STOP WILSON'S VISIT

TO WASHINGTON

Kenneth Tynan

signs petition

17 1971 Y.S. lead

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theatre critic and pro-

ducer, has added his

signature to the Workers

Press 'Stop Wilson's visit

to Washington' campaign.

He joins the growing num-ber of writers, trade unionists,

students and young workers demanding that this expression

Vietnam is cancelled.

signatures.

# S.L.L. Central Committee demands:

# HANDS OFF TRADE UNION RIGHTS!

# £1,000 MONTHLY APPEAL FUND

A REALLY magnificent effort by our readers has placed us in sight of our December

With one day to go we require  $\mathfrak{L}57$  10s to complete  $\mathfrak{L}1,000$  for the month. To date

we have received £942 10s. Workers' Press proudly enters 1970 confident that its readers not only fight to maintain it—very soon we are sure they will help us with the substantial improvements we

have in mind. Remember January 1 (first post) is the deadline. Send your donation to:

Workers Press, Monthly Appeal Fund, 186A Clapham High Street,

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From our own reporter

Adverse conditions

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Since then the TUC has set about laying the groundwork for changes in the structure of the union to the liking of the employers.

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*'GUIDELINES'* 

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What is the purpose of these 'guidelines', issued to the unions on the first day of a year when the Tories are likely to return

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The TUC leaders know very well that the changes of rule they propose cannot be completed before a general election. Their aim is to condition the union membership for the Tories' anti-union legislation and

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Instead of leading the fight against the Tories and against the Labour government, which has opened the door for them, these TUC leaders, frightened by the workingclass opposition to legislation in 1969, are preparing the ground more thoroughly, so they think, for the next attempt to legislate

against shop stewards and strikes.
In 1969, the working class has shown great fighting strength against the employers. It faces much bigger struggles with the coming US economic recession and the threat of a Tory government.

State control of the unions is the aim of the employing class, and the trade union bureaucracy, the leaders and full-time officials are collaborating in their plans. They see integration of the unions into the state as a place in the sun for themselves

and as a strengthening of their defences against their own rank-and-file.

The interests of the trade union bureaucracy have thus become an immediate

threat to the basic defence organizations of the working class.

The TUC 'guidelines' are not an alternative to legislation against the unions, but, on the contrary, are intended as the pre-paration for such legislation. To fight against such future legislation means to fight every inch of the way against the

The Socialist Labour League therefore calls for an all-out campaign in every union to reject the TUC 'guidelines' on union rules. This is an absolutely essential part of the fight against the return of the Tories. December 30, 1969.

# **Solar wind may**

AN experiment carried out by the crew of Apollo-11 may have resolved a problem that has puzzled scientists for many years.

Swiss scientists suggest that moonlight may be caused by billions of helium atoms from the sun striking the lunar

surface.

Helium is the most abundant component of the 'solar wind' - the gaseous particles boiling off the sun as a byproduct of the sun's burning and is easily trapped in

Armstrong and Aldrin took a thin aluminium sheet to the moon and exposed it to solar particles for 77 minutes.

# plot thickens MARITIME officials in

the French port of Cherbourg have admitted that the five gunboats going to Israel infringed regulations in the course of their surprise departure on Christmas morning.

The boats' officers had not given the 24-hour notice of leaving required by the port authorities and the Cherbourg immigration officer had not been given a list of the crews.

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Phase Two threat behind redundancy plans

BY PETER READ

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Another case involves Private Richard Chase, who has been in the Fort Hood stockade since mid-October for his refusal to take part in 'Operation Garden Plot'— the federal government's national 'riot control' training

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Despite this repression, the movement of GIs against the Vietnam war and all aspects of militarism continues to

# Why Wilson supports

withdrawn a further £73 million from the International Monetary Fund.

This is the third instalment of the standby credit agreed

Despite all the efforts made to boost sterling's achieving parity with other currencies, as a major strengthening of the economy, capitalist Britain slides deeper and deeper into debt to the USA.

This fact will also dominate the Wilson-Nixon talks in Washington towards the end

Economically speaking, the Labour government is absolutely tied to the US bankers.

That is why all the claptrap from fake-lefts and the Communist Party that Wilson will criticize Nixon's Vietnam policies is absurd.

It ignores the basic fact that the Labour government is pledged to defend bankrupt British capitalism as it is with all its debts to the USA. Here is the foundation stone of its alliance with Nixon over Vietnam.

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They mislead the working class over the real economic issues behind Wilson's subservience to Nixon by creating the illusion that he can be forced to change—a lie from beginning to end.

In the entire history of Wilson's government, from 1964 to the present day, there is not one single example of an occasion when it has defied the international bankers.

If the Labour government was to oppose Nixon, it would have to split from Wilson and the right wing and adopt socialist policies such as the nationalization of the basic industries, without compensa-tion under workers' control

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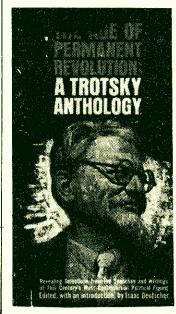
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## **ALL FOR £1 POST FREE**

#### machines was rejected by the unions involved. The fettlers were offered die-casting machine operators, have taken this action over the refusal of the management to settle a claim for improved condition money.

**DIE-CASTERS** at Tottenham's Gestetner plant yesterday struck for an improved pay an hour for large machines and 3d an hour for small Workers in the fettling-shop, together with the small

the die-casting machines. The small machine operators

based on adverse working con-A management offer of 71d

Gestetner strikers may face

nothing in spite of the excessive noise in the fettling-shop and the fumes given off

feel that they work under con-

ditions very similar to those

in the large machine section.

A strike meeting held on Monday, addressed by conve-nor John Reynolds and the shop stewards, gave full backing for a strike.

However, the large machine operators have decided to accept the 7½d and at a meetdecided not to support the strike, in spite of a recommendation from the shop

the management can benefit from this division as proposals

stewards' committee.

Many workers feel that only ● PAGE FOUR COL. 7 →

aluminium.

The Swiss scientists calculated that the moon is being bombarded by about 63 million atoms of helium per square centimetre every sec-ond and suggest that this enormous flux may form a kind of haze from which light

PLANS TO tighten the employers' noose around the necks of London dockers were taken a stage further at this week's meeting of the port's Dock

Labour Board. By March 1970, it was confirmed, another 1,400 dockers are to be paid off

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Redundancies after March are not to continue at the same rate as in the preceding two years.
This indicates that the employers are hoping to temporarily absorb their surplus by overcoming the dockers' resistance to Phase

Two with the co-operation of the union officials.

Overtime cut Under the Phase Two provisions, shift-work would cut out overtime and dockers could be asked to do certain tasks—such as washing and changing, moving hatches and mechanical loading gear—in their own time outside the

Although the latest forecast that the London labour force will be cut by 10-12 per cent over the next 18 months ● PAGE FOUR COL. 5 →

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# Nixon's Vietnam policy

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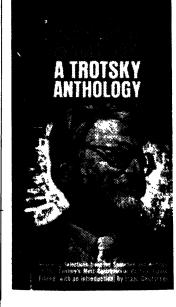
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## Gestetner strikers may face job-evaluation threat From our own reporter

DIE-CASTERS at Tottenham's Gestetner plant yesterday struck for an improved pay

Workers in the fettling-shop, together with the small die-casting machine operators, have taken this action over the refusal of the management to settle a claim for improved condition money.

Adverse conditions Their claim, on which a failure to agree was registered earlier this month at York, is based on adverse working con-

an hour for large machines and 3d an hour for small machines was rejected by the unions involved.

The fettlers were offered nothing in spite of the excessive noise in the fettling-shop and the fumes given off by the die-casting machines. The small machine operators

feel that they work under con-

ditions very similar to those

in the large machine section.

Monday, addressed by conve-nor John Reynolds and the A management offer of 7½d

ing for a strike. the strike, in spite of a recom-mendation from the shop

stewards' committee.

Many workers feel that only the management can benefit from this division as proposals ● PAGE FOUR COL. 7 →

A strike meeting held on shop stewards, gave full back-

However, the large machine operators have decided to accept the 7½d and at a meeting decided not to support

a thin aluminium sheet to the moon and exposed it to solar

particles for 77 minutes. The Swiss scientists calculated that the moon is being bombarded by a b o u t 63 million atoms of helium per square centimetre every sec-ond and suggest that this enormous flux may form a kind of haze from which light

AN experiment carried out by the crew of Apollo-11 may have resolved a problem that has puzzled scientists for many years.

> Swiss scientists suggest that moonlight may be caused by billions of helium atoms from the sun striking the lunar

December 30, 1969.

surface.

Helium is the most abundant component of the 'solar wind'—the gaseous particles boiling off the sun as a by-product of the sun's burning -and is easily trapped in aluminium Armstrong and Aldrin took

the union officials. Overtime cut Under the Phase Two provisions, shift-work would cut out overtime and dockers could be asked to do certain tasks—such as washing and

changing, moving hatches and

mechanical loading gear—in their own time outside the 35-hour basic week. Although the latest forecast is that the London labour force will be cut by 10-12 per cent over the next 18 months ● PAGE FOUR COL. 5 →

# Why Wilson supports

THE Labour government has

temporarily absorb their surplus by overcoming the dockers' resistance to Phase This fact will also dominate the Wilson-Nixon talks in Washington towards the end Two with the co-operation of of January.

Labour government is absolutely tied to the US bankers. That is why all the clap-trap from fake-lefts and the will criticize Nixon's Vietnam policies is absurd.

Nixon over Vietnam.

In the entire history of

Such a decision would require the institution of a monopoly of foreign trade and the scrapping of all loan commitments to foreign

The fake-lefts and the ● PAGE FOUR COL. 1 →

THE Socialist Labour League comes under attack from the 'state capitalist' (International Socialism) group for basing itself on the programme of Trotskyism in 1938, in a situation where that 'Transitional Programme' has, according to them, become 'irrelevant or false' (Duncan Hallas, 'Building The Leadership' in 'International Socialism', No. 40).

We showed in the first article in this series that this attack is based upon the acceptance of an anti-Marxist method, that of empiricism and adjustment to the requirements of capitalism and its agents.

Now we must take up specifically the arguments of Hallas, Cliff and their associates on the basic question of the nature of our epoch.

For the Marxist revolutionary, we live in the epoch of wars and revolutions', of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism. This revolutionary nature of the epoch permeates every aspect of economic, social, political and ideological relations.

The reality of all these spheres is unified in the experience of struggle of the revolutionary party, which must then organize and transform every aspect of its work on this basis, thereby enriching revolutionary theory as the key to intervening yet again.

The way we understand the nature of the whole epoch is therefore not some general 'background' question, but is the essence of all our work as Marxists.

When Hallas attacks the SLL and attacks the fact that our programme and policies are 'rooted in the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International', he is attacking Marxism. Lenin and Trotsky defended and developed Marxism as the scientific analysis of capitalism and the key to its revolutionary overthrow by the working class in the epoch of imperialism.

The 'state capitalists' and other revisionists reject this continuity of Marxism; they reject the analysis of 20th century capitalism, imperialism, as that stage of capitalist development in which 'mankind's productive forces stagnate' because of the barrier raised against them by the continuance of capitalist social relations of production.

## Leadership

In the Transitional gramme of the Fourth International we find in summary form all the gains of Marxist theory and experience, applied to the present epoch.

Capitalism can no longer survive by its own strength as a social system: this crisis for the whole of humanity is now decisively concentrated in the crisis of the revolutionary leadership of the working class. Only through the struggle—on the basis of Marxism, the Russian Revolution and the first four congresses of the Third International—to defeat the exist counter - revolutionary (Social-Democratic and Stalinist) leaderships, can the nature of imperialism's crisis be grasped and a new leadership, the Fourth International, be

Within such a perspective, the uneven development of parts of the imperialist world or of particular periods of the epoch must be judged.

If Hallas says the Transitional Programme is 'irrelevant or false' in the present 'world situation' he is rejecting Marxism. It is not a question of the 'situation', but of the nature of the epoch. It was on this basis that the Fourth International was formed, and not on the characterization of

the situation in 1938. Hallas ridicules the founding conference of the Fourth International on the grounds that it met for only one day and that, as contrasted with the formation of the Second and Third Internationals with 'mass support' it represented

only a handful of people. Every serious Marxist knows that Trotsky, after a long and bitter struggle of the Left Opposition to 'reform' the Third International, set course for the Fourth International after Hitler's defeat of the German proletariat in 1933. All the intervening years were years of intensive political preparation for the 1938

Founding Conference. Hallas, with the contemptuous and sweeping petty-bourgeois rejection of the theoretical struggle, throws out this whole history and simply says of Trotsky:

'In his eyes the formation of an "International" without any mass support was justified by the extraordinary nature of the world situation.

1 'The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the



Trotsky made his position clear in his reports to the early Congresses of the Third International—that capitalism was finished and that the crisis of this epoch resolves itself in the fight for revolutionary leadership. Above: Trotsky addresses the Second Congress.

Hallas attempts to show that in 1938 Trotsky thought capitalism was in the depths of an economic crisis from which it could not emerge, and that, in Hallas's words, 'It is there-

fore now or never'. We shall need to quote Trotsky extensively in order to put Hallas in his place. Hallas prefers to begin with a quotation, not from the 1938 Programme, but from Trotsky's 'The USSR In War' written in September 1939, i.e. after the outbreak of the Second World War. 2

Hitler's rise to power and the defeat of the working class through

prepare the ground for the founding of the Fourth International.

'The disintegration of cap-

italism has reached extreme

limits, likewise the disintegra-

tion of the old ruling class.

The further existence of this

Even though the world de-

pression of the 1930s and the

outbreak of the second imper-

ialist war were open and

obvious indications of the

historical bankruptcy of the

capitalist social order, Trotsky

was here talking not just about

the current 'situation', as

Hallas puts it, but about the whole historical epoch, about the historical doom of the

capitalist class and its system.

article in question is, in point

of fact, directed against exactly

what Hallas represents! Trot-

sky is replying to the theorists

and 'state capitalism' in the

Capitulation

say: don't just give us the

results of your terminological

experiments, but explain how

your definitions fit in with the

whole historical conceptions of

Marxism and the nature of the

The same question now comes up for Hallas and his

friends: was Trotsky wrong,

Mr Hallas, to say that cap-

italism was finished and that

the ruling class had long since

fulfilled its historical mission?

And is not your rejection of

this historical perspective the

secret of your capitulation to

reformism and your venom

against the Socialist Labour

Trotsky's remarks on the

impossibility' of the further

existence of capitalism is

correct is confirmed by the line

of his whole article, 'The

USSR In War' (as well as, for

example, his reports to the

early Congresses of the Third

International cf 'The First

Five Years of the Comintern',

and its relation to leadership

The historical perspective

See 'In Defence of Marxism',

That our interpretation of

League?

2 volumes).

epoch in which we live.

His answer to them is to

'bureaucratic collectivism'

The whole of the Trotsky

system is impossible.'

the counter-revolutionary policies of Stalinism decided Trotsky to

is clear in the following extract from 'The USSR In War':

'The crisis of capitalist society which assumed an open character in July 1914, from the very first day of the produced a sharp crisis in the proletarian leadership. During the 25 years which have elapsed since that time, the proletariat of the advanced capitalist countries has not yet created a leadership that could rise to the level of the tasks of our epoch.

'The experience of Russia testifies, however, that such a leadership can be created.

imperiously presented itself since 1914, and they work instead for an adaptation to the 'fact' that capitalism continues. According to Hallas, Trotsky in 1939 was saying: the proletariat must win the struggle for power in the course of the war and its immediate aftermath; if it does not, then we shall have bureaucratic totalitarian societies and must revise our conception of the epoch as one of socialist revolution. It follows, according to Hallas, that Trotsky's perspective was mistaken and 'cataclysmic'. However, as we have seen, this whole argument, when presented in its historical perspective, turns against Hallas and the state capitalists, and not against Trotsky.

#### Class nature

vanguard of the working class;

that is, in the process of this war and the profound shocks

which it must engender, will a

genuine revolutionary leader-ship be formed capable of lead-

ing the proletariat to the conquest of power?"3

Do Hallas and the 'state

capitalists' answer this ques-

tion? Yes, they answer it in

the negative: they reject the

conscious struggle to 'cut a

path' in the proletariat for the

objective necessity which has

The purpose of Trotsky's article 'The USSR In War', is to show the full historical and reactionary nature of the conclusions drawn by 'state capitalists' and their like about the supposed class nature of the Stalinist rulers of the Soviet state.

Trotsky said: either accept the socialist revolutionary nature of our epoch and understand the degenerated character of a society in Russia in isolated transition from capitalism to socialism; or draw the full conclusions of your theory that the bureaucracy is a new class with a necessary historical mission to organize and carry forward the productive forces; in the latter case you will be forced to conclude that a whole historical period of 'totalitarianism' confronts humanity. and the working class would be reduced to a long-term defensive struggle against a new form of enslavement.

Against this, Trotsky re-3 Ibid pp. 14-15.

affirmed the socialist, revolutionary perspective. Hallas quotes Trotsky:

'If however, the present war will provoke not revolutions but a decline of the proletariat, then there remains another alternative: the further decay of monopoly capitalism, its further fusion with the state and the replacement of democracy wherever it still remained by a totalitarian regime.'

In line with this, Trotsky had concluded earlier, in the Transitional Programme, that 'systematic social reforms' were 'in general' finished.

Now, Hallas might have quoted another passage from The USSR In War' which would have seemed an even more certain 'proof' of his argument that Trotsky thought either socialist revolution or totalitarianism' would be the result of the war. We will quote it for him and then show why he preferred to omit it:

'. . . it is absolutely self-evident that if the international proletariat, as a result of the experience of our entire epoch and the current new war, proves incapable of becoming master of society, this would signify the foundering of all hope for a socialist revolution, for it is impossible to expect any other more favourable conditions for it; in any case no one foresees them now, or is able to characterize them.'5

#### Revolutionary

In this passage, in order to emphasize that the apparently overwhelming conditions of defeat and world war in 1939 do not require the rejection of the revolutionary perspective, Trotsky insists on the favourable revolutionary conditions which the war itself will produce.

He is calling upon revolutionaries to face up to these conditions and these tasks. He is saying: if you reject, because of defeat and war, the responsibility of revolutionary preparation, then you will in fact be rejecting in advance the possibility of the proletariat's taking power in the most favourable conditions which at this stage can be foreseen.

He is putting into the mouths of his opponents the historical meaning of the conclusion they have so far

Trotsky goes on immediately to give his answer, which explains why Hallas chose not to use the above quotation:

'Marxists do not have the slightest right (if disillusion-ment and fatigue are not considered "rights") to draw the conclusion that the pro-letariat has forfeited its revolutionary possibilities and must renounce all aspirations to hegemony in an era immediately ahead. Twentyfive years in the scales of history, when it is a question of profoundest changes in economic and cultural systems, weigh less than an hour in the individual who, because of empirical failures in the course of an hour or a day, renounces a goal that he set for himself on the basis of the experience and analysis of his entire previous lifetime?' 6

What good indeed? But in politics and the class struggle, as in nature, there is no vacuum; the despair of the petty-bourgeois is turned into

4 Ibid, pp. 10. 5 Ibid. pp. 18.

6 Ibid.

# THE SECOND PART OF CLIFF SLAUGHTEI

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They abandoned it then, in the testing time of the outbreak of war, when, according to Hallas, Trotsky's 'analysis of the world situation' was still 'plausible', and not just after the war, when the renewed capitalist expansion and extension of Stalinist rule to eastern Europe appeared to contradict it. And so, when Hallas, after

describing the mass influence of the Communist International in the 1920's, says 'If Trotsky's economic perspective had been correct the Fourth International might have been in a similar position' 7 let him answer this question: how is it that your political ancestors abandoned the Fourth International even when, in terms of your own analysis, Trotsky's perspective was still correct?

We shall return later to this question of those who claim 'correct' economic perspectives

against Trotsky.

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This petty-bourgeois caricature of the historical alternative which Trotsky tried to make the middle-class opposition face up to is typically summarised by Hallas:

'Orwell's "1984", written a few years later, describes the



By a Workers Press

# Behind the power industry strike threat

# Jobs and wages under attack

Some £14 million will be added to the industry's wage bill, but the council is confident that continuing productivity improvements and reductions in manpower should mean the increases are matched by savings.

('Financial Times', November 8, 1969.)

Are supply workers to become industrialized zombies with no individual freedom in theory or practice?

(Carrington power station craftsmen.)

**NOVEMBER'S** 'Financial Times' verdict on the Electricity Council's 10 per cent wage award put its finger firmly on two of the main issues behind next week's threatened power strike.

(This does not mean, of course,

that it will be immune to

stands as follows: Will objec-

tive historical necessity in the

long run cut a path for itself

'The question consequently

degeneration.)

Up until 1963, productivity agreements were virtually unknown to the industry's 150,000 or so workers. They were paid a basic wage with extra for overtime.

Speed-up and redundancies began to dominate the scene only with the coming to power of the Wilson government in

The successive agreement by the union leaders of incentive in the industry increased by bonuses, staggered hours, and flexibility of labour and work-study were the forms. Measured-Day Work with thorough-going £100.6 million, even after

job-evaluation was the aim. Mr Les Cannon, Electrical and Plumbing Trades Union president, has claimed that next week's planned strike is part of a Communist-supported attack on productivity bargain-

He has adde his own threat of union discipline against strikers to those of suspensions and legal action from the power employers.

Let us just see where the eager collaboration of Cannon and other union leaders with productivity bargaining has got power workers.

In 1968-1969, productivity some 6 per cent, despite a 10.000 reduction in the labour force. The industry's power side realized a net profit of

amounting to £222.4 million.

Figures for the previous year were even more spectacular on the strength of the notorious 1967 pay - and - productivity agreement.

The 1967-1968 increase in productivity far surpassed the Prices and Incomes Board's own 4.8 per cent forecast, rising to 12 per cent. Wages, meanwhile, went up

by only 5.5 per cent leaving average earnings at £21 10s. This is bad enough, particularly in comparison to similar work in private industry, but many earn far less than this average level.

A brief summary of the record here places the responsibility for this situation squarely with the union leaders.

In 1964, the unions agreed to a bonus scheme which was then further developed in the pay-and-status agreements of later that year.

Dropped quickly

In return for a 40-hour week and some extra payments the employers, on the basis of these agreements, were able to largely replace paid overtime with a system of staggered hours and some unpaid over-

The at first relatively high rates of pay dropped very quickly as overtime was elim-

implications of this drive interest and other payments Then, in 1966, work-study was introduced with the full co-operation of the union leaders. It had been made possible to introduce some pooling of mates and inter-craft flexibility and now this process became accelerated.

> The real crunch, however, came with the 1967 agreement. It was agreed that is was the management's responsibility to

'(i) make any changes the Board thinks necessary in the organization, the methods, the supervision, the materials, and the equipment required to carry out work and to apply the results of using work-study and other techniques!

(ii) deploy the labour force in the manner required by the Board.

Specifically, this meant that craftsmen were expected to be flexible in carrying out associated jobs within their competence; the use of highergrade employees on lowergrade work as required; temporary up-grading on the rate for the job as required; mobility between local management

All this clearly set the scene for Measured-Day Work. One Prices and Incomes Board report on the industry made clear that the union leaders had even asked for this system

to be implemented. The Socialist Labour League has consistently explained the against jobs and wages. The experience of increasing numbers of workers is now coming in line with these warnings. One example will suffice to bear this out.

'The 1967 pay-and-productivity agreement', stresses a recent statement from craft representatives at Manchester's Carrington power station, 'was one of the most diabolical ever perpetrated on any group of workers since the Industrial Revolution.

'The agreement was thrust upon the industry without any consultation with the rank-

'First and second stages of the status agreement were introduced with revolutionary changes in custom and practice which the majority workers at shop-floor level did not envisage such as compulsory week-end working, staggered hours and days.'

Gave the right The Carrington craftsmen

take particular exception to clause 202 of the agreement. This clause, which they say

'has been repeatedly rejected at station meetings held by union members', gave management the right to direct labour in any manner they desired by introducing method-study, work-measurement, mobility and flexibility of labour.

All overtime could be eliminated by work-load stagger. No wage award can compensate them until the agreement is amended, they insist.

Their final question is 'are supply workers to become industrialized zombies with no individual freedom in theory or practice?'.

These demands and questions, which reflect the feelings of increasing numbers of power workers, must be answered. Neither the union leaders nor the kind of 'pure militancy' advocated by sections of Communist Party stewards in the industry can do this.

If, as the 'Financial Times' intimated, the Electricity Council now expects to pay for its £14 million award by 'continuing productivity improvements and reductions in manpower', then further swingeing attacks on jobs, working practices and wages are on the way.

We say:

● No to work-study and Measured-Day Work!

● Throw out the arrogant board managements! Workers' control throughout the power industry!

• Link the power station fight to that of engineers, carworkers, dockers, railwaymen and others now facing similar



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'Orwell's "1984", written a

sort of society Trotsky be-lieved must come unless the proletarian revolution occured in the near future.' 8

All of Trotsky's writings in 1938-1939, as in every stage of his political life and in his dying moments, are suffused with the revolutionary optimism of Marxism, of the proletariat and its historical mission.

When he presents the dangers from the continued existence of capitalism, it is entirely in the service of the preparation of the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat. For this, Hallas can sub-

stitute the neurotic fantasy of

Trotsky insisted that the conditions of

revolutionary perspective. As the events

defeat and the world war in 1939 did

not mean the rejection of the

applause of the working class.

in Italy were to show, communist

partisans entered the towns to the

often pointed out that an economic upturn was sometimes necessary to restore to the proletariat a basis for its confidence and unity. 8

Lenin's book 'Imperialism'

When Lenin said that im-

At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of a society come into conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed.'9

Capitalism in its imperialist stage leads directly to the most comprehensive socialization of production; it, so to speak, drags the capitalists, against their will and consciousness, order, a transitional one from complete free competition to complete socialization.' 10

## **Barrier**

The barrier to 'complete socialization' remains of course the private property of the monopolists. They can be dispossessed only by proletarian revolution. It is not a question of a smooth transition through the imperialist stage to socialism, but, on the contrary, of the most profound and

sary tendencies for capitalist production, to impede the development of the productive forces, now become the predominant feature of the epoch. The tension inevitably produces wars and revolutions:

This imposition of the exploitative requirements of a few monopolists on the inter-

Before we go into more detail on the 'state capitalists' relation to Stalinism, we must

is the foundation-stone of the Marxist analysis of 20thcentury capitalism. The 'state capitalists' long ago rejected Lenin's view of the nature of the epoch, concluding that capitalism has proved that it still has possibilities of growth as a social system.

perialism is 'moribund' (dying) capitalism he meant that humanity had arrived at one of those junctures analysed by

Lenin says:

revolutionary contradictions. What were previously neces-

'The social means of pro-

duction remain the private property of a few. The general framework of formally-recognised free competition remains and the voke of a few monopolists on the rest of the population becomes a hundred times heavier, more burdensome and intolerable.  $^{11}$ 

Communist International'. 2 vols. 9 Marx: P reface to 'The Critique of Political Economy'. 10 Lenin: 'Imperialism'. Collected Works Vol. 22, p. 205.

production of humanity is what Marxists mean by the 'fetter' on the development of productive forces, or what Trotsky called 'stagnation'.

nationalized and socialized

(Transitional Programme.) Revisionists like to hold up against this analysis the so-called 'technological revolu-tion' of the period between the Second World War and the 1960s, which, according to them, is associated with a new

But does the Marxist theory of capitalism's opposition to the development of the productive forces means that improvements in the technique of production are excluded?

period called 'neo-capitalism'.

On the contrary. It was a Stalinist distortion, accepted by the revisionists, to identify 'forces of production' with 'technique' or 'implements of production',

In 1847 Marx wrote: 'Of all the instruments of

production, the greatest productive power is the revolu-tionary class itself. The organ-ization of revolutionary elements as a class supposes the existence of all the pro-ductive forces which could be engendered in the bosom of the old society. 12 Lenin insists precisely that Lenin insists precisely that the production developed and

carried out for profit by the capitalists in the period of imperialism is carried out under conditions where it 'becomes a hundred times heavier, more burdensome and intolerable' for the workers of the whole world.

This did not at all mean that productivity in technique would not improve. Lenin indeed writes:

'Competition becomes transformed into monopoly. The result is immense progress in the socialization of produc-tion. In particular, the process of technical invention and imimprovement becomes cialized.' 13

## **Parasitism**

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15 Trotsky Thoughts O

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Naturally, under capitalism such technical progress will be introduced into production only under conditions where capitalists actually gain from it an increase in surplus value and accumulated capital. Thus, says Lenin, after referring to parasitism of finance 'It would be a mistake to

believe that this tendency to decay precludes the rapid growth of capitalism. It does not. In the epoch of imperialism, certain branches of production, certain strata of the bourgeoisie and certain countries betray, to a greater or lesser degree, now one and now another of these ten-dencies. On the whole, captialism is growing far more rapidly than before; but this growth is not only becoming more and more uneven in general, its unevenness also manifests itself, in particular in the desired the particular, in the decay of the countries which are richest in capital (Britain).' 18

This does not stop Lenin from concluding only two pages later:

'From all that has been said in this book on the economic essence of imperialism, it follows that we must define it as capitalism in transition, or, more precisely, as moribund capitalism.' 14 Marx had long before, in his

'Capital', pointed out that developments in science and technique come into the life of the proletariat only as objectifications of capital, as means for his exploitation and therefore as forces hostile to So long as capitalist private

property extended the world market and was the historically necessary form of productive organization then this conflict between the proletariat and the development of investment in science and technique was only potentially destructive of the main 'force of production', the proletariat.

To invest in technical change for the sole purpose of increas-

12 Marx. 'The Poverty Of Philosophy', final section.

13 Lenin, op. cit. 13 Ibid, p. 300.

14 Ibid. p. 302.

When Trotsky spoke of the bankruptcy of the capitalist system, he was referring not judepression in which the working class was thrust in the 1930s, but to the historical dotthe capitalist class and its system. The demonstration above, protesting against rising place in London on February 5, 1933.

ower industry strike threat By a Workers Press and wages under attack

interest and other payments Then, in 1966, work-study amounting to £222.4 million.

agreement. The 1967-1968 increase in productivity far surpassed the Prices and Incomes Board's own 4.8 per cent forecast,

rising to 12 per cent. Wages, meanwhile, went up by only 5.5 per cent leaving average earnings at £21 10s. This is bad enough, particularly in comparison to similar work in private industry, but many earn far less than this average

A brief summary of the record here places the responsibility for this situation squarely with the union leaders.

dent, has claimed that week's planned strike is In 1964, the unions agreed to a bonus scheme which was then further developed in the pay-and-status agreements of union discipline against

# **Dropped quickly**

In return for a 40-hour week and some extra payments the employers, on the basis of these agreements, were able to largely replace paid overtime with a system of staggered hours and some unpaid over-

6 per cent, despite a 0 reduction in the labour The at first relatively high rates of pay dropped very The industry's power quickly as overtime was elimrealized a net profit of 6 million, even after

was introduced with the full Figures for the previous year leaders. It had been made poswere even more spectacular on the strength of the notorious sible to introduce some pooling of mates and inter-craft pay - and - productivity flexibility and now this process became accelerated.

The real crunch, however, came with the 1967 agreement. It was agreed that is was the management's responsibility to

'(i) make any changes the Board thinks necessary in the organization, the methods, the supervision, the materials, and the equipment required to carry out work and to apply the results of using work-study and other techniques!

(ii) deploy the labour force in the manner required by the Board.

Specifically, this meant that craftsmen were expected to be flexible in carrying out asso-ciated jobs within their competence; the use of highergrade employees on lowergrade work as required; temporary up-grading on the rate for the job as required; mobility between local management

All this clearly set the scene for Measured-Day Work. One Prices and Incomes Board report on the industry made clear that the union leaders had even asked for this system to be implemented.

The Socialist Labour League

has consistently explained the

gered hours and days.' Gave the right The Carrington craftsmen take particular exception to

implications of this drive

The experience of increasing

numbers of workers is now

coming in line with these

warnings. One example will

tivity agreement', stresses a

recent statement from craft

representatives at Manchester's

Carrington power station, 'was

one of the most diabolical ever

perpetrated on any group of

workers since the Industrial

upon the industry without any

consultation with the rank-

the status agreement were introduced with revolutionary

changes in custom and prac-

tice which the majority of

workers at shop-floor level did

not envisage such as compul-

sory week-end working, stag-

'The agreement was thrust

'First and second stages of

'The 1967 pay-and-produc-

against jobs and wages.

suffice to bear this out.

Revolution.

and-file.

clause 202 of the agreement. This clause, which they say 'has been repeatedly rejected at station meetings held by union members', gave management the right to direct labour in any manner they desired by introducing method-study, work-measurement, mobility and flexibility of labour.

inated by work-load stagger. No wage award can compensate them until the agreement is amended, they insist.

Their final question is 'are supply workers to become industrialized zombies with no individual freedom in theory or practice?'. These demands and ques-

tions, which reflect the feelings of increasing numbers of power workers, must be answered. Neither the union leaders nor the kind of 'pure militancy' advocated by sections of Communist Party stewards in the industry can do this.

If, as the 'Financial Times' intimated, the Electricity Council now expects to pay for its £14 million award by 'continuing productivity improvements and reductions in manpower', then further swingeing attacks on jobs, working practices and wages are on the way.

We say:

● No to work-study and Measured-Day Work!

board managements! Workers' control throughout the power

• Link the power station fight to that of engineers, carworkers, dockers, railwaymen and others now facing similar the terrified petty-bourgeois. Orwel! could see in Stalin's Russia only the tyranny and the power of counter-revolution. Hallas follows him.

For Trotsky and Trotskyism, the conquests of October 1917, the power of the working class, the unrivalled example of the historical possibility of pro-letarian revolution and fashioning of a Marxist leadership—these were the foundations of the historical estimation of and struggle against Stalinism and imperialism.

complete the argument on the nature of the epoch, and its relation to what Hallas calls the 'situation'. This is important, because Hallas proceeds later, as we shall see, to say that the expansion of capitalism after the Second World War dis-

proved the verdict of Trotsky

in 1938-1939 that 'mankind's

productive forces stagnate' and that 'the disintegration of

capitalism has reached extreme limits'. In the first place, it is not true that Trotsky, as Hallas puts it, believed 'an economic expansion of some sort' to be 'permanently excluded'. Trotsky certainly drew from the historical crisis of capitalism the conclusion that 'In general, there can be no discussion of systematic social reforms and the raising of the masses'

living standards. . . . Trotsky pointed out many times that discussion of economic upswings and downswings within the imperialist epoch must always be placed within the historical context of the epoch of capitalist decline.

Within that context, Trotsky

7 Hallas p. 31.

8 Ibid, pp. 26.

PAGE THREE

# GHTER'S REPLY TO HALLAS

# lature of ational group

sort of society Trotsky believed must come unless the proletarian revolution occured in the near future.' 8

All of Trotsky's writings in 1938-1939, as in every stage of his political life and in his dying moments, are suffused with the revolutionary optimism of Marxism, of the proletariat and its historical

presents the dangers from the continued existence of capitalism, it is entirely in the service of the preparation of the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat.

For this, Hallas can substitute the neurotic fantasy of



terrified petty-bourgeois. Orwell could see in Stalin's Russia only the tyranny and the power of counter-revolution. Hallas follows him.

For Trotsky and Trotskyism, the conquests of October 1917, the power of the working class, the unrivalled example of the historical possibility of proletarian revolution fashioning of a Marxist leadership—these were the foundations of the historical estimation of and struggle against Stalinism and imperialism.

Before we go into more detail on the 'state capitalists' relation to Stalinism, we must complete the argument on the nature of the epoch, and its relation to what Hallas calls the 'situation'.

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Within that context, Trotsky

7 Hallas p. 31.

ductive forces means that improvements in the technique of

often pointed out that an

economic upturn was some-

times necessary to restore to

the proletariat a basis for its

is the foundation-stone of the

Marxist analysis of 20th-

century capitalism. The 'state

capitalists' long ago rejected Lenin's view of the nature of

the epoch, concluding that capitalism has proved that it still has possibilities of growth

When Lenin said that im-

perialism is 'moribund' (dying)

capitalism he meant that

humanity had arrived at one of

those junctures analysed by

At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of a society come into conflict with the existing relations of production,

or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing—with the property relations within which they have been

at work hitherto. From forms of development of the pro-

ductive forces these relations

turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revo-

lution. With the change of the

entire immense superstructure

more or less rapidly trans-

'Capitalism in its imperialist

stage leads directly to the most

comprehensive socialization of

production; it, so to speak, drags the capitalists, against their will and consciousness, Into some sort of a new secial

order, a transitional one from

complete free competition to complete socialization.' 10

**Barrier** 

socialization' remains of course

the private property of the

monopolists. They can be dis-

possessed only by proletarian

revolution. It is not a question

of a smooth transition through

the imperialist stage to social-

ism, but, on the contrary,

of the most profound and

What were previously necessary tendencies for capitalist

production, to impede the

development of the productive

forces, now become the pre-

dominant feature of the epoch.

The tension inevitably pro-

'The social means of pro-

duction remain the private property of a few. The general

framework of formally-recog-

nised free competition remains

and the yoke of a few mono-polists on the rest of the popu-

lation becomes a hundred

times heavier, more burden-some and intolerable.' 11

This imposition of the ex-

ploitative requirements of a

few monopolists on the inter-

8 'The First Five Years of the Communist International'. 2 vols.

9 Marx: P reface to 'The Critique of Political Economy'. 10 Lenin: 'Imperialism'. Col-

lected Works Vol. 22, p. 205.

11 Ibid.

duces wars and revolutions:

revolutionary contradictions.

The barrier to 'complete

economic foundation

formed.'

Lenin says:

Lenin's book 'Imperialism'

confidence and unity. 8

as a social system.

production are excluded? On the contrary. It was a Stalinist distortion, accepted by the revisionists, to identify 'forces of production' with 'technique' or 'implements of production'.

nationalized and socialized

production of humanity is

what Marxists mean by the 'fetter' on the development of

against this analysis the so-

period called 'neo-capitalism'.

In 1847 Marx wrote: 'Of all the instruments of production, the greatest productive power is the revolutionary class itself. The organization of revolutionary elements as a class supposes the existence of all the productive forces which could be engendered in the bosom of the old society.' 12

Lenin insists precisely that the production developed and carried out for profit by the capitalists in the period of imperialism is carried out under conditions where it 'becomes a hundred times heavier, more burdensome and intolerable' for the workers of the whole

world. This did not at all mean that productivity in technique would not improve. Lenin indeed writes:

'Competition becomes transformed into monopoly. The result is immense progress in the socialization of production. In particular, the process of technical invention and imimprovement becomes so-cialized.' 13

#### **Parasitism**

Naturally, under capitalism such technical progress will be introduced into production only under conditions where capitalists actually gain from it an increase in surplus value and accumulated capital. Thus, says Lenin, after referring to the parasitism of finance capital:

It would be a mistake to believe that this tendency to decay precludes the rapid growth of capitalism. It does not. In the epoch of im-perialism, certain branches of production, certain strata of the bourgeoisie and certain countries betray, to a greater or lesser degree, now one and now another of these ten-dencies. On the whole, capitalism is growing far more rapidly than before; but this growth is not only becoming more and more uneven in general, its unevenness also manifests itself, in particular, in the decay of the countries which are richest in capital (Britain).'

This does not stop Lenin from concluding only two pages later:

'From all that has been said in this book on the economic essence of imperialism, it follows that we must define it as capitalism in transition, or, more precisely, as moribund capitalism.' 14 Marx had long before, in his

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So long as capitalist private property extended the world market and was the historically necessary form of productive organization then this conflict between the proletariat and the development of investment in science and technique was only potentially destructive of the main 'force of production', the proletariat.

To invest in technical change for the sole purpose of increas-

12 Marx. 'The Poverty Of Philosophy', final section. 13 Lenin, op. cit.

When Trotsky spoke of the bankruptcy of the capitalist system, he was referring not just to the world

depression in which the working class was thrust in the 1930s, but to the historical doom which inflicted

the capitalist class and its system. The demonstration above, protesting against rising unemployment, took place in London on February 5, 1933.

13 Ibid, p. 300. 14 Ibid. p. 302.



The end of the Second World War saw a new revolutionary wave sweep Europe. In Greece communist guerrillas attempted to seize power in Athens—a move which received absolutely no support

ing surplus value was still, in

capitalism's earlier stages, the

actual mechanism by which the

productive forces of mankind

In the period when the international division of labour

and the associated advanced

means of production and

communication have been

created, this economic aspect

of the mode of production

takes on a totally new and

malevolent aspect, threatening

even the destruction of man-

Developments in technique,

when they are applied to pro-

duction, threaten unemploy-

ment, death and destruction.

quite explicit that the develop-

ment of the technical-scientific

aspect of the productive forces

was not at all excluded in the

epoch of imperialist decay, but

insisted that it would only

contribute to greater and

greater danger to the pro-

letariat and worsening of the

'Human progress has reached

a dead end. In spite of the latest triumphs of genius in

the field of technique, the

material forces of production have ceased to grow.' 15

What emerges from this

series of quotations on the

definition of forces of pro-

duction in relation to the

definition of the character of

picture given in Hallas's article,

as always by the 'state

capitalists', of a post-war capitalism which left behind

the historical crisis character-

istic of the pre-1939 era is a

falsification of the whole

Marxist theory as well as

being an opportunist distor-

tion of the actual course of

opment, with which we shall

'The Living

capitalism's post-1945 devel-

deal in a later article.

15 Trotsky, 'The L' Thoughts Of Karl Marx'.

What emerges is that the

Finally, Trotsky himself was

kind.

decay.

our epoch?

were carried forward.

# WEDNESDAY TV I.T.V.

a.m.—Out Of School. p.m. Mad Movies. 1.05 The Tingha and Tucker Club. 1.15 Flipper. 1.40 The New Adventures of Superman. 2.10 'National Velvet' with Elizabeth Taylor, Mickey Rooney. Donald Crisp and Angela Lansbury. Crisp and Angela Lansbury. Horse story. 4.15 Crossroads. 4.40 Lift Off. 5.10 Junior Show-

6.03 Cliff In Scotland. 6.30 The Ghost and Mrs Muir. 7.00 This Is Your Life. 730 Coronation Street. 8.00 The Tennessee Ernie Ford With guests Davy Jones Harry Secombe, Terry Thomas and Norman

Wisdom 'Woman Of Straw' With Ralph Richardson, Gina Lollobrigida and Sean Connery. Has young wife murdered rich, old husband?

10.00 News At Ten. 11.45 Hogmanay Party.

# **REGIONAL I.T.V.**

CHANNEL: 4.35 p.m. Puffin's Birthday Greetings. 4.40 London, 6.00 Channel News and Weather. 6.10 Link-Up. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 Treasure Hunt. 7.30 London. 12.40 a.m. Epilogue ollowed by Weather.

SOUTHERN: 11.05 a.m. 12.17 p.m.
London. 12.40 Huck Finn. 1.05 London.
1.15 Thunderbirds. 2.10 London. 6.00
Day By Day and Crime Desk. 6.35
Castle Haven. 7.00 London. 12.30 a.m.
Weather followed by Inquiry Into
Christmas.

WESTWARD: As Channel except at following times: 11.00 a.m.-12.17 p.m. London. 2.10 Feature Film: 'A Tale Of Two Cities' with Ronald Coleman and Basil Rathbone. 4.28 Westward News Headlines. 4.30 The Gus Honeybun Show. 6.00 Westward Diary. 12.40 a.m. Faith For Life. 12.46 Weather.

HARLECH: 11.00 a.m.-12.17 p.m. London. 1.45 It's Time For Me. 1.50 Zoo Baby. 2.00 'Time Bomb' with Glenn Ford, Anne Vernon, Maurice Denham. 4.10 Mr Piper. 4.40 London. 6.01 Report. 6.20 Batman. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 London. 9.00 'The Full Treatment' with Claude Dauphin, Diane Cilento and Ronald Lewis. 10.00 News At Ten. 10.30 'The Full Treatment' continued. 11.40 Hogmanay Party. 12.45 a.m. Weather.

ANGLIA: 11.00 a.m.-12.15 p.m. London. 4.15 Anglia Newsroom. 4.20 The Romper Room. 4.40 London. 6.00 About Anglia. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 London. 12.30 a.m. Reflection.

MIDLANDS: 11.00 a.m.-12.17 p.m. Schools. 12.40 That Girl. 1.05 London. 1.15 Mr Piper. 1.40 Pinpoint. 1.55 Houseparty. 2.10 London. 4.15 Halls Of Ivy. 4.40 London. 6.00 ATV Today. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 London. 9.00 'Anything Goes', with Bing Crosby. Donald O'Connor, Jeanmaire and Mitzi Gaynor. 10.00 News At Ten. Weather. 10.30 Film continued. 11.30 Tei Minutes of Herb Alpert. 11.40 Hogmany Party followed by Weather Forecast.

ULSTER: 11.05 a.m.-12.17 P.m. London. 4.15 Romper Room. 4.35 Ulster News Headlines. 4.40 London. 6.00 UTV Reports. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00

YORKSHIRE: 11.00 a.m.-12.15 p.m. London. 12.30 The New Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. 1.00 Hatty Town. 1.15 The Champions. 2.10 London. 4.15 The Charlie Chaplin Festival: 'The Adventurer'. 4.40 London 6.00 The Saint. 7.00 London. 12.30 a.m. Late Weather.

GRANADA: 11.00 a.m. London, 12.40 p.m. Stingray, 1.05 London, 1.15 The Doris Day Show, 1.40 London, 2.00 Feature Film: 'True As A Turtle', with John Gregson and June Thorburn, 3.45 Custer, 4.40 London, 6.30 Newsyiew, 6.35 The Beverly Hillbillies, 7.00 London.

TYNE TEES: 11.00 a.m.-12.15 p.m. London. 4.09 North East Newsroom. 4.11 News Headlines. 4.13 Freud On Food. 4.38 North East Newsroom. 4.40 London. 6.00 Today At Six. 6.30 Police Call. 6.35 Castle Haven. 7.00 London. 12.30 a.m. A New Year Message.

p.m. Laurel and Hardy. 1.05 London. 12.38 p.m. Laurel and Hardy. 1.05 London. 1.15 The Forest Rangers. 1.40 Captain Scarlet. 2.10 Feature Film: 'Whistle Down The Wind', with Hayley Mills, Bernard Lee and Alan Bates. 3.35 I've Married A Bachelor. 4.05 Scotland Early. 4.15 London. 6.00 Scotland Now. 6.30 The Legend of Jesse James. 7.00 London. 12.45 a.m. Late Call.

GRAMPIAN: 11.02 a.m.-12.17 p.m.
London. 1.45 Tarzan. 2.35 Amang The
Headhunters. 3.45 Skippy. 4.10 The
Flintstones. 4.40 London. 6.00 Grampian News. 6.10 Ron Thompson's
Year. 6.35 Crossroads. 7.00 London.
8.00 The Last Western: 'Man in the
Saddle'. 9.25 Police News. 9.30 Cliff
In Scotland. 10.00 News At Ten,
Weather. 10.30 The Tennessee Ford
Show. 11.30 Hogmany Party.

## **B.B.C.** 1

12.25-12.50 p.m. Nai Zindagi-Naya Jeevan. 1.00 Bob Yn Dri. Watch With Mother. 1.45-1.53 News and Weatherman. 1.55-2.40 Out Of School. 4.20 Play School. 4.40 Jackanory. 4.55 Tales of Tsar Sultan: Film from Russia (part one). 5.15 Tom Tom Special. 5.50 National News and

6.00 London Nationwide. 6.45 The Doctors.
7.10 Bob Hope and guests.
8.00 The Rolf Harris Show.

8.45 The Main News and Weather. 9.05 'The Reluctant Debutante' with Rex Harrison, Kay Kendall, Sandra Dee and John Saxon. Comedy.

10.35 Pop Go The 60's! 11.50 The Turning Of The Year. midnight Big Ben. 12.01 a.m. Ring In The New

All regions as BBC-1 except at the following times:

Midlands and East Anglia: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Midlands Today, Look East, Weather, Nationawide. North of England: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Look North, Weather, Nationwide.

Wales: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Look
North, Weather, Nationwide.

Wales: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Wales
Today,
Nationwide, Weather. 6.45-7.10
Heddiw.

Heddiw.

Scotland: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Reporting Scotland, Nationwide.

Northern Ireland: 6.00-6.45 p.m. Scene Around Six. Weather, Nationwide.

South and West: 6.00-6.15 p.m. Points West, South Today, Spotlight Southwest, Weather and Nationwide.

## **B.B.C.** 2

11.00-11.20 a.m. Play School. Newsroom 7.30 p.m. N Weather. 8.00 Man Alive: 'The Celluloid Tycoon'—

Bryan Forbes.
8.45 The Fabulous Etvis: Elvis Preslev in his own

television special. My World. . . . And Welcome To It.

10.00 Europa. Weather

10.40 'David Copperfield'.
With Freddie Bartholomew and W. C. Fields.

of the coterie of avant-gardism

In this context of course the

THEATRE

THE ENGLISH stage

has always resisted any

discussion on a theory of

Like true pragmatists a

sort of suck - it - and - see

method has predominated;

everything is down to flair,

individual talent; the play's

the thing and we don't want

to get bogged down in boring

Poor old Gordon Craig, the

only serious theoretician, come

to think of it the only theoretician that the English

theatre has produced, was always treated like a nutcase

and ignored at home, whereas

abroad in less Philistine and

anti-intellectual cultures, in

Germany or France, his repu-

The worst aspects of the

British bourgeoisie, insular, un-

imaginative, suspicious, taste-

less (their aesthetic needs are really satisfied by dogs and horses, they don't aspire to

anything more than that) have

filtered into the theatre in the

form of the vulgar creed of

the provincial bars of ailing

reps, where the bored wives

of businessmen massacre art

over gin-and-tonics, through

the heady heights of the National Theatre, where culture-hungry librarians sip

coffee and nibble liver sand-

wiches in the intervals between

'artistic' assaults of mediocrity

in bronze and russet, to the

stripped pine and spotlighting

The spectrum extends from

'show biz'.

tation is and was enormous.

the theatre.

dogmatic theory.

basic question 'What is theatre?' is never asked, unless in the form of the gossip interview—'Well, Sir John, what is theatre in your view?'. And pace the last two weeks of canonization of Noel Coward, who has had more to

say about nothing in particular

than almost anyone on record,

the theatre is not 'the well-

made play' either. With this sterility of bourgeois theatre it becomes more imperative that a theoretical discussion on content, form, styles of presentation be taken

An important contribution to such a discussion is the recent publication of 'Meyerhold on Theatre' (Translated and edited with a critical commentary by Edward Braun, published by Methuen).

This is an invaluable book and makes available in English for the first time all his writings on the theatre.

Meyerhold was a remarkable Russian genius of the theatre, one of the few who unequivocally joined the ranks of the Bolsheviks immediately after the October 1917 Revolution and remained its defender till he fell foul of the Stalinist purges and died in prison in 1940.

In his early pre-revolutionary days, Meyerhold was a bitter opponent of the naturalistrealist school of theatre.

At that period his work was full of polemic against the naturalism of the Moscow Art Theatre, against the meticulous clutter of set and props that went into the attempted representations of real life on stage so that the play itself became earthbound, pedestrian, locked within the heavy dimension of stage machinery.

Production became merely

an assembly of minutiae and detail so that the totality of the play was lost, the essence of the whole was submerged.

'The urge to show everything, come what may, the fear of mystery, of leaving every-thing unsaid, turns the theatre into a mere illustration of the author's words. "There's a dog howling again," says one of the

Mayerhold

BY BRIAN MOORE

with the latest news from the front. On the night when the herald announced a decisive victory in the Crimea, the entire audience rose spontaneously and sang the Inter-

versary of the Revolution.

Each night, at a point during

the play, a herald would arrive

national. Meyerhold's work was not always orthodox and he was often criticized for some of his productions. But it is a measure of the Revolution at that period that he was given full support and encouragement by Lunarcharsky. The same freedom was not granted

him ten years later. In his productions he strove to clarify the underlying reality of class forces. For him the theatre was a spectacle which used burlesque, placards, screens, acrobatics, music, rhythmic, controlled movements which he called bio-

mechanics. Performances were for him demonstrations where the actors themselves comment on the characters the are playing to reveal their social essences. In this respect, of course, he is a precursor of Brecht.

In Meyerhold's words: 'The actor-tribune acts not the situation itself, but what is concealed behind it and what it has to reveal for a specifically propagandist purpose.'

This spirit of criticism, this fight for proletarian position was to be his downfall, for with the rise of Stalin and the bureaucracy came the dictate that art should depict real life, for satire harmed the 'cause of socalism' or rather questioned the position of the

bureaucracy.
In 1930 Meyerhold produced Mayakovsky's 'The Bath House', a vicious lampoon against the bureaucracy. It was not regarded favourably by the Central Committee for Repertoire Control, nor did 'Pravda' take to it kindly.

And no wonder. In the third act of the play the bureaucrat Pobedonossikov tells the director what the theatre ought

'In the name of every worker and peasant, I beg you not to disturb my piece of mind. An alarm clock? Perish the thought. Your job is to beguile



One of the experiments in stage design carried out in the Maverhold theatre.

hooves on the wooden bridge

over the river as well. You

hear the rain beating on the

iron roof; there are birds,

Although the struggle against

naturalism superficially takes

on the search for new forms,

new set designs, lighting,

stages, etc., underlying this

philosophical question.

of unrelated experiences.

dialectical materialism.

revolution.

activities.

panies.

struggle is a more important

with the surface impressions,

understands life as a continuity

underlying tensions and forces,

to grasp the world and ex-

perience as a whole, Meyerhold

turns albeit unconsciously to

of October that Meyerhold is

able consciously to synthesize

his quest for form with the

real social demands of the

ately with the Bolsheviks at a

time when most other theatre

people were maintaining a

discreet silence, waiting to see

the outcome of the civil war.

arrested by the White Guard

in 1919 and was almost

executed for alleged subversive

to take charge of the Theatri-

cal Department for the entire

Soviet Republic, which he immediately transformed into a military headquarters and declared the advent of the

He worked furiously to set

up Red Army theatres, propa-

ganda pieces for the troops

and savagely attacked the

other uncommitted stage com-

coincided with the third anni-

His production of the 'Dawn'

Revolution in the theatre.

Lunarcharsky appointed him

Not so Meyerhold, who joined the Party in 1918, was

He threw in his lot passion-

And it is after the triumph

In seeking to discover the

Naturalism concerns itself

frogs, crickets.'

characters, and, without fail, a my eye and ear, not assault dog's howling is reproduced. 'We need to rest after the The spectator concludes the discharge of our official obligadeparture, not only from the retreating sound of the harness tions. Back to the classics. Study the great geniuses of bells, but from the thundering

the accursed past.' This was absolutely a description of the official line. And they stuck to it. The play was forced out of the repertoire. Mayakovsky committed suicide. Meyerhold spent ten years of uncertaintly and constant criticism.

Yet he never wavered from his initial position.

Finally he attended in 1939

the All-Union Conference of Stage Directors, presided over by a well-known director of lies ad illusions, a showman and actor of a certain skill, vice-president of the Soviet of People's Commissars, Andrei Vyshinsky.

Reputedly Meyerhold's last public words were as folows: 'The pitiful and wretched

thing that pretends to the title of the theatre of "socialism realism" has nothing in common with art. . . . People in the arts searched, erred, and frequently stumbled and turned aside, but they really created, sometimes badly and sometimes splendidly. Where once there were the best theatres in the world nowby your leave—everything is gloomily well-regulated, averagely arithmetical, stupefying and murderous in its lack of talent. Is that your aim? If it is-oh-you have done something monstrous. In hunting down formalism you have

eliminated art. He died in prison some months later. His words are a fitting and

Stalinism and the arts. They are the eloquent testimony of a brave and gifted

still accurate description of

They provide us with a starting-point.

8 Ibid, pp. 26.

**Fascists** 

involved

in Milan

bomb

attack

AS NEW FACTS come to light on the

groups alleged to be involved in the

recent Milan bomb explosion, the whole

affair begins to take on the character of a

anarchist

ing students.

the affair.

Those currently under

Valpreda,

arrest, apart from the

Roberto Manderi, Emilio

Borghese, Emilio Bagnoli,

Roberto Gargamelli and

Mario Merlino, all five be-

six are the ringleaders in the plot, and that members of

other groups have been re-

The political background of

one of the arrested six—Mario

Merlino — points to the involvement of the fascists in

**EXTREME** 

He was a dissident fascist

in 1968 and broke from the MSI (the main fascist party in Italy) to join the smaller

'Ordine Nuovo' group.
Together with another fas-

cist, Stefano delle Chaie, he organized the infiltration of

the left-wing student move-

ment 'Moveimento Student-esco' and anarchist circles.

his political past from left-wing circles, he founded the ostensibly anarchist 'Group of March 22' in the April of

Excluded on the grounds of

Shortly afterwards he went,

with 40 other fascists, on a voyage to Greece sponsored by the colonels' regime, as re-

ward for having 'distinguished himself' as a propagandist for the dictatorship.

**LESSON** 

The lesson to be learned

even more extreme

The police say that these

classical police provocation.

T.U.C.

it either to rouse trade union-

General Council's recommen-

dations, or to begin a cam-

Only the Socialist Labour League, on the basis of yester-

statement (see page one), is going to lead such a fight.

**ATUA-YS** 

**PUBLIC MEETINGS** 

Stop Wilson's

visit to

Washington

HULL

Thursday, January 1

7.30 p.m.

Woodworkers' Union Office 53 Beverley Road

**BIRKENHEAD** 

Monday, January 5

8 p.m.

Observatory Hotel

Oxton Road

**OXFORD** 

Tuesday January 6,

7.30 p.m.

Small Hall

Blackbird Leys

Community Centre

Speakers:

J. Power (leading local trade unionist)

P. R. Bush

(Young Socialist)

Central Committee

paign against them.

By our industrial correspondent

# Italian strikes continue

# PRINTING PLANTSARE OCCUPIED

WHILE AGREEMENT has been reached between the unions and the employers on the Italian engineering wage claim-involving about a million workers in the private sector-strikes and occupations continue in many other industries.

From our own

The engineering agreement, concluded in the early hours of December 22, contains the following main

- Increase in pay of 65 lire (just under 1s) an hour for wage workers and 13,000 lire a month for staff.
- Working week to be progressively reduced to 40 hours by the end of 1972.
- Progressive limitation of overtime to eight hours a week by 1972.
- Official and notified trade union meetings to be held on the plant and in the employers' time up to a maximum of ten hours a year.
  - One day extra holiday a year.
- Increased and officially recognized freedom of trade union activity on the factory premises—i.e., distribution of leaflets etc.

This agreement, forced on the big engineering employers by the massive strike move-ment of the last three months, has been described as disastrous for the medium and smaller firms, many of whom will be driven out of business as the new wage rates cut into their already narrow

# Big problems

Even for the larger firms such as Fiat, which has been at the centre of the strike wave, the new deal will create big problems in the export

Italian employers generally can only hope to survive in the Common Market by counter-attacking against the now thoroughly aroused working class, which will not yield these gains enormous fight. without an

The bulk of the Italian working class remains unaffected by this deal. Typical of the situation in the smaller firms involved in production outside engineering is that of two printing plants at Pome-zia, about 20 miles from

Here the owner of the two plants—which together employ 208 men and womenvanished two months ago after receiving government aid to set up and run the firm.

Wages are in arrears and the social security premiums for the workers have not been paid by the employer for two

## 'Nationalize'

When the employer vanished, the workers decided to occupy the plants and keep them working, which they have done now for more than 50

The workers demand that the factories be nationalized and their wages and social security premiums paid by the government.

There is wide support for the occupation in Rome itself.
The local co-operative farmer's federation has presented free gifts of food to the workers.

Our correspondent in Italy interviewed several of the workers leading the occupa-tion, most of whom are members of the Italian Socialist Party—which split off from the ultra-right-wing group led by Nenni earlier this year. The general feeling was that the present Christian-Democrat government was against the working class, and

that it had to be replaced by a coalition based on the main workers' parties, together with elements from the Christian-Democratic Party itself (this is also the policy of the Italian Communist Party the so-called opening to

Such a government would,

# Wilson

## **● FROM PAGE ONE**

Stalinists are opposed to such measures, and Wilson certainly will not carry them out. That is why they oppose the 'Stop Wilson going to Washington' campaign which is aimed at building up in-ternational solidarity in class action between the British working class and the workers and peasants in Vietnam. Such a campaign is aimed at the establishment of the independence of the working class from capitalism and facilitates the building of revolutionary parties in all the capitalist countries.

#### 

they argued, begin to attack the acute problems of housing, the land, education, pensions

The leader of the workers' committee agreed that nationalization of the basic industries was essential to the solving of all these problems, but claimed that perhaps under the pressure of the workers' parties, the Catholic trade union wing of the Christian Democrats might support such

Despite these illusions in the viability of a parliamentary combination of the left parties with the left of the ruling Christian Democrats, these workers are thinking about their problems in a political way, and at the same time decisive action further their own demands.

The factory will remain occupied, the workers said, until their demands had been

There was no other work available in Pomezia, despite the fact that it has been 'developed' over the last seven to eight years as a new

All over Italy struggles such as this continue, despite and often against the leaderships of the main unions and workers' parties.

It is this militancy and stubborness that, given revolutionary leadership, will eventually triumph.

Fiat workers on the march during the recent strikes and sit-ins.

motion against the visit before

But the AEF and EPTU

the Communist Party respec-

FIFTY T&GWU bus drivers

and conductors from Glasgow's municipal bus garage

have supported the campaign.

A total of 17 shipyard workers—including ASB dis-

trict committee member J.

Borg—have also signed the

petition at the Scotstoun division of Upper Clyde Ship-

Young Socialists have col-

lected over 100 signatures in

support of the campaign from

workers in Drumchapel and

YOUNG SOCIALISTS in Port

Talbot have won the support of 45 local trade unionists for

Signatories include R.

Clement, shop steward at Briton Ferry steelworks and secretary of the Briton Ferry

branch of the AUBTW; J. Heatley, secretary of the Port Talbot AUBTW branch; R.

Bond, lodge committee member of the NUB at the Mar-

25 other Port Talbot blast-

furnacemen have also signed

IN Leicester, Young Socialists

canvassing with the petition have been supported by 41

tenants on the Elston and

were members of the NUG&MW, POEU, Boot and Shoe Operatives, NUM and

Among those who signed

Belgrave estates.

and the T&GWU.

COVENTRY'S

gam and Abbey steelworks.

the Workers Press petition.

the campaign.

a branch meeting.

tively, both signed.

# STOP WILSON'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON

• FROM PAGE ONE

tenants from nearby Brixton's Cowley Road estate.

A CAMPAIGN by Woolwich Young Socialists has brought in 150 signatures in support of the demand that Wilson's visit is cancelled.

and maintenance staff—to-gether with students—have now given their support to

the petition at London's Imperial College. veterate Stalinist—of the Imperial College ASTMS branch

#### IN Aberdeen, 20 T&GWU dockers have supported the 42 signatures have come The other 20 Aberdeen trade unionists—including five Communist Party members-OVER 110 academic, technical who have so far signed the Workers Press petition include members of the ASTMS, ETU, AEF, DATA, ASW, AUBTW, NUVB and SOGAT.

Two officers - one an inrefused to sign and strongly resisted attempts to bring a



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# London

• FROM PAGE ONE

entailing another 1,000 redundancies after the March shop stewards at the college, cuts, severance payments will probably be offered to twice this number to allow the recruitment of younger workers. A younger labour force will be required to stand up to greatly intensified working and will be used by the employers in attempts to break up militant sections of

experienced dockers. Since the severance payments so far have worked out at approximately £1,700 per docker, the bill for the new offer will be £1-£2 million.

## Squeezed

The money which the employers have to pay at this stage for re-shaping the labour force will, of course, have to be squeezed out of the dockers through the drastic speed-up imposed under Phase

The privately-owned port at Felixstowe provides the model the employers are aiming at: a port largely handling containers with a small labour force broken into gangs smaller than anywhere else, no restrictions on overtime and a correspondingly high intensity of work.

## All ports

The struggle for the nationalization of the docks and associated industries must include all ports, otherwise ports such as Felixstowe could readily be used as the whip for dockers in the nationalized sectors.

These moves by the employers in London urgently pose the need for a united fight in London, Liverpool and the other docks to throw out the Devlin scheme and for the nationalization of all ports under workers' control.

There must be no question of the London dockers being taken on in isolation from their brothers in the other

Other Leicester signatories include members of the NAS • See column six for Southampton position.

Willenhall Young Socialists have sent in the signatures of 19 T&GWU and DATA members from the Stoke GEC factory, 38 Willenhall estate tenants, three members of the local Labour Party including Alderman G. Hodgkinson—and three mem-bers of Willenhall's Labour

Party Young Socialists. TWENTY-ONE miners and Young Socialists from Doncaster's Scawthorpe estate have signed the petition.

SIXTEEN signatures have

come in from Exeter Young Socialists.

WEATHER London area, E and W Midlands, NW and central Northern England: Cloudy, Cloudy, snow. Brighter with snow showers later. Strong 2C (36F) but 5C (41F) near snow showers. Bright intervals later. Fresh easterly winds. Cold. Maximum 2C

(36F). SE and central Southern England: Cloudy, light to moderate snow. Brighter but with snow showers later. Fresh or strong easterly winds. Cold. Maximum 2C (36F). Edinburgh: Snow showers. Bright intervals. Fresh or

strong winds moderating. Rather cold. Maximum 4C Channel Islands, SW England:

from Merlino's career is certainly that anarchism, with its rejection of discipline, leaderrole of the working class, makes it a fertile breeding ground for police and fascist agents. In a movement dominated

by middle-class individualism, the adventurer and the spy can operate with little or no danger of exposure.
In truth, the mushrooming

of these groups is an accurate measure of the crisis of leadership in Italy.
The reformist strategy of

the Stalinists has driven not only students but many young workers to seek anarchist solutions to the problems facing the working class. In the last analysis, the responsibility for the success of any fascist or police provocation must be placed at the

door of the Stalinists. The events surrounding the Milan bomb explosion must Italian working class and leftwing students.

Maoism and anarchism are not the way out of this crisis, any more than are the parliamentary policies of the Communist Party.

The task remains one of

breaking the working class from Stalinism by building a Trotskyist leadership based on

## the programme of the Fourth proposals.

**Devlin Phase Two** threat in Soton

# SOUTHAMPTON'S port employers have put forward proposals similar to those recently rejected by dockers in

London in a bid to achieve implementation of the second phase of Lord Devlin's docks 'modernization'. expect the union

officials' full co-operation in pushing through their proposals. Flexibility, hire-and-fire, no

strikes or mass meetings, three-shift working and re-

winds. Cold. Maximum

Ireland: Isolated sleet

showers, bright intervals. Fresh or strong East winds. Rather cold. Maximum 5C

Glasgow area: Mainly dry.

dundancies — all the worst aspects of the London deal are included at Southampton. Judging by the union officials' record on the Southampton docks, the employers will get all the co-operation they want.

The bosses' proposals are an essential part of their strategy of playing off one port against another.

Threats to move work from London to Southampton (and, of course, vice versa for the consumption of the Southampton men) have proved a welltested gambit here. So far, the Southampton men have rejected the pro-

Bright or sunny intervals. Light easterly winds. Near normal. Maximum 5C (41F). Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. Published by Workers Press, 186a Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4. Printed by Plough Press Ltd. (TU), 180b Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4. Outlook for Thursday and Friday: Cold, night frosts in all areas. Sleet or snow at times in eastern and northern

posed deal.

# Fleet Street plays YESTERDAY'S Fleet Street

is part of the TUC's plan for dealing with unofficial strikes,

the outlines of which were put to the Prime Minister last

June when he agreed to drop

his proposed anti-union laws.

the TUC to ask a union to

take unofficial action against members who go on unofficial

when he should report to the branch, or district committee,

or other appropriate body, on

the view expressed by such committees and meetings'.

rule-books should also give guidance to shop stewards and

ship to joint shop stewards' committees and when they

should support the views of these bodies' (our emphasis).

course, is the case.

The Communist Party's con-

temptible determination never

to challenge the betrayals of

the trade union bureaucracy thus makes it impossible for

Quite the opposite, of

convenors on their relation-

But the 'Star' reports that

'It could make it easier for

coverage of the TUC General Council's new 'guidelines' on strikes and shop stewards was played distinctly and carefully

It was almost as if there was a deliberate policy-embracing, of course, the Stalinist 'Morning Star'-to lull workers into thinking there was nothing particularly new in this guidelines treacherous document. Almost, but not quite!

Both the 'Daily Mail' and the 'Daily Telegraph' lifted a corner of the veil on the main political danger.

Glasgow Chamber of Commerce president Mr Harold Whitson, the 'Mail' emphasized under a sketchy report of the TUC's proposals, said on Monday that trade unions should be forced by law to discipline members who break negotiated agreements.

If they fail to do so, he insisted, then the unions should be taken to court.

#### **Discipline** Tory improved' legislation

The 'Star' chose to distort the section dealing with joint Tory determination to legisshop stewards' committees. late on precisely these lines was also reflected in the 'Telegraph'. What the General Council

actually recommend here is that unions should ensure that Following up its industrial correspondent's verdict that the TUC document would 'do their rule-books, shop stewards' handbooks or other publittle to prevent the sponlications should 'give clear guidance to the shop steward taneous outburst on the shop floor which lead to so many or convenor about how and crippling unofficial stoppages the paper editorially slated the General Council's 'long-4110101401111160116011601100111011101101101101111 awaited guidelines on how to TUC general secretary Mr

strike decently'.

They were, its leader con-Victor Feather last night explained—on television—how to 'make tinued, 'its do-it-yourself, signthe next year as strike-free a year as possible for post-to-chaos answer to Mrs Castle's inadequate attempt earlier this year to improve the jungle of our industrial

relations'. With characteristically shortsighted cynicism, 'The Guardian' saw the guidelines as 'a curious mixture of attempts to marry the government's earlier determination to curb small groups of unrepresenta-tive "wildcats", and the in-sistence of left-wingers that the rank and file should have a bigger say in union policy-

making' Both 'The Times' and the 'Financial Times' were careful not to welcome this 'marriage' too gleefully.

## **Distorts**

'If the unions take the council's advice,' thought 'Times' labour correspondent Michael Thomas, 'discipline is likely to be improved, and militant stewards would find it harder to bring members out on unofficial strike.

'Full-time officials, for their part, should be better informed about their members' demands and grievances so that suitable action can be taken before the flash-point is reached.

The 'Financial Times' be lieved that the proposals would 'go a long way to involving stewards directly in official union affairs'.

The Communist Party's 'Morning Star', presumably unable to work out a plausible cover-up for the General

council, reported neutrally that:
'The new recommendation

# Gestetner

● FROM PAGE ONE for job-evaluation are in the

A previous strike in May 1967 over conditions in the factory's paint shop led to the signing of a full co-opera-tion agreement after the men were locked out. It is feared that any divi-sions at this stage will only

weaken the fight against the management's productivity

#### East India Hall 8 p.m.-11 p.m. London, E.14 Saturday, January 10 2.30 p.m. Young Socialist National Speaking Contest

DANCE IN THE EVENING The Crescendos The Element of Truth

KEEP LEFT WEEKEND RALLY

Saturday and Sunday, January 10 and 11

1970 marks the 19th year of the Young Socialists' official newspaper. Selling at 4d for 16 three-colour pages and with a circulation of 20,000, it is the foremost youth paper in

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Special appearance LONG JOHN BALDRY East India Hall 8 p.m.-11 p.m.

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Sunday, January 11 9.30 a.m. CLASSIC CINEMA, POND STREET HAMPSTEAD, LONDON, N.W.3

STOP WILSON'S WASHINGTON VISIT!

FOR THE DEFEAT OF US IMPERIALISM IN VIETNAM!

# **DEMONSTRATION SUNDAY JAN. 11**

ASSEMBLE: Speakers' Corner (Marble Arch), 2 P.M.

MARCH: via Oxford Street, Regent Street, Trafalgar Square past Downing Street. MEETING: Lyceum Ballroom, near Aldwych.

Details from 186a Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4 Tickets for the whole weekend 12s 6d