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AT THE CROSS-ROADS

By THE EDITORS

THE trade unions stand at the cross-roads. Leaders and members face vital decisions. On Monday the London busmen's delegates spent over twelve hours in heated debate, deciding in the end to send their claim to arbitration. Fleet Street hailed this as 'a remarkable triumph' for Mr Cousins; thus did it express the Tories' satisfaction at the crisis which Macleod's rebuff has thrust upon the leaders of the Transport and General Workers' Union.

No parallel since 1926

We are now in a situation without parallel in this country since 1926. Reformist leaders, clinging to old formulas, old catchwords and old methods, display a measure of panic when confronted with the harsh fact that the Tories mean business. Inexperienced rank-and-file militants, too, are liable to be confused at the beginning of the fight. It will be a protracted and bitter struggle, in which individuals, movements and theories will be put to the severest test. Trade union bureaucrats who enjoyed the stability of full employment can no longer look forward to a comfortable future, for an upsurge of working-class activity will match words with deeds and weaken the basis for bureaucracy. The understandable hesitations of trade union militants today will give place tomorrow to rapid maturity and a corresponding broadening of their political horizons.

Right-wing leaders exposed

Now it is true that the Tories have all the advantages of the offensive at the moment. But they have had to pay a high price. Arbitration and negotiation machinery, which served them so well in the past, has now to be discarded and replaced by a naked trial of strength between the classes. Right-wing leaders, on whom the employing class depended so much, are being exposed in the eyes of their members. The Cabinet, which the Fabian theorists claim to stand above the classes, is shown to be indeed 'the executive committee of the ruling class'.

Lesson of the hour

It is of the highest importance that we appreciate the weaknesses as well as the strength of the Tory attack. The Tories cannot defeat the trade unions in a head-on collision. They are forced to manoeuvre, to probe for the weak spots of the Labour movement. And the weakest spot is undoubtedly the reformist leadership,

who were not only utterly unprepared for the attack, but have shown no sign of taking serious steps to meet it. They cling stubbornly to shibboleths about arbitration at a time when the Tories have ripped this class-collaboration mask to pieces. Mr Gaitskell's New Year message, with its talk about 'national responsibility' and 'goodwill' is about as ineffective as the early Christians who faced the lions in the circuses of ancient Rome singing psalms about 'brotherly love'. The early Christians, however, were serious people, with character and courage. The same cannot be said of Mr Gaitskell and his friends. To Labour's ranks they preach the gospel of 'love'—and at the same time they crawl round to the Trades Union Congress for informal discussions about whether the unions would grant some wage concessions if a Labour government was returned. Like MacDonald and Snowden before them the Labour leaders appear to have decided to pile the burden of the capitalist crisis, not on the bankers and Stock Exchange patriots, but on the shoulders of the millions of ordinary hard-working people who vote Labour. These leaders are bringing aid and comfort to the Tories. In this they are no different from all previous generations of social-democratic leaders, who again and again have betrayed the hopes and aspirations of their followers and treated conference resolutions as scraps of paper. This is the lesson of the hour, and it should be thoroughly grasped by all militants, on whom great and growing responsibilities are falling.

Need for action committees

The strength of the trade unions does not lie at the top, but in the movements and organizations of the rank and file: trade union area committees, trades councils, shop stewards' and works committees, committees of action, rank-and-file conferences and the like. Here is the tough nut which, given leadership, determination and vigilance, the employers will not be able to crack. Mobilized under Marxist leadership and acting in concert, these bodies are strong and vigorous enough to rout the employers. It is reported that Mr Cousins and his supporters pooh-poohed the idea of asking aid from the TUC because of Right-wing influence on that body. But the opinions of these Right-wing leaders are vastly different from those of the wage-earners they claim to represent; and there is an immediate course of action

(Continued on back page)

RENTS

TOWN COUNCIL URGES TENANTS: RESIST THIS RENT INCREASE

DALKEITH Town Council (population 9,117) has decided 'to vigorously oppose the institution of a Means Test' and to give full support and leadership to tenants affected by a Scottish Special Housing Association rent increase.

The Association plans to put rents up by a maximum of 7s. 6d. a week; the increase will be less than 7s. 6d. only if the tenant is prepared to submit to a Means Test.

First stage in the Council's campaign is a tenants' meeting tomorrow night. Council representatives will urge the tenants to form a Committee of Action in defence of their interests. says a circular signed by Mr J. Findlay Kerr, Town Clerk the burgh.

'The Council is prepared to take drastic steps to defeat the rent increases,' the circular goes on.

'It has agreed to dismantle the machinery for the collection of rents on behalf of the Scottish Special Housing Association. The principal question is: what are you, the tenants concerned, going to do about it?

'Attend the meeting and help to prepare a programme of action which will beat off this latest measure to undermine your standard of living.'

The Association owns 100 houses in Dalkeith, all occupied by miners. The Town Council factors (collects rent from) the houses in return for the payment of a commission.

Dalkeith Council has nine members—eight Labour and one Tory.

FOOTNOTE. Dalkeith Town Council recently passed unanimously a motion strongly condemning the proposal to establish missile bases in Scotland.

INDUSTRY

NASD PROTESTS TO MINISTRY OF LABOUR

It is understood that, following a meeting between Ministry of Labour representatives and the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers, the National Dock Labour Board is to be called to the Ministry for consultation.

This follows a strong protest by the NASD (the 'blue union') that the Transport and General Workers' Union is trying to prevent 'blue union' members from working on the docks in Liverpool.

It appears that the Ministry of Labour has agreed that if this is the case it is a breach of the Dock Labour Scheme.

DON'T USE LANCS. MINERS AS GUINEA-PIGS

By Price Jones

ANNOUNCING the setting-up of absentee committees in the Lancashire coalfield, Edwin Hall, area secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers, gave the assurance that men will not be sacked 'willynilly'.

The committees, he said, would consist of equal numbers of management and union representatives.

A man with a bad record would be called before the committee and told that he should attend more regularly because his non-attendance was destroying the value of price-lists and putting more work on his colleagues.

He would then be given a month to alter his ways, but if he persisted in being absent without a legitimate reason the manager would be told that the man must be downgraded—or that the manager must do his job and the union would not protect a man who was dismissed.

The scheme had been before all union branches and the delegate conference and had been accepted.

Hall went on to say: 'The union can regard itself as having lost its own interest in nationalization if it talks about strikes. We have a set-up to settle all questions around the table or by arbitration.'

Many doubts and questions

Now most ordinary rank-and-file miners in Lancashire and elsewhere will have many doubts and questions about these remarks.

For instance, who will be chairman of these committees? It does not need much imagination to see that that post will be filled by the colliery manager.

A person brought before the committee (after warning) will be downgraded or sacked. But how can a haulage-hand be downgraded? He is already the lowest-paid worker underground.

If he is sacked, and 'the union would not protect a man who was dismissed', then what good is the union going to be to the miner?

On the point that the scheme had been before branches and accepted by a delegate conference, the question naturally arising will be this: on so important and fundamental a question, why was a coalfield ballot not held to give everyone the opportunity of expressing his opinion?

I am confident that if that had been done a very different picture would have been obtained.

A ballot would have given the colliery workers a chance to express their objection to a scheme which they see as designed to assist the National Coal Board to 'get tough'.

Why start in Lancashire?

Miners wonder why this scheme is being started in Lancashire, where manpower is not a serious problem and which is in any case a declining area. Is Lancashire being used as an experiment?

If the Lancashire miners give way to this scheme, will it be tried in other areas so that eventually the standards of all miners can be lowered—not producing one extra ton of coal, but allowing coal to be sold cheaper to private industry?

Absenteeism is supposed to be causing a lower output. But the NCB is now finding it difficult to sell all the coal that is being produced; and increased mechanization is meaning that there is more and more small coal, which is what is unsaleable at the moment.

Another aspect of mechanization is that more dirt is "cut" as well as coal.

The collier is paid for filling a certain amount of material which includes a great amount of dirt. This he does, which means that while the pits wind a record number of tubs, the saleable content of coal is not correspondingly greater.

The miner is working harder, but owing to the methods used his efforts are not truly reflected in the coal output figures.

At the same time Edwin Hall is excusing the setting-up of these anti-miners committees, Ernest Jones and Arthur Horner are working overtime proving that absenteeism is not the real cause of falling output. They are nearly bursting at the seams because the NCB has turned down the union's claim for a sick pay scheme and a 40-hour week for surface workers.

'Dug in its heels'

Their immediate reaction was to put in a claim for a 10s. per week increase. They fully expect this to be turned down (Daily Herald, January 17) and will then refer the claim to the industry's National Reference Tribunal.

If the claim is turned down by the Tribunal, what then? As the Bolton Evening News put it on January 16, 'the long official honeymoon is now over—the NCB has now dug in its heels'.

Gone are the days when the National Union of Mineworkers asked for 10s., the NCB offered 5s., and after a period of

gentlemanly haggling, a compromise figure of 7s. 6d. was reached.

As the coal industry, though nationalized, is still part of a capitalist system it has got to conform to capitalist policy.

The Tory Government is determined to deal with 'inflation' or in other words, to maintain the capitalists' profits at the expense of the workers. It is time the NUM, too, realized that 'the honeymoon is over' and 'dug in its heels'.

What will be the reaction of Hall and the other leaders when the 10s. claim is turned down by arbitration? Will they tell their members to grin and bear it, or will they adopt a more militant attitude?

The NUM leaders should be fighting, not getting mixed up in arbitration tribunals and collaborating in NCB-sponsored absentee committees.

26 SUSPENDED: WORKMATES DOWN TOOLS

THERE were two disputes at the Petro chemicals plant, Flixton, Manchester, last week.

Over 100 pipe-fitters and twenty-eight welders stopped work on Friday afternoon, in protest at the suspension of twenty pipe-fitters and six welders.

Acting on decisions of meetings of workers in the two trades the twenty-six suspended men had refused to work on gantries, which had been the subject of negotiations between the men and the sub-contractors, Wimpeys.

These negotiations had been going on for about three months.

Pipe-fitters and welders met and decided to stop work until the suspensions were lifted.

A section of Pipeweld men also stopped work on Friday, demanding the removal of a foreman from the job.

COVENTRY CP EXPEL BUILDING WORKER

REG PERRY, a Coventry building worker, has been expelled from the Communist Party because—according to the leadership—his 'disagreements on party principles, policy and organization are so fundamental that his conduct can only lead to disunity'.

In an appeal to party members, Reg Perry says a party recognizing democratic centralism 'should allow and promote within its organization the greatest freedom of discussion'.

He asks what the Coventry city committee mean when they say 'his conduct'. Do they mean his conduct at party meetings when he asked questions about the distortions of history?

'Do they mean my conduct in discussing with other people who hold different political viewpoints?

'Is this an admission that although formally on paper a minority can exist in actual fact they do not believe

in the rights of minorities or democracy?'

If the rights of individuals are not respected, 'we shall only appear in the same light as those so-called democratic organizations which have bans against communists and Left-wing militants'.

ECONOMICS

IT'S CAPITALIST ANARCHY—OR A REAL SOCIALIST POLICY

By Tom Kemp

THE *Economist* review of prospects for 1958, the reports of the chairmen of the big banks and the Commons debate provide ample but conflicting evidence of how business and financial leaders are looking at the problems ahead.

No doubt they do not speak with the frank taste for gain found in the letters produced at the Bank Rate tribunal. But even from the guarded language they employ on public occasions some of their hopes and fears can be gauged.

World capitalism, as everyone can now see, is facing a more uncertain prospect than for a long time. The hectic boom of the 1950s is shuddering to a standstill. 'You've never had it so good' is being transformed into 'watch out for what is coming'.

Downward plunge will continue

Despite the optimism of Eisenhower's economic report the evidence is piling up that the U.S. economy will continue its downward plunge, perhaps for the whole year.

A falling U.S. market means a growing dollar shortage. Industrial capacity built up in the boom in all countries will seek an outlet in a strenuous struggle for a shrinking volume of demand. The competition will be keen. British exports may be threatened. And the gold and foreign exchange reserves, already depleted by speculation, may fall to a critical level.

That means devaluation, slashing cuts in imports—the coming home to roost of all the problems of the British economy which have just been kept at bay since 1945 by American aid and then the world market expansion.

As Sir Oliver Franks, chairman of Lloyds Bank, pointed out 'a succession of sterling crises has taken place during a decade of general prosperity and almost continuous expansion in world trade'.

What happens to the external position of British capitalism if recession and stagnation become the order of the day?

(Continued overleaf)

Explorer

By Our Scientific Correspondent, J. H. Bradley

THIS article was written [and sent from Canada] twelve hours after the launching of the first American sputnik.

The inferiority of the U.S. guidance system is made clear because the orbit has not yet been determined exactly. The impossible figure of 75 minutes for the period would put the orbit well inside the earth.

The Explorer is the last stage rocket from the launching, as is Sputnik 2. Consequently its life will be short, owing to the shape's giving a large friction in the atmosphere.

Since the orbit comes within about 230 miles of earth at nearest approach (technically called perigee), most of the slowing down will take place there. Explorer will not be suitable for determining the density of the high atmosphere.

No other details of the instruments are yet available; one of the power sources is a semi-conductor solar battery, the other a mercury battery inferior to the Soviet silver-zinc battery.

American reaction has been a mixture of hysteria and tranquillizing drugs. Whatever may appear in the gutter Press, the U.S. ballistic missiles are temperamental, require long adjustments (count-down) and depend on the weather.

As such they can be used only as instruments for aggression, never defence.

The greatest obstacles overcome by the U.S. scientists were McCarthyism and the administration. All scientists greet these achievements impartially, whichever nation is concerned.

Or take Thorneycroft's statement in the Commons debate that 'over twelve years we have slithered from one crisis to another. Sometimes it has been a balance of payments crisis, sometimes it has been an exchange crisis, but always it has been crisis'.

A permanent crisis, in fact—and in a period of unprecedented prosperity? What sort of an economic system is it when one of its faithful guardians has to describe it in such terms?

What of the case put up by the Labour spokesmen—Gaitskell, Wilson, Jay and the rest? It seems that their main line of attack is that the present strains are largely due to 'the follies of Tory freedom'; 'capitalism' and 'socialism' appear to have no place in their vocabulary. The important thing is to score points off the other side—with an eye on the electorate.

Just give them the chance and they could run the capitalist system better than those who not only believe in it but benefit from it, they seem to say.

What policy do they offer?

'Patriotism' of high finance

Exchange controls—to stop speculation in sterling? Certainly that would be useful. But could they really be enforced after the patriotism and principles of high finance have been made clear for all to see.

Our old friend 'wage restraint' and equality of sacrifice—yes, that was the basis of Gaitskell's peroration in the economic debate! All to be done on 'getting round the table'. But there are some hard social realities which seem to be left out here. Who is going to restrain whom and on what basis?

This does not constitute a socialist policy. In fact it is not a policy at all. It is an ill-digested pious hope, a poor substitute for the positive, socialist thinking which needs to be done.

If business won't accept such a policy from its friends is it going to take it from Labour?

Assuming that property relations are left undisturbed—which we ought not to do if we are seeking a socialist solution to the crisis—there is only one way to get at the big incomes.

That is through taxation: the reimposition of the surtax cuts, a real onslaught on tax evasion, a capital gains tax to get the speculators, a profits tax and, if necessary, a higher basic rate of income tax.

It is just evading the issue, for the sake of a handful of hypothetical middle class votes and to avoid the Tory Press outcry which would result, not to say so clearly. If sacrifices there must be, make it clear who must bear them and how.

This is a class issue. As long as policy is left to the Tories there is no doubt who is going to bear the brunt of the difficulties ahead. The bankers express these things more forthrightly than their colleagues in the Cabinet, even in public.

Thus in his annual report Mr D. J. Roberts of Lloyds Bank drew up an interesting list of priorities.

Today's 'guns before butter'

'Defence must clearly have the first claim on our resources'—no bones about that (it's the 'guns before butter' of our age). To ensure that the hydrogen bomb and the guided missiles get their whack the Government must 'if necessary, scale down budgetary charges devoted to other objects'.

Like a grocer doing his stocktaking this gentleman proceeds to say that since capital investment must be the next priority then 'the volume of consumption, and the improvement of standard of life need to be adjusted to the scale of priorities'.

The pensioners, health, medical research, education and the like can apparently fight it out at the bottom of the queue.

Evidently when Mr Roberts says 'our' he does not mean the shareholders in the bank; they netted a cushy 18 per cent. dividend in 1957! He means the 'public', who must

be 'educated' (presumably by the Economic League or some such body) to cut down their constant demands for increased Government expenditure.

So all is plain. If the business men can have their way British capitalism will seek to solve its problems at the expense of the welfare and living standards of the people.

The Government's objective is no different, but it goes about it in a more subtle manner and it dare not say so openly.

Of course there are different ways of going about it, different assessments of what the public will bear. But anyone can guess that the coming Budget, if not perhaps as tough as Thorneycroft would have liked, will go as far as it dare in translating this policy into practical terms.

Meanwhile the changing economic climate stands basically outside the direct control of the Government.

Every capitalist government today shares the illusion that the rest of the world trading system will go on as before regardless of the policy it adopts. But this is not so.

In trying to solve its own problems a government may worsen the situation for others, leading to a chain of retaliation.

Every government is being obliged to impose or think about restrictions of one kind or another. And if the American recession does continue and worsen, the pressure to take restrictive action will grow.

Even without such a general unfavourable turn the forecasts are by no means hopeful. The Economist has suggested that unemployment in Britain may rise by 250,000 It will be

EFFECTS OF THE CUTS

'The flow of new orders for the building industry has declined further in the past few months, largely as a result of cuts in local authority housing programmes . . .

'The Minister of Housing . . . thought that local authorities in England and Wales should aim at starting about 100,000 houses, in 1958—compared with the 137,584 houses completed last year . . .

'The cut-back in investment by nationalized industries will also have some effect on builders and civil engineers . . . The investment of private industry in new factories and extension has already fallen . . .

'A further decline in industrial building output is inevitable.'

(Financial Times, February 1)

concentrated at first in certain trades and localities, as has already been seen.

On January 11 this journal wrote: 'By the end of 1957, prices seem to have risen roughly enough to take up the margin of extra disposable income from pay increases conceded last spring and summer and overtime earnings are already thinned out somewhat. Rents have risen for a very large proportion of tenants'.

What this means is that working-class spending power is falling off. Stiffened employer resistance to wage increases means that the employers and the Government intend to keep it that way.

There is no doubt whose consumption has to be pruned to 'save the pound' in the interest of the City of London.

It is a complex and sombre situation: it demands a policy for the Labour movement. Urgently.

If the leaders cannot, or will not, work out and fight for a coherent alternative to capitalist anarchy then the rank and file must.

As a start, standards and jobs must be defended wherever they are threatened. Years of full employment have built up a vast reserve of latent strength of which full advantage must be taken before it is dissipated in fruitless partial struggles, or sapped by unemployment and defeat.

The time to begin is now.

Cunvin's Column | Two Kinds of Dockers

WHEN I saw the headline in the Daily Express last week, 'Now the Dockers Admit It', I thought that at last the capitalist Press had got hold of some dockers who confessed that they were indeed receiving the fabulous wages which the employers' newspapers always credit them with.

But the Dockers the Express was concerned with only go to the docks to enter their sumptuous yacht or to board a luxury liner.

Yes, it was our old friends Sir Bernard and his wife Nancy stealing into the news again. The occasion was the auctioning at Christies of jewelry worth some £20,000 to £25,000 which some keen-eyed newshawk traced as belonging to this precious pair.

The sale of Nancy's jewels does not mean that the ex-boss of BSA is hard up. Far from it.

As ostentatiously as ever, he and his wife still maintain their yacht the Shemara at an estimated cost of £30,000 per year. No danger of the Dockers' applying for public assistance in the near future.

WHO ARE THE PUBLIC?

WHENEVER the busmen or some other group of workers put in a claim for a wage increase, the daily Press and other organs of opinion hasten to assure us that to grant the increase would be 'against the public interest'.

Well, there are some 5 million workers with wage claims pending at the moment. At a conservative estimate, the average family in this country constitutes four people.

So the five million workers with their families represent some 20 million people.

Quite a representative section of the public, I should think.

LORDLY 'SOCIALISM'

WHAT strange bedmates we find in the Labour Party! Take Lord Pakenham, for example, a Minister in the last Labour government and one of the party's principal spokesmen in the House of Lords.

On January 31, His Lordship contributed a lengthy article to the Daily Telegraph, in which he maintained that there need be no gulf between the Labour Party and the 'City'. The Telegraph headed this article 'Must the City be Anti-Socialist?'

One would think that the answer to that question is obvious. The City represents the very pinnacle of the power of finance capital in this country. When there is a Tory Government in power it is the City which ultimately decides Government policy.

'ALL-OUT OFFENSIVE ON GOVERNMENT'

General Management Committee of Finchley and Friern Barnet Constituency Labour Party has passed the following resolution:

'That this CLP is opposed to:

- (a) the maintenance of American bases of all kinds in this country;
- (b) the patrolling of military aircraft, loaded with H-bombs (in a perpetual state of readiness to launch a nuclear attack) in the skies over Great Britain; and
- (c) the establishment of American rocket missile bases anywhere in the British Isles.

'Accordingly, it calls upon the Parliamentary Labour Party to launch an all-out offensive against the Government and its suicidal policy, and further it calls upon the Party's national executive to initiate a campaign to bring about a state of public opposition to the continuation of the policy being followed by the Government, with the declared object of overthrowing both.'

Lord Pakenham does not regard the feud between the City and socialism as inevitable. He can see no conflict in their ultimate aims.

After all, His Lordship can see no contradiction in the fact that he is 'a former socialist minister, earnest member of the Labour Party and chairman for the last three years of a clearing bank'.

Well, as the late Professor Joad would have said, it all depends on what you mean by socialism.

RACIALIST PIN-PRICKS

THE 'Apartheid' laws of South Africa demand that the various racial groups in that unhappy country should be rigorously classified as a prelude to their eventual separation.

Unfortunately for the apostles of racialism, humanity tends to rise above mere man-made laws and the lines which are supposed to keep the races apart tend to get blurred.

So 'experts' are given the job of determining to which race the borderline cases belong. They employ all the usual criteria—assessment of hair and eyes, the lie of the cheekbones, the shading of the skin at one or two telling points and a few questions about social connexions.

But every now and then these 'scientific' tests do not suffice.

It is here that the racialists show their ingenuity. Suddenly a common or garden pin is produced and jabbed into the unsuspecting flesh.

If this produces a 'Shu' from the victim, then he is obviously an African; if the sound which emerges from his lips is 'Eina' then he must be a Cape Coloured.

Even Hitler never thought of this one!

GEORGE CUNVIN

KENYA

WE HAVE A DUTY TO KENYA'S OPPRESSED

By Cliff Slaughter

IN the columns of the Press and the speeches of British and settler politicians, the Kenya problem is presented as one of finding the best way of bringing racial understanding and a suitable degree of democracy to the people of Kenya.

The suppression of Mau Mau and the state of emergency are a 'cleaning operation' prior to the main task.

I once heard a Colonial District Officer from the Kikuyu area get to the bottom of the question.

'Our long-term aim has been to create among the Kikuyu a class of wage-earning agricultural workers'.

Looking back on the history of the colony, this is clearly true. The greatest problem for the European settlers was finding people to work for them.

A commission appointed in 1912 came to this conclusion:

'The reasons for the shortage of labour we considered from the evidence to be the following:

'The wealth of certain tribes arising from the large quantity of land at their disposal, the natural fertility of these reserves, the possession of large quantities of stock and the profits of trade. It is clearly recognized that there are practically no natives who need to work for wages in order to live'. (my emphasis—C.S.)

(Cut this out and look at it whenever you hear about the poverty and backwardness from which the Empire has raised the colonial peoples!).

They plundered their land

For the next forty years the settlers and the Government proceeded to repeat the achievements of their capitalist forefathers in eighteenth century England.

They attacked and smashed the basis of the independence

of the native peoples—i.e., they plundered their land and deprived them of the means of life.

This economic oppression was the basis for an attempt by the settlers to dominate the whole of social and political life in Kenya.

In 1941, for instance, Lord Francis Scott advocated education for all European children in Kenya, on the grounds that it was a country of several 'races' and that 'European children are eventually going to be in a position of authority over other races'.

Of course, we must have democracy. Michael Blundell, the settlers' leader, was reported in March 1956 as saying:

'The present experiment, if successful, was the beginning of the transfer of responsibility from the people of Britain to the people of Kenya. Of course, there must be a European majority and European control.'

Is it any wonder that the struggle takes on the form of racial terrorism? Who are the instigators of terrorism?

100,000 acres for one Lord

It would require an enormous space to describe the history of the robbery and plunder of the resources of Kenya, and here only a few examples can be given.

Between 1905 and 1914, 4,500,000 acres of land were allotted to Europeans. A single company was granted 223,000 acres, and several individuals, including Lord Delamere, received areas of up to 100,000 acres.

The Uasin Gishu Masai, a whole people, were removed with all their stock from an area required by settlers.

Although very large peoples, the Masai, Kikuyu, Meru and others had not yet evolved centralized political systems and could not fight wars of resistance like the classic struggles of the Zulu, Ashanti, and others in various parts of Africa.

By 1938 a total of 7,063,814 acres had passed into European hands. At that time the native African population was estimated at 3,000,000; that of the Europeans at 20,000.

Lord Hailey in 1934 estimated that of the 6,543,360 acres alienated to European settlement, 1,405,036 acres were unoccupied; the remaining 5,138,324 acres were held by 2,027 owners, an average of 2,534 acres per occupier. Only 11 per cent. of this land was actually under cultivation.

Lord Hailey achieves a masterpiece of understatement when he writes:

'It soon appeared that the administration had underestimated the extent to which natives could assert claims to the apparently empty lands of the highland area'.

African growers receive less

Discrimination is extended to trade and commerce. African growers receive less for important products than Europeans.

In other fields too the discrimination is naked and unashamed. Separate hospitals, schools, and so on, are aspects of the colour bar which always receive great attention.

More decisive than these very important fields is the political structure, now based on the 'Lyttelton Constitution' of 1954.

Dominant is the Council of Ministers, which consists of the Governor, the Deputy Governor, six official members, six unofficial members (consisting of three drawn from European elected members, two drawn from Asian members of the Legislative Council and one drawn from African members) and two nominated members.

The Legislative Council from which this group is chosen consists of: the Governor as president, vice-president and Speaker, eight ex-officio members, eighteen nominated members (appointed by the Governor), twenty-one elected members (fourteen European, six Asian and one Arab), seven representative members (six Africans and one Arab, appointed by the Governor with the approval of various communal organizations).

Compare this with the estimated population of the various main groups: Europeans, 45,000; Asians, 150,000; Africans, 5,750,000.

The fight against discrimination in South Africa must go on. The atrocities of the French in Algeria must be stopped. But the British workers must face squarely their responsibility to the oppressed peoples of the British Empire.

Just as the people of Kenya are forced to illegal methods of resistance, and need the solidarity of British workers, so do we depend on the hammer-blows of the colonial peoples in fighting our common class enemy.

That enemy claims to be the representative of democracy. Its colonial policy brings home a fundamental truth for us. 'For the working class, democracy is in all circumstances a political necessity; for the capitalists it is in some circumstances a political inevitability.'

A GREAT (ANTI-COMMUNIST) NIGERIAN

'I MUST tell you quite clearly that I and my colleagues are determined that . . . we shall use every means in our power to prevent the infiltration of communism and communistic ideas into Nigeria.

'I myself am convinced that communism is an evil thing and I have no sympathy for any Nigerian who, knowingly or unknowingly, allows himself to be used for spreading its doctrines.'

—The Prime Minister of Nigeria, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, O.B.E., C.B.E., in a letter refusing a passport to Mrs. Ransome-Kuti, president-general of the Nigerian Women's Union, quoted in the Manchester Guardian, December 28, 1957.

'Last August, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa became the first Prime Minister of Nigeria . . .

'He is Prime Minister because . . . he has won wide recognition as a great Nigerian as well as a good Northerner.'

—Ken Forge, 'Nigeria Draws Nearer to Independence', Daily Worker, January 29, 1958.

'I STAND BY COMMUNIST IDEALS'—GATES

John Gates, former editor of the New York Daily Worker, writes in the New York Post:

'I did not quit the Communist Party in order to enlist in the cold war. The ideals which originally attracted me to communism seem to me the ones that give meaning to life, and they are worth trying to realize.

'I left the Communist Party because it no longer affords a way to further these ideals.'

USSR

TITOISM ON RUSSIAN COLLECTIVE FARMS

From a Correspondent

KHRUSHCHEV'S proposal that the collective farms of the Soviet Union be allowed to possess their own machinery instead of having to borrow it from the 'machine and tractor stations' is a major retreat from the fundamentals of Stalin's policy in agriculture from 1930 onward.

This policy put Soviet agriculture in a permanent state of crisis, which Khrushchev's tax reforms, price revisions and schemes for ploughing up virgin soil have only palliated.

(His recent alleged statement to Gomulka that the state of Soviet grain reserves does not permit greater aid to Poland is relevant here).

*Khrushchev's proposal is a surrender to a demand which has been put forward insistently since contact between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia grew closer in 1955—that the

example of the Yugoslav decree of 1950 on the mechanization of agriculture be copied in the Soviet Union, where collective farmers' dissatisfaction with the terms on which they are allowed the use of the machinery has long been reflected in neglect of proper maintenance and other negative phenomena.

An official Belgrade publication, 'Agricultural Development in Yugoslavia', by Petko Rashich, has this to say about the 1950 decree (adopted after four years experience of the Stalinist method):

'This decree abolished agricultural machine stations, since their further operation as independent State enterprises would not be in accordance with the socialist principle that the means of production belong to the producers themselves.

Therefore the tractors and other agricultural machinery of these stations were handed over to co-operatives for permanent use and exploitation, provided that the co-operatives pay certain fixed depreciation quotas for the machinery allotted them until the total payment of their estimated value was completed.

Along with this, funds for mechanization and investment construction were organized in the individual districts through which the State sponsored the investment construction and mechanization of co-operative agriculture.'

MAGAZINES

SAVILLE DEBUNKS WELFARE STATE MYTHS

LATEST issue of *The New Reasoner* (no. 3, Winter 1957-58) marks a further advance in quality by this quarterly 'journal of socialist humanism'.

John Saville contributes a study of the Welfare State, debunking myths that are the stock-in-trade of both Tories and Right-wing Labour.

Edward Thompson deals with attempts by the current semi-Tory, semi-cynical trend among historians to rewrite the history of the Peterloo period in a fashion less distressing to men of property than that of the Hammonds and their school.

Peter Worsley—whose recent book 'The Trumpet Shall Sound' has been widely recognized as a valuable study of the mind of a colonial people—demolishes the cult of Albert Schweitzer.

'A true humanism', he writes, 'must be a revolutionary, materialist humanism if it is not to become as compromised, corrupted and dehumanized as Schweitzer's'.

Other contributions include further comments by readers on Thompson's article on Socialist Humanism, the most interesting of which is, perhaps, that by John St John, who suggests that Trotsky's analysis should be examined before it be accepted that the bankruptcy of Stalinism has discredited the Marxist approach.

There is also a Russian short story, 'Levers', by Alexander Yashin, translated and presented by Alfred Dressler, which not long ago brought down Moscow bureaucratic thunderbolts upon its author's head (he has since recanted) for the exposure it gives of the hypocritical double-talk of 'party cadres' in the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile two issues of the bi-monthly Labour Review have appeared—for November-December 1957 and January-February 1958.

This journal now presents a regular and serious challenge to Labour Monthly and Marxism Today as the leading Marxist political journal in Britain.

Specially noteworthy features of these two numbers are the editorials (on forty years of Soviet Russia and on current problems of the Labour Party), a study by William Hunter of the 'blue union' and the part it plays in dockland¹, two

further articles by Joseph Redman on episodes in the history of the communist movement (one on the expulsion of André Marty from the French Communist Party in 1952 and its political significance, the other on the early years of the Communist Party), and a hitherto untranslated speech of Trotsky's, delivered in 1926, on some implications of scientific and technical progress.

The New Reasoner costs 4s. and can be obtained from Holly Bank, Whitegate, Halifax, Yorkshire. Labour Review costs 2s. and is published by New Park Publications, 266 Lavender Hill, London, S.W.11.

HISTORIANS, BUT STILL NO PARTY HISTORY

THE announcement which appeared in previous issues of the Communist Party's theoretical journal, *Marxism Today*, about a series of articles on the history of the Communist Party to be contributed by R. Page Arnot 'and others' is not to be found in the latest issue.

Can it be that King Street has thought better of this risky project?

That all is far from monolithic among the Stalinist historians, even after so many 'unsound elements' have left their ranks, is shown by the stinging attack by Betty Grant on Lionel Munby in this issue, under the title 'A Caricature of Marxism'.

Munby is a prominent member of the Communist Party Historians' Group who wrote an article on the pre-history of the British Communist Party—a study of the Social Democratic Federation—in the December issue of *Marxism Today*.

Betty Grant is the editor of the Group's quarterly, *Our History*, the April 1957 issue of which the Political Committee tried to suppress (see *The Newsletter*, July 13, 1958, p. 69).

She accuses Munby of omitting to do any original research for his article and merely rehashing the statements of previous writers. 'There is no short cut to history: we must find out the facts by patient research'. Dangerous advice . . .

'Where is Britain Going?'

Frank Jackson, secretary of the party's commission for editing a party history (if this commission is indeed still in being), offers a friendlier comment on Munby's piece, but makes a few criticisms.

Thus he says that 'to get a clear picture, in my view we must examine more closely the ideological influence of the religious movements' upon the British working class and its organizations.

An examination of this important aspect of the British Labour movement was a feature of Trotsky's book 'Where Is Britain Going?', which is perhaps not as well known among the younger British Marxists as it should be—though a veteran like Jackson certainly knows it, for did not the British Communist Party publish this book, albeit somewhat belatedly, in 1926?

Another contribution to the latest *Marxism Today*, 'Marxism and The Moral Law', by John Lewis, calls to mind another useful work of Trotsky's, 'Their Morals and Ours'.

Lewis completely fails to grasp the dialectical interrelation of ends and means—discussed by Trotsky, whom he has, one fears, been careful not to read.

Formal return to fold

This article, offering 'theoretical' justification for the excesses of Stalin, Rakosi and Co., seems to mark Lewis's formal return to the fold from which he strayed somewhat during the Great Debate in the British Communist Party in 1956-57—the fold of Stalinist orthodoxy, guarded so resolutely by the head of King Street's Organization Department, Betty Reid (Mrs John Lewis).

J. R. Campbell, in an article on the British workers' struggle, since the war, to keep wages in step with prices and productivity, conspicuously omits to discuss how and why the Communist Party, down to the end of 1957, worked against strikes and in favour of the 'more production' campaign, even to

¹This article has been reprinted as a threepenny pamphlet, *Hands Off the 'Blue Union'!*

the extent of supporting the abandonment of hard-won rules in certain industries.

Yet this is an episode of great significance, if only because there is every reason to suppose that, should Moscow secure some new 'Potsdam' agreement with a British Government—Tory, Coalition or Labour—King Street would revert to the line of 1945-47, using the trade union positions won during the 'militant' phase of 1948 onward for the purpose of imposing this line upon the workers.

LETTERS

'YOU MILITANTS HAVE INFANTILE SICKNESS'

THERE is nothing new under the sun, says an old adage; when applied to the Holborn Hall conference of building workers this contains more than a grain of truth.

All the old shibboleths have been uttered many times before and are familiar to the ears of the active building worker. It was another case of pouring old wine into new bottles, with not too good a result.

The stage, the setting, the players and the play remained unchanged and corresponded very closely to the conferences convened in previous years under another name; except that the actors were not chosen with the same degree of meticulous care.

Had the conference devoted its time to discussing a programme aimed at the unification of the various organizations within the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives and in particular the welding of the general operatives into one unit instead of expending its energy in a fruitless attack on the 'leaders' a useful purpose would have been served.

It is time these would-be 'Progressives' shed the infantile sickness from which they are suffering and replaced it with a more realistic policy.

London, W.2

Jack Bayswater

KING STREET LIKES TO FLIRT, NOT FIGHT

THE attempt of the Communist Party to hold back the movement of building trade workers is by no means the first time that the Stalinists have helped to preserve the Right-wing.

The sell-out at Standards was hailed by the Daily Worker as a 'glorious victory', that at the British Motor Corporation as a 'partial victory'.

Stalinist policy seeks to achieve its aims by flirtations with bureaucrats rather than by mobilizing the rank and file.

Of course a trade union militant will support his officials in any attempt they may make to improve the position of the working-class.

To suggest however that the fight against the bosses be kept within the limits prescribed by these people is fatal.

Subordination to the trade union bureaucracy means becoming infected with its cowardice and participating in its treachery.

A vigorous working-class movement without a bureaucratic strait jacket would be a step in the direction of socialism. This is no more wanted by King Street than by the Right wing.

Leicester

Alan Stanley

WHAT IS A SOCIALIST FOREIGN POLICY?

MAY I suggest that a series of articles on 'What is a socialist foreign policy?' is most urgent?

Following the Russian sputnik lead, both Western commentators and political specialists have been re-evaluating the Western role in the cold war.

Former fanatical supporters of German rearmament, like Denis Healey, the Labour MP, have now swung round to

AT THE CROSS-ROADS (Continued from front page)

open to the TGWU. Why not set up joint local and regional action committees together with the railwaymen? This would be a shining example for all workers in struggle and it would be greeted with enthusiasm by all trade unionists. Such action committees could put the workers' case locally and win public support; and they could rapidly be extended to embrace other industries if the need arose.

A militant strategy—now!

A militant strategy for the working class is imperative. Local bus depots should contact the railwaymen immediately. The TGWU executive should begin discussions with the NUR executive. This is the kind of unity which will bring results, hearten and rally the workers and mobilize them to give back blow for blow.

Any more meetings like the one last Monday could only cause deep frustration and split the ranks of the TGWU. Now is the time for action. Let us stop the retreat. Let us go into battle.

the idea of 'a neutral zone' including Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia.

The Rapacki plan for nuclear disarmament in this area has also been seized upon both by the Daily Worker and by some people in Tribune as a solution to the problem of international tension.

The great build-up for summit talks which is now gaining momentum is all part of this new mood and new thinking.

Of course, a socialist Europe is the answer to this type of thinking—but is it not necessary to deal with these ideas more specifically?

What is the socialist alternative to the Rapacki plan, the Healey plan, for instance? This is the sort of question that is going to come out of discussion both within the Labour Party and Communist Party.

London, N.W.6

A. Powell

ISRAEL'S ALARM IS UNDERSTANDABLE

WITHOUT sympathizing in the least with Zionism, it is easy to appreciate the alarm now being expressed in Israel over the union between Egypt and Syria under Nasser's leadership.

The recent Afro-Asian conference in Cairo passed a resolution denouncing as a menace to the freedom of the Middle East not just the ruling class, the Government or the present policy of Israel, but the very existence of the State of Israel itself.

The implication is obvious—'delenda est Israel' ['Israel must be destroyed'].

Incidentally, this resolution was not published in the Daily Worker or World News.

Many Jewish members of the Communist Party have been kept from leaving its ranks by means of unscrupulous propaganda about the 'anti-Jewish counter-revolution' from which Soviet tanks are supposed to have saved Hungary.

Nothing must be allowed to spoil this touching picture of the Soviet bureaucracy as the protectors of Jewry!

Leeds

G.J.

OLD AND TRUE

'He and Trotsky alone said [in October 1917] "This is the moment."'

(R. Page Arnot, obituary of Lenin in the Labour Research Department's Monthly Circular, February 1924.)