



# SOCIALIST APPEAL

Organ of the Revolutionary Communist Party

BRITISH SECTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL (TROTSKYIST)

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## FOR A WORKERS' STEEL BOARD OUT WITH THE CAPITALIST DIRECTORS!

The Steel Nationalisation marks a big step forward. Owing to world conditions and the relations of class forces at home, the Labour Party has gone further in the implementation of its programme than could have been expected. The capitalists have not been in a position to exercise strong enough pressure to prevent this development. They have had to content themselves with propaganda for the efficiency of private enterprise as against bureaucratic mismanagement.

Even American imperialism, because of world diplomatic relations, was not able to exert the pressure which the Tories had hoped for. Hoffman said he did not like the Steel Bill but it was Britain's business. Undoubtedly, he must have tried to exert some pressure on the Labour Government, but failed. Indeed, his boost for Britain's economic recovery and his statement that Britain's economic planners made the Americans look like amateurs in many respects, was a blow at the Tories.

The Labour leaders have replied to the Tories with telling arguments by retelling the real facts of the industry.

Far from the steel industry being in a state of "healthy competition" leading to lower prices and cheaper products for the benefit of the consumers, as painted by the spokesmen of big business, the facts tell a different story: The industry has been controlled by a handful of

of the Steel monopolists, was taken over by the monopolies through their interlocking control of the banks. This firm was made to subsidise the inefficient and antiquated firm of Baldwin's with which it was amalgamated.

"Could Hardly Be Detected..."

In "British Steel at Britain's Service," the Labour Party's pamphlet, one editor of the "Observer," Geoffrey Crowther, is quoted as having written in 1939:

"The result of Conservative steel policy has been to confer enormous advantages on the businessmen of the industry. They have been granted a monopoly and assured of its exclusivity and permanence; and they have been encouraged to use it to raise prices for their product. The policy has beyond question put large profits into the pockets of the steel shareholders. And it is equally beyond question that some at least of these profits have come out of the pockets of the consumers of steel—who include, directly or indirectly, almost every inhabitant of the island. But the return that the community has received for this assistance could hardly be detected with a microscope."

"Political Blackmail"

The attempt of the capitalists to exert pressure through the right wing leaders of the Government, who according to the entire capitalist press—apparently on good authority—were in favour of retaining control on the lines of the old Steel Board, failed. The "Observer" in its editorial of October 31st gives the following reasons why (continued on page 4)

### Steel Bosses' Record

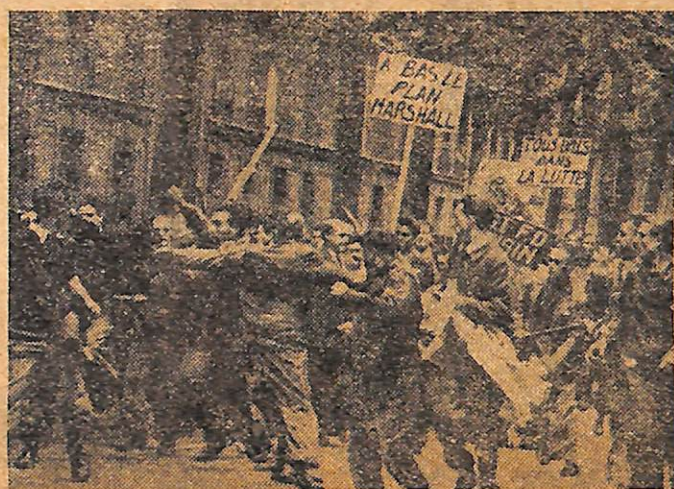
Between the wars, these monopolists sabotaged the development of technique. They were interested only in profits on obsolete plant, instead of replacing it by modern methods of production. The British Iron and Steel Federation was content, through its connections in the Government, to have high tariffs to protect them from the competition of their more efficient rivals abroad.

Britain was for generations the most important steel producing country in the world. By 1886 America had already overtaken her. By the first world war, the output of America was four times, and Germany's double that in Britain.

### Case Of Richard Thomas

Who controlled Britain's steel? Six firms controlled about half the capacity in England, and about one hundred subsidiaries through their directors. Between the wars, they actually conspired to retain the inefficient firms.

Readers will recall that the modern firm of Richard Thomas in South Wales, which started the construction of modern plant in the teeth of opposition



A STALINIST DEMONSTRATION IN PARIS... but merely to undermine the Marshall Plan in the interests of Stalin's foreign policy.

## N.C.B. THREAT TO CLOSE TWO PITS THE CHOICE: £2 WAGE REDUCTION OR PITS CLOSE

By JOCK HASTON (from G.C.G.)

This is a black day for the miners of Gwaun-Cae Gurwen. Its shadow is cast over the whole of the anthracite pits of South Wales.

A recent dispute between the 1,600 miners working at Steer and East pits went to the Conciliation Committee. An award was granted which gave a slight increase of price on coal getting to that proposed by the N.C.B. But it was also probably the greatest blow to miners' wages in the history of national arbitration.

On that Arbitration Committee were a majority from the workers' side. One ex-coal owner, and 2 ex-miners; Jack Davies (Stalinist) and Sam Garland (Labourite).

The terms of the Award mean that for an extra effort and output of coal, amounting to more than twice the amount they were previously producing, the miners of G.C.G. will lose from £2 to £2 10s. in wages. Incredible as it might seem, that is the brutal fact.

The dose now being administered to the miners of G.C.G. is a foretaste of what is coming.

### Coal Board's Policy

In April of this year, a joint conference was held in Swansea between the representatives of the Coal Board and the Union, including 3 representatives from every colliery in the Division. At this Conference Mr. A. Lindsay, Financial Director of the Coal Board Division, stated that whereas the rest of Britain's mines showed a slight profit before interest charges, South Wales was responsible for the whole of the Coal Board's loss before interest charges plus 12 per cent., thus equal to £11 million (£9 million the total net loss plus £2 million).

He indicated that the N.C.B. was not prepared to spend a penny for new capital development in South Wales unless the miners substantially raised the level of output without extra cost.

The drive against the miners of G.C.G. is the spearhead of the attack to put this policy into effect.

As we go to press the majority of the miners in the two affected pits have given notice to quit. The Coal Board have replied by declaring in this event, they propose to close the pits. The N.C.B. claim the pits are uneconomic. Even if this is true, why should the miners suffer for past neglect by the coal-owners?

While, of course, Socialist workers must support planning by development of economical units, as against unproductive ones, there must be no hardships for any section of the miners thus involved. If the ex-owners were compensated, how much greater right have the miners to adequate compensation for any losses incurred by such a policy of rationalisation. This must be the first charge on the industry, even if it means the ex-owners do not receive a penny.

## 218,616 FRENCH MINERS VOTED STRIKE ONLY 25,086 OPPOSED

By TED GRANT

To those who say that the French miners' strike was imposed by a minority, we say the figures of the strike ballot speak for themselves. The decision was carried by 218,616 votes out of 244,322 who voted. Only 25,086 voted against.

The Miners' Union is demanding the repeal of the decree cutting down staff in the nationalised mines by ten per cent. and imposing penalties for absenteeism.

The Government has endeavoured to split the miners by announcing that the cuts will apply only to German P.O.W.s and recent immigrant miners. This is clearly intended to speed up the miners and penalties are simultaneously laid down for absenteeism.

The miners are demanding a monthly minimum wage of £16 11s. and also an automatic readjustment of wages each time the cost of living rises by 10 per cent., an increase in pensions, security guarantees, and a bigger say for Union delegates. (See page 4.)

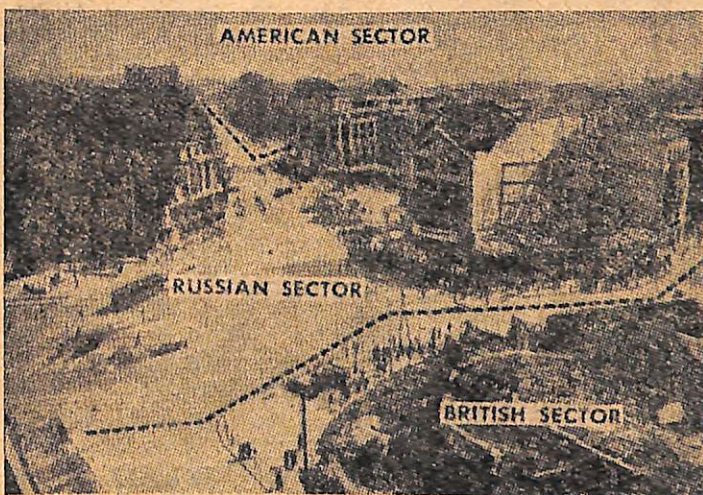
## BIKINI SHIPS STILL RADIOACTIVE

WHEN the underwater bomb was exploded in the second atomic test at Bikini, nine ships were sunk. Most of the other 67 seemed to have escaped with only a drenching of radio-active spray. But the lery has proved more lethal than the bomb itself.

One by one the Navy has had to sink the ships which survived Bikini. Last week the submarine *Skate* and the transport *Crittenden* were destroyed during landing manoeuvres off Southern California. Next month the heavy cruiser *Pensacola* and the destroyer *Hughes* will be sent to the bottom. Two years and three months after Bikini, all four were still radioactive.

In all, the Navy has had to write off 57 Bikini ships as still too difficult and too expensive to decontaminate. The carrier *Independence* is still afloat at San Francisco, but is so 'hot' that it can be used only as a laboratory for decontamination training. Of the original 76 ships that rode at anchor in Bikini Lagoon, only two submarines, five transports and two L.C.I.'s remain afloat and declared to be completely safe.

Time, October 18th, 1948.



POTSDAMER PLATZ, the focal point of the struggle in Berlin. A city divided into four cannot but lead to future conflicts. (See editorial, page 3.)





# LAWTHER versus HORNER

## WHERE SHOULD MILITANT WORKERS STAND IN THE DISPUTE?

By ROY TEARSE

**THE T.U.C. has secured its first success in its anti-Stalinist campaign within the Unions. The Lawther-Horner dispute, following the declaration of the latter in support of the French striking miners, has resulted in Horner being severely censured by the Miners' Executive.**

*Lawther claims to speak for the interests of the British miners. Those interests, he states, are bound up with co-operation in the Marshall Plan and as such no strike activity will be tolerated.*

Lawther has made it perfectly clear that this applies with equal force to Britain as to France. Thus, the policy of the N.U.M. towards strikes arising from genuine grievances of the British miners will be no different from their policy in the French miners' strike. They will condemn strike action as "wantonly," "irresponsible" and against the interests of the "nation's recovery." Lawther's policy has nothing in common with the interests of the rank and file.

### Whose Interests Does Horner Represent?

Does this mean that Horner represents the interests of the rank and file? The issue is not so simple.

It is not so long ago that Horner and Lawther were bosom pals, marching arm in arm and jointly attacking the strike activity of the miners in Britain. Remember the Grimethorpe strike only one year ago?

### "Reactionary"—Horner

Lawther said then that the strikers should be prosecuted "even if there are 100,000." Horner described the Grimethorpe men as "reactionary" for going on strike. The Grimethorpe miners were, according to this same Horner, "holding the country up to ransom."

### "The End Of The Union . . ."

—Daily Worker

The "Daily Worker," which today carries articles decrying the speed-up of the miners, described the Grimethorpe strike in an article by the Communist Party's Yorkshire Organiser, as an "injury to all the 700,000 miners of Britain." The same article accused the Trotskyists, who supported the Grimethorpe men, of thereby pursuing a policy "that would have meant the end of the Union."

### Scottish Stalinists Toe The Line

Following in line, the Scottish Miners' Executive has voted £1,000 for the French miners' strike. Yet when the Scottish miners struck work in October of last year against inadequate wages, this same Stalinist dominated Executive threw its weight against the Scottish miners and did its utmost to break the strike.

### South Wales Executive Too

The South Wales Miners' Executive, dominated by the Stalinists, has also gone on record in support of the French strike. But it was only nine months ago, when miners in certain pits in South Wales were conducting stay-down strikes because of genuine grievances, that this same Executive adopted a policy against sending food down to the men on strike—a policy of starving the strikers into submission. Horner at that time offered "the most complete support to the courageous action of Mr. Alf Davies" (the C.P. South Wales Area President) in advocating this policy.

### Change of Heart?

Does this new turn mean that Horner, Moffatt, Pearson and Davies have had a change of heart? That they have suddenly become seriously concerned about the welfare of the miners? Not at all.

Their "line" has the same basis as it had a year ago. It

stems from and is designed to supplement the foreign policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy in Russia. That, and that alone, determines their attitude in the British Labour movement. "When Joe turns, we all turn."

### Stalin Uses C.P.

Stalin uses the Communist Parties in the various countries only as a pressure point in his foreign diplomacy. Given some form of international compromise tomorrow, and the C.P. will once again move right, and arm in arm with Lawther, Horner will again be denouncing strikes as harmful to the nation.

### International Solidarity

Horner talks about "international class solidarity" and cites the demonstration of the Russian Unions in sending £1,000,000 to the British General Strike. But it was Horner and his Party who denounced the German workers during and after the war in the most shameful manner, and conveniently forgot the action of the Ruhr miners and the Hamburg dockers who refused to handle coal for Britain during the General Strike.

Even today, in an appeal for support for the French strike, the Communist Party resorts to chauvinism against the German workers. "French workers have always stood by the British workers when we were fighting the Boche." International class solidarity has a peculiar nationalist flavour in Stalinist hands.

### Support French Miners—Despite Stalinists

Whatever the policy of the Communist Party in the French strike, it is the duty of workers everywhere to support the French miners.

Whilst it is clear that the Stalinists manoeuvred and timed the strike to correspond with the Berlin crisis, only the reaction will declare that these 350,000 miners are not striking for their living standards. The French miners have real cause for strike action, regardless of the attempts of Lawther to gloss over and claim they are victims of a Stalinist "plot." But the support of many British miners of Lawther is understandable. It is because of the Stalinist antics that they believe there is some substance to Lawther's case.

This is the way in which Stalinism undermines the Labour movement and drives the workers behind the right-wing leadership.

### "Socialist Leader" Supports Lawther

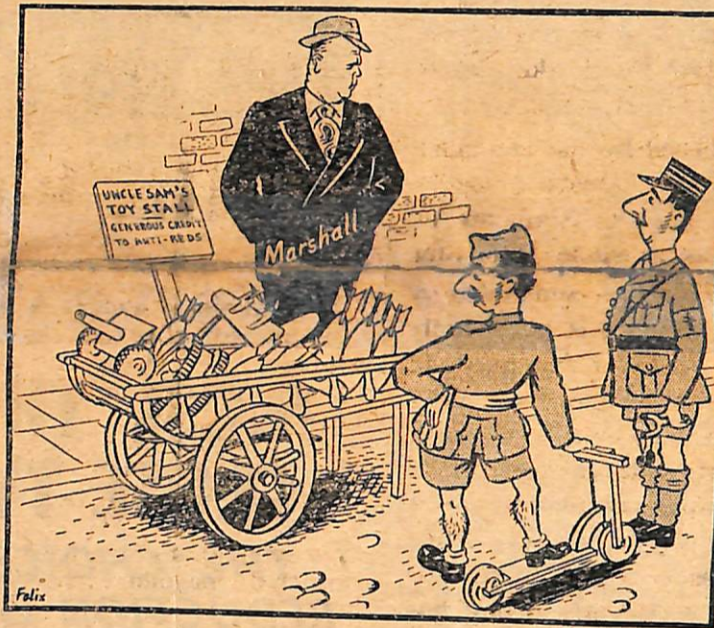
The policy advocated by the I.L.P.'s "Socialist Leader" in an article by R. Sherman that "Lawther and the Miner's Executive should be supported in their efforts to get rid of these Stalinist quislings" would be a suicidal policy for the trade union movement. Any victimisation of the Stalinists at the hands of the right-wing leaders would be a precedent for use against militant workers. It has nothing in common with Union democracy.

### For A Political Struggle Against Stalinism

Trade Unionists must beware of the anti-Stalinist campaign. The struggle against Stalinism is a political struggle and undoubtedly must be waged on the branch and committee floor by

democratic methods. We Trotskyists have fought the false policies of Stalinism tooth and nail for many years. We have sought to oust the Stalinists and replace them with consistent militants. We do this today as we did when Lawther and Horner were in brotherly embrace. But we will fight equally as strongly against the right-wing and any proposed bureaucratic victimisation of Stalinists by the right-wing.

The efforts of the right wing to oust members of the Communist Party from union positions cannot be supported by militants. It must be remembered that this campaign will not stop at Horner. The same methods will be used against all militants who advocate a fighting policy within the unions. The task is to organise the left-wing in a militant fight to remove Stalinists and right-wing alike. Both are a menace to a healthy Socialist working class movement.



"Nice Toys for Good Little Boys."

## REUTHER SHOOTING MAN ARRESTED

**After six months, the investigations into the shooting of Walter Reuther, President of the United Auto Workers' Union (U.S.A.), the Detroit police have arrested Carl Bolton.**

Walter Reuther's arm was shattered by the shotgun blast as he was standing in his kitchen.

### POLICE RECORD

Carl Bolton has a police record dating back to 1926, since which time he has been in and out of prison on charges of grand larceny and armed robbery sentences.

Since the Reuther shooting he has been picked up twice but released on both occasions for lack of evidence. Now the Prosecutor is proceeding claiming "there are plenty of details."

### Member Of Union

"Newsweek" reports that "Somehow he had drifted into U.A.W. Local 400 at Ford's Highland Park plant, serving as its Vice-President in 1945-46. Caught in the battle of left- and right-wing factions, he had won universal dislike and mistrust by shifting his allegiance back and forth."

### Offered 15,000 Dollars

When arrested in September for the robbery of a U.A.W. co-

# Letters

## THE STALINISTS AND THE TERRITORIALS



### Disgusted At War Propaganda

Dear Comrades,

In the Mid-October issues of the "Socialist Appeal" you published a letter from a delegate to the Croydon Trades Council, Bro. Sisley, with regard to the recent demonstration of leading members of the C.P. in Croydon at a recruiting meeting for the Territorial Army. Bro. Sisley pointed out that it was only a few months ago that the Croydon C.P.ers placed themselves at the head of this very recruiting campaign inside the working class movement.

At the last meeting of the Croydon Trades Council on October 20th, Bro. Jarvie, leading member of the local C.P., announced his resignation as the Trades Council's delegate to the Territorial Association, because he said, he was disgusted with the war propaganda that was being carried on at the present time.

This was in sharp contrast to the attitude Jarvie had taken up when the question of sending

a delegate to the Territorial Association was discussed a few months previously. One delegate incidentally nailed Bro. Jarvie down on this matter. He pointed out that at the previous discussion he had stood on the other side of the gate. This made Bro. Jarvie rather apologetic and he put forward the argument that last year "he thought we were building Socialism in this country and we needed a military force to defend it."

This is a striking example of the fantastic positions in which members of the Stalinist Party are pushed as the result of the shifts and changes of Russian foreign policy and the corresponding change of the C.P. line.

D. HARPER.

Oct. 30, 1948.

## MANCHESTER PEACE CONFERENCE

Dear Comrade,

At the "Daily Worker Peace Conference" held in Manchester on Saturday, 30th October, the Manchester Branch of the Revolutionary Communist Party applied for credentials. These were refused. Among the delegates from the Unions were a number of Trotskyists who spoke from the floor.

In answer to discussion, J. E. Campbell gave as the excuse for the exclusion of the Trotskyists that prior to the war, when Trotskyists were admitted into such conferences, the discussions usually developed around the Moscow Trials which was great fun for the C.P. and the Trotskyists, but for nobody else.

Incidentally, Campbell stated that some of the criticisms made by the Trotskyist delegates were justified, and the reason the Soviet Union was participating in U.N.O. was to expose capitalist power politics! A very unusual line for a Stalinist leader; and another example that the rank and file Stalinists reject the slanders which their leaders have published for years.

D. (Manchester).

## MEETINGS

EGHAM: Fire Station Hall, at 7.30. "Russian Revolution 1917-1948." Speaker: Roy Tearse. 12th November.

BIRMINGHAM: "Russian Revolution 1917-1948." Speaker: Ted Grant. 21st November. (For place and time see next issue).

LONDON: Hyde Park Meetings every Sunday at 4.30 p.m.

LONDON: Trade Union Club, 12, Great Newport Street, at 7.30, 7th November. "The Theoretical Basis of Trotskyism." Speaker: Ted Grant.

## READ:

STALIN-TITO CLASH  
by E. Grant & J. Haston

THE MENACE OF FASCISM

by E. Grant

THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION

by Leon Trotsky 10/-

RISE AND FALL OF COMINTERN

by L. Tilak 6/-

### "Communist Son Of A Bitch"

Later he added that Bolton had hidden two shot guns in Miller's home, which he had collected several hours before the shooting with the words: "I've got to get rid of a red-haired Communist son of a bitch."

### Police Are Sure . . .

Bolton is being charged with assault with intent to kill, along with two as yet unnamed accomplices. The paper "Time" comments: "Police were sure of one thing. Bolton did not have 15,000 dollars to offer from his own pocket."



# SOCIALIST APPEAL

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## BERLIN STALEMATE

The deadlock over the Berlin issue continues. Charge and counter-charge are hurled back and forth from West and East.

U.N.O. has adopted a resolution aimed against the Russians, but the Stalinists dig in their heels. The next move is up to the West. But the West is incapable of movement.

The conflict can only be understood on the basis of the Potsdam Agreement, and the separate policies which the Russians and Western Bloc have pursued in contradiction to the Potsdam Agreement. Behind this lies the fundamental contradiction between the economic and social basis upon which the Russians and Western Powers rest. This finds its point of explosion in Germany which these powers occupy and rule.

Both sides have pursued an independent and conflicting economic and political policy from the very moment of occupation.

It is now clear that there was no agreement at Potsdam. At best there was an uneasy compromise which was destined to blow up. The waving of the flags was war propaganda to fool the working class as to the "unity of the anti-Fascist nations."

The Berlin clash has been utilised by the capitalist press and the Labour Government to create a hostile attitude towards the Russians and the Stalinists in this country. The population as a whole feels that there is a real danger of war—This is accompanied by a belief that the Russians are mainly, if not wholly responsible for the stalemate. Most of the goodwill towards Russia which pervaded the Labour movement in the war and post-war years, has been dissipated. Right wing, pro-Bevin and anti-Russian resolutions pass freely through trade union branches where it would have been unthinkable two years ago. While there does exist some uneasiness over the subordination to American foreign policy, Bevin's policy has a strong support in the Labour movement. Fellow travellers of Stalinism are having a thin time, and numbers of one-time fellow travellers have become violent opponents of Russian expansionism. This indicates the success in the diplomacy of the Labour Government in placing the onus on Stalin.

This is in no small measure due to the anti-democratic, non-Communist and non-internationalist policy of the Stalinists.

## WITHDRAW THE TROOPS!

Nevertheless, the situation may yet be reversed. General Robertson has recently declared that the Russians are arming a large police force on semi-military lines to be used against the German civilian population. It is said that this may be a prelude to a new Russian policy advocating the withdrawal of all troops from Germany, ensuring that Russian quislings will be in a strong position to dominate a united Germany. Substance is given to this by the recent declaration of German Stalinists who speak of Russian proposals to withdraw all occupation troops in 12 months.

We Trotskyists have always opposed the occupation of Germany and the policy of extracting reparations. As recently as six months back, our policy received little support among the workers of the West. It was vigorously opposed by the Stalinists in Russia, Britain, America, France and the Benelux countries on the most reactionary chauvinist grounds.

German workers want to be rid of all foreign troops from German soil. They want a Germany unified economically and politically. They want a Government of their own choice.

From the standpoint of the national and international interests of the working class, of socialism, the fight for the withdrawal of all occupation forces is an elementary duty.

# IMPERIALIST DEMOCRACY IN GERMANY AND JAPAN

By BILL HUNTER

**T**HERE are still people around who believe that the victors of the last war are occupying the territories of the defeated nations in order to teach them democracy. American Imperialism has recently been doing its best to disillusion such political infants.

### German Works Law Vetoed

In the American Zone of Germany, General Clay has vetoed the Hesse Works Council Law. The law was based on an article of the Hesse constitution ratified by plebiscite, and passed by the Hesse Parliament, by a large majority. Thus it came into being by one of those democratic processes much lauded by Allied spokesmen and generals in their lectures to the German workers.

However, this law gave Works Councils the right to see the books of the firms in which they operated, and also the right to hear quarterly confidential reports from the management.

### Democracy—But . . .

Despite its "legitimate" birth—and even though the Works Councils would have no right of veto but could only appeal to an Arbitration Tribunal—this Hesse Law has proved too much for the American military authorities. Democracy is fine, thinks General Clay, so long as it means that effective control remains with the occupying powers, or with monopoly groups and business men; so long as no steps are taken which can appear to in-

crease the workers' control over economic life.

Thus, despite the fact that the trade union leaders argued that the new powers of the Works Councils would provide a check on any attempt at secret rearmament, the Law remains unratified.

### Japanese Trade Unionists Persecuted

In Japan—a country where, according to Honor Tracy in the "Observer" of May 9th, there is a huge cotton surplus while the population is dressed in rags—we have further evidence of the progress of the Great Crusade for Democracy.

Honor Tracy writes from Osaka on the 1st August, of the persecution of trade unionists by restrictions on meetings, spying, arrests and beatings-up. All this is carried out under a Chief of Police named Suzuki who is "an officer of the old school who held posts in Tokyo and Hiroshima, before and during the war." An obvious democrat this!

### "Democratising" The Unions

To make his work of "democratising" the unions easier, General MacArthur on July 22nd issued a letter calling for

the banning of strikes and collective bargaining by Government employees.

The Japanese Government then decided on an ordinance, prohibiting Government workers from striking, or otherwise fighting for satisfactory wages, and invalidating all labour contracts and agreements concluded in the past. This applies to workers in the administration and juridical departments of the Government, State railways, Ministry of Communications and State monopolies.

### Special Session

At present, the Japanese Government is in a severe state of crisis, owing to a widespread commercial scandal involving members of the Cabinet. However, a special session of the Diet was summoned to make this ordinance law.

### "Impossible To Live

The "Times" correspondent, on 31st July, commenting on the wages of the Government employees, declared succinctly: ". . . it is impossible for Government workers to continue on their present wages, which lag far behind the cost of living."

These workers cannot but fight back in such conditions. In an attempt to prevent the inevitable struggles, these repressive measures have been instituted. Thus, the Japanese workers are learning the meaning of imperialist "democracy."

# THE ROLE OF LEON TROTSKY IN THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

By V. CHARLES

To Stalinism, history is a lump of clay to be moulded in accordance with the pressing needs of the "Party Line." Since its advent to power, after the death of Lenin, the whole history of the October Revolution and the subsequent years have been contorted beyond recognition.

The central theme of the falsification is that, next to Lenin, Stalin was the leader, the organiser, the inspirer of the Revolution. By contrast, Trotsky was always plotting against the Revolution, seeking only personal power and the overthrow of the Soviet regime.

A whole stack of "official"

histories have been written to this end and the current celebrations of the 31st anniversary of the Russian Revolution will, without doubt, repeat this theme *ad nauseum*.

### Lenin's Central Committee

The official report of the Russian Party Congress of 1917 reads: "The names of the four members of the Central Committee receiving the most votes are read aloud: Lenin—133 votes out of 134; Zinoviev, 132; Kamenev, 131; and Trotsky, 131. Besides these four, the following members were elected to the Central Committee: Nogin, Kollontai, Stalin, Sverdlov, Rykov, Bukharin, Artem, Joffe, Uritsky, Miliutin, Lomov." This was the Central Com-

mittee which was to lead the first victorious workers' revolution in history. Of its members, only Kollontai (now Soviet Ambassador to Stockholm) and Stalin remain alive. All those who did not die natural deaths have been victims of one or other of Stalin's bloody purges.

### Trotsky In October

The leading article which appeared in "Pravda" on November 6th, 1918, commemorating the first anniversary of the Revolution, throws a clear light on Trotsky's activities during the October days:

"All the work and practical organisation of the rising was carried out under the immediate leadership of Trotsky, chairman of the Petrograd Soviet. We can state with all certainty that we owe the garrison's prompt adherence to the Soviet cause and the skilful organisation of the work of the Party's Revolutionary War Committee first and foremost to Comrade Trotsky."

The article was signed in full by the writer, who was none other than Joseph Stalin. It is an unequivocal answer to the Kahn and Sayer's "Great Conspiracy" and all the other lie-peddlers of Stalinism, a complete vindication of Trotsky's role in October.

If we accept the version of the October Revolution as described in "The Great Conspiracy," recommended by Pollitt and other official Stalinist "historians," then the October Revolution becomes one of the enigmas of history. We would have to believe that the Bolshevik leadership of the Revolution was corrupt through and through, that the greatest social revolution of all times was led to victory by villains of the deepest dye. We would have to believe that German agents and British spies acted as midwives to the birth of the first workers' state. Of such stuff is Stalinist fantasy.

On this 31st Anniversary of the great Russian Revolution, the Stalinists will spread the usual lies and slanders. But there is a growing awareness in the ranks of the Labour Movement of the true nature of Stalinism.

## MADRAS WORKERS' VICTORY

At the elections to the Madras Municipal Corporation, the third largest local body in India, held on the 30th September and 1st October, Comrade S. C. C. ANTONIPILLAI, member of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party (Trotskyist) was elected by an overwhelming majority to represent Division No. 32 in the City Corporation.



ANTONI PILLAI

Comrade Antonipillai polled over 5,000 of the 7,000 votes cast, the remaining being divided among five other candidates. Comrade Antonipillai's vote is the highest recorded in the history of the Madras Municipal Corporation.

Six members of the Madras Labour Union were also elected to the Corporation. Being sympathisers of the Trotskyist movement they will work in co-operation with Comrade Antonipillai. These seven will be the only spokesmen for the Left in a Corporation of 80, as the Socialist Party and the Communist Party did not run any candidates.

Comrade Antonipillai is the President of the Madras Labour Union and a member of the General Council of the All India Union Congress.



# THE AIM OF THE C.P. IN THE FRENCH STRIKE

**T**HE French miners' strike was the climax of a whole series of strikes among other sections of the workers. In September and October there were strikes varying from 2 to 24 hours in gas and electricity; also by transport workers which paralysed the metro and bus services for 24 hours. Air France was grounded for 2 hours. Also affected were cinemas, Post offices, wireless, big departmental stores and hotels. There have been strikes of seamen, dockers, railwaymen, engineers and civil servants.

The tragedy of the situation is that instead of generalising the struggles of the workers in one concerted effort, as a preparation for workers' power, the Stalinist leadership has deliberately organised sporadic and sectional strikes. The reason for this policy is not to raise the political consciousness of the workers, but merely to undermine the Marshall Plan in the interests of Stalin's foreign policy.

## 24 Hour Solidarity Strikes

In the town of Ales, the workers in the factories, angered at the police brutality, called a 24-hour strike which embraced the entire town. The Minister of the Interior stated that the workers attempted to seize the Post Office, the Gendarmerie, and the Sub-Prefecture. 350 workers were arrested.

In the Tarn Department of Toulouse the strikers recaptured the power station which had been forcibly seized by the police. A general strike was declared.

At St. Etienne, the miners summoned assistance from all the workers in the area by sounding the pit-head siren. A 24-hour general strike was proclaimed and the police were driven from the town. The Government replied by sending large bodies of troops.

In many other towns there have been injured on both sides.

The dockers in all ports refused to unload black coal from abroad.

## Foreigners Threatened

The Government threatened that "all foreigners" taking part in the demonstrations would be expelled from the country. A considerable section of the miners in France are Spanish workers who fled from Franco, Polish workers who have been in France for many years, Italians and German ex-P.O.W.s.

## Gardes Mobile Used

However, the situation was so charged with explosive possibilities that the authorities proceeded with extreme caution. The correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian" commented on October 26th:

"M. Moch (Socialist Minister of Interior) was at pains to avoid military terms for an operation which was perilously akin to a military operation. The spearhead of the forces used seems, in almost all cases, to have been Gardes Mobile and companies of Republican Security men; that is, Army-trained police held in reserve to deal with disorder who neither take part in the ordinary work of the municipal police nor in the life of the Army. Army units appear to have been used only as auxiliaries because the use of these against civilians would lead in most cases, to grave complications and probably, to insubordination."

## "Strictly Limited Duration"

Here was a situation with revolutionary implications. But the Stalinist controlled C.G.T. did not seek to rally the masses in a general strike in preparation for the overthrow of capitalism and the seizure of power by the workers. They called for solidarity protest movements "of strictly limited duration" in other industries. Thorez preferred to stand on what he called "the legality of the strikes."

## Stalinists Withdrew Safety Men

On the other hand, the Stalinists have resorted to extreme measures which cannot be regarded as out of proportion to the aims they have set themselves to achieve. We refer to the withdrawal of the safety men from the mines which has led to the flooding of some mines and may lead to unemployment for many miners for some time in the future. As M. Lacoste, Minister of Industry and Commerce, pointed out:

## First Time

"This was the first time in a French labour conflict that the Unions had given orders to suspend maintenance and safety measures in the mines. Even in the fight against the Germans this suicidal step had been avoided."

## Aim Of C.P.

The aim of the Stalinists is clear. To undermine France's economy in order to strike a blow at the Marshall Plan. The strike is costing the French regime as much each day as the amount received by Marshall Aid. Three million tons of coal have been lost which cannot but have a tremendous effect on French economy in the coming months.

## Why C.P. Has Following

The masses follow the Communist Party because they are leading strike struggles. Of course, the Stalinists do this in the interests of serving Stalin's foreign policy, but in the eyes of the French workers, they are in the forefront of the struggle against the rotten capitalist regime.

## Huge Compensation

However, in nationalising steel, the Government has attempted by every possible means to placate the capitalists and soften the blow. The compensation to the shareholders is to be based on the prices of steel shares on selected dates in 1945 and 1948. This does not take into account the post-war boom which has led to a rise in the share prices and profits. Thus, a huge burden of nearly £200 million is to be imposed on the industry and on the working class as a whole.

## Directors To Remain

Despite the fact that the steel barons have been paid over and over again in super-profits for their investments, they will have a safe income which will give a greater return than ordinary Government stock, and will involve no risk.

## C.G.T. Makes Gains

As a result of the strikes led by the Stalinists, the C.G.T. is gaining at the expense of the Socialist and Christian Trade Union organisations. At the Congress held during the strike, the C.G.T. claimed that 4,428,000 workers were represented this year as compared with 3,952,000 in 1946.

## Stronger Than Bolsheviks

Today the French C.P. is far stronger organisationally than the Bolsheviks were in the months before the conquest of power in Russia. What is lacking is a revolutionary policy aimed at the conquest of power by the working class.

## Two-fold Character of Strike

The strikes thus have a two-fold character. For the miners they are a life and death struggle against cuts into their already low standard of life. For the Stalinists they are merely a means of exerting pressure on French capitalism to change its foreign policy in the direction of support for Russia rather than America.

## Where We Stand

The Revolutionary Communist Party stands solidly with the striking miners. But it condemns the Stalinists for their irresponsible calling of sporadic strikes without perspective which in the long run will disorient the working class and drive the middle class behind de Gaulle in his propaganda for "order and tranquility."

There are two paths for France: the revolutionary road or reactionary military dictatorship.

# THE FACTS BEHIND THE BLACKWELL CASE

By our Manchester Correspondent

The case of Blackwell, ex-E.T.U. Shop Steward at Metro-Vickers in Manchester, whose credentials were withdrawn by the Union District Committee, has been elevated to the level of a nation-wide controversy by the press in the general campaign against "Communist domination" in the Trade Unions.

The dispute had its origin in an alteration of overtime schedules by the management without consulting the Shop Stewards concerned. The men imposed an overtime ban, and the Works Committee (which functions as the Stewards' Executive) called for an overtime ban throughout the plant, until the management agreed that all overtime should be subject to negotiation.

Blackwell, it is reported, advised the men in his own department to ignore the overtime ban, and a report appeared in the Manchester "Evening News" that Blackwell had advised all E.T.U. members in Metro-Vickers to ignore the ban. The management, however, conceded the demand of the Works Committee and the ban was lifted.

## Why Credentials Were Withdrawn

The A.E.U. convener and the secretary of the Works Committee wrote to the E.T.U. District Office asking for the withdrawal of Blackwell's credentials on the ground that he had violated a shop decision. Blackwell, it is alleged, wrote a letter to a D.C. member suggesting that when the matter was raised, the Committee should postpone consideration.

Blackwell was summoned before the Committee and questioned about his violation of discipline and his letter, which had been handed to the Committee. His credentials were withdrawn whilst the matter was sub-judice in accordance with union rule.

## Anti-Red Campaign

It was at this stage that the campaign was unleashed in the national press. Blackwell was held up as a "victim" of Red influence in the union. Blackwell's supporters based themselves not so much on the Blackwell case, but on control of the union by the Communist Party. They asked support in their campaign to "oust the Reds" from the unions and called upon the Government to "take all necessary steps to remove Communists from control of the

unions." It is also reported that Blackwell is a member of the Catholic Action group.

## Shop Stewards Endorse Action

An official meeting was called by the Electrical Trades Union at which Foulkes explained the rule under which Blackwell's credentials were withdrawn. It was attended by 1,000 E.T.U. shop stewards and branch officials, who passed an overwhelming vote of confidence.

The meeting called by the right-wing on a bombed site in the centre of Manchester was attended by 2,000 people.

## Workers Must Beware!

Whatever disagreements workers may have with the policy of the Communist Party, it is clear that the support for Blackwell is not based on a policy in the interests of the workers. The positions taken on the overtime ban dispels all doubts on this score. The Blackwell issue is being raised in an effort to bolster up the campaign to remove from official positions workers who happen to belong to the Communist Party.

It is, in essence, a right-wing movement to bureaucratically intervene in the right of rank and file trade unionists to choose their representatives. The leaders of this movement allegedly seek to eradicate political domination of the trade unions by the Reds. In fact, they seek to control the trade unions in the interests of the extreme right-wing elements. This is a political struggle on their part too. There can be no united front with these elements on the part of Socialist militants who are hostile to Stalinism.

# FOR A WORKERS' STEEL BOARD

(continued from page 1)  
the Government proceeded with the Bill:

"With all these real doubts and dangers inseparable from this measure, why have the Government persisted in this course? The reason appears to be a most embarrassing one for them—that their decision was compelled by internal pressure in the form of a threat from their Left Wing to split the Party amounting almost to political blackmail."

## Huge Compensation

However, in nationalising steel, the Government has attempted by every possible means to placate the capitalists and soften the blow.

The compensation to the shareholders is to be based on the prices of steel shares on selected dates in 1945 and 1948. This does not take into account the post-war boom which has led to a rise in the share prices and profits. Thus, a huge burden of nearly £200 million is to be imposed on the industry and on the working class as a whole.

## Directors To Remain

Despite the fact that the steel barons have been paid over and over again in super-profits for their investments, they will have a safe income which will give a greater return than ordinary Government stock, and will involve no risk.

The whole rotten structure is to be left intact. The same directors will continue and will draw their inflated fees in the same firms; the steel consumers (motor, chemical, etc.) are to be served by the Iron and Steel Corporation. Their links with iron and steel will continue intact.

If anything, it will be worse than in the pits, where the old managers and directors remain. The directors of the steel companies will retain their positions and continue as directors of the Steel Board.

## Nuffield On Private Steel

In August, 1935, Lord Nuffield complained on behalf of the motor interests:

"The present state of affairs is disgraceful. Unless they change their methods I will go so far as to say that we will buy our steel outside this country. I only wish I was younger. I would set up a steel plant in this country and put them all out of business."

Nuffield will now probably get his cheap steel.

## "Very Little Difference . . ."

The "Observer" has correctly commented that "... the Bill will make very little practical difference to the present organisation, management, and working methods of the Iron and Steel industry and to the existing degree of state control over it."

## Why The Opposition?

Why, then, the bitter opposition of the entire capitalist class to this measure? The "Observer" gives the answer: "If hard pressed, the advocates of nationalisation always come back to this irrational fear. The steel industry is a 'basic' industry; it represents a key position of economic power; it cannot be left in private hands."

"It is just this reasoning which is really sinister and which not only explains but justifies the bitter and desperate political resistance which the Steel Bill will provoke. For it is a reasoning which has unmeasured implications. If every 'basic' industry—that is, every industry that produces not for direct consumption but for other industries—must be State-owned, then what prevents the nationalisation of chemicals, oil, metallurgy, machine-tool production, and ship-building?"

This is the key to the bitter resistance of the employers. They fear that, having started with coal and steel, the workers will exert pressure to go forward with the nationalisation of all industry. In other words, it can encourage the workers to proceed from Labour's reforms to overthrowing the system of capitalism altogether.

This would be the only means of eliminating the danger of

slump and mass unemployment in the future. For the first time it would be possible to commence the organisation of production in the interests of the masses.

## For Workers' Management

The workers of Britain rightly support this Bill as a step forward. But to go forward on a socialist policy, certain pre-requisites are essential. An end must be made to the bureaucratic state capitalist controlling board. There must be a majority of workers' representatives, from top to bottom, on the managerial and administrative body of nationalised steel. The representatives on the Steel Board, as well as on the Boards of the six companies and their subsidiaries must be responsible and subject to recall by the workers who elected them.

To counteract the growth of bureaucracy, all accounts, production records and plans, minutes of Board meetings and all records relating to every aspect of the Board's activities must be subject to inspection and approval by workers' committees appointed by the Unions. Only by full participation of the workers in the running of the industry, will the working class benefit.

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