

The Newsletter

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Railwaymen tell the Tories: GET OUT!

By OUR POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ALL power to the railmen! Their magnificent one-day strike is an inspiring demonstration of the hostility of the working class to the Tory government. Those fainthearts who ignore rank-and-file workers like the railwaymen have had a rude awakening.

Right-wing trade union leaders may talk as much as they like with Tory Cabinet ministers. But they can be forced to toe the line when their determined members decide they have had enough and demand action.

Only a few weeks ago the TUC gathered at Blackpool and conveniently ignored the problem of unemployment and the plight of the miners and railwaymen. The one-day strike is therefore a 'call to order' by the rank and file.

But railway workers must be warned against leaders like Sidney Greene who did not want this strike and who don't want a showdown with the Tory government. The fact that the strike lacks a positive policy is largely their responsibility.



Greene: didn't want strike

Taste of battle

Now that railmen have enjoyed the taste of battle, the next and most important question is how to defeat the Tory government and defend the standards of those who are threatened with unemployment. Greene and company have no answer to this. They visit Marples and Beeching looking for a ray of hope, but they do not present an alternative policy.

It is not sufficient to say that certain railways should not be closed. The government are determined to close them and the only way they can be stopped is by the Labour movement taking power.

Mr. Greene will have nothing to do with a strike to bring down the Tories. So far as he is concerned, it is merely a form of protest. But that is clearly not sufficient and it cannot solve the problems facing railway workers.

A policy which would demand from the Tory government that they guarantee work or full

RAILMEN MARCH

4,000 railway shopmen marched through Glasgow on Wednesday. They were joined by many housewives from the Springburn district of Glasgow threatened with heavy unemployment by rail and factory closures.

The railmen listened at Georges Square to speakers from the NUR, Engineering Confederation and Glasgow Trades Council.

Tom Macmillan, chairman of the Cowlairs rank-and-file committee was cheered when he called for a national stoppage to last 'not for one day but until the redundancies are beaten'.

maintenance for all those threatened with unemployment is the only alternative. The money for such a policy could be obtained through suspending the interest payment on railway stock used to pay out the former rail owners.

The full industrial and political strength of the Labour and trade union movement must be mobilised behind the demand that not a railwayman should be sacked. The Tories must be forced to find alternative work with wages and conditions suitable to the men employed or maintain every railwayman until such a demand has been fulfilled.

The one-day strike should be followed not only by more strikes, but by the adoption of such a policy, which alone can answer this serious threat of unemployment.

Byrne smears militants

IN the September issue of *Electron*, the journal of the Electrical Trades Union, Mr. John Thomas Byrne, who prides himself as a man of integrity, writes on page 137:

'It is, however, necessary to state that the Communist Party and the Trotskyists are resorting to further unscrupulous methods (including unofficial circulars which they used to condemn when in office) and to organised factional opposition to the proposals of the Executive Council.'

'The reason for this is quite obvious, as disclosed in the High Court. It was due to the rigging of the old balloting system that they were able to command all

Right wing attack ETU members' rights

By Our Industrial Correspondent

NEXT week's rules revision conference of the ETU will pose a number of important issues before the rank and file. Left-wing delegates must anticipate that the right-wing Byrne-Chapple-Cannon clique will open the conference with the usual reference to the court action on the fiddling of ballots. The purpose of this will be to create an anti-communist atmosphere in order to influence decisions at the conference. It is also possible that cases which are still in the courts will be referred to, as has already been done in items of correspondence to branches.

It would be a great mistake to concentrate the attention of the conference on the rights and wrongs of the court case. No militant can or should justify ballot-rigging. But that, we repeat, is not the real issue in front of the rules revision conference. It is simply being used to impose on the union changes of rule which would strengthen the right-wing bureaucracy.

DIVERT

We must not allow Byrne and Co. to divert the attention of conference from the real issues which can be seen very clearly in the amendments which the executive propose to Rule 21. They are asking conference to change the rule in order to appoint a full-time executive for five years, to make conference a biennial affair and to allow it to

continue as an advisory body only.

In other words, the full-time executive will be the only body that can make policy for the union. If these amendments are carried, then the union will be in grave danger of becoming a tool of an unscrupulous Right wing.

Conference must reject these amendments and demand that conference be the policy-making body which should meet once a year. This is in line with the amendments already accepted at the rules revision conference last December. As is known, these were set aside by the successful application of Chapple to the high court.

Delegates should not waste much time in quarrelling with the new rules for balloting for elections. In general these can be accepted without a great deal of controversy.

OPPOSE

The amendment to rule which provides for a delegate from each branch must be opposed very carefully as there is a danger of dividing the small branches from the large ones. What is required is an examination of the existing rule so that an arrangement permitting the small branches and the large ones to have representation on a basis acceptable to both can be made.

As it stands now, the amendment to rule would disfranchise the majority of members and prevent them from being represented at conference. We feel sure that if this is correctly posed to the delegates from the small branches, it will be appreciated and understood.

The eyes of the trade union movement will be turned to the ETU. We are convinced that the rank-and-file militants of this very important union can and will defeat the Right wing.

Witchhunt defeated at Brighton

IN spite of the intrigue of Mr. Gaitskell's supporters, he is still not undisputed master of the Labour Party. His 'fight, fight and fight again' policy reversed the Scarborough decisions of 1960 after the fake Lefts of *Tribune* ran away from the battle. They deserted the struggle against the H-bomb at precisely the time when it should have been stepped up. The result was an overwhelming victory for Gaitskell at Blackpool last year.

During the last few months, there has been a spate of feverish witch-hunting by the Right wing. Prominent pacifists were almost expelled and the Young Socialist movement has been seriously weakened. Yet in all these apparently successful acts of McCarthyism, the Right wing were left with one main difficulty.

It was, and is, impossible for them to charge their victims with being members of pro-

ALAN WEST
from Brighton
see page 3

scribed organisations since it is difficult to provide proof which would convince even a court of capitalist law.

They thought, therefore, that by introducing the 'guilt by association' clause they would overcome this difficulty. If it had been written into the constitution, all they would have to do to expel members would be to produce the most flimsy evidence that they 'associated' with certain proscribed organisations, for them to be accused, charged and drummed out.

But the Right wing has come unstuck. The proposed amendment has been thrown out and the National Executive Committee face a real dilemma. Previously they could apply their own conception of what 'guilt by association' meant, but now the conference has decided categorically against any such ruling. This means that the Left wing can now operate and organise more boldly against the Right.

In this attempt to destroy the Left, Mr. Gaitskell has suffered an even more serious defeat than at the Scarborough conference. Had the Tribunes and other Lefts fought him for leadership of the Labour Party then this week's decision would have really been a triumphant occasion for them. But it is nothing of the sort.

cont. p. 3, col. 1

IN the course of the past weeks, many people, especially young workers, have been drawn into political activity by their instinctive hatred and contempt for the racist filth purveyed by the fascists. Clashes with the police have made many think about politics for the first time.

There is a tendency to see the present outbreak of fascist activity in isolation, as an objectionable accident. This mistaken view leads both to an over- and an under-estimation of the significance of the little groups of misfits and psychopaths, which make up the fascist gangs at present. While they are not in themselves of great consequence, they do indicate an important tendency in the political and economic situation developing in Britain today. The fight against fascism cannot be separated from the fight to throw out the Tories.

With the entry of Britain into the Common Market, a period of fierce competition will open up for British capital. Vast monopolies, wielding enormous power, must make war on the working class in order to compete more effectively against each other. Rising unemployment will assist their efforts to drive down living standards and safeguard profits. But they still have a powerful labour movement to deal with.

In Britain, they have a tame trade union leadership on their side. The power of the press is deployed to defend it against left-wing opposition, and the witchhunts in the ETU and in the Young Socialists are an important part of this process.

But even though the Labour leaders adapt themselves to the needs of the ruling class, they may not be strong enough to hold back the rank and file. That is where the fascists come in.

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However distasteful it may be to sections of the ruling class, the monopolies may require a weapon which can be used to smash the Labour movement. The desperation of the middle class and de-classed victims of monopoly capital is turned against the established institutions of society in the interests of the biggest of big business.

Fascism has to use rubbish like racialism to cover up its role. It must pretend to be extremely 'radical', while it prepares its gangs for violent action against the working class movement.

That is why the do-gooders, who make propaganda speeches explaining why racialism is wrong, without getting at its social roots, can never stop fascism growing. Indeed, they may even help it.

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They tell people to ignore the fascists and to avoid their meetings. Or, with the support of the Communist Party, they call for the Tory government to stop fascism by legislation.

Because they do not relate racialism to the need of the employers to split the working class, they imagine that it can be eliminated by passing a law.

The right-wing trade union and Labour Party leaders, in particular, aid the growth of fascism. Tied increasingly to the whole political set-up of capitalism, they identify themselves with the very society which creates unemployment, slum housing, and all the rest



Left must lead drive against fascism

By JOHN CRAWFORD

of the corruption of the profit system.

Failing to provide any real answers to these problems, they drive desperate people into the arms of the fascist demagogues in a period of crisis. Only by showing how the independent action of the organised working class will solve social problems, can the middle class and unorganised workers be drawn away from reaction.

The growth of support for the Liberal Party at this year's by-elections indicates the way in which an anti-working class trend could develop out of the crisis facing the Tories. Incidents involving racist violence show that a fascist movement

could find soil on which to grow in the next few years.

None of the groups of fascists to be seen disfiguring London streets at present may be used in the construction of the mass movement on which big business will eventually put its money. They compete for financial backing as experimental prototypes for a future fascist party.

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It is very important to continue the work of stopping the growth of these groups in the way we have seen in Trafalgar Square, Ridley Road, Croydon and Bethnal Green. But this type of action is only a beginning.

At this stage, the employers watch with interest the activities of the fascist groups, and the police protect their meetings. Later, they will be pushed much more to the fore, or even called to power. Then the whole state apparatus will be used to back them.

Out of the experience gained by local anti-fascist committees, socialists must draw the practical and theoretical lessons about the role of the police and the labour leaders in the struggle against fascism. This fight must be linked with the battles to get rid of the Tory government and to counter attacks on working class living standards.

The fight to stop the fascists

cannot be separated from the struggle against unemployment, for better housing, against war preparations, and for socialist policies in the Labour movement. That is why the development of a Marxist leadership is the key to the fight against the fascists.

The building of the Socialist Labour League is bound up with this activity. By laying the basis for an alternative to the misleadership of the Right wing and of Stalinism, the League strives to link together the various aspects of the political and industrial struggles going on today, basing itself on the theoretical and historical heritage of Marxism.

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This conscious understanding of the role of the working class is essential for the anti-fascist movement. It is through the united struggle of the working class that the fascists will be cleared off the streets and their backers in the employing class removed from power.

Housing—slums grow and the landlords profit

Britain in the Sixties: Housing.
By Stanley Alderson (Penguin Special, Price 3/6)

THAT capitalism, and its twin brother landlordism, can never solve the housing problem becomes crystal clear to anyone who reads this book. The misery of millions of workers living in heaps of junk is here translated into cold facts and figures.

The author argues that the vast majority of the three and one-third million houses built before 1880 should be immediately pulled down. When they were constructed there were neither minimum housing standards nor building regulations. Over 80 years of neglect have led to further deterioration.

If all houses in England and Wales over 75 years old were replaced in 20 years, Britain would need 300,000 new houses a year. Another 100,000 would be required for the formation of new households and about 25,000 to replace houses lost through redevelopment, new roads and changes in land use.

Thus, the author maintains, 425,000 houses a year would be required for 20 years. But the current building rate is 270,000 a year and of these, incidentally,

only about a half are built for rent. The situation is even worse in Scotland.

The figures in this book are a condemnation of the Tory government. 'One may safely say that slums are being created at a rate a good deal faster than 60,000 a year' (the current replacement rate).

'Over half of the households in privately rented (unfurnished) property in England have no fixed bath of their own. Five per cent have no kitchen sink, 8 per cent no flush lavatory and 53 per cent no hot water. . . . About 26,000 baths a year are being installed in private property. At this rate it will take a century and a quarter to equip the more than three million privately rented houses that now either have no bath or a shared one.'

The property racket is exposed by Alderson. Thus one property dealer who bought a 32 acre plot of vacant ground at Hounslow, has seen its value go up to £3 million. Fabulous prices for land pushed up the price of new houses by 25 per cent in the three years 1959-61.

What a mockery these figures make of the fascists' lies on housing. It was mill and factory owners who laid the basis for the housing shortage 100 years ago by

refusing to build decent houses at that time. Their capitalist grandsons carry on the old traditions. How can any coloured worker—who, the book shows, gets the worst of it both in housing and unemployment—be responsible?

The main weakness of the book is that the author—one-time literary editor of *The Manager* and a guild socialist—is full of middle class prejudices. He believes that subsidies for council property should be abolished. (But the subsidy goes to pay the money lender not the tenant.)

Rented property has deteriorated because rent control has been 'hard on landlords'. (The dividends of the investment companies and housing trusts which the author does not quote, hardly bear out this argument.) 'Municipalisation of rented property was a non-starter.'

The British working class cannot wait 20 years to solve the housing problem. The housing problem can be solved—but only by socialist action. Land, finance (banks, investment companies, and building societies) and the building industry must be nationalised.

Rented property must be taken over by the local authorities and the homeless must be immediately housed in empty property, without waiting for requisitioning powers (which will never be granted by the Tory government). Interest on housing (both by local authorities and the individual working or middle class buyer) must be abolished, and house building accelerated.

This policy if it is to be operated requires a new leadership in the Labour and trade union movement.

David Finch

Labour Review Autumn issue

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Racial violence shakes America

U.S. Labour must organize to root it out

By ERIC NEILSON

THE last few days have seen the Southern United States of America racked by another wave of race hatred. The crisis centred around the refusal of Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett to accept the ruling of the Federal authorities on the question of James Meredith, a young negro wishing to enrol at the University of Oxford, Mississippi. Already lives have been lost in violent riots and the town is now occupied by about 10,000 troops. The entire population of Oxford is not more than 7,000.

Since the similar experiences with Governor Faubus at Little Rock, negro and white workers and students have been protesting against the vicious apartheid which exists in the 'confederate' states. Through their 'sit-ins', boycotts and demonstrations they have won certain concessions.

But as yet these victories have only been achieved in a very limited field. The right to eat in certain restaurants and to go to certain schools is not enough. Before the racial question can be settled a blow must be struck at the roots of the problem.

Racialism in the United States serves exactly the same purpose as racialism in Britain. It is the tool used by the employers to split up the working class. Where racialism hits hardest in the USA is in the wage packet.

In 1959 the average yearly wage for a white family was \$5,252. The figure for non-

whites was \$2,672. This discrepancy is not due to the employers preferring any one particular racial group; it springs from a calculated intention on their part to keep the working class divided.

This is where the trade unions come into the picture. When black and white workers are united in a trade union against the common enemy, the splitting tactics of the bosses are upset.

In the north, where the trade union movement is strong, the employers have a far more difficult task to keep down wages. This is why many industries are now moving southwards to those states which are traditional centres of reaction.

They know that in this less highly industrialised section of the USA the Labour movement is relatively weak. There they have the state and local governments, in which the vast majority of negroes is usually unrepresented, together with organisations such as the Ku Klux Klan, to do their dirty work for them.

They choose to move to the South simply in order to obtain cheaper labour. The only method of fighting this is by strengthening the trade union movement in this area.

TROOPS

To support the sending of Federal troops to Oxford is no way to fight racialism. Those who give such support are in fact giving a vote of confidence to the Kennedy government. Yet since when has Kennedy come down on the side of a strong trade union movement? Since when has Kennedy called for better wages and conditions for black and white workers?

These Federal troops can and will at a later date be used against the working class. Those who support their use at the present time are playing the same role as the many so-called socialists in Britain who call for Tory legislation against the fascists, and in France for giving de Gaulle special powers for dealing with the OAS.

ACTION

If coloured workers are being attacked, it is up to the working class to take its own independent action to protect them. The word action does not mean passive, 'non-violent' protest—the non-violence of demonstrators has not prevented them from being savagely beaten up by racist mobs and the state police.

The American workers must form their own defence committees. The AFL-CIO must resume its drive to unionise the South and fight to desegregate its own affiliated unions.

Labour Conference marks time

By ALAN WEST,
Our Labour Correspondent

THE atmosphere at Brighton is one of dogged determination to unite the Party in time for the General Election. But the very fact that unity with the present leadership means accepting policies which can in no way solve the problems facing the Labour movement, has plunged the conference into long stretches of apathy and boredom. In the view of many delegates, this is the dullist conference for years.

In the first big debate on Monday, on transport, the chairman, Harold Wilson, called a selection of trade union leaders after Sidney ('some of my members think I'm a Conservative') Greene had rushed through a jumbled speech calling for an 'integrated' transport policy.

Appeal to the Tories

Tallon, Bradley and Cousins followed in quick succession, each attacking Beeching and Marples, but appealing to the Tories to change their present policies.

When Mr. Wilson terminated the debate by calling on Ray Gunter, a lone delegate called out 'What about the rank and file?' Wilson replied that he had had to call all the union leaders. He might have added, as one paper did, in order to stop a few militants getting to the microphone.

A few veiled threats

Mr. Gunter made a long, repetitive and empty speech in which he against called for an 'integrated transport system. For the sake of clarity, a delegate might have asked what exactly the re-

formists mean by this term. He also uttered a few veiled threats about possible future action by the rail unions—threats which he quickly denied when interviewed later on television.

The day ended with a turgid debate on housing and a truncated one on education. Anthony Greenwood, reading with obvious



Gaitskell: 'stand firm'

disinterest from notes prepared by the Research Department, explained the new policy on housing, an explanation which left no one any the wiser, notably Mr. Greenwood himself. He concluded by asking the movers of a composite motion on municipalisation to remit it to the NEC. Failing this, he asked conference to reject it.

The matter went to a card vote and the resolution was defeated by a very narrow majority. Thus the Party is not committed to any real policy with which to attack the power of the landlords, who profit out of the misery of people crowded into slum buildings at exorbitant rents.

Tuesday morning was largely taken up by a discussion on the Health Service and the drug

industry. Following the general trend, there was much noisy demagoguery from the platform but few concrete proposals in the resolutions.

Eloquent call for justice

The secret session which dealt with the 'guilt by association' amendment was made notable by the eloquence of Elwyn Jones, QC, calling for freedom and justice in the Party, a slashing attack by Bob Willis on George Brown and the usual wild invective of Mr. Mr. Charles Pannell which helped swing the delegates against the amendment.

Then came Wednesday, the day which all those trade union leaders who have been draping themselves in Union Jacks had been waiting for—the Common Market debate. Despite all the hot air, flag waving and press propaganda, this was undoubtedly the most unimportant debate of the week.

Hell-bent on Europe

Perhaps the delegates thought that their decision would make an impression on the Tories, who are hell-bent on getting into Europe.

Gaitskell received an ovation for an 83-minute speech in which he referred enthusiastically to the 'Mother Country' and the Commonwealth and obtained the expected support for the policy of the Labour Party: pressing the Tories to get the best possible terms for British capital in Europe.

MEANING WHAT?

'If this should not prove possible we must stand firm by what we believe for the sake of Britain, the Commonwealth and the world, and we shall not flinch from our duty if that moment comes.'

Gaitskell, Wednesday

Witchhunt cont. from page one

It marks, in fact, a victory for the Marxist forces who have fought on at this conference despite overwhelming odds. It opens the way for a new left-wing leadership under their influence.

The rank and file of the Party and the trade unions are in a restive mood. Although they want to preserve unity to win the next General Election, they are deeply suspicious of such full-time politicians as George Brown. Memories of Ramsay MacDonald hang heavily over the assembly.

Gaitskell has succeeded in reversing the Scarborough anti-H-bomb decision, but he has been beaten in precisely that part of the struggle which was for him decisive. The witch-hunters' axe has been blunted and the right-wing leadership has not been strengthened.

The defeat of Mr. James Callaghan in the elections for the National Executive Committee was a blow against Gaitskell. Not one of his supporters succeeded in election to the Constituency section of the NEC. This section is still dominated by people vaguely adhering to the Left.

The Brighton conference revealed that because of the lack of alternative leadership, Mr. Gaitskell, in fact, leads by default. Marxists must redouble their efforts to provide in the months ahead a new leadership advocating socialist policy.

EVERY year the Board of Inland Revenue publishes a Blue Book purporting to give detailed information regarding the distribution of incomes, and the incidence of tax amongst different sections of the population.

People like Professor Paish have used these reference books as the basis for learned papers 'proving' that there has been a marked redistribution of income since 1938.

But statistics are not sacred. Their work is dependent on the inclusion of all the facts, not only selected ones. Professor R. M. Titmuss has just carried out a most useful survey which exposes the falsity of economic theories based on statistics reflecting the so-called levelling of incomes.

His *Income Distribution and Social Change* (Allen & Unwin, 25/-) examines the data on which official statistics are based and finds them completely deficient.

When changes in social patterns are taken into account, such as the vast number of married women working today and much earlier marriage compared with pre-war, the weaknesses of the government tables are revealed.

A man and wife both earning, rank as an 'individual' for tax purposes, and their joint income is treated as the income of only one person, thus completely nullifying the use of Blue Book figures as a source of information as to what section of the population earns what part of the total income.

City Slants by colin chance

Not only are the Board's available statistics unreliable. In order to assess the true income of top families, it is necessary to have information about family settlements and discretionary trusts (formulae for vesting capital on minors to escape death duties).

But the Board do not know the number of such settlements and trusts in operation. It has been

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Figures do lie

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estimated that these comprise assets of over £8,000 million, but there are no available records and it could be considerably more than that figure.

The trusts have enabled vast fortunes to remain in families for several generations without the capital ever having been reduced by death duty liability. Similarly, huge life assurances have been written under the Married Woman's Property Act, so that inheritances will never attract death duties.

Professor Titmuss quotes Mr. Grundy Milton, an authority on the subject of tax 'planning', thus: 'As far as estate duty is concerned

the Revenue benefit almost exclusively from the unlucky, the ungenerous and the unwise. Anyone who is prepared to divest himself of most of his assets and does so with proper advice, should not—given luck—trouble his executors with estate duty problems.'

The book examines the definition of income as used by the taxing authorities, and finds it completely inequitable. Buying shares with a low dividend yield but a high degree of expected capital appreciation suits the surtax payer who grows richer free of all taxes. The legal distinction between capital and income favours the wealthy to the disadvantage of the poor.

Whereas the market capitalisation of Woolworth's shares is some £280 million, this is represented by book values of some £39 million (1955 figures). The difference has never attracted tax in the hands of the shareholder. This sort of differential applies to most public companies.

Whether it is the mechanics of tax-saving pension schemes, 'benefits in kind' for big businessmen, or educating the children of the rich at the expense of the generality of taxpayers, Professor Titmuss exposes all these devices and more. He has performed a great service by so doing.



Industrial Newsletter

Saturday October 6, 1962

Scots labour fights unemployment

Unions must campaign for ban on overtime

By BOB SHAW, Our Scottish Correspondent

THE Scottish trade union movement faces this winter its toughest fight since the 1930s: to defeat the threat of unemployment. The economic policies of the Tory government condemns thousands of families to live on unemployment relief, in continuous struggle to keep up with mounting rents, rates, transport and food costs.

On September 10, the number of unemployed was 82,780, 20,742 more than a year ago and 3.8 per cent of the total labour force in Scotland. The rate of increase, now higher than in 1961, threatens to bring peak unemployment during the slack winter months to a figure exceeding 1959, when over 100,000 were out of work.

In Glasgow, there is to be an immediate run-down of 1,100 men at Cowlairs and St. Rollox railway workshops.

Pits are to close in all of Scotland's coalfields and 5,000 miners will be redundant this winter. There is very little prospect of other employment being provided for miners in some areas: workers and their families face real destitution.

Many engineering factories on the Clyde also have lists of redundancies and workers such as those at Rolls-Royce are being advised to seek employment elsewhere.

The fight against unemployment is not one to 'save the Scottish economy', as stated by the Executive of the Scottish TUC, but a battle to unite the unemployed workers with those in work to defeat the Tory plans.

'INDUCEMENT'

Instead of starting with the necessary unity of all workers, the STUC talks of its objective being 'to arrest the industrial decline and to provide for expansion'. An appeal is made for 'special consideration for Scotland's exceptional problem by 'extraordinary measures of inducement'.

The only inducement which the monopolies are likely to take note of is the prospect of making massive profits. The exceptional position which Scotland occupies is the unenviable one of having very low rates of pay and an army of unemployed.

All talk of offering inducement to employers to come to Scotland and appeals for government 'direction' turn out to be the most reactionary and dangerous propaganda for the employers. Not only will such appeals fail to solve the unemployment problem, but their effect is to divert attention from the main fight. This is to unite the unemployed workers with those at present in jobs, who are themselves fighting against super-exploitation and sweat-shop conditions.

In many engineering factories on the Clyde and elsewhere overtime is being worked whilst union members are walking the streets looking for jobs. In some factories men are on short-time working, alongside those working

a full week.

Some employ temporary labour, laid off each time there is redundancy, so that a certain number of workers spend a few months of each year on the dole.

The district committee of each union should review the number of their members unemployed each week. All overtime should be automatically banned until all are found work.

The strong Trades Councils in Glasgow, Clydebank, Dundee, Aberdeen and other towns should immediately give a lead in asking all affiliated unions to start such a campaign in the main industrial areas. Trades Councils should themselves go to the factory gates and explain the need for unity of those in work with the unemployed.

There are now five unemployed young workers for every available job. Many are forced to take

dead-end labouring jobs whilst others return to school. The unemployed youth should be asked to sign a declaration that once employed they would join a union. Those who sign such a pledge should be given the same opportunities for employment as unemployed trade unionists.

The engineering confederation is on record for the 40-hour week. The miners and many other unions have also said that they would like the introduction of the shorter working week.

Now is the time to campaign and to fight for this demand. The employers should be forced to concede the shorter working week without loss of pay to absorb the unemployed.

By such a struggle the working class will strengthen the labour and trade union movement in a fight to bring down the Tory government. The way can be cleared for the operation of socialist policies of nationalisation and planning as an alternative to the aims of the monopolies.

Glasgow stewards meet redundancy menace

AT the quarterly meeting of AEU shop stewards in Glasgow last Sunday, a resolution demanding the immediate and complete banning of overtime as a first step to compel the employers to absorb some of the unemployed workers, was passed unanimously. AEU shop stewards from all the main engineering and shipbuilding establishments in Glasgow and Clydebank were in attendance.

The resolution was moved by Communist Party Councillor, Arnold Henderson. Whilst the Right wing 'accepted' the resolution, it was obvious to many stewards that they intend to let it rest at that, and not put it into effect if they can possibly get away with it.

They were annoyed with the terms of the resolution, which seeks to make the union really use its power to challenge the employers and force them to re-employ unemployed workers.

Moves are now afoot by some of the stewards to exert pressure on the Glasgow AEU District Committee to implement the resolution.

Another resolution unanimously endorsed was proposed on behalf

of the Olivetti Shop Stewards' Committee by its convenor, Peter Murray. This called on the General Council of the Scottish TUC to initiate a 24-hour token stoppage around the slogan of bringing down the Tory government and forcing a General Election.

The resolutions demanding action against the menace of unemployment reflect the growing anxiety of the working class at the situation. The main obstacle in the path of the workers who want to see their union being used to defend their conditions, is that section of the officials who see in the unions only an instrument for negotiation with the employers, and who are afraid to mobilise the workers for a struggle. Those are the elements that have to be fought and removed from their positions at all levels in the unions.

The quarterly meeting of the Paisley and District AEU shop stewards also endorsed a resolution calling for a ban on overtime. When the resolution, was moved on behalf of the Pressed Steel shop committee, the mover said that the ban should remain operative until all unemployed in the district obtained employment.

Docks plans are threat to portworkers

By REG PERRY

THE smashing of the Dock Labour Scheme; a strengthening of employers' authority and direct control over labour; a contract system of employment with a mobile disciplined labour force, subject to every whim and fancy of the employer; and an increase in mechanisation. These are the plans of the National Port Employers made clear last week with the publication of their 'decasualisation' scheme and supported by the report of the Rochdale Committee of Enquiry into the major ports of Britain.

Like the Beeching plan for the railways and the economy plans of the London Transport Executive for the buses, the aim of the port employers is to provide an efficient, competitive and profitable transport system for the British employers. In these considerations the port-worker is nothing more than a debit or credit figure on the annual balance sheet.

DISTRUST

Already, the implications of these proposals are being discussed in the branches of the Transport and General Workers' Union and the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers Union. They must be treated with the greatest scepticism and distrust by all portworkers.

The main proposals of the Rochdale Report are:

1. To restrict the Dock Labour scheme to recruiting and keeping the register of dockworkers.
2. The establishment of a National Ports Authority to co-ordinate the plans of the port employers and the big industrial monopolies.
3. For portworkers to be directly employed by private employers on a permanent basis and under a signed contract.
4. For shift-work and more mechanisation.
5. For a reduction in the number of employers, and for increased powers for the remaining large employers.

According to a leaflet being circulated by the NASD, the proposals for decasualisation are even more blatantly aimed at destroying existing conditions in the docks. 'Men will be offered a form of contract and agree to honour the requirements of the scheme and all negotiated industrial agreements.' Men in breach of their contract will be subject to the disciplinary action of the employer.

The terms of the contract demanded by the employers are harsh. There must be a greater mobility of gangs and the employers reserve the right to

increase or decrease the strength of the gangs 'depending on the type of gear to be used'. The document makes it clear that by mobility they mean that workers must be at the continual beck and call of the boss. Manning scales will be determined by the employers and there must, says the document, be improved time-keeping.

Under these conditions the clause in the contract that covers strikes is vicious. 'Any man taking part in a strike will forfeit all rights to any further benefit under his contract for so long as he withholds his labour. His contract may be cancelled, depending upon the circumstances of each incident.'

In the case of sectional strikes, the contracts of other categories of labour prevented from working may be temporarily suspended.

MONOPOLIES

Dockworkers should be perfectly clear about these plans. The so-called decasualisation plan is intended to institute the direct employers 'hiring and firing' system which operates in industry generally, with the added sting that workers will be tied to a contract which takes away all the safeguards and checks including the right to strike against the attacks of the port employers.

The proposals of the Rochdale Committee for a reduction of the number of employers is a move to encourage the growth of monopolies. In this way it is hoped to squeeze out the inefficient smaller firms who are often less willing to take the firm stand against the unions and dockworkers which the employers are demanding for the future.

These plans must be resisted and the case for nationalisation of the port transport industry, implicitly proved in the report but not acknowledged, must be fought for. Only then can the inadequacies of the Dock Labour Scheme be ironed out and decasualisation carried through to the benefit of all portworkers.