

THE NEWSLETTER — by a Yorkshire Miner

IN the past the only papers one could find to read with any thought for the working class were the Daily Herald and the Daily Worker. But to find one with any hint of real socialism was virtually impossible.

The Daily Herald is too tied up with its capitalist friends, namely, the Right-wing of the Labour Party which is so near to the Tory camp that it might as well be in it

The Daily Worker is so busy paying lip service to the Soviet bureaucracy and to the so-called 'communist' trade union leaders, that it has very little space for the real problems of the workers, and no space to teach the workers what socialism is all about.

I have learned more about socialism in the few months I've been reading The Newsletter than I have in all the years I've been reading the Daily Herald or the Daily Worker.

The service The Newsletter gives to workers in struggle has never been equalled in my lifetime. I only wish you could sell millions, so that all workers could benefit from its socialist contributions—but I think that is in the future.

Now to the organization behind the paper, namely, the Socialist Labour League. I don't think you will ever be in trouble about changing that name, I would say it covers the lot, not like the Labour Party which can't make its mind up what to call itself. It is a very serious sin to mention the word socialist or socialism in the Labour Party today and now they are trying to figure out a new name for the Party. I suggest they call it 'Labour and Conservative', it just about fits them and their policy—retreat, retreat.

JOSEPH FITZGERALD. Scawthorpe, near Doncaster.

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NYASALAND TERROR GREET'S MACMILLAN

By BOB PENNINGTON

A CANE struck black bodies. A knee thudded into Africans pleading for symbolic arrest. An officer's boots crashed down on women's bare feet.

The Blantyre police officer responsible for this sadism egged on his junior officers to follow suit. Within view, premier Macmillan munched his specially imported Scotch pheasant and sipped his port wine at a civic luncheon.

Demonstrating Nyasalanders, carrying slogans for Dr. Banda's release and against the Monckton Commission, were slung into cages on three-ton trucks.

Screaming white settlers encouraged the police. Two settlers threatened to smash the camera of a newsreel photographer. One settler rushed out and took a swinging kick at a small boy shrieking: 'It's the only thing the beggars understand.'

As Africans were kicked and rabbit-punched, the 'Empire builders' with gin-and-tonics in their hands sneered and jeered. Others waved and cheered the police on. One moron cynically surveyed the plight of the Africans and remarked: 'Funny little monkeys, aren't they.'

Afterwards Macmillan blandly said: 'They were all most courteous and smiling.'

The fury and anger of the settlers is not to be wondered at. All their economic and social privileges rest on theories of racial superiority. These uncultured cretins can only maintain themselves by forcibly suppressing the African people.

Peaceful advance

Macmillan told his fellow guests at the luncheon: 'Advance must come in a peaceful way and not by violence. If the African leaders will accept this, then I am sure we can advance.'

No doubt, then, the settlers' minds flickered to Algiers. There, their French counterparts are fighting a similar battle. But right now they have their consolation. Their control of the government is secure and the police force stands solid behind them. Furthermore, the man with the rather vacant face and the walrus moustache can be relied on to give a Christian tinge to clubbing and terror.

**POLICE
DO THEIR
DUTY**



GREAT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF LABOUR CAMPAIGN-p.32

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RETURN FROM RAT ISLAND

IT is now just over a week since Mr. Gaitskell returned from what the press described as 'a restful holiday on Rat Island in the Caribbean Sea'. We do not know whether Mr. Gaitskell's choice of holiday resort has inspired him to remember the story about rats deserting a sinking ship, but there is not the slightest doubt that he is preparing to sink the Labour Party politically.

The Daily Telegraph of January 27 says that Mr. Gaitskell is determined to revise the section of the constitution dealing with common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange. Mr. Crossland and Mr. Jay are campaigning as hard as they can for this decision. Meanwhile, despite the good intentions of Michael Foot and the leaders of Victory for Socialism, the Left remain without a clear programme as an alternative to Gaitskellism. This is the weakness of the hour and it will prove fatal if allowed to remain.

The importance of Gaitskell's proposed alteration to the constitution does not lie in the words that are used. It is common knowledge that although this section of the constitution has been in writing since 1918, nothing very much has been done about it. What makes the discussion so sharp today is that the organization of capitalism under the control of fewer and fewer monopolies makes it imperative for a socialist movement to have as its main objective the nationalization of all the basic industries.

The trouble with Mr. Gaitskell's left-of-centre opponents is that they are confining the struggle to words. Neither Tribune nor Victory for Socialism have produced a policy which states clearly that they are prepared to fight for the nationalization of all the basic industries.

The divisions between Left and Right in the Labour Party are the divisions between those who want a socialist state of society and those who want to compromise with capitalism and preserve the status quo. Victory for Socialism is meeting in conference on Sunday, January 31. It must clearly state where it stands on this question and decide what sort of campaign it is going to organize amongst the working class throughout the country.

IRAN**MASSACRE IN TEHERAN**

By the Friends of Iran

Last Monday (January 11) thousands of students in Teheran gathered in front of the Ministry of Education to protest against the recently tightened examination regulations. In a country like Iran, afflicted by a military dictatorship where freedom of the press and speech is reduced to a mere farce, people are often desperately reaching out for an opportunity to give expression to their grievances. Accordingly, the students' demonstrations which were originally intended to be of a non-political nature turned into an angry manifestation of popular outcry against the Regime.

Other sections of people and sympathizers joined the demonstrators. The police found themselves unable to establish 'order' and the army—that supreme arbiter of politics in the country—was called in.

The Iranian Government always labours under the assumption that whenever a group of people gather to protest against one of its policies, they are armed bandits determined to overthrow the regime, and therefore should be crushed in the most ruthless manner. Keeping to this habitual pattern, the soldiers were ordered to open fire on the demonstrators. At least three people were killed and thirty or more gruesomely injured. This intensified the crowd's anger who then began to stone the police and set fire to some of the Ministry's cars. According to Government circles 300 persons have since been arrested.

The attitude of the Government's official propaganda machine over such incidents is both ridiculous and repulsive. On the one hand it tries to play down the importance of such spontaneous demonstrations, claiming that no one has been killed or seriously injured and on the other it puts forth a stream of intimidating statements, warning the students of the reprisals to be taken against them.

This is, to be sure, not the first time that the present regime in Iran has displayed its morbid hatred against the patriotic intellectuals. In November 1954 also, the security forces, overstepping all limits of military oppression, entered the University of Teheran under the pretext of quashing anti-Government demonstrations, and dastardly murdered three students.

Over the last six years the present regime has committed many such crimes and butcheries, but has scarcely succeeded in dissuading the Iranian patriots from opposing the roving lackeys of terror and treachery.

Placing on record our disgust at the Iranian Government's new outrage against the students, we reiterate our firm belief that the just struggle of Persian patriots, youths and students will finally bring about the salvation of the whole nation. But let us not forget those who have given of their best with their lives. Their heroism is legion and forever looked upon with reverence.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF LABOUR CAMPAIGN: AREA ASSEMBLIES

book these dates now!	LONDON: March 6	Denison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W.1. 10 a.m.—5 p.m.
	LIVERPOOL: March 6	Walker Art Gallery, William Brown Street. 10.30 a.m.—4.30 p.m.
	GLASGOW: March 20	Central Halls, Bath Street. 10 a.m.
	LEEDS: March 27	Leeds Museum. 3.0 p.m.
	MANCHESTER: March 27	Registrar's Office, All Saints. 2.30 p.m.
	BIRMINGHAM: April 10	Typographical Hall, Bath Street, Birmingham.

Employers Discriminate Against Coloured Labour

By DAVE FINCH

The Labour Exchange clerk smiled politely at the coloured worker but said: 'Sorry, no jobs.' Officialdom had provided another race-discriminating employer with a legal cover for his dirty practices.

That wasn't in South Africa or America's southern States. It happens every day of the week right here in London.

Across the road from Brixton Labour Exchange in Somerleyton Road, a 24-year-old coloured worker told me of his experience in hunting for a job.

"I was sent by the Labour Exchange to an engineering factory for a job paying £9 4s. a week, plus bonus. When I met the manager he told me: "The work is unsuitable for a coloured man." He would not explain why.

"When I got back to the Exchange and told them what happened they said: "There must have been some mistake."

"Nothing was ever done about it and finally I managed to get a worse paid job in a warehouse."

Mr. Allen, a 48-year-old coloured worker lives in Mayall Road, Norwood. A painter by trade and an active member of the National Society of Painters he doesn't take discrimination lying down.

He told me how on October 26 last year he signed on at his Exchange. They said that there were no jobs for painters. Later that day he met a fellow member of his union—a white man, who had reported to the same Exchange half an hour after Mr. Allen and had been sent to a job.

List of firms

"Naturally I returned to the Exchange and complained to the supervisor," said Mr. Allen.

"The supervisor listened to what I had to say and then before I was finished he was called away. The clerk who had dealt with me previously then called me over. He said he was sorry but there was no work for coloured labour since a number of firms would not employ them.

"When he was telling me this he thumbed through a whole sheaf of papers which were obviously a list of these firms.

"I then contacted two of the local M.P.'s, Mr. Marcus Lipton (Labour, Brixton), and Brigadier John Smythe (Conservative, Norwood), asking them to investigate the matter.

"I also raised the matter in my trade union branch.

"Since then the Labour Exchange has denied to Mr. Lipton that the clerk showed me a list of such firms.

"Brigadier Smythe wrote me on November 9 saying: "I don't think for a moment that the fact you could not be given suitable employment on October 26 was anything to do with any colour problem."

Now out of work Mr. Allen is drawing only £3 5s. a week dole. He was drawing £4 but this was reduced because he did not have enough stamps on his insurance card. Out of his £3 5s. he has to pay £2 in rent.

Another coloured man, Mr. MacKenzie of Leathwaite Road, Battersea, said: "I was told in confidence by a Labour Exchange clerk, "there are firms on the books who will not employ coloured labour."

A skilled engineer, Mr. MacKenzie has been unable to get a skilled job and is working in a store issuing electrical equipment. He is a member of the Electrical Trades Union.

"There are firms who employ coloured labour. But only on semi-skilled and labouring jobs, even when we prove that we are capable of doing a skilled job they won't give us one."

In Lambeth the local trades council has recently attempted to get a list from the Brixton Labour Exchange of firms who will not employ young coloured labour. It had been reported at a meeting of the youth employment committee that it was more difficult to place coloured school-leavers in jobs.

To date the Labour Exchange has refused to answer directly whether or not they have firms on their books refusing to take coloured labour.

The struggle against racial discrimination is of vital importance to British Labour. It exposes the insidious way in which the employers attempt to divide by colour; it exposes the Tories as the sanctimonious enemies of coloured and white workers and it exposes the 'impartial' Ministry of Labour who cover up racial discrimination on the grounds that information given by employers and employees is 'confidential'.

Labour must act

Trades councils and Labour Parties must obtain a list of all firms practising discrimination. These firms must be 'blacked' by all organized labour. The boycott of South African goods must be turned into a boycott of British firms employing South African policies.

The trade unions and the Labour Parties must also wage a campaign amongst white workers showing how racial discrimination acts against their interests.

If the Trade Union leaders and the National Executive of the Labour Party insist in restricting opposition to racialism to platonic phrases and empty gestures then the Left-wing must take over such a campaign. Failure to fight now leaves the way open for fascist propaganda.

INDUSTRY

RAILWORKERS PREPARE FOR STRUGGLE

By Brian Arundel

Railway workers stand today on the verge of the most important period since the 1920's, and the outcome of the present struggle for a decent wage can well determine the shape of more important struggles in the future.

London railworkers are to the forefront of the present fight. On Monday they will be striking in support of this demand.

This strike, even though it will be confined to London, demonstrates the tremendous feelings and pressure which have been built up in support of the pay claim.

Although a one-day strike won't break the BTC and

LEEDS BRANCH OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

MARXISM IN THE SIXTIES

FOUR PUBLIC LECTURES

February 7: Alasdair McIntyre	...	'What is Marxism?'
February 21: Tom Kemp	'The Future of Capitalism'
March 6: Frank Girling	Subject to be announced
March 13: Cliff Slaughter	'The Socialist Revolution in Britain'

Leeds Trade Hall, Upper Fountaine Street

Leeds, at 7.30 p.m.

force NUR secretary Sidney Greene into a real fight, it is a mistake for railway workers in other parts of the country to ignore the part it can play in preparing for an all-out struggle.

At the moment the pay claim is uppermost in railway workers' minds, but apprehension about the future and the Transport Commission's plans for the reorganization of the railways, still hovers in the background. This is what makes the present fight so important for the future.

The confusion which Sir Brian Robertson, the BTC spokesman, has succeeded in creating shows that he, too, has an eye for the future.

If they succeed in defeating railway workers at this stage then the next step in their reorganization plans, which involves the jobs of thousands, will be all the easier to carry out.

The role of the NUR leadership in this plan to demoralise and split is typical of the pattern which has been created in the past. Moreover, the present attitude of Sidney Greene and the Right-wing at Unity House poses quite sharply the need for rank-and-file railway workers to prepare to take over if the 3 per cent. of 1958 is repeated.

This lesson can be driven home even more forcibly once it is understood how railway workers live today at the bottom of the wages scale.

A legend

The present Union leadership isn't in fact doing anything really new, but rather they are extending the work of those who have gone before.

The legend of militancy which grew up around the late General Secretaries of the NUR, Figgins and Campbell, is used to compare Greene unfavourably. But in actual fact militancy extends much further than making rousing speeches and acting on rank-and-file pressure. In the present case it can only be judged from the standpoint of what was actually achieved for railway workers in a period when the railways were the life-blood of an expanding economy, and big business couldn't afford a fight with railway workers.

An example of this militant leadership can be seen from the drawn-out pay struggle in the middle of the 1950's.

In January, 1954, an interim settlement of 6 per cent. was accepted by the NUR and other railway unions after a threatened national stoppage in support of a claim for 15 per cent. which had been lodged six months previously. In January, 1955, 12 months later, the 15 per cent. was paid in full.

In all 2½ years were taken up with this claim and a national stoppage was twice threatened. Yet within months of the full claim being conceded a further application for a wage increase had to be made.

The reasons that railway workers are on low pay today can be found in the retreats and compromises which have taken place in the past.

Today, however, the BTC is in a position to take a much firmer stand. The entire employing class and City of London will fight with the BTC if they decide to take on the railway workers.

Yet in face of this Sidney Greene does nothing to unite the ranks of railway workers, but adds to the confusion by playing into the hands of Sir Brian Robertson in his manoeuvring.

Sir Brian is also responding to this attitude by making pie in the sky promises which Greene can pass along to his members and add to the confusion.

Two important factors

Firstly, the recent struggle of the printworkers and the present engineering pay claim show that employers who are enjoying even bigger profits than ever are reluctant to part with a penny piece without a bit of fight.

Secondly, what is posed in this fight is the question—'on whose terms will the railways be reorganized—the BTC's or those decided by railway workers?'

This is the goal the BTC have set their eyes on, and a

defeat will set them back in their attempts to make railway workers pay for their reorganization.

All railway workers have a stake in deciding the outcome of the pay claim. Members of ASLEF and TSSA who are awaiting the outcome of the 'pay inquiry' should take note of these present developments. Webber and Hallsworth won't be able to keep their members out of the BTC's reorganization plans like they have with the pay demand. These weak-kneed bureaucrats should be shaken off and their members should join other rank-and-file railway workers in the fight.

Every lesson of the past shows that the future for thousands of railway workers cannot be left in the hands of Greene, Hallsworth, Webber and Co. Rank-and-file railway workers must prepare now for when the pattern of retreat is repeated and the leadership sells out.

COVENTRY RAILWAYMEN SUPPORT NATIONAL STOPPAGE TO WIN CLAIM

By Reg Perry

At the best attended meeting for many years the Coventry branch of the National Union of Railwaymen unanimously passed the following resolution.

'This branch calls upon the Executive Committee to call a national stoppage to start at midnight on February 28 if by that date the British Transport Commission has not granted a wage award of at least 10 per cent.'

In an interview with The Newsletter, Bro. Lanwarne, the branch secretary, said: 'Railwaymen feel their claim is long overdue. The claims that the railways are uneconomic and not able to pay their way have still to be proved. The railways should be classed as a public service and the crippling burden of compensation payments which amount to around £40 million per year should be stopped.'

'The West Midlands District Committee, of which I am president, meets next Sunday. If the offer presented by Sir Brian Robertson during the week is not at least equal to 10 per cent. then we shall press forward for the Committee to endorse our resolution.'

'I am of the opinion that it will then be necessary to contact those other areas of the union who have threatened action. Because the nationalized industries are taking the full brunt of the Tories' attacks a united stand with the miners would be the best means of ensuring a victory.'

Bro. Lanwarne's personal opinion was that their struggle had been hampered by many union officials who wanted to retreat from the problems facing the members; 'just as we have not had the support from the Labour Party that would have been given years ago to workers in struggle by the pioneers of the party.'

The trouble with the set-up in the nationalized industries was because when the plans had been drawn up by the Labour Party they had not consulted the workers in the industries or their trade unions.

ENGINEERS READY FOR ACTION

By our Industrial Correspondents

As anticipated, the engineering employers have turned down the unions' claim for a 40-hour week and a £1 per week wage claim.

The union leaders rejected the offer of a 42½-hour week and a sub-committee to investigate wages, because they wish to iron out difficulties over piece-work earnings, and not because they are determined to stand firm for the 40-hour week.

The present offer can entail financial losses for over half the industry's workers who are employed on payment by results work.

Rather than go back to the members with a call for action to enforce the pay-and-hours' claim, the Confederation leaders have agreed to participate in a sub-committee. The sub-committee which meets on February 8 will discuss the 'practical

implications of reducing hours'.

The men are willing to fight. On Tuesday the day of the negotiations, workers in factories all over the country staged stoppages and demonstrations. These received neither the help nor the encouragement of the union leaders. In fact the reverse operated. Andy Wolfe, convenor at Sperry's Gyroscope, Middlesex, told me: 'The leaders sent us a circular telling us they would not "countenance" any unofficial demonstrations in favour of the claim.'

At Tothill Street, site of the Employers' Federation offices, 1,500 shop stewards and militants thronged the pavements whilst employers and Confederation officials met. Time after time the big crowd roared 'For the full claim'. Amongst the demonstrators were men like Bro. Essen, convenor at Osram lamps who felt, 'that the leaders should not hesitate. Behind them is a tremendous solidarity to back up our claim.'

Two shop stewards from Metropolitan Vickers factory at Sheffield, laconically commented: 'Of course we want the full claim. We are not children. Our leaders must not try and settle for less.'

Bert Jones who is a shop steward at H.T.B., Enfield, London, did not have much confidence in the union officials. Pointing a finger at Broadway House where the discussions were taking place he said: 'I know one thing. There is not much class struggle going on there.'

His factory had 'slapped an immediate ban on piecework and overtime a week ago.'

In Church Hall, Westminster, the demonstrators heard Confederation leaders speak on the offer. Not one hand was raised amongst the 1,500 present against the demand that the union executives run a nation-wide campaign for strike action.

Salford, too

This decision comes in line with the demand of Salford stewards who, meeting last Saturday, called on the Manchester district committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union to organize mass demonstrations in support of a national strike for the full claim.

The Salford stewards also decided that if the district committee do not organize such a demonstration they will themselves organize one. Convenor Jim Wilcock, from big Salford Engineering concern, Gresham and Craven's, says his workers want the Confederation to call a national strike.

Workers at Muirs Machine Tools, John Shaws Ltd., Farmer-Nortons and Manchester Dry Docks, have all pledged support for strike action.

The raising of the bank rate 'marks the first turn in official economic policy towards a policy of active restraint' comments last week's Economist. This means a get-tough on wages for the employers.

The Economist makes happy note of the fact that: 'The boom is not so universally spread. Reserves of labour are probably larger. The pressure of wages, although it is becoming stronger, is still small by post-war standards, and so far, more than matched by rising output per worker.'

The government and the employers hope to stabilise prices at the expense of increasing production without wage awards.

Resistance to wage demands will stiffen. Sir Kenneth Hague spokesman for the employers, appeals to the union leaders to keep the men quiet. They know that in Carron they have a willing ally. They also recognise that even the Communist Party members on the Confederation such as Foulkes settled with the Electricity Supply Board for 42 hours.

Action committees

The rank and file must now organize for action. At yesterday's meeting in Church Hall, Constructional Engineering Union official, Wally Kent, advised the men to set up action committees in every factory. That is a good practical piece of advice.

Action committees in every factory. A shop stewards' movement in every city and district. Demonstrations, meetings, leaflets and campaigns throughout the factories to prepare

the workers for a national strike to win the claims.

If the Union leaders will not lead them let the rank and file step forward.

ALGERIA

BEHIND THE ALGIERS INSURRECTION

By Tom Kemp

On Sunday, January 24, European activists tried to reproduce their action of May 18, 1958, which set in motion the events which rapidly brought the Fourth Republic to its knees. That has been their conscious and declared aim since disappointment with de Gaulle came to a head last September, following his policy statement on 'self-determination'. The great dissimilarities between the two situations suggest that this time the movement will be scotched in Algiers itself; but it marks a landmark in the history of the Fifth Republic and reveals, if only for an instance, the bottomless pit which will one day swallow it up.

The Europeans of Algiers have lived for over five years in a heady and tense atmosphere compounded of unprecedented material prosperity and civil war. They have feared that a sell-out from Paris would snatch away their privileges just as much as they have feared the bombs and bullets of the nationalist fighters. In their imagination looms up the dire choice: the suit-case or the coffin. How to avoid that choice has been their great political problem: hence, when de Gaulle seemed to offer a third way they were ready to grasp it with both hands. When doubts arose, many of them were ready to prepare and arm themselves to fight another betrayal.

Army divided

But if the settlers won in May, 1958, they only did so because they had the army on their side. Clearly the new insurrection was designed to force the hand of the army and to bring it into action against the dismissal of its idol, Massu—who may have deliberately offered the provocation knowing that it would be followed up by the settler movement. The army, i.e., the officer corps, still holds the keys in Algeria and will not tolerate a sell-out; it knows its power. However, the army is divided—for and against de Gaulle, for and against the settlers. Some officers regard the General as a prisoner of the civilian old-line politicians in Paris and for whom no obscenity is spared; for others he remains a symbol of authority and the only hope for the army in Algeria. For some the settlers are greedy exploiters, and they look to a military-paternalistic regime balance between colonists and Arabs. The lack of unity in political thinking in the army is clearly a barrier to action: and inaction means obeying the orders of Paris. Without the army the settler insurrection cannot succeed. Thus, although repression seems to have been mainly left to police formations, unless the unexpected happens, we can expect that the army will keep its powder dry—seeing in this the best way to consolidate its position.

De Gaulle may move further to the right

For a long time now de Gaulle has been keeping his distance from the extreme right both in France and in Algeria. He has preferred the traditionally conservative forces in big business, high finance, the Church and the army. These forces have been moving towards the principle of finding new political forms, making concessions to the moderate nationalists, while preserving the main economic stake in Algeria and the Sahara. As a matter of fact the prospects of such a policy succeeding seem dimmer than they were a few months ago. Consequently, official policy may, through force of circumstances, be brought nearer to that advocated by the men who took to the barricades last Sunday.

Marxism Under Fire

Peter Cadogan and the ILP

By G. HEALY

The history of the Labour movement is a history of political tendencies. Since the policies of the movement can only be determined by discussion and argument it is natural that there should be various organizations which subscribe to different opinions. Superficially this may appear to some people to be rather unfortunate, yet in the course of history this division of opinion, especially in the Marxist movement, has often led to important victories. There is the history of the Bolshevik party, a history of fierce debate and discussion leading to the greatest discipline in action against the common class enemy.

There is, however, one yardstick which must be applied to the conduct of groupings inside the Labour movement who have political differences. That is the attitude of one of these groupings towards the common class enemy should another of the groupings be attacked.

The long struggle between Stalinism and Trotskyism always found Trotskyists in the forefront defending the democratic rights of the Stalinists under persecution by the class enemy. Marxists regard differences of opinion as the business of the Labour movement and no one else's. And if their opponents inside the movement are attacked they fight to defend their right to propagate their opinions, regardless of differences.

The Socialist Labour League is constantly being witch-hunted by the capitalist press and the Right-wing of the Labour Party. Several of its members have been expelled from the Labour Party and from trade unions. One of the tendencies in the Labour movement which has supported the actions of the Right-wing in expelling our people is the insignificant sect calling itself the Independent Labour Party, and its paper the Socialist Leader. When the Socialist Outlook was banned by the Labour Party in 1954, Mr. George Stone, the editor of the Socialist Leader, supported the ban. When our members were expelled from the Labour Party last year, the Socialist Leader supported the expulsions.

It is no surprise, therefore, that this paper should now become the open forum for people who have deserted the Marxist movement and are rapidly making their way to the Right. Birds of a feather flock together, and Mr. Peter Cadogan, of Cambridge, who is never tired of shouting about his hatred of sectarianism, now finds it convenient to attack the Socialist Labour League in one of the most sectarian and unprincipled of all papers in the Labour movement.

It is also not surprising that in his article (Socialist Leader, January 23) Cadogan should reveal his intention of 'snuggling up more closely to the Right-wing of the Labour movement. After all, could there be a better place to outline one's opportunist tendencies than in a sectarian newspaper? Especially since the ILP has provided quite a crop of opportunists for the Labour Party in the past—John McGovern, for instance, and Walter Padley. Perhaps Cadogan thinks he, too, is moving along one of those traditional 'British' paths in this respect.

Cadogan and the SLL

Cadogan was expelled from the Socialist Labour League because he refused to avail himself of his constitutional right to present his political opinions to the membership and took his views to the public at large. As a result he revealed that far from being as democratic as he claims to be, he treated the membership of the Socialist Labour League with contempt. The opinion he expressed to the public was fundamentally at variance with the policy of the League. He insisted that the world should unite in 'a front that cuts across class boundaries' in the struggle against the H-bomb. The Socialist Labour League, on the other hand, believes that it is necessary to widen the gulf between the classes as part of the struggle to establish socialism, the only answer to the H-bomb. Consequently, Mr. Cadogan parted company with the League.

It should be said that on leaving the Socialist Labour League Cadogan expressed himself as fully satisfied with the way he was treated by the National Committee which heard his appeal

against suspension. To read him in the Socialist Leader one would imagine that he had been brutally assaulted. We take note of the fact that whilst Cadogan advocated Stalinism and justified its crimes for several years, he never to our knowledge, at any time used the same type of vicious language about the leaders of the Communist Party as he has used against the leading members of the Socialist Labour League. In any case, such language always tells more about the person who uses it than about those of whom it is said.

The political differences

Cadogan opens his article in the Socialist Leader with the statement that: 'The October Revolution of Lenin and Trotsky was the most successful failure'.

Here is a remark which is very acceptable to the Right-wing of the British Labour Party. These gentlemen like to convey the impression that they consider that, while there is some good in Russia, the revolution was a failure. Marxists, on the other hand, constantly endeavour to explain how the great economic advances of the Russian revolution are in contradiction with the parasitic role of the Soviet bureaucracy. Cadogan equates the bureaucracy with the revolution in his 'success and failure' formula. This is a major concession on his part to the Right-wing reformists.

He then goes on to speak about the transformation of the State. Marxists have always carefully explained that it is impossible to transform the capitalist State; that the State has to be destroyed in the course of revolutionary struggle and replaced by a State based upon the working class after it has taken power. Cadogan here subscribes in effect to the Stalinist theory of the 'British road to socialism' which is very acceptable to Fabians and reformists in general—and which Cadogan himself debunked only three years ago.

There is not a word in his article about how to fight the Right-wing in the Labour Party and achieve socialism in Britain. Instead he proceeds to advise members of the Socialist Labour League to get rid of Healy so that, to use his own words: 'The Socialist Labour League can clearly demonstrate to the whole Left that it really intends to change its ways.'

What is this 'left' that Cadogan speaks of? There is no doubt that the Socialist Labour League is in political opposition to the centrists of the New Left Review and their supporters in the Labour Party. These people are at least honest in their approach to the class struggle. By and large they refuse to accept it, and of course they are extremely annoyed with the Socialist Labour League when we insist upon the decisive role of the working class in the struggle for socialism.

Why should Healy be expelled to satisfy this 'left'? Cadogan has a very clear answer for this, too: 'If this is not done,' he says, 'then the Right-wing will continue to point the finger of scorn at Healy.' Here we have Mr. Cadogan's policy in a nutshell. We should break down the class barriers, that is, get rid of the idea of class struggle; throw the very great achievements of the Russian revolution overboard and make ourselves

respectable to the renegades of Transport House; end all revolutionary talk about the need to overthrow the State, leaving the door open for supporting the Parliamentary road; demand that the Socialist Labour League purges the Marxists and then we shall be so respectable that even the Right-wing will recognize us.

The day that the League is recognized as 'respectable' by Transport House, that day will sound its death-knell. We are

proud of the hostile way our policies are received by the capitalist press and Transport House, as well as by Cadogan. There is no room in the Socialist Labour League for reformists and Right-wingers. We are sure that this principled position on our part will not frighten away serious people in the Left-wing who may be critical on this or that question in relation to Marxism. We are confident that it will in fact attract them towards the Socialist Labour League.

Rutland Boughton 1878-1960

The eminent composer of 'The Immortal Hour', Rutland Boughton, died in London on January 25.

He joined the Communist Party in 1926 and left it in 1956. Below we reprint, instead of an obituary, a passage from the article 'How Come These Traitors'—an analysis of the causes of degeneration of working-class leaders—which he contributed to the Labour Monthly for November, 1926, during the discussion which followed the betrayal of the General Strike.

Absolute standards of living have changed since 1926, but the principle Boughton expounded remains the same.

To pay the secretary of a trade union or the editor of a Labour paper a higher salary than the average wages of the men he is intended to serve is contrary to every principle of socialism and common sense.

The theory appears to be that if the Labour movement is to have really first-class officials they must be kept for Labour by the sort of wage they could get from the boss class. But the boss class can always afford to pay the highest salaries and so secure the most efficient of these men who are for sale.

Therefore of such men Labour can in any case only get the second best, the men left over when the boss class has had its pick—unless, of course, a certain number of very efficient men are actually allowed to put on the livery of Labour the better to do the bosses' own work; and in that case it is fully to be expected that they will get a good deal more than Labour pays them.

I don't mean that such men would receive actual bribes of cash. That would be too obvious and would not properly achieve the masters' object.

But popular Labour leaders whose ideas are flabby and offer no real threat to the capitalist system may be invited, for instance, to write for the capitalist Press, with great advantage

to themselves and to the increase of a reputation for broad-mindedness among the masters.

Or they may be called upon from time to time to act as Labour adviser to capitalist organizations. But under the most favourable circumstances, even when the highly-paid leader is a man of principle, he is unable properly to serve or represent the workers if he lives at a higher rate than they live.

Plutocratic embrace

It is not his fault so much as the fault of the workers who overpay him. A man who gets the cut of a joint every day in the week forgets (if he ever knew) the needs of a man who lives chiefly on bread and potatoes.

A man who can take his family once a week to the theatre cannot understand the intellectual starvation of one who finds it hard to afford a daily paper.

Further, if an official is paid well enough to mix without too much discomfort in circles frequented by the master class, he will be open to another demoralizing influence—to that flattery which is the third cause of official Labour treachery.

When MacDonald got into such a muddle over the forged letter (i.e., the 'Zinoviev' Letter, 1924), I heard a great dramatist remark, 'He has fallen a victim to the charming manners of the English governing class.'

And while the workers will have to take steps to guard against that sort of failure they must not despise too much the men who have failed.

Not one of the workers themselves but would become weakened in moral fibre if day in and day out, year in and year out, he were assailed by the subtle sweetness of pretended and genuine admiration from fair women of fine culture, and by the even more powerful flattery of their men when they ask for advice and incidentally learn many solid and useful facts which lie behind the Labour official's opinions, the knowledge of these facts being so necessary for the continuance in power of the capitalist class.

This is not a wilful treachery of the official: he cannot help himself in the false opinion of superiority which a high salary gives him.

VFS CONFERENCE

By our Political Correspondent

When Victory for Socialism was reorganized in 1958, many Left-wing Labour Party members hoped it would offer an organized political alternative to Gaitskellism. Hopes were soon dashed. The original intention to form branches was quickly dropped at threats from Transport House. Opposition was mainly confined to pamphleteering, and no serious effort was made to build support inside the unions.

Over the last two years membership has rapidly declined and unofficial estimates now place it as low as 400.

Now as the fight opens up again in the Labour Party the role and activities of VFS can assume a new importance. As Gaitskell, Crosland and friends, acting under the increasing pressure of the employers, try to swing the party to the Right, so, too, the Left comes under pressure.

New industrial struggles are on the way. Three-and-a-half million engineering and shipbuilding workers push forward for

higher wages and a 40-hour week. They head a queue of seven million workers with similar claims.

In aircraft, mining and rails the threat of mass sackings hangs over the head of some quarter of a million workers.

Every day the working class shows its militancy and willingness to fight back. If Victory for Socialism turns towards the industrial movement; if it campaigns for an extension of nationalization and if it is prepared to join hands with the trade union Left against the Carrons and Sidney Greens then it can provide a real alternative to the present Right-wing Labour leaders and their policies.

But a strong, healthy Left-wing inside the Labour Party and the trade unions must firmly resist bans and proscriptions. New policies cannot be developed without free discussion and the right of all sections to fight and organize inside the movement for their opinions. This week-end's conference of Victory for Socialism must do more than record its general opposition to bans and proscriptions. It must go clearly and unambiguously on record for the removal of the present ban on the Socialist Labour League and initiate a national campaign for the removal of that ban.

Constant Reader | Background to a Crime

Since my paragraph of December 19 mentioning that August will see the 20th anniversary of the murder of Trotsky (and recalling how the Daily Worker treated the news of that murder), a friend has told me of a remarkable book recently published in America (and due to come out here soon) which has appeared very timely for this anniversary—and all the more so because the murderer is due for release from his Mexican prison about then.

The book is 'The Mind of an Assassin', by Isaac Don Levine, whose life of Stalin (1931) was described by Philip Grierson, in his invaluable 'Books on Soviet Russia, 1917-1942', as 'the best of the early biographies, despite the hostility of the author, an able American journalist'. Levine has put together the evidence regarding the murderer's identity and the pre-history of the crime which has been assembled since Gorkin and Salazar brought out their 'Murder in Mexico' ten years ago.

A great deal of information about the prisoner's personal record has been uncovered. Of considerable political interest are the details of how this man, whose real name is Ramon Mercader, was recruited to the Soviet secret service in his native Spain in 1937, by the political policemen operating there under cover of Soviet aid to the Republican side in the Civil War.

When Trotsky moved from Europe to Mexico in that same year, the Stalinist murder-squad was faced with a new problem in accomplishing its task of destroying him. The young Spaniard Mercader was assigned the responsibility of making his way into the Trotsky household and finding the opportunity to kill his host. He spent two years of methodical work on this, beginning by cultivating the friendship of an American girl supporter of Trotsky's who was living in Paris!

Characteristically, the passport (in the name of 'Frank Jackson') which Mercader used during one stage of his 'expedition' had been taken by the Soviet political police in Spain from a Canadian volunteer killed fighting with the International Brigade.

According to the prison criminologist's report, quoted by Levine, Mercader (who calls himself Jacques Mornard) 'does not feel any repentance for his crime'—for which he was secretly awarded by Stalin the order of Hero of the Soviet Union.

Bevan

Inevitably, in these recent days when Aneurin Bevan's health has been a centre of attention, people interested in the history of the movement have been looking back over his career and remembering particular moments that seem important to them. If anybody is planning to publish a selection of Bevan's speeches and articles, I should like to offer a suggestion for it.

Between 1931 and 1934 a lively weekly called the New Clarion appeared, and became a sort of unofficial organ of the Socialist League, the 'Victory for Socialism' of those days. The young ex-miner M.P. contributed an article to the issue of February 11, 1933, which not only struck the right note at the time but has something to tell us today as well.

Bevan discussed the question why young people were so lacking in interest in the Labour movement. His answer was that its activities were focussed on Parliament, and the role of the people in relation to Parliament was merely to put a cross in the right place every four or five years, something which could not inspire the youngsters. Behind the political doldrums of the time lay 'Mondism', as the policy of class-collaboration in industry was then called. 'The essence of the matter lies in the industrial movement. . . . A virile political party cannot be built up on the basis of a working class in full industrial retreat.' It was not possible to preach political advance while organizing industrial retreat. 'A revival of industrial militancy would have an electrifying effect

on the political situation.'

How the revived industrial militancy which began in 1933, led by rank-and-file movements, was defeated and brought to naught is a story which also has its relevance to today's problems. A first glance at this story forms the concluding part of the Socialist Labour League pamphlet 'Some Past Rank-and-File Movements' which I mentioned last week.

BRIAN PEARCE.

LETTER

DIRECT ACTION

In his recent article on the Harrington demonstration your correspondent from the Direct Action Committee makes the point that Direct Action seeks to get rid of nuclear weapons by mobilizing the working class.

This is not correct. The main emphasis of Direct Action lies in persuading individual workers on rocket sites, etc., to give up their jobs. This, to my mind, is futile and can succeed only in isolating politically-conscious workers from other members of their class. It would be far more effective to get such people to agitate among their workmates for the building of an anti-bomb movement and ultimately for the blacking of the bomb and the bases.

It is true that Direct Action was responsible for a token strike among building workers at Stevenage. But no attempt was made to follow up this work in the district.

Moreover, when calling for strike or demonstrations by workers Direct Action seeks to make the struggle one 'purely' against the H-bomb, and attempts to link it with other issues are discouraged. Individual 'freedom from sin' is rated more highly than political effectiveness.

At the back of this activity lies the old pacifist illusion that if enough people will refuse to take part in war preparations then peace can be preserved. But war is prevented not by individuals adopting an abstentionist position but by building a movement for the overthrow of capitalism.

Undoubtedly the Direct Action Committee is composed of sincere, courageous and self-sacrificing people. They compare in this very favourably with the opportunist leadership of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. But no point is served in minimising differences between Direct Action and Marxists. If the CND leadership take the peace movement into a marsh, the Direct Action take it into a blind alley.

Leicester.

ALAN STANLEY.

SALFORD BUILDING WORKERS TO DEMONSTRATE AGAINST THE H-BOMB

By H. Ratner

A small but significant sign of the fact that ordinary rank-and-file workers are not always as apathetic about politics as some pundits on both the Right and the so-called 'Left' make out comes from Salford.

On Saturday, February 6, building workers employed by the Salford Direct Works Department will demonstrate in support of Nuclear Disarmament.

The idea for this demonstration came quite spontaneously from break-time argument on one of the sites.

As Bro. Jim Arnison, Federation steward explained, the call did not even come from the shop stewards. 'One of the site stewards came to me and told me of the suggestion made by lads so the Shop Stewards Committee went ahead.'

The Salford Shop stewards' rank-and-file movement will be supporting the demonstration. The Salford Labour Party and other organizations are being contacted.

The leaflet put out by the Direct Works Shop stewards' Committee invites all organizations and individuals to take part. Banners and posters will be welcome. The march starts from Broadway (Central Mission), Salford, at 1 p.m. on Saturday, February 6.