

The Newsletter

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The dirty oil war

Wilson backs Home

EDITORIAL

Two-faced action shows up union crisis

THE unanimous decision of the National Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union to endorse a resolution calling for the nationalization of the basic industries underlines the deep-going nature of the crisis within the British trade union movement.

The growth of automation in the engineering industry, particularly in steel and motor car manufacturing, is forcing rank and file members to consider seriously the need for overall nationalization of that industry. These demands are bound to increase within the trade union movement in the next period, but it would be wrong to exaggerate their significance. At the same time as the AEU calls for a revolutionary solution to the problems of the industry it covers, it ties itself more and more to the capitalist state machine.

The acceptance of the principle of an industrial court to enquire into the strike which recently took place at the Steel Company of Wales is an example of... As the AEU National Committee delegates were voting through the resolution for nationalization on one day, the Executive Council of the Union was urging its members employed at the Jaguar plant at Coventry to return to work, almost on the next day.

But it is precisely in large plants like Jaguar that the problem of automation and the need for socialist solutions is greatest.

What is the use of carrying pious resolutions on nationalization and then proceeding to dampen down the struggles of engineers in Coventry? Nationalization cannot be achieved without large-scale class action.

This fundamental conflict between the tendencies in the AEU cannot go on for very long.

Those militants who want to see the AEU play a leading role in achieving the nationalization of the basic industries should appreciate that as a union it is quite unable to carry through this great political task.

Trade unions are organisations for the protection of the minimum conditions of livelihood of their members. They are utterly unprepared and unable to take power. This can only be done by the building of a revolutionary party.

Emphasising the demands contained in the transitional programme of the Fourth International, the resolution adopted by the Conference of the Socialist Labour League on March 14, 15 and 16 this year, said:

"The essence of the Transitional Programme" is that these demands are fought for in preparation for a struggle for state power, under the leadership of a revolutionary party. Only under such a leadership would transitional demands mean a decisive change in the character of trade unions.

The important task before all militant members of the AEU is not just to remain militant workers carrying left resolutions at Conference, but to prepare for the building of the revolutionary party out of the growing discontent inside their union.

Only this party, which the Socialist Labour League is fighting to build, can implement the nationalization decision of the AEU National Committee.

* Transitional Programme of the Fourth International, New Park Publications Ltd., 186a Clapham High St., London, S.W.4, phone 1/-.

‘In the face of an almost world-wide critical campaign against Britain over Aden there is a gratifying measure of general agreement among the three British parties on the essentials of policy.’

The Daily Telegraph (13/5/64)

ONCE again Harold Wilson crawls along behind the Tories on matters of foreign policy. He pledges full support for the oil war in South Arabia. A few days ago he argued the case for more tanks to be sent to Cyprus; he now calls for more helicopters for the military brass-hat Major-General Cubbon.

The present shooting stage of the war in South Arabia was planned on the basis of a lie. The army high command mobilised two thousand troops. To justify their intervention, a horror story was deliberately invented to the effect that the heads of two British soldiers killed in battle had been displayed in Ta'iz, the Yemeni capital.

The rest was left to the Fleet Street yellow press. Hours after this outburst of jingoism, the story was revealed to be a lie from start to finish.

All this had no meaning for Wilson and the right-wing leadership. They continued to blindly follow the Tories even though a serious split over the war itself had broken out between the powerful groups within Lord Home's cabinet.

John Bull

'The Economist' of May 9, representing one of these groups, says:

'It became clear this week that only the most stubborn John Bulls were prepared to defend the perpetuation of Britain's connection with archaic Arabian regimes. With perhaps a prickle of treachery in their hearts, but with realism shining from their eyes, nearly all British commentators have agreed that the cost is high and the gain without substance.'

It is common knowledge that Butler and Sandys are at loggerheads over the way in which the war is being conducted.

Instead of taking advantage of this division and calling for the withdrawal of all British troops from the Middle East, where they are universally hated and despised, Harold Wilson strives to out-do the diehard Tories in their quest for vengeance.

1,000 lb. bombs

But what is the war all about?

We read about 1,000 lb. bombs being used against tribesmen armed with rifles in the Radfan mountains. But who in Britain wants the Radfan mountains?

In whose interests are these killings carried out? It all centres around the oil port of Aden and the luscious profits flowing into the coffers of Shell and B.P.

Under a socialist government

Crisis in the Communist Party:

— See page two —

these oil companies should, of course, be nationalized, but since Wilson opposes nationalization he naturally treads the imperialist path in defending their interests by naked force.

No change

The Tory foreign policy of the right-wing Labour leaders in South Arabia today emphasises once more that the Labour leaders have no intention of changing anything in capitalist Britain and that they will defend its possessions overseas.

Where are the peace-loving MPs around 'Tribune' on the Left? Why the silence? The

answer is simple. They are all looking to their seats in the General Election. No one wants to rock the imperialist boat.

The Newsletter has consistently warned the labour movement that with the policy which we now see in the Middle East, a Labour government under Wilson's leadership will betray the working class. We call upon the rank and file of the trade unions and the Labour Party to force these right-wing leaders to immediately fight for the withdrawal of all troops from the Middle East or resign.

The Arab people must have the right to decide their own future.

No 40-hr week by July, dockers fear

DOCKWORKERS' suspicions that a deal betraying their working conditions was being prepared in the 40-hour week agreement have now been confirmed.

The agreement reached last June between the National Association of Port Employers and leaders of the Transport and General Workers' Union promised the 40-hour week would start on July 27 of this year.

At the time this was heralded as a great victory by the TGWU.

Since then union leaders have consistently confirmed that the agreement was signed and sealed and would automatically come into effect on the date promised.

It has now been revealed that the port employers only made a provisional agreement after receiving a promise from the TGWU officials that important practices, which dockers have established over the years to protect wages and working conditions, would be conceded.

The difficulties for the TGWU officials have arisen because dockers on Merseyside refused to sacrifice these same protective practices when they rejected the employers' 'new deal'.

INCONCLUSIVE

Reporting the last meeting between the Port Employers and the Transport and General Workers' Union on April 29, the 'Financial Times' says:

'The meeting was long and inconclusive because the agreement, although drawn up in provisional form last June, contains two "pre-conditions" which the employers want fulfilled before July.

'The most important pre-condition is that arrangements should be reached in each port to ensure that "a reasonable amount of overtime is worked", when required on Saturday

RELUCTANT

Even this paper of high finance and industry is forced to admit that: 'The docker is reluctant to sacrifice important protective practices which help to keep his earnings high. He argues that if he will not trade such practices for decasualisation, why should he do so for an hours agreement virtually settled last year?'

These latest moves should act as a warning to all dockers. The port employers will not rest until they have destroyed the present working agreements on manning scales, mobility of gangs, overtime and tea breaks.

Manoeuvres behind the scenes of the TGWU follow the patterns of sell-out and betrayal.

But it should now be quite clear that unless a fight is prepared the leaders of the TGWU will accept the conditions the employers are demanding.

After the meeting on April 29, Sir Andrew Crichton, chairman of the National Association of Port Employers, told the press: 'Progress is being made towards

(Continued on page 2)

Prepare for wage freeze under Labour

Veiled warning from P.O. union leader

FRESH from his recent betrayal of the postmen's demand for higher wages, general secretary of the Union of Post Office Workers, Ron Smith, told delegates to the union's annual conference this week to prepare for wage restraint under a Labour government.

Smith is the first union leader to give this warning publicly but he sugared the pill with appeals for unity behind a victory for Labour.

'Let us be very careful that we, as a trade union movement, do not destroy a Labour government before it is elected,' he said.

He then went on to explain, in veiled terms, that such a Labour government would operate a wage freeze.

His obvious support for wage restraint is adding insult to injury and should not be tolerated by the rank and file of the UPW.

As one of the six trade union representatives on the National Economic Development Council Smith naturally defends the council and wage restraint. He said 'a Labour government will need a comprehensive council of this kind'.

Council

A Labour government under the right wing, led by Wilson, and tied to the interests of monopoly capitalism will need such a council.

Rank and file militants must have different ideas. They should fight against any form of wage freeze and for a Labour government pledged to socialist policies.

In April, post office workers showed they were not prepared to accept a measly offer from Chancellor of the Exchequer Maudling. They were all prepared for a one-day stoppage.

But after some discussion with George Woodcock, general sec-

retary of the Trades Union Congress and a fellow member of NEDDY, Smith sold out the postmen.

The final settlement, which Smith hailed as a victory, was a four-man committee to consider 'fair comparison' of postmen's wages with those of other civil servants.

What is worrying Labour leaders so much is that the postmen will make further demands for wages after the committee makes its report.

Contribution

So, they sent Smith along to the annual conference to tell his men to pull in their belts. They had to recognise that they must make a contribution to schools, housing, hospitals and roads by not making wage demands, he said.

If Wilson was prepared to take up a fight with big business and nationalize on the basis of previous party conference decisions, there would be no need to ask workers like the postmen to wait for 'economic planning' by NEDDY.

Against the advice of the executive, delegates at the conference voted for a closed shop in the Post Office.

Speaking against the resolution, Smith said that neither a Tory nor Labour government would stand for a closed shop.

Obviously, for a Labour government a closed shop with a militant rank and file leadership would be a threat to any policies of wage restraint.

Czech students expelled after march

GIVING the lie to protests from the Czech Press Agency (CTK)—echoed by the 'Daily Worker'—that only one student took part in the May Day demonstrations in Prague, reports from the capital state that disciplinary action has been taken against students of the Charles University (Prague's main university), the Houtska College and the Economics High School.

It appears that hundreds of students have been expelled and that some professors have been threatened with suspension.

Party officials at the college have been dismissed for 'lack of vigilance'.

DISOBEYED ORDERS

Even more worrying to the bureaucracy than the actual demonstration, in which slogans like 'Long Live Freedom' and 'Down with the Gestapo' were shouted, is the fact that the police refused to obey orders and break up the demonstration when it began.

It was only after the students marched into the centre of the town, where they demonstrated in the Wenceslas Square that the police intervened.

But even then they did so in such a half-hearted manner that the state security force had to be called in.

Nor is there any sign of the present revolt of intellectuals subsiding.

STAND

The Slovak literary magazine 'Kulturny Zivot', which has recently been attacked by the bureaucracy, has stated that it will continue to stand for 'everything new, humane and progressive' and has rejected charges that it has interfered in matters that the Communist Party has already solved.

An editorial in the journal said it would not disassociate itself from contributors who were accused of revisionism and liberalism.

Nothing, the paper stated, would be more immortal than to accept such criticism.

The journal's policy, the article concluded, has been correct in substance.

Prison for Spanish unionists

THREE members of the Syndicalist Workers' Alliance of Spain have been arrested and face prison sentences for association with the Alliance and distributing illegal propaganda.

Mariano Pascual, regional secretary of the Alianza Sindical in Catalonia, faces three years' prison; Francisco Calle, secretary of the Alianza and a National Committee member of the National Confederation of Labour (CNT), six years; and José Cases, who is accused of printing the illegal propaganda, five years.

All three were arrested on February 7, it is disclosed by the Co-ordination Committee of the Alianza in a letter to the CNT in Exile.

Outlawed

The Alianza, formed by the General Union of Workers, the CNT and a Basque workers' organisation—all of them outlawed by the Franco regime—are continuing work, especially among the Asturian miners and metalworkers, who are at the moment on strike.

In a May Day leaflet, the Alianza called for students and teachers to link up with workers in the development of 'liberation work'.

'Free Spain, Free Abarca' march: see page 3



Rusk threatens Cuba K remains silent

WHEN Khrushchev withdrew his missiles from Cuba after threats from Washington, the Stalinist leaders and their press hailed it as an 'act of statesmanship' which had 'saved the peace of the world'.

They solemnly announced to the world that there could be no invasion of Cuba nor any threat of armed attack.

Now Mr. Dean Rusk, Secretary of State, has given the lie to this Stalinist deception by declaring at a NATO ministers' meeting that another 'eyeball confrontation' would occur if Castro tried to stop the reconnaissance flights of US aircraft over Cuba.

Not only that. The plan to blockade and isolate Cuba is to be continued no matter what risks and dangers such a policy entails.

Mr. George W. Ball, the Under-Secretary of State, in a radio and TV interview, cynically boasted that the US policy of economic denial has been successful and that the Cuban economy was 'at its lowest point in 20 years'.

US imperialism wants to starve Cuba into submission. If she has had any success so far it is due almost entirely to the opportunism of Khrushchev and the Soviet bureaucracy.

Is it not strange that Khrushchev should rattle the sabre at British imperialism in Egypt while remaining silent on Mr. Rusk's threats to Cuba?

The Cuban people have been betrayed once. They must not be betrayed again.

Only mass action by the world working class can save Cuba from aerial attack and invasion.

ACCORDING to the national newspapers a large-scale purge of members of the Young Communist League and Communist student organisations is now under way.

Mr. William Lauchlan, national organiser of the Party, in a statement ('Daily Worker' May 9) entitled 'Disruption their purpose' said:

'It has recently come to our attention that the Socialist Labour League, a Trotskyist organisation, has sent some of its members into our Student and Young Communist League branches for the purpose of disruption.'

Mr. Lauchlan is well aware that this is a lie from beginning to end.

The Socialist Labour League has not sent a single member into the Communist Party.

Discontent

It has no need to because so great is the discontent, especially amongst the youth, with the reformist 'peaceful co-existence' policies of the leadership that they are quite capable of politically exposing people such as Lauchlan by themselves.

The present purge began when a young student, who was present at the National Conference of the Socialist Labour League on March 14, 15 and 16, after a great deal of pressure in an interrogation lasting several hours, handed over one of our conference documents to the leaders of the Communist Party in King Street.

List

From this 'evidence' the witch-hunting Party chiefs have compiled a list of young oppositionists whom they want to get rid of at all costs. Some of these are amongst their most influential leaders in the universities and the Young Communist League.

Their procedure is simple and very much like that employed by the right wing of the Labour Party.

An 'enquiry' is arranged, to which a number of people are invited ostensibly to discuss their political opinions.

In practice this 'enquiry' turns

out to be a court which forthwith recommends the expulsion of those whom they want to get rid of, without any charges or evidence being brought against them. It is anticipated that the present purge may well involve over a hundred young people.

The crude frame-up methods of the Stalinist chiefs is similar to the technique employed by Stalin himself. He coined the phrase 'enemies of the people'. Gollan and Lauchlan call the opposition 'enemies of the party'.

The vilest slander of all is the charge that those who want to discuss their differences of policy within the Party are guilty of disruption.

No one has done more to besmirch the good name of communism in Britain than the present leaders in King Street. They covered up and justified all Stalin's crimes against the international working class.

Examples

Let us take a few examples. In his speech to the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956, Khrushchev referred to Lenin's last Testament which said:

'Stalin is excessively rude, and this defect, which can be freely tolerated in our midst and in contacts among us Communists, becomes a defect which cannot be tolerated in one holding the position of the Secretary General. Because of this, I propose that the comrades consider the method by which Stalin would be removed from this position and by which another man would be selected for it, a man who, above all, would differ from Stalin in only one quality, namely, greater tolerance, greater loyalty, greater kindness and more considerate attitude towards the comrades, a less capricious temper, etc.'

Throughout Stalin's lifetime Andrew Rothstein, a leading member of the Communist Party, insisted that this statement was a Trotskyist forgery.

Communist Party crisis (1)

The real disrupters

by GERRY HEALY

After the 20th Congress speech, he admitted that he knew of the existence of the Testament since the middle of the 1920s.

Whilst Stalin was organising the murder of Lenin's old colleagues in their thousands and disrupting the CPSU, Rothstein remained silent and deliberately misled the rank and file of the British Party. Needless to say he has not been expelled for disruption.

J. R. Campbell, in his book 'Soviet Foreign Policy and its Critics 1939' justified the trial and execution of General Tukhachevsky on the grounds that he was an agent for the fascist Trotsky.

Tukhachevsky

The murder of Tukhachevsky and the generals who associated with him endangered the Soviet Union militarily, making it easier for the Nazis to organise their invasion in 1941.

Although this was revealed by Khrushchev in his 20th Congress speech, J. R. Campbell has not written a single line to explain his support for Stalin's actions—actions which cost the Soviet Union very dear.

In 1951 James Klugman, another leading member of the Communist Party, wrote a book denouncing Tito as an agent of Trotsky and international fascism.

Lies

Although this book was later admitted to be a pack of lies, Mr. Klugman not only remains a full-time functionary at King Street, but is also educational director of the Party.

Mr. W. Lauchlan, who is now leading the witch-hunt, was national organiser of the Party during the Electrical Trades Union ballot rigging scandal era.

As an important Party functionary, he worked alongside Mr. Frank Haxell, then General Secretary of the ETU and member of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party.

The antics of Haxell resulted in the right wing gaining a decisive victory under conditions where this progressive union is now entirely under right-wing leadership.

Funds

In the April 1964 issue of the Electrical Trades Union journal, 'Electron', Mr. Haxell describes some of the things he got up to during the time he was sitting on the Executive Committee meetings alongside Mr. Lauchlan:

'In 1959, when I was General Secretary of the Union, Mr. Odlin, otherwise known as Dick Reno, made certain allegations as to the use of the Union's Funds for my benefit. Among the allegations was one that a considerable amount of the Union's cash had been spent without authority on the improvement of property known as No. 57 Clarence Road, Bromley, Kent, in which I lived and on the installation of a garage there.'

'At the Annual Delegate Conference of the Union held at Bridlington in June 1959, in secret session, I said:

'Now, of course, we have the position of the building repairs and decorations to the premises in which I live. This did not start from an inspection of the books, because there is nothing in the books in connection with it. Indeed, how could there be? The funds of the Union have not been involved. I say to you very clearly, very definitely and decisively that not one penny of the Union's funds has been used in costs involved with either this property, its repair, building of garages or decorations. When I say 'the funds of the Union' I mean cash, time or labour costs. I

think quite frankly, that that is one of the most low and despicable stories ever put around this Union.' My statement was received with applause. It was well known to the audience that Mr. Odlin, who was present at the meeting, was one of those who had put around the story to which I have referred.

'I now find it necessary to correct what I said and to state to my deep regret that the funds and labour of the Union had in fact been involved to a substantial extent in the repair and improvement of No. 57 Clarence Road, which included the installation of a coke-fired central heating system with piping throughout the house which was at a later date converted to an oil-fired system.'

'Accordingly I tender this my public apology to Mr. Odlin and all those who supported him.'

'After I ceased to be General Secretary and a new Executive Council had been elected, the Union changed its solicitors and began proceedings against me and my wife in the course of which it was alleged:

(1) That it was arranged for the Union to spend a considerable sum of money upon the repair and improvement of No. 57 Clarence Road, which then belonged to someone else.

(2) That he let the property to me at the quarterly rent of £14 12s. 6d.

(3) That in September 1958, he sold the property to my wife for £950.

As a result largely of the repairs and improvements made at the Union's expense, the property was then worth very much more.

(4) In October 1959, my wife sold the property for £4,000. With the proceeds she purchased another house elsewhere.

'In these proceedings the Union claimed an account of the profit made and a charge on the property which my wife bought. Alternatively, the Union claims repayment of the moneys expended.'

'My wife and I obtained



Legal Aid to enable us to defend these proceedings, but while we consider we still have a Defence, the said allegations numbered (1) to (4) are substantially true and I therefore consider it right to see that the Union is not involved in any loss.

'Accordingly, it has been agreed that I pay the Union a sum of £2,000 with costs not exceeding £500, in settlement of all claims against my wife and myself arising out of the purchase of the property, any profit made on the resale of any outgoings in respect of the property.'

'Accordingly also I tender this my public apology to the Union and all its members.'

'Dated this 6th day of March, 1964.'

Signed F. L. HAXELL.'

Snoop

Betty Reid who is the big snoop for the Organisational Department in King Street and prides herself on being able to spot a Trotskyist a hundred miles away, rubbed shoulders with Haxell all the time and saw nothing wrong.

After Khrushchev's 20th Congress speech, the Communist Party lost 7,000 members. Having found out that they were politically and deliberately mis-

led as to the role of Stalin by such people as Rothstein, Campbell and Klugman, they simply dropped away and many of them were lost to the movement for good.

No one will suggest that Mr. Lauchlan knew about Mr. Haxell's financial transactions.

The members of the Political Committee at King Street are undoubtedly the most naive people whose obvious good nature and willingness to be loyal to each other opened the Communist Party to great disruption in the ETU.

They simply could not believe that Frank Haxell would do such a thing, although they will act immediately on the report of a petty informer who denounces his colleagues as Trotskyists.

From all this it should be perfectly clear that those who are really responsible for disrupting the Communist Party are the same people who are now conducting the witch-hunt.

Next week the second of this series of articles on the crisis of Stalinism called 'Trotskyism v. Stalinism' will appear in The Newsletter

Dockers 40-hour week

From page one

concluding the hours agreement. If the conditions are kept it will come into force in July.'

Commenting on this, Mr. Tim O'Leary, National Docks Group Secretary of the TGWU, said: 'Many dockers are leaving it until the last moment before resolving their doubts about what should be done, but I am sure the matter will be resolved before July 27.'

WHAT DOUBTS?

Merseyside dockers would like to know 'doubts' O'Leary is talking about. Since they were never informed that strings were attached to the 40 hour week proposals, and were never consulted about making concessions, how does O'Leary propose to resolve these doubts?

Already on Merseyside a campaign has been launched by the area committee of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers Union, (the 'Blue Union') against the underhand deal which is being prepared.

Meetings have been held this week at all the dock gates to warn dockers of the latest moves. The area committee of the NASD has drawn up its own demands which were unanimously agreed at a mass meeting of 1,000 dockers of both unions two weeks ago.

These proposals have been issued in a leaflet put out to all dockers this week.

PROPOSALS

These proposals are:

1. The 40-hour week to commence night shift working midnight Sunday to 7.00 a.m. Friday. Day shift working 8 a.m. Monday to 5 p.m. Friday.

2. 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Friday to be paid at the rate of double time and not to count against the guarantee.

3. Friday night shift working to be payable at three hours for one and not to be

counted against the guarantee.

4. Saturday working to be voluntary as is Sunday arrangement now. If accepted, no compulsion to work after 12 noon, except when ship is proceeding to sea, etc. Payment to be made at the rate of double time up to 12 noon, and three hours for one up to 4 p.m. with a guarantee of 12 hours' minimum. After 4 p.m. all payment to be at the rate of four hours for one.

5. All week-end requisitions to be engaged at the afternoon call on Friday. No additional call voluntary or otherwise.

6. Men engaged at 1 p.m. Friday for 1 p.m. start on Saturday to be paid from 8 a.m. Saturday at the appropriate rate.

7. Men engaged for Sunday working or ordered back for Sunday working to be guaranteed the full day's pay at the appropriate rate.

WARNING

The NASD conclude their leaflet with the warning: 'The committee feel it right and proper to remind all registered workers that the port employers have made it quite clear that the 40 hour week agreement will not be ratified until certain conditions are accepted and put into effect.'

'The consequences of these conditions could be so detrimental to the interests of the rank and file that they must be opposed.'

'The policy must be a 40-hour week first and consideration of the employers' submissions after.'

The area committee of the of the NASD intends to call a mass meeting for all Merseyside dockers in three weeks' time after their proposals have been considered, to decide on further action.

It has already been suggested that an overtime ban should be operated.

Latin America: A backward sub-continent dominated by American capital

by Tom Kemp

LATIN America is in an explosive stage of development. Within the next few years great events will take place in that part of the world which will either take it forward in a struggle against imperialism or throw its people back into apathy and hopelessness for a generation.

Latin America is made up of 20 countries, only three of which have a population of more than 20 million people. Five have less than 2 million.

This artificial division of a continent is the heritage of Spanish and Portuguese colonialism. It helps to hold back development and leave the separate states prostrate before American domination, from which only Cuba has so far, in any way, disentangled itself.

Peasants

These countries remain predominantly backward producers of primary products. The peasants form the majority of the population—a population which is increasing more rapidly than in any other part of the world.

Foreign—mostly American—capital has developed those parts of the economy which produce commodities for sale in the world market.

Following this a local class

of capitalists has emerged which is partly subordinate to foreign capital yet chafes under its domination. Even sectors such as retail trade and distribution are now being brought under the big corporations of the United States.

Consolations

Of the total population—220 million—about 150 million are illiterate. The mass of the people live in abject poverty and may have given up all hope of improvement, surrendering themselves to the consolations of cheap drugs, alcohol and religious fervour.

With industrial and commercial activity expanding in the cities, millions are flocking from the countryside into the slums and shanty towns, which spring up side-by-side with the skyscrapers, luxury hotels and night clubs.

Poverty is scattered throughout the countryside and concentrated in the poor quarters of the towns.

In Latin America there are not only the most degrading examples of humanity but, in contrast, some of the richest men in the world.

Corruption is rife in both politics and business. Some of the smaller states are controlled by the big American concerns like the notorious United Fruit Company and are no more than

vast plantations serving the United States market for tropical fruit.

Throughout the continent foreign capital plunders the natural resources with the help of corrupt local politicians.

The Latin American countries have one thing in common—their dependence upon the sale of one or two main exports in the world market. Foreign trade is dominated by the United States, and some European countries, including Britain and West Germany.

Alliance

Commodity prices have been on the decline in recent years. As a result the much-vaunted United States aid, including that offered by the Alliance For Progress, has not prevented wages from falling in South America.

At the same time, big profits are being made by the United States corporations, enabling them to extend their control over the richest sectors of the economy.

Behind a facade of concern for development, welfare and inter-American unity, the United States government policy is really designed to protect investments and profits.

Since these countries are all

formally independent, the United States government operates through various methods of indirect control. It finds support from the most amenable sections of the ruling class, however oppressive.

However, where the people have overthrown an oppressive government, the US may shift its support to reformist governments if they should prove docile enough.

This was the outcome of the Bolivian revolution.

Commenting on this a recent historian of Latin America writes that American diplomats became convinced that if the social revolution failed through lack of finances—which appeared likely at that time—it would be followed by chaos and communism.

'Aid'

So, to the astonishment of the MNR (revolutionary movement) and others, the US government launched an extensive programme of economic aid.*

Bolivia thus became a client state of the US imperialism.

In some cases the United States supports bloody control and corrupt dictators, in others it backs reformist leaders and movements.

A major factor in such sup-

* Pendle—'A History of Latin America', pp. 210-211.

Trotsky's friend

Alfred Rosmer

(1877-1964)

LAST week on Wednesday, May 6, Alfred Rosmer, a veteran of the French and international working class movement, a pioneer of the French Communist Party and an early follower of Trotsky, died in a Paris hospital. He was 87.

Rosmer began his political life on the left of French politics as a revolutionary syndicalist. He was one of a whole generation of militants of the French labour movement who had turned away in revulsion from the opportunism and corruption that permeated both the social-democratic and the syndicalist wings of the movement.

Rosmer, Monatte and others were opposed to the collaboration of the French labour movement with the ruling class during the First World War. His group published illegal literature calling on the metal workers to oppose the war.

They were savagely persecuted by the French bourgeoisie for the stand they took.

It was during this period that he came into contact with Trotsky, who did much to influence the policies and the course of the Rosmer group, persuading them to attend the Zimmerwald and Kienthal anti-war conferences.

From 1915 to 1919 Rosmer was called up into the army.

After the Russian revolution in 1917 the Rosmer tendency, which was grouped around the paper, 'La Vie Ouvriere', broke with French syndicalism.

Praesidium member

The group was represented by Rosmer at the second congress of the Third International in Spring 1920, where he was elected onto its executive. He also became a member of its praesidium and a signatory of its Manifesto.

He was a founder of the International of Red Trade Unions and a member of its council.

Amongst other services rendered to the Communist International, Rosmer was a representative at the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities of the East, he was commissioned to investigate the assassination of the eight members of the Finnish Communist Party and was present at Kropotkin's funeral in 1921.

On his return to France he was made a member of the Central Committee of the French CP as a representative of the Left (one of the many constituent groups of the Party at the time) and was placed on the editorial board of its journal, L'Humanite.

This Left tendency fought for the line of the Communist International in the Party.

In 1924 Rosmer, who was one of Trotsky's earliest supporters, left the French CP.

Later when Pyatakoff was in Paris trying to coalesce the opposition elements of the French Party, Rosmer dissociated himself from these efforts to bring the pro-Zinoviev section into the opposition.

Trotsky's emissary

By 1929 the French opposition had taken the form of a number of disparate groups. But through Trotsky's intervention they were brought together in common activity.

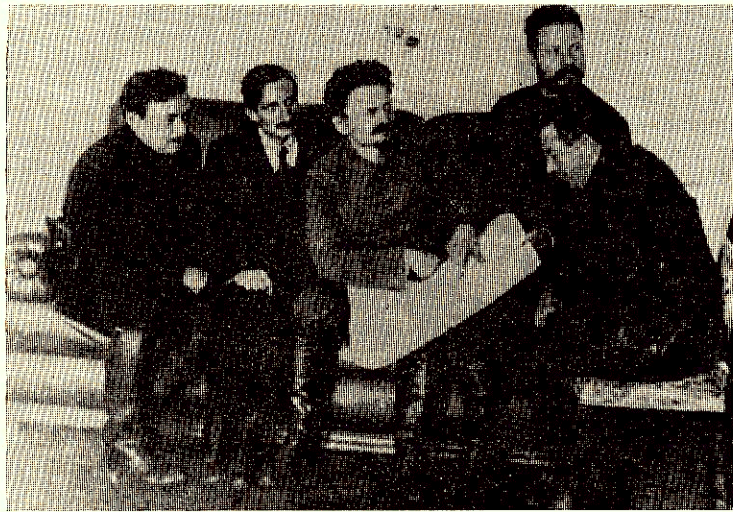
During this period Rosmer was Trotsky's emissary in Belgium and Germany and he was in contact with sympathisers in Italy, Holland and the United States.

But soon the joint organisation of the groups broke up. The rift between the Rosmer-Naville group and the Molinier section was repaired in 1930 at Prinkipo. But relations were ruptured again and Rosmer resigned his membership.

When Trotsky moved to France, Rosmer did not make contact with him. But this did not prevent Trotsky from saying of him: 'Rosmer is a man on whom one can always count in a difficulty.'

Trotsky had to move again. This time to Norway just before the Moscow trials and the sub-

(Continued on page 4)



During the civil war in Russia: left to right, Bela Kun, Alfred Rosmer, Leon Trotsky, M. Frunze and S. I. Gusev.

Greek Communist Party seeks legalisation

CHAIRMAN of the Greek Communist Party's central committee, Apostolos Grozos, wrote a letter to the country's government this week applying for his organisation's legalisation.

In his letter Grozos asked for a general amnesty and the repatriation of all political refugees.

These requests come at a time when the Greek government, headed by Papandreu, a right-wing reactionary, is to discuss a bill abolishing restrictive practices enforced at the time of the communist rebellion in 1949. In fact if the bill goes through the only law in force will be the one banning the Communist Party.

Grozos stated that the outcome of the past two Greek elections in November and February had demonstrated the power of popular demand for the full restoration of democratic institutions.

Although The Newsletter will always support demands for the freeing of socialist political prisoners, the role of the Greek Communist Party in relation to its present demands cannot go without comment.

APPEAL

Grozos is, in fact, appealing to a government which is headed by the very man who assisted in the hounding, shooting and imprisonment of communists between 1944-49.

What Grozos hails as 'the full restoration of democratic institutions' by popular demand, was actually a betrayal of the Greek working class by the Communist Party.

Communist Party leaders in Greece are known to have written out an instruction to all their party members ordering them to swing votes behind Papandreu and his supporters instead of the Communist candidates.

A prominent member of Papandreu's government is former EOKA leader Grivas. This right-wing, one-time rebel leader who posed as a Cypriot freedom fighter does not, in fact, have anything in common with the working class in Greece or Cyprus.

LIQUIDATE

During the civil war in Greece Grivas was a prominent member of Rallis battalions which were used to suppress the communists and to liquidate hundreds of workers and peasants. His politics are monarcho-fascist.

These are the kind of people that the Greek Communist Party call a part of the 'democratic institutions'.

The 12-year-old right-wing regime of Karamanlis may have been thrown out by Papandreu, but it has been replaced by people who are fakers and betrayers of the working class movement of Greece.

The freeing of Tony Ambatielos and other communists may well have been part of a bargain between the government and the Communist Party—votes for the freeing of prisoners.

SHADY

In addition to conducting shady bargains behind the backs of the Greek working class the Communist Party in that part of the world has done nothing to give a lead on the Cyprus question.

Instead they have lined up with Makarios and his nationalist policies without posing any socialist alternative to the Cypriot workers and peasants of either Greek or Turkish nationality.

This letter of Grozos also comes at a time when Khrushchev and other Soviet bureaucrats find it possible to co-exist with Western imperialism. And the British Communist Party, intent on toeing the official Moscow line, carries out a witch-hunt against militant youth inside the Young Communist League.

FAILURE

Grozos' letter is another shameful example of the Communist Party's failure to fight capitalism or pose as a leadership for the working class.

Instead it accommodates its policies either to the nationalists of the colonial countries or the social-democrats of the more advanced countries.

In either case its policies are not those of a party destined to take the workers forward in a fight for the overthrow of capitalism.

Someone should remind the Greek CP that it was Papandreu who was a collaborator during the Nazi occupation and was blamed in the CP book 'Bloody—but Unbowed' for all the bloodshed in the Greek civil war.

The Rallis battalions, formed during the Nazi occupation to rid the country of communists were not disbanded when the British took over in 1943-1944—the period of the civil war—and were used for the same purpose.

World News Round-up



FREE SPAIN . . . FREE ABARCA!

Spanish call on march

OVER 100 demonstrators marched to the Spanish and Belgian embassies in London on Sunday to press for a 'regime of peace, justice and freedom' in Spain, and freedom for all political prisoners.

Led by members of the Confederation of Labour of Spain in Exile (CNT), which organised the demonstration, the marchers carried banners calling for support for the striking Asturian miners and freedom for the 25-year-old Spaniard, Francisco Abarca.

An anti-fascist, Abarca is still in a Belgian jail waiting for extradition to Switzerland, where he may face charges of sabotage—placing explosives near a Spanish plane at Geneva.

SOLIDARITY

Secretary of the CNT, Sr. Augustin Roa, and two committee members, Sr. José Cabañas and Sr. Antonio Vargas, were allowed into the Belgian Embassy where they spoke to an official and handed him a letter which said: 'This demonstration takes place in the light of the most recent events in Spain. We are in solidarity with the Spanish people and in favour of the release of political prisoners.'

'The imprisonment in Belgium of Francisco Abarca, a young Spanish anti-fascist, detained since October 11 last year, is arousing great concern and indignation among the British and Spaniards in this country.'

'On behalf of this demonstration, we representatives of trade union branches, local organisations, political parties and individuals, demand the immediate release of Francisco Abarca and the right of asylum in accordance with the principle of human rights and international conventions.'

Sr. Roa told The Newsletter that the official gave the delegation a 'very sympathetic hearing'.

'The Belgian Embassy official said that the case of Abarca was moving so slowly because they were taking great care not to do any injustice. He said they would never extradite people on political grounds. M. Spaak the Belgian Prime Minister has already made clear his views on some regimes,' said Sr. Roa.

PROMISE

It is now believed that Abarca is being illegally detained—prisoners for extradition can only be detained for a certain period.

Sr. Roa raised this with the Embassy official who promised to contact M. Verneylen, the Belgian Minister of Justice.

At the Spanish Embassy things were not so friendly.

A conversation in Spanish between Sr. Roa and a porter ended with the porter hastily taking Sr. Roa's letter which said: 'We proclaim today our solidarity with the rightful claims of the Spanish people and especially with those of the Spanish working class, for a better standard of living and freedom of the trade unions in Spain.'

'We declare as the strong wish

and determination of this demonstration, formed by men and women of all political beliefs, the urgent necessity for the present and future of Spain:

1. To free all political prisoners.
2. The right of free association, freedom of speech and of the press.
3. To bring Spain in line with all the democratic countries of the world.
4. We declare that we are always besides all those workers, students, professors and liberal people who, at the present time, are struggling to gain for Spain a regime of peace, justice and freedom.'

Some of the marchers became angry when they were kept away from the Embassies by the police.

Police grabbed Sr. Roa and asked him to control the crowd.

'An inspector told me that in this country we have to do as we are told to do and that we would not be able to demonstrate like that in Spain. If we carried on like that we would be sent back to Spain,' Sr. Roa told our reporter.

Bold stand by Asturian miners

MORE Spanish miners have decided to join the bold stand against the Franco regime for better working conditions in the Asturias area of Spain. This is the third Asturian miners' strike in three years.

By the middle of this week, over 40,000 miners—80 per cent—and hundreds of metal workers were involved in the stoppage.

Police and civil guards have now surrounded all the affected pits and are ready to move in at a moment's notice.

Sympathy

The strike started two weeks ago in the region of Oviedo, the capital of the Asturias, when 20,000 men came out in sympathy with workers laid off from a mine for striking over bad health conditions.

These men were pressing for protection against silicosis, a common, but dangerous disease among miners. Pressure was also put on the management by the strikers who insisted on negotiating through their own committee.

This is a direct challenge to the Franco regime which controls the 'legal' unions.

In Madrid officials are saying that if the stoppage continues, the coal industry could be badly affected because of the high cost of production.

Orders

They are now threatening that other fuels may be used in industry and that orders for coal may be placed abroad—in the United States, Britain and Poland! Sr. Solis, the Spanish Minister of Labour, was in Britain last week and at a dinner in the Spanish Embassy he sat with Mr. Ness Edwards, a Labour MP for a constituency in Wales—a coal-mining area.

The British labour movement must take up the demands made in last Sunday's London march by members of the Confederation of Labour of Spain in Exile for full support for the Asturian miners—one of the most militant and gallant sections of the Spanish working class.

Coalition ghost haunts Ceylon centrists

TWO weeks ago The Newsletter pointed out the dangerous trend towards 'Popular Frontism' in the LSSP (Lanka Sama Samaja Party) of Ceylon.

Now, according to 'The Times' the right wing in the LSSP have made another unsuccessful attempt to commit the party to a policy of coalition.

This time, however, the motion was defeated by one vote (20-21) in the Central Committee.

The voting figures do not reveal the real line-up of forces in the party. The opposition to the right wing in fact consists of a bloc of two groups.

OPPOSITION

The biggest of these is led by Edmund Samarakkody who follows a policy of outright opposition to the SLFP (the government party) and a return to a class struggle line rather than the present policy of parliamentary manoeuvres and unprincipled electoral alliances.

The smaller group, led by Colvin R. de Silva and Leslie Goonewardene, tries to maintain a centrist position which does not reject coalition but tries to postpone the issue until after a general election.

That is why the same Central Committee which opposed a direct alliance between the SLFP and the LSSP carried a motion that the Prime Minister should negotiate with the entire United Left Front.

It seems doubtful whether the ULF can resolve this problem because of the obduracy of Philip Goonewardene who wants a coalition on his own terms: a prospect which Mrs. Bandaranaike will not entertain at all.

JADED

The United Left Front, despite all the ballyhoo which accompanied its launching last year, remains a jaded facade. The first part of its programme relating to immediate problems has been dropped.

The second half, relating to a prospective ULF government, has been ignored or whittled away.

At the last May Day the trade unions were deliberately deprived of the right to be represented on the platform of the joint CP-LSSP-MEP meeting.

This extraordinary and unprecedented procedure was adopted by the leaders of the ULF for three reasons:

1. They did not want any Indian trade unionists on their platform because that would hurt the chauvinist susceptibilities of Mrs. Bandaranaike.
2. They did not want the Peking-oriented CP to participate under its trade union banners. (The application of the pro-Peking CP to join the ULF has been rejected by the LSSP!)
3. They did not wish to embarrass the government by presenting any of the 21 demands agreed to by the entire trade union movement comprising 1½ million organised workers.

CLEAVAGE

One of the demands is for a one Rupee (1s. 6d.) increase in the daily pay of all workers.

The growing cleavage between the ULF policy and the demands of the trade union movement is another symptom of the crisis of leadership in Ceylon.

The right wing in the LSSP have not given up hope of coalition despite two defeats. By packing the youth leagues and the party with their supporters they still hope to change the line of the party at the next conference.

The right wing can and will be defeated only if there is a determined and organised struggle waged within the party.

Double problem for U.S.

CONCERN at the setbacks in the war in South-east Asia and at the breakdown in Western unity over the question of trade with Cuba has sent Dean Rusk and McNamara, the US secretaries of State and Defence, touring the world to whip the allies back into line.

The situation in Vietnam is such that the Vietcong were able to blow up an American aircraft carrier in Saigon harbour last week and almost kill McNamara on his way into the town from the airport.

Explosives installed on the bridge, over which McNamara was to pass, were discovered a few days before.

These military successes of the Vietcong, despite the enormous expenditure both in lives and money by the US, have forced the American government to adopt a new and tougher line towards its allies.

Fear

This, together with a fear that the Cubans may take a stricter attitude towards American spy planes once the Soviet 'advisers' have withdrawn, forced President Johnson in a press conference on May 6 to say that the US would continue to insist that its allies co-operate in the 'economic quarantine' of Cuba and that McNamara would visit Vietnam.

McNamara, it transpired, would stop off in Western Germany to urge the government in Bonn to step up its aid to the US war against the Vietcong.

At present the West German government contributes about £3.6 million aid for the war. McNamara tried to get them to give more money and to begin giving medical aid and arms.

It is believed that the British government is also making a contribution to the war effort.

The French government, however, is not so co-operative.

After the defeat of the French army, just ten years ago at Dien Bien Phu, American capital replaced French capital as the main force in the area.

Now that they are free from the problems of the Algerian war, the French ruling class want to break back into the rich investment areas from which they have been forced out by their British and American rivals.

Hence their 'independent' policy towards NATO, Cuba and Vietnam.

Denounce

They have withdrawn troops and generals from the NATO forces in Germany.

In the SEATO meeting last month, they openly denounced the American policy of fighting the Vietnam war to the bitter end and, instead, suggested a plan for the neutralisation of the area.

In spite of protests from the State Department, the French firm of Brissonneau negotiated the sale of 20 diesel locomotives, worth £4 million with Cuba.

According to Mr. George Ball, the US under Secretary of State, the sale was a 'blow', especially as it was revealed that both Britain and Italy had also put in a tender for the order, but had been undercut by the French offer.

It is not surprising, then, that President Johnson sent Secretary of State Dean Rusk to Europe to persuade the allies to drop their 'selfish aims'.

Bosses manoeuvre in Yorkshire pit dispute

Concessions part of 'wait and see' tactic

SHAKEN by the strike of 10,000 miners in the Yorkshire No. 8 area, which ended last week, the management of the Glasshoughton pit have been paying high fall-back rates to the men.

Lancs miners thwart 3-shift system

ATTEMPTS have been made in the past few weeks to introduce three-shift working in the Lancashire coalfield.

At Astley Colliery, three shifts have actually been in operation for three months.

This represents a real drive by the NCB to step up production and at the same time impose a wage cut on the face workers.

Since ripping and extending work is done at night, face workers on the night turn are often stopped for long periods. This has the effect that all face workers take cuts in wages of up to £5 a week.

Resistance

Last week the NCB met resistance to this policy at Mosley Common near Manchester, where two-shift working has always been in force.

When a face collapsed, the management transferred 12 face workers to the night turn on another face.

The following day the union brought the whole pit out on strike, as a result of which the management withdrew the three-shift working, and transferred the 12 men to other night work.

Another stoppage occurred on Friday, which resulted in the day-wage men being stopped by the management two hours before the completion of their quota of shifts.

Tactics

These men, therefore, lost their bonus for the week. This is typical of the tactics which the NCB uses to split the face-workers from the day-wage men and which strong union leadership could counter.

At a well-attended meeting on Saturday morning, a resolution was passed stating that under no circumstances would the miners agree to the three-shift system.

Other resolutions showed that Mosley Common miners understand the need for unity of piece-workers, craftsmen and day-wage men.

What this really requires, however, is a leadership which fights not only for unity within each pit, but links up different pits in effective struggle against the NCB's speed-up.

Walk-out

The fact that this is not provided at the moment was shown when Jim Hammond, Lancashire Area President of the National Union of Miners and Agent for Mosley Common pit, arrived (in his green Rover) a quarter of an hour before the end of the Saturday meeting.

The miners showed their appreciation of his efforts by starting to walk out when he was called upon to speak.

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In the first week after the strike they paid 64s. 11d. to 'market men'—miners who become spare and can be put on any job.

The strike was sparked off when seven men at Glasshoughton came off a mechanised face and their wages dropped from 64s. 11d. to 47s. 10d. a shift.

Previously, men who were transferred to day-wage jobs of 'dinting' (lowering the floor to make more headroom over a unit) have had their wages dropped to the day-wage rate, 42s. 10d. or the dinting rate 47s. 10d.

At the moment, if they are put on a contract job, they receive what the contract pays, but if they are put on a day-wage or dinting job, they are getting the full 64s. 11d.

Retreat

The Glasshoughton men feel that this, to some extent, is a retreat by the management. Although nothing has been signed and the management could revert to its former hard position, it seems clear that they were shaken by the strike and are anxious not to provoke any more trouble just yet.

However, the coalfield is far from quiet.

Both men and management are waiting to see what happens when the threatened strike of the Doncaster panel is called. They will come out if there is not early satisfactory settlement of the national claim for a 15s. increase for day-wage men.

Meanwhile, there is bound to be more dissatisfaction in the No. 8 area where other pits close to Glasshoughton are still dropping the pay of men who are transferred to day-wage and dinting rates.

It is important now that the managements are not allowed to 'divide and rule' by making concessions in some pits and not in others.

Agreement

The Yorkshire miners must look closely at the tactics of the management.

There is, for instance, an existing agreement that 64s. 11d. can be paid at the management's discretion to displaced contract workers.

Their refusal to pay it before and their agreeing to pay it now does represent a retreat, but these are just management manoeuvres.

They are anxious to split off the men in the No. 8 area from the Doncaster panel by creating the appearance that one of the strike demands has been met.

A similar tactic was used during the strike itself when the

Whitwood colliery management, a mile or so from Glasshoughton, suddenly gave 64s. 11d. to contract workers placed on bye-work.

Normally these men would have received around 50s., but the management did not want the Whitwood men to feel they were in the same struggle as the men at Glasshoughton.

Secondly, the management were so alarmed by the militancy shown in the strike that they are now anxious to build up the prestige of the official union leadership.

Unity

This leadership can be relied on to oppose any militant action, so the management is only too ready to give them the credit for apparent 'concessions' and to strengthen their claim that militancy is not necessary.

The management has had a scare, but the original demands of the strike—an assured, guaranteed fall-back rate and an increase in the day-wage—have not yet been achieved.

For this, there must be unity throughout the coalfield.

Preparing for this unity is now the first priority for militants in the Yorkshire coalfield.

Vicar attacks dyeworkers

DYEWORERS at Denby's, near Bradford, who have been locked out for the past six months after going on strike, received another attack through the press last week.

In the leader column of his parish magazine, the Rev. Kenneth Targett condemned the use of violence during the dispute.

However, he did not describe the way in which the local police, with Alsatian dogs, moved in to break the strike earlier this year.

Targett argued that the idea that a man must be a member of a trade union before he could get a job was wrong.

The police recently moved into the dispute again when several of the locked-out workers attended a local cricket match to visit one of the men who, they alleged, was a black-leg.

A member of the strike committee was arrested.

RIGHTS

The dispute in Denby's has become a fight with the management for a protection of trade union rights.

When 250 workers were sacked following a stoppage, the management stated that in future an open shop would be operated.

The general secretary of the National Union of Dyers, Bleachers and Textile Workers, Leonard Sharpe, is reported to

From October 1939 to May 1940, Rosmer and his wife lived with Trotsky in Mexico. They brought Trotsky's orphaned grandson, Seva, from Europe with them.

After Trotsky's death the Rosmers remained the staunchest friends of Natalia and Seva. Rosmer was named as executor of Trotsky's will.

Rosmer was a writer of quite considerable repute.

His outstanding work was 'Le Mouvement Ouvrier Pendant La Guerre' (The Working Class Movement During the War). The first volume was published in 1936 and the second in 1959,

NOBODY was very surprised when the national press carried big news stories on the Labour gains in the local elections throughout the country last week.

The Tory 'Coventry Evening Telegraph', was no exception. 'Labour win control of eight more towns' read the headline.

A closer look, however, at the Coventry results shows that the local Labour Party has nothing to brag about.

The Tories, in all but two of their wards, have increased their majorities in spite of Liberal interventions and the average poll was 50 per cent.

In every Labour ward, but two, the majority was down, and their average turnout was only 39 per cent.

MAJORITY

One ward, which the Tories held by only 45 votes last time, was gained by a majority of 757.

But in the Labour-held Walsgrave ward, the majority was cut to 175, and in another ward a 2,635 majority went down to 835.

The reason for what Labour officials would probably term as 'apathy' amongst supporters is quite clear and has nothing to do with the 'climate' as a local party agent stated.

WEAKENED

In fact, they say, he has weakened the strike by finding jobs for several of the locked-out workers in other dye factories instead of taking a principled stand against the management and insisting that all the men be reinstated.

In his report, which is to be presented to the union's annual conference on May 30, Sharpe hints at outside forces interfering in the strike.

It is quite obvious that he means The Newsletter, which has consistently given its support, through reports on its pages, to the Denby strikers.

The Newsletter has supported the locked-out workers in their call for the spreading of the strike to other factories and will continue to give every assistance to these men in their fight.

but not before the Gestapo had destroyed a mass of valuable documentary material in the years of the Second World War.

He also wrote 'Moscou Sous Lenine' (Moscow under Lenin); in 1953 and in 1960 he was a signatory to the 'Manifesto of the 121', an action which made his home a target for a plastic bomb attack.

However much he may have equivocated between his revolutionary syndicalist training and Bolshevism, Rosmer never crossed the line of the class struggle. He remained loyal to the best traditions of his experience in the international working class movement.

RENT INCREASES HIT COVENTRY LABOUR VOTE

It is directly due to the rent increases of 16s. a week which the council imposed last November.

Workers in the council houses were certainly not apathetic to that. Tenants' associations were formed on the estates. These people are criticising the Labour Party by not turning out to vote for it.

If the Coventry Labour Party wants to win back the marginal south constituency, then it must campaign on the basis of socialist policies to meet the housing problems of workers in that area.

POLICIES

Only policies which attempt to grapple with the problems confronting the Labour voter, such as those of housing and rents, are going to bring success.

Coventry Labour Party sent a resolution to the annual conference last year demanding nationalization of the land and the building industry, and municipalisation of rented property.

That is a working class policy and the party must stand by it, not retreat into easy solutions like putting up the rents, which is an attack on working class standards of living.

If the Coventry local council can put up the rents by using Tory interest rates as an excuse, the next Labour government is certain to do a whole lot of other things, using the bankers and financiers as an excuse.

Halifax workers return on rejected terms

FIVE hundred men and women, on strike for 13 days, decided at a meeting at the Halifax AEU club on Tuesday to return to work. This decision was taken on a recommendation from the shop stewards' committee.

The strike, at Hattersley's (Ormskirk) Ltd., began when 26 workers were given notice without discussion in accordance with the agreed procedure for the industry.

The offer was made last week by the management to withdraw the notices if the strikers immediately returned to work and agreed to 'acknowledge' redundancy.

This was, of course, rejected. A return on these terms would have meant agreeing to accept the very thing which the strike was intended to prevent.

Official

But on Monday—the strike having been declared official by the National Society of Metal Mechanics' annual conference—a three-hour meeting was held between the management and officials of the National Society and other unions involved.

In the course of this meeting the management agreed to withdraw the notices, provided there was an immediate return to work and that discussions on the redeployment of workers, redundancy in all its aspects, including dismissals and short-time working, would be held.

At first there seems to be no difference in this formula to the one rejected last week.

Negotiations

In effect, the strike was not called to fight redundancy at all, but only in order to force the management to use the proper machinery for establishing discussion and negotiations.

There was some dissatisfaction among a minority of the strikers who voted in favour of staying out.

One young worker said: 'I think we should have stayed out. I am sick of going on strike and then

Another vicious letter for tenants' leader

MRS. JOSEPHINE COLLINS, leader of the Gorbals, Glasgow, tenants, who are fighting against appalling housing conditions in the Oatlands area, has received another threatening letter.

Like the previous letter, this one is couched in threatening terms and a razor blade was enclosed in the envelope.

It is not known from what source these letters originate but it is clear that measures must now be taken to protect Mrs. Collins and other militant tenants from reactionary hoodlums.

The setting up of a tenants committee is now an urgent necessity.

Such a committee is required to plan and develop the campaign against the landlords and slum housing and to act as a defence committee for tenants threatened with violence or eviction.

Trade union branches in the area should also come to the support of the tenants and through the Trades Council seek to develop a campaign against slum landlordism throughout Glasgow.

CONDEMNED

The Oatlands area has been spotlighted because the tenants started to fight against bad housing, but there are numerous areas throughout Glasgow where workers' families are condemned to live in similar conditions.

Meanwhile the Labour Council and corporation officials remain inactive, hiding behind official jargon, red tape, the limitations imposed by Acts of Parliament and local bye-laws.

It is ironic, that whilst thousands of working class families in Glasgow are

criying out to be rehoused, the corporation last week sacked 57 building workers employed by the direct labour department.

Thus bad housing and unemployment go hand in hand.

Tenants, trade unions and Labour Parties in Glasgow should demand that the council immediately take measures to requisition the many empty houses in the city, carry out such repairs or structural alterations as may be necessary and allocate these homes to the most needy slum dwellers.

At the same time, they should fight within the labour movement for the nationalization of land, the building and building supplies industry, finance companies, etc., so that under a Labour government emergency measures to get rid of the slums and provide an assured job for every building worker, could be carried out.

Small bonus at 'efficient' Linwood

WORKERS at the Linwood factory of Pressed Steel Ltd. were shocked when they read the company's announcement that their April bonus payment would amount to only 8½d. in the £.

One hundred and fifty workers on the Friday night shift walked out in protest.

The bonus is paid each month on the basis of the firm's estimate of the useful output of their Scottish factory, the chief product of which is car bodies for Rootes factory across the road.

Penalties for strikes, other stoppages and body rejects are extracted from the total output, leaving a bonus pool of which factory and other workers get a percentage.

The bonus plan has been worked out by a firm of efficiency experts, obtained for the purpose from the USA.

Percentage

Since it first started six months ago, the percentage given to workers from the total available for distribution has twice been cut. Payments have swung from a high peak of 3s. 4d. in the pound to the lowest ever, recorded in April.

That the company is the one to gain from the bonus plan has been shown by the figures of its profits during the last three years.

1963 showed a dramatic improvement in the Pressed Steel fortunes. There was a leap in profits of something like £4,000,000 from the loss of £2,500,000 recorded in 1961. Shareholders received a dividend of 20 per cent, compared with the workers' bonus payment for April of 3½ per cent.

The bonus payment in April, the management announced, suffered from strike stoppages. (There were a number of stoppages at the Rootes factory over low wages paid there. The Pressed Steel workers also stopped work for half a day in support of the sacked convenor of Remington Rand.)

Lessons

The lessons are clearly stated for car workers. The bonus plan, so enthusiastically welcomed by the financial columns in the capitalist press, and by some of the trade union officials, is designed to split workers in preparation for an attack on wages.

Given the co-operation of shop stewards, the company can cut wages behind a camouflage of 'boosting sales in order to boost wages', and 'strikes only injure the workers themselves'—propaganda favoured by organisations such as the Economic League.

Car workers should beware of plans which link their interests with those of the employers. Trade union officials who co-operate in such plans are not to be trusted.

Glasgow dockers reject decasualisation

AT a meeting of Glasgow dockers held last week, a scheme put forward by the port employers in connection with the decasualisation of dock labour was unanimously rejected.

The employers' plan included a two-shift system—6 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 10 p.m.—with a basic wage of £9 9s. and an additional 2 hours' pay per shift.

In addition, the dock employers want the right to select their own gangs and complete control of the recruitment of fresh labour and sackings.

When a surplus of work occurs, they want gangs to be cut by 4, 3, 2 or 1 men according to the size of the gang.

A greater degree of mobility of labour was also proposed, with men being moved from ship to ship, hatch to hatch, and even port to port as the employers consider necessary.

Glasgow dockers flatly refused even to consider these proposals which can only result in lower wages, longer hours and unemployment with the employers reaping all the advantages.