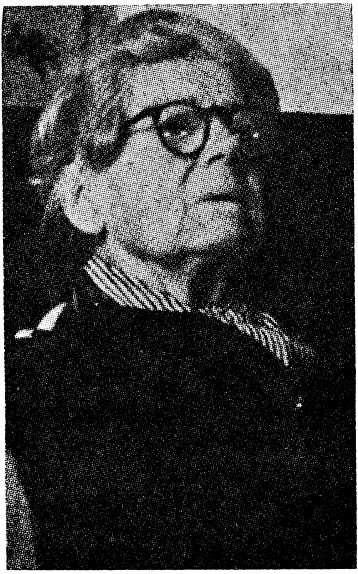


The Newsletter

WEEKLY JOURNAL OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

Vol. 6, No. 234

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1962

H. S.
APR 2 1962

Funeral of Natalia Trotsky

THE cremation of Natalia Sedova Trotsky took place at the Pere Lachaise cemetery in Paris on Monday, January 29, at 11.0 a.m. Several hundred people, many of whom knew Leon and Natalia Trotsky intimately were present. The National Committee of the Socialist Labour League was represented by its secretary, Gerry Healy.

The small chapel was crowded out to hear speeches by Isaac Deutscher, the well-known historian and English biographer of Trotsky; Andre Breton, the internationally famous writer; and Joseph Hansen of the Socialist Workers' Party of America, who was Trotsky's secretary in Mexico at the time of the assassination.

The ashes are to remain at present in Pere Lachaise. Later they will be sent to Mexico to rest alongside those of her husband in the garden of their home at Coyoacan.

In his speech, comrade Hansen specially thanked the Mexican government for having granted asylum to Leon and Natalia Trotsky, thus having demonstrated in practice that in Mexico there was a belief in democracy. It is to be hoped that the home will be preserved as a museum in memory of Trotsky.

(An appreciation of the life and work of Natalia Sedova Trotsky appears on page 2.)

Bradford Locarno Drops Colour Bar

Newsletter Reporter

THE Mecca-Locarno Ballroom in Bradford has lifted its colour-bar. General Manager, Mr. Alan Boyce, has announced that as from Monday, February 5, the ban on coloured men who are not accompanied by their own partners will be lifted.

This colour bar, which has operated since the dance hall opened last September, has led to two demonstrations by students and Young Socialists and to protests by the Musicians' Union. Further action against the ban had been threatened.

This victory shows that militant action can smash the colour-bar.

UNITE TO FORCE THE TORIES OUT

A Statement by the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Labour League

Wednesday, January 31

IT is time to get a move on in the fight against the Tories. Their anti-trade union campaign is now in full swing. All the forces of propaganda that can be mustered by the gutter press in Fleet Street is concentrated upon discrediting the trade unions.

The Right-wing trade union leaders continue to cringe before the government on the one hand and in fear of the powerful pressure from their ranks on the other.

London's great tube strike last Monday was a powerful blow against Toryism. Yet Mr. Cousins, who made such Left speeches at the Labour Party conference last October is now a nominee from the TUC to the Tory planning commission and on the eve of the tube strike instructed his busmen members to remain at work.

No wonder the Tories press on. Their determination springs from the failure of such people as Cousins to match their words with deeds.

Fortunately, there are other forces on the Left who are rapidly becoming aware of the dangers involved. In its leading article on January 26, 'Tribune' called upon the Labour movement to 'unite and fight'. This is good advice and we support it wholeheartedly.

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

'Tribune' outlines a three-point programme for a national campaign. This calls for:

'A decision by the TUC to support whatever action the post office workers and the railwaymen decide to take to break the Government's stranglehold on industrial negotiations. A simultaneous political campaign by the Labour Party and the TUC to tell the people of Britain the truth about the Government's action. Millions of leaflets should be distributed, hundreds of meetings organized and protest marches held. A continuous attempt in Parliament to disrupt the Government and focus attention on the industrial battle.'

We also subscribe entirely to this policy so far as it goes. We believe it could be strengthened by taking into account the powerful role which rank-and-file action can play in bringing down the government.

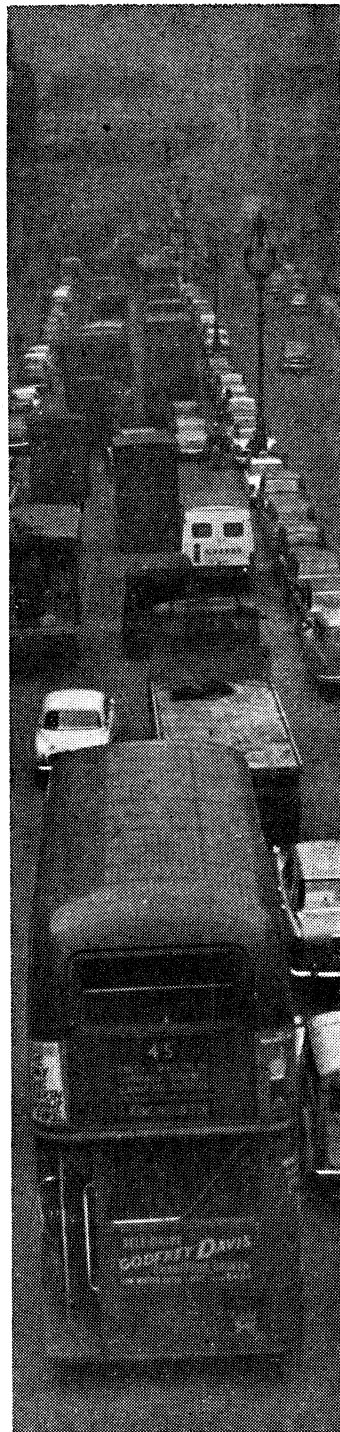
In effect that is what 'Tribune' calls for. Use the industrial situation to clear out the Tories.

Next Monday, February 5, will be a great day for Labour. The tube men will be out again. We earnestly hope that the busmen will come to their aid on this occasion. Almost four million engineering workers, the largest contingent since 1926, are to down tools in a one-day protest. It is strongly rumoured that building workers will also join this massive anti-Tory demonstration.

Here is the key to the future. The government can be brought down, if the rank and file of all the unions with wage claims build up strong liaison bodies to co-ordinate the struggle.

As usual the press repeats the parrot-cry of the nation's suffering. That is true. Many people will suffer, but the fault rests on

the Tory government, who, in the words of 'Tribune', have not only slammed the door 'in the faces of the trade unions but on their fingers'.



Monday, January 29. London grinds almost to a standstill—and so does big business—as tube men strike.

The Newsletter

February 3, 1962

Danger Signal

THE ascent of Woodrow Wyatt's Lib-Lab alliance balloon is a warning to Labour's rank and file of the grave danger facing the party, for even if Gaitskell pretends he is not interested, Wyatt's approach to politics is identical with that of the leading groups in the movement today.

The Labour Party arose out of the attempt to give the British working class independent political expression. Keir Hardie and many of the other founders of the party understood little of the implications of this, but Labour's support grew from the strivings of working people for a voice which would speak for them against their exploitation.

The right-wing leaders who dominate the movement today are constantly manoeuvring to cut their last links with the party's history. Without a single clear political answer to the problems of the workers, they drift towards coalition, open or concealed, with the Tories.

After the 1959 electoral defeat, Gaitskell's henchman, Jay, raised the question of the transformation of the Labour Party into a 'radical' organization, cleansed of the last trace of socialism. The Right tried to remove Clause 4 from the party constitution. They were overwhelmed by protests from all sections of the ranks, demanding that nationalization remain as the objective of the movement.

But, owing to the cowardice and ineptitude of the so-called 'Left' leaders, Gaitskell and Co. were able to continue to push the party to the right. Now, on the eve of big trades union struggles, as the Tories attack the living standards in preparation for entry into the Common Market, the right wing moves closer to collaboration with the employers.

After a protracted courtship, the TUC agrees to cooperate with the Tories in the Economic Development Council. What is worse, Frank Cousins decides to become one of Lloyd's councillors. And Gaitskell calls on busmen and railwaymen, as 'patriotic trades unionists', to scab on 'unofficial' strikes.

Wyatt's proposals are an 'embarrassment' to the Right wing because they disclose too soon for their liking the way in which they are thinking and moving. It is movement towards destruction for the party.

The Left must organize now, linking the industrial struggles with the Labour Party fight, to clear out Lib-Labism and its protagonists from the movement.

Black Monday for Busmen

By A London Busman

'BLACK Monday': that's what the militants are calling January 29 on the buses. With only 23 trains running on the Underground and hundreds out on the Southern Railway against the Tory pay pause, London's buses were on the road, with the sole exception of the Hanwell garage.

The big question being asked all over the fleet is why this occurred when a delegate conference of busmen on December 18 voted 71 to 3 to strike and the Central Bus Committee endorsed this resolution twice on January 9 and 24.

The failure to stop the buses has undoubtedly weakened the fight against the pay pause and

disappointed thousands of busmen who recognize that only united action with the tube men can force the LTE to grant their wage demands.

Everybody can see who holds the power in London after the fantastic chaos and traffic jams of the 29th. The tube men are indispensable to London and united action with the busmen would achieve in a few days what the bus strike in 1958 failed to do in seven weeks.

An autopsy is inevitable by the busmen. No doubt the Central Bus Committee can claim that the members betrayed them; the garage delegates can blame apathy; the men can blame the tube men for working in 1958, while the press in no small way

● page four, col. 5

ON the afternoon of January 23, Natalia Ivanovna Sedova Trotsky died in a nursing home in Corbeil, Paris.

Her passing has severed one of the last frail links with the generation of October. Her life spanned the activity and experience of two whole generations of Communists.

Her generation, the first generation of Bolsheviks, of Lenin and Trotsky and countless others, worked for and achieved the successful conquest of power in Russia. Most of them survived only long enough to taste the bitter fruits of that revolution—the international reaction and Soviet Thermidor.

The second generation, that of their children, of Leon Sedov, Platon Volkov, Man Nevelson was born into the accomplished fact of that Revolution, of its short-lived triumph and its protracted decline and degeneration.

The life work of Leon and Natalia Trotsky was completely identified with the struggles of the international and Russian proletariat, of its mole-like activity in the period of Tsarism, its momentary elations of 1905, the black raging terror that followed 1905, its shock and disillusionment at the collapse of the Second International, with the great exultation of the March Revolution, the terror of the July days and then the crowning glory of October consolidated by the victories of the Red Armies on the civil war fronts.

But even more so were their struggles blended in what followed. They battled alongside their children, the youth, against crushing odds, against the engulfing primitiveness of old Russia now bled white by wars, revolutions, civil wars, pestilence and famine, completely denied access to the succour of revolutionary aid from industrial Europe.

It was in this phase, when the light of revolutionary theory was in the greatest peril of being snuffed out altogether that the contribution of Trotsky assumed its greatest proportions.

There was no sleight of hand to cheat history with, only the enduring will of the cadres of Bolshevism young and old. With their very lives they bought time for us. The toll was catastrophic especially amongst the older Bolsheviks, worn out by decades of wear and tear. But the younger generation, the Sedovs, yielded less.

Here it is necessary to remind ourselves of what this meant in terms of Trotsky's own family. At the time of the Trotskys' exile to Alma Ata in 1927, there were Trotsky's first wife and her daughters, Zinaida married to Platon Volkov, Nina married to Man Nevelson, and their children. There was Natalia and her two sons Leon and Serge, both married.

Leon Sedov, the elder, who took very much after his father, an active young 'veteran' oppositionist opted to accompany his parents

NATALIA TROTSKY (1881-1962)

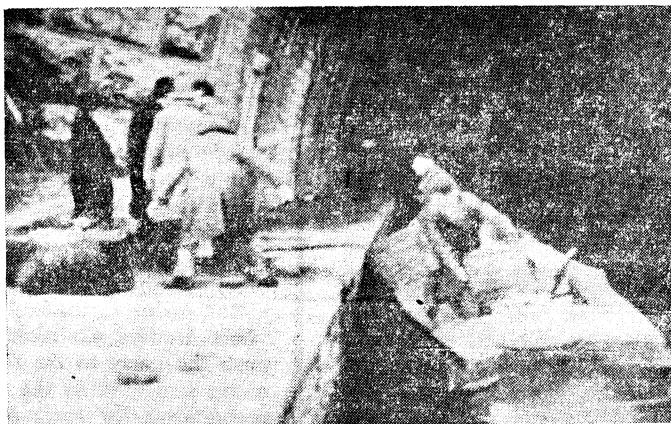
'The Second October will come; it will conquer the whole world and it will mete out their deserts both to the heroes of its predecessor as well as to its gravediggers.'

(Natalia Trotsky 'Father and Son', August 1941)

into exile. Serge the other son, whose interests were outside politics, in engineering, chose to continue his studies in Moscow.

Trotsky's first wife and her daughters stayed put, continuing their fight against Stalin (the mother lived in Leningrad and they in Moscow). Soon the husbands of the girls were victimized, 'unemployables', expelled from the party and deported to Siberia. Both daughters lived in dire poverty, both contracted consumption, one nursing the other until in June 1927, Nina died at the age of 26.

What became of her children is not known. Zina herself was to survive her sister by a few years until in 1933 she took her life in Berlin on the recall of her husband to Russia. Only their son survives. Trotsky's first wife, Alexandra Sokolovskaya was arrested and deported at the age of 60, to perish in some concentration camp.



Secret arrival at Marseilles, 1933

Then in 1935 after the Kirov assassination, Serge, Natalia's son was deported. Concentration camp survivors of the Stalin era have described encountering him in a transfer prison, dignified and full of pride in his father. He disappeared.

In all this period, from 1923 to the founding of the Fourth International in 1938 and indeed up to the moment of Trotsky's death, was contained his most decisive contribution in preparing the new generation of revolutionaries. His last five years seem to focus all the hopes of history. He notes on March 25, 1935:

'There is now no one except me to carry out the mission of arming a new generation with the revolutionary method over the heads of the leaders of the Second and Third International. . . . I need at least five more years of uninterrupted work to ensure the succession.'

This was in the midst of the persecution of the members of his family. Blow fell upon blow.

How much more so on his wife, their mother and friend. But she realized that those were the critical moments, when she had to be her husband's mainstay. With an unexampled generosity of spirit she gave him the sustenance to fight on. In his testament he remarks on this quiet strength:

'N. and I have been together for almost 33 years (a third of a century!), and in tragic hours I am always amazed at the reserves of her character.'

In all his migrations, the constant upheavals of changing abodes from literally one geographical climate to another, she exhibited a lively, keen appreciation not only for Trotsky's physical comforts but for his mental repose, whether at Coyoacan or in Norway.

'N. is fixing up our living quarters. How many times she has done this! There are no wardrobes here, and many other things are lacking. She is ham-

pering nails in by herself, stringing cords, hanging things up and changing them around; the cords break; she sighs to herself and begins all over again. She is guided in this by two considerations: cleanliness and attractiveness. . . . How many "furnishings" we have changed in thirty-three years of living together. . . . N. has never been indifferent to her surroundings, but always independent of them.'

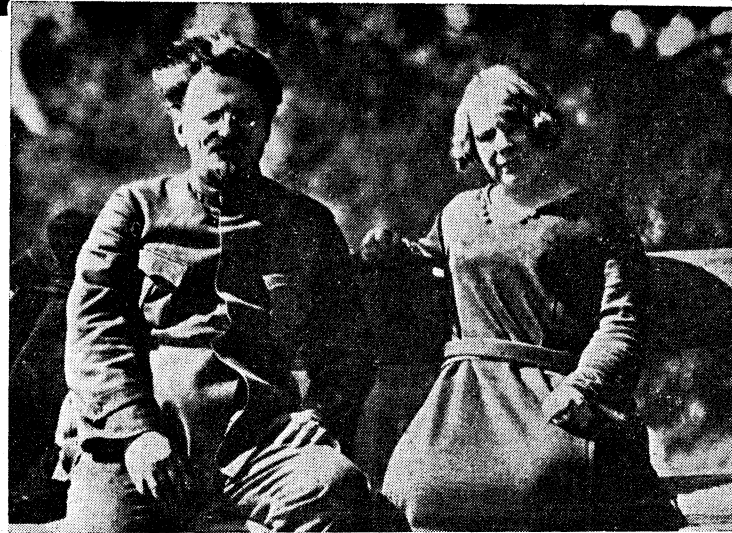
In her modest but competent way she brought to the once youthful Trotsky, the vision of a whole new world, introduced him to what was best in modern art, literature and music which went to enrich his writings and speeches.

Natalia devoted her whole life to the welfare of Trotsky, abandoning her specialist interests in order to organize his work-day life for him. In fact the family was at one time during their exile in Alma Ata a veritable 'apparatus', being the very heart of the organization of the forces of the opposition then dispersed in exile.

Increasingly with the decline in Trotsky's health (he suffered from a combination of a mysterious fever, malaria and insomnia) she found her time given up wholly to him. Sometimes they were both ill and with no help.

In 1940, when the machine gun attack was made on their bedroom, it was her presence of mind that saved Trotsky's life. His safety became her sole obsession and those nightmare years, the poisoning of their surviving son, Leon, in a hospital by GPU agents, the assassination of Trotsky's secretaries only served to concentrate her devotion to him.

On August 20, 1940, the end



Leon and Natalia Trotsky at Sukhum Kale, 1924.

came. Her warrior husband was struck down by Stalin's agent Mornard (at present in Prague). That nightmare lived with her to the end of her days. In the Paris clinic of Dr. Zakine her last words were 'He is gone. They are going to kill him. Stop them!'

The sudden removal of her husband from her life was an irreparable blow. In the twilight of her life the friends of her husband were all that was left. Many of them had reneged on the Trotskyist movement. Nevertheless, she retained a respect for their better past. Sometimes the lodestar of her political orientation was dimmed by her predicament. Life had taken its toll of her strength.

But her last public statements demanding from Khrushchev the correction of the record and the restitution of her family's historic rights are confirmation that she remained to the very end, the constant and watchful guardian of her husband's memory.

Trotsky said of her in his testament:

'In addition to the happiness of being a fighter for the cause of socialism, fate gave me the happiness of being her husband. During the almost forty years of our life together she remained an inexhaustible source of love, magnanimity, and tenderness. She underwent great sufferings, especially in the last period of our lives. But I find some comfort in the fact that she also knew days of happiness.'

We Trotskyists pay tribute to Natalia Trotsky. She gave Trotsky the strength to complete the major portion of the work he set himself. In other words she helped him bequeath to us that great armoury of ideas which will be the inspiration of our movement for many years to come. This is an irredeemable debt. We owe it to her to remember her well.



Sergei Trotsky as a boy.

NATALIA IVANOVA SEDOVA was born in Romy in the Ukraine in 1881 the daughter of a Ukrainian Cossack and Polish family. They were landed gentry. The family had revolutionary traditions. Orphaned at an early age, relatives brought her up, educated her at a boarding school, where she led an anti-religious crusade. She went abroad to Geneva and Paris universities, studied botany then literature and joined Plekhanov's group.

In 1903 she met Trotsky to become his second wife. She commuted to Russia as a courier for the underground. They returned to Russia during the 1905 revolution. Trotsky was arrested, jailed and deported whence he made his remarkable dash for freedom which was latterly planned by Natalia. Natalia herself was arrested in a cavalry charge in a demonstration. She was sentenced to four years, but later amnestied. Leon Sedov was born in 1906.

Vienna was their home for the next seven years. Here they experienced privations, Sergei was born in 1908.

On the outbreak of the First World War, the Trotskys went to Switzerland and later to France, where they worked with anti-war socialists publishing a Russian paper. In 1916 they were expelled to Spain.

They sailed to New York where they met up with Bukharin, Kollontai and others. Their return to Russia after the March revolution was impeded. They were arrested by the British Navy on the high seas and interned in humiliating circumstances with German prisoners of war. The Trotskys were released after the intervention of the Russian provisional government.

Back in Russia, Trotsky resumed work on the Petrograd Soviet, Natalia worked for the woodworkers' union. After October, as a member of the Soviet government, Natalia served as head of museums and arts section under Lunacharsky—these were the halcyon days of Soviet art. The Trotskys lived in the Kremlin sharing amenities with Lenin.

After Lenin's death, they had to leave the Kremlin. Persecution followed. She was beaten up by GPU thugs in the 1927 demonstrations of the Left Opposition. In January 1927, forced into exile in Alma Ata. February 1929, deported to Prinkipo. Admitted to France in 1933. Sergei and other members of the family were arrested and deported. In 1935 the Trotskys were forced to leave for Norway. Soviet pressure succeeded in getting them expelled after being held practically incommunicado. President Cardenas of Mexico granted them asylum. In this last respite Trotsky carried out a tremendous amount of work combatting the Moscow Trials. The first attempt on Trotsky's life came in 1940. The assassination on August 20, 1940.

Natalia Trotsky continued to live in Coyoacan, Mexico until 18 months ago, when she came to France for medical treatment. Cancer was diagnosed and she retired to the clinic of Dr. Zakine who attended her up to the end.

Leon and Natalia and their son, Leon Sedov, Alma Ata, 1928.



The Class Struggle Intensifies

BECAUSE of their determination to maintain their privileged positions at the expense of the working class, some 'left wingers' will be surprised to find themselves with some queer allies on the colonial question. For example, Sir Roy Welensky has become a definite hindrance to the plans of international capital in Africa and even thinking Tories are now definitely after his blood.

It is not only the liberal 'Observer' which respectfully submits that 'The government should not let itself be forced into the position of supporting Sir Roy Welensky against the UN. On the contrary, it should aim at enlisting the help of the UN in averting the catastrophe that Sir Roy's policy will create if it continues unchanged.' (Jan. 14)

The 'Economist', right-wing business organ, is much more decisive, now that it has made up its mind:

... some conservatives remain honestly convinced that Sir Roy is still the best, indeed the only, man for the job. He was. He is no longer. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that more Tories believe in Sir Roy than there could ever be in any Rhodesia lobby, or in any copper men's pockets. These are the men who, for the nation's sake (of course!), have to be persuaded that, frankly, the time has come to face the music in central Africa. There is still an appalling danger that the whole thing might blow up this year. (My emphasis, C.S.) The British government must find the courage to give a liberal constitution to Northern Rhodesia, as civilly as possible, to make plain to Sir Roy that his assistance in the international sphere is no longer required. It is sad, even tragic, but any other way might be disastrous.' (Jan. 13)

☆

The 'Economist' puts it in a nutshell—if we don't give concessions 'the whole thing might blow up'. Our tame socialists are nothing but a left cover for the present phase of imperialist strategy: this strategy is to attack the organisation and standards of the workers in the advanced countries in order to cut costs in the latest stage of cut-throat competition between monopolies, to co-operate with stooge governments in the 'new' countries, meanwhile strengthening the UN militarily and financially to intervene where this stability cannot be achieved without evidence.

Marxist socialists on the other hand must base themselves on the struggle of the international working class. There is no possibility of imperialism, with all its great concentration of wealth and power, being able to defeat and discipline the working class permanently, settling its economic problems through planning and state control.

The contradictions continually break through in unemployment and war preparations, and above all in the daily struggle of the working class itself in every country, despite short and even long periods of apparent class peace. It is in this sense that we must grasp the unity of our struggles against the wage pause with the fight against capital all over the world.

Two small examples will illustrate this. A few weeks ago the railway workers of the Argentine carried out a strike, and this has seriously affected the whole future of economic development, the domination of US bank capital through the World Bank, and so on, as the following report in 'The Times' of January 13 shows: 'The resignation of Senor Avecedo, the Minister of Public

NEW PROBLEMS FOR IMPERIALISM

Second of two articles by Cliff Slaughter

Works, rapidly followed by that of Dr. Roberto Alemann, Minister of Economy, has come as a political bombshell. . . . Senor Avecedo said in a state-



Welensky: a hindrance to international capitalism.

ment that the terms of the strike settlement would gravely affect the execution of the plans designed to modernise the railways and eliminate the huge operating deficits which were seriously affecting the country's economic structure.

'He said the World Bank was willing to provide \$440m. for the purpose if the Argentine Government complied strictly with the programme which called for drastic economies.'

The report concludes: 'Over all there still hangs the problem of the railways: their appalling cost and the unwillingness of employees to accept the remedies proposed.'

It is not just a question of the remarkable similarity of problems confronting the workers of the Argentine and of Britain, but of the constant problem of class struggle in every phase of capitalism's attempts to preserve itself.

☆

The 'American' way of exploiting dependent countries cannot dispel this problem any more than the old colonial powers. It is these struggles of the workers which are the objective basis of revolutionary optimism and political action for socialism. It is necessary to fight constantly against theories of capitalism having achieved the means of permanently pacifying its wage-slaves.

A final example is from West Germany, which has enjoyed a very special position, from the capitalist point of view, since the late 1940s. 'Over-full' employment, as the capitalist economists call it, and elaborate negotiating machinery, have appeared to do away with class struggle to many superficial observers.

The labour leaders in West Germany helped this process by moving faster even than Gaitskill to remove socialism from the party programme. And yet even this 'miracle' is beginning to fade. The economists are scratching their heads about inflation and balance of payments, and above all industrial struggles are looming up.

On January 11 metal workers in 70 towns in Baden-Wurttemberg staged demonstrations for longer holidays and higher wages, and strike action may follow.

'The Times' correspondent reported, 'A Stuttgart firm which put up posters to discourage its men from attending had to remove

them when the workers downed tools.'

An important and encouraging feature of this action was the solidarity of German and foreign workers who work in large numbers in West Germany. Even though this event is not of great magnitude, it is important for the workers of Europe to follow every event in the class struggle in Germany, where the capitalists have had the advantage, among others, of exploiting a proletariat decimated and beheaded by the fascists under Hitler.

A reawakening of the class struggle there will not remain under the domination of a few trade union leaders who will take the opportunity to drag out from their cupboards one or two militant phrases. It will be a vital stage in the European revolution, and be worth a hundred 'campaigns against the Common Market'.

The employers in this fight, says 'The Times', 'have insisted on national negotiations, and have obviously been heartened by the election results and the coalition with the Free Democrats, old-fashioned liberals in economic matters; they feel that the opportunity has come to curb the workers' demands and the progress towards a welfare state.'

Once again, for all the appearance of having been put aside for ever, the class struggle 'rears its ugly head'. Only when the workers of this and every other country are led by parties who start from this class struggle and the need to overthrow the capitalist state everywhere will victory be in sight. For this to be achieved it is necessary to fight against all trends in the labour movement which are subservient to the class enemy.

SURELY the Political Correspondent has missed the interesting and important point raised by the Pollitt pictures in the TV programme about Russia. These pictures showed the British Communist leader addressing a demonstration in 1942, called to demand the opening of a 'second front' to relieve the pressure on the Red Army.

Abstract observations about the 'imperialist' character of the Second World War neither were nor are of any help in this connection. In a war in which the Soviet Union is involved it is the duty of socialists everywhere to facilitate a Soviet victory—presumably there will be no disagreement on that point.

The next time the Soviet Union is attacked it seems all too probable that she will have no imperialist allies; but let us not be quite certain of that. In one form (and place) or another the question may arise again of how best to help the Soviet Union in an imperialist country which is allied to the Soviet Union.

During the late war the Trotskyists called for the sending of arms by Britain to Russia—though they added a tag: 'under workers' control'. Would a British naval convoy, fighting to get through with these arms to a Soviet port, have been waging an imperialist war? Should a class-conscious sailor try to organize a mutiny on these ships—and if so, should 'defence of the Soviet Union' be included among his slogans? Such problems as these were and are bound to arise in a complex situa-



IN early 1962 the situation in France has come to resemble the last months of the 4th Republic four years ago. Political incoherence and spreading symptoms of the accelerated decomposition of the regime could lead, quite suddenly, to a new crisis which the de Gaulle regime would not survive.

In Algeria the French government has practically handed over to the OAS, while negotiating half-heartedly with the FLN.

The operative law is that of the lynch-mob, the assassin's gun and the bomb. Practically the whole European population is now aligned with OAS, which operates with growing impunity.

At the same time, the position of the settlers becomes increasingly desperate. The main question is whether, if de Gaulle comes to an arrangement with the FLN to preserve the main stake of French capital in North Africa, will he be able to enforce his decision? Such an inclination might solidify the officer corps and part of the ruling class around a new military-fascist putsch by Salan and his friends.

If the situation in the metropolis is, on the surface, less critical than in Algeria, the regime is beset by a palsy of indecision and by the obvious willingness of many in the capitalist class and in government circles to make a deal with the fascist Right.

The OAS lacks mass following in France, but it is now turning its attention to spreading its influence by appearing as the safest force against 'communism'. The desperate fear of

Crisis Year for France

By Tom Kemp

the working class which exists among the French capitalist class, despite prosperity and the apparent apathy of recent years, is a factor upon which the OAS is playing with some success.

Nor are de Gaulle and Salan polar opposites. As upholders of the established property system they disagree about methods, not about fundamentals. For the present de Gaulle seeks, with some success, to integrate the official labour movement into his system—fear of OAS in the leadership of the latter facilitates his task. But, now that in street demonstrations the Left has shown some signs of life, the temptation to smash the working class organisation completely is an attractive proposition.

Tomorrow it may be too late; the present political indifference of the mass of the workers may be too good to last. The machine-gunning of the CP's headquarters in Paris, and other attacks on communist and socialist personalities, are, as it were, practical demonstrations by thugs of the OAS that they are ready to do the job.

As evidences of a pre-fascist situation accumulate, and the teeming political underworld so typical of France comes into its own, the lack of real leadership for the working-class movement becomes ever more apparent. Unless such a leadership is built in the near future the French working class may be swept into a horrible tragedy comparable with that of 1933 in Germany.

The question which arises is: was it not inevitable that a 'second front' campaign such as the Communist Party mounted was bound to fail to secure a 'second front' when this would really have helped the Red Army—that there would necessarily be no 'second front' until this suited the needs of the ruling class? This is the kind of question that Communist Party members should be asked to think about.

Broadly, the political position is clear enough: the best assistance the working class of an imperialist ally of the Soviet Union can give to the latter is to carry through a revolution and establish a workers' government. But knowing this does not absolve us from facing the practical need to force the imperialist government to do everything possible to help the Soviet Union; and to utilise the struggle for such measures of aid not to damp down but to stir up struggle against the imperialists.

Trotsky touched on this type of problem in his article 'Learn to Think' recently reprinted in 'Labour Review'. The process of serious thinking exemplified in that article needs to be carried forward, not backward.

Let us avoid, even by implication, the standpoint of those who regret that the Russians ever made their revolution—or at least that, once it became clear there wasn't going to be a revolution anywhere else for a time, they didn't decide to pack theirs in, lest they 'create problems' for socialists in the still-capitalist countries!

BRIAN PEARCE

LETTER

The point of view of those who participated in the 'second front' campaign should be understood, if one wishes to understand and not merely to mock or moan. To the simple-minded it seemed that a British tank, while useful in the hands of Red Army soldiers, might be even more useful to these same soldiers if sent to France to force Hitler to withdraw some of his forces from the eastern front.

In fact, as things turned out, the 'second front' in the sense of the invasion of France, was not launched until the Red Army had already got the Germans on the run, and when the Russians were already sure they could finish the job single-handed. It was launched more to counter the Red Army's advance than to aid it!

Industrial Newsletter

Angry Railmen Tired of Talks

By A London Railwayman

THE joint action taken by the London underground men and motormen on the South-Eastern division of the Southern Region, has demonstrated beyond all doubt that railworkers will no longer tolerate the delay in the settlement of their wage claim and their intentions to seriously fight against the Tory wage freeze.

The chaotic conditions experienced last Monday, which brought London to a near-standstill, will be ineffectual if the leadership of the three rail unions continue to fumble and hesitate, and offer their members nothing but shortcomings and promises of 'fruitful negotiations'.

While railworkers become more frustrated and discontented, the Tory government has made it clear that it will concede no wage award to railwaymen until after March, and then it will not exceed a paltry 2½ per cent.

In the meantime, we are offered arbitration which means putting the wage claim before the National Railway Staff Tribunal.

Railway workers will not accept such cut-throat proposals. We have experienced the results of arbitration boards in the past.

In 1959 the Guillebaud Report came into operation, which gave the average railwayman an increase of 6s. per week. This was the net result of two years of useless negotiations, between the union leadership and the British Transport Commission.

The wage claim was originally submitted in May 1961. Rail-

workers are still awaiting the results of negotiations!

Now the seething discontent has turned into industrial action.

Last Monday's strike action is only the beginning of the struggle and proved a powerful blow to the London Transport Executive, the British Transport Commission and their political agents the Tory government.

But if the Transport workers are to firmly break the wage freeze, this action must be continued and extended in alliance with the engineers, miners, postal workers and all workers faced with a fight against the Tories.

Natalia Trotsky Memorial Meeting

Saturday, February 10, 7.30 p.m.

YORK HALL, CAXTON HALL, Victoria St., S.W.1

Engineers Lead Pay Pause Fight

by Harry Finch

A Birmingham Engineering Worker

THE one-day stoppage by over three million engineering workers planned for Monday, February 5, is another decisive step in the battle against the pay pause. Further action by engineers must be carefully planned with a clear understanding of the forces ranged against them.

These forces are the employers in all industries who want to see the engineers beaten so that they, in turn, can defeat their workers as they struggle to smash the pay pause.

The Tory government is merely the chief spokesman for the big employers. Seated in the government are the big businessmen who control it, the directors of the giant combines and monopolies.

And there is Lord Mills, the Minister of Fuel and Power, who was recently the president of the Engineering Employers' Association.

The government's pay pause is a vital part of its plans to enter the Common Market. In order to cut production costs so that they can compete favourably with European big business, they are making a big drive to cut down on workers' wages and conditions.

Take-overs, mergers and the build up of great monopolies are also part of the employers' plans to stabilize prices. When the Tories declare that take-overs are not harmful to the nation they mean they are not harmful to the shareholders and businessmen who back the government.

The Tories commenced to attack the weaker unions like the post office workers, teachers and civil servants as a softening-up process to fight the larger, industrial unions.

So far they have succeeded in keeping down wages. The pay pause is highly successful.

Unless a serious and determined struggle is waged against the pay pause there is a grave danger of the employers succeeding in worsening our conditions. The

engineers are in a key position to defeat the employers and the government on this issue.

Ted Hill, as well as thousands of shop stewards throughout the country, have pointed out that to win the fight engineers must prepare for an all-out national strike.

Any other measures are only substitutes for a real fight. Bans on overtime or working to rule are confusing and extremely limited in their effectiveness, as the campaign of the post office workers has shown, in spite of the splendid loyalty of the postmen.

The leaders of the Confederation of Engineering Unions will try to avoid this fight. The rank and file must be organized for it. This involves the preparation of regional and national link-ups by shop stewards' committees before and during the dispute.

The entry of the TUC leaders into the government's economic planning council (including some 'leaders' of the engineering unions), demonstrates the absolute necessity for engineering workers to rely solely on their own action and organization.

Only preparation and alertness on the part of rank-and-file engineers can stop any attempts at a sell-out by the union leaders.

But the fight against the government cannot be won in isolation. Only a link-up between all workers in all industries can bring the Tories down. That unity must be forged now between engineers and busmen, railmen and postmen, teachers and civil servants and all workers engaged in a struggle against the Tories.

Engineers must call for the ending of the steady monopolization of the motor, aircraft, electrical and shipbuilding industries by taking them out of the hands of the employers and nationalizing them under workers' control. The Labour Party must be forced to take its stand with the engineers in the national strike for the £1 increase and the 40 hour week.

The one-day strike must be the foundation stone for effective national action in the near future. The time for preparation is now.

Work to rule collapses

The UPW Executive's decision to call off the postman's work-to-rule campaign is a betrayal, not only of GPO workers, but of all trades unionists fighting the pay pause. After five weeks of battling, the postmen go back to 'normal working' without any real gain.

The work-to-rule tactic has been shown to be inadequate as a weapon against the government. Only united action by all sections of the trades union movement will be able to force the government and the employers to retreat on the wages front.

Postal workers must begin now to prepare for future struggles to improve their wages and conditions. The first step is to get rid of Smith and Co., and replace them with leaders who really want to lead.

Buses

● from page one

helped the confusion that got the 'no strike' votes.

But it was lack of leadership over a whole period that created a situation where the press and the Right wing could confuse the issues and defeat the conference. Voting in many garages was quite close, while many others the delegates did not hold meetings but just posted notices for normal working on the 29th, stamped by false press reports.

UNITED ACTION

It is apparent from the meetings that many bus crews are not acquainted with the union's wage claim to the LTE, or that it has been rejected twice. No special meetings were called on the wage claim rejections to set the atmosphere for united action with the tube men. If the CBC is to lead it must see that this is done in every garage.

Delegate conferences are held monthly but none was held in January and the CBC only really protested as late as January 24 when an evening delegate conference to discuss the strike was refused by union officers.

The time to see that a conference was called was at the CBC meeting of January 9. If a date had not been offered by the union officials there would have been enough time for a campaign in the branches for a conference. The failure to call a conference contributed to the confusion, as the full-time officials knew it would. They said on the 24th that if a 'work on Monday' instruction was given an evening conference could be held.

CONFUSION

The sum result of all this manoeuvring is solid confusion and demoralisation among many militants in the fleet.

The Central Delegate Conference can do the job that was not done by the Central Bus Committee. It can give a clear lead for next Monday. A decision to strike is the only decision that can be made if the pay claim is to be won.

As Hanwell garage showed this will meet with a ready response. If the staff are to be spared the extra strain of working while trying to carry the 37 per cent of the public that use the tubes, the conference has no alternative but to propose a stoppage. February 5 can be an important day for London busmen that will more than make up for Black Monday, if the delegate conference gives the leadership that busmen are ready for.

This Paper is your Weapon

IN the fight for socialism, The Newsletter is playing a vital role. Do you get it regularly? Don't leave it to the chance encounter, fill in this form and send it to:

Subscription Department, The Newsletter, 186A Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

7s. for 12 issues, or £1 8s. per year

Name

Address

Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper
Published by The Newsletter,
186A Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4
Printed by Plough Press Ltd. (TU), r.o.
180 Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4

City Slants by colin chance

Big Deal

One merger that has taken place within the last few weeks has received little attention considering its importance.

In some ways it is of equal significance to the possible ICI-Courtaulds take-over.

It is the amalgamation of British United Airways and British Aviation Services. These two giants themselves were created by bringing together 19 companies, and the new company, Air Holdings Ltd., will have total assets of some £20 million—quite a sizeable rival to the nationalised air transport undertaking.

And therein lies the reason for the new merger.

Previously air companies have not had sufficient resources to enable them to modernise their fleets and thus justify the issue of licenses by the Licensing Board to enable them to compete with BEA and BOAC.

Now the government may decide that such a substantial concern deserves special treatment. Just as 'independent' television was created to compete with BBC

because of the mammoth profits to be derived from its operation, so there may be big dividends from 'private enterprise' airlines.

Certainly the big shipowners hope so. For they are all represented as majority shareholders in this new company. Blue Star, British & Commonwealth Shipping, Furness Withy and P & O realise that shipping is a declining industry, so they are backing, in a big way, this new company.

This tendency to create huge business empires has increased tremendously in the past year.

Take-over bids or mergers involving well over £1,000 million have included Odhams-Mirror, the Leyland bid for Standard-Triumph, the Rank absorption of Hovis-McDougal, and the combination of the brewers, Ind Coope and Tetley Ansell and that represented by United Breweries.

We have seen a vast integration of property companies, particularly arising out of the activities of Messrs. Clore and Cotton.

Insurance companies are also very much to the fore in this concentration of wealth. Royal Insurance took over London and Lancashire for £50 million, and

the Northern Assurance brought into its fold several smaller companies.

The recent offer for Saxone's shares by the British Shoe Corporation, if accepted, will make this firm the dominant one in both manufacturing and retailing.

Reasons for take-overs are various. They include the elimination of competition, the creation of vertical integrated units (processing of raw material to producing finished product under one ownership), the need to control price structure, the ability to cut costs and realise surplus assets, and sometimes the need to control retail outlets.

But most of all the creation of these huge concerns means that great power can be wielded both economically and politically so that, through the government, they determine the sort of lives we lead.

Nationalised industry under capitalism is controlled by the government, but private monopolies and the big industrialists control the government. Members of Parliament sit on their boards, ministers hold their shares and lend willing ears to their pressure groups.



**Widow of the late
Leon Trotsky**

**NATALIA
TROTSKY**

(1881-1962)

York Hall, Caxton Hall,

Victoria S.W.1

at 7 p.m.

on Saturday 10 February

MEETING OF TRIBUTE

Published by Socialist Labour League, 186 Clapham High St., London, SW4
Printed by Plough Press Ltd. (TU), r.o. 180 Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4