

# THE NEWSLETTER

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## NOW LET LABOUR ACT TO GET THEM ALL OUT!

**W**ITH the Tory Government torn by a crisis that is without precedent in modern times, a new mood of confidence and determination is spreading through Labour's ranks. Labour Party members and trade unionists want to smash the Tories NOW, while they are still in disarray and their bankruptcy is plain to everybody.

**ALL LABOUR IS WAITING FOR IS A LEAD.** And if the lead does not come from the national executive and the General Council, then the rank and file themselves will find ways of mobilizing the British workers:

**AGAINST ROCKET BASES**

**AGAINST SACKINGS**

**FOR HIGHER WAGES**

**FOR NATIONALIZATION**

**AGAINST H-BOMB FLIGHTS AND TESTS**

**AGAINST RENT INCREASES**

**FOR A NEW LABOUR GOVERNMENT**

**FOR WORKERS' CONTROL**

Up and down the country the demand is growing in local Labour Parties for Labour to call mass demonstrations to rouse the British people against the American rocket bases.

Unanimously, the general management committee of the Norwood Labour Party has passed a resolution fully supporting the stand taken by the Scottish Labour Parties in opposing rocket bases in Scotland; and opposing the establishment of rocket bases and the continuance of American air bases anywhere in the United Kingdom.

### **Call for mass demonstrations**

The resolution asks the national executive to support this action immediately by organizing mass demonstrations all over the country 'in order to rouse the people against this new danger of war'.

The Norwood GMC also agreed to call a meeting of all active workers in the constituency's trade unions and Labour Parties as soon as possible 'in order to work out plans to mobilize the people behind such a national campaign'.

The idea of local conferences on the fight against war and unemployment is one that is likely to catch on. And the walk-out from the Treasury shows how great is the possibility of such a mass movement leading to the collapse of the whole Macmillan conspiracy.

Militant action against rent increases, too, is being demanded on an increasing scale. On the agenda of the London Labour Party's annual conference, to be held on March 1 and 2, are motions seeking to put teeth into the rents campaign.

### **Help tenants defend themselves**

One from Wembley South instructs the London executive 'to give all possible support to any action taken by tenants in the London area to defend themselves against the effects of the Rent Act'.

And one from Streatham calls for a seven-month campaign against the Act, including demonstrations; for local campaign committees to be formed to prevent evictions; and for the possibility of industrial action to defeat evictions to be discussed with the unions.

Already at Glasgow the City Labour Party has by 65 votes to 45 rejected its executive's decision to carry out a 'rent review', thus staving off rent increases for Glasgow's 100,000 municipal tenants.

(The Hour for Action: overleaf)

## USSR

### **'MOSCOW PURGES FRAME-UPS'—SEROV**

By Brian Pearce

ON December 21 *Pravda* published an article on the fortieth anniversary of the Soviet security service, written by General Serov himself, who is at present in charge of this service.

Reviewing the history of his organization, Serov mentioned as outstanding achievements in its work the Shakhty trial of 1928, the 'Industrial Party' trial of 1930, the Menshevik trial of 1931 and the Metro-Vickers trial of 1933.

When he came to the anti-Trotsky trials of 1937-38, however, Serov declared that these were frame-ups organized by 'provocateurs and conscienceless careerists', in the setting of Stalin's dictatorship.

Now, one need not necessarily accept Serov's view of the trials he justifies: if, however, he says the trials of 1937-38 were frame-ups there would seem to be good reason to take his word for it.

At any rate, such a statement, coming from the head of Soviet security, must be of considerable interest to communists everywhere. Yet, to my knowledge, no report of this article has appeared in the *Daily Worker*. And, after all, this was no 'secret speech' but an open declaration in a public newspaper.

A number of members were expelled from the Communist Party in 1937-38 for saying what Serov has now said in *Pravda*.

Does King Street not owe them an apology?

And is it not appropriate for Communist Party members now to reopen the whole question of the British Stalinist leaders' attitude to their own past words and deeds?

## INDUSTRY

### **BUILDING WORKERS GET READY TO FIGHT**

By Our Industrial Correspondent

LONDON building workers are meeting at the Holborn Hall on Sunday, January 19, to launch a campaign to resist the employers' offensive.

Called by the Alderton Construction Works Committee, the  
(Continued overleaf)

## COMMENTARY

### THE HOUR FOR ACTION

WILL those who lead Labour seize with both hands the opportunity offered them this week by the Government crisis? Or will they go on dithering? Before our eyes the Macmillan Government has become a conspiracy against the British people—and the Labour leaders have salved their consciences with resolutions that they show no sign of putting into effect. The landlords are set loose to fleece and evict the tenants; the Labour leaders recoil in horror from any suggestion of industrial action to prevent this. Macmillan conspires with Eisenhower to keep loaded hydrogen-bombers in our skies; Gaitskell goes briskly into action—with his mouth. The Government declares war on the trade unions; the leaders fire popguns in reply. Rocket bases are to be built; not a single demonstration or meeting or protest action of any kind is contemplated by Transport House. The leaders seem to be paralysed.

Their ability to exploit the crisis caused by the resignations depends in large measure on how they prepared for such a contingency as this, which was by no means unforeseen. But their record over the past few months is so dismal that one might justifiably ask whether they *want* to take office. Parliamentary opposition has become a sluggish succession of damp squibs; the shouts of 'Resign' from the Opposition benches are a half-hearted formality. Trades Union Congress representatives are closeted with Macmillan for two hours on the H-bomb menace; a two-hour strike against rocket bases would soon wipe the sneer from Macmillan's lips, but this would be as explosive for the General Council as the bomb itself.



How long must we wait for a lead? What sign or portent are our leaders waiting for? Chancellors of the Exchequer do not resign every day of the week, taking their colleagues with them. This is something without precedent. The Tories are reeling. Labour must hit them while they are reeling—powerful blows, resounding blows, industrially and politically. And if Labour's leaders fail to respond to the urgency, the drama and the magnitude of this hour, the rank and file dare not fail. There is too much at stake. There should be demonstrations in the streets of all our cities. There should be a conference in each locality of Labour Party members and trade unionists, to discuss the fight against war, against unemployment, against a big business government whose members are squabbling in public about how best to turn the screw on the British people. Let these be business-like conferences, which will get down to the practical details of mobilizing public opinion and co-ordinating the activities of each section of the movement so that all—shop stewards, Co-operators, tenants, individual Labour Party members and the rest—are brought into the struggle. On every possible occasion the initiative of the rank and file must be given full scope. Labour can focus all the latent resentment and hostility and anger of the common people in one great mass movement. With or without the help of our leaders we can smash this Government. And smash it we will.

### BUILDING WORKERS (Continued from front page)

meeting will discuss the formation of a campaign committee based on jobs and branches; the setting-up of joint branch committees; the calling of stewards' meetings by the Regional Council; and the holding of public meetings and demonstrations on the eightpence an hour claim.

The Alderton leaflet points out that in the last six months the building employers have stepped up their attacks on job organization.

They have sacked stewards and militant trade unionists at Higgs and Hills, White City, McAlpines, Shell-Mex House, and Units, Abbey Wood.

'If they get unemployment they will really get the whip out to put us back in the "good old days". This we must resist with all the strength we have.

'Our union stands for the forty-hour week, for eightpence an hour increase and for the nationalization of the building industry. We believe that the demands the union is making go some way to meeting the attacks of the employers and their government.

'But there is no campaign by the union to prepare us for action to enforce our demands on the employers.'

The Alderton workers, whose job is 100 per cent. organized, with a stewards' committee and regular meetings, believe that what the union leaders will not do the members must do.

### OH, HOW THEY HATE THE NEWSLETTER!

CLOSE on the heels of Miss Helen Bailey, the Economic League's glamour girl—whose attack on us in the Edinburgh *Evening Dispatch* was reported last week—another 'we hate THE NEWSLETTER' attack has been launched.

This time it comes from the Merseyside full-time officials of the Transport and General Workers' Union, who are very much offended by our exposure on November 16 of the TGWU private war against the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers (the 'blue' union).

Our story included the full text of a private TGWU document revealing the TGWU bosses' decision to pay grants equal to dispute benefit after an 'unofficial' stoppage designed to smash the 'blue' union in the port of Garston.

The document revealed also the TGWU leaders' private belief that this piece of inter-union warfare 'has done an immense amount of good'.

We heard afterwards that the TGWU executive spent a whole morning behind locked doors trying to find out where the 'leak' came from.

It is believed that several highly respected officials came under suspicion, including at least one who had for the sake of security destroyed his copy of the document we reproduced—and so could not produce it to prove his innocence.

### Foaming, drooling and circulating

Now a paper called Merseyside News accuses us of 'foaming at the mouth when the name of the TGWU is mentioned'. The Newsletter turns out to be a 'dubious and questionable political movement'—which is more or less exactly what Miss Bailey said!

'Mr Fryer' is 'disruptive' because he 'supports the blue union'; but never mind, 'Mr Fryer's cause was killed long before he drooled his way through the pages of his Newsletter'.

The author of this elegant prose says The Newsletter is 'circulated sparsely on building sites on Merseyside'. As far as we know, Merseyside News is so hard to sell that copies have to be given away; at any rate there is no price on the copy we have received.

Merseyside News says that a man may be known by the enemies he has, and that The Newsletter is lining up with employers and Tories against the TGWU leadership. 'Strange Bedfellows!' is the title of the article.

All right, let's apply the test. Who hates The Newsletter?

The Stalinists at King Street, the Economic League maidens  
and the TGWU officials.  
Strange bedfellows, indeed!

## LABOUR

### LIVELY DISCUSSIONS, LIVELY DELEGATES

By Ursula Verity

SOME two years ago Transport House recommended local Labour Parties to appoint Political Education Officers.

Their task was to arrange for policy statements and other pronouncements of the party to be introduced by a competent speaker and then discussed by the members.

In our local Party the PEO is active and wide awake to the issues being raised in the party. As a result we have had the opportunity to discuss basic issues such as the Confederation plan for engineering, the colonial revolution, personal freedom and the building trade unions' policy for their trade.

The subjects have been introduced by rank and file participants in the struggle, e.g., a redundant motor worker introduced the Confederation plan, and discussion has always got down to fundamental issues.

This is important in the Labour Party where the accent at local party meetings tends normally to be on organizational matters.

When the Regional Council of Labour organizes day schools and conferences we are only allowed to listen to policy statements from our betters, and, if we are very good, to ask a limited number of questions.

It is assumed by the platform that we shall not participate in discussion. This gives such speakers as national executive members a glorious opportunity to put across unchallenged their propaganda that we should go into the next election without a socialist programme—with our hands 'not tied'.

They say that it is sufficient to invoke the memory of Cripps and his austerity to solve the balance of payments problem and to come to an understanding with the trade unions 'based on all-round sacrifices'.

But in our local political education talks, where the rank and file conduct the discussion, we find that this is not at all what building workers, engineers and garment makers expect of the next Labour Government.

They soon make it clear that they could build houses, schools and factories and manufacture all the machinery and so on that we want—if it were not for the inefficiency of capitalism, the monopolistic practices of the suppliers of raw materials, high interest rates and the sheer greed of the employers.

### 'Genned up' for Conference

Our experience has been that since the PEO has been organizing our discussions, we have been 'genned up' on the main issues to be discussed at Annual Conference and have submitted both resolutions and amendments on which there has been thorough discussion beforehand.

This is a great help to the Conference delegate, who is not so easily swept off his feet by floods of oratory or emotional appeals from the platform.

It helps to avoid the situation which so often arises, where delegates realize only when they get home from Conference that they have helped to pass resolutions which do not really express what Labour men and women want.

## Cunvin's Column | Why Do You Tarry, Sir Hartley?

### HOW LONG?

How much longer are we in the Labour Party going to tolerate Sir Hartley Shawcross in our ranks?

Since he has not the political integrity to resign from a party whose whole political outlook he evidently disagrees with, why doesn't the national executive take the obvious step and expel him?

The NEC shows no reluctance to act against critics of the Left and, as I revealed in The Newsletter on December 21, Transport House has just launched a fresh witch-hunt to smell out the ex-communists who have joined the party.

But Sir Hartley, it appears, can go his own merry way, say what he likes, neglect his parliamentary duties, without so much as a threat to withdraw the whip from him.

### FOREIGN POLICY AND SOCIALISM

According to Sir Hartley's latest there ought not to be a 'Tory foreign policy or a Labour foreign policy; there ought to be a British foreign policy . . .'

Inane statements such as this make one wonder how Sir Hartley ever got into the Labour Party at all—or why! One presumes that he knows the Tories represent the interests of capitalism.

When a Tory thinks of 'Britain' he thinks of the vested interests of British capitalism. The Labour Party, on the other hand, was founded and built up by the British working class to put an end to capitalism and build a socialist society.

Now British capitalism does not change its nature when it turns its attention outside these shores.

When British capitalism thinks of the Middle East it is not concerned with the social and economic welfare of the people in those regions but of the rich sources of oil which spell profits to British finance-capital.

Its whole attitude to foreign affairs is determined by this lust for profits. And the Tories represent the interests of British capitalism in the political field.

### KICK HIM OUT!

The Labour Party, however, according to its constitution, is a socialist party. Socialists want to see the world's wealth used for the benefit of the people and not just for the enrichment of a handful of bankers in the City of London and their hangers-on.

From these two entirely different conceptions of the economic development of the world's resources, should flow two completely irreconcilable foreign policies.

Bi-partisanship in this as in other spheres is simply a euphemism for class collaboration, and class collaboration by whatever name stinks in the nostrils of all socialists.

Sir Hartley should be unceremoniously kicked out of the party. He has never been an asset to the cause of socialism; today he is a menace to Labour's victory in the next election.

### LESSON OF SUEZ

When the Egyptians nationalized the Suez Canal, all sorts of dire catastrophies were foretold. The canal would be silted up; it would take years to train pilots with the necessary know-how to deal with the treacherous undercurrents; Traffic would inevitably be slowed up or come to a standstill.

Alas for the prophets of woe! None of these things happened!

Last month the Manchester Guardian, in an authoritative article, testified that the Egyptians were making a first-class job of running the Suez Canal.

With fewer pilots more shipping was passing through the Canal than at any time since it was first constructed. New developments have been put in hand to prepare it to handle even heavier traffic.

What a blow this must be to the ex-Indian Army colonels as they sip their whiskies in their favourite clubs! What a blow to all those who divide the world into 'inferior' and 'superior' peoples.

(Continued overleaf)

**CUNVIN'S COLUMN (Continued from previous page)**

## NEW YEAR TASKS

The Tories are on the defensive on all fronts. They are still reeling as a result of the exposure that American planes are carrying H-bomb loads over our heads in daily sorties.

The Bank Rate inquiry has shown up their tie-up with finance capital. The NATO agreements have served only to lower their stock still further. Cost of living goes up and up and up!

**But from all sides come reports of lack of activity in the Labour Party, both inside and outside Parliament.**

This is the moment for Labour to go on the offensive on all fronts. We need a broadside from all guns.

Locally and nationally, using to the full the resources of TV and radio, as well as the old-fashioned but still effective street-corner meeting, the Labour Party should be conducting a campaign to force the Tories out NOW.

That must be priority task No. 1 for the New Year.

The TUC and the Labour Party NEC must insist that all party activities be given the maximum publicity in the Daily Herald—which one can read for days on end without coming across any mention of the Labour Party.

Let us make this the last New Year under a Tory Government.

GEORGE CUNVIN

## USA

### HOW THE U.S. COMMUNIST LEADERS VOTED

From Our New York Correspondent

SIGNIFICANT new shifts are taking place in the deeply divided leadership of the U.S. Communist Party. While *Daily Worker* editor John Gates has not mobilized any substantial support among party leaders to defeat a proposal to discontinue the *Daily Worker*, a new division has taken place in the party's national executive committee on the crucial issue of independence from Moscow.

A meeting of the NEC at the end of last month saw a realignment on the independence issue of those who had been assumed to be part of a 'centre' group led by Eugene Dennis.

The bulk of this group, including organization secretary Sid Stein, voted with the Gates forces against a return to subservience to the Kremlin. Dennis voted with the Foster group in favour of such a course.

A Press release issued by the National Administrative Committee (a sub-committee of the NEC) says that the NEC meeting also heard conflicting reports by Dennis and Stein on the party's organization crisis.

The Gates group views endorsement of the Moscow declaration of twelve Communist Parties as repudiation of the independence mandate of last February's national convention.

The NEC voted 11-7 against endorsement, with two abstentions and two absent.

The line-up in the NEC, which is a sub-committee of the 60-member national committee, is symptomatic of the sentiment among rank-and-file members.

While there is wide disagreement in the ranks as to what the party's policy should be, there is strong opposition to any return to the days when all-important questions were settled abroad.

This opposition in the ranks was mirrored in the vote cast against endorsing the twelve-party declaration by most of those NEC members who are leaders of state and district organizations.

**On the other hand, those who supported the Foster line were mostly national functionaries with little direct rank-and-file contact.**

Among those who voted with Gates are Dorothy Healy, head of the Southern California District and Mickey Lima,

a top figure in the Northern California District. The others were Fred Fine and Claude Lightfoot (Chicago); Martha Stone (New Jersey); Mike Russo (Massachusetts); Carl Ross (Minnesota); David Davis (Philadelphia); George Charney (New York); plus Stein and Gates.

Voting for the Moscow declaration were Ben Davis (New York), Eugene Dennis, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, James Jackson, Hy Lumer (Ohio) and Robert Thompson. Carl Winter (Michigan) and Jack Stachel abstained. Foster and George Myers were absent.

The new division in the NEC is also shown in sharpening of factional warfare on the organization plane.

By the same 11-7 vote as on the independence issue the committee strongly censured the Fosterite majority of the National Administrative Committee.

The Fosterites had apparently used their majority on the NAC to vote endorsement of the 12-party declaration and then tried to make this public as a statement of party policy without consulting the NEC.

## ECONOMICS

### CAN NEW 'NEW DEAL' STOP U.S. SLUMP?

By Tom Kemp

A CRISIS of unknown dimensions is now in prospect in the U.S.A. But how far can government spending and action on 'New Deal' and Keynesian lines prevent further economic decline and swing the economy back on an upward curve?

The immense increase in public spending since the thirties has been emphasized on all hands in the past decade or two. Its very size, and the proportion it bears to the National Income, is a testimony to the inability of even American capitalism to function through the market mechanism alone.

State spending has become indispensable, built into the structure of present-day American capitalism. This in itself may set a bottom to any future depression: but there is no reason to suppose that it will prevent one.

Over the last few years the total of public expenditure has continued to increase. But it may not do so in 1958. An

This is the second of two articles by Tom Kemp on the economic situation in the USA.

increase in unemployment will involve greater expenditures, but tax revenues will almost certainly shrink, setting up a demand for economies.

It cannot be assumed, either, that public expenditures naturally compensate for deficiencies in private outlays. Over recent years the two have moved upwards together. Why should they not move downward together?

Until the New Deal and Keynes, this is what normally happened. The public authorities behaved very much like business enterprises as far as the timing of their expenditures on capital account was concerned.

Now state and local governments spend about one-third of the total government expenditures in the USA and they may still tend to behave in a pre-Keynesian fashion, i.e., if tax receipts fall and business is gloomy they may go in for economy and postpone investment projects.

At the Federal level greater sophistication can be assumed; but here the political factor is important.

When Strachey wrote about democratic pressures on government economic policy there were quite a few things he missed out about the working of the two-party system.

Thus the Eisenhower administration faces a hostile, Democratic Congress. The Democrats may be quite prepared to see a Republican slump—just enough of one, at any rate, to

provide them with election ammunition.

As Congressional sanction is now required for further borrowing (i.e., involving additions to the Federal Debt) this gives them a strong hand.

Even Strachey admits that the American ruling class (though he does not use this straightforward term) 'think in their heart of hearts that drastic oscillations of economic activity are inevitable, and may even be desirable'.

This may very well be a widely held, but necessarily private, view in the Republican Party, to judge from recent economic policy, or lack of it.

As the Financial Times put it, with a different interpretation in mind: 'The present American administration cannot be relied upon either for dynamic leadership or for recognizing the real nature of the economic situation'.

Certainly there has been no sign of 'economic statesmanship' either from the administration or from the fuddling interest policy of the Federal Reserve Board. Eisenhower must have learned the technique of 'muddling through' during his sojourns in Europe. All in all, 'contemporary capitalism' does not seem to be running true to form.

There is still time to apply crisis measures, though it may well be that in the present situation the psychological effect would be to make matters worse. And it is doubtful whether they could be applied as expeditiously as may become necessary.

Besides, what new public expenditures would be appropriate for American capitalism? What administration is going to risk encroachments into the preserves of private enterprise?

Recourse to greatly increased arms expenditure, though not to be excluded (with all the re-intensification of the cold war it would imply), would run counter to the moderate Kennan school in foreign policy.

A big programme of technical development and space research, with all the gimmicks, to restore home morale and restore and boost American prestige abroad is not impossible, in moderation; but hardly on the scale necessary to boost the economy. In any case such steps would only postpone trouble to a later date.

### Much greater domestic resistance

The same can be said of other possibilities. There could be a new, grandiose give-away—to some of those nations which have been snapping at the hand which fed it in the last year or two . . .

It is true that more than one European country is in need of foreign aid and that the capital needs of some underdeveloped countries are becoming desperate.

But still this is not 1947. Such a policy would encounter much greater domestic resistance in the USA. And the mouths of gift horses are going to be scrutinized with much more care in this year of grace.

There are endless possibilities. No doubt the coming year will answer some of the questions we have been asking about the American economy, or give a firmer basis for answering them.

Should the American economy move further into crisis the most immediately significant effects will be felt in other parts of the world.

The very survival of capitalism as a world system owes much to ability of the U.S. economy to plaster over the cracks in the post-war structure of world capitalism.

The role of the USA in holding the system together remains vital. As a writer in Barclays Bank Review put it in a disenchanted article entitled 'The American Enigma' (Nov. 1957):

The need (for a resurgence of production in the United States) is as much political as economic, for, in a world so divided ideologically, **capitalism as exemplified by the American way of life must demonstrate its ability to prevent a severe recession.**

In other words even a 'severe recession', not a full-blown depression, will, it is feared, strike a blow at capitalism as a world system.

The ideological appeal of capitalism in the world derives primarily from the only dynamic and relatively self-sustaining model extant, i.e., the USA.

If that shows wild instabilities not only will other parts of the capitalist world system be severely shaken, perhaps to their very foundations—presenting new opportunities for clear-sighted and energetic socialist leadership—but the main prop of the defenders of capitalism in other countries will have been snatched away from under them.

## SCIENCE

### SCIENTIFIC, MILITARY AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF SPUTNIKS

By J. H. Bradley

THE implications of the Sputniks fall into two clear classes, the purely scientific and the military. Scientifically, we now know far more about the high atmosphere, the cosmic rays and the properties of the sun than was feasible before.

The predictions of the rapid fall of Sputnik I made a few days after its launching were not sour grapes—they showed the upper atmosphere was far less dense than we had supposed.

There is a curious conflict between the immediate correct predictions of the Soviet scientists about Sputnik I and the curves of atmospheric density published in Priroda a few months before, which agreed with Western measurements.

Really sour grapes, however, was the prediction by a speaker on the American CBS network that no results from the sputnik would ever be released, some five minutes after the first Moscow broadcast giving cosmic ray measurements!

The broadcast was part of an exchange series with Moscow radio, and was duly relayed round the world.

This 'dirty hunk of old iron' which 'anybody can throw into the sky' may also allow measurements on the variation of density in the core of the earth, though Sputniks well outside the atmosphere are needed here, and the observations are of extreme difficulty.

It will be possible, by international co-operation, to check certain predictions of two rival schools (the Dingle and McCrea schools) based on the Special Theory of Relativity.

The question is this: whether time is the same on bodies which separate and come together again. The answer is by no means obvious, but many Western physicists use formulae wildly in situations they were never intended to apply to.

Important military implications are contained in the phrase 'once the importunities of certain aggressive ideologists had been swept aside', used by Hyman Levy in the Humanist of December 1957.

Clearly the Russians have fuels and guidance systems far more powerful and accurate than anything we have any idea how to make, for the orbits of the Sputniks were announced before they could have been measured.

Perhaps the new fuel may mean that missiles can be put in holes in the ground in instant readiness. The Soviet claims for the world air speed record, and to have a plane which can fly round the world without refuelling, strongly suggest such a fuel.

Of course, nothing was said about the payload carried by this plane, any more than by the American plane which can fly 7,000 miles.

It is hard to find any important scientific field in which the USSR is not well represented. This contrasts with extensive technical backwardness, and disposes of the idea that to date they have been copying ready-made foreign achievements.

A recent symposium in the American periodical Science shows a new, objective attitude to Soviet science, though there are still such legacies of ignorance as the denial of any Soviet work on a branch of physics called neutron diffraction.

The Sputniks have dangerous political implications in the

West. American newspapers shamelessly denied the availability of information which was being printed in the Manchester Guardian for all the world to see.

Some of them are still discovering that the USSR 'recently' issued a stamp commemorating Sputnik I—ten weeks after its publication.

Long and bitter struggles must now take place, not only by Western nations seeking their independence from the USA, but between those who practise the methods of McCarthy and those who have sober scientific regard for undeniable achievements.

## DOCUMENT

### YCL MEMBERS ASK SEARCHING QUESTIONS

**The authors of this letter to the general secretary of the Communist Party have now been recommended for expulsion from the YCL. The letter has been slightly abridged.**

DEAR COMRADE GOLLAN,

The writers of this letter have been accused of 'factionalism' by the London leadership of the Young Communist League.

When the district committee meets on January 8, we understand that steps will be taken to expel us from the YCL. Before such action is taken, we feel that as a leading member of the party you should be acquainted with the political issues involved, and we would appreciate it if you could see your way to comment on what we have to say.

The decline in membership and influence of the YCL since the Twentieth Congress is a matter of great concern for all communists. The Tory offensive presses down on the youth and there are many indications that substantial numbers are becoming politically minded.

Yet at this time our League is losing ground and with it the possibility of becoming a mass youth organisation.

Our differences with the leadership of the League lie in the fact that they refuse to analyse politically the reasons for this dangerous situation.

At the same time they hurl accusations of 'factionalism', 'Trotskyism' and 'Titoism' against those of us who insist that a political answer is necessary.

Such methods, we submit, are a hangover from the worst features of the Stalin era, and are one of the main obstacles in building the YCL today.

The declaration of the Communist and Workers' Parties which met in Moscow on November 14-16, while it emphasizes some of our most important problems, nevertheless fails to provide adequate answers.

'Revisionism', 'sectarianism' and 'dogmatism' are set forth as the main dangers. What do we mean by these characterizations? To begin with, were the politics of Stalin revisionist?

In his article 'Questions Posed by the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU' Comrade Togliatti declared that 'Stalin's errors were linked with an excessive increase in the weight of the bureaucratic apparatus, economic life and political system, and perhaps above all in the life of the party.'

'Stalin', Togliatti goes on to say, 'was, at the same time, the expression and the author of this situation, both because he was the most expert organizer and leader of an apparatus of a bureaucratic type at the moment in which this superseded democratic constitutions, and because he gave a theoretical justification for what was a mistaken line, which was followed to a point at which there was degeneration, in the form of his personal power.' (Our emphasis)

From all this it seems to us that when Stalin 'gave a theoretical justification' to bureaucracy he was guilty of revisionism. Are not the teaching of Marx and Lenin opposed to bureaucracy in all its forms?

Here in Britain we justified Stalin's revisionism on all questions. At the 1949 Congress of our party Harry Pollitt's report declared [that Tito was a Western imperialist agent and Titoism a new and more dangerous form of Trotskyism].

In the light of Comrade Khrushchev's speech at the Belgrade airport was this not a revisionist statement? Would it not be correct to characterize James Klugmann's book 'From Trotsky to Tito' as the work of a man seriously affected by revisionism?

The question is of some importance since Comrade Klugmann is still educational director of the party. To our knowledge he has never politically analysed his revisionist book.

Presumably he will be entrusted with the task of educating us on the recent 'declaration', although we fail to understand how a person who has not corrected himself politically can correct others. How does this line up with the principle of 'criticism and self-criticism'?

Harry Pollitt insisted that the Titoites were trained by the Trotskyites. Does not Khrushchev's admission that the attacks on Tito were a mistake also extend to the Trotskyites? If not, why not?

We ask these questions because we note with some bewilderment that the Yugoslav delegation refused to vote for this 'declaration'. If in the future Comrade Khrushchev launches a political attack on the leadership of the Yugoslav communists, is there not a danger that we may once again employ the old revisionist labels such as 'Trotskyites' etc. etc.?

After all, we accepted without question the removal of Molotov and Malenkov and their replacement by Zhukov, and later still we saw nothing wrong when the latter was demoted.

Our party and YCL leadership are now in the position where they accept the policy of Khrushchev without question, in the same manner as they accepted the policies of Stalin. What if at some future date Khrushchev is removed and we learn that perhaps he also was 'a trained Trotskyite'?



More publications will have to be withdrawn like Klugmann's book, and no doubt we shall be told that 'mistakes were made' but they are now 'corrected'.

It is this 'Moscow right or wrong' position which constitutes in our view the main revisionist threat today, and in our opinion we cannot speak about the dangers of revisionism unless we politically study the origins of Stalinism.

Here again we have no authentic history, either of the Soviet or British party, to assist us. How can we claim to be a Marxist party and at the same time not produce an accurate history of past events?

We submit that the great obstacle to our work in building the party and YCL today is that we are still known as 'Moscow men' and not as Marxists who are not afraid to give a truthful accounting of past events, even though these may be unpleasant for some of our leading people.

'Sectarianism' and 'dogmatism' flow from 'revisionism'. We denounced the Labour Party in 1929 as 'social-fascist' because Moscow wanted it that way. We dogmatically hailed Stalin as the wise leader because it pleased Moscow.

The leadership of the London YCL can expel us bureaucratically if they wish, but this will not resolve the problems of our League. We may be guilty of factionalism—we are certainly guilty of fighting for the basic aims of our party.

All we want is genuine Marxist discussion in order to strengthen our day-to-day activity. In this we feel that we voice the opinions of a large number of party and YCL members.

They, as well as we, want to get rid of the theoretical baggage of Stalinism, and we are determined to continue with a struggle towards this end.

We ask you therefore to oppose our expulsion, thus helping to restore confidence in the political integrity of the League.

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