

TORY CRISIS GROWS

EDITORIAL

Mr. Gaitskell's Coat Tails

GAITSKELL has returned from the United States full of praise for the Kennedy administration. In a press conference, he talked about Kennedy's foreign policy as something which was very close to that of the Labour Party.

He justified the resumption of nuclear tests on the grounds that the Russians had made some progress in the testing of anti-missile missiles. (It is now generally accepted that there has been no fall-out from the Russian tests which has in any way injured human beings.)

From Gaitskell's own description of anti-missile missiles, these tests were purely defensive and based on the need to save human life in the event of the American imperialists launching a nuclear attack on the Soviet Union.

Gaitskell, the 'humanist', is angry with the Russians. He thinks that to have tested such weapons is a bad thing and he lines himself up with the Americans in the testing of weapons which are designed to break through the Russian defences and kill millions of ordinary people. This is the real role of right-wing social democracy.

Gaitskell and George Brown stand openly for the continuation of imperialism and its war preparations, just as Guy Mollet stood for de Gaulle and the continuation of the war in Algeria.

No doubt we shall hear some protests from the so-called lefts, but what is the use? These gentlemen are tied in a thousand ways to the coat-tails of Gaitskell.

They confine themselves to Parliamentary talk and refuse to take a single action which will inspire the ranks of the Labour Party in a struggle with the right wing.

The Padley-Crossman compromise is barely 12 months old, and the net result is that Gaitskell is able on behalf of the Labour Party to commit the Labour movement to full support for the American militarists and warmongers.

Before 'Tribune' lets loose its usual verbal criticism of Gaitskell, it would be advisable for its editorial staff to contemplate how their role in the case is responsible for the present disastrous situation.

Until the left wing realizes the need to break completely from Gaitskell and to wage a stubborn fight for socialist policies in the Labour Party, this present disgraceful state of affairs will continue.

Engineers must reject 3 per cent

by our Political Correspondent

HARD on the heels of the government White Paper on wages and the 3 per cent settlement between the right-wing trade unions and Macmillan, comes further preparation for the Tory war on wages. The announcement by Selwyn Lloyd that government spending has increased by £111 million amounts to nothing more than a preparation for further increases in the cost of living through the April Budget.

The Tories are in a confident mood. Now that they have brought the right wing to heel and split the trade union movement in its opposition to the pay pause, they are preparing the ground for the next round of wage demands.

Both Beeching and Macmillan explained to the railwaymen that the only justification for a consideration of further wage increases on the railways later in the year would be if the economic situation improved.

It is perfectly clear from the announcement of the increase in government spending that such a situation cannot arise.

The full measure of the treachery of the right-wing railway union leaders now becomes clear. They have deliberately confused their rank and file by promising them further increases in the autumn when they know perfectly well that such a thing is impossible on the

and in doing so made it much easier for the Tories to win the next round of struggle which will open in the autumn.

Here is a grim warning for the engineers. The right wing of the Confederation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Unions are preparing to follow those who advocate the 3 per cent sell-out.

Everything must be done to stop this. Engineers must fight to prevent their leaders from doing any kind of a deal with the government on the eve of the Budget.

If the engineers stand firm, then they can rally all those

'It was the time of the big engineering stoppage. We had 3,000,000 men out on strike. After two or three weeks a decision had to be made whether or not the strike should be called off.

'The union leaders were equally divided, three for and three against. So I had to use my casting vote.

'I had to make the crucial decision whether 3,000,000 men should stay out of work.

'I sent a swift prayer to the Holy Spirit for guidance. Then I gave the decision that the strike should terminate. I was much criticised at the time, but history vindicated me. This was for me further proof of the power of prayer.'

William Carron interviewed in the Daily Mail, 27.2.62

The highest Authority



grounds advocated by the Tory government.

It can now be assumed that when they discussed with Macmillan at Admiralty House they were in full possession of the facts relating to the increase in government spending.

What they have done is to conspire with the Tory government against the members of their unions, knowing full well what the Tories have in store.

If the Budget increases taxation on wage workers, what will the 3 per cent mean?

By running away from a fight with the Tories now, the Trades Union Congress, the railway unions and the miners' leaders have increased the confusion and demoralization in the ranks

sections of the trade union movement, such as the railwaymen who have been fooled into accepting 3 per cent, into a united struggle against the government later this year.

If this is done, then the situation is by no means hopeless. The right wing are becoming more and more exposed.

It now requires a determined stand by the engineers and the deadlock will be broken.



The Swiss frontier. Disguised as tourists, French ministers crossed here every day for their discussions with the Algerian Provisional Government. Comments on the agreement are on page 2 of this issue.

New Stalinist Betrayal

By TOM KEMP

'THE thirteenth of February is already a long time ago!' This was the comment of a French militant worker on the failure of the Communist Party to follow up on the massive demonstration at the funeral of the victims of police brutality two weeks ago.

The impression of class power which participants gained from the demonstrations is something which the leaders of the Communist Party have been quietly trying to dispel. Their weapons are the usual weapons of Stalinism and they are worthy of close consideration.

THEIR OWN KIND

In the first place, behind a smokescreen of critical phrases, the Communist Party is effectively in support of the de Gaulle dictatorship. Thorez is now calling upon all 'good Frenchmen', including 'gaullists', to rally in the spirit of the Resistance against the OAS. All wage and other class demands have been dropped.

The Algerian sell-out is strongly supported, with the only proviso that if people had listened to the Communist Party the war need not have taken place.

There is no word of solidarity with the Algerian revolution; for the CP there is no revolution in Algeria. The party chiefs recognise in the FLN leaders, on the other hand, men of their own kind.

Nevertheless, the hold of the

CP over the working class remains complete. It has a powerful apparatus with extensive ramifications in the class. It lacks an effective rival. The Mollet 'socialists' have long ceased, in any real sense, to command the support of any important sections of workers. Their capacity for betrayal is thus strictly limited. They serve as an alibi for the Stalinist leaders and live largely on anti-communism.

The 'new left' Unified Socialist Party has little influence outside the ranks of intellectuals and sections of the petty bourgeoisie. Only the CP can organize demonstrations of more than a few thousand and its own demonstrations are supported only by the party activists.

In a crisis, however, many workers turn to the CP or follow its directives. Its leaders are conscious of this power and are determined to maintain it.

Yet, since their policy is an unyielding one of compromise and opportunism, there is always the danger that the currents of criticism which arise within the party will be attracted by those who stand for a consistent policy of opposition to the Gaullist regime.

ATTACKS

There is already a strong undercurrent of dissatisfaction in the working class, and especially in the party ranks, with a policy which is seen as stemming from Khrushchev and which leads to sympathy for the Albanians and the Chinese parties.

The sensitivity of the CP leaders to the situation is shown by the virulence of recent attacks launched against Trotskyists in the Paris industrial belt. Not only have leaflet distributors been physically attacked, but a campaign of slander and

(Cont. p. 2, col. 1)

Enquiry Demanded into Trotsky's Murder

See page two

Enquiry Demanded into Leon Trotsky's Murder

The Newsletter is proud to sponsor the appeal to N. S. Khrushchev printed below calling for a full investigation into the trials and executions of the leaders of the October Revolution during the 1930s. In particular, the appeal demands an enquiry into the allegations made against Leon Trotsky, and his murder in Mexico in 1940.

Copies of this appeal will be ready for further signatures within the next week and we urge all our readers and sympathizers to write in for them at once.

TO: N. S. Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Sir,

At the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on October 27, 1961, you spoke about the murder of S. M. Kirov in 1934. The remarks you made indicated that this assassination was nothing to do with the former leaders of the Communist Party who were executed in 1936 after 'confessing' to organizing it.

You referred also to the way in which innocent people were forced at that time to confess to all sorts of crimes.

A full enquiry into these events is imperative. Men who had devoted their lives to the building of the Soviet Union were not only unjustly punished but were made the objects of an international campaign of slander.

Leon Trotsky, especially, was alleged on the basis of these confessions to have been acting in league with the Nazi government to overthrow the Soviet Union. These lies must be exposed.

Trotsky's widow, Natalia Sedova, before her death, demanded an enquiry also into the murders of her husband and of her son, Leon Sedov. The murderer of Trotsky, now resident in Czechoslovakia, should be questioned about his connection with Stalin's regime. Natalia Sedova offered

to return to Moscow to assist any such enquiries. Her death should not prevent them taking place.

In 1956, statements made by leading members of the CPSU implied that full investigations of these questions were to take place. Six years later, they are still awaited.

We urge you to ensure that these enquiries be undertaken at once.

Yours faithfully,

John Baird, Labour MP for Wolverhampton North-East.
Lord Chorley, Labour peer and lawyer.
Reg Groves, well-known Labour historian.
T. G. Healy, National Secretary, Socialist Labour League.
E. Patterson, General Secretary of the Constructional Engineering Union (in his personal capacity).
Raymond Postgate.
Donald Soper.

A. Thompson, Convenor of Shop Stewards, Guest, Keen & Nettelfold, Glasgow.
A. C. Hunt, British Light Steel Pressings Strike Committee press secretary.
Len Smith, Shop Steward, Sainsbury Ltd., President Lambeth Trades Council.
G. F. Mitchell, Convenor, Shop Stewards, ENV, London.
D. Wallace, Federation Steward, Laings site, Liverpool.
G. Rogers, President, Liverpool No. 1 Branch, Plumbing Trades Union.
B. Williams, Convenor Shop Stewards, Stanlow. President, Liverpool No. 2 Branch, Boilermakers' Society.
J. Walls, Convenor of Shop Stewards, George Manns, Leeds.
David Forfar, AEU Convenor, Harland & Wolff, Glasgow.
W. B. Burr, Chairman, East of Scotland District Council, NUR.

feel of their strength in the demonstration of February 13. Hence the readiness to employ lies and physical and moral pressure against the Trotskyists.

This campaign has disgusted many Communist Party supporters who know personally the people who have been singled out for these vicious attacks and whose record of devoted service in the trade union movement is well known.

The nature of this attack leaves no doubt that it was inspired at the highest levels of the French Communist Party. Men who are stretching out the hand of friendship to Gaullists, to old comrades of the Resistance and all patriotic Frenchmen—for 'peace and against fascism'—in scarcely veiled support for de Gaulle, pursue, within the labour movement, a splitting policy against rival tendencies.

That is not to say that the



J. Robertson, Chairman, Kilmarnock District AEU Junior Workers' Committee.
J. Cavan, Secretary Glasgow Trades Council youth section.
M. Cavanaugh, Vice-President, Birmingham Trades Council, Deputy Convenor, Rovers, Solihull.
George Walter, Chairman Shop Committee, Ministry of Works, ETU Central No. 1.

W. Brannen (secretary)
J. McLean
J. McArdle
J. Hampton
J. McQuade
Liverpool Branch (Dredgermen) Power Section Transport and General Workers' Union.

Eric S. Heffer, ASW Shop Steward, Liverpool City Councillor.

F. Meredith (shop steward)
Kenneth Dawson
Jim Roche
B. Tobin
H. Brady
Leeds clothing workers.

James Higney
Joe Fitzgerald
J. Martin
A. Smillie
J. Stones
Miners, Brodsworth Colliery, Yorks.

Archie Cherrie (Boilermakers' shop steward)
John Moffat (Boilermakers' shop steward)
John McLaughen
Edward Dahlstrom
T. Borg (Boilermakers' shop steward)
Harland & Wolff's, Scotstoun.

Trotskyists at this stage represent an appreciable force in Paris factories; in fact they are a small minority.

But there is a contradiction in the Stalinist attacks which are bound to raise doubts in the minds of even loyal supporters of the CP. If the Trotskyists are weak, why is it necessary to attack them so bitterly, and why is it necessary to resort to methods worthy of Stalin himself?

History shows that whenever a Communist Party is carrying through a betrayal it has, partly as a diversion, partly for preventative reasons, to strike at the left.

The incidents at the gates of Paris factories are therefore symptomatic of the whole policy of betrayal which the French Communist Party is putting over to the French working class and which threatens to bring it to disaster.

K. Hatton
M. Gibson
A. Gray
Jack Harris
William Brocklehurst
G. Flanagan
Birmingham engineering workers.

C. Baker
W. F. Smith
E. Canning
A. Hopkins
W. Ward
K. Holt
C. Grainger
Members of Birmingham 4th AEU.

D. Halsworth, ASLEF, Birmingham.
R. O'Connell, ETU shop steward.
H. Dalton, ASW shop steward, Labour Alderman.
A. E. Longbottom, EC member, Willesden Trades Council.
W. G. Stewart, secretary, Leith No. 1 Branch, NUR.
P. O'Rourke, AEU shop steward.
David Crossan, AEU shop steward.
David Kennedy, AEU shop steward, Secretary, Woodside branch.
R. McKenzie, AEU.
T. Anderson, Liverpool No. 1 Branch, Plumbing Trades Union.
J. Hessey, member Liverpool Trades and Labour Council, Liverpool No. 1, PTU.
C. Ashton, Birkenhead No. 1, PTU, member of District Council 14, Birkenhead Trades

Council.
J. Fenner, Liverpool No. 2, PTU.
F. Schofield, Liverpool No. 1, PTU.
T. P. Sharple, member Boilermakers' Society.
V. Duckworth, Birkenhead No. 1, PTU.
A. Bates, AEU, Fisher & Ludlow, Birmingham.
H. Baker, Secretary, Birmingham Trades Council (in his private capacity).
G. Howlett
C. J. Gill
B. Rowney
ETU.
F. Wingfield, USDAW Shop Steward.
K. Lanning, Chairman, Edgware No. 3, AEU.
H. Kilkenny, member works committee, Kodak Ltd., Harrow.
D. F. Tomsett, Vice-chairman, Wealdstone branch, ETU.
R. K. Baxter, ETU.
P. Hendrie, AUBTW, Assistant Secretary, Lambeth Trades Council.
A. Hendrie, CAWU.
B. E. Thornton, Post Office Engineers.
P. O'Hea, building worker.
L. Branscombe, West Norwood AEU.
W. J. Kearney, ETU.
J. Russell, Boilermakers' apprentice.
(More signatories will be published next week.)

Algeria: Shameful Sell-out

THE available facts concerning the settlement between the Algerian Provisional Government and the de Gaulle regime make it quite clear that the Algerians have gone much further in a compromise with imperialism than any other nationalist leadership has dared.

After more than seven years of murderous war the Algerian people are called upon to accept a compromise which leaves intact the essential positions of French capital.

Those tendencies in the working class movement which supported, and still support, the FLN are called upon to give an account of their policy. The people who criticised the Socialist Labour League for its position on the Algerian nationalist movement must now be asked to explain how it was that they dressed up as fighters and revolutionaries, as fine a bunch of petty-bourgeois place-seekers as ever paraded as strong men.

As a matter of fact we shall not accuse Ben Khedda and his friends of betrayal. We think that they are true to themselves. They never intended to carry through a social revolution in Algeria.

They sacrificed the lives of their followers quite consciously to secure for themselves a more privileged position within the confines of imperialism.

If the agreement is implemented, which remains to be seen, they will have succeeded in what they set out to do, with interest added. After the initial relief at the end of the fighting and enthusiasm for what seems a victory, the Algerian people will discover that they have been betrayed. History has confirmed our appreciation of the FLN, as of other bourgeois leaderships. We expect it will confirm that the present settlement is only a stage which will be the prelude to new struggles. (Next week The Newsletter will publish a fuller treatment of the Algerian national movement.)

● **FRANCE:** from p.1
calumny in the real Stalin tradition has been launched against well-known working class leaders of the Trotskyist movement.

They have been described in CP leaflets as 'hitlerotrotskyites' and 'plain-clothes policemen', as well as 'one of the ramifications of fascism'.

The crime of the militants who have been attacked is that they have tried to expose the disastrous policy of the Communist Party and have won some support in the factories. This is the unforgivable sin, because if the Stalinists can tolerate a few opposition sheets which circulate no further than the Latin Quarter, they are seriously disturbed when they see the possibilities of a challenge to their leadership in the factories.

This is especially so at a time when the workers have got the

How to Fight the Pay Pause

GERRY HEALY answers Readers' queries

QUESTION:

I have often heard right-wing trade union officials say that the establishment of rank-and-file committees would tend to split the unions because they would lead to the setting up of a union within a union. What is the truth in such an allegation?

W.S., Birmingham

ANSWER:

There is at the moment the danger of a very real split in the trade unions over their attitude towards the wage pause. Those unions who have accepted the government's 3 per cent have set a precedent which will encourage the Tories in their opposition to unions who require much more than 3 per cent for their members.

The trade unions are obviously divided in their attitude to the Tory government. One of the main reasons for this arises from the way in which the Trades Union Congress has refrained from giving any kind of leadership to the labour movement in the fight against the pay pause. Right at the time when the unions are in conflict with the government, the TUC uses its efforts not to defeat the Tories but to participate with the Tories in Selwyn Lloyd's 'planning commission'. The real splitters today are the right-wing trade union leaders.

The establishment of rank and file committees would bring together trade unionists who are fighting for wages, no matter what union they are members of. They would provide a real source of unification within the trade union movement by

drawing into action large numbers of trade unionists who are at the moment indifferent to the unions as instruments of struggle. Many of these trade unionists have long ago lost confidence in the right wing.

The committees would provide such workers with confidence in their own strength as a class and enable them to fight on despite betrayals and sell-outs by the right wing. They will start a process which will assist in the preparation and education of a new group of trade union leaders who will be loyal and sensitive to the demands of the working class.

One of the main tasks of rank and file committees would be to organize the fight against the right wing within the various trade unions. This could be done by working to achieve support in the branches, district and regional bodies of the unions. In this way, real trade union unity will be achieved in the fight against the Tories and the right wing.

One can foresee difficulties in that some people might want to separate these rank and file organizations from the official trade union movement. This would represent a serious tendency towards syndicalism and a fragmentation of the working class. The Socialist Labour League would oppose and fight against all such attempts.

In our opinion real trade union unity lies through the establishment of rank and file bodies which will work within the trade unions to strengthen them and make them effective instruments in the struggle against capitalism.

LETTER

Last week's Newsletter article on British Guiana gives a wrong impression of the situation there.

It did not mention that the unions calling the strike are, in fact, company unions.

While it is correct to oppose Jagan's opportunist conduct and to point out that it is impossible to achieve real independence without leading a fight against imperialism it is wrong to equate a centrist such as Jagan with reactionaries like Burnham and D'Aguiar.

D'Aguiar is the leading local capitalist; his UF party is backed by MRA and is subsidised by United States big business.

Burnham is a racist who has sold out to Booker Bros.

To call these gentlemen 'opportunists' is surely an understatement.

By imposing increased taxes on the mainly Negro middle class, instead of expropriating the imperialist concerns, Jagan gives the racists ammunition in their campaign to arouse anti-Indian feeling; but surely it is wrong to place the blame for racialism on Jagan and the PPP, while the actual racists are merely described as opportunists.

South London reader.

Cyril Smith writes:

I could have said more about the character of Burnham and

D'Aguiar. 'Opportunist' is not the correct word to describe the latter, at any rate. But South London reader is quite wrong to try to lessen Jagan's responsibility by telling us that some other people are even worse.

As an alleged 'Marxist', Jagan has the leadership of many thousands of West Indian workers who want to fight imperialism. His policy has betrayed their trust and played into the hands of the imperialists.

He, rather than Burnham, has given imperialism and its agents their major weapons—racialism.

We blame him for the racial divisions, since these are the result of his opportunist attempts to operate within the limits set by world capital. By calling in British troops he has forfeited any right to be considered as an anti-imperialist leader.

The struggle for independence and socialism in the West Indies will require a leadership which has no illusions in people of this kind.

PUBLIC MEETING Leeds

Sunday, March 4, 7.30 p.m.

Room 'C' Leeds Trades Hall, Upper Fountaine Street, Leeds 2

Cliff Slaughter

Prospects for World Socialism

Ticket 1/-

War Danger in South-East Asia by Cyril Smith

THE Russian government's efforts to reach agreement with the West on a 'neutral' Laos constitute a blow against the anti-imperialist struggle in South-East Asia.

Such an agreement would mean a cut in the supply lines of the Vietcong guerilla fighters opposing the corrupt Diem regime in South Vietnam.

Russian, British and American representatives are all flying to Laos this week to urge a settlement between the three princes, right-wing Boun Oum, pro-communist Souvanna Phouma, which could lead to a coalition government being formed.

By trying to hold back a victory of the Pathet Lao forces in Laos, Khrushchev is weakening the liberation movement at a crucial stage.

Scared of the collapse of the Diem government, the Americans are increasing their military involvement in Vietnam.

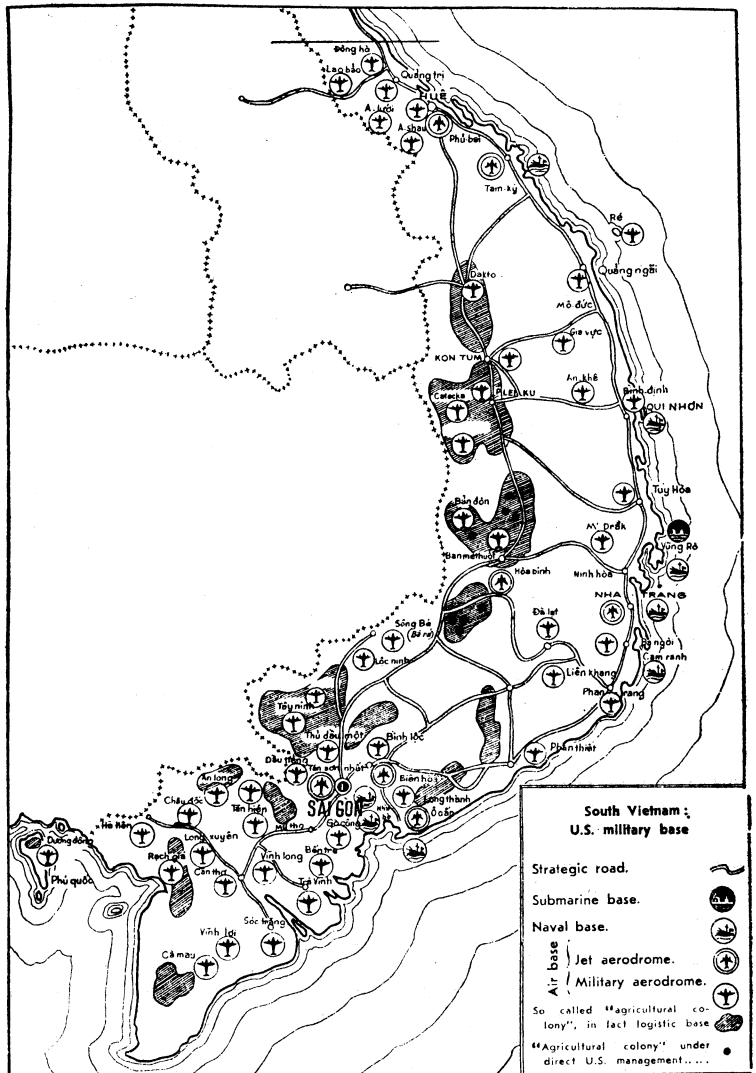
The Vietnam government is now in a state of disintegration. Even with US support, it is doubtful if it could survive. Without it, it would have collapsed long ago.

Some 5,000 US personnel are now operating in the jungle areas. They are there to train Diem's anti-guerilla forces and to maintain State Department-supplied equipment.

But they also have orders to fire back if attacked in combat areas.

Diem's soldiers are also receiving training from British forces in Malaya. Meanwhile the US Seventh Fleet is sending several destroyers to operate off the South Vietnam coast.

A top-level conference of American generals and politicians was held last week in



Honolulu, where Secretary of Defence, Robert MacNamara discussed the prospect for further US intervention in support of Diem. MacNamara returned later to Washington to report to Kennedy.

Thus the danger of war in the whole of this part of the world, into which the Chinese would inevitably be drawn, grows all the time.

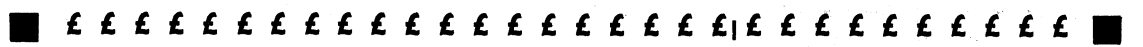
This danger is the result of the 1954 Geneva carve-up, when Khrushchev persuaded the Viet-minh to accept a compromise with imperialism.

At that time, the United States stood aloof, since it was the French who were getting pushed out of what had been their sphere of influence.

Within a few months, French control had almost entirely disappeared and an American-backed regime was installed.

In this way a 'peaceful co-existence' settlement prepared the ground for still greater war dangers later on.

Khrushchev's present policy in relation to Laos is an attempt to repeat the whole experience.



City Slants by colin chance

A sense of proportion

The price of sheet steel is increased by 5½ per cent from last Monday. Other steel prices are up by an average of 2½ per cent.

Government policy decrees a pay pause, but there is to be no pause in the profits of the steel owners. It is anticipated that the new prices will result in at least a 50 per cent rise—in some cases considerably more—in steel company profits.

I forecast that there would be an increase four weeks ago, but the announcement by the Iron & Steel Board comes at a time of declining production in many key industries, and will thus aggravate conditions still further.

With an unemployment figure of 2 per cent of workers, and with seven unemployed for every five jobs available the signs are that Tory government fiscal policies are deliberately creating slump conditions.

Steel prices are controlled by the Iron & Steel Board, a govern-

ment agency. It is true that considerable pressure from the steel owners has brought about the increase. This is not the only factor, however. Without doubt, this measure has been deliberately planned with its deflationary consequences firmly in mind.

The government is really allowing a premium to the steel owners on the amount of their unused capacity. For the less the steel produced, the higher are the prices allowed to be charged.

In a time of slackening demand, the higher is the cost of steel. This is due to the basis on which prices are fixed, the main consideration being that the steel owners should get a 9 per cent return on the capital they employ.

But this type of price fixing can only lead to a further slackening of demand. It is significant that although there was a strong possibility of a steel price increase there was no large-scale stocking by users—a pointer to the stagnation of industry in Britain at the moment.

Once having secured a price

increase on the basis of unused capacity, the steel owners will be encouraged to run down 'uneconomic' plant which will lead to substantial unemployment in the industry.

Just as the cotton mill owners were compensated if they ceased production, so the steel owners are compensated to produce less steel.

The difference is that steel is the very basis of the economy and if production is deliberately restricted it will have consequences for workers in the motor, machine tool and shipbuilding industries as well as for the consumer.

The shipbuilding industry, for example, is already in the doldrums. The increased price of steel will give another fillip for 'redundancy' in that sector of the economy.

3 per cent for the railwaymen, an additional £20 million a year to the steel owners. You see we just can't afford to let your incomes rise at a greater pace than production. You must keep a sense of proportion!

Industrial Newsletter

Byrne Prepares Blitz on Militants

By REG PERRY

THERE can be no compromise in the fight against the right wing of the ETU. This is made clear by the decision of the Byrne, Cannon, Chapple machine at its meeting on February 26 to prefer charges against 'all members alleged to be involved in the rigging and falsification of ballots'.

The national press, extremely well informed, as usual, on ETU affairs, claim that five members of the previous EC and staff of the union are to be expelled. The 'Daily Express' declares that 200 'communist' members are to be

The five are Frank Haxell, ex-General Secretary, Robert McLennan, ex-Assistant General Secretary, James Humphrey, former head office manager, and Jack Hendy and Jack Frazer, former EC members.

It is clear that in their determination to tighten their control on the union, the right wing are ruthlessly preparing expulsions and disciplinary measures against the left as a prelude to a possible ban on communists from holding office.

Not satisfied that their decision to squash the annual delegate conference and call a special 'one branch, one delegate' conference will give them a clear majority, Byrne and Co. are now attempting to smash the left wing of the union and restrict still further the chances of left wing representation at such a conference. This action shows the instability of the EC and its lack of any real base among the membership.

They are conducting this witch-hunt under Rule 38 of the old rules, having annulled the Rules Revision Conference of last November which would have made the EC subject to the democratic control and authority of the annual conference.

Under Rule 38 they will be charged with 'bringing injury or discredit to the union' and also for 'wilfully falsifying or withholding union ballot papers' in connection with a union ballot.

Under the old rules the EC have full authority and any member expelled will have no

right to appeal to annual conference against expulsion, as they would have done under the revised rules of November.

Rank-and-file members and branches are becoming more and more exasperated with this activity of the EC, at a time when the greatest unity is required to fight for the wage claim just rejected by the employers.

Despite the objections of Byrne in the latest edition of 'Electron', to being called right wing, the political nature of this EC is becoming more and more exposed.

These latest moves are in complete opposition to the democratic decision taken at last year's annual conference against all bans and proscriptions in the labour movement and relating in particular to the bans on the Socialist Labour League.

This resolution was the popular expression of the rank and file. The actions of the EC show more clearly than ever the need for the greatest vigilance on the part of left-wing militants. The present course of the right wing will lead them into support of the TUC and the new Economic Development Council.

Along that road will lie more attacks against the wages and working conditions of electricians. The work started by the ETU Campaign Committee must be extended and taken up by all militants in the union against these attacks of the Byrne-Chapple caucus.

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Engineers

All out on March 5

Then on to a National Strike

By A COVENTRY ENGINEER

AS engineers prepare for their second one-day national stoppage on March 5 and a feeling of militancy and determination grows amongst the rank and file, the leaders of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions are playing a vastly different role.

Engineers throughout the country fully realise that they are fighting to maintain their present living standards which, despite Super Mac's claims, are the lowest in Europe, except for Holland.

But union leaders are calling for a return to negotiations with the employers, knowing full well that they are not prepared to give any increases. The right-wing union leaders are pinning their hopes on the government forcing the employers to give a tiny percentage increase for the sake of industrial peace.

The Tory wage plan may be just flexible enough to allow this, so leaders like Jim Matthews brand strike action as 'industrial suicide'.

It is the engineers who will commit suicide if we allow Matthews to lead the claim for a £1 a week rise and two hours off the working week.

Carron and Boyd of the AEU who voted against the ballot for a national strike, are also sabotaging the fighting strength of the engineers in favour of a return to

negotiations.

They intend to draw out the ballot within the AEU as long as possible by lengthy correspondence between branches to establish who is entitled to vote.

The Confederation hoped to announce the result of the ballot during March, but Carron claims it will be impossible to declare the AEU vote before the National Committee meeting at Folkstone in May.

All engineers must stand firm for action in support of our present claim and make it quite clear that if the Carrons, Boyds and Matthews won't fight then the rank and file will.

On March 5 rank-and-file committees in all areas must be formed to organize for the national stoppage. These must link up throughout the country and gain the support of other sections of the labour movement with wage claims to form a united front against the government.

Try as they might, the right wing, faced by such a movement, will not be able to betray us.

Carron's Splitting Tactics

By A London Engineer

THE circular issued last week for shop stewards and branch secretaries by the AEU shows very clearly that the right-wing leadership of Carron and company have no serious intentions of carrying through a struggle for the Confederation wage and hours claims.

Many thousands of engineers who were called out for the one-day strike on February 5 are forbidden to take part in next Monday's stoppage.

The circular says:
'It is not intended to apply, unless specific instructions are received from Executive Council, to members employed in industries such as Dockyards, Ministry of Supply, War Office Establishments, CWS, ICI Ltd., Courtaulds, Iron and Steel Industry, Flour Milling, Sugar Beet, Papermaking, Cement manufacture and Chemicals, etc.'

Something like 400,000 workers in government employment took part in the last stoppage and are now excluded, although none of them has received any reduction in hours or any wage increase.

At a meeting held by the North London District Committee it was stated that these members were to be excluded from the forthcoming ballot as well.

To assist the splitting tactics of the right wing, the circular goes on to say:

'The criteria should be that no stoppage should take place where the safety of workpeople and/or plant is involved, or where the circumstances of a shut-down of even one day could mean no re-opening for a period.'

It should be clear that the leaders of the Confederation unions will sell-out the engineers at the earliest opportunity, just as Sidney Greene has already done in the case of railway workers.

This is the general feeling amongst militant workers and particularly members of the Communist Party. But it remains to be seen whether such bodies as the Stalinist-controlled North London District Committee of the AEU intend giving a lead in preparation for the expected betrayal of the right wing.

So far they seem content only to give every encouragement to militant action strictly within the bounds laid down by the EC. But nothing in the way of an alternative leadership is being created.

Unless a break with the right wing is made, including their rules, the CP role will be to inevitably assist the sell-out.

No runaway for Robens

By ALAN WEST
Our Labour Correspondent

IT is by no means certain that the National Coal Board's pay offer to mine-workers will be accepted. Last Friday a delegate conference of the NUM narrowly agreed to their executive's proposal that the offer should be accepted by 392,000 to 212,000 votes.

The question is now to be put to a national ballot in the coalfields. If the decision is upheld about 250,000 day-wage men will receive a pay increase of 7s. 6d. a week and 46,000 colliery craftsmen will have another 10s. 6d. from April 1.

STRONG FEELING

But there is strong feeling amongst rank and file miners that a much sterner fight should be waged against the government's pay pause and the NCB and last week's result does not automatically prove that a national ballot will agree to accept Lord Robens' offer.

At Friday's conference important areas like North Derbyshire, Kent, Scotland, South Wales and the craft and power workers' groups voted for complete rejection of the offer.

The majority for acceptance was only gained when the Yorkshire delegates cast their 108,000 votes for the executive.

Mr. S. Ford, NUM president, said neither his executive nor the delegates were satisfied with the NCB's offer, but they believed it was the best the union could obtain in present circumstances and in light of the government's interference in wage negotiations.

DISSATISFACTION

Meetings during the last few days indicate that the miners dissatisfaction goes considerably deeper than Mr. Ford seems to think.

In Derbyshire, for example, not one of the 48 pit delegates would support the acceptance of the offer and a spokesman said that the miners must consider really challenging the pay pause if further attempts to interfere with negotiations and cuts in living standards were to be defeated.

There is also a great deal of anger at the weak manner in which the NUM executive presented the miners' demand for united action against the Tories to 'the TUC—presented mainly by letters to and from the TUC and NUM headquarters, despite the fact that the two buildings are only separated by a few minutes' walk.

In the coming ballot there must be a decisive rejection of Robens' offer, backed up by a further call for action by all unions against the pay pause.

Vital USDAW Ballot

THREE candidates are standing for the post of General Secretary for the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers, the fifth largest union affiliated to the TUC.

The ballot will take place between March 2 and April 16.

The main fight for the post will be between the right-wing Mr. A. W. H. Allen, a national officer of the union and Mr. R. B. Seabrook on the left, who resigned from the Communist Party in 1956 and is now a member of the South Norfolk Constituency Labour Party.

A Newsletter pamphlet

PLAN TO BEAT THE TORIES

by Gerry Healy

(National Secretary of the Socialist Labour League)

The important article which appeared in a recent Newsletter is now available as a pamphlet. It is invaluable reading for all trade unionists.

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