

# SOCIALIST REVIEW

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW, BUT INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

9th YEAR No 9

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SIXPENCE

**FORTNIGHTLY**  
for the  
**Industrial Militant —**  
for  
**International**  
**Socialism**

## LABOUR MUST FIGHT BACK!

Big Business is making no secret of its plans. It wants the Tories in government and is going to keep them there. None of this gentlemanly diversion into industrial and political campaigning. No ideological front is to be left undisturbed.

So you have the booze budget and Macmillan's sum-miteering. You have the Engineering Employers' demand for a showdown with organized labour in their pamphlet **Looking at Industrial Relations**. Now the National Union of Manufacturers have followed the steel barons in mounting an offensive on nationalization. **This is Your Fight** they call it.

And what has Labour done in defense? Where are the great ideological battles being joined? Big Business uses its power to sack workers and victimize stewards, to undermine our gains by government action. Our Party answers by segregating politics neatly from economics and remaining impotent in both.

We must answer in defiance. Solemn pledges on H Tests are not enough. Equally solemn pledges to oppose sackings, to defend victimized shop-stewards, to support embattled workers in the small and big showdowns of everyday are needed. And behind the pledges—action. More, there must be a clear statement of our basic socialist aims; full nationalization and national planning under workers' control.

### Socialist Review

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We need £20 an issue

During the last fortnight we have received from:

	£	s.	d.
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G.C. (Birmingham) ...	2	0	0
P.M. (Birmingham) ...	1	0	0
C.B. (Barrow-in-Furness) ...		10	0
Readers in Islington ...	2	19	0
Readers in N. Lewisham ...	1	13	9
<b>Total ...</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>

**THANKS! and KEEP IT UP, COMRADES!**  
I enclose a contribution of £ s. d. to the  
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Address

Send to **SOCIALIST REVIEW APPEAL  
FUND, 35B, Priory Terrace, London, NW6,**

Why should we go **into action** for a program short of this, short of radical change? Why be enthusiastic about turning out to the polls, turning out the local Tories, doing any of the necessary work unless they held out a promise of a different future? Writing before the results of the local elections are declared, we confidently predict an apathetic response, as apathetic as our official Party program is undemanding.

## NUR UNION GOES IT ALONE

By **JOE SPOUTHALL**

**T**HE members of the National Union of Railwaymen who are mostly the lowest paid of railway workers, are bound to be putting greater pressure on the leadership, at this stage, than members of the other two sectional Unions, the ASLE & F (Locomen) and the TSSA (mainly clerks). That, essentially, is the explanation for the cold-shoulder given to the NUR by the other two when approaches were made to get them to join in a new wages claim for "a substantial increase." The decision of the NUR Executive was taken the day after the London DC of the Union had called for a 20 per cent increase and sent a special deputation to present it to the Union General Secretary Sydney Greene, the next day.

pay enquiry to see how the rail workers compared with workers in other industries. It is true that railway basic wage-rates are amongst the lowest in all industry. Only additional earnings in the shape of overtime, rest-day and week-end workings, have been getting them along.

In a recent list of basic rates compared with take-home pay published in the NUR weekly **Railway Review**, average take-home pay was about a quarter to a third more than base rates. As an example: average rates for shunters are £8 14s against average £10 7s earnings. Of course, average figures can be misleading and, in many instances, the earnings are well below the sum stated.

### Never militant

In the coming weeks, the NUR will now go through the motions of presenting its claim through the usual stages. It is said that although the ASLE & F took a similar official attitude to the TSSA, the Locomen's NEC was evenly divided on the issue. They may yet be pressed to join the NUR, who cater for some of the footplate staffs. The TSSA (formerly RCA) has never been in the forefront of militant action, and has usually come along to pick up consequent adjustments for its membership after the pace has been set by the other two.

During the last railway wages debacle (we get one about once a year), the three Unions settled for a 3 per cent increase and a

### Dole standards

Recently the EC of the NUR found it necessary to issue a reminder that they are not willing agents of the present economy drive of the BTC and, although they support broadly the Modernization Plan now going forward, they do not accept many of the measures being taken as being part of the Plan. The South Wales and the South Western DC has coined the term "economania" and it is now being freely used in the industry. The drive is slashing at the "additional" of the workers and forcing them onto base rates which are more akin to "dole" standards. Although Messrs Greene and Evans, respectively secretary and president, are well to the right as TU

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## INDUSTRIAL

## BUILD LEFT IN THE AEU

SR readers will know the name Geoff Carlsson as one of the regular contributors to our columns. Recently Carlsson stood for election to the Presidency of the AEU in order to offer the members of his union something more positive than the grim alternative of Right-Wing Carron and Stalinist Birch.

We are printing Carlsson's election address in full. We believe it offers the type of program militant trade-unionists can adopt and fight for, not only in the AEU but in every working class organisation.

—Editor.

117, Carmelite Road,  
Harrow Weald,  
Middx.

Dear Brothers,

In allowing my name to go forward for the position of President, I realise what a serious and important job it is. Although I am a comparatively young member (34 years old), not possessing the impressive qualifications other candidates have, I feel the necessity of challenging the present holder who has not, in my opinion, given the correct leadership called for at this present time.

However, I have been a Shop Steward for 3½ years and am at present Convenor at ENV, Willesden. I was Branch President in 1955/6 and on the Executive of the Hammersmith & Kensington Trades' Council during the same years. Also, I am an NCLC tutor.

Important though qualifications may be, more important in my opinion is the candidate's attitude to working-class problems in general and AEU problems in particular. The employers and their spokesmen in the Tory Government are attempting to use the present economic situation to discipline the workers, and, with the weapon of unemployment, to break the ranks of organised Labour. Sad to say, at this crucial time the leadership necessary to inspire and guide working-class action does not exist to any great extent, either in our own Union or in the Trade Union Movement generally. The failure of the TUC and our own Union to give effective leadership and support to the London busmen when the employers' government started its offensive, has already cost us dearly.

Result of the election to AEU presidency are as follows:

William Carron .....	57,127
Reg Birch .....	19,779
Geoff Carlsson .....	5,615
B Martin .....	5,463
J Sanders .....	3,461

91,400 votes were cast out of a possible total of 960,000.

The figures intimate that a special effort was made by the Right to Get Carron back, that the CP's candidate Birch lost some 10,000 votes or so, a large part of which was picked up by Carlsson, the independent socialist candidate. We believe Carlsson's to be a good vote, well above anything that might reasonably have been expected and a good augury for the development of a militant socialist consciousness within the AEU.

The paltry wage increase which we Engineers obtained was based, not on the merits of our case, but on what the busmen managed to wring from the Government. This constituted the wages pattern for 1958. It in no way compensated for the rise in the cost of living, and certainly did not amount to what could have been obtained out of the vast profits if the full strength of the Union had been brought to bear against the Employers.

In the struggle against redundancy, which I consider is the paramount question which we face in the AEU, we have a policy on paper, but no endeavour from the leadership to carry that policy out. In fact, it is apparent that in the main the only resistance is coming from the Shop Stewards' Committees, which are the priority targets of the Employers, and which have not had the support of our leadership, who seem more intent on "Red-baiting" and "witch-hunting"—to the detriment of our Union.

In the elections over the past years, members have had to choose between candidates backed by the right-wing Labour or the Communist Party. The choice has not been easy.

Although most members owe allegiance to the Labour Party, they cannot accept the policies pursued by the right-wing of the Trade Union and Labour Party when these have included wage-freezing, class collaboration and "sell-outs." Alternatively, although they respect the militant activities of the individual Communist Party member in the daily struggle on the shop floor, they cannot ignore the external loyalties of the Communist Party to Russia; nor forget the anti-working-class measures adopted by that country in East Berlin, Poznan, Hungary, etc.

I am a member of the Labour Party, and a firm believer in international socialism, but I do not believe it can be achieved by accepting the policies of the Communist Party or of the right-wing at Transport House. I believe that we members of the Trade Union must fight within these organisations for a complete change of leadership and policy.

We must strive for a movement that will fight at all times in the interests of the working-class as the only class capable of playing a progressive role in society. We must work for a movement that will stand politically for International Socialism—Independent of both Washington and Moscow—and industrially will pursue a policy of increasing the share of our product for our members, until we arrive at a stage when industry is taken out of the hands of the Capitalist class and placed under workers' control.

This, briefly, is my attitude. I hope it will receive your support.

Yours fraternally,  
GEOFF CARLSSON.

Supported by:—

Brother Crane, President Willesden 5.

Labour Party Councillor.

Brother Hagger, Secretary Feltham 3.

Brother P Jordan, Nottingham No. 5.

Delegate City Labour Party,  
Delegate Trades Council.

Brother Leese, Longton Branch, Shop Steward, Labour Party Councillor, Stoke.

Brother Parrymore, Slough 6, Shop Steward, member District Committee.

Brother Searle, President Tottenham 6, Convenor Benjamin Electric.

## NUBE—

## NEEDED, MILITANT POLICY

by N Conquest

THE National Union of Bank Employees has always been one of the most "newsworthy" of the non-manual trade unions. Hardly a week goes by without some mention of the activities of this 50,000 strong black-coated union appearing in the national press or a question being asked on its behalf in the House of Commons.

That nearly half of the ultra respectable, "middle class" men and women working in banks are members of a trade union is, in itself, a rather startling fact. It upsets one's idea of the established order of things to be faced with the possibility that dapper Mr Jones, the chief cashier with the distinguished, grey-at-the-temples look and the superior smile (smarter even than the manager of Burton's) might be a secret shop steward. Who knows what dark thoughts may be passing through his head as he thumbs through the pile of pound notes, rejecting one here and there for no apparent reason. Perhaps he is thinking of tonight's Branch meeting or, even worse, of whether or not he will be elected a delegate to this year's TUC to, perhaps, rub shoulders with the dreaded Mr Cousins.

There is, however, little about NUBE to strike terror into the

heart of the most timid small shopkeeper of Surbiton and it is unlikely that they will be faced with pickets next time they go round the corner to pay in their takings. In fact, the history of NUBE has been a tale of extreme moderation being treated by the employers with extreme contempt.

In forty years the Union has been able to obtain recognition only from Barclays of the "Big Five" banks, and even there it is shared with the bank's own company union. In the others, despite large membership, the employers barely acknowledge the union's letters.

Before the formation of the Bank Officers Guild (later NUBE) in 1918, there was no form of staff representation in banking. The initial success of the Guild was countered in 1919, by the management of the Midland Bank setting up an internal staff association, which was recognised before it had any members and which had the immediate effect of dividing the staff and crippling the Union. The other Banks were not slow to follow suit and the membership of the BOG, which had reached 30,000 in 1920, fell to under 18,000 in 1939. The idea of

see opposite

# John Phillips Discusses, Inter-union disputes — the danger

TU COMMENTARY

## ★ In Lancashire

1 . . . . The last 12 out of 100 employees of a plastics factory in Lancashire have been sacked because of an inter-union dispute. Under a national agreement with the Confederation of Engineering Unions, plastics workers can belong either to the Transport and General or General and Municipal Workers' Union.

### Dispute

The workers were members of the Transport Unions, but two months ago, the Associated Society of Woodworkers persuaded five girls to join the Society after telling them that unless they joined they would not be permitted to do so when the Society had completed arrangements to organize labour at the works. The Society also told the employer that unless he agreed, all products would be "blacked." The two unions have met, but the Woodworkers still insist on organizing. Perhaps they want to prove that they can lengthen dole queues better than thou.

### NUBE — end

"company unions" might well have been tailored to suit bank clerks. Only the hard economic pressures following the first world war forced them to take a course of action completely out of character and form a trade union. Immediately a "respectable" alternative was offered to them they flocked to it.

At the end of the second world war the climate in banking changed again. Ex-service men returned feeling more like men and less like bank clerks and found that in the face of a generally rising standard of living their salaries had barely risen above pre-war levels. Many of them joined the Union, others tried in vain to make the internal staff associations work.

### Staff association

In 1951 the Midland Bank Association dissolved itself when its ineffectiveness became obvious and although NUBE membership increased rapidly for nearly three years the management steadfastly refused to recognize the Union and eventually was obliged to repeat its 1919 tactic and set up a second staff association. It is difficult to understand how the same trick could be pulled twice in a lifetime, but such is the mentality of bank workers that before very long the second association had a membership of several thousands. As a reward this "puppet" organization was presented by the bank with an "agreement" which included a built in arbitration clause (which has never been, and is never likely to be, invoked). Once again most of the other banks followed the Midland's lead.

This time the employers were less successful than in 1919 and despite subtle intimidation of union members and open support of the staff associations, NUBE's

## ★ At Jaguars

2 . . . . A dispute between the TGWU and National Union of Vehicle Builders put 3,000 men out of work for nearly a week at Jaguars, Coventry.

### Who belongs?

The Vehicle Builders insisted that a youth drilling holes should belong to their Union. (There are agreements between the two unions pledging co-operation and regulating membership). The Transport workers, thinking that they were being coerced, decided not to work with members of unions who refused to work with members of other unions and came out on strike. The rest were sent home. The next day, the Vehicle Builders came out and again the rest sent home. When everybody was back at work, the Union agreed that future disputes would not be settled through striking. An attempt would be made to work out an (another!) agreement to resolve the "many demarcation problems". And so the crazy roundabout goes on.

membership rose to its present total of 50,000.

Unfortunately it does not look as though the bank employees have learned much from past experiences. Despite occasional militant words from some of the Union's leaders there is, as yet, no sign of militant action. In fact, NUBE seems to go out of its way to reassure anyone who might consider that the bank clerk has nearly reached boiling point. The Union has a strike clause which in practice makes it virtually impossible to have a strike and the leaders never hesitate to point out this comforting fact to potential members, the press and the employers. Attempts to change the rule at Annual Conferences have always been opposed by the leadership and always failed. This year a London branch will try again but this resolution is likely to meet the fate of its predecessors.

The main trouble is that the employers fully realise the potential dangers of a strong trade union in banking and will go to any lengths, even if need be by increasing salaries, to prevent this coming about. Add to the ruthless opposition of the employers, the timidity of the workers and the lack of a really militant lead by the union and I think you will agree that, for the time being at least, Lord Monckton can sleep soundly in his bed.

**Barclays, The National, The Co-operative and the Trustee Savings Banks all recognize NUBE. If you or your trade union branch has an account with any of the others, remove it and let it be known why you are doing so. If your account is as microscopic as mine this course of action will be largely symbolic but at least it might help to give to the trade unionists in the banks the encouragement they so badly need.**

## ★ At Cammel Lairds

3 . . . . 1,500 Boilermakers are out on strike again at Cammel Lairds over a "who shall do what" argument. The strike followed a recent refusal of two members of the Boilermakers Union to work alongside members of the Shipwright's Union whom the Boilermakers considered were doing work which should be done by plater members of their union. When the firm refused to place the two men in other work while the matter was being discussed by the two Unions concerned, the Boilermaker's met and unanimously decided to strike.

## Unemployment

On April 13 there were 531,000 people registered as unemployed in Britain, of whom 486,000 were wholly unemployed and 45,000 were temporarily stopped.

Unemployment among adults decreased by 28,000 while unemployment among boys and girls increased by 8,000.

Expressed as a proportion of the estimated number of employees, unemployment in April was 2.4 per cent, compared with 2.5 per cent in March. In April, 1958, it was 2 per cent.

The number registered as unemployed in Northern Ireland on April 13 was 37,400 (7.9 per cent), 3,500 fewer than on March 9.

Employment exchanges filled 169,000 vacancies in the five-week period ended April 8. The number of vacancies notified to exchanges but remaining unfilled on April 8 was 98,000; this was 17,000 more than in March.

Times, May 1

At the time of writing, one in four of the remaining workers are now out of work. According to reports, the local leaders insist that the issue at stake is victimization, not demarcation, and that it was the company rather than the shipwrights with whom they were at odds. Bro W Kerr, delegate of the Boilermakers' Society, said that talks were in progress between the two unions at executive level, but they could not of themselves produce a settlement because the executives were "clearly unacquainted with the facts surrounding the dispute" (and their only job was to produce a frame of reference in which discussions could be held at local level). But even so, he insists, "no such discussions could be allowed to begin until alternative work was found for his two 'victimized' members." This, of course, the management refuses to do.

Bro Jack Howson, district delegate of the Shipwrights Association, said that what had happened in the yard was anarchism, not trade unionism, and it was only due to the intervention of the Boilermakers' Society that

also said that, in most cases, it had been extremely difficult, in fact, almost impossible, to get an agreement with the Boilermakers Society to place demarcation disputes before an independent arbiter. (He then continues "this is one time when the management have done everything possible to avoid a dispute, short of calling on Boilermakers Society officials to run the yard for them.)

Bro Kerr may feel rather righteous in saying that his members are fighting the bosses and not other workers, but still the fact remains that Cammel Laird's are sacking men left right and centre. At a meeting between the management and representatives of the Engineering Unions, the unions protested that "men were being sacked indiscriminately whether their jobs were dependent on the Boilermakers or not."

Of course, looking at it from the other side of the boardroom table what better excuse, what better opportunity to take advantage of the internecine activities of their workers to get rid of a few faces they don't like, and promote enmity between the rank and file workers?

In the two other union disputes above, it appears that they were inspired by paid officialdom, to which I think no comment need be added. The Cammel Laird dispute, however, is much more disturbing as it seems that the whole thing started with the shop stewards concerned. Unless one is directly concerned or on the spot (which this column is not), it is unfair and dangerous to pass judgment one way or another.

Nevertheless, instances like this should not pass without some comment. **Socialist Review has often, in the past, pointed out the need for industrial unionism, and I think that this point must be hammered home every time these disputes arise. Only when officials and workers stop dissipating their energies in fruitless (except for the bosses) squabbles, and diverting the fight of every worker against his boss will the workers succeed in getting what they want.**

On more word on industrial unions. Last week nineteen building unions met to discuss demarcation problems. Bro. (Sir) Richard Coppock, president of the NFBTO, said (after first blaming demarcation disputes on to "entrepreneurs") "The mind is desirous but the money in the bank is a difficult problem (wealthy unions are loth to pool their resources with their poorer brethren)."

Have you any money in the bank, Dick?

★

**THE** Scottish TU Congress amended its constitution to allow the General Council to intervene in industrial disputes in conditions where members of other unions, which are not parties to the dispute, are likely to be involved.

## INTERNATIONAL

## TWO YEARS SINCE MAO'S FAMOUS SPEECH

## CHINA : THE HUNDRED FLOWERS WILT

by TONY CLIFF

It is two years since the policy of "A hundred flowers will bloom" was launched in China (May, 1957).

This campaign in its way revealed, better than anything else, the real social and political character of Mao's China.

The "hundred flowers" campaign was launched largely as an after-effect of the Hungarian revolution. Mao saw to what extent a so-called Communist regime can become isolated from the people and found it advisable to allow popular criticism to be vented in order to prevent a social explosion.

Mao made a sharp attack on "bureaucratism" and stressed the need to deal carefully and patiently with "contradictions among the people" and between the "people and the leadership." The Communist leaders deferred to the new spirit of the "hundred flowers" policy to invite all organizations and individuals to join with the Communists in open and frank criticism of all the deficiencies of the Party activities, especially of the three "evils of bureaucratism, sectarianism and subjectivism." Assurances were given that no action would be taken against the critics, and that the movement would be carried out "as gently as a breeze or a fine rain." (New China News Agency, April 30, 1957).

As we shall see presently, despite these pledges, a bare month passed before the movement to cleanse the Party suddenly turned into a campaign to crush the critics.

**Criticism short-lived**

On June 8, the *People's Daily* gave the signal for the change, charging that certain people had taken advantage of the rectification movement to try to overthrow the Communist Party. The following months saw the unfolding of a vast "anti-rightist" campaign attacking all those who dared to criticise the shortcomings of the Party during the month of "free criticism." Thousands upon thousands both outside and inside the Party became the victims of this campaign. However, the short-lived period of free criticism served to reveal the terrific tensions rending Mao's regime, the great amount of gunpowder lying under its foundations.

The leadership's announcement of the rectification of the Communist Party caused great excitement, especially among the intellectuals, who, as in Hungary, were the first to taste the new freedom. As one paper wrote:

The bulletins began to be more active in Peking University. All available wall space around the Mess Hall was filled with these bulletins. At one corner there appeared the "democratic wall"; at another corner there was opened the "garden of freedom," the "democratic tribunal." Some articles were written by persons individually, others jointly produced by a number of people, and still others produced by the students associations of departments. According to statistics compiled by one student, by the evening of May 22, over 500 bulletins had been issued.

At this time, there were developed debates of varying scopes, started spontaneously or with proper organization. On the square in front of the Mess Hall, like in Hyde Park, thousands of students were listening to one heated debate after another. The Student Association announced that the period from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. would be given to debates, and two class rooms were allotted for the purpose, while platforms were also erected and loudspeakers installed on the square to facilitate the holding of debates. The university magazine, the broadcasting station, and the Blackboard Bulletin all carried reports on the viewpoints expressed by students in the course of their contention.

In Peking University with its glorious revolutionary tradition, more than 8,000 young people had become inflamed with enthusiasm. (Wen Hui Pao, May 27, 1957).

In their excitement people came out with the sharpest criticism of the Communist Party and its rule. Thus, one playwright, Ho Chih, a member of the Communist Party,

wrote a play entitled *Disease of Unity*, in which he poured scorn on totalitarian regimentation. The play describes a city of a million people, the mayor of which once contracted the "disease of unity." In his pursuit of "unity," this mayor not only cancelled all the names of the people in the city and gave each a number to follow in his daily routine of livelihood, but also, for the sake of "unity" of physique and features of the people, ordered the "medicine of unity" for everyone of the whole city so that they subsequently became people with the same appearance in ten different categories. The result was great confusion among all, with fathers and sons and husbands unable to recognise each other. Finally, they had no choice but to recover their original features. (New China News Agency, August 22, 1957).

**Rulers tool**

Li Shi-chun, Director of the Nanking Bureau of Civil Administration, at a forum called by the Communist Party Kiangsu Provincial Committee on May 23, severely attacked the Public Security Organisation. He said that the Public Security Personnel were as numerous as "the hairs of a tiger" and were "dreadful and hateful." He called the personnel dossiers "the record of life and death." (New China News Agency, July 14, 1957). A student in Nanning said: "The system of personnel dossiers was a ruler's tool with which the Tsars dealt with revolutionaries" (Kwangsi Jih Pao, October 3, 1957).

Ko Pei-chi, lecturer of physics and chemistry in the China People's University stated: "The Party members behave like plain clothes police and place the masses under their surveillance — China belongs to 600,000,000 people — It does not belong to the Communist Party alone. It is good for the Party members to behave as masters, but your adoption of the 'I am the State' attitude cannot be tolerated." (Jen Min Jih Pao, May 31, 1957).

Engineer Lt P'ei-ying of Tientsin said:

When the Communists first entered Tientsin, they said that it was a revolution, and that 'our revolution is not a change of dynasties.' But judging from present conditions, it is even worse than a change of dynasties. To live in such a society is a most disheartening thing. Intellectuals are more timid and nervous day after day, living a life that is less peaceful even than in the Japanese period or under Kuomintang rule. (Ibid, June 12, 1957).

**Party privileges**

One, Liu Tseng, declared that "Party members are secret agents and they are worse than the Japanese agents during the occupation period." (New China News Agency, June 30, 1957). In Tsinghua University a number of students and professors branded Communists as a "privileged class," even "fascists." (Chung Kuo Ching Nien Pao, June 21, 1957) Hsu Hsing-chin, Councillor of the State Council, wanted "to end the practice of making the high-ranking cadres a privileged class." (New China News Agency, May 27, 1957). Again, while complaining of the generally low standard of living of the people, one Ko Pei-chi, stated that not all suffered: "Who are the people who enjoy a higher standard of living? They are the Party members and cadres who wore worn-out shoes in the past but travel in saloon cars and put on woollen uniform now." (Jen Min Jih Pao, May 31, 1957).

Again, in a forum convened by the Chinese Communist Party, one Chu Yunshan, said:

In leading the masses to carry on the revolution in the past the Party stood among the masses; after liberation, the position was changed in its mind and, instead of standing among the masses, it stood on the back of the masses and ruled the masses.

Government cadres should differ in duties and not in status. Some are deeply conscious of being officials; they occupy special positions even when taking meals and seeing operas." (New China News Agency, May 30, 1957).

Lui Kan, a student in the Department of Geology at Nanking University, called for the "abolition of special privileges of the Party and young Communist League." (Jen Min Jih Pao, July 12, 1957). Chou Ta-chio, a student at the Aviation College in Peking, spoke about the "new class" of Communist Party high officials who "had obtained financial advantages from controlling financial activities" — the "leaders class." (New China News Agency, July 16, 1957). Liu Ti-sheng, an assistant professor at Nanking University, called upon the Communist Party to "liberate the Chinese people for a second time." (Jen Min Jih Pao, July 12, 1957). A professor of sociology, Li Ching-han, declared that the Communist Party "rules the people with Marxist-Leninist textbooks in its left hand Soviet weapons in its right." (Jen Min Jih Pao, August 30, 1957).

Pao Chu-t'ao, a student of the Normal College at Kwangsi, said:

"The Communist Party monopolises all the power in China today. All you can do is to flatter it and cater to its every wish. You will be in its good books by simply shouting 'I support . . .' and 'Long live . . .' all the time. What you really think does not matter." He also said that "the Party is a hotbed for two-faced characters." (Kwangsi Jih Pao, October 3, 1957).

**"Loyal stooge"**

In an article, entitled "Second Tour of River Village," published in the June issue of the *New Observer*, Fei Hsiao-tung, probably the most famous sociologist in China today, and up to then the pride of the Communist regime, asserted that "the peasants do not live so well as twenty years ago." For this statement he was called, a few months later, "a despicable, obsequious, loyal stooge of imperialism." (Houch Hoi, September 18, 1957).

Reference was constantly made to the Hungarian revolution. Thus one professor at Peking University, Chien Wei-cheng, stated: "This is the eve of the Polish and Hungarian events." (New China News Agency, July 6, 1957).

**Mass demonstrations**

In a speech to a forum of the Department of Industrial Economy of the People's University of Peking, Professor Wang Teh-chou stated:

The Party has come before the situation where it confronts a dangerous crisis . . . Speaking of pork, in a certain land, 12 butcheries have been reduced to two. When pork is unavailable, it is difficult to convince people that living standards have improved. Vegetable prices have increased by 600 per cent. compared with the previous year. The common people begin to lose confidence in the Central Committee, saying that in some matters, the situation is worse compared with the days of the Kuomintang . . . To say that the Party has divorced itself from the masses is not so true as to say that the masses have divorced themselves from the Party. The Party will collapse soon. More than 90 per cent. of the members of the Party give themselves to sectarian activities, and some indulge in the most evil of acts. At any time, might overcomes might. It is possible to mount machine guns to deal with trouble. But what is to be feared is that the machine guns may be turned round for action. (Chung Kuo Ching Nien Pao, June 10, 1957).

In a number of places, mass demonstrations took place. Thus, for instance, on June 12, thousands of secondary school pupils in Hanyang went on strike and demonstrated. (See reference to this in *New China News Agency*, Wuhan, September 6, 1957. Three of the leaders of the demonstration were condemned to death and

*continued opposite*

# Is it really A PLAN FOR PROGRESS?

asks John Crutchley

The choice before us is clear. We can either continue along our present path, alternatively seeking safety by damping down the forces of growth, and making short-lived dashes for "freedom" which end in disaster. Or else we can take to the highroad of sustained expansion, planning to achieve higher investment and full employment, along with more stable prices and a strong balance of payments. (Labour policy statement *Plan for Progress*, 1958.)

THE MAIN Tory argument against this programme is that any attempt at greater investment will lead to inflation and a weakening of sterling. The City Tories and Zurich sharpshooters consider that a Labour victory at the general election will result in a flight from sterling and subsequent disruption of the British economy. A recent article in *The Economist* "Labour and the Pound" March 28, 1959, tried to soothe these capitalist fears. It pointed out that a Labour Government will be able to preserve sterling by taking a "strong stand." However this will be only achieved by becoming more capitalist than the Tories.

## • Two aspects

There are two aspects of a sterling crisis under a Labour Government. The initial impact of a Labour election victory and the long-term stability of the pound during its rule.

Firstly, says *The Economist* the initial crisis can be guarded against. The 1955, 1956 and 1957 crises were completely unforeseen by the City men. Now balances are favourable, the International Monetary Fund quota (a form of reserve of foreign currency) has been increased and the "experts" know the election must come within a year. **Moreover the Labour Party leaders are determined to maintain capitalist confidence in the pound and their government.** "Mr. Harold Wilson, the shadow Chancellor, has given private assurances in a number of places that the party would be prepared to take all measures to fight off a speculative attack; and in these measures he does not exclude Bank rate." A higher Bank rate means higher mortgages, higher interest rates on local authority and nationalized industries borrowings and thus higher rents, rates and taxes.

another three were given sentences ranging from 5 to 15 years). On the same day a large number of students in Chengtu demonstrated and attacked the Security Police station. (*Jen Min Jih Pao*, July 11, 1957).

Very suddenly, after a month, the Party leadership put an end to the rectification campaign and turned about face against the critics. *The People's Daily*, in an editorial, blandly stated that the aim of the month of free criticism had been to trap the critics. It said:

"To publish no or little positive views and to refrain from counter-criticising the erroneous views for a certain period of time—is that wrong? From May 8 to June 7, our paper and all Party papers carried out exactly this policy in accordance with the directive of the CCP Central Committee. The purpose is to let the evil spirits and demons of all kinds to 'contend

Not only will a Labour Government have to rely on high interest rates to prevent a flight from sterling after their victory but this manipulation will have to be used throughout their term of office. "There is a much wider acceptance (by the Labour Party—JFC) of the use of interest rates as a regulator."

### Wage freeze

Restoring convertibility of sterling at the beginning of the year was part of the deliberate policy pursued by the Tories since 1951 to firmly link the British monetary administration to the international capitalist economy. Thus ensuring that "severe limitations on freedom of manoeuvre at home . . . are inspired by conditions in the world outside."

Gaitskell recognises this but still says, "we should have to do

with a built-in disadvantage." It must take "sufficient strong measures to offset its basic deficiencies in business and foreign eyes." This means hitting working-class living standards through the wage freeze and other reactionary measures. "If it does not, many business men and most owners of equities will presently find themselves doing very nicely out of the inevitable inflation." They win both ways.

### Modify

But if the Labour Party does pursue a "sufficiently firm . . . financial policy" it will find that "political measures against profits may hold up expansion . . . but the net effect need not necessarily be a constant drag on the pound." Thus if a Labour Government is willing to modify the extremely modest proposals envisaged in

## Big Business

Property of the US Defence Department is valued at over \$160 billion (£57,000 m), "by any yardstick of measurement the world's largest organisation," according to the Cordiner Report to the Secretary of Defense. In the US alone the Pentagon owns more than 32 million acres of land and in foreign countries an additional 2.6 million acres. The total acreage is greater than the combined areas of Rhode Island, Delaware, Connecticut, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maryland.

Military assets of the Pentagon "are three times as great as the combined assets" of US Steel, AT & T, Metropolitan Life, General Motors and Standard Oil (NJ), all major giants of the US corporate world. And the Defense Department's paid personnel total is "about three times the number of all the employees of these companies." This is apart from persons engaged in war preparations production work.

In 1957 Senator Paul Douglas admitted that 92 per cent of military contracts were negotiated without competitive bidding. (See also the reports in recent years of the House and Senate small business committees).

(From J M Swomley Jr, writing in *Progressive*, quoted by *Economic Notes*, Labor Research Association, New York, February, 1959).

our best" to make convertibility work. The Labour Party if it tries to maintain the current level of sterling will be trying to run a capitalist economy better than the bosses' Tory Government. This paradoxically is their aim. "Ambitious Labour leaders whose main article of faith is that they could run the country better than the Tories may be expected to fight quite hard for financial stability."

A Labour Government, continues *The Economist*, which is dedicated to increasing the efficiency of capitalism will "start

Plan for Progress and sacrifice everything towards the maintenance of a strong monetary system, which will mean no rise in workers' living standards and continuing unemployment, it will be allowed to govern.

### No disaster

To conclude with the words of the bosses' weekly; "The Economist . . . is simply saying that the approach or the arrival of Labour to power need not bring the certainty of disaster." That is, it will not be a disaster for the capitalists if it is for the workers.

freely' and to let the poisonous weeds gain a luxuriant growth so that the people will be startled at such things in the world and will take action to wipe out these low scamps.

"Some say: this is a dark scheme. We say: this is a dark scheme. For we told the enemy beforehand: demons can be wiped out only when they are let out of the cage and poisonous weeds can be got rid of only when they are let come out of the soil. Do peasants not weed several times a year? The weeds removed can be used as fertilizer." (*Ibid*, July 1, 1957).

The victims of the counter-"purge" are very numerous, many of them being Party members of long standing, like Ting Ling, undoubtedly one of the most famous of Chinese authors, who had been a member of the Party for some 25 years. The affect of the Hungarian Revolution was so great that Ting Ling's house in Peking was nicknamed the "Petofi Club."

## WHAT WE STAND FOR

The SOCIALIST REVIEW stands for international Socialist democracy. Only the mass mobilisation of the working class in the industrial and political arena can lead to the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism.

The SOCIALIST REVIEW believes that a really consistent Labour Government must be brought to power on the basis of the following programme:

● The complete nationalisation of heavy industry, the banks, insurance and the land with compensation payments based on a means test. Renationalisation of all denationalised industries without compensation. — The nationalised industries to form an integral part of an overall economic plan and not to be used in the interests of private profit.

● Workers' control in all nationalised industries ie, a majority of workers' representatives on all national and area boards, subject to frequent election, immediate recall and receiving the average skilled wage ruling in the industry.

● The establishment of workers' committees to control all private enterprises within the framework of a planned economy. In all instances representatives must be subject to frequent election, immediate recall, and receive the average skilled wage in the industry.

● The establishment of workers' committees in all concerns to control hiring, firing and working conditions.

● The establishment of the principle of work or full maintenance.

● The extension of the social services by the payment of adequate pensions, the abolition of all payments for the National Health Service and the development of an industrial health service.

● The expansion of the housing programme by granting interest free loans to local authorities and the right to requisition privately held land.

● Free State education up to 18. Abolition of fee paying schools. For comprehensive schools and adequate maintenance grants — without a means test—for all university students.

● Opposition to all forms of racial discrimination. Equal rights and trade union protection to all workers whatever their country of origin. Freedom of migration for all workers to and from Britain.

● Freedom from political and economic oppression to all colonies. The offer of technical and economic assistance to the people of the underdeveloped countries.

● The abolition of conscription and the withdrawal of all British troops from overseas.

● The abolition of the H-bomb and all weapons of mass destruction. Britain to pave the way with unilateral renunciation of the H-bomb.

● A Socialist foreign policy subservient to neither Washington nor Moscow.

## FORUM

Vic Pellen asks,

## NEW TOWNS — WHO CONTROLS ?

WHEN Lord Silkin came to Crawley in 1947, before his elevation to the peerage, to a general discussion meeting on the subject of the projected New Towns, a few of us were able to get an informal supplementary talk over the tea table. One of the points which was taken for granted at that time was that the New Towns would pass eventually into the hands of the local Councils. Such indeed was the original intention of the New Towns Act, as Lord Silkin has since publicly declared.

With the coming of a Tory government in 1951, rumours began to circulate that the New Towns were to remain permanently controlled by some appointed body. Although no official pronouncement was made, several times prominent Tories advised against handing over to local Councils.

In November, 1955, a Rents Conference was held in Crawley, during the period of the great rent strike. It was attended by local trade unionists, by Tenants' Association delegations from several other New Towns, and by the various branches of the Crawley Tenants' Association, who convened the Conference. Of the political parties, all of whom were invited. Labour and Communist delegates were present. At that Conference, representing some 20,000 people, a resolution was passed calling for the setting up of a New Town Tenants' Federation, one of whose aims should be to work for future Council ownership.

## Full confidence

Such a Federation was set up, with the encouragement and assistance of the National Association of Tenants and Residents, in April, 1956, although it never functioned very effectively. At the same time it established sufficient contact to make it clear that the people of all the New Towns felt the same way about their future, and that intermittent campaigns were being waged.

In Crawley the matter was discussed by the various Neighbourhoods during the ensuing twelve months, and in March, 1957, a London Conference was called by the National Association after the intention of the Tory government became clearer. **The complete victory of Labour at the first Crawley Urban elections that year—a feature of all the New Towns — undoubtedly stiffened the determination of Tory ministers to retain control themselves.**

The Urban Council itself went on record as opposed to any sell-out. The Tory minority, of course, dissented.

In April, 1957, the CTA issued a formal statement repeating its views, and supporting the points made by its delegates to the London Conference. This statement said:

"The CTA believes that the only possible successor to the Development Corporation is the Urban District Council, which is

the effective Housing Authority already in existence. This is the only course which would give tenants full confidence in the future of the town. There must be no cutting out of property assets. The assets of the Corporation must be handed over complete."

It concluded with the words: "We are confident that the Council has the full support, not only of all tenants, but of many other organizations, including the Trade Unions."

At this period support was given by practically every Trade Union branch, by the Trades Council and by various Works Committees. The Labour Party had been early in the field, and New Town Ownership was one of the planks of their successful Urban election platform.

## Petition

In the past six months the campaign has been renewed. Now we are faced by the present Bill, which the government undoubtedly intends to push through before any General election. Recent meetings in Crawley have shown that the people still feel the same way, in spite of reassurances about sale to private landlords.

There has been a great smoke screen raised as to the real in-

tentions of the Tories. Play has been made of the possibility of purchase by sitting tenants — a property - owning democracy again! How tenants, who often enough find the rent hard enough to find, can find the money to buy, no-one has yet said.

Crawley Tenants' Association has now launched a petition. It got its start on a very wet Saturday afternoon recently when nearly 400 people stopped long enough to sign. Now it is expected that the petition will be circulated in the neighbourhoods and through the factories and TU branches.

## Tories exposed

We believe it important to maintain the protests, even though the Bill is halfway through the Commons. It may be possible to hold it up, or secure amendments of some features; certainly it ought to be made quite clear that a Labour government would reverse the process.

The Tory case has been fully exposed by the complete absence of any positive reason for transfer to a Minister-appointed Commission. The real reason — that the New Town Councils are firmly Labour-controlled — they dare not use.

Excuses vary in their weakness,

VIC PELLEN is the Secretary of the Crawley Tenants' Association. He is writing here in an individual capacity.

but they are all weak. The Councils are not experienced enough, or too busy, or do not have the right numbers or sorts take over. Of course, if a Tory Minister appoints his own supporters to a Commission which is not even directly answerable to Parliament, we can be sure of non-political control!

## Decentralize

No one would argue that Council housing policies are always right. Hammersmith and Croydon, to give two examples, show that. Even Labour Councils go off the rails at times. **But the plain fact of the matter is that Councils are elected bodies answerable to the people. The Councils are accessible; Ministerial bodies are not. Councils are ultimately controlled by the people; Commissions are not.**

It would be a very simple matter to hand over control to the Councils, with financial safeguards, such as Corporations enjoy. The Councils could handle the job. (The LCC is a far bigger Housing Authority than any New Town Corporation). The people could trust the Councils—or replace them.

The alternative is a New Town in the hands of bureaucracy, and ultimately probably in the hands of the big landlords.

## "POWER AT THE TOP"

reviewed by David Breen

## BOOKS

If nationalization in Britain has not brought socialism, it has certainly brought into focus the basic issue—control. We know that we own the mines, railways, etc., in theory. Of course, they're nationalized. But who controls them? This is the nub; it is a question that hasn't been answered in great detail.

True, we've always been able to show that nationalization has not meant workers' control; that it has meant fat compensation for the ex-owners who have invested their salvaged capital in more profitable lines. We have shown that big (private) business benefits from special tariffs and subsidies paid for by workers in the nationalized industries.

## Links

But we have never traced exactly the myriad links connecting private and nationalized industry (nor shown in detail the mechanism of control whereby the giants of British capitalism impose their will on the workings of the state-owned sectors.

This Clive Jenkins has now done in *Power at the Top, A Critical Survey of the Nationalised Industries* (MacGibbon and Kee, 21s). It is a simple book, not much more than a glorified list of the members of boards of nationalized industries, their private interests and their interconnections. The world it reveals needs knowing.

Of the 13 members of the British Transport Commission's Board, 7 are company directors; of the 6 each on the Southern Area and Western Area Boards, 5 in each case are company directors. The position is similar in other nationalized industries as can be seen from the master table on pp 41-44.

## Directors

And what directors! Take BOAC's board as an example. There is J G R D'Erlanger, CBE, ACA (part-time chairman), Vice-Chairman of Erlangers Ltd, Chairman of City and International Trust Ltd, Director of EBE Holdings (No 1) Ltd, Chairman of Forestal Land, Timber & Railway Co Ltd, Director of Forestal Provident Trust Co, General Consolidated Investment Trust Ltd, John Mackintosh & Sons Ltd, Pauling & Co Ltd, Vice-Chairman of Provident Mutual Life Assurance Association Ltd, and Chairman of Richard Hawarth & Co. (Holdings) Ltd.

Then there are J W Booth, Sir John Stephenson, CBE, JP, Sir Francis Brake, MIEE, Lord Tweedsmuir, OBE, LLD, and Major-General Lord Rennell, of Rodd, KBE, CB, all of whom are part-time members of the Board and who hold between them 29 directorships.

Jenkins' picture is, however, not entirely a who's who of British capitalists in "public service." He shows how the Tory

government has been used consistently to make nationalized industry more sensitive to the demands of big business. Whether through skimming off the cream of air traffic for the benefit of private operators, or decentralizing the railway organization, the Tories have made nationalized industry a thoroughgoing extension of the mighty monopolies, a meeting — and market-place for them.

Jenkins has done a good job of compilation, classification and description. It is only when we come to the broader social analysis and to the necessary programmatic conclusions that we find confusion.

## Invaluable

He rejects capitalist control, but refuses to consider workers' control. He shows clearly how the State and the experts are celluloid and rubber executives of capitalism, yet attributes to them independent status and initiative in his vague hints at a differently organized Britain.

*Power at the Top* is, notwithstanding, an invaluable handbook for socialists and for workers in nationalized industry. Socialist propagandists will find in it explosive material for every occasion.

A final note to the publishers; why the skimpy index? The value of the book rises with the number of references workers can readily find to their own neighbouring firm.

# CLASS IN EDUCATION 1

by Peter Ibbotson

With this issue, we are starting to serialize extracts from 'Class in English Education' by Peter Ibbotson, which first appeared in the October 1958 issue of *Labour Teacher*, quarterly journal of the National Association of Labour Teachers.

Readers are invited to send their queries on educational matters (enclosing a stamped addressed envelope) to us. Those of general interest will be answered by Peter Ibbotson in our columns; those of interest to the sender alone will be answered by post. Whatever the question, we shall be glad to help—Editor.

THE present education system certainly denies equality of opportunity for self-fulfilment. The whole system is caste-ridden throughout; attendance at certain schools or types of school confers (sometimes fictitious) advantage on their pupils. The *Times* of March 28, 1956, analysed the education of the Bench of Bishops. Of 40 Bishops—two sees then being vacant—no less than 31 had attended public schools, and only 5 had not been to Oxford or Cambridge University.

Or look at the Government's recent report on recruitment to the administrative class of the Civil and Foreign Services. The report, published as a white paper last year, includes a table showing the number of candidates for Foreign Office posts in the last nine years, with their fathers' occupation; a table on which the following is based:

Father's Occupational Class	No. of Candidates	No. of successful Candidates
Unskilled ... ..	5	0
Semi-skilled ... ..	22	2
Highly skilled ... ..	365	12
Professional ... ..	778	42
Top professional ... ..	1,039	93

### Class jobs

Small wonder that the *Daily Mirror* headlined its story with **IF YOUR DAD'S A DUST-MAN, FORGET THAT FOREIGN OFFICE CAREER, SON**, and contained this revealing sentence: "The better your father's job, the greater your hope of becoming a diplomat." Sixty-two per cent of the successful candidates, in fact, came from the advantage conferred by attend-highest social class!

### Schools

The social and occupational advantage at a public school is also strikingly brought out by considering university awards. In *The Times' Educational Supplement*, June 6, 1958, GDN Worswick analysed the awards of open scholarships and exhibitions at Oxford and Cambridge in 1957-8. Altogether, 486 scholarships and 431 exhibitions were awarded to boys, divided percentage-wise among three main classes of school as follows:

Type of School	Scholarships	Exhibitions
Headmasters' Conference (Direct Grant) ...	20	19
County Maintained Secondary ... ..	17	20
Headmasters' Conference (Independent) ...	50	45

Thus more than twice as many independent school and public school boys secured awards than secondary school boys. (The number of Headmasters' Conference schools, independent and direct grant together, is 198, whereas

the number of maintained grammar schools is 1,206.) The 27 schools which secured at least 7 awards each actually grossed 38 per cent of all the open awards—and all but one were independent or direct grant!

Eye-opening figures regarding University entrance were also given in RR Kelsall's report on an industry into **Applications for Admission to Universities**. This report, which showed that two-thirds of the male undergraduates at Oxford and Cambridge come from schools outside the state system, analysed among other things the social and educational backgrounds of all university entrants in 1955-6. In that year, of all university admissions with addresses in England, 74 per cent came from the professional, managerial and clerical classes, 21.7 per cent were the children of skilled manual workers, 3.4 per cent of semi-

skilled manual workers, and 0.9 per cent of unskilled manual workers.

Only 9 per cent of entrants at Cambridge came from manual workers' homes; only 13 per cent at Oxford. In this connection it must always be remembered that manual workers form over 70 per cent of the adult male occupied population.

Very large differences occurred in the proportions of entrants who had been educated at different types of secondary school. The proportion who had been boarders was highest at Cambridge (46 per cent) and Oxford (36 per cent) with no other university exceeding London's 18 per cent.

Only 28 per cent of the Cambridge entrants had been educated at Local Education Authority grammar schools, compared with 39 per cent at Oxford, and 66 per cent for Scotland and 90 per cent for Wales.

An equally illuminating analysis showed the percentage of entrants who had attended LEA

primary schools. At Cambridge it was 34 per cent and at Oxford 42 per cent; which suggests that a fair number of entrants progressed from primary school to university via direct grant grammar schools.

# PARLIAMENT by

## MICHAEL MILLETT

MR LIPTON, Labour MP for Brixton, asked how many weekly National Assistance grants had been increased to provide for higher rents since the Rent Acts, and the average amount of these grants.

Mr Boyd-Carpenter said: "The National Assistance Board inform me that . . . it is estimated that some 500,000 weekly assistance grants have been increased to provide for rent increases since the beginning of 1957. Of these, about three-fifths have been in respect of increases under the Rent Act. The average amount of the increases is calculated at 5s 1d a week."

### Expenditure

This means that there is a direct subsidy to landlords of four million pounds a year! Enough to build thirty comprehensive

reduce the rent-paying powers of National Assistance Boards without provision to secure the tenancies of those affected.



THE results of the beer tax reduction could also do with close observation. Labour arguments against it are that pensions should have been increased and milk and bread subsidies reintroduced, rather than cheaper beer. Labour MP's have a strong suspicion that the tax has been reduced because of the altogether disproportionate effect of the price of beer on the out-of-date cost of living index. ("The Conservatives bring down the cost of frothing.") The Chancellor has, however, an unanswerable reply to all criticisms; it is the opinion of the Treasury that the greater amount of beer sold will more than make up for the loss. Will it? Only time will tell, as the girl was told when she enquired if there was any harm in bluebell-gathering with mixed company.



ONE day in April — and it wasn't the first of the month — the Lords discussed Dan Dare whilst the Commons discussed Terry Dene. It having been shown that he undoubtedly had a medical certificate there was nothing more to say, except to make the customary jokes about No 9 pills, according to the traditions of army debates. There was without question, a strong feeling on both sides of the House that if he could get off by claiming emotional disturbance, retarded personality or whatever it was, either the army is not what it was—a most unlikely surmise; it has been the same since the eighteenth century—or that there has been a fiddle big enough for Mr Dene to play as double bass.

The Dan Dare debate was more profitable. The Macmillan program for a Brighter Britain ("The Conservatives believe in all modern improvements") can hardly forgo space travel, even if it has to be on the cheap. The heedless skies will be shortly seeing Her Britannic Majesty's first space satellite. Probably the thing will have a lion stamped on it like an egg, and will be of about that size.

### FIGHT OMO, says TOTTENHAM LP

The following resolution was passed by the Tottenham Labour Party, sent to the London Labour Party Executive the London Transport Executive and the local press. Other Labour Parties, Trades Councils etc., should take note:

That this Labour Party protests at the attempt of the LTE to introduce one-man-operated buses. After the recent cuts in services which slowed up transport, this new attack on the service will reduce efficiency and slow up transport considerably more, besides causing redundancy among conductors.

It calls on the LTE to run transport for the purpose for which it was nationalised, which was to provide an efficient public service for the people. One-man-operation works directly against this.

schools or to increase unemployment benefit by three shillings a week, to provide up to three thousand new Council houses or to make a down payment on an American missile system.

Even the Conservatives cannot be too happy about this particular fantasy and they should be watched closely lest they should

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## FORUM

M M from DUBLIN contributes to our forum,

## THE STRUGGLE IN IRELAND

I COULDN'T agree more with Noel Harris that resolutions calling for the "withdrawal of British troops from N. Ireland," etc., etc., are vulgar oversimplifications of the Partition Question and are at best the sincere if misguided expressions of a once radical nationalist mood and at worst the product of the Stalinist propaganda - mill speaking through the Connolly Club fronts and other nationalist organizations where dupes do their bidding. Stalinist treachery and the ruthless suppression of entire nations and their characteristics in the interest of the Great Russian totalitarian monolith must be apparent to even the most myopic nationalist. Hungary is not a generation away!

As sketched by Noel Harris (SR, March 1) the genesis of the Northern Ireland statelet was dictated by the military preoccupations of the Lloyd George Government; but has nevertheless remained loyal to its constitutional position as an integral part of the UK, and as far as the majority of its citizens are concerned will continue to be so in the foreseeable future.

**Support**

It is this civilian support that gives the N. Ireland regime its solidarity; not as the ranting nationalists would have us believe—the British Army. **Anyone who thinks that the N. Ire-**

**land working class would not take up arms to defend the constitutional position on the withdrawal of the British Army is not facing up to realities;** and every armed foray by the IRA, particularly where injury to human persons is concerned only entrenches the resolution of these people to refuse to be coerced and incidentally, as Noel Harris points out, consolidates the Tory-Unionist Party which has acquired for itself the reputation of being the unrelenting defender or repository of the political union with the UK.

**Belfast workers**

Fortunately, and in spite of the pro- and anti-partition opportunists inside and outside the Labour movement, North and South, the N. Ireland Labour Party has **broken through on the economic and social front and has found a bridge between workers—Protestant and loyal, Catholic and (presumed by the Unionists as) disloyal—in the city of Belfast, against the economic background of a permanent 8 per cent unemployed figure.**

This is a change from the sterile pro- and anti-Partition position that traded on (and still does) sectarianism, evocative slogans of republicanism vs. the monarchy and vice versa; loyalty and disloyalty to abstract and essentially bourgeois political formulae allied to stupid eth-

nological theories as to whether a N. Ireland Unionist could be considered an Irishman, or indeed, whether Southern Irishmen were ruled from Rome or Dublin.

To be sure these manifestations of working class political consciousness in the North are still on a rather small scale, but once the nationalist working class can rid itself of the self-imposed **apartheid** in the public and social affairs of N. Ireland that was nurtured by the abstentionist policies of the Tory Nationalist politicians and by the discrimination and gerrymandering of Tory Unionist politicians; once a bridge is found and the **de jure** as well as the **de facto** basis of N. Ireland society is accepted; then political progress will be made.

**IMPERIALISM**

*"I have listened to young Whites boasting of the number of Africans they have killed in road accidents. I have listened to police reservists talking of going out and shooting a few demonstrators after a party (the 1953 riots). Brutal but true, and by no means exceptional."—A correspondent in the Manchester Guardian, March 11, commenting on the emergency in the Central African Federation.*

**● NUR GOES IT ALONE — End**

leaders go, they are being forced to get a move on. The impoverished railwayman is not sympathetic to the finer points as to whether the cost-of-living index (which is a phoney for the lowest paid) has moved up or down.

**Cannot wait**

The future for the railwaymen is very much dependent on their willingness and ability to struggle. The industry is well in the "red" and most are very sceptical of tales about the railways' supposed ability to "break-even" financially in the 60's. This is the story put forward by the £10,000 a year Sir Brian Robertson, BTC Chairman. But the workers cannot wait for "pie-in-the-sky"; they have to live now. If Messrs Greene and Evans will not properly lead the fight, they will be pushed aside for those who will.

**Debt**

The experiences of the railway workers, who expected so much from nationalization, form an instructive lesson about the worthlessness of piece-meal nationalization without workers' control.

The industry right from the first was saddled with a huge compensation debt of £30 millions a year; now on top of that, it bears more millions on new "Modernization" borrowings. The BTC argues that it will be able to get out of debt when the extra revenue comes in later. Like

the other sectors of the nationalised economy, the BTC has not been master of its own fate. It was ordered during the Tory Government's credit squeeze to go easy on freight and fare increases. Despite many beliefs to the contrary, passenger long-distance fares have not risen anything like the general rise in commodity prices, and freight-rates have also remained lower than the general extra costs of raw materials used by the railways.

Just as in the case of coal, nationalized transport is put in service to suit the needs of the four-fifths of purely privately owned capitalist profit-making industry.

**Spread demands**

In this situation it is not much good looking to the overpaid Sir Brian to proclaim the needs of the workers; and if Messrs. Greene and Evans don't take a far more intelligent and forthright attitude, it might not be much good looking that way either.

**In addition to the overdue need to demonstrate, the railwaymen need to carry their case into the other sections of the TU Movement and demand that a future Labour Government takes the compensation burden off their backs, and establishes workers' control as part of a planned Socialist economy developing over the whole of the industrial field.**

This implies that the **Republic's Labour Party with its anti-Partition overtones should withdraw from N. Ireland and direct its members to rejoin the N. Ireland Labour Party that they left in 1948.** In the same way as the Irish TUC leaves the affairs of N. Ireland in the hands of its N. Ireland Committee, and which has gone on record year after year demanding that the Stormon administration give **de jure** and **de facto** recognition to this Committee which inversely must imply that this recognition will be reciprocated, the problems of political labour should be left to the N. Ireland Labour Party.

**Possibilities**

The class consciousness of the workers in the South is at this juncture very important. Quite involuntarily the Tory Unionist government in N. Ireland has had to—gall and all—swallow the Welfare State, keep in step with the UK, and now with tongue in cheek cite the Institution as an additional reason why the workers' interest in the North would not be served by unity at the present stage of economic and social development in the Republic.

**Quite correctly Noel Harris points out that within the constitutional set-up of each state in Ireland socialists can work for the quite immediate objectives of**

**economic and social reforms; for full employment; for an end to the political monopoly of Toryism North and South; for extension of democratic processes and an end to discrimination based on religious or political beliefs; and to use a fashionable phrase in power politics, to lessen the tensions between the Unionist majority and the Nationalist minority by the acceptance of the constitutional position until by the democratic process the relative political position is altered.**

Clearly this process will not be initiated by armed attacks or stupid—though calculated—rantings by Tory and Labour politicians in Belfast or Dublin, whose utterances are slanted towards the ingrained constitutional prejudices of their supporters at home.

I don't propose to offer any blueprint to the readers of *Socialist Review* as to how and when the Border will go; but the sacred cow of republican absolutism must be driven out of the leadership of politics in Ireland. Even a United Socialist Ireland would not be a viable economic unit except on a potatoes and salt economy. The country North and South is grossly undercapitalized; with a natural increase of upwards of 50,000 per year in the population and economic growth providing less than 5,000 jobs per year. The balance emigrates, mostly to Britain where even the people from the South, officially at least, are afforded the same citizenship rights as a person from the North.

**Policy**

**Democratic socialists would welcome even a loose confederated set-up between the North and South which would at least rob the IRA of its messianic role on destroy the myth that bedevils socialist ideology;** that the end of the border would ipso facto project us into a dynamic, progressive and prosperous Ireland where apparently and without any political surgery property relations would be socialistic rather than capitalistic; all political controversy would cease to have any meaning, and by some strange economic law, unemployment and underprivilege would disappear and Ireland would have reached the Millenium! It is this dangerously naive view of politics and economics that could transform the IRA into a vehicle for totalitarian aims of a Fascist or Stalinist character. Democratic traditions in Ireland are of recent vintage.

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