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Socialist Outlook

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3d.

The Fight
for a
Labour Press
(See page 2)

WALL STREET IN AFRICA

By John Goffe

THE results of N'Changa Consolidated Copper Mines have been published this week. They provide a very interesting commentary on the scheme for making Central Africa safe for Wall Street and the City of London—the so-called “voluntary” Federation.

Profits are up from **£9,982,246** to **£14,042,101**. The dividend is increased for the second year running to 75 per cent.

Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, the Chairman, complacently tells the shareholders that “new records have been achieved by your company in the fields of production, sales and profits”. The total operating costs—royalties, raw materials, power, high salaries to European officials and the under-£5-a-month wages of the African mineworkers—are at **£7,200,898**, approximately half the profits.

In his annual statement, Sir Ernest Oppenheimer explains one way the “British” Empire is being passed over to Wall Street. The four mining companies have formed a corporation “which has recently concluded an agreement with the Export-Import Bank of Washington for a loan of up to £8 million. Your company, in common with the other three (copper) producing companies, will guarantee a quarter of the repayment and interest of the Power Corporation to the Export-Import Bank of Washington, which obligations are to be satisfied by supplies of copper and cobalt.”

Instead of financing their own

power development these copper millionaires think it better to let Wall Street do it and sell them copper in return. N'Changa put £3,100,000 to capital reserve last year, whilst their obligations to the new power company are only “up to £2,000,000”.

Very neat isn't it? For Wall Street, for the copper barons, for the politicians pushing Federation, but not so good for the Africans who have had a heavy American chain added to the British one which is already fastened tightly round their necks.

End of a City

The streets of the German city of Cologne in 1946 after almost total destruction in the war. John Lawrence, who recently spent some time in Germany, will write his impressions next week of the Germany that is rising again out of the ruins and, in particular, of the newly risen German Labour Movement.



IN the biggest strike movement since 1936, over two million French workers have shown their determination to defend living standards against the attacks of a Conservative Government headed by millionaire M. Laniel.

This great demonstration of the French working class is of direct concern to British workers who, unless the Tories are rapidly removed from office, will be faced with a similar situation before very long.

The immediate cause of the

strikes was the announcement by the French Government of its intention to use the plenary powers given it by Parliament (against the opposition of the Socialist and Communist Parties) to issue certain decree laws.

They propose, among other things, to increase the qualifying age for retirement pensions for state-employees from 58 years to 60 for those in the “active” grades and from 63 to 65 for “sedentary” grades. Also, some of the “active” grades (like postmen) who got their pension at 58 would be regraded as “sedentary” and thus have to work an extra seven years till 65.

Another decree will allow rent increases to continue. A direct blow to the living standards of all sections of the workers and lower middle class.

These proposed decrees provided

the spark that ignited the long-simmering discontent of the French working class caused by the continuous rise in the cost of living.

WORKERS ACT

As soon as the drafts of the decrees became known, the C.G.T. and C.F.T.C. (Christian T.U. federation) called on their members in the postal services and civil service to warn the Government by token stoppages and protest meetings on Tuesday, August 4 (the decrees were due to be ratified on August 9).

This call was enthusiastically followed, not only by the C.G.T. and C.F.T.C. members, but also by non-unionists and by members of the Force Ouvriere (right-wing union which had split off from the C.G.T. on the grounds that it was communist-dominated) who walked out in solidarity.

Under this pressure, the F.O., whose leadership had not joined the call for token stoppages, on the next day, August 5, issued a call for a general strike of all post office workers to continue “until satisfaction is obtained”. Within 24 hours the whole of the post office workers were out.

By Friday, August 7, railway workers, civil servants, municipal employees, gas and electricity supply workers had all come out solidly in 24 or 48-hour warning strikes. During the day the strikes spread to Air-France employees at the two Paris airports, to the Merchant Navy at Havre, and partially to the mines and state-owned armament factories (equivalent to R.O.F.'s).

By Friday over two million workers in the civil service, post office and nationalised industries were on strike.

A secretary of the C.G.T. Postal Workers Union told me that the older militants don't remember anything like it among post office workers since 1910! Never have the workers responded so rapidly.

At 11 o'clock on Friday, August 7, the Paris buses and underground railway were working normally. At 12 o'clock the four unions representing the Paris transport workers (C.G.T., Christians, F.O. and Independent) issued a call for a half-day strike. Within one hour not a single train or bus was running.

This unanimity comes as an encouraging contrast to the trend of the last two years. The criminal split in the trade union movement started by the break-away of the right-wing from the C.G.T. to form the F.O., and the existence of four separate T.U.C.'s (the C.G.T., the

HARRY RATNER, well-known Manchester stop steward who has recently been on holiday in France, send us this first hand report of the French strikes.

F.O., the C.F.T.C. and Autonomous union) considerably weakened the workers.

This time, however, the workers realised what was at stake and, in fact, dragged the top leaderships behind them. It is unthinkable that the F.O. right-wing leadership would have been the first to call for an unlimited strike unless they knew that the workers would take action themselves anyway!

Even the C.G.T. was caught on one foot. It did not issue a call for a general strike, but issued a communique to the effect that “if and where the workers themselves meeting on a local or factory basis decided to continue the strike they would support them”.

TRADE UNION UNITY

In each post office, telephone centre, railway depot, power station, etc., the rank and file have democratically elected “Unity Strike Committees” composed of representatives of all the different unions.

I attended a mass meeting of several thousand striking post office workers in Paris, addressed by the general secretaries of each of the four unions. Pledges were given that no union would negotiate separately. But the meeting wanted more than that.

They wanted the unity which was being cemented at the bottom in local united strike committees to be completed at the top by the formation of a National Strike Committee representing all the four unions and responsible to the rank and file.

Under the pressure of the meeting, it was finally proposed that the Executive Committees of the four unions meet jointly the next morning.

At the time of writing (August 10) I cannot report the final results, but, whatever happens in the immediate future, it is clear that the last few days' events have tremendously heightened the French workers' self-confidence. Already the Government has had to retreat. Today's press (August 10) reports that the pulling back of the retiring age has been dropped.

We can expect that the French workers will continue the struggle not only against the present decrees, but to bring down the present reactionary Government.

Secret Diplomacy in Korea

★ Tories Ignore Parliament ★

WHAT is going on in Korea? Is it to be peace or an extended war to the Chinese mainland? What are the generals and politicians of the “United Nations” plotting now behind the backs of the people?

Well may the workers of the world ask these questions. For less than a couple of weeks after the headlines announced the Korean armistice the following grim facts have emerged.

(1) Syngman Rhee and the American Foreign Secretary, Foster Dulles, have signed a Treaty which permits the United States to build, and man, military bases in South Korea and pledges the American people to go to Rhee's aid should his adventures involve him in armed conflict with the Government of the North.

(2) Sixteen nations—including Britain—have signed IN SECRET a declaration which states that in case of a breach of the armistice by the North Koreans (no mention of a possible breach by Syngman Rhee!) “in all probability it would not be possible to confine hostilities within the frontiers of Korea”.

Which means that if the war is restarted it will be waged against China and on the Chinese mainland!

(3) At the political conference which is to follow the armistice, the American Government has openly declared that they and Syngman Rhee will propose the unification of Korea and if their terms for this unity are not

accepted by the North they will walk out of the Conference after 90 days.

Rhee has further stated that in that event he will feel himself free to recommence hostilities. Which in turn means that the Americans

Editorial

will come to his assistance and that, following the 16 nation declaration quoted above, will mean that the war will be carried into China itself and the whole world will be rapidly involved.

Many things can be deduced from these ugly facts but two conclusions are inescapable.

First, the American capitalist government, which has been forced by the conciliatory attitude of the Chinese and North Koreans and the pressure of public opinion to sign an armistice has in no way abandoned its supreme aim of attacking China and destroying its new and progressive economy.

All this plotting and scheming is designed to serve this supreme aim of American capitalism.

The second conclusion concerns our own unlovely Tory brigade. These gentlemen from the playing fields of Eton and Harrow, these upholders of “fair-play”, these self-professed devotees of democracy, deliberately withheld from the British Parliament the fact that the Government's signature had been affixed to a 16 nation declaration which commits the people of

these islands to World War Three on behalf of the gangster Syngman Rhee!

Although the declaration had been signed three days before the Parliamentary debate on Korea, Mr. R. A. Butler shamelessly denied that British policy had in any way changed and gave not a hint of our new and horrible commitments. This is secret diplomacy at its worst.

Surely this should be enough to stop the present stupid “looking-to-Churchill-to-save-us” line of so many of our Labour leaders. Churchill must have known all about the secret treaty. He kept his mouth shut because he liked it that way. He is not interested in peace as such. He is interested only in getting the best possible deal for British capitalism. To ask him to stand up to the American warmongers to preserve the peace of the world, is like preaching morals to a brothel-house keeper.

The responsibility for peace or war now rests squarely with Labour and with the international action of the working class.

The fight of the Chinese and North Korean peoples forced America to sign an armistice. The fight of the British Labour movement for the immediate withdrawal of all British troops will make Dulles and Rhee think twice about restarting the war. There is no other way.

We, therefore, offer the following as an immediate policy for the Labour Movement. Condemn the secret diplomacy of the Tories and their American protectors! Put

some teeth into the campaign—show the people we mean business—by declaring (if possible with the Labour movements of as many other countries as possible) that in the event of the armistice being broken and war against China becoming a possibility, British Labour will do all in its power to frustrate the sending of troops and materials—including the use of a general strike.

The Tories have hooked Britain up to the next world war behind the backs of the people. The people are therefore under no obligation to honour these dirty agreements which have been hatched in the dark.

The French Political Set-up

IN Britain the interests of the ruling class are represented by only two political parties (the Tories and Liberals), but in France the parliamentary representation of the ruling class is split up into a number of different groups, and since the last elections the basic pattern of every Government has always been the same. A combination in one way or another of the various “conservative” groups and the M.R.P. (Christian Democratic Party).

The main opposition has been the French Communist Party, which has over one million members and the support of the majority of the industrial workers. The other working class Party, the Social-

ists, has since 1936 been gradually losing its working class support to the Communist Party.

In fact, the relative strengths among the workers of the Socialist and Communist parties in France is in inverse ratio to the relative strengths of the Labour Party and Communist Party in Britain—except that the C.P. in Britain is weaker in relation to the Labour Party than the French Socialists are in relation to the French C.P.

The French workers do not want to change the present Government for another slightly altered combination of the same parties. What they want is a Workers' Government. At present this can only

be a Government of the two working class parties, the Communist Party and the Socialist Party, and the workers realise that the first step towards this must be the conclusion of a United Front of these two parties on an agreed minimum programme of Socialist measures.

Unfortunately, the Socialist leaders seem more concerned with parliamentary manoeuvres, while the C.P., which calls for unity at local level, has made no approaches for unity on a national level. It puts forward a vague slogan “for a Government of National Independence”, without specifying who or what parties would form such a Government.

H.R.

Let's Get Out of
Egypt and Redeem...

71 Years of Broken Promises

EGYPT has now reached the first anniversary of her so-called freedom.

I wonder how many people in Britain know any of the history relating to the original treaties as signed between the British and Egyptian governments?

Let us go back a few years in history. During the reign of Queen Victoria, in June, 1882, Lord Cromer, a responsible person and the first Earl, promised that the British troops sent to Egypt would only remain there "for a very short while".

Just a month after this pronouncement of Lord Cromer's, on July 25, 1882, Sir Charles Dilke, a senior Cabinet Minister in the Gladstone Government, said in the House of Commons: "It is the desire of Her Majesty's Government to leave the Egyptian people to manage their own affairs".

A month later, on August 10, 1882, Mr. Gladstone repeated the previous pledge. He added: "To keep British soldiers in Egypt would be absolutely at variance with all the principles and views of Her Majesty's Government."

Now let us jump five years ahead, to May 22, 1887, when a Convention was signed between

By

Bob Streetley

Britain and Egypt which stated: "At the expiration of three years from date of convention, Her Britannic Majesty's Government will withdraw its troops from Egypt."

In January, 1946, we have Ernest Bevin, late Labour Foreign Secretary telling the United Nations Security Council "it is one of the cardinal principles of my policy that you cannot negotiate with a country while your troops are in occupation of that country." Three months later, in March of the same year, Labour Prime Minister Attlee told the House of Commons: "that the government has decided freely to evacuate the troops from Egypt." That is quite plain, is it not? But what happens? Are the troops withdrawn from Egypt? Not on your life! Five years later, in October 1951—64 years after the original treaty limiting the stay of the troops to three years were signed—another Labour Foreign Secretary, Herbert Morrison, said: "We are standing on our rights" and he opposed the withdrawal of troops from Egypt.

Well now, if that is the attitude of the official Labour Government, the so-called Voice of Labour, the very people who were trusted and put into power to speak and act on behalf of and for the benefit of the community, can you expect anything better from the present Tory government?

The trouble is, as I said before, how many people can know the facts when it is difficult for them even to read the facts? The Tory millionaire press will not give them the truth and that apology for Labour, the "Daily Herald" is no better.

So can you wonder that the man in the street as well as good old Labour Party and Union members growl with disgust and say "go to hell—they are all alike", that they are really browned-off and simply read the dog winners or the football results.

It is therefore very important that the people should be told the facts so that they can place themselves in the position of the Egyptian people and help them to regain their freedom and, at the same time save themselves quite a lot of pocket money by way of taxes. This also applies to Germany, Malaya, Kenya—everywhere where we have unnecessary troops in occupation.

Think it over.

**Socialist
Outlook**

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Labour's History

The Struggle For a Labour Press

"Men and women who are in dead earnest can achieve great victories in face of what may appear insurmountable difficulties"—George Lansbury.

JACK put down his mug of tea in disgust. "Look what it says about us in the 'Daily News'," he said. "Just another pack of bloody lies."

It was a cold January morning in 1911. The London operative printers had struck and then been locked out because they wanted a 48-hour week.

"I've been thinking," continued Jack. "Instead of letting the newspapers deceive the public about the dispute, why don't we run a paper of our own? It would be better than sitting on our backsides all day. I'll bring it up at the strike committee meeting tomorrow."

And that's how the "Daily Herald", the first Labour daily paper in Britain, was born.

It was a 4d. strike sheet "appearing on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 12 noon". When the employers threatened a national lock-out it began to come out every day and circulation soared to nearly 27,000 copies—no mean figure in those days. General news was carried in addition to reports on the strike, though any clear political policy was lacking.

Mainly as a result of the paper the print workers won their fight and the paper closed down on April 28. But an influential committee of Socialists, led by Ben Tillett of the London dockers, had been interested and decided it must be restarted. They formed a Co-operative Society and appointed as editor George Lansbury who, at 52 had been recently elected M.P. for Bow and Bromley.

"I never imagined I'd become an editor", he said. But if the movement wanted him he'd do it.

★

The first issue was on the streets on April 15, 1912. After paying preliminary costs they had barely £300 in cash to pay expenses. Three hundred pounds to run a national daily newspaper! Fantastic! (It was estimated to cost £2,000,000 to start a national daily paper in the 1930's and twice that sum more recently.)

Yet, because of the sacrifice of countless unknown workers throughout the country and of the newspaper men themselves, it came out.

On the first night of publication all the newspaper trains to the provinces were missed but it came out.

The organisers were pursued by creditors. On one occasion the bank overdraft had reached £30,000 and further credit was stopped. The National Union of Railwaymen agreed to act as bankers. The paper came out.

After the daily meeting of the board of directors "we always parted in a Micawber-like spirit, praying God something would turn up," said Lansbury later. Many workers donated the whole

of their life savings to the appeal fund.

One night it was decided that the paper would have to stop next day because no more newsprint could be afforded. The printers rooted round the storeroom and found some half-used reels of all sorts and sizes. The next day's issue of the "Herald" looked odd. But it came out.

At another time the paper was issued for three days with the broker's men on the premises. When the vans came to take away the office furniture Ben Tillett stood in the doorway haranguing the van drivers until £1,000 arrived in time to pay for the furniture. And it still came out.

Nor could three lost libel cases stop it.

After paying expenses Ben Tillett was often instructed on Fridays to tell the employees there was not enough cash to pay their

Recounted for you by
Frank Allaun

wages. Sometimes a whip round was taken for those in greatest need.

"It is an extraordinary fact," Lansbury recorded, "that on some occasions after Ben had told his unpalatable story he received a perfect ovation from the men who, after a week's work, were going home minus most of their wages."

When the paper-making companies threatened to boycott the "Herald" (for political reasons) they were told: if you cut our newsprint the workers in your paper mills will strike. The paper continued to come out.

George Lansbury once again summed up the whole of the epic of workers' sacrifice by saying: "Would they have done this for a Liberal paper? Or for a Tory newspaper? Not likely."

What kind of message did the

"Herald" print? A very Left message by present standards. (And the eternal struggle between Left and Right in the Labour movement was quite as fierce then as it is today.) The paper was anything but mealy-mouthed, as we say in Lancashire.

It went for reactionary Union and Labour leaders bald-headed. It supported every strike, official or unofficial.

When a national transport strike appeared imminent the "Herald" was asked by opponents to consider its conduct.

"We have considered the matter," replied the editorial. "We have considered every phase of it and we say 'Prepare your organisation and then strike. Strike and strike hard!'"

The paper, hard up itself, raised thousands of pounds for the dockers', railwaymen's and other strikes.

★

It was equally outspoken on other news items. When the "Titanic" sank, the "Herald" carried a streamer with the words: "Women and Children Last". The accompanying report showed that in the steerage 121 women and children were saved and 134 drowned. In the first and second class 246 women and children were saved and only 20 drowned.

In the first class 58 of the 173 men were saved at the time children in the steerage were drowning.

The "Herald" claimed that the ship was criminally under-equipped and that the White Star Company which owned it paid 30 per cent. to its shareholders and sacrificed 51 per cent. of the steerage children. Plain speaking indeed.

The suffragettes had no more powerful weapon than the "Daily Herald".

During the first world war it was the leading British anti-war journal, standing up to the merciless Jingoism.

★

In 1918 it reported the contents of the secret treaties found by the Bolsheviks in the Tsarist government's archives in which the Allies agreed on how they would annex territories and share them out after victory was won.

During the "Hands off Russia" campaign the "Herald" ran Sunday editions.

On July 22, 1919, when Churchill, then Minister of War, was proposing to invade Russia and declare war on the revolution, the famous poet, Osbert Sitwell, wrote—as the paper's leading article—a bitter poem entitled "To a Certain Statesman". It commenced:

"The Daily Herald
Is unkind.
It has been horrid
About my nice new war.
I shall burn the Daily Herald."

As a matter of fact in the same month Churchill did order the paper to be burned. The "Herald" secured and reprinted his instruction to British Army officers in Germany to destroy bundles of "Herald's" addressed to British soldiers on the Rhine.

Also published was a secret circular from Churchill asking officers in Britain whether their troops could be relied on for strike breaking. What a scoop! It certainly spiked Winston's guns on that occasion.

But even this was nothing to the commotion the journal caused when the proprietors of the Royal Albert Hall cancelled a booking for a "Daily Herald" meeting. Lansbury appealed to the government—in vain. "It has no power to intervene", said Lloyd George.

A week before the planned event the Electrical Trades Union disconnected the Albert Hall fuses. And the power station manager was told: if you promise not to reconnect the fuses the Union won't place pickets on the doors. Any trouble would have led to the withdrawal of electric light from all Kensington.

Now a Victory Ball for London's high society was due to be held in the hall in a few days time. Such an event was 'sacred'. So the government (which could not intervene) asked Mr. Lansbury if he could find it convenient to come round to the Board of Trade

at once. It instructed the Albert Hall people to fulfil their contract.

The "Herald" actually held two Albert Hall meetings—and such was the size of the crowd that 22,000 people had to be turned away.

★

While Lansbury permitted his contributors and staff great freedom the general line was for nationalisation of industry plus elected workers' representatives on the managements boards. (Maybe we have something to learn from this today.)

The "Herald" circulation had its ups and downs. It started in 1912 with 230,000 copies a day, a tremendous figure as newspapers went in those days. When the novelty wore off it settled down at between 50,000 and 100,000. Shortly after the 1914 war broke out it went over to a weekly, resuming daily publication after the Albert Hall meetings in 1919.

Circulation rose to 250,000, with 400,000 or even 500,000 on election days or at times of industrial crisis.

But with bad times and millions of workers either on the dole or short time, large numbers couldn't even afford the 6d. a week for the "Herald". The board was faced with closing down.

Rather than let the paper go to big businessmen or leading Liberals (who made private offers) Lansbury agreed to handing over the paper to the T.U.C. and the Labour Party National Executive.

In 1929 after further financial difficulties the paper was transferred to Odhams Press. The T.U.C. has four representatives on the board, and industrial and political policy is that laid down by the T.U.C. and Labour Party at their annual conferences.

We are indebted to Raymond Postgate, well-known Labour historian, for permission to reproduce this signed portrait of George Lansbury.

GEORGE LANSBURY. The Herald's First Editor



Workers of all
Countries unite
You have nothing to lose
but your chains
You have a world to gain
March 18, 1911

You Are Stopped By A Cop

YOU drive along the highway, a citizen of the "free world" somewhere near Galveston, Texas. You're a doctor, graduate of the Texas Medical College. You were the first Negro to be admitted into that Medical School and you received the highest honours of your class of 1953. Now you're interning in a local hospital. Your teachers and associates have a high opinion of your ability. They expect a brilliant career for you.

A highway cop stops you. He claims you were speeding. Maybe he doesn't like your looks. He decides to take you down a peg. He puts the handcuffs on you and then comes down on your head

Reprinted from the American
Socialist paper "The Militant"

with his pistol. That's the last you remember. You wake up in a hospital and they tell you it took 27 stitches to pull your lacerated scalp together. What you feel in your heart can't be stitched together.

Yours friends go to the local redress committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People and the N.A.A.C.P. attorney asks the F.B.I. to investigate the violation of your civil rights. The cops and their cronies are enraged. They decide to give you the works. The cop, thinking fast, claims that you pulled a knife on him, that he had to subdue you in self-defence. They charge you with speeding, resisting arrest, assault with a

deadly weapon, and intent to commit murder.

A rusty blood-stained knife is found by a Justice of the Peace near the place you were beaten. They don't stop to think that the cop didn't claim to be wounded and that they will have to explain the blood stains.

Now you face serious charges with the possibility of long imprisonment. Just to let you know what Southern justice thinks about your case, the Judge fixes your bail at \$10,000. Now besides recovering from a pistol whipping you've got to defend yourself against a frame-up.

An imaginary incident? Not at all. It's a real-life case, and not an unusual one either. It's the way capitalist democracy works in the U.S.A. in 1953, as Dr. Herman Barnett of Galveston, Texas, can testify.

Thank You!

Once again we thank all those readers listed below whose magnificent financial support has enabled our Fighting Fund for July to reach its target of £100.

We are fighting the same kind of battle which George Lansbury fought with the old "Daily Herald" (you can read about it on this page) and that's why we continue to get such good working class support.

If this support continues and grows then we shall one day achieve a daily "Socialist Outlook" and, what is more, we shall neither go out of business or hand over policy-making to the T.U.C.!

So dig down for the August Target, comrades. Holidays make it our worst financial month. Please make an extra effort for your "Socialist Outlook".

J.L. (Canada), 9s. 6d. Conscript (Germany), 10s. G. Ironmonger, 3s. 3d. St. Pancras readers, 11s. 6d. A. F. Cooper, £1 1s. Enfield Engineers, £1 19s. R. T. Shelley readers, 19s. 3d. Birmingham readers, £3 12s. 6d. J. Gale, 12s. Birmingham readers' special effort, £4 3s. 4d. Birmingham A.E.U. expenses donation, £2 13s. E. Godfrey (N.W.11), £1 11s. Hackney readers, £2 18s. 3d. Donation (anon.), £6. West London readers, £6. Enfield Engineers, 17s. 9d. London busman, 5s. Streatham readers, £5. Three L.S.C. composers 15s. Irish socialists, £15 16s. 3d. Bermondsey readers, £1 18s. 9d. Bermondsey engineer, 1s. H. E. Noakes, £1. Manchester readers, £3 12s. Enfield Engineers, 15s. London reader, 10s. Norwood readers, 14s. 4d. E.N.V. workers, 14s. 9d. Islington readers, 17s. Bebington readers, 10s. Tottenham readers £5 7s. 6d. Hackney readers, £1 5s. 6d. F. Picton, 3s. 6d. "Manchester" £3 1s. Fulham readers, £1 5s. A.W., 10s. Ashton readers, 10s. R. Johnston, 4s. Leicester readers, £2. Notts readers, £4. Anon. £4. Tottenham readers, £1 5s. Leeds readers, £2 17s.

Total £100 8s. 2d.

GEORGE LANSBURY. The Herald's First Editor



Workers of all
Countries unite
You have nothing to lose
but your chains
You have a world to gain

Yours always
Geo. Lansbury

March 18. 1911

from the ranks...

Local Parties Amend 'Challenge to Britain'

Blackley (Manchester) Divisional Labour Party have submitted an amendment to "Challenge to Britain" which says:

- (a) That to achieve economic and political independence, Labour will break the reactionary alliance with capitalist America, whilst making every effort to strengthen the ties with American Labour.
- (b) To break the stranglehold of British Finance Capital, Labour will nationalise all major Banks and monopolist combines of industrialists thus giving Labour full control over financial policy both here and throughout the colonies.
- (c) Labour will withdraw all British troops from the colonies and assist in every way possible the colonial workers in their struggle for democratic socialism.

The Conference delegate from this party has also been mandated to support all resolutions condemning Trade Union leaders who accept positions on industries denationalised; to support extension of workers control in nationalised industry; to support any call for withdrawal of American troops from Britain.

The Leicester City Labour Party's amendment deals with industrial democracy. They propose to add the following: "Recognising that joint consultation is insufficient to develop industrial democracy, Labour will take steps to secure effective worker participation in management within the nationalised industries, as a first step towards the general application of this principle throughout the entire economy. Particular attention will be paid to the operation of this principle at shop-floor level."

Leicester S.W. Divisional Labour Party is asking that "Labour will take into public ownership the Joint Stock Banks and such other financial institutions as necessary to ensure complete public control over the creation and the manipulation of credit."

Leicester S.E. Divisional Labour Party's amendment "regrets the tentative and inadequate nature of the proposals in 'Challenge to Britain' for dealing with the grossly unequal distribution of capital wealth which has remained largely unaffected despite the improvement in the distribution of the national income during Labour's period of office. We urge upon the National Executive the necessity for increased death duties, and a capital levy to be imposed at a rapidly progressive rate on all fortunes over £20,000, in addition to the capital gains tax envisaged in the present programme."

Richmond Constituency Labour Party wants all ambiguity on the question of compensation payments in the re-nationalised industries removed. It proposes to delete the ambiguous phrases in the document and to insert the straightforward statement that "Transport will be re-nationalised without further compensation."

Richmond is also asking the Surrey Federation of Labour Parties to submit an amendment to "Challenge to Britain" which will secure for all colonial peoples "the freedom to choose their own form of government".

Is the "SOCIALIST OUTLOOK" in your Local Library?

If not—ASK FOR IT!

T.U.C. AGENDA

Reviewed by Fred Emmett

THE ever increasing gap between the rising cost of living and wages will be one of the most important debates at the Trades Union Congress due to open on September 7 in Douglas, I.O.M.

The Plumbers, Post Office Engineers, the Electricians, have all submitted resolutions bluntly opposing any form of "wage restraint". Draughtsmen refer to the "present tendency to reduce the real purchasing power" and want Congress to support "vigorous campaigning in favour of higher wages".

N.U.P.E. wants Congress to "assist the affiliated Unions to recover and improve their former standards". They also want Congress to examine a long term wages policy and to devise a method to ensure "higher, more stable and equitable wage standards".

The Chemical Workers Union puts forward a basis for such a policy. Their resolution reads:

"This Congress notes the tendency for wages to be constantly behind the cost-of-living index. As a contributory means of ending this social injustice, Congress accepts the principle of a legalised minimum living wage linked to a revised and accurate retail Cost of Living index, thus guaranteeing that the practice of wages always chasing prices will be ended at the earliest possible moment."

Several Unions have already obtained agreements which automatically raise wages with the rising retail price index, and which therefore go some way toward keeping their wages in step with rising prices. But even these agreements can be improved. The present retail price index for example, is often criticised as not being a true reflection of the cost of living—and the amount of increase in wages per point rise in the index needs careful watching.

NATIONAL SERVICE

The length of compulsory national service also comes up for criticism. Woodworkers, Scottish Painters, Furniture Trade Operatives and Post Office Engineers all want it cut. The Fire Brigades Union call for a reduction in the "proportion of the nation's wealth spent upon the preparation for war".

Draughtsmen, Miners and

Foundry Workers all want extension of nationalisation.

Each and every one of these resolutions are in direct opposition to Tory policy, and a clear refutation of all those who argue that the Trade Unions should be "non-political" or even "independent".

REMOVE THE TORIES

They therefore give added weight to the resolution of the A.E.U. which wants Congress to "instruct the General Council to initiate a United National Campaign of Trade Unions, the Labour Party and the Co-operative Movement for the early defeat and removal of the Tory Government".

Such a campaign would be enthusiastically welcomed by every worker and every housewife, hard hit as they are by the rapidly increasing prices. As a start in such a campaign a real fight on the issue of wages would prove a splendid rallying point.

The launching of the campaign would give added point to the fight which is being waged now inside the Labour Party for a Socialist policy on which the Labour Government to replace the Tories would operate.

How The Tories Deal With a Lock-Out

★ The Parliamentary Record on M.S.A. ★

THURSDAY, JULY 16

Dr. Jeger (Labour) asked the Minister of Labour whether he is aware that the Medical Supply Association Limited, Park Royal, has declared seven men to be redundant without making prior use of the facilities offered by his Department; that this firm has refused to accept the offers of his conciliation officer to mediate in the industrial dispute that followed; and why his Department is supplying replacement labour to this firm.

Sir W. Monckton (Tory): I am aware of the circumstances of this dispute. My officers have been in touch with the firm and the Trade Unions, but I regret that it has not been possible to find an acceptable basis for a settlement. Their services are, however, still available to the parties.

The one man placed there

since the employment exchange became aware of the dispute was, in accordance with long established practice, informed of the dispute before he was submitted.

Mr. Robinson (Labour): Is the firm still insisting that no dispute exists, on the grounds that all the union members of the staff have now been dismissed?

Sir W. Monckton: I was not aware that the allegation was being made that there was not a dispute.

Dr. Jeger asked the Minister of Health what action he proposes to take with regard to existing and future contracts with the Medical Supply Association Ltd., in view of the fact that this firm is no longer complying with the fair wages clause 1946.

Mr. K. Robinson asked the Minister of Health whether he is satisfied that the Medical Supply Association, Park Royal, N.W.10, with which his Department is in contractual relations, is observing the fair wages clause, in view of the circumstances of which he is aware.

Mr. Iain Macleod (Tory): It has been represented to me that this contractor is not complying with the fair wages clause in current contracts, and the matter is being investigated.

Mr. Awbery (Labour): Is there not an obligation on the Government and local authorities to withdraw contracts when it is proved that the fair wages clause is not being carried out?

Mr. Macleod: For the moment no further contracts are being placed with this firm, but this matter, as the reply to an earlier question indicated, is being investigated by the Minister of Labour, and I wish to await the outcome of that.

JULY 23

Mr. K. Robinson asked the Minister of Labour whether he has any further statement to make regarding the industrial dispute at the Medical Supply Association, Park Royal, N.W.10.

Sir W. Monckton: The observations of the firm on the complaint that they are not observing the fair wages clause have now been referred to me by my right hon. friend the Minister of

Health in accordance with normal practice, and I am arranging for my officers to approach the parties again.

Mr. Robinson: Do I gather from that that there has been no progress in the settlement of this industrial dispute? Is the Minister aware that this firm is now advertising for non-union labour and that up to last weekend 22 non-union men have been engaged, some through the facilities of the Minister's Department? Will the Minister do what he can to try to prevent this firm behaving in this stupid and prehistoric manner?

Sir W. Monckton: I understand that in their observations to my right hon. friend they have denied that they are breaking the fair wages clause. That is the very point where we can come in and see what the position is, and my regional industrial officer is now engaged on that task.

JULY 30

Mr. K. Robinson asked the Minister of Health what conclusions he has reached with regard to contracts with the Medical Supply Association, Park Royal, N.W.10, following his inquiries into the firm's alleged breach of the fair wages clause.

Mr. Iain Macleod: I regret that I am not yet in a position to add anything to the answer given by my right hon. and learned friend the Minister of Labour on July 23.

Mr. Robinson: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this firm is advertising for non-union labour and has a staff almost entirely of non-union men; and will he arrange for an inspection of the quality of the work that is being done for his Department?

Mr. Macleod: This is rather outside my field. A number of allegations have been made about this firm, but I should like to make it clear that the firm deny all these allegations, and it is only reasonable that the investigation set in train by my right hon. and learned friend the Minister of Labour should be allowed to proceed, so that we can find out on which side justice lies.

D. C. Thomsons

The Trades Union Congress asks all trade unionists and the public generally to refuse to buy the following publications:

DAILY NEWSPAPERS		
Courier and Advertiser (Dundee)		
Evening Telegraph and Post (Dundee)		
WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS		
Sporting Post	Sunday Post	Weekly News
OTHER PUBLICATIONS		
Adventure	My Weekly	Secrets and Flame
Beano Comic	People's Friend	Skipper
Dandy Comic	People's Journal	Topper
Family Star	Red Letter	Weekly Welcome
Hotspur	Red Star Weekly	Wizard
	Rover	

These are all publications of the firm of Messrs. D. C. Thomson which has printing establishments in Dundee, Glasgow and Manchester.

Although D. C. Thomsons have accepted the principle for which 74 members of the National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants came out on strike in April, 1952, they have refused to re-instate these Trade Unionists. The official appeal of the T.U.C. states:

"Trade Unionists and the public generally... will be indignant that Messrs. D. C. Thomson seek to set themselves in defiance of normal present-day practice. It is for this reason you are asked to refuse without any breach of contract to buy the publications listed above until there is a change of attitude on the part of the firm."

Serious Crisis in the British C.P.

THE resignation of Harry McShane, leading Clyde-side member of the Communist Party, is the first indication of a serious crisis inside that Party. McShane, besides being Scottish Correspondent for the "Daily Worker", was a leader of the National Unemployed Workers' Movement and well known throughout the country. He was a C.P. member for 31 years.

He describes the reasons why he and others have resigned as "the outcome of a bureaucratic development which has seized hold of the C.P. since the end of the Second World War". Some foundation for this allegation is in fact tacitly admitted in the Resolution of the Scottish Committee which declares:

"There should have been more sympathetic handling of certain comrades and that a too rigid approach was adopted in connection with some of the problems, which made their solution more difficult."

This official resolution of the

C.P., however, completely ignores the political accusations made by McShane in "Reynolds News", August 2. It concentrates instead upon a campaign of implied slander, hinting that McShane and those others who have resigned serve the millionaire press. This, of course, is a downright lie, as can be seen from a study of the press statements. The criticisms of McShane are political and they come from a man who still maintains his belief in socialism. They are entirely different from the criticisms of renegades like Douglas Hyde and Bob Darke.

The smear attack of the C.P. resolution is designed to obscure the inability of the leadership to answer McShane politically, and the fact that 36 voted against it, and 34 abstained, would indicate that quite a few C.P.'ers understand this.

BACKGROUND OF THE CRISIS

McShane declares that the political influence of the Party is declining and he is absolutely right. Its General Election record since 1931 proves it.

Candidates	1931	1935	1945	1950	1951
Votes	25	2	45	100	10
	75,000	27,117	102,780	91,815	19,640

In 1931, each candidate averaged 3,000 votes; in 1950 less than 1,000. Two candidates could poll 27,117 between them in 1935, but 10 candidates, whose contest in-

cluded these same seats, polled only 19,640 in 1951.

This is indisputable proof to supplement the statement of McShane. No amount of talk about 1,000 new members joining the Scottish C.P. since the beginning of the year can offset this. Since 1945 the membership has dropped from 65,000 to around 30,000 today. Everyone knows that members pass through the C.P. like water through a strainer.

The Party is stagnating and the worse it gets the more infallible

By

Phillip Williams

become the Party leaders. They manage to hold conferences where not one opposing point of view is heard from the floor. Two members (says McShane) are suspended when they fail to rise from their seats and shout "hurrahs" for the leaders. Pollitt, Laughlin and Co. act as if they were in Moscow by even seeing to it that their portraits are carried around in the public demonstrations, which are now few and far between.

McShane and his comrades have denounced this bureaucratic play-acting because to them it is strangling the life out of a Party which they hoped would one day lead the British workers to socialism.

THE POLITICAL DIFFERENCES

The charge of "Browderism" in the British C.P. remains, of course, unanswered by Pollitt. "Browderism" signified that period of class collaboration in the U.S. during the war when Earl Browder, then

General Secretary of the American C.P., urged the Party to disband and form an association devoted to working along the lines of the two-party system in the U.S.A.

The British C.P. pursued an identical line during the war, and supported Churchill to the hilt. After the war it declared for a "Peoples' Government" of Liberals, progressive Tories, Labourites and itself. A few months after this declaration, the working class elected by an overwhelming majority a Labour Government, thus proving how the class-collaborationist C.P. was completely out of touch with the people. Only a few weeks ago when Churchill "talked peace" the C.P. once more swung into support for him.

McShane has touched a fundamental point here. The rôle of the British C.P. is not to make a revolution in Britain—it is to act as the foreign policy spokesman for the U.S.S.R. So McShane and his colleagues cannot wall up their criticism on British soil. They must re-examine the past history of developments in the U.S.S.R., for the bureaucracy in the British Party is but a reflection of the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union. It may seem absurd to have portraits of a Scottish leader carried around Glasgow Green as if he were Malenkov on the Red Square—but there is a method in this type of madness. The bureaucracy here is simply aping Moscow, because it rests on the Kremlin.

Right now the Kremlin is for "peaceful co-existence" with capitalism. Is not this a form of "Browderism"? He stood for "peaceful co-existence" with the

democratic and Republican Parties. They stand for peaceful co-existence with the capitalist world.

Here we see the political need for the bureaucracy in the C.P. Its main task is to keep the Party behind the Moscow line, and as long as Laughlin and Pollitt do this, they know they are at least temporarily safe from criticism.

McShane and his colleagues have taken an important step. If they persevere in their devotion to socialism, they will find a place inside the left wing of the Labour Party helping forward the socialist fight.

Dirt and Dollars

The President of the Grimby Trades Council, Mr. E. Elsom, informed its July meeting that the Government had refused permission to the Grimby Co-operative Society to build a laundry. The reason? A laundry is only a consumer service and not a dollar earner.

Well, well, we always did suspect that dirt and dollars go together!

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Clerks Oppose African Federation

"This Westminster General Branch of the Clerical and Administrative Workers' Union strongly protests against the action of the Nyasaland Government in deporting from its territory the Reverend Michael Scott and Paramount Chief Gomani. It recognises this action as a further step in the campaign to enforce the federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland

against the declared wishes of the African peoples. It further resolves that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Colonial Secretary."

This resolution was sent by the branch to the Executive Committee of the C.A.W.U. which decided to support it and bring it before the General Council of the Trades Union Congress.

Problems of Nationalisation

IN the article headed "Labour Rank and File", July 31, there is a section which states: "The key to the question of transforming our economy from a capitalist to a socialist basis . . . is . . . workers control in the nationalised enterprises".

This is of course true, but it goes on: "The mere transfer of ownership from the private capitalist to the state, though a big step forward, does not accomplish this as it leaves unaltered the relation of the worker to the means of production. If the worker remains a 'hired hand', a wage labourer, the mode of production remains capitalist in its nature."

Surely the expression "mere transfer" is incorrect—and the argument built up round it proves it to be used deliberately. We are told that even though the "means of production" may be nationalised, it is quite on the cards that "the mode of production remains capitalist in its nature". Even if that is not what was intended by the writer, he underestimates the important rôle of nationalisation in Britain today. It also projects a type of state capitalism that would be a contradiction in terms. Perhaps it doesn't mean that, but it says it.

How can we afford to be careless in such matters at a time when in the Far East, in Eastern Europe and elsewhere this "mere" question of nationalisation is the object of open war?

In the East, nationalised economies have been fought for and won. The West, literally, has been obliged to go to war against nationalisation. The cleavage extends even to our own Party ranks. Our own right wing first split the Party on this issue. At Scarborough, Morrison first organised his followers on the policy of "consolidation". Today that has ripened into Tory-Labour near-unity.

Remembering this situation, nationally and internationally, is it not extremely careless to use phrases implying that "the mode of production" can "remain capitalist in its nature" despite the "transfer of ownership from the private capitalist to the state"?

Nobody can deny the extreme importance of stressing the need for workers control, but the transfer of any further sectors of industry to the state in Britain today means, in fact, undermining the "capitalist nature" of the "mode of production" and of the state that defends it.

Had it been argued that nationalisation of a major sector of industry was impossible without workers control, that would have been entirely correct. To say, however, that it could take place under capitalism is entirely incorrect. In practice, it would be an attempt to set up a socialist state, i.e., the power to go ahead and plan the production of this country. Workers control is certainly necessary to do that. But equally true is it that nationalisation means nothing other than the abolition of capitalism, and of the present "mode of production", and of the state that defends it.

Today, when nationalisation is under attack from every angle—at home and abroad—we should say nothing that could confuse the fact that it is the antithesis of capitalist private property and that it is the

Our readers write

form of spelling the end of this outworn "mode of production".

Let us raise the question of workers control by all means, but in such a way as to heighten the meaning of nationalisation, in Britain, in Russia, China, Eastern Europe and in every sphere where the war to turn the clock back to the system of the 18th and 19th centuries is now being fought.

The article, I am sure, is not meant to convey any other sentiments than the above. However, it would be unfortunate if it seemed to belittle the campaign for nationalisation. For I feel certain that its author would agree to the abolition of private property in the means of production. In a word, nationalisation.

R. Hood. Peckham.

★ Kenya Sportsmen

The Whites in Kenya are to have a new racecourse. According to the "Yorkshire Evening Post" (August 4) "no expense is to be spared to make the track modern and up-to-date in every way, and over £400,000 has been spent on the grandstand alone." (My emphasis—G.G.)

Vast sums of money to build a whites-only grandstand—while there are 10,000 homeless African workers in Nairobi who must sleep each night in the streets. Doesn't this explain the present revolt of the Kenya Africans?

The "Yorkshire Evening Post" goes on to report that "internal unrest is having an adverse effect

on the sport . . . and the second most important race track in the country is now being used as a depot for troops fighting the Mau Mau."

However, I have no doubt that these white racegoers will console themselves by indulging in the now popular "sport" of hunting the Mau Mau. Doesn't the whole rotten business make you sick.

G. Gale. Leeds.

★ One Man's Meat

You are to be congratulated on the paper which meets a need long wanted, for something which is readily recognisable as distinctive Socialist policy given utterance in a paper that is convincing, uncompromising, and eminently readable.

P. J. Scott. Felixstowe.

★ Another's Poison

Though I agree with a great deal that you say, I cannot tolerate your very virulent attacks on the Royal Family.

If you got rid of them, whom would you put in their place? And, from an economic point of view alone, how much would you have to spend to cook someone up to the sufficient degree of importance to meet foreign visitors without causing offence?

I have done a good deal of sweating at my own job, mainly work in overcrowded hospitals, but I would not like to change places either with a miner, or with the Queen. Both are hard working people, and deserve our thanks for doing an arduous task, requiring life-long training.

It is with a mixture of regret and relief that I suspend my subscription.

Audrey Henson. London, W.1.

The Week at Westminster

by Harold Davies, M.P.

THE SHIP AND THE SHOVEL

A bloke has just been in to take me to a wonderful little pub of which I have never heard before, "The Ship and the Shovel". Now I can't go because I have to get this column in the post before the evening is out. Nevertheless, "The Ship and the Shovel" is as good a caption as any for what I want to say right now.

Mr. Dulles, as reported, upset the Opposition and Mr. Attlee called for a special debate on the Thursday before recess, in order that the Government could explain to us what it thought about Mr. Dulles and his talk of a "walk out."

Labour Members wanted to know what would the Government do if Dulles vetoed the entry of China into the United Nations and the U.S.A. were to "go it alone"?

Again Mr. Attlee asserted his leadership and Mr. Butler was much more informative than in the Foreign Affairs debate. He suggested that the fuller reports he had, revealed the Dulles Press Conference in a better light and in

any case Britain rested her case upon the policy of the United Nations and no decisions would be made outside U.N.O.

While Butler's backbenchers seemed less enthusiastic, loud cheers greeted the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he added that he looked upon the United Nations as a family of nations and not an anti-communist alliance. It is about time that this fact was made clear. Too many reactionaries appear to look at the United Nations as the top-level anti-communist combine in the world.

Co-operation, as Attlee pointed out, is a two way process and to say this implies no anti-American propaganda. Butler hoped that the armistice had brought the day nearer when we could see China as a member of U.N.

John Strachey, though, was not quite satisfied with the statement. He had hoped Butler would say that he would press firmly for China's entrance and that the embargo on East West Trade would be lifted.

That's just where my "ships and my shovels" come in. Clearing up the mess in Korea is going to be a long heartrending job. The Korean people as usual have been pawns in the game. They suffer. To build this country up she will need food and tools. As I have said before, this is how we can win the time to heal the ulcers of hatred.

EAST WEST TRADE

Those of us who have heard Adlai Stevenson find that the American conception of liberalism is streets apart from the British idea. When I heard Adlai Steven-

son I felt a little depressed because I could see that it would take a long time yet to bring the American leadership to an understanding of the progressive European outlook on Far Eastern problems.

We are losing valuable markets in China and this week we find that the Lower House of the Japanese Parliament are asking the right to trade with China.

Our manufacturers are going to be placed in an unfair position. Our trading competitors will have captured these markets. Tom Driberg illustrated this point during the debate when he quoted the Glasgow "Daily Record".

"West Germany is pushing a trade offensive with Communist China, which already ranks just behind Eastern Germany as the Federal German Republic's best customer behind the Iron Curtain. West German trade with China has doubled in the last year . . . and German trade experts estimate that it can be increased tenfold without running foul of the Western embargo on shipments of war materials."

We must not make the mistake of building up generations of hatred against the Western World in China. This was the mistake we made with the new Russia in its early days.

"NO CAKES AND NO ALE"

In 1952 to meet charges raised under the National Health Service just over £600,000 was paid and of this £209,000 represented the refund of shilling charges from prescriptions from June 1 onwards. It would be interesting to know how many people are not getting the full benefit of the Health Service now because they have to through the formula of applying for assistance. These Health Service charges must go.

During the year 1952 the number of persons receiving weekly assistance from the National Assistance Board rose by more than 200,000. The Report of the National Assistance Board for 1952 shows that allowances provided the needs either in whole or in part for over 2,400,000 persons. I see from the Report too that the Board total expenditure was over £118 million. It is interesting to note that in that there is an item of £270,000 for Polish hostels.

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The Abolition of The Death Penalty

THE Christie case showing as it has (unless you can accept the coincidence of a second strangler at work at 10 Rillington Place at the same time as Christie) that in all good faith an error was made and an innocent man hanged for the murder of his child, will again bring up the question of abolishing capital punishment.

At the same time, by focusing attention on the sentimental aspects of the question it may do the case for abolition more harm than good. Those who fear an increase of the more highly spiced crimes can scream louder and longer than those who fear a possible miscarriage of justice.

The execution of Evans was a great personal tragedy, but not more so than those mangled and killed on the roads or in accidents at work or indeed than the National Service boys killed in Korea. Of these thousands most are the innocent victims of blind mischance as Evans was.

If the Evans case is an argument for abolishing capital punishment then the toll on the roads is one for abolishing motor-cars. They are in fact arguments for reform not for abolition.

The real arguments for abolition are less highly coloured. They are unanswered because unanswerable. But fortunately for those who like their newspaper reading

to be spicy (and who were badly hit by the Act of Parliament which banned publication of the details of divorce cases) they can be largely ignored just because they are not highly coloured. The main arguments are:—

(1) The hysteria and morbid excitement created by news reports of a murder trial is highly undesirable because it corrupts those who read about it and make it their chief source or one of their sources of interest. Society is entitled to be protected against it, just as it was against the pornography of some divorce court news. But in banning publication of divorce details, the only risk is that a divorce may be wrongly

By
A Labour Lawyer

granted or withheld; a ban on publishing murder trial details might lead to a man being wrongly put to death. Where the liberty of the individual (and still more his life) is at stake, any ban on Press publication would be intolerable. If therefore the news can not be expurgated then the only alternative is to cut away the base of the morbid excitement itself by removing the death penalty.

(2) The following countries have abolished the death penalty for murder; most of them have abolished it for all crimes but a few retain it for political crimes:— Argentine, Austria, Belgium (disused); only one execution since 1863 and that in wartime), Brazil, Columbia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Dominica, Ecuador, Finland, Holland, Honduras, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Maine (U.S.A.), Mexico, Michigan (U.S.A.), Minnesota (U.S.A.), Nepal, Norway, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Queensland (Australia), Rumania, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, U.S.S.R., Venezuela, Wisconsin (U.S.A.), Rhode Island (U.S.A.) and North Dakota (U.S.A.) the death penalty can be imposed for a second murder. In South Dakota (U.S.A.) there had in 1949 been one execution in the last 30 years.

While the above list of abolition countries varies widely in social and cultural level, a glance at those who retain the death penalty show that the British Empire and

France with its Empire are the leading countries to retain it.

In the U.S.A. all the States with the higher murder rates are included in those which retain the death penalty and all the States with lowest murder rates have abolished. This does not mean that the death penalty incites to murder. It means that the same social phenomena (hot blood, racial animosities, etc.) which lead citizens to kill one another privately (murder) lead them also to kill one another publicly (death penalty). In Kansas (U.S.A.) where capital punishment was abolished in 1907 and reintroduced in 1935 as a result of public reaction to one brutal murder, the official evidence is that there has been no change in the average murder rate before abolition of the death penalty, while it was abolished or since it has been reintroduced. And this is true generally.

(3) The only impartial investigation of the question ever carried out in this country was by the Select Parliamentary Committee set up in 1929. (The recent Royal Commission was limited by its terms of reference to considering limiting the death penalty and could not consider its abolition. To limit the death penalty might easily give us the worst of all worlds). The Select Committee established by detailed evidence from abolition countries

(a) that abolition had not caused an increase in murder in a single European country; in most cases abolition had been followed by a decrease.

(b) that the chief fears of the more responsible opponents of abolition in this country were that it would lead to an increase in murders by professional criminals or to carrying of firearms or would be followed by lynch law.

(c) that there is no evidence that abolition had led to an increase in murders by professional criminals or to carrying of firearms or had been followed by lynch law in any country in the world.

A study of these facts shows that if we can only keep sentiment out of it and allow the public interest to take precedence over private passion the case for abolishing the death penalty is overwhelming.

★ Star Letter ★

The Sterling Area Socialists

THE statement "Challenge to Britain" is mainly concerned with another step in the Baldwin policy of protection and development of the Sterling Area. It is not good enough for Socialists.

The "dollar problem" is not new. Stanley Baldwin began the policy of "protecting the Sterling Area" and the Ottawa (1939) Conference registered the first major decisions in a new war—the war of the Sterling Area against all challengers.

The first enemy was the autarchic trading methods of Nazi Germany. Russia was beyond control or influence, but the Dollar Area saw close affinity between themselves and the Sterling Area on this matter of trade and the German totalitarian bloc, and from Ottawa onwards the world position deteriorated into war.

Socialists at the time expressed concern at the decisions of Ottawa and the attempt to solve the problems of the Sterling Area by currency controls and manipulations.

The basic need of the Sterling Area vis-a-vis the Dollar Area is not currency but integration on a balanced basis. For example, we want newspaper and oil, but they need tin, rubber and so on. The currency problem is a reflection of an imbalance which is not likely to be corrected by means of currency policies. The wording of the Party Policy Statement seems to suggest that we are in for an economic and currency cold war against America.

With capitalist modes of thought we can find no solution of the problems facing us. We have to think again, and get the British people to think again, on socialist lines. Planning, integration, co-operation and partnership are the key words, not "National independence", (we must, of course, get freedom from dependence, which is not quite the same thing). Underselling on the "dollar market", freeing "world trade" are not indications of a socialist approach.

Can we protect our trade and currency by restrictions and all the paraphernalia of economic cold war against all others? Can we give security to the Sterling Area whilst denying it to the rest of the world? Will the Sterling bloc hold together under such conditions, remembering the action of Australia recently when the rest were seriously jeopardised? Is there another way—leading through world co-operation?

The Policy Statement does not exclude this possibility but it also does not consider it. Rather does it come down strongly for a closer Sterling Area and a determined struggle to balance trade with the dollar countries.

I realise that many of these problems will solve themselves under the stress of conflicting interests but as a socialist I do not like to see our Policy Statement tie itself to the Sterling Area policies of the finance-capitalists.

H. Hodson. Ilford.

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