



SOCIALIST APPEAL

Organ of the Revolutionary Communist Party

BRITISH SECTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Problems Facing Labour Party Workers See Page 4

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4TH INTERNATIONAL HOLDS WORLD CONFERENCE 19 Countries Represented

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL HELD ITS SECOND WORLD CONGRESS IN PARIS DURING THE MONTH OF APRIL, 1948. THE FIRST WORLD CONGRESS WAS HELD IN 1938 WHEN THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL WAS OFFICIALLY FOUNDED. ALTHOUGH TWO EMERGENCY CONFERENCES WERE HELD DURING THE WAR AND IMMEDIATELY AFTER; THIS WAS THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY FOR A REPRESENTATIVE WORLD GATHERING OF REVOLUTIONARY INTERNATIONALISTS SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL.

While the Second and Third Internationals liquidated themselves, despite vast resources possessed by them, the Fourth International met under difficult circumstances to uphold the banner of internationalism and the struggle for world socialism.

Its deliberations extended over a period of three weeks. Despite financial and organisational difficulties, there were delegates from North America, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and the Far East. There were a number of representatives from colonial countries and many parts of Europe. Approximately 50 delegates representing 19 different countries took part in the Congress.

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One hundred years after the Communist Manifesto, the World Congress of the Fourth International has reaffirmed the basic conclusions of Marxism and its application to present day events. Carrying on the tradition of Marx and Engels, of Lenin and Trotsky, the Fourth International stands firmly rooted on the basis of the class struggle and the fight for international socialism as the only means for achieving the emancipation of the world working class. While reformism and Stalinism have abandoned the basic teachings of Marxism, the Fourth International, though small in numbers, represents the only Marxist trend in the world today.



SECOND WORLD CONGRESS—on the platform—Comrades Fabre-Bleibtreu (French P.C.I.; S. Santen (Secretary R.C.P. Holland); Pierre Frank (French P.C.I.); Jock Haston (Secretary R.C.P. Britain); Colvin De Silva, Leader of the Trotskyist Parliamentary group in Ceylon; Munis (emigre Spanish group). The two women comrades are minutes secretary and interpreter.

Basing itself on the analysis of capitalism made by Marx and Engels, a century ago, the Manifesto shows how present day events prove that the great teachers accurately predicted the impasse in which world capitalism finds itself. Despite all the measures of totalitarianism and militarism, monopoly capitalism produces more and more devastating slumps, wars and a threat to civilisation itself. Warning the workers of all lands of the inevitable war which capitalism is preparing, the Manifesto outlines the programme of working class emancipation which Marx and Lenin explained can only be achieved by the action of the workers themselves. The Manifesto counterposes the Marxist method of democratic workers' control to the Stalinist method of imposing a bureaucratic straight-jacket on the workers' movement. The Manifesto outlines a programme of transitional demands linking up the day to day demands with the struggle for the socialist reorganisation of society.

The Fourth International basing itself on the best traditions of the old Internationals, offers the only hope for the future. The world working class will achieve a Socialist Europe and a Socialist World only under the banner of World Socialist Revolution. That is the banner of the Fourth International.

Political Resolutions

The World Congress adopted political resolutions on the world political situation and the tasks of the Fourth International, a thesis on the Russian Question and the nature of Stalinism, a resolution on the situation of the colonial countries and the tasks of the Fourth International. Political resolutions were adopted dealing with the situation and tasks of the Internationalists in Germany and Italy. These will appear in the next issue of "Workers' International News."

The Congress adopted a programmatic manifesto addressed to the exploited of the whole world summing up the chief ideas elaborated. This will be published in the next issue of the "Socialist Appeal."

A new International Executive Committee, composed of 19 members, was elected.

Congress sent greetings of solidarity to Comrade Natalia Trotsky and to the imprisoned Trotskyist Militants in Greece, Indo-China, India, Bolivia and other countries; to the Trotskyist militants in the U.S.S.R., in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Germany and Austria. It sent a message of solidarity to the workers and colonial peoples of the world engaged in the struggle for social and national emancipation.

VEHICLE STRIKE

Review by a Vehicle Builder

ROY STEVENSON

After three and a half weeks, the national strike of 20,000 Vehicle Building workers has ended. The workers have returned to work on the instruction of the Executives of the two Unions involved, the National Union of Vehicle Builders and the Amalgamated Society of Wood-cutting Machinists. At the meetings held over the week-end when decisions were taken to return to work, no motions against the E.C.'s proposals were allowed—they were ruled out of order.

The strike was for 3d. an hour increase for all men, and proportionate increases for women and boys.

As the first official strike since the T.U.C. accepted the wage freeze, it constituted a direct threat to the Government's policy. Success might well have transformed this strike into the spearhead of a militant opposition to the freezing of wages. Defeat can only strengthen the hands of the top leadership in the T.U.C. and the Unions who have accepted the policy of freezing wages.

The strike also threatened to undermine the policy of the employers to use arbitration machinery to undermine the workers' demands and concessions. Two years ago, the vehicle builders demanded 6d. an hour. This demand was referred to arbitration and reduced to 3d., but still without results. When Isaacs, the Minister of Labour, referred the dispute to arbitration on the eve of the strike, in order to forestall it, the Unions

demanding direct negotiations with the employers. The rank and file workers are bitter at a return without victory. Feeling is high after being ordered back when the strikers were in a strong position.

Whilst the response demonstrated the solid support by the workers, the fact is that the strike was called on the basis of a ballot carried out over a year ago. For this reason, the main issue, the wage freeze, was never clarified before the members. Mine, the National President of the N.U.V.B., declared on April 4th:

"The strike should not be considered as one against the Government's wage freezing policy. . . . It is a strike against the employers' policy of freezing our members' wages over two years ago."

Nevertheless, the employers are sheltering behind the wage freeze declaration of the Government. The strike took place under the present-day conditions. Any strike today for wage increases inevitably conflicts with the Government's policy. Instead of sidestepping

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PROFITS GO UP

43 Resolutions on L.P. Agenda on Wages, Prices and Profits

BY G. NOSEDA

FROM THE TIME THAT THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT TOOK POWER UP TO THE END OF THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR, THE PROFITS OF THE EMPLOYERS HAVE RISEN CONSISTENTLY. IN 1947 THEY WERE £320 MILLION MORE THAN IN 1946. RENT, INTEREST AND PROFITS STILL TAKE ABOUT THE SAME PROPORTION OF THE NATIONAL INCOME (36%) AS THEY DID IN 1938 UNDER THE "NATIONAL" GOVERNMENT. IN THIS CAN BE SEEN THE MAIN AXIS OF THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC POLICY.

Despite the special levy on profits introduced by Cripps in his recent Budget, nothing can conceal the fact that the Labour Government has not made any real inroads into the profits of the capitalist class.

In the year 1948-49, an extra £117 million will be levied in the form of direct taxation, including the £50 million that will accrue from the special levy. But this still means that 63% of the extra £320 million profits made by the capitalist class last year, will remain in their possession.

The capitalists know what they are doing when they generously promise to "peg" dividends at the 1947 level! For nearly every large enterprise and capitalist undertaking had a very profitable year in 1947. Take the huge chemical monopoly, I.C.I. whose net income jumped from £7,171,109 in 1946 to £7,646,933 in 1947. Or Courage and Co. the brewers, who appear to have done very well despite (or because of) the two budget increases in the price of beer; their total profits in 1947 showed an increase from £1,164,385 in 1946 to £1,268,920. And, lest it be claimed that this is calculated before payment of taxation, depreciation, etc, it should be observed that their net profits showed a tidy jump from £180,022 in 1946 to £227,325 in the latest year.

STEEL AND FOOD

The workers in the steel industry have been coming in for some unusual and unexpected pats on the back from the capitalist press. The press, they have pulled up the production of steel to new highs. These mouthpieces of the capitalist class don't add, in the same articles anyway, that the increased production sweated from the steel workers has also pulled up profits in the industry, as the latest company reports of some steel enterprises record. Take the Vickers (Steel) monopoly, their consolidated net profit, after all taxation, depreciation, etc.; deductions, increased from £1,255,050 in 1946 to £2,399,394 in 1947. Or the Enfield Rolling Mills, whose directors were happy to report to their shareholders that 1947 total profits were up to £648,468 as against £181,543 the previous year; net profits for the comparative years were, £105,312 and £68,972 respectively. Pats on the back for the steel workers and fat dividends for the shareholders!

Food enterprises too, like the Home and Colonial group found their 1947 balance sheets very happy reading with the combined profits of the group, after all pro-

visions for taxation etc., up to £1,313,796 as compared with £1,172,548 in 1946, an increase of £141,248.

And these few examples are by no means all. They represent the general picture of the profits being coined by the capitalist class in Labour Britain today. Of course, the press organs of Big Business and finance have expressed their loud disapproval and indignation at Cripps' pin-prick of a special levy on their profits, which, Cripps hastened to assure them, was only for this year. This vociferous and hypocritical outcry of the capitalist press was, however, only to be expected, it helps to cover up the fact that the Labour Government have treated them with kid gloves, and they have got away very lightly. The same capitalist press, which rushed to defend the profits of its class to maintain the profits of its class, were very loud in their acclamations for the Government's wage-freezing proposals, and complained only that they did not go far enough.

43 RESOLUTIONS ON L.P. AGENDA

The dissatisfaction of the working class in Britain at this situation is beginning to find wide expression. On the agenda of the Labour Party Annual Conference, 43 strong resolutions and amendments have been tabled on the issue of wages, prices and profits. Pressure from the rank and file of the trade union movement which is highly critical of the General Council's support for the

Government's wage-pegging White Paper, has given the T.U.C. bureaucrats some uncomfortable times. Alarmed at the bitter feelings of the workers on mounting prices and profits, a deputation from the General Council sought an interview with Cripps on April 22nd.

As the "Economist" (24/4/48), no friend to the working class, observes: "They have heard from their constituents, and their constituents ask, in substance, what trade unions are for, if not to press for as much wages as they can get. . . . Precisely, and what else are the working class organisations for if not to safeguard their conditions and improve their standards of life? If the Labour and Trade Union leaders fail, as they are failing, to conduct a militant struggle in the interests of the workers, they claim to represent the workers they claim to represent, then it is time for the rank and file to call them to order. The present set-up, whereby the working class is expected to accept an increasing cost of living, while the profits of the capitalist class continue to pile up, has nothing in common with a Socialist policy. In a real Socialist planned economy profits would be used to foster the technology and scientific development of industrial production and to improve greatly the conditions and standard of life of the working class. That is what the Labour Government should be doing if it were genuinely concerned to advance the interests of the working class; to establish Socialism instead of propping up the capitalist system."

DISCIPLINE THE LABOUR LEADERS

Platts-Mills Expelled

The telegram "signed" by Platts Mills and 37 other Labour M.P.'s to the Italian Socialist Party (Nenni Socialists) wishing the Popular Front success, has caused a crisis in the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Extreme Right Wing members such as Raymond Blackburn demanded the setting up of a Parliamentary Select Committee to examine the question, obviously preparatory to drastic action against the dissidents. The Tory M.P.'s and the Tory Press seized on the issue for their own ends and pressed the Labour leaders for punitive action.

MORRISON PROMISE EFFECTIVE ACTION

Morrison, in the Commons promising that the matter was "going to be dealt with effectively."

As is known the official policy of the Labour Party was to support the Right-Wing (Saragat) Socialist Unity group which split on the issue of co-operation with the Stalinists, only in order to "co-optate" i.e., capitulate to the capitalist Christian Democrats. A sub-committee of the N.E.C. was formed to investigate the matter and report back. According to the Press the leaders of the N.E.C. of the Labour Party pressed for the expulsion of one or two of the leading elements who have been in the wake of the Stalinists, in persistent opposition to the foreign policy of the Labour Government. Now Platts Mills has been expelled.

The leadership wish to take advantage of the situation to deal a blow at the crypto-Stalinists. In so doing they may be compelled reluctantly to condemn the Right-Wing Labour M.P.'s who attend the

"United Europe" Conference in company with Churchill and other Tories. Alfred Edwards can attack even the nationalisation measures of the Labour Government and defy the rank and file of his own division with impunity.

Some of the alleged signatories have denied having signed the telegram, others specifically asked for their names to be withdrawn, and some refused to have anything to do with the matter but still their names appeared. These methods naturally tend to repel workers in the Labour movement.

LET THEM SET AN EXAMPLE

The Labour leaders should be the last to raise the question of discipline. They have consistently and disloyally violated the decisions of Labour Party Conferences during the period of office of the present Government. If discipline is to be observed in the broad Labour movement then let the leadership set the example. Workers must demand that the rank and file of the Trade Union and Labour movement must itself decide the policy of the movement. To allow the leadership to take advantage of the actions of Stalinist agents or crypto-agents would give the leadership the excuse to launch reprisals and expulsions against any Left wing opposition to the policy they are pursuing at the present time.