

At a conference held at the A.C.T.T. Hall, Soho Square, London, on Sunday 2nd. December, the new Trade Union and Socialist paper was officially launched. The conference was attended by about 60 delegates coming a number of towns including Bristol, Birmingham, Coventry, London, Nottingham, Southend and Wolverhampton. Among the unions represented were: A.C.T.T., A.E.U., A.S.S.E.T., C.S.C.A., E.T.U., Metal Mechanics, N.U.J., N.U.P.E., N.U.R., Sheetmetal Workers, T.G.W.U., and U.S.D.A.W. Participants included the editor of Trade Union Affairs, the Business Managers of Tribune and Young Guard, all of whom greeted the forthcoming publication of the paper and gave the conference the benefit of their experience in running their papers (N.B. these details are not complete because there was no credentials report and very few of the speakers gave their name and organisation)

The conference was business-like and got through a surprising amount of work despite the lack of material preparation. Another significant feature was the fact that, unlike many conferences, there was very little haggling or wrangling, and even those who had a different point of view from the platform and the majority of the delegates put their criticisms in a positive way. John Eber, Secretary of the Movement for Colonial Freedom, was chairman of the first session and Anthony Greenwood took the chair in the second. The general approach of participants was that in a venture of this kind in the first stages there had to be a great deal of trust and latitude given to the sponsors of the paper. A decision was taken that there would be a conference of supporters of the paper six months after commencement of publication. The sponsors, who in the mean time would act as an Editorial Council, would submit a constitution to that conference which would include arrangements for the election of the Editorial Board. In addition to the sponsors, where there are functioning supporters groups these would nominate people to attend the Editorial Councils.

Ernie Roberts, who led the discussions and gave the main reports, said he was very much in favour of supporters groups. He also gave details of those people who had agreed to serve on the initial Editorial Board: Frank Alluan, Cyril Cooper, John Eber, Richard Fletcher, Jim Garst, Sidney Hyam, Ernie Roberts, Gordon Schaffer and a representative from the Youth Editorial Board. It is also hoped that Jim Mortimer of D.A.T.A. would be able to come on. The paper is to be printed by the Northern Labour's Voice print shop which already prints 18 local editions of the 'Voice' papers. There were eight suggestions for the name and the final selection was put in the hands of the Editorial Council. The paper is to start in February, and if possible be in the hands of local groups by the 25th of January this being felt better than rushing a January issue. The paper will probably have eight pages and cost 6d. A proposal to have local business managers who would be responsible for a given area was accepted. Another suggestion ^{was} that to get the paper rapidly established, approaches should be made to Trades Councils to help in circularising of T.U. branches, etc. Local groups should organise this and send speakers to T.U. organisation, L.P. wards and other organisations. A fighting fund is to be established and the local groups are to be asked to help to ensure that the response from local T.U. branches is successful. Regional machinery will be established where there is a basis for it.

The most controversial question was that of the statement of aims of the paper. There were two points of view. The first being that to differentiate itself from other papers, and thus establish a reason for its separate existence there should be a concise and detailed statement of aims. The other point of view was that to ensure maximum unity of the left, the key question of clause four, and the corollary of fighting for a Labour Government whose policies would be in the spirit of clause ^{of} four, would suffice. Proponents of this point of view argued that to include a list of points would inevitably lead to splits before the paper got going even. A proposition supporting the latter point of view was supported by a large majority, this proposal also included, to meet the arguments in favour of a detailed statement of aims, that in the first issue there should be a statement of policy covering a whole range of political questions.

Other decisions taken included that of having a youth section (at least a page) with an independent Editorial Board. Features would include at least a page of letters (it was agreed the letters column should be as unrestricted as possible.) There would be a woman's section with the emphasis on the problems of the problems of working housewives. In this short report many points have been missed out but more material will be published. Finally we call upon all readers to support to the full this new venture. In particular they should help in the formation of supporters groups. Reports and suggestions should be sent in for publication.

In its editorial the 'Militant' of 19, Nov. reports: "In a report released to the press Nov. 2nd, the House Un-American Activities Committee darkly announced that the Socialist Workers Party and Communist Party had "made common cause" in support of the Los Angeles Fair Play for Cuba Committee. To lend a cloak and dagger touch to this latest smear, the committee adds that members of the SWP were the "concealed masterminds" behind this group. The allegations follow closed hearings held by the house inquisitors in Los Angeles last April to which FPCC officers and others were subpoenaed.

Insofar as the Socialist Workers Party is concerned, if this charge of of making "common cause" with the CP on behalf of Fair Play for Cuba is intended as an effort to dictate what sort of associations are on or off limits, the Congressmen are wasting their time. The SWP has long-standing, well-known political differences with the CP. But the SWP has an equally well-established record of readiness to work with any group, regardless of differences, in promoting progressive causes. It has consistently engaged in united action in a host of civil rights and civil liberties movements, on union picket lines and in the fight for peace.

On this basis, the SWP has joined forces with others of various views in spreading the truth about Cuba and in defending its heroic revolution against U.S. aggression.

The SWP has also consistently defended the Communist Party against the frame-up attacks under the Smith and McCarran laws. SWP National Secretary Farrell Dobbs publicly offered the use of the Party's platform and meeting halls to Communist Party representatives in the fight against these measures.

Those efforts at united action in support of a common cause which HUAC would twist into a "conspiracy" flow from a principled policy openly proclaimed and publicly performed. And the SWP intends to continue functioning on this basis regardless of what a gang of anti-liberties Congressmen may say.

One group with which the SWP does not intend to associate or co-operate is HUAC itself. That committee is a mortal enemy of democratic and constitutional liberties. It seeks to smear, disrupt and divide every progressive movement.

The whole sickening record of HUAC's work demonstrates the need for such a stand. Timid and compliant officials in many organizations thought they could purchase immunity by carrying out purges of their membership under the committee's pressure. These moves have served only to throttle democracy, divide the ranks, and cripple the effectiveness of such organizations without in any way stating the committee's thirst for destruction.

The SWP has made clear that it will not propose or participate in any witch hunt. On the contrary, it will continue to stand in uncompromising defiance of HUAC's smear attacks and it urges every partisan of genuine democracy to join, regardless of other differences, in nation wide movement to abolish this agency of reaction."

BIG INCREASE IN S.W.P. VOTE IN NEW YORK CITY

from Militant 19/11/62.

"Unofficial figures, issued by the Police Department, for the SWP election ticket in New York City show an encouraging increase over returns for previous years.

Richard Garza and Sylvia Weinstein, SWP candidates for Governor and Lieut. Governor, polled 15,215 votes, more than double the amount polled by Garza in the 1961 mayoralty election.

Leroy McRae, running for Attorney General, received 15,863 votes - the highest number of any candidate on the SWP ticket. Allen Taplin, candidate for Comptroller, and Carl Feingold, candidate for U.S. Senator, polled 14,983 and 13,510 votes respectively.

The gubernatorial candidate of the only other socialist party on the ballot, Eric Hass of the Socialist Labor Party, polled 7,096 votes in New York City."

SLAVE CAMP NOVEL A GREAT SUCCESS

The novel about life in one of Stalin's slave camps, reported in last week's Bulletin, is a great success. Novi Mir, the leading Soviet literary journal which published the novel complete in this month's issue, was sold out within minutes of appearing on the newspaper stalls. Red Star, the Soviet armed forces newspaper, described the novel as one of the outstanding works of Soviet literature. The Guardian of November 26th reports:

"According to Soviet sources, the story, "One day of Ivan Denisovich," was read by one of the top Soviet leaders before permission to publish it was granted. For although repressions carried out by Stalin have been revealed no Soviet publication has

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"yet told what went on in the camps to which the victims were delivered. Mr. Solzhenitsin, the author, is a former "zeki" (political prisoner jargon for "zakluchoni" or "imprisoned ones"). He was an artillery officer during the Second World War and is now a secondary school teacher.

His story tells of a camp surrounded by barbed wire and lit by searchlights with prisoners sleeping on sawdust mattresses without sheets but with thin blankets in the cold winters. The prisoners get up at 5 a.m. to a breakfast of "very bad soup of a small fish and rotten cabbage or carrot and some oats."

Their supervisors are not guards but hardened criminals to whom they are ordered to "take off their caps five paces before passing, and to keep them off two paces after. Failure to do this means a spell in a punishment cell, and "prisoners who spend 10 days there usually die, perhaps from tuberculosis; if they get 15 days they always die."

After the meal the prisoners are marched to the construction site of a "Socialist town." Before they set off an armed guard reads out: "Attention prisoners. You must keep strict order in the column. No pushing. No talking. No looking around. Keep hands behind backs. To step to the left or right is regarded as an attempt to escape. In such case guards will fire without warning."

The camp was run by a security police chief called Volkovoi, "a real bastard," who was "dark and tall, and moved quickly on his feet. Once he carried a leather-thonged whip to beat prisoners...but luckily not now."

ANOTHER "SECRET" SPEECH BY KHRUSHCHOV?

According to press reports, Khrushchov speaking at the closing session of the C.P.S.U. Central Committee, made the most vigorous attack against Stalin and the 'cult of the individual' he has yet made. The speech, made on the 23rd. November and which may be made public shortly, is said to have referred to death of 100 people in the crush before Stalin's coffin in 1953. He is said to have told this story to justify the length of time which elapsed after the death of Stalin before the attack on the "cult of the personality" was made. Khrushchov also said that he had issued instructions for Yevtushenko's poem, the "Heirs of Stalin", to be published in Pravda, after Yevtushenko had written to him. As if to back up these reports, Pravda on November 28th, published another anti-Stalin poem by K.Nikolai Dorise in which the author spoke of his father being taken from home and lost in the snows of Siberia. Other reports of the speech say that Khrushchov explained that the decision to publish the novel about life in a slave camp (referred to above) was taken after it had been debated at length in high party quarters.

Thus the process of 'destalinisation' goes ahead at a truly amazing rate. Khrushchov it would appear, partly for factional reasons in his struggle against the Chinese and their allies, and partly to head off the struggle, is putting himself at the head of the process. No doubt some of those who were actually the victims of repression are asking awkward questions - how long will they be satisfied by the prevarications of Khrushchov?

JAPANESE COMMUNIST LEADER USES 'DISCARDED' STALINIST SMEAR

At the 20th. Congress of the C.P.S.U., Khrushchov spoke of dealing with political opponents such as the Trotskyists, Bukharinists, etc., calmly. In other words he was in favour of treating them as political opponents rather than merely denouncing them as imperialist agents. Since then the history of the CPSU has been rewritten and all reference to the Trotskyists, etc., as being police agents has been removed. However, in Japan where Trotskyist ideas are a real threat to Stalinism (the Zengakuren, the 300,000 strong student organisation is lead by people who are either Trotskyist or are strongly influenced by Trotskyism), the technique of the amalgam is still used. Writing in World Marxist Review, September, 1962, Itaru Yonohara wrote:

"The U-S-Japanese intelligence agencies in an effort to split the working class and the democratic organisations and to destroy the Communist Party, are rendering financial and other assistance to the Trotskyite and revisionist anti-Party groups, using them as their tools. There is also a Japanese Committee of the Fourth International through which the U.S. imperialists are trying to unite the scattered forces of the Trotskyites."

EUROPEAN ARMS POOL PLANNED

The following report, appearing in the Financial Times of November 27th. shows very clearly the 'cold-war' character of the Common Market, and how this aspect of the E.E.C. would be developed upon Britain's entry:

A European armaments production pool should be set up in the perspective of the U.K.'s entry into the E.E.C., according to a recommendation by the Defence Committee of Western European Union, a body originally set up by Britain and the Six to control and standardise the manufacture of weapons.

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Together with another recommendation for a N.A.T.O. nuclear executive to exercise political control over a N.A.T.O. nuclear force, this will come up for debate on December 3, when the W.E.U. Assembly opens its meeting here.

The Defence Committee follows up its case for joint arms production by urging N.A.T.O. to adopt only one model of V.T.O.L. fighter for production by member countries, after financing the development of two different models between which the choice would be made - evidently a reference to the rival Hawker P-1154 and Dassault Mirage 111 V projects.

The U.K. is criticised for its unilateral decision to continue the development and production of the T.S.R.2 strike aircraft and the Blue Steel, Thunderbird and Sea Slug missiles, although none of them has been adopted by any other country for joint production.

GERMAN STEEL INDUSTRY FACES CONTRACTION OF ORDER BOOKS

Speaking in Bonn on November 27th., Herr H.J. Sandler, a director of the huge Kleckner concern and president of the German Rolled Steel Association, said that the "golden age" of the West German steel industry is over. Gone are the days when this industry had a four month backlog of orders as the normal state of affairs.

In an assessment of the current state of business, Mr. Sandler stated that the industry's order book of 3.5m. tons was enough to keep the mills busy for an average of two months. From July to October they had delivered something short of 1.7m. tons of rolled products monthly and had booked orders for only 1.5m tons a month. Orders fell off most heavily in the case of exports to countries outside the E.C.S.C. where the German steel masters are often either unable or unwilling to match their competitors' prices. Prices in export business outside the Community were from 11 per cent. to 28 per cent. below German domestic list prices with competition at its heaviest in the case of quality flats.

U.S. TO URGE BIGGER ARMS EXPENDITURE BY WEST EUROPE

In its editorial summing up the post-Cuba crisis situation, the Bulletin predicted that one of the features would be a renewed increase in arms expenditure by the U.S. Moreover, this increase in military expenditure would be tempered by the balance of payments difficulties that the U.S. has been experiencing, and that consequently there would be a drive by the U.S. Government to get other advanced countries to pay their share. This would apply especially where otherwise the U.S. would have to use foreign currency reserves up. Striking confirmation of this opinion is contained in a report in the Financial Times of 26/11/62 where their New York correspondent writes:

The Kennedy Administration will make a renewed attempt next month to persuade its N.A.T.O. allies to stop up their defence expenditures in Europe.

At the December meeting of the North Atlantic Council, which will be attended by Mr. Rusk, Secretary of State, and Mr. Macnamara, Defence Secretary, Americans are likely to stress at least one lesson to be derived from the Cuban crisis - the importance of military preparedness. With this in mind they will again urge that European nations should contribute more in manpower and in weapons towards European defence. N.A.T.O. is still eight or nine divisions short of the American goal of 30 divisions, and, in the U.S. view, several nations are not yet pulling their weight. The U.S. would like to see Britain enlarge her forces in Europe, which now amount to about three divisions, but since Britain is already diverting 7 per cent. of her gross national product to defence (a proportion exceeded only by the U.S. and Portugal) no substantial increase is expected from this source.

A more promising candidate is West Germany, which has been spending only 4.8 per cent. of her gross national product on defence. Both Germany and France, whose proportion is about 6.4 per cent., may again be pressed to purchase more arms from the U.S. - a topic that was discussed in the recent meeting between President Kennedy and Dr. Adenauer. The proposed sale of an atomic submarine to France, which has to be approved by Congress, will also be important in this connection.

THE AFTERMATH OF THE BATTLE OF OXFORD - THOSE FRIENDLY TO MEREDITH VICTIMISED.

Although the press gave widespread coverage during the 'sensational' days of the attempt by James Meredith to get into Mississippi University, nothing appears these days and one might think that all goes well. This is not the case as the following report from Militant of 26/11/62 (slightly shortened) shows:

A Mississippi-born white freshman, Craig Knobles, has been driven from the University of Mississippi by racist threats and harassment. He was one of the seven white students who sat with James Meredith, the only Negro student, in the cafeteria. Knobles and his roommate later found their room broken into and wrecked. Subsequently they and others, who befriended Meredith, were ostracized, taunted, and spat upon. A racist student explained, "Such warfare was used by the South during Reconstruction and the South eventually triumphed."

Sunday 25th November saw a most interesting development in Labour Party politics at the Grosvenor Hotel, Manchester. 30-40 L.P. militants, mostly from the Manchester area but including comrades from London, Nottingham, Hull and Banbury met to consider further plans in the 'Unity' campaign that has already achieved a measure of much needed national unity amongst the Party's various left groupings. Three aims needing attention were agreed upon. Nationalisation. A campaign to extend nationalisation, especially to those industries where the unions concerned were keen and could swing other unions' support at conference. This campaign to be linked with schemes for Industrial Democracy (Workers Control). COME ON MARKET. This was thought to be a productive field of action but delegates did not seem eager to consider co-ordinated reaction in the event of Gaitskell suddenly finding the terms of entry acceptable. Some common plan seems a priority to be pressed in this otherwise hopeful and growing organisation. In the discussion on Defence and PARTY DEMOCRACY an appeal was made that the left in CLP's should repeatedly enquire through their constituencies, the steps being taken by the N.E.C. to set up the appeals committee favoured by last Conference.

LABOUR PARTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MAINTAINS BAN ON E. ROBERTS.

Meeting on Wed. 28th Nov., the Labour Party Executive Committee rejected a request from Horsham Labour Party for a meeting to reconsider the position of Ernie Roberts, whom the constituency nominated as its candidate many months ago. The executive refused to endorse Roberts' candidature and at the Labour Party Conference in October, a move to protest at this decision was defeated.

A.S.L.E.F. EXECUTIVE CLAMPS DOWN ON MOVE FOR RAIL UNITY.

At its Nov. meeting, the executive committee of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen has instructed its Dundee branch to withdraw a circular proposing that the Society should open talks with the National Union of Railwaymen and other unions in the industry with a view to forming one British rail union. When the decision to hold an enquiry into the structure of British Trade unions was taken at the T.U.C. in Sept., A.S.L.E.F. was the only body to oppose the move. An N.U.R. spokesman said that the union had always been in favour of there being only one union in the industry and any approach from A.S.L.E.F. would be looked at 'with great interest'.

UNITED KINGDOM TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP NEARS 10 MILLIONS.

Britain's 635 Trade Unions had a total membership of 9.88m. at the end of 1961. Of this total 54.1 per cent. were members of the nine largest unions, according to figures in the Nov. Ministry of Labour Gazette. Trade Union membership rose by about 62,000 during 1961 and was around 273,000 more than the total at the end of 1959. The number of Trade Unions fell during the year from 654 to 635. These memberships include small numbers in the Irish Republic and in other branches outside the U.K. There is also a certain amount of duplication owing to people being members of more than one union, but this is regarded as insignificant.

The number of women who are members of unions rose sharply by 39,000, or 2% during last year and reached just under 2m. The number of male members rose by 23,000, or 0.3%, to nearly 8m. At the end of 1961 there were 344 unions with fewer than 1,000 members including 286 with less than 500. These 344 smaller unions together accounted for under 1% of the total membership of all the unions. T.U. membership is now at its highest level ever. There was a steady expansion in size between 1953 and 1957, when the total reached 9.81m., but there were drops in 1958 and 1959.

JAPANESE MINERS PROTEST.

Shouting protests against the sacking of 70,000 from the Japanese coalfields, miners broke into the courtyard of the Japanese Premier's residence after an all-night sit-down at the gates. Several were injured. More than 100,000 Japanese miners were on strike (Nov. 19) for 24 hours against the dismissals. - Tass.

T.G.W.U. CALL FOR "COMMON MARKET T.U.C."

Before Britain enters the EEC careful consideration must be given to evolving some form of Common Market TUC, says an editorial in the Christmas issue of 'Record', the journal of the Transport and General Workers Union. The article says that with common transport and agricultural policies, common tariffs, harmonisation of social benefits, often with common employers, and the general levelling of many of the industrial factors influencing profits and production and working conditions, the strength of the continental trade unions would have far-reaching effects, on the bargaining position of British unions. Apart from Belgium, Britain had the highest proportion of its employed population as members of trade unions - 43 per cent. This proportional strength would be lowered to 31.4 per cent by association with the EEC.

HOSIERY BOSS SUGGESTS "WAGES HERE AND ABROAD TO COME INTO LINE".

Brig. C.B.S. Morley, Chairman of Derby and Midlands Mills Ltd., in a statement to shareholders on Nov. 28th intimated that entry into the EEC would mean adjustments to British employees wages in the hosiery trade. The only conclusion to be drawn from his remarks is that this would be a levelling-down process as far as Britain is concerned. "..... immediate prospects in hosiery are likely to be disappointing, nevertheless every avenue is being energetically explored that might lead to cheaper production costs ... I feel compelled to comment that the extraordinarily high wage rates in this country and the restrictions on shift working in the stocking industry inevitably make an impact on prices. I believe that under Common Market conditions of trading, and with the goodwill of the operatives(!) wages here and abroad may tend to come more into line with each other".

Notwithstanding the above innuendo threatening wage cuts, the company's real position is revealed by its taxed profits for last year which amounted to £108,670 from which a dividend of 12% was paid to shareholders. This would indicate that the capitalist god of competition is being used in connexion with the EEC as a smokescreen to persuade workers to accept less pay or defer claims for increases whilst profits are allowed to rise.

INDIAN FORCES TO BE QUADRUPLED.

Financial Times Nov. 28.

India plans to double her present army strength of just over $\frac{1}{2}$ m. men, and raise militia units so that about 2m. men will be under arms, usually well-informed sources said here today. The build-up will go on even if the Chinese accede to India's demands for withdrawal and there is no further fighting, the sources said.

KRUPPS TO ASSIST INDIAS ARMAMENTS INDUSTRY.

Herr Krupp, West German industrialist and arms magnate is at present on a nine day visit to India with Dr. Heinrich Luebke, West German President. The main reason for the visit is the 1.8m steel plant at Rourkela but Krupps is to confer with business leaders and the Indian government on plans for expanding the armaments industry, according to the Financial Times which comments that Krupps "has several irons in the fire in India."

MORE REPRESSIVE MOVES IN SOUTH AFRICA.

For several reasons the South African government has sealed the borders with the three British protectorates that adjoin it. The Vervoerd regime is anxious to prevent political refugees from escaping imprisonment in South Africa. Illegal immigration into South Africa is also hampering apartheid policies as Vervoerd has committed himself to the expulsion of a million foreign workers from the republic. All frontiers are to be fenced and transit permits needed to cross into the protectorates, the future relationship of which is at present under discussion between Vervoerd and Britain.

We also have news of an unofficial strike that took place on Nov. 28. at the Rhokana copper mine by 7,500 African miners, virtually all the labour force apart from some 1,000 white employees who did not participate. The strike was called in protest at the activities of two African personnel officers, whose removal from the mine compound where workers are housed, is being demanded by the strikers.