

# THE NEWSLETTER

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## HOW TO BEAT THE HYDROGEN-BOMB

By CLIFF SLAUGHTER

**T**HE bomb has broken through! Anything that can burst through the formal and contrived procedure of British parliamentary politics and bring the whole population face to face with the real problems of our 'terrible twentieth century' as Churchill once described the century in which capitalism is doomed to die, is a mighty issue.

Why is the hydrogen bomb able to break through party lines that have stood for a generation, even able to restore a semblance of strength to an anachronism like the Liberal Party?

This bomb is not just another election issue. It is the symbol of the dawn of a new era in human history.

By threatening the death of the human race—and this is no exaggeration—it forces men and women to ask how civilization could arrive at such a choice.

In the life of two generations, the people of Europe have given the blood of tens of millions of their sons to war, to a series of blood baths on the soil of France, Belgium, Russia, Germany and every other nation.

### Sanity itself demands it

And for what? In the interests of the ruling cliques of the imperialist powers of Europe.

A system which requires such mass murder on an ever-increasing scale, which even in times of 'peace' indulges in the concentration camps of Kenya and Malaya, or the torture chambers of Algeria, can no longer claim any affinity with human existence, let alone claim to represent 'Western Civilization', 'the democratic tradition', and all the rest of it.

Now that human science and industry can provide for the complete extermination of the race, no one can claim any

## COMMENTARY

### MURDER

**N**AGY and his companions have been murdered for the same reason that Trotsky was murdered eighteen years ago: while these men lived the workers could draw comfort and courage from a living link with the heroic age of their Revolution. By murdering Nagy without even the farce of a public trial and confessions Hungary's Stalinist overlords display more than savage vindictiveness. They demonstrate their fear of the workers and of the growth of any kind of Marxist leadership. Nagy was the one prominent Hungarian communist in whom the ordinary people had confidence. Alive, he was a standing reproach to the régime of 'judges' who, a few months after joining the Socialist Workers' Party, are busily condemning life-long communists and revolutionary workers to death. Alive, he was a standing challenge to the system of secret police persecution, corruption, repression and lies which masquerades as 'people's democracy'. That was why he had to be arrested by a trick and executed.

Nagy lacked almost all the conventional attributes of a great workers' leader. His thought rarely rose above the humdrum, ponderous level of 'next tasks'. He was thrust forward by the tide of popular feeling, catapulted into the role of spokesman for Hungary's inarticulate multitudes. His greatness lay in his refusal, at a time of national crisis and upheaval, to abdicate the responsibilities that there was no one else to shoulder. His weakness lay in his failure to understand and base himself on the dynamic new force arising in his storm-tossed country: the workers' councils.

The murder of Nagy, Maléter, Gimes and Szilágyi comes two days after the Soviet Ambassador to France bears a private message from Khrushchev to de Gaulle, so becoming the first foreign diplomatist to have an exchange with the General since his advent to power. These two events together show the real face of Stalinism. The 'socialist legality' and 'collective leadership' of Khrushchev have nothing in common with Marxism or working-class policies. How blind to the lessons of history are the men in the Kremlin if they think they can kill ideas by killing rebels. In 1958 as in 1940, neither Stalinism nor imperialism can destroy the ideas which, linked with the mass movement, will sweep both these evils away.

### OUR SERIES ON THE H-BOMB

This is the last in a series of articles designed to give workers as simply and clearly as possible the facts about the scientific, military, medical and political aspects of the hydrogen bomb.

Previous articles in the series were by our scientific correspondent, J. H. Bradley (May 10, pp. 140-1; May 17, pp. 144-5), and our medical correspondent (June 7, p. 156; June 14, p. 161).

Cliff Slaughter, author of this final article, is a lecturer on sociology at Leeds University. He is a member of the Editorial Board of The Newsletter.

Our correspondents would be glad to answer readers' questions or to deal with any difficulties.

justification for the monopoly of production in the hands of a small ruling class.

Sanity itself demands that private ownership in the production of armaments must end; a power capable of destroying the nations must come under the control of the people themselves.

The demands of profit and colonial expansion have brought a series of unprecedented disasters to the people of the world; yet the same interests are still in control of our destiny, now when total destruction is on the cards.

(Continued overleaf)

**H-BOMB (Continued from front page)**

In the past two hundred years, a comparatively short time in human evolution, man has created the possibility of abundance and freedom for all mankind.

Modern industry and science depend on an international division of labour, on the unseen relations of co-operation among millions of men and women.

Just look at the items in your kitchen and you will realize the mutual dependence of all the labours of all the peoples of all the world.

**Should be world planning**

Factory workers, scientists, peasants, seamen and miners are a part of the lives of all of us. Why should we be involved in the possibility of mutual destruction, of a throwback to the Stone Age just at the time when we ought to be entering a period of abundance?

The answer is an old one. We retain a social system which has long outlived its usefulness.

For a long time the freedom afforded by private capital and enterprise allowed for a big advance of industry and civilization, though even this was accompanied by the slave trade and the ruin of the peasantry.

But now the large-scale production unit and the international market cry out for planned use of the world's resources and humanity's skills.

Once again we are beginning to see the consequences of private enterprise and the absence of planning: the bread lines are forming in that land of milk and honey, the USA, which now has nearly six million unemployed.

**Real issue is exposed**

The great American steel industry is working at less than sixty per cent. of its real capacity.

**The danger of human annihilation by the H-bomb is part of the same question.**

Some of our old-fashioned conservatives here in Britain have stated the issue boldly. 'Death before dishonour,' they cry. 'Britons would rather die than live under communism.'

The conclusion for a true-born Briton is that we must prepare for the destruction of humanity.

This has been effectively answered by Alex Comfort and others; let those who feel this way commit suicide, and let them not deign to act on our behalf.

At least the 'death before dishonour' boys expose the real issue: they admit in effect that the retention of their system of society depends on the threat of destruction of the whole human species.

**Working people must act**

Here is the problem for the British people (and it is the same problem for the people of the world):

**If the existing system cannot live without war and the bomb, how can we replace it with something else?**

Unless the campaign against the bomb goes on to answer this question, it will fizzle out as all peace movements have fizzled out.

The bomb grows out of the needs of aggressive imperialism and its drive to war.

We must unify and inspire the social forces that can defeat the interests of that aggression, and the growing mood of the people against Britain's manufacture and testing of the bomb is the first step towards this.

But so far the campaign against the bomb is a campaign to mobilize opinion, and not to gather together the power inherent in the working people. When this stage is reached, we shall be on the threshold of victory over the bomb.

**Sick of traditional politics**

Already the German workers have begun to strike against the use of atomic weapons by the German High Command.

In this country some trade union organizations have resolved

not to work on rocket sites or on the production of nuclear weapons.

An international campaign linking together actions of this kind should have been the obvious step for the Labour Party in this country.

From this point of view we should be very wary of those anti-bomb speakers who make great play of being 'anti-political'.

The popularity of this cry, like the increased votes of the Liberals, shows that the people are genuinely sick of the traditional run of party politics, of the parliamentary pendulum which makes precious little difference to the lives of ordinary folk.

**Bomb dominates all politics**

The people realize that the issues of the bomb and the danger of world war must not be entrusted to the professional speech-makers of sleepy Westminster.

But nothing could be more dangerous than to go to the opposite extreme, and to say 'To hell with politics, it's just a dirty game.'

Many people tell us 'the H-bomb is an issue above politics.' But this is the opposite of the truth—the bomb is the political issue dominating all political issues.

Ask the Tories after their by-election defeats. Ask the Labour Party executive, worried by the support for Victory for Socialism and the growing demand in their ranks for unilateral renunciation of the bomb.

All the established parties, without exception, fear the intrusion of the bomb into open politics, and we must force it on them.

For here is an issue which does not say only 'This party or that', but says: 'An end to the system which allows our government to be shared by parties which can suffer such a horror on earth!'

**Where real force lies**

Here then is the issue, crystal clear:

Where is there a force that can shatter the existing peace between the parties on this vital matter?

Where is a force capable of intervening in politics, rather than ignoring politics, capable of insisting on the peaceful use of the power in man's hands?

That force is the working people of the world, the same people who have died in millions for a system which rewards them only with unemployment, insecurity, inequality and the certain promise of future wars in which their sons will be able to meet the same heroic death.

There is no time to lose. In the aftermath of two world wars capitalism has managed to survive the great upsurge towards freedom.

With each new lease of life it has come to possess ever greater means of destruction, and the lesson of history is that ruling classes are prepared to see the end of existing civilization rather than retire from their power.

**Only people can decide**

There must be initiated in the Labour movement a campaign which takes human life out of the bloodstained hands of the ruling class and their apologists.

Only the people are fit to decide on the life or death of the human race.

**We must win a campaign for the following demands:**

- 1) No work by trade unionists on nuclear weapons or rocket bases. Black all work connected with war plans.
- 2) Labour must initiate an international working-class campaign against nuclear weapons. Immediate approaches to the German, Japanese and American movements must be made.
- 3) Labour must demand the nationalization of the armaments industry and commit itself to immediately suspending manufacture of the bomb.
- 4) Labour should propose immediate international summit talks

for the destruction of existing stocks of atomic weapons and a working agreement for a ban on such weapons. This should be accompanied by a demand for an end to secret diplomacy so that we may see who are the real enemies of peace.

- 5) In all elections, let the question be put to each candidate: Are you for or against the plot to exterminate humanity?

### BIRMINGHAM LABOUR WANTS CLARION CALL TO WORLD'S WORKERS

BIRMINGHAM borough Labour Party has overwhelmingly passed the following resolution submitted by Saltley ward:

'This borough Labour Party declares that the national executive committee, in running the campaign on H-bomb tests and the summit conference, should now respond to the immense feeling in the country by extending the campaign to one which vigorously attacks the whole concept of nuclear armaments.

'It is of the firm opinion that the Labour Party must pledge itself that, when returned to power, it will not only stop all British H-bomb tests but it will also renounce unilaterally the British manufacture of the H-bomb and will revoke all agreements with the USA for the construction of rocket missile bases on British soil.

'It further asks that the NEC makes these pledges a clarion call to the working classes of all countries, thus uniting them

in an international campaign to end the menace of universal death and destruction by H-bombs and rocket missiles.'

## RENTS

### WHERE IS THIS MISSING CONFERENCE?

By Our Industrial Correspondent

Two months ago, because of pressure from Left-wing delegates, the London Federation of Trades Councils agreed to hold a delegate conference on the Rents Act.

The conference was due to be held on June 28, but so far local trades councils and trade union branches have received no confirmation.

Can this be because the Right wing on the London Federation (and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress) are not really concerned to muster any sort of opposition to the evictions which will begin in October?

### WITCH-HUNT ATTACK ON MICK WEAVER

Right-wing elements at the Lancashire area of the National Union of Mineworkers last Saturday attacked Mick Weaver, Communist Party candidate in the recent Wigan by-election, and tried to unseat him from the executive and censure him.

After a heated debate the matter was referred to branch level, where little support is likely to be found for such a witch-hunt.

## Constant Reader | How a Movement was Strangled

Now that moves towards the formation of rank-and-file committees are under way in a number of trades, it is to be expected that the Communist Party, though it has not favoured this development, will try to move in.

In this connexion the history of the National Minority Movement—the greatest rank-and-file organization Britain has ever known—is a cautionary tale.

Formed under communist leadership in pre-Stalinization days, it was later strangled by its communist leaders in accordance with the needs of their Moscow masters and in fulfilment of their instructions, which bore no relation to the realities of the British situation.

The destruction process passed through three stages. Already at the time of 'Red Friday' in 1925, the culmination of the NMM's influence in industry, the rot had set in.

### Cultivating their goodwill

Stalin's adoption of the line of 'socialism in one country' had corollaries in his foreign policy. So far as Britain was concerned, the development of independent action by the working class gave place to cultivating the goodwill of a group of trade union bureaucrats who had made statements friendly to Soviet Russia.

The Minority Movement had to play down its fight for democratizing the unions and its criticisms of their 'Left' leaders—indeed, had to become essentially a kind of supporters' club for the latter.

This led straight to the betrayal of the General Strike, when the Minority Movement proved incapable of taking over the leadership from the 'Lefts' who sold out.

For two years following the end of the General Strike the Minority Movement drifted; there was neither explanation of what had happened nor a clear lead for the future.

Against a background of unemployment and victimization Right-wing persecution harried a confused and demoralized movement.

### 'Social-fascist' somersault

Then came the somersault ordered from Moscow in 1928-29; from tailing helplessly after dubious Left-wingers among the

bureaucrats, it was now necessary to go over to treating the trade unions as such as 'social-fascist' bodies, the Labour Party as a blackleg organization and so forth.

This policy very effectively helped the Right wing to isolate and whittle down to almost nothing what had once been a powerful mass force.

After the 1931 General Election had replaced the second Labour Government by the viciously anti-working-class 'National' Government of MacDonald and Baldwin, the communists made a belated and hesitant adjustment in their trade union policy.

What not long before had been the deviation of 'Hornerism' (after Arthur Horner), meaning that militants ought not to refuse to try to work through the official machinery, now became official doctrine.

And the first practical consequence of this turn was the final winding up, in 1932, of the little that remained of the National Minority Movement.

### What is 'revisionism'?

KHRUSHCHEV is hurling around the epithet 'revisionism' with a more vicious edge to it than ever.

If you are a 'revisionist' this is said to lead you logically into the camp of the enemies of the Soviet Union—for an example, see what happened to Imre Nagy: Yugoslav and other deviators, take warning and submit.

Communists may well be wondering just how one tells what is 'revisionism' and what is not nowadays. Especially when the Daily Worker has published in recent months the following new interpretations of the Marxist theory of the State, without adverse comment:

'But the function of the State machinery is not to help this or that class, or coalition of classes, but to prevent their mutual relations from developing into open conflicts and acts of violence . . .

'It is, of course, not for the police to intervene on the side of labour against capital.'

—(E. M. S. Namboodripad, on 'Communists in Office in Kerala', May 20)

'Rebels should be treated as rebels . . . I think that every Government with self-respect will take action against rebels.

'Take for example the State of Ohio in the U.S. If a revolt were to break out there the U.S. Government in Washington would not remain passive.'

—(D. N. Aidit, leader of the Indonesian Communist Party, March 31)

The position seems to be that it is the man or men currently on top in Moscow who give the rulings on these great questions.

Like the anti-Semitic mayor of Vienna who, reproached for having some Jewish associates, replied: 'I decide who's a Jew around here', Khrushchev and Co. have taken full powers to define 'revisionism'.

BRIAN PEARCE

## ECONOMICS

### IS THERE A SOVIET CHALLENGE IN WORLD TRADE?

By Tom Kemp

SOVIET competition in trade and aid with the 'un-committed' countries is a new factor in the East-West political balance.

Whatever some may say about the feasibility of Soviet autarky (self-sufficiency) this is not practical politics. Economic expansion itself has made increased intercourse with other countries possible, and even necessary.

Now, for example, whole industrial plants can be exported on low credit terms—but, on the other hand, complete factories have been contracted for in capitalist countries, including Britain (from whom a rubber factory is on order).

Soviet purchases of raw materials and foodstuffs, needed to meet consumer demand for more goods, can be used with political effect. The Soviet Union buys a large part of the Icelandic herring catch which Mr George Dawson could not sell in Britain.

Purchases from Egypt, Syria and Burma have been used to permit these countries greater independence. At the Cairo conference of Afro-Asian countries lavish offers of aid were made.

#### Extent can be exaggerated

The extent of this incursion into the world market can be exaggerated, both by Soviet propaganda and by those in the West concerned with stepping up military spending and foreign aid programmes.

Despite the attention given to Soviet deals with such countries as India, Indonesia and Burma they do not so far represent a large proportion of either the trade or foreign assistance of these countries.

The Soviet share of trade with the under-developed countries is around 15 per cent. While credits made total about £430 million, only a part has so far been taken up.

India's foreign debt, as in February 1958, shows that of a total of 2,213 million rupees, only 128 million are accounted for by the USSR, less than west Germany and far less than the USA's 1,113 million rupees.

The huge volume of investment needed in the USSR to realize the ambitious targets set in various fields limits the extent of resources available for foreign aid.

#### Aid to Hungary and Poland

The economic difficulties of east European countries have proved a serious drain in the past eighteen months. Considerable aid has had to be granted to Hungary and Poland, not to speak of the large credits to Yugoslavia. Her need remains urgent as lagging agricultural output makes it difficult to greatly expand capital goods imports from other sources.

Even though Soviet competition on the world market will increase, it is unlikely in the near future to become a serious challenge to the capitalist countries to the extent of taking

their place in relations with the under-developed countries of Asia and Africa. Now the growing slump in the capitalist countries introduces a new factor.

On the one hand, as in the 1930s, the combination of economic difficulties in the capitalist countries with continued expansion in the USSR will be a major factor in world politics.

The Soviet Union is also seeking to break through existing trade restrictions and, it would appear, trying to establish closer trade relations with some of the capitalist countries, by offering them a stable market at a time when world trade seems likely to contract.

#### Repeated, but contradictory, theme

Thus Zakharov, Soviet delegate at the recent meeting of the Economic Commission for Europe, recalled (according to Soviet News) 'that Soviet foreign orders in the grim thirties had saved many hundreds of thousands of workers from unemployment'.

Implied here was the idea that East-West trade could counteract economic depression in the capitalist countries—a repeated, but contradictory, theme of Communist Party propaganda.

## LETTERS

### PAPERT'S ANALYSIS IS NAIVE, SCHEMATIC

THERE is a disquieting complacency, even apparent naïvety, in the remarks of your Paris correspondent.

He argues that big business, which has put de Gaulle into power, wants to get out of the Algerian war and rationalize the economy without a naked class fight.

Surely, on the contrary, capitalism intends firmly to maintain its grip on Algeria? Oil in the Sahara is now the real 'motif' for the slogan 'Algeria is French'.

Even if Seymour Papert explains this by saying capitalism wishes the integration of the army in Algeria into a bureaucratized French régime, this means an intensification of the war in Algeria, which will require intensified attacks on working-class standards and working-class organizations in France—that is, there will be a naked class fight.

The fact that parliamentary forms of government are pushed to one side indicates that big business is looking away from its usual props—the 'socialist' and 'communist' lieutenants of capitalism—and is very seriously considering constructing a mass fascist movement.

The success or failure of these plans will depend on whether the working class of France can be welded together on the basis of a socialist fighting policy.

It is dangerous to draw up a schematic analysis which minimizes the threat to the working class and which gives de Gaulle a programme he himself has not argued for.

Only a few days ago he pleased his Algerian audience of colons by shouting 'Algeria is French'. To please the colons further he will have to act against the workers' movement.

That he moves slowly testifies to the strength of that movement, rather than a 'risk of stabbing in the back his most vociferous supporters'.

London, S.E.27

David Finch

### HOW TO HELP OUR FRENCH COMRADES

'OUR free democratic British newspapers' have been a myth—in fact a joke—for the last fifty years. They support de Gaulle, and they supported Hitler and Mussolini before the latter turned nasty on them.

But the emergence of British fascism is not an immediate danger. As long as the Tories do the capitalists' job well, the capitalists will not want fascism.

The way to prevent fascism when the Tories are defeated is to have a strong, class-conscious and united Labour movement.

That will also help our French comrades. The weak attitude of the official Labour Party has done untold damage to socialism in western Europe.

London, N.6

James D. Young