motor vans would be reduced from twelve to four men with a stacker truck and driver.

Barge delivery gangs of twelve would be cut to ten men and two stacker trucks.

At present the unions do not permit van, rail and barge delivery to take place at the same time. The employers would like to have ten-men gangs with two stacker trucks loading all three at once.

#### Brooms round their waists

'All we need now is brooms tied round our waists while we are working so we can sweep the quay at the same time and make the bosses really happy,' cracked one docker.

Although feeling is running high on the docks against the employers' proposals, neither the main executive council of the NASD nor the Transport and General Workers' Union has yet made an official statement.

I understand, however, that the Ocean Lay Committee of the TGWU, which represents the 'white union' men in the Royal group, has gone on record against the proposals.

TGWU members tell me that committee members suggested that an approach be made to the 'blue union' for a joint fight against any cuts in the labour force.

The dockers are incensed by the fact that although three men will be doing the work previously done by twelve, dockers will not earn an extra penny for this.

#### 45 men's wages saved

Many cargoes pay about 12s. per hundred boxes for a gang of twelve. For a gang of three the rate will be 3s. a hundred. The bosses, therefore, stand to gain 9s. on every hundred boxes of cargo.

On ships such as the 'Argentina Star'—a Blue Funnel Line ship which when it docks at the Royal Victoria generally has five gangs working ship-side—the new manning rate would mean a reduction from sixty men to fifteen, saving the employers forty-five men's wages.

If the employers are able to implement their demands they will certainly follow this by demanding cuts in the dock register itself.

Employers are hardly likely to see any point in saving on actual labour costs and then paying out increased attendance money to those dockers made idle by the cuts.

The slowness with which the dockers' leaders at official level have reacted to this latest attack from the employers is alarming.

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#### LABOUR LEADERS TAKE REVENGE ON PARTIES THAT WON'T EXPEL

MEMBERS of the Labour Party national executive ran the gauntlet of opponents of bans and proscriptions when they met at Transport House on Wednesday morning.

Prevented by the police from picketing in the street outside, Labour Party members and trade unionists—many had come from the provinces—lined up in the entrances with posters and made sure that every NEC member heard the arguments against the ban on The Newsletter and the proscription of the Socialist Labour League.

Bessie Braddock and Alice Bacon both got very red and angry as lobbyists protested at the way members had been expelled without a hearing. Aneurin Bevan, Jennie Lee,

#### FOUR MORE LABOUR PARTIES PROTEST

Labour Parties in Hampstead, Wembley North, Aston and Dagenham are the latest to go on record against the proscription of the Socialist Labour League and The Newsletter.

The Hampstead resolution says 'bans and proscriptions are no substitute for democratic discussion within the Labour Party' and calls on the national executive 'to withdraw its proscription of organizations, such as the Socialist Labour League, and its expulsion of individuals'.

By 23 votes to 4 Dagenham Constituency Labour Party both protested at the proscriptions and supported the affiliation of the Socialist Labour League to the Labour Party.

Tom Driberg and Richard Crossman spared a few minutes of their valuable time for a discussion as they waited for the lift.

Hugh Gaitskell did his best to pretend that nothing was happening.

Then came a lofty statement. The NEC could not interrupt its agenda by receiving deputations. It would not reconsider its decisions. And it was going to 'reorganize' Streatham and Norwood—the south London Parties which have refused to expel people.

After the lobby the following statement was issued to the Press by Gerry Healy, general secretary of the Socialist Labour League, Brian Behan, the League's national chairman, and Peter Fryer, Editor of The Newsletter:

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## THE NEWSLETTER

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### NOTTING HILL AND HOLA

SINCE the murder of Kelso Cochrane nearly three weeks ago two things have become absolutely clear. First, that the Socialist Labour League's answer to the racialists is the only policy that can protect coloured people from violence and unite the Labour movement against the poison of race hatred, with which fascism seeks to set worker against worker. Secondly, that a conspiracy is at work—we use the word advisedly, because we have reason to believe that it is quite deliberate—to distort the policy of the Socialist Labour League on this question, and, at the same time, lest anyone see through the distortions, to keep silent about whose policy it in fact is.

The last issue of the Sunday Pictorial featured an interview with a youth, whose name and picture were given, who claims that the 'roughing up' of Cochrane, in which he was asked to help, was 'organized by anti-coloured political groups to attract attention to their meetings'. According to the Pictorial the youth told Chief Superintendent Ian Forbes-Leith that the 'political groups' hired 'professional thugs to inflict the beatings'. The thugs were paid more than £200. So far there has been no denial of this report.

Every serious worker should demand answers to the following questions: Who prompted Scotland Yard to issue the statement, calculated to calm public disquiet, that the murder was not committed for racist motives, but for theft? Where did the fascists get the money from to organize this bloody deed? Who at Scotland Yard is covering up for the fascists? It is high time the Labour movement began an inquiry into all these questions.



But another question arises. What lies behind the unity of the entire British Press, from The Times to the Daily Worker, on the subject of the Socialist Labour League's proposal for meeting the racist menace in North Kensington? The proposal that came from the League's inaugural conference at Whitsun was a simple one: that the Labour movement should launch a campaign against racialism, and should organize united defence committees and defence squads of white and coloured workers.

For a fortnight after this proposal was made neither the capitalist Press nor the Daily Worker left it alone. They reacted as if they had been stung. They came back again and again to our proposal, twisting it, distorting it, and always telling their readers, in suspiciously similar terms, that such an idea was out of the question. Why, observed the Daily Worker in a tone of horror, this would be nothing less than a 'State within a State'. And we can't have that, can we?

The Daily Telegraph, the Manchester Guardian, the News Chronicle, The Times, the Observer, the Sunday Times, the Birmingham Mail, the Yorkshire Evening News; all have explained to their readers that of all the

proposals put forward for dealing with the trouble, the idea of letting the Labour movement tackle the job was the rankest heresy. The Economist went so far as to suggest that the (unnamed) sponsors of the scheme really wanted 'the chance to organize a paramilitary nucleus of trouble-makers'.

Without exception, all these papers left out the essence of our proposal—the role of the organizations of the Labour movement: trade union branches, trades councils, shop stewards' committees, ward and constituency Labour Parties. Without exception, they left out the emphasis laid on educational work among young white workers to show them that racialism is part of the employers' offensive against the working class.

No one with the most elementary experience of how the British Press functions on questions of high policy or low can have a shred of doubt that this campaign against the League's proposals is centrally inspired and centrally directed. It is inspired and directed by those who deny that the murderers of Cochrane were racialists; by those who harry and persecute coloured workers and turn a blind eye when they are attacked; by those who above all else fear the prospect of the working class organizing itself. That it was the fear of the response which the League's proposal would evoke which lay behind the campaign was underlined by the way the name of the League was dropped from these editorials after the first few days, while the campaign itself went on. Meanwhile not even that custodian of the liberal virtues, the Manchester Guardian, could find room for a letter answering its own leader of May 19.



Workers should have no illusions about the meaning of this campaign, nor about the meaning of what is happening in Notting Hill. We thought last autumn, and we think now, that the police are unable to prevent racist outbreaks. The people who issue instructions to the police and the Press in London are the very same people who issue instructions to Baring, the governor of Kenya, and to Campbell, the commissioner of prisons who whitewashed the atrocities at the Hola concentration camp, where eleven Africans were beaten to death. This crime—and let there be no doubt about it—was also committed in accordance with policy made in London.

Paul Johnson, writing in the New Statesman last week about the shame of Hola, compared the responsibility of the British people in this matter to the responsibility of the German people for Belsen. He says: 'Hola was an invitation to every good Briton to stand up and be counted.' We disagree with Mr Johnson's conclusions. Hola and Notting Hill alike are a challenge thrown down by the capitalist class. It is a challenge above all to the Labour movement. The Labour movement cannot afford to ignore the challenge. It must answer it, and expose the lies and distortions in the Press, by demonstrating in deeds to the coloured workers and the colonial peoples that British Labour intends to recognize and perform its class duty. Let us with one voice say to the imperialists and fascists: we shall permit no more crimes like the Hola massacre and the murder in Notting Hill. The strong arm of the British working-class movement is the only force that, in alliance with the colonial revolution, can do this job.

**DOCKERS (Continued from front page)**

The gains made by dock workers since the end of the war are seriously jeopardized and can only be defended by the action of the rank and file on a national scale.

It would be wrong to believe that the employers can somehow be persuaded by gentle reasoning to give up their plans.

**National portworkers' movement needed**

What is needed now is an organized campaign throughout all the ports, based upon joint inter-union committees, official or otherwise.

By means of leaflets, a dockers' paper and dock gate meetings, these committees could prepare a national portworkers' movement to resist the cuts.

They would also serve as a real warning to the employers that if they insist on going ahead with their plans they will be confronted with a national stoppage.

**LIVERPOOL PORTWORKERS ACT TO SAVE THEIR JOBS**

From Our Merseyside Correspondent

To protect their jobs, 130 checkers working on the Gladstone docks, Liverpool, came out on strike on Monday.

They decided to go back to work on Tuesday and await the outcome of talks with the employers. They have called a mass meeting of all checkers in the port for Sunday.

The men, who are members of the Transport and General Workers' Union, took action after the New Zealand Shipping Company decided to do away with the employment of 'hatch checkers'.

They thus broke an established custom of nearly twenty years' standing, declares a statement issued by the 'Checkers' Action Committee'.

The statement goes on: 'This is the latest in a series of actions taken by employers against checkers that have goaded responsible men into taking steps normally foreign to them.'

**Examination and additional discipline**

The statement points out that the 'clerical sub-register' of dock workers was formed to meet the employers' needs. Men entered on this sub-register must first pass an examination, be subjected to additional discipline, and can only be employed on clerical duties.

The aims of the checkers on strike are to secure a revision of agreements so that a checker is employed on every job. 'This is most important,' they say 'as most dock work is covered by "piece rate" agreements.'

They also want an agreement that only registered dock workers can be employed on dock clerical duties.

**'BLUE UNION' STALWART VICTIMIZED IN HULL**

From a Correspondent

At a recent sitting of the National Dock Labour Board in Hull, Harry Lowthorpe, Labour councillor and former full-time organizer of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers (the 'blue union') had his application for reinstatement to the dock register turned down by a unanimous vote.

Cllr Lowthorpe has a fine fighting record on behalf of the working class in East Central ward.

A dock worker for thirty years, he was elected as full-time delegate of the 'blue union' at the time of the six-week 'break-away' strike in 1955.

He held this position until recently, when the NASD decided to retain only one organizer—Jim Ginley—in the Hull area.

At the time of his election the National Dock Labour Board told Cllr Lowthorpe that should the occasion arise his application for reinstatement to the dock register would be

'favourably received'.

For an active man in his early fifties who has done nothing but dock work all his working life, to be kept off the register is to be thrown on the industrial scrap-heap with a vengeance.

The Dock Labour Board is a joint committee of representatives of the port employers and representatives of the Transport and General Workers' Union. The NASD is not represented, as it is not officially recognized.

In the eyes of the TGWU and the port employers the 'blues' do not exist—even though they have about half the lads on the docks in their ranks and their branch meetings are much better attended than those of their brothers in the 'white union'.

The rank-and-file dockers have caused some embarrassment to their TGWU overlords in Bevin House by operating a joint rank-and-file committee of members of both unions to settle questions which they considered the full-time organizers could not settle.

**MANAGER HAD TAPE RECORDINGS MADE OF STRIKE MEETINGS**

From Our Scottish Correspondent

OVER two thousand workers, half the production force, are now on strike at the Ferguslie and Anchor thread mills, Paisley.

The dispute, declared official by the National Union of Dyers, Bleachers and Textile Workers, arose over attempts by the employers, J. and P. Coats, to introduce speed-ups in the mills, and the sacking of two workers who had been unable to complete new work loads.

Daily meetings are being held in an effort to bring out the considerable number of non-trade-unionists still working.

Approaches are being made to other unions to 'black' products to and from the mills.

**Tape recordings of the strikers' meetings held outside the mill gates, made by the general manager, Mr J. A. Stone, are the latest method of intimidation. 'I thought it might be a good idea to know what was being said' is the excuse. But the workers have different ideas.**

'Big Brother' tactics are not frightening the strikers.

'If we go back defeated, we go back as non-trade-unionists and all that means as far as wages and conditions are concerned. We must and will win,' was how Mrs Ellen Hill, a worker in the twisting department, summed it up.

Support is now coming in from other sections of industry. The Rolls Royce shop stewards have pledged the fullest support, and so has Paisley Trades Council.

**ZENITH WORKERS WIN A STRIKING VICTORY, AND MRS CUMMERFORD'S JOB IS SAVED**

By Our Industrial Correspondent

SACKED for being off work sick for five weeks, Mrs Peggy Cummerford was reinstated unconditionally when her workmates at the Zenith Carburettor works, Queensbury, Harrow, stopped work in protest.

Most of the 300 strikers were women and girls, and most of them are members of the Transport and General Workers' Union. They were supported by the non-unionists in the factory, and received the full support of the men, who are members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union.

The women strikers told me about the bad relations in the factory: the petty rules and restrictions, particularly the so-called 'six weeks rule' under which Mrs Cummerford was sacked. Many of the workers were afraid to stay away when they were sick, they added.

AEU divisional organizer Chapman, addressing a factory-gate meeting, said the management's action was 'callous and inhuman'. But he was not well received when he suggested an immediate return to work.

A recommendation from AEU and TGWU organizers that the strikers return to work to allow negotiations to proceed

was accepted only after a number of pointed questions had been asked about the negotiating procedure.

Chapman promised that if after they had gone through the official channels no agreement was reached, then an official strike would be called.

### **HAMSTEAD MINERS SAY: 'WE WON'T STAND FOR THIS**

**By Harry Finch**

THOUGH miners at Hamstead colliery went back to work after a three-day strike, while negotiations took place with the Coal Board, they insist that they will be satisfied with nothing less than the removal of the deputy who is alleged to have struck a workman.

In a statement to The Newsletter on behalf of the strikers, lodge secretary Bro. Phillips said:

'When Leslie Forrt tried to deal with problems affecting thirty-one face workers, and met with obstruction from the deputy, he phoned the manager for permission for me to come down the pit to negotiate.

'The manager refused permission, and as Bro. Forrt turned from the phone the deputy struck him in the face.'

Bro. Arkell, another lodge committee member, added: 'When the men saw Leslie's face all covered with blood, naturally they all walked out.'

'Mass meetings of all the men have been held,' Bro. Phillips went on, 'and the demand is for the removal of this deputy. We do not think he is a fit and proper person to be in charge of men.'

Other miners say that this deputy was continually abusing and shouting at the men under him, and that in any case 'things have been boiling up at this colliery for quite a while on all sorts of issues'.

One miner told me: 'We had one of our men strike an area manager four years ago. He was sacked on the spot. But when a deputy strikes a miner he gets away with it—if the Coal Board has its way.'

Others complained about attempts to reduce wages by means of the various price lists on work schedules.

### **STRIKE AGAINST UNATTAINABLE BONUS TARGETS**

**From Our Merseyside Correspondent**

STRIKE of twenty-two bricklayers and labourers at the Lloyd and Cross site, Robertson Street, Liverpool, has been receiving strong support from meetings of building workers on other sites throughout the city.

The men have been on strike for three weeks. They declare that the bonus targets set by the firm are unreachable and are demanding that new targets be negotiated which will permit an 'operative of average ability' to earn 20 per cent. in accordance with working agreements.

Among building workers on Merseyside there are numerous complaints about the arbitrary way in which employers are fixing bonus targets.

Although there are a small number of men involved, the fight at Lloyds and Cross is looked upon by other building workers as being an important one.

### **SACKED MEN'S CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE CALLS ALL-LONDON CONFERENCE**

**By Our Industrial Correspondent**

REPEATED sackings and victimizations of building workers in the London area are to be discussed at a conference in Holborn Hall on Sunday, June 21.

The conference has been called by a campaign committee representing forty-five labourers, three of them stewards, who have been sacked by the Token Construction Co. Ltd from its Southwark Street site in south London.

This is a £5,500,000 contract which will take at least two

more years to complete.

The sacked men—only the Federation steward and one labourers' steward were left on the site—have decided to picket the job. They are holding themselves in readiness for work, and are seeking to prevent any fresh labour being taken on until all of the forty-five have been offered their jobs back.

### **No confidence in commission**

They also want to ensure that no unauthorized overtime is worked and to ensure continuity of employment on the site.

A leaflet issued by the campaign committee declares:

'We have no confidence in the disputes commission. This body consists of three employers and three trade union representatives. A majority on both sides is necessary to reach a decision. We hardly think that the building employers can be relied on to provide a majority for our point of view.'

**FOOTNOTE.** The Token sackings took place only two weeks after the Token workers, by taking strike action, secured the reinstatement on another site of three carpenters sacked on the ground of redundancy.

### **BUILDING WORKERS' OWN STRENGTH WILL DECIDE CONTEST WITH EMPLOYERS**

**By Brian Behan**

THE results of the annual conference of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers confirmed the Socialist Labour League's view that the trade union leaders are completely failing to prepare to meet the problems facing their members.

In the past two years, it was reported, the AUBTW has lost 12,000 members. The platform tried to explain away this loss as due to the growth in unemployment.

In fact unemployment in the building industry has dropped. With the building of roads and power stations and the modernization of the railways, union membership could have been increased.

Why has it gone down? Because the leaders do not have a challenging policy on wages, hours and conditions.

### **Their lack of realism**

Lack of realism was shown in the discussion on wages and hours. In face of the employers' rejection, just before the conference, of the fourpence an hour claim, the conference proceeded to pass a resolution calling for a 40-hour week.

If the leaders were at all serious they could surely have examined, in a critical way, the reasons for the rejection of the old claim before proceeding to launch another one.

The reasons have nothing to do with the state of the industry. Building trade employers' profits were never higher.

The employers are determined to keep profits up and wage rates down. That was why they rejected the claim.

The AUBTW leaders are afraid that their bankruptcy of policy would be exposed if they made a critical examination of the negotiations.

And they are afraid that their members would demand a real fight for future claims.

They have not the slightest intention of fighting any harder for the new claim than they did for the old one.

### **Need for united action**

Had delegates been present who were members of the Socialist Labour League they would have raised the need for united action by the working class.

For instance, they would have urged full support to the workers in the electrical contracting industry who are now going forward for higher wages.

The discussion on the expulsion and suspension of AUBTW members showed that the Right-wing leaders had prepared the ground very well, in order to prevent a serious challenge.

They did this first of all by excluding from the conference

## 'People's Front' crumbles in Ceylon

By EDMUND SAMARAKKODY, MP\*

**T**HE virtual expulsion of the Phillip Gunawardena group from the coalition which rules Ceylon has narrowed the composition of the People's United Front government led by Prime Minister Bandaranaike.

This outcome of the factional struggle between Finance Minister Stanley Soysa's group and the Gunawardena group was somewhat unexpected.

**WARRING GROUPS.** Bandaranaike's policy was to maintain a balance between these two warring groups. But he found himself forced to come out on the side of Soysa's faction on pain of losing ten ministers, and with them his party, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

Though in fact an unprincipled struggle for power, the factional struggle took on the appearance of a struggle between the Left and Right in the government.

From the beginning of his career in the government Food Minister Gunawardena sought to appear as a Marxist. He and his group indulged in Marxist phrase-mongering, while adopting anti-working-class policies.

His half-hearted measure of land reform through the Paddy Lands Act gave him the appearance of a progressive.

Gunawardena utilized differences he had with his Cabinet colleagues to expose them as 'reactionaries'—but he found no difficulty in supporting anti-democratic and anti-working-class legislation like the Public Security Act.

**THE SHOW-DOWN.** Meanwhile his opponents in the government, led by Soysa and C. P. de Silva, Lands Minister, bided their time. The show-down came, and Gunawardena and William Silva, Minister of Industries, are now out of the Cabinet, and out of the government party.

The Bandaranaike government has lost its parliamentary majority, and it is doubtful whether it will survive for long.

The prorogation of Parliament by gazette notification much earlier than scheduled clearly showed that the government was trying to gain time in order to win over 'independent' MPs, and even other groups, in order to make up for its recent losses.

Even if the government survives by further alliances it will remain at best a rump. The squeezing out of the Gunawardena group has removed whatever 'Left' coloration the government had.

It is now clear that the government is not prepared to make any concessions to the people. There will be no more socialist

phrase-mongering. The government will now appear openly as a capitalist government.

The Prime Minister's declaration of his anti-communism is a clear call to the capitalist class to place its confidence in his government. There are signs that it may take this opportunity to save capitalism in Ceylon.

Some far-reaching repercussions can be expected. The middle-of-the-road People's United Front has hitherto posed as providing an alternative road to socialism.

It was born in the 1956 elections, and the first two years of its rule brought it considerable strength, while the revolutionary movement suffered stagnation.

**REPUTATION WANED.** But during the past year, as the government's reputation waned, the revolutionary movement was able to advance. Yet as long as this Centre formation remained, there were difficulties.

The disintegration of this Centre bloc will mean the polarization of class forces. The way is now open for a rapid development of Ceylon's working-class movement.

In this setting the Communist Party, which found its ideal people's front government in Bandaranaike's administration, is in a quandary. The 'progressives' have left the government. The people's front is no longer a front. What is left is revealed as a capitalist party and a capitalist government.

Will the Communist Party continue to support the government? Is the criterion of a 'progressive' government its policy towards the Soviet Union and China?

In that case the Communist Party will continue to support the Bandaranaike government at the risk of seriously undermining what support it has among the masses of the people.

**OVER THE PRECIPICE.** For the workers and peasants there cannot be even a temporary solution through any kind of regroupment in Parliament. New coalitions must be opposed.

If the Bandaranaike government is leaning over the precipice, then the task of the workers and peasants is to push it over. And if it survives the crisis, serious preparation for its overthrow by a mass uprising will be on the order of the day.

\* Edmund Samarakkody is a member of Ceylon's Marxist party, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, and sits as MP for the constituency of Dehiowita, where there are rubber plantations and other industries.

delegates like Mick Gammon, who, though elected, was not able to attend because he had been suspended.

A complete ban had been put on the distribution within branches of material giving the case of the expelled and suspended members. These members were banned from speaking in branches.

Even so, Weaver made a major retreat from the leaders' original position. He said membership would be restored to the four members as soon as they had indicated their willingness to obey the rules and constitution of the union.

### One of main planks

As readers will know, these members were expelled or suspended on the ground that they were associated with The Newsletter. This was one of the main planks in the executive's 'case' against them.

Weaver now gave a guarantee that there would be no political discrimination within the union. This partly accounts for the low vote against the EC on this issue.

Weaver has been forced to make this retreat by the campaign waged by the supporters of the Socialist Labour League in the branches, a campaign to safeguard the rights of all political opinions in the unions, including those of Communist Party members.

Yet Communist Party delegates either abstained on the resolution opposing the expulsions and suspensions or voted against it. Only one Communist Party member voted for this resolution.

There was a stooge intervention by Bro. Charles Croucher, a delegate from the south-west area, who inferred that money collected for men on dispute had not been paid out to them.

This was repudiated by Bro. P. McGowan, who pointed out

that all those who subscribed to the South Bank dispute fund had received a copy of the balance sheet.

Weaver said one of the charges by the expelled and suspended members against the EC was that the latter each received £33 per week while in session.

He told delegates that they also received £33 per week for attendance at the conference, adding that the highest payment at the conference was £42 per week.

Well, the future of the building trade workers will not be decided by such a gathering as this, but by the rank and file using its strength in struggle against the employers, for higher wages, shorter hours and better conditions.

Lowthian has not gained any lasting victory. The members that the Socialist Labour League is winning to its ranks from the AUBTW will make a very powerful contribution to the struggle against the employers.

Within two days of the annual conference the Federation steward on the largest building site in Liverpool and two AUBTW stewards in London had applied to join the League.

## CINEMA

### DANGER! BRASS HATS AT WORK

Pork Chop Hill (Odeon, Leicester Square, London)

THIS film does not try to offer a solution to war. Nevertheless director Lewis Milestone, of 'All Quiet on the Western Front' fame, effectively portrays the wastefulness and horrors of modern warfare.

In the final days of the Korean war, when a peace treaty is

only a matter of hours away, 135 U.S. soldiers are instructed to wrest a barren hill from the Chinese, apparently for 'prestige' reasons.

Reluctantly the troops, led by a lieutenant (Gregory Peck) move into the battle zone. Obviously their lives, homes and families mean more to them than the prestige of some five-star general.

The troops meet an unbreakable resistance and their ranks are blasted. They begin to reach breaking point, particularly after they are caught in the fire of their own artillery. Some of them begin to kick.

### REBEL

A coloured soldier, probably wondering whether the race-hating South is worth dying for, rebels against the futility of it all.

The lieutenant, however, with 'sympathy' in his heart and militarism on his mind, still orders the advance to go on.

The film ends with the lieutenant and a handful of survivors being rescued by reinforcements.

Milestone draws no message or moral in this film. But one cannot help feeling that if the brass hats and statesmen of capitalism are permitted to remain in power the whole world could quite easily become a radio-active Pork Chop Hill.

PAT O'DONOVAN

### MORE WORKERS HEAR LEAGUE POLICY

Well-attended meetings of the Socialist Labour League have been held in the past week in Liverpool and Lambeth, and at the Unit Construction site, Abbey Wood, where there was an audience of over 200 building workers.

## Constant Reader | Why Not by 'Peaceful Means'?

LAST week I discussed a possible misrepresentation of part of the Socialist Labour League's programme. To be expected also is the charge that we bloodthirstily seek an armed show-down between the classes as a matter of preference.

In the early 1920s Ramsay MacDonald used to accuse the—then Marxist—Communist Party of deliberately working for 'heavy civil warr', a phrase he took out of its context in a famous document which deserves to be studied by the present generation.

This was 'The Communist International Answers the Independent Labour Party', a series of replies to questions submitted by the ILP in 1920 to Lenin and his colleagues, about the applicability of their policy in British conditions.

'It is possible to think,' wrote the Comintern, 'that the working class in England can secure government power even without a revolution and by means of parliamentary election victories.'

'The world revolution knows various stages, as that for instance of the Hungarian workers, who received the government power without insurrection and without armed collisions, owing to the capitulation of the Karolyi government.'

'The Russian working class has gained power, not so much owing to the application of armed force as to the fact that the armed forces of the country have gone over to their side.'

However, the document continues, even in the event of a parliamentary victory in Britain, 'it is most unlikely that this bourgeoisie will give up its power without a struggle and become subject to the paper will of Parliament'.

### Need to prepare

For this reason 'the workers should prepare, not for an easy parliamentary victory, but for a victory by a heavy civil war'.

Even 'should the workers have succeeded in gaining power without this civil war, that would only signify that the

necessity of civil war would confront the working class so soon as it set out to realize its will . . .'

Twenty years later, Trotsky put forward the following additional observation on this problem of violence:

'By anticipation, it is possible to establish the following law: the more countries in which the capitalist system is broken, the weaker will be the resistance offered by the ruling classes in other countries, the less sharp a character the social revolution will have, the shorter it will be, the sooner the society will be reborn on the basis of a new, more full, more perfect and humane democracy' (Interview to St Louis Post-Dispatch, February 1940).

Clearly, the course of events in Britain will depend a great deal on whether or not the workers have already taken power in the United States.

As things are, the presence of an American 'garrison' in this country is a powerful argument against the possibility of a peaceable transfer of power here.

### The Queen Cult

Kingsley Martin, referring in his New Statesman column to the disapproving noises made by Establishment penguins about that journal's treatment of the Shah of Persia as 'King Slickey', wrote recently:

'One of these days I shall reprint a book I once wrote which quotes what the papers used to say about royal personages.'

Modesty prevented him, no doubt, from naming the book in question, which is 'The Magic of Monarchy'.

Published not long after the coronation of George VI in 1937, it gave an excellent account both of the Establishment's effort to set the monarchy back on its pedestal after the Mrs Simpson scandal and the abdication of Edward VIII in the previous year, and of the historical origin of this pedestal.

Innumerable clock-towers commemorate Queen Victoria's



jubilees of 1887 and 1897. Martin's book describes how the most reactionary sections of our ruling class set out to 'build up' in the last two decades of the nineteenth century a monarchy which was held in scant respect before, but which they now needed for the purposes of imperialism and to counter the rising class and socialist consciousness of the workers.

### Silent 'rehabilitation'?

The recent review in the Daily Worker of 'Notes of a Film Director' was illustrated by a photograph of the author, the late Sergei Eisenstein, standing in front of a poster advertising a play he directed in 1923.

Prominent among the credit titles is the name of S. M. Tretyakov, a writer who used to be well known in communist circles here for his 'Roar China' and 'Chinese Testament'.

In 1938 Tretyakov was arrested as an 'agent of Trotsky and Chamberlain', and apparently died in a concentration camp not long afterwards.

Does the Daily Worker photo mean that Tretyakov has now been 'rehabilitated'? Or is it merely that the editor supposes that nobody notices these things?

I quote from the review itself: 'Eisenstein belonged to our world, the socialist world, the world of truth.'

### Better part of valour

The resolution put down by the Finchley Advisory Committee of the London Typographical Society for the general management committee of Finchley Labour Party, seeking a declaration of support for the proscription of the Socialist Labour League in place of mere mechanical compliance with it, has been withdrawn.

The reason given was that 'it is not desired to give these people any further publicity'.

BRIAN PEARCE

## LETTERS

### AMERICAN READER GREETES OUR PAPER

I WOULD like to commend The Newsletter on its excellent articles and method of presentation.

You are making enemies in the capitalist camp, and that is good. You are driving a razor-sharp wedge between the Communist Party leaders and 'their' rank and file.

America has a politically backward mass of workers, but they are learning fast. The future is pregnant with a coming struggle for a Labour Party in this country.

I am sending copies of The Newsletter to a contact in the U.S. Communist Party, who finally admitted to me in a recent letter that 'from all you have told me, and from all that I have now read, I am utterly convinced that you are not anti-Soviet, but . . .'

Now I am working on the 'but'.

Lastly, I wish to request an 'honorary' membership card in the Socialist Labour League, for which I shall pay a sustaining pledge.

New York, 1

Arthur M. Knutsen

### MELBOURNE'S MAY DAY THEN AND NOW

At the May Day demonstration on the Yarra Bank the 2,000 marchers strained their ears to hear a real May Day message from the Communist Party speakers. But they listened in vain.

One veteran socialist remarked to me: 'We are just like an old soldiers' pilgrimage on Anzac Day.'

I remembered my first Melbourne May Day. There were only eighteen party members in Victoria. Of these eighteen, eleven made the total number of marchers.

The men took a day off work (we forgot to tell our bosses about this). The five women wore red blouses and the six men wore home-dyed red shirts.

We marched to the Yarra Bank, held our meeting, then marched back through Melbourne to headquarters.

Maybe those who denounced us as 'hopeless adventurers' were correct. But we marched and sang in the cold wintry rain, soaked to the skin. The Internationale and the Marseillaise may have lacked tune—but they were certainly sung with vigour.

And the home-bound shopping crowds came out of their shelters and cheered us as we marched through the main business street.

The Communist Party led from the front in those days.

Plenty, Victoria, Australia

C. A. Monson

### GIVE YOUTH A FIGHTING POLICY, AND THEY'LL RESPOND

OPPOSITION to the H-bomb and rocket sites has so influenced the mind of the prospective Labour candidate in North Hull—a Tory marginal constituency—that he has publicly declared that he is against them.

This shows that we must keep up a constant pressure on this question.

The Labour Party, trade unions, Co-op and a big brass band contributed some eighty stalwarts to Hull's May Day parade. Marching at a discreet distance behind—as requested by the local Labour Party—was the nuclear disarmament section, some 120 strong.

And the city's one Labour Party youth section marched with the nuclear disarmament contingent behind the slogan 'No rocket sites for Yorkshire'.

Questions have been asked at the divisional meeting as to why the youth section did not march with the Labour Party. But the answer is not far to seek.

The nuclear disarmament section was really youth on the march—youth who, with the right policy, could be attracted to Labour.

Hull

Ray Bradbury

### ELECTRICIANS WANT WORKERS' DEFENCE ORGANIZATIONS IN NOTTING HILL

CAMDEN TOWN branch of the Electrical Trades Union has passed a resolution expressing alarm at the racial murder of Kelso Cochrane in Notting Hill. The resolution declares:

'We believe that the advent of race hatred corresponds to the rise of fascist organizations and Tory attacks on rents, wages and working conditions.

'We therefore call upon the area political committee and the executive council [of the ETU]:

'(1) To demand that the London Labour Party and the NEC of the Labour Party declare their international solidarity with colonial workers everywhere;

'(2) To demand that the trade union and Labour movement set up workers' defence organizations in Notting Hill.'

### SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE: PUBLIC MEETING

## Manchester

Sunday, June 7, 7 p.m. Caxton Hall, Chapel Street, Salford.

GERRY HEALY and JACK GALE speak on 'The Policy of the Socialist Labour League'

**LOBBY (Continued from front page)**

We expected from the Right-wingers on the national executive of the Labour Party a decision to continue the witch-hunt. But this decision was made possible only by the help of the Left-wing members of the NEC.

We already know that there were big policy differences between ourselves and the Right wing. It now becomes clear that the so-called 'Lefts' are just as much against the introduction of real socialist policies in the Labour Party as the Right wing are.

Bevan and others are using 'Left' phrases to obtain positions in the machine. Bevan says it is his ambition to become prime minister. The Socialist Labour League exists, among other things, to see that he does not use the Left wing to attain his own unprincipled ambitions.

There is wide and growing support within the party for the policies that the Socialist Labour League has been advocating.

We have advocated the mobilization of the entire Labour movement behind all bodies of workers engaged in struggle against the employers.

Now the arrogant attitude of the printing employers, who have decided to destroy the print unions if they can, proves once again that this policy is correct.

**RIGHT OF APPEAL****NEC's promise is farcical**

We are amazed that the NEC should put people out of the party for calling for support for the printworkers; we think that the NEC this morning should have been discussing how it can help the printers; we think it was the duty of the representatives of the trade unions on the NEC to raise this matter; and we call for the utmost support by all sections of the organized Labour movement for the printworkers in the battle they are now entering.

Or take another aspect of our policy—our call for an extension of nationalization under workers' control. On Sunday Bevan defends nationalization. On Wednesday he agrees to throw people out of the party for the crime of calling for an extension of nationalization.

We of the Socialist Labour League will organize and lead the fight for a socialist policy, and against all bans and proscriptions.

The NEC has declared that people who feel they have been unjustly treated have the right to appeal to the NEC. This is farcical. Who ever heard of people appealing to the very judge who sentenced them?

This shows once again that the Labour Party has no internal democracy, and is ruled by a junta, as the Tory Party is.

We are confident that the rank and file will support us in the struggle against bans and proscriptions. We base this confidence on the fact that wherever the decision has been left to the rank and file, they have refused to expel.

We thank the many Constituency Labour Parties and trade union branches that have passed resolutions protesting against the banning of The Newsletter and the proscription of the Socialist Labour League.

We ask them to keep up the fight.

**STREATHAM AND NORWOOD****Lead to entire movement**

We are indebted in particular to the Streatham and Norwood Constituency Labour Parties, who by their stand have given a lead to the entire movement. We ask them to refuse to be 'reorganized' and to continue the fight to the annual conference.

On the Sunday before the annual conference we shall be convening at Blackpool a special conference to consider the fight against bans and proscriptions.

We are more determined than ever to see to it that a discussion on policy shall take place in the Labour Party, so that Labour may enter the general election fight armed with a real socialist policy and capable of decisively smashing the Tories.

**SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE POSTER PARADE THROUGH RACE RIOT STREETS**

SALES of the Socialist Labour League pamphlet 'Workers' Defence Squads for Notting Hill' now top the 2,000 mark.

At least 1,700 of these have been sold on the streets of north Kensington. A campaign of street sales, which will be backed up by open-air meetings, has also started in Brixton this week.

Last Saturday afternoon over 250 people—coloured and white workers—were present at the first meeting held by the Socialist Labour League in north Kensington.

Bob Pennington explained how racialist propaganda peddled by fascists suited racketeering landlords.

'Slums, high rents and unemployment, the results of capitalism, are suffered by both white and coloured workers.

'The fascists, who are the agents of the employers and the landlords, try to blame these evils on coloured workers. They hope to divert the attention of working people from their real enemy—the employing class.

'It is in the interests of all workers irrespective of the colour of their skins to join together in a fight against their common enemy, the employers and the landlords.'

Mr R. S. Webb, a member of the executive of the Coloured People's Progressive Association, also spoke—in a personal capacity—from the Socialist Labour League platform.

He too stressed that white and coloured workers must join together to fight against the employers.

'The reason why there are so many coloured immigrants here from the West Indies is because of the appalling conditions and misery inflicted upon our islands by British capitalism,' said Mr Webb.

Before the meeting, at which 309 pamphlets and eighty copies of The Newsletter were sold and a collection of £1 14s. 4d. taken, forty-four members of the League demonstrated with posters along Portobello Road.

After the meeting one coloured worker joined the League and many others expressed interest in its future meetings and activity.

Another meeting will be held this Saturday at the junction of Portobello Road and Cambridge Gardens.

**RIGHT WING AND 'COMMUNISTS' TRY TO BAN DISCUSSION ON BANS****From a Correspondent**

Executive of Birmingham Trades Council, by 7 votes to 4, has struck off the agenda of this Saturday's trades council meeting a motion from Birmingham no. 9 branch of the Amalgamated Engineering Union condemning the proscription of The Newsletter and the Socialist Labour League.

The president, George Varnom, JP, ruled the motion—it also calls on trade unionists to do all in their power to get the ban lifted—'out of order'.

Two prominent members of the Communist Party, Messrs Bulgin and Grant, moved that it be kept off the agenda, and that they write to the Trades Union Congress to ask if it is 'in order' for trades council delegates to discuss the proscription.

**FLASHBACK.** Delegates to Birmingham Trades Council last January overturned an executive ban on the publication in the council's monthly journal of an article on the National Industrial Rank-and-File Conference.

**SAYING OF THE WEEK**

And the party leaders? Non-socialists, it would seem, to a man, Lib-Labs like Mr Gaitskell and his fellow-Wykehamists. Cautious Progressives like Mr Harold Wilson. Subdued Radicals like Mr Bevan. Men, in fact, like Mr Phillips himself.

The socialists are a party of patriots. And all their policies are dignified and respectful.

Indeed, between them and the Tories there is less difference than ever before!

—Douglas Clark in the Daily Express, June 1.