

# The Newsletter

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## ROUND 1 TO THE TORIES

The Newsletter

January 20, 1962

### Smallpox and the Press

SMALLPOX is a terrible disease. Epidemics are fortunately rare these days, except in countries where the standard of living has been depressed by imperialist exploitation.

But the disease of racialism is not controllable by the methods of medical science. Its causes are to be found in the contradictions of a decaying society.

The present smallpox scare is being deliberately blown up by the press, radio and TV not because of the dangers to public health but as part of the agitation around the Tory Immigration Bill. The scare and headlines like the one reproduced here are openly welcomed by racialists and certain Tory MPs. The near hysteria of the newspaper reports from Bradford is attributable to the fact that the first signs of the disease were found in Pakistani immigrants.

For two centuries the British ruled the Indian subcontinent. Pakistan is still economically dominated by British capital. The prevalence of diseases of this kind in that part of the

**Evening Standard**

Hundred more Pakistanis due here tonight  
and an MP sends plea to Home Office—

**SMALLPOX: 'BAN  
THE IMMIGRANTS'**

world is a result of the miserable conditions of life to which imperialism condemns the colonial people.

As in the case of Middlesbrough, the national press angles the story so as to play on racist prejudice as much as possible. Bradford, it should be remembered, is the town where the Locarno Ballroom's colour bar is being fought by the Labour movement.

The fight against the wage pause is the real light in which this campaign should be viewed, for it is now that the Tories need to find every way they can to divide and confuse the working class.

Racialism in every form must be combatted by the Labour and trades union movement by showing how it diverts the attention of workers from the real issue—the fight against capitalism. The unity of the working class, black and white, Jew and gentile, must be achieved in the struggle to rid the world of this putrefying social system.

Vaccination, let us hope, will soon bring the smallpox outbreak under control. Marxist leadership is the political vaccine which can stamp out the racist infection and its social cause.

## Kennedy's Achilles Heel

AN article in the 'New York Times' of January 11 by the influential American commentator Max Frankel gives a clear indication of the desperate muddle over foreign policy that the Kennedy administration has fallen into.

Frankel writes that the 'Operations Center'—known as the crisis center—formed after the failure of the Cuban invasion is to be abandoned; not because of a lack of crises in the world but because of difficulties in the running of the center.

The center was planned as a 'high-priority' agency to co-ordinate foreign policy planning and action involving the White House, State Department, Pentagon and Central Intelligence Agency and other offices.

'It was staffed with a dozen high-ranking Foreign Service officers who were to have authority to cut across bureaucratic lines to comparable officials in other agencies and through the red tape of the State Department itself.

'Their mission was to identify trouble spots abroad and to prepare contingency plans for quick action, if necessary.'

The center was to maintain an around-the-clock watch on world events and to collate all news and intelligence reports. The officers were to service the inter-departmental task forces created for such problems as Berlin and Vietnam, to make certain that urgent decisions were reached and carried out.

But the crisis center never got going. Frankel said that new task forces were established but the

more permanent ones attained virtual autonomy. The center was merely duplicating the work of other departments.

Kennedy's brother-in-law, S. E. Smith, the center's unpaid 'trouble-shooter' resigned on an hour's notice and moved to handle the Kennedy family's financial interests.

The center's director, Theodore C. Achilles is to move to a job in the department of the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs.

The center, or what remains of it, is in the charge now of Lucius D. Battle, a special assistant to Secretary of State, Dean Rusk.

The collapse of the 'crisis center' is indicative of the whole crisis of world imperialism as it struggles to bolster itself against the rising tide of working class action.

## Pay Pause Brings Results

by Cyril Smith

**T**HE Tory pay pause is, in the main, successful. Regardless of the significant breaches in Selwyn Lloyd's policy made by the power workers and others, the hard fact remains that the government has succeeded in depressing wages by raising taxation and forcing the white-collar workers to retreat under conditions which have meant the loss of millions of pounds in real wages.

In a recent speech, Macmillan explained that his Cabinet anticipated it would have to make temporary retreats in order to hold the main line of its strategy. This strategy is based upon the need to cut production costs preparatory to entering the Common Market early in 1963.

The first stage of the strategy consisted in efforts to frighten the weaker section of wage earners, in particular Civil Servants and teachers, and to hold up any payment of wage increases for a certain period. It is now anticipated that increases will be granted to these workers of somewhere in the region of 2½ per cent when the arbitration tribunals recommence operations after March.

In relation to the mass of wage workers, the policy of the government has been to try and engage the TUC around its so-called 'planning' policy talks and mark time for several months.

### Suits the Tories

This has also been successful. Whilst the government have been busy depressing wages and saving millions, the TUC has been talking. This arrangement suits the Tories very well. Meanwhile, the Chancellor, through the employers' organizations, refuses any increase to the major unions and holds out the carrot of a slender possibility that some consideration will also be given—again in the region of 2½ per cent—after next March.

Another and perhaps more significant development, but on a much smaller scale, has been the get-tough attitude of employers, particularly Rootes and,

for a short time, the Steel Company of Wales.

In the latter case it became clear to the Tories that a major conflict might have been brought forward too quickly had the steel strike continued. This, they felt, threatened to interfere with the talks between themselves and the TUC. So they settled the South Wales strike at the expense of the labourers.

The Rootes strike, however, was fought out to the finish at the cost of millions of pounds. There is a strong rumour that the motor car manufacturers helped to subsidize Rootes in



Macmillan: temporary retreats

Admiralty employment will be much less than it is now.

Meanwhile, no one disguises the fact that the promise of the 2½ per cent is of a transitional nature. In other words, it is the second stage of carefully-laid preparations by the government to force a real showdown with the unions, which will undoubtedly come when they enter the Common Market.

### Prevent the Unions

'The victory of Rootes has demonstrated how the unions can be defeated.' 'The Financial Times' of January 17 advises the government that, 'If the unions are not prepared to exercise self-restraint—as they demonstrably are not—the Government must so order the affairs of the country as to prevent them from having a stranglehold on the economy.'

There is now a real need to consolidate the struggle of all the workers engaged in wage negotiations. This can only be done through the encouragement of rank-and-file movements similar to the one in the power industry which will bring together not only the workers of a particular industry and union, but all those workers—in particular white-collar workers—who have a fight on with the Tory government.

### Resolute Struggle

The heart of preparation so far as the trade unions are concerned today lies in the building of such movements. Needless to say they will meet with the bitter opposition of Right-wing leaders such as Carron and Williamson, but that is to be expected.

For the first time since the end of the war, there can be no mistake about the Tory strategy. Only resolute struggle on the part of the rank and file can defeat them.



Carron: bitter opposition?

this struggle. Rootes won the strike because the Right-wing leaders of the engineering unions did everything to help them.

On this front also the government has been successful insofar as it made up its mind to encourage the employers to fight.

By some expert manoeuvring, Mr. Brooke and Mr. Selwyn Lloyd have succeeded in defeating the work-to-rule movement.

When we consider the way that the trade union chiefs have in the past extolled the benefits of the arbitration machinery, one can now appreciate the pitiable plight of the Right-wing trade union leaders who stood idly by and allowed the government to scrap this machinery for the Civil Service as and from Lloyd's speech last July.

Nor has the role of the Left-wing Mr. Cousins been much better. He has over 100,000 members of his union engaged in government employment, yet the best he can do is to take out a legal action, something which can drag on for months if not years. When the court does meet, the value of real wages for Mr. Cousins' members in

**T**HE sharpness of Maurice Dobb's criticism of R. P. Dutt's presentation of the 22nd Congress, in the January 'Labour Monthly', is all the more remarkable in view of the well-known mildness of temperament of the critic. Dobb is essentially a scholar; he has been a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, since the 1920s and was for a long time the only Communist among British university teachers.

Over many years he has rendered service to the Stalinist cause—in particular, during the fateful debate in the Soviet Union in 1926-27, it was he more than anyone else who 'interpreted' it to British Communists in a way which ensured smooth acceptance of the Stalin-Bukharin line and dismissal of the views of Trotsky, Preobrazhensky and the Left Opposition generally.

But Dobb has also made useful contributions to Marxism, most notably his book 'Studies in the Development of Capitalism' (1946); and throughout his career, honest scholarship has kept chafing against the Stalinist framework he chose to accept. Over a long period he has been treated as a dubiously reliable 'element' by the Dutts, Rothsteins and other monolithic party hacks.

Dobb's first clash with the leadership appears to have occurred in 1932. This was the year of the great international drive to crush Trotskyism in the Communist movement, heralded by Stalin's letter to the editors

of Stalin's warning against what he called 'rotten liberalism' in relation to Trotskyism were not immediately grasped and acted on. The Labour Monthly—then, as now, edited by R. P. Dutt—carried in its issue of March 1932 an advertisement for another journal called 'Twentieth Century', whose listed forthcoming contributions included an article by . . . L. D. Trotsky. But the penny dropped soon after this.

In the 'Communist Review' for April, Ralph Fox, a writer with close Moscow connections, wrote about the local significance of Stalin's letter and applied it forthwith to local bad types. Stalin had taken a swipe

## WHAT DOBB SAID

IN the January issue of 'Labour Monthly' a communication from Maurice Dobb states that the 'Notes of the Month' for December, in their summing up the 22nd Congress, are in two respects, 'inadequate to the point of being misleading'.

Firstly, Dobb says, the impression is given that the fact that emergency powers were distorted and misused was due to personal quirks of Stalin's character and to the 'unique authority' that he came to enjoy from his 'outstanding ability and record of achievement'; while there is no mention of the fact that Stalin made major political errors (from 1934 onwards) or of what they were.

'As has been frequently emphasised since the 20th Congress, Stalin's major political error in this context, from which so much else flowed, was his theory that the class struggle became intensified in the degree to which socialism was being constructed. It was this which was used to justify the intensified use (instead of relaxation) of emergency powers after 1934. To appreciate this is, surely essential ABC for any full political understanding of what happened?'

Secondly, says Dobb, a rather cautious attempt is made to draw a distinction between regular trial procedure and 'special procedures', and to attribute the injustices exposed only to the latter. 'One can see that such a distinction might be a comforting one for ourselves if it were valid. But I suggest that the distinction has little or no validity, and if intended as an excuse is too lame to sound convincing to more than a handful.'

He cites the case of Rudzutak who, at his trial, withdrew the 'confession' he had previously made but was nonetheless executed within less than an hour. Dobb quotes the references made by Khrushchev to 'the practice of mass repression' in the 1935-38 period, applied 'first against the Trotskyites, Zinovievites, Bukharinists, long since politically defeated by the Party, and subsequently also against many honest Communists.' This leaves no doubt, Dobb thinks, that the accusations of criminal activities (as distinct from political errors) made at the public trials were as faked as those levelled at Rudzutak, Postyshev, Kossiov, Eikhe, Krylenko, Bubnov, etc.

of 'Proletarskaya Revolyutsia', 'On Some Questions Concerning The History of Bolshevism' (October 1931), quoted in The Newsletter of December 9. Right-wingers who might support Bukharin had been expelled or disciplined in 1929-31—that was the period in which, in Britain, J. R. Campbell, Andrew Rothstein and Arthur Horner were put on the spot and made to toe the line.

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In 1932, individuals accused of Trotskyism were expelled in droves—in Britain such well-known figures as Reg Groves, Stewart Purkis and Henry Sara were thrown out, along with virtually the entire party organization in South-West London. By the end of 1932 most Communist Parties had been made 'safe for Stalin'—for the time being anyway.

In Britain the Party leadership was rather slow in the uptake when 'Some Questions . . .' was published. The implica-

at Rosa Luxemburg in his pronouncement, and Fox picked for acid comment a letter in the 'Daily Worker' by T. A. Jackson in which Rosa had been made much of. 'That Jackson himself is one of the banner-bearers of Luxemburgism is a trifle', observed Fox, nastily.

'No doubt other, more serious, carriers of the same semi-Menshevik burden have instigated him to write his letter . . . It is to be regretted that the editorial board of the Daily Worker saw fit to make such a mild reply to Jackson. Surely there is a touch here of the rotten liberalism against which Comrade Stalin wages war?'

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Twentieth Century's April number appeared with the first instalment of Trotsky's article: 'Germany, Key to the International Situation'. The May number carried the conclusion of Trotsky's article, together with one by the British Communist Emile Burns, and an

# Dobb versus Dutt

## — the Background

announcement that the next, June, number would include a piece by Maurice Dobb. Meanwhile, however, hell had broken loose at King Street. To make up for earlier remissness, the comrades were lashing out with vigour sufficient to satisfy the master of their bona fides.

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There was the fantastic affair of the expulsion of J. T. Murphy, editor of the Communist Review. In the April number of that journal he had written an editorial stressing the importance of what is now called 'East-West Trade' and urging that the labour movement fight for the granting of trade credits by Britain to the Soviet Union. Now, once the anti-Trotskyite frenzy had 'taken' in the Party leadership, this was bound to seem extremely suspect.

For Trotsky had suggested as part of the transitional programme for the German revolution that a plan be drawn up for integrating the German and Russian economies, whereby unemployment might be abolished in Germany by means of work orders which would help Russia's five-year plan for industrialization. Murphy's proposal bore some slight resemblance to Trotsky's; so out he must go.

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What gave a farcical flavour to the incident was that nobody was more closely identified than Murphy with the fight against Trotsky—he it was who had moved Trotsky's expulsion from the Communist International! It just showed that you couldn't be too careful; and that was, indeed, the object of the exercise.

When the June number of Twentieth Century came out it duly carried Dobb's advertised article, but also a letter from Dobb, perhaps not wholly spontaneous or uninspired, expressing anger with the editors for publishing the Trotsky article. If it was their policy, Dobb warned, to publish such attacks on Russia, he must dissociate himself from the journal. The editors mildly pointed out that the article by Trotsky was in no sense an attack on Russia, and that in any case it had been published as a matter of interest, without necessarily committing the editors to the views expressed—like Dobb's own contribution.

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Twentieth Century, it should be explained, was one of a number of 'intellectual' magazines which appeared in the 1930s, lasted for a few months or a year or two, and then disappeared. (No connection with the magazine of the same name published nowadays.) As it was a time when interest in Marxism was growing among British intellectuals, the editors natur-

ally welcomed contributions such as Trotsky's, as well as those by Dobb and Burns. (Other Stalinists who wrote for it included Leslie Morton and Pat Sloan.)

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'Germany, Key to the International Situation' was, of course, no attack on Russia at all, but rather a warning of the terrible danger to Russia which a victory for Hitler in Germany would represent. At that time the 'line' in Stalinist circles was to treat developments in Germany as being of secondary importance. A 'temporary' triumph for Hitler was probably inevitable, but what of it; 'after Hitler, our turn'.

Attention was focused on the much less serious threat in the Far East, from Japanese imperialism. Trotsky warned that a Hitlerite Germany would certainly go to war with Russia, and would constitute a more



R. Palme Dutt

powerful adversary than any other. Comintern and Soviet policy should therefore be concentrated on preventing the Nazis from coming to power in Germany, and Trotsky offered a policy towards this end.

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After giving its first earnest of goodwill to obey Stalin's instructions by expelling the wretched Murphy, King Street was now turning on the real Trotskyists, the so-called 'Balham Group'. They were not properly sorted out and expelled until September, after a ludicrous episode in the pages of the Daily Worker. Insufficiently vigilant editors allowed a statement inspired by the Trotskyists to appear under the heading: 'Militant Mandate For Delegate', in the issue of August 13, and this had to be repudiated in the issue of August 16. (Particular exception was taken to a phrase about world revolution being the only guarantee of victory for the Russian workers.)

And in the Communist Review's September issue the great Dutt himself—eager, no doubt, to atone for that slip in the Labour Monthly—ponderously expounded the implications of Stalin's letter for British Communist intellectuals. The 'new

vogue or fashion of "Marxism", or what passes for "Marxism", which had begun to spread "in the younger progressive intellectual circles in Britain", held serious dangers.

Some Communist intellectuals had shown 'tendencies towards collaboration . . . with non-party intellectuals in enterprises and groupings of a very questionable character (e.g., the Twentieth Century grouping)'. In general, intellectuals who were Party members were showing bad symptoms—Dutt worked in a reference to 'incurable professorial types' which was understood to be aimed at Dobb—and they should take themselves in hand: 'The intellectual who has joined the Communist Party . . . should forget that he is an intellectual (except in moments of necessary self-criticism).' King Street would assign the Communist intellectual appropriate tasks, and to these he should confine himself, taking care not to let mind or pen wander.

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Two books of Dobb's were given hooligan treatment in reviews in the Communist Review. In the July number, under the heading 'Marxism Vulgarized', 'On Marxism Today' was savaged as 'an intellectual exercise'. (One of the specific complaints of the reviewer reveals clearly his own level: 'Dobb asserts that Marx never rested his forecast on the assumption that "the wage position of the workers would necessarily worsen absolutely", asserting further that Marx envisaged only "a relative decline in the share accruing to the workers".')

The reviewer, in the September issue, of 'Soviet Russia and the World', expressed amazement ('The Paradox of Maurice Dobb') that 'this "Marxist" doesn't know yet that there is full freedom for the worker in the Soviet Union . . .'

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The whole disgusting business culminated in the 13th Party Congress, held in November. The expulsions of the Trotskyists were confirmed, Pollitt informing the congress that 'two members [of the expelled group] had the impudence to send in appeals against the expulsions, but if we sense the congress aright it will give no opportunity to this group of putting its poisonous views across.'

The Party rules were changed to provide that in future delegates to congress must be 'comrades who support the line of the party and actively fight for it'—a provision which would have prevented the Dutt-Pollitt faction from getting their majority against the old leadership at the Leeds Congress in 1929.

The witches had been driven out, the waverers bawled into conformity, the party ranks strait-jacketed. Stalin could rest satisfied that his British organization was 'on the line'.

# The Mystery of the Reeks

WHO is the Irish terror? Who is the mighty Celtic aristocrat stalking the misty peat bogs to spread the good news of the National Fellowship and its inspired leader, Mr. Edward Martell? These are the questions being asked in homes on every continent. Who is the McGillicuddy of the Reeks?

Top Fleet Street sleuths have been working late in the night to solve this gripping mystery. Is the McGillicuddy in England, helping his brave compatriots to carry on the time-honoured, strike-breaking traditions of the ruling class by delivering parcels for Martell's 'Urgent Delivery Service'?

At last the truth is known. The McGillicuddy, daring defender of British heritage, has been unmasked. He is a 13-year-old Irish schoolboy at Eton.

'We should have checked,' said a spokesman for the National Fellowship, sponsored by 'men and women from all walks of life'—lords, ladies, viscounts, earls, dukes, generals, colonels and a few lowly misters—but he was interested, signed the form, and now we're glad to have him.'

'We shan't disown the boy now,' they added.

It is rumoured that all the sponsors and supporters of the National Fellowship are, in fact, 13-year-old schoolboys and girls. But head office denies, for example, that Rear-admiral Saffron Gore is a member of the Sea Cadets.

Watch this page for further breath-catching episodes of the Fellowship's derring-do.

Next Week: The McGillicuddy Reeks Again!

# ETU: Witch-hunt Steps up

by John Barker

**T**HE Right-wing Executive Committee of the Electrical Trades Union is now working furiously to extend its bureaucratic control over the entire union. A referendum of the membership is to be organized asking whether or not the Rules Revision Conference should take place.

This is presumably a further attempt to nullify the properly constituted conference which was held towards the end of 1961.

If a Rules Revision Conference does take place, the Right wing proposes that there should be one delegate from each branch in attendance. A large number of branches other than the usual 300 which send delegates to the policy conference have only a very small membership.

### DEMOCRACY?

The Right wing suggestion means that these branches will be granted the same voting rights as a branch with hundreds and even thousands of members.

'If this proposal is carried out we shall find that 406 delegates will represent 57,000 union members and 299 will represent 193,000.'—comment by contracting electrician in the press.)

Thus union money is to be spent in the struggle against the union. A large sum will be expended on the referendum and if a delegate conference is called the cost will run into thousands of pounds.

Meanwhile, rank - and - file electricians are asking when the



Frank Haxell

new Executive will get down to business in relation to their wages and working conditions. It seems to them that most of the time which their leaders fill in is spent either in giving interviews to the press, conferring with solicitors or working out ways and means to further hamstringing the union.

The Executive have also decided to set up a Court of Enquiry to investigate Bob McLennan, Jack Frazer, James Humphrey, Frank Haxell and Jack Hendy who were implicated in the ballot-rigging trial. This is nothing more than a propaganda diversion behind which it is hoped to intensify the witch-hunt against rank-and-file militants.

Although only a few weeks in the leadership, the Right wing have only as yet provided us with a foretaste of what is to come. So far as they are concerned, the main drive is to bureaucratize the union in a way which would prevent the Left wing from ever regaining control.

In next week's Newsletter: 'New Problems For Imperialism' first of two articles by Cliff Slaughter

## Soviet Science Hindered by Bureaucracy

**I**N an article in 'Izvestia' last week, a leading Russian scientist complained of political interference with Soviet scientific research. He is Professor Igor Tamm, who won a Nobel Prize in 1958 for his work in nuclear physics.

'It often happens,' he writes, 'that when the faculty recommends a student for a research post, his talents and success in research work—his productive capacity, in fact—are subordinated to third place in relation to all kinds of other considerations.'

'Often it is claimed that the social activity of the student is insufficient even if the reason for this is not any lack of political consciousness, but rather an absorption in scientific work.'

Of course, the novelty of Tamm's statement does not lie in the situation he refers to, but in the fact that he is now able to talk about it.

In the years before 1953, Soviet science was held up in many fields by such bureaucratic methods.

Contact with western scientists was hampered severely in the days of Stalin. Whole subjects were hardly studied in the USSR, because of the political line of the Party.

The dominance of Lysenko in the biological sciences was assured by the backing of the Central Committee, not by his experimental results. At one stage, relativity physics was suspect, as it was alleged to involve idealist philosophical concepts.

One reason why Soviet scientists were able to develop so fast in the field of rocketry was that Russian mathematicians had continued to investigate the subject known as cybernetics, despite official disapproval.

### MATHEMATICS

Fortunately the bureaucrats could not understand the mathematical 'language' spoken by these men and did not see the connection between the symbols and their application.

The treatment of science in the days following the revolution was the exact antithesis of this. Trotsky, in particular, stressed that science, like art, could only develop unfettered.

At a time when resources were extremely scarce, specialists in many scientific fields were given assistance and encouragement to carry on their work, even when its ultimate application was not obvious.

The laboratory equipped for Pavlov is the best known example of this attitude, particularly since Pavlov was a monarchist and very hostile to the regime.

## Horsham Fights Back

**H**ORSHAM Constituency Labour Party, which adopted Ernie Roberts as their parliamentary candidate, is fighting back against the decision of the NEC not to endorse him.

They have sent a circular to every constituency and local Labour Party in the country, describing the NEC's decision as 'intolerable'.

Mr. Roberts was accepted initially by the NEC, but after a long enquiry by the Organi-

sation Sub-committee, under George Brown, in which Mr. Roberts was questioned about 400 meetings he had addressed in recent years, the endorsement was cancelled.

Labour Party members should press for the reversal of the NEC's decision at all levels of the party. This attack by the Gaitskellites is just the first in a long-term sortie to weed out all militants and Left-wingers from the Labour Party.

## What about it Gollan?

By JACK GALE

**T**HE admission by the Italian Communist Party, reported in last week's Newsletter, that Trotsky was a genuine revolutionary and not in league with the imperialists, surely calls for some statement by the British CP.

For, in April 1944, the British Communist Party issued the following statement on 'Trotskyist Organisation' in which they repeatedly identify Trotskyism with fascism, and call for police action against Trotskyists.

'The Communist Party warns the public against the unscrupulous attempt of the small group of Trotskyists who have been endeavouring to spread disruption and ferment strikes on the eve of the Second Front, to confuse public opinion by labelling themselves the "Revolutionary Communist Party".'

This label is as false as Hitler's label of "National Socialist Workers' Party" for his fascist organisation.

The entire propaganda and activity of the Trotskyists is directed against trade unionism, against the organised strength and unity of the Labour movement, against communism and against the Soviet Union.

The international leaders of Trotskyism were legally convicted in the Soviet Union already before the present war for conspiring with Hitler to des-

stroy the Soviet Union and partition its territories for the benefit of Hitlerite Germany and Japan.

Trotskyism in all countries works to disrupt unity against fascism and serves the interests of fascism.

The Communist Party has repeatedly demanded that measures under existing legislation should be taken against Trotskyist propaganda in this country in the same way as against fascist propaganda. The licence given to Trotskyist propaganda has enabled it to exploit the difficulties of the present situation in a way that has at last aroused public opinion.

At the same time the Communist Party gives warning of the necessity to be on guard against any attempt of reactionary interests to utilise the pretext of Trotskyism, which has no connection with the working class movement, to introduce any wider measures which would be harmful to the democratic rights and liberties of the working class movement.'

(Taken from Documents for Congress [17th Congress] published September 5, 1944, by the Communist Party.)

In view of recent revelations about the fraudulent nature of the Moscow Trials and the baseless charges (of fascist affiliations), isn't it about time that this screed of insults and lies was withdrawn?



## City Slants by colin chance

### What price steel?

This is the season when the steel barons report to their shareholders. But they do not bring glad tidings this time, for profits have decreased compared with 1960 and most steelworks are working at less than 80 per cent of capacity.

Let us, however, examine some of the trading profit figures reached for 1961 as announced by the leading companies.

Steel Co. of Wales	£23,253,000
Stewarts & Lloyds	£19,067,000
United Steel Co.	£17,275,000
John Summers	£13,175,000
South Durham Steel	£7,088,000
T. Firth & J. Brown	£4,646,000

These figures are before providing for depreciation on plant and income tax, but they indicate that there are not likely to be any bankruptcies in the steel industry in the near future.

But a concerted attack has been launched by the steel 'industrialists' against the Iron and Steel Board with the object of achieving a price increase so that even with

diminished production, profits can be given a further fillip.

The Iron and Steel Board, set up in 1953, is a government controlled body whose main function is to regulate steel prices with particular reference to the known capacity of the industry.

Mr. B. Chetwynd Talbot, chairman of the South Durham Steel and Iron Company, censuring the attitude of the Iron and Steel Board's directors for an 'unrealistic appraisal' of price structure had the immediate effect of drawing a reply from the Board. This clearly showed that it was prepared to change its policy in deference to the steel barons.

It is also significant that Sir Robert Shone, the Board's executive director has been removed to take up an appointment on the government's new National Economic Development Council—presumably in response to pressure from the steelowners.

Judging from the clamour of the steel bosses, one would think that no recent price increase had been authorised by the Board.

In fact as recently as last June a 1 per cent increase was granted. Now the Board states that 'in view of the possibility that low running rates may be associated with a long-term change from a phase of tight supplies to one of ample capacity, some adjustment in the assumed average running rates may be called for'.

This must mean that the Board is preparing to upgrade prices soon. Steel investors can expect increased profits and an appreciation in the value of their shares.

But what of the consumer and the worker? By allowing the price of steel to be increased the trend towards economic stagnation will be encouraged. A whole range of finished products will become dearer.

So that on the one hand, the Tories attempt to peg wages, on the other they encourage price increases. This represents a direct threat to living standards.

Nationalisation of the steel industry is the only alternative to the classic situation of falling demand and overproduction.

# Industrial Newsletter

## ENGINEERS — One-day Strike

By JOHN TURNER

THE one-day token strike called for February 5 by the full executive of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions meeting in York on January 11 has dealt a body blow to the hopes of the employers and the government.

Prior to the meeting papers like the 'Financial Times' and the 'Glasgow Herald' had forecast that the possibility of industrial action was remote and that the unions, because of the influence of the Right-wing led AEU, would seek a further meeting with the employers.

Harold Poole, National President of the Confederation, said that the action was directed against the Government's pay pause as well as the employers' rejection of the wage claim.

### DIRTY MONEY DOCK STRIKE

SIX hundred dockers stopped work in Glasgow on Wednesday, January 10, in a dispute over 'dirty money' to be paid for unloading manganese ore.

There has been a record in the Glasgow docks of poor wages being offered for jobs, and the ridiculously low figure in this case was the last straw.

'How can we win,' one docker said, 'when the arbitrator (who fixes the prices) is an ex-employer?'

The men went back to work on Friday to allow union officials to proceed with negotiations.

But the faith most dockers have in the officials was summed up by another striker who said it was 'only the old patter to get us back to work'.

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# GPO Go-Slow in the Balance

By ALAN WEST Our Labour Correspondent

THE Civil Service Clerical Association has thrown in the towel for 2½ per cent (and sparked off a violent row within its ranks) and undermined the whole threat of the work-to-rule campaign by public workers.

As we go to press it is uncertain whether or not the postmen will continue their go-slow, which has caused widespread chaos in the business world, pile-ups of mail-bags at all main-line stations, put London mail three days behind and forced the Postmaster General to cancel the parcel post.

Mr. Smith of the UPW has announced that his executive will discuss the position on Thursday. The main drawback to a settlement, he says, is the question of back pay for postmen.

But Selwyn Lloyd's new terms preclude the payment of back pay in disputes, thus saving the Government millions.

A refusal by Lloyd and Brooke, however, to consider back pay does not mean a continuation of the work-to-rule.

### Miss Godwin and the Pause

'CLERICAL workers have no desire to strike; we are reasonable people,' declared Anne Godwin, general secretary of CAWU and this year's chairman of the TUC to a meeting of 300 clerical workers at the Central Hall on January 11.

Miss Godwin went on to pledge the union's support for those members who did find it necessary to fight for their rights.

Those union members who have less faith in the Tories than Miss Godwin were perhaps not so shocked as she seemed to be by the double-cross on office legislation which was supposed to become law on January 1.

The chief concern of the audience seemed to be how to fight redundancy and the pay pause, which Miss Godwin claimed was 'irrelevant'.

This meeting was a step forward in organising London clerical workers; CAWU members should now press for unity with industrial workers, and for a real campaign to attract young 'white collar' workers to the union.

### DISSATISFIED

There are strong rumours in London that the postmen will decide to return to normal working in the next few days. Many postmen, although having their first taste of industrial action, are dissatisfied with the naive role of the union leadership and see no point in continuing the dispute.

The Post Office Engineering Union says that their work-to-rule will start as planned on Friday. But if the UPW gives in, sole action by the engineers will be of little effect.

If the postmen go back it will be a considerable victory for the Government. The postmen were indeed fighting for the whole working class against government policy and capitulation on their part will seriously weaken the struggle against the Tories.

### MINERS SAY NO!

The Executive of the NUM has turned down the Coal Board's wage offer of 5/6d. to 9/- a week and a reduction in hours. But, say the leaders, they hope to talk it over with the NCB in the next few weeks and feel sure that an amicable agreement will be reached.

## Lambeth Fights Rent Increase

'This meeting of Lambeth tenants calls on the Council to withdraw its new revised rent and rebate scheme as agreed at the Council meeting of November 22 on two counts:

Firstly, it places further financial burdens on Council tenants, some of whom will experience severe difficulties in meeting the extra rent;

Secondly, it solves none of the problems enumerated by the Council as being responsible for the amended scheme.

Instead, this meeting of tenants and ratepayers asks the Council to consider ways and means of using its power — possibly in conjunction with other Labour Councils — to campaign against the Government (responsible for a whole series of attacks on council and private tenants).

Such a campaign must be waged so that the Government can be brought down and replaced by an alternative government which will halt

the inflationary trends, speculation in land and waste by taking action against the handful of big businessmen and landlords responsible, instead of attacking the standard of living of ordinary working class and middle class people.

Should the Council begin to implement such a policy as outlined above instead of increasing rents and rates, then this meeting pledges itself to give the Council the maximum support.'

This resolution was the unanimous reply of Lambeth Council tenants faced with rent increases to come into force at the beginning of April. Five years ago the Council attempted to increase rents by £2 a week. Due to the resistance of the tenants at that time they were forced to retreat, imposing increases of half that first contemplated.

Having learnt that the tenants would fight back, the Right-wing Labour Council have been more circumspect on this occasion. They are increasing the maximum rents

by 2s. 6d. per week for all tenants.

Existing council rents in Lambeth are now among the highest council rents in London; the rent of a 3-bedroomed flat, for example, being approximately £3 per week. In addition, many tenants who were previously allowed to claim a rebate, will, under the new scheme be excluded because earnings will now include all overtime, bonus, etc. For some tenants the increases will be more than £1. In other cases, it will mean increases varying from a few shillings to about £1.

These points were discussed by tenants who met in Lambeth last week. Seventy of them met at short notice to discuss the most effective methods and to take up the challenge.

It was agreed to strengthen the Lambeth Council Tenants Association who organised the meeting, to demand that a deputation of tenants be received by the Council and to form or strengthen the Tenants' Associations on the estates. The fight will also be pursued in the three Lambeth Labour Party constituency parties involved and in the trade union branches.

## Haxell won't Fight — But Rank and File will

Newsletter Reporter

CANNON and Haxell shared the same platform at a closed meeting of ETU members for the first time in seven years in Coventry last week.

I questioned Haxell, Frazer, Wolfe and local ETU members after the meeting and it was clear that no policies for the improvement of conditions for the membership were put forward by the speakers to the 100 electricians who attended the 2½ hour meeting.

All they heard was a re-hash of the charges and counter-charges that have been headlined in the press for months. Frank Haxell asked the audience to believe in his personal honesty; Cannon stated that he was as good a socialist as Haxell and company.

If Haxell had challenged the new EC to demand a wage rise for contracting electricians (the cost of living has now risen over the 5 per cent clause in the agreement he himself negotiated), he would have served not only the ETU but all workers fighting the Tory wage freeze.

When challenged on these points, Haxell said he was opposed to any rank-and-file action against the Right-wing EC. He considered that the time was not ripe to re-group the Left; perhaps in 12 months time.

Jack Gould, shop steward at a local aircraft factory, scathingly said that Coventry electricians were in no mood for such pussy-foot action as put forward by the Haxell crowd.

He and his colleagues were busily organizing a local campaign committee, which hoped to link up with the London campaign and any other grouping in the union who were prepared to fight for the annual and rules revision conference decisions.

His group leafleted the meeting and asked any interested electricians to contact: J. Gould, 17 Cheriton Close, Coventry.

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