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THREE FORUM LEADERS ON THE FORUMS' FUTURE

THIS SUNDAY the first conference of London socialist forums takes place at the Holborn Assembly Hall. We asked Pauline Harrison of Sheffield and Richard Goss and Joe Young of London, prominent members of the forum movement, to write on 'The Future of the Forums'. Their articles appear below. A full report of the conference will appear in next week's issue of The Newsletter.

THE 'NEW LEFT' OF SERIOUS SOCIALISTS

By Pauline Harrison

I HAVE BEEN asked to write about the future of the forums. Not being a prophet, I have taken the liberty of writing instead about some of the problems which in my view the forums should try to tackle, and of some of the dangers which they should try to avoid—a subject which is very much concerning the London forums at the present time.

The future of the forums does after all very much depend on what they set out to do now.

The forums were born in a general movement of liberation—in Hungary this took the form of a bloody struggle against foreign interference and the AVH, in Britain an attempt to shake off some of the imprisoning dogmas of 'religious Marxism' and the belief that foreign experiences could be taken over wholesale here.

The forums' initial impetus

Hungary and the Twentieth Congress gave the forums their initial impetus. It would be a great mistake if they allowed their first preoccupation with eastern European affairs to dominate their future development.

It is not that the USSR as the 'first socialist country' is unimportant, but that the problems of introducing socialism in an under-developed, semi-feudal country and those in a highly developed, capitalist one are entirely different.

To Lenin socialism in Russia equalled Soviet power plus electrification. But is there not more than a bitter grain of truth in Djilas' argument that the attempt to carry out two revolutions in one stage has required, and produced, instead, a third and distinct revolution with its own new dominant class, the party officials and technocrats?

If Djilas is right, perhaps we in Britain are in a happier position than that of Russia or Yugoslavia.

Having gone through our 'bourgeois revolution', we have an industrial society at the start. We want to run industry for public rather than for private profit. The problem in the first place is how are we actually to set about taking over industry.

Socialism 'by the backdoor'?

Then a whole host of problems arise—how are we to ensure that industry is run democratically without decreasing its efficiency; at what levels should direct workers' control be introduced and what should be the relation of workers to managers; where industry must be run on a national scale to maintain efficiency (e.g., the coal-mines); how can the individual worker prevent the development of a vast and bureaucratic machine over which he can have little control?

Are we likely to get socialism 'by the backdoor'—by 'State' acquisition of shares, by the nationalization of firms which are 'failing the nation'?

Most of us would agree that these methods have at least as good a chance of propping up capitalism as of achieving socialism.

(Continued overleaf)

INDUSTRY

LONDON BUSMEN WANT ACTION ON WAGES

By Our Industrial Correspondent

'THIS BRANCH of the Transport and General Workers' Union expresses its dissatisfaction with the way in which the General Executive Council has handled our wage claim.

'We demand that the claim for 25s. be pushed and, should no satisfactory reply have been received from the London Transport Executive by November 1, we ask plenary powers for strike action.'

This was the substance of a resolution passed by an overwhelming majority at a special meeting of a South London branch of the TGWU last week.

Members had listened to a report of the recent delegate conference, where Mr. Nicholas, deputy to Frank Cousins, had given the views of the executive.

In their opinion it was not now opportune to press the claim, because such a demand, if granted, would destroy the good work of the recent 'levelling-up' of provincial wages.

OUR SPECIAL ISSUE

The special enlarged issue of The Newsletter commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution, to be published on November 7, will cost 2s. to non-subscribers. Subscribers, however, will receive it without extra charge. It will contain over twenty articles.

Further, the cost of living had only gone up by three points; therefore busmen were not entitled to such a big increase.

Asked from the floor how he could claim only a three point increase with the Rent Act now being felt, Mr. Nicholas replied: 'Rents don't come into the cost of living'.

After a heated discussion the conference rejected the proposals of the executive, proposals which side-stepped the wage demand and proposed the establishment of a 'national' committee of busmen.

Only five delegates voted for the executive plan, and it surprised members that one of those five was Hills, a member of the executive who was previously sponsored by the bus sections.

This has led to several branches withdrawing their support from Hills, and it is expected that Bill Jones, driver in Dalston Garage, will be a popular candidate in the approaching elections for the Executive.

Bill Jones has been a leading busman for thirty years, and was a member of the executive for seven years. As he was a member of the Communist Party, he was forced to resign office in 1949 with the coming of the 'black circular'.

Because he disagreed with Communist Party policy in Hungary, Bill Jones resigned from the Communist Party, and his application again to hold office in the union has been granted.

COMMENTARY

FORUMS AND LABOUR

THE SOCIALIST FORUMS which began to spring up a year ago have been successful in providing a place for ex-members of the Communist Party and other socialists, holding various points of view, to exchange opinions and clarify their ideas. This weekend's conference in London—we wish it every success—can look back on a year of lively local discussions, which have very often sent people to the library shelves. Clearly, as independent discussion centres the forums are doing, and will continue to do, a very useful job.

This function, however, is a limited one. Fruitful discussion leads to a desire for political activity. Can the forums organize such activity? In our view they would cease to be forums if they tried to act as an independent political centre. The time has come for socialists, refreshed and enlightened by their discussions, to join the Labour Party in order to strengthen the fight for Left policies and Left leadership. It would help the whole Left-wing movement, and would make a great contribution to the future development of the socialist forums themselves, if a majority of forum members took this step. Let the discussions continue—and let us get down to some solid work in the Labour Party and trade unions as well.

WILL CAMPBELL APOLOGIZE?

IN THE *Daily Worker* recently J. R. Campbell referred to the 'Bevanites, Trotskyites and what-have-you' associated with *Tribune*. Campbell used at one time to write much about Trotskyites and Trotskyism and, indeed, with his book *Soviet Policy and its Critics* (1939) and numerous pamphlets and articles, did perhaps more than anybody else to miseducate a whole generation of British Communist Party members on this subject. Trotskyists, we were told, were fascist agents, spies, wreckers, bandits etc., and not a trend in the Labour movement at all. Communists might—~~hay~~, should—associate with Liberals and 'progressive' Tories, but on no account with Trotskyites. On the contrary, these must be hounded out of all working-class and socialist organizations.

Is not an apology from Campbell on this question long overdue? After all, the Soviet comrades have withdrawn these slanders, even if (so far) only in their characteristically quiet way—by implication rather than by direct statement. Compare, for example, the 1940 and 1956 editions of the reference book called *Politicheskoy Slovar* [*Political Dictionary*]. In the earlier version 'Trotskyism' is defined, in Stalin's words, as 'the advanced detachment of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie', and all the familiar epithets follow, culminating in the charge that Trotsky's followers acted as fascist intelligence agents in Spain and China. The 1956 edition, however, has none of this, the definition being written in straight political terms. As was usual in Stalinist circles before 1931, 'Trotskyism' is now defined as 'one of the most harmful varieties of Menshevism'. Instead of a reiteration of the criminal charges levelled during the 1936-38 Moscow trials, the reader is merely told that after his expulsion from the USSR Trotsky 'continued his struggle against the party'. The implications of this change seem clear.

FORUMS (Continued from front page)

But while we may reject this sort of 'Lib.-Lab.-ism', most of us are not agreed on what methods should be used instead, nor indeed have any adequate alternative proposals yet emerged.

There is simply no use pretending that our situation is comparable to that of a hungry peasant society. Our standard of living is comparatively high and it has—with fluctuation—been gradually improving. And the majority of Britons are not avowedly socialist.

Under these conditions the socialist appeal will get nowhere if it is a purely economic one. The imagination will not be stirred very much by offers of more jam or cheaper television sets, **important as it is to fight to maintain and improve real wages.**

What more is needed? Some genuinely practical and detailed proposals on how industry can be taken over and controlled under socialism, coupled with a vision of a new society based on the motive of public co-operation rather than private greed, where privilege and U and non-U distinctions are abolished, where workers are not simply working for a 'boss', be he old capitalist or new bureaucrat, and consumers are not simply 'the market', where there is equal opportunity in work, education and creative leisure, where freedom of thought and action will not be diminished but increased.

Not just angry young men

There is a growing 'new Left', of which the forums form a part. They are not just a bunch of angry and arrogant young men and women as some critics would like to suggest, but are composed of serious socialists trying to face up to some of the problems which Right or Left have dodged for years.

In many ways they are already developing a distinctive character of their own. The majority of their members—certainly of their foundation members—have been strongly influenced by Marxism and believe that Marxists, stripped of some of their religious beliefs, still have much to offer.

They believe that the problems facing us can best be solved through a close association of rank and file socialists from factories and mines with those from schools and universities.

They have rejected any attempt to set up a new party under present conditions: most of them are probably by now members of the Labour Party, but they nevertheless believe that it is essential for their organization to remain independent of any party control.

The forums aim to unite Left socialists of all types and to win new socialists through their meetings and through their journal, *Forum*.

Of the future, who can say? But is it not fair to suggest that the prospects are brighter than they have been for years?

FIRST AFFIRM BASIC SOCIALIST PRINCIPLES

By Richard Goss

THE FORUMS came into being with the crisis of the Communist Parties and the final discrediting of the communist dogmas, especially as applied to Britain—dogmas which had frightened the Right wing of the Labour movement and divided the Left.

The determination of the movement, both in the leaders and the rank and file, has been sapped by the romantic clamour for revolutionary action by those who claimed to be scientific, at a time when neither the economic conditions nor the temper of the workers were favourable to revolution.

It must be recognized, however, that the Labour movement has now found a new unity in the face of Conservative inadequacy and the possibility of winning the next General Election.

But this unity is based on a short-term programme to cover the five years or so of a Labour government. On the question of socialism the movement is still vague and divided and the party has lost its appeal to youth.

Most of the members of the Labour Party can be considered non-political. The leaders, both national and local, are often overburdened with the practical problems of doing something for the workers within the limits set by the con-

tinuing capitalist system. This is what has sickened so many ardent socialists.

The politically conscious members often have an idealistic conception of socialism, full of over-simplified answers to complicated questions—such as total and immediate nationalization of every industrial and commercial firm in the country, with no compensation and also no revolution.

True, there are political education officers of great erudition in the more favoured constituencies, but they do not seem to be concerned with explaining socialism or how it may be achieved, but rather with current problems and the expounding of official policy.

What is missing?

What is needed at the present time is a new vision, a new declaration of principles and moral values, which will inspire the youth, disarm the Conservatives and give consistency and drive to an ever-growing body of active socialist workers and leaders.

The moral basis of socialism is not clear to the British people in either social class, and the vision of the future presented so attractively by the early socialists has been tarnished by anti-humanist and anti-democratic realities in socialist Russia and other countries.

Perhaps what is needed is more Marxism. But it has to be realized that there has been practically no forward development of Marxist thought since Trotsky died.

Much false doctrine has to be scraped off before the clean face of Marxism can be seen again. Marxism must be brought, up to date if it is to inform the British Labour movement.

The communist-Labour squabble has given us the false antithesis of reform versus revolution, as if they were mutually exclusive.

Neither gradualism nor revolution is inevitable as the only way for Britain. The policies of the movement need a socialist, working-class basis, which will enable it to fight vigorously for reforms while reforms can be achieved with acceptable speed, but will carry the movement over into revolutionary action if reforms become blocked.

How the forums can fill the gap

The development of these policies, as I see it, is the purpose to which the efforts of the forums should be directed.

They should seek to unify the romanticist and pragmatic wings of socialist thought in a scientific and humanist analysis of society, method of advance and determination of socialist aims. The capitalists must be defeated morally as well as economically—then maybe a military victory will not be needed.

The forums should first of all systematize and affirm basic socialist and humanist principles, such as the meaning of equality, freedom of the individual and democracy; and they should decide broadly how these principles might be applied in socialist society.

A deep and constant study should be made of the existing capitalist system as a living, moving organism.

On the basis of these studies and principles, a peaceful democratic road to socialism should be projected, with an alternative method of transition ready in case democratic processes are unduly hampered.

Closest links with Labour

When these ideas have been worked out with some degree of clarity and unanimity, the forums will have a basis for criticizing existing policies and for putting forward policies of their own.

The forums can succeed only if they unify as they clarify. In order to do this their ideas must always be moving and developing. This can be assured only by encouraging continuous free democratic discussion and by maintaining the closest links with the general Labour movement.

Any attempt to formulate and impose a strict ideology, with a sectarian organization set up to defend it against deviation, must be strongly guarded against.

The British Labour movement has the strength, the experience and the organization to achieve socialism: what it needs

is the understanding and the determination.

These the forums must help to find and transmit to their members and the movement in general. Then the future of the forums will be assured and the road to socialism smoothed and victory speeded.

LET'S MEET THE CHALLENGE OF OUR TIME

By Joe Young

It is about a year ago now that the first of the socialist forums was formed and it must be said that many of the doubts and questions about the usefulness and purpose of these new groups have been answered simply by the fact of the forums' continued existence.

Arising as they did in the atmosphere of disillusionment and shock created by the revelations about the Soviet régime and the crisis of international communism, it was natural for some to question whether these discussion groups had any useful purpose for any length of time.

As could be expected, this question was not answered so much by arguing about it, but was much more effectively answered by demonstrating that the forums have grown in numbers and strength, have continued to meet regularly, and after a year show every sign of further progress.

The first year of life is always hazardous and exciting and to come through it at all is something of an achievement. But now is the time to discuss the future.

In the beginning the temptation was resisted to present a list of aims which could only have been foisted artificially on forum members, whose immediate need was to discuss the situation in a time which can only be described as confusing.

Political do-it-yourself movement

Instead the forums were encouraged to act independently, deciding for themselves what they would discuss and what conclusions they would arrive at.

This is a more democratic, and in the long run more effective, method than that chosen by some other bodies. In a way, a kind of political do-it-yourself movement.

A number of forums have now established themselves in various parts of the country. The major question now is to try to define in words what appears to have emerged in practice as the commonly held view of the nature of these forums—their aims and objects. The first conference of London socialist forums will discuss this question.

The document which will be discussed proposes that the forums should continue to act as independent discussion centres, bringing together as far as possible the various shades of socialist opinion, not seeking to supplant any existing political party or group, but through discussion of theory and current events to help to evolve a clearer socialist perspective and to influence policies and actions towards that end.

At the same time, the conference will seek to establish more effective links between the forums so as to improve their exchange of opinions and experience, chiefly by developing the monthly journal *Forum*.

We are living in times when, as never before, the opportunity for social advance is so great and the danger of world disaster so close. The global satellite encircling the world in outer space is a symbol of this choice before mankind.

The future of the socialist forums lies not in the advocacy of this or that doctrine, but in the uniting of all socialists outside of party confines, through their discussion of the real world and its real problems to help achieve socialist solutions to the challenge of our time.

5TH EDITION OF LENIN'S WORKS BY 1963

According to Pravda of October 2, the promised fifth, complete edition of Lenin's works is to begin publication before the end of this year. It will consist of 55 volumes, all of which will have appeared by 1963.

The new edition will include some hitherto unpublished documents, it is stated. Special volumes will be devoted to the 'Philosophical Notebooks', 'Notebooks on Imperialism', 'Notebooks on the National Question' and 'Materials on the Agrarian Question'.

White Terror? Counter-revolution?

These Witnesses of Hungary's Days of Struggle Give History's Answer

ONE YEAR ago next Wednesday the workers, students and soldiers of Budapest rose in revolt against Stalinist tyranny. Within a few days the Revolution had spread throughout Hungary, administration was in the hands of workers' councils, the hated security police force (AVH) had been abolished and socialist democracy was being practised in pit and workshop, village and office.

Twelve days later the Hungarian Revolution was crushed by the Soviet Army and the Kadar government was placed in power to break the workers' resistance and punish those who had paved the way for the revolt and led it.

Many of them were communists; and on this sombre anniversary The Newsletter, as a Marxist paper, pays solemn tribute to the courageous Marxists who are in Kadar's jails.

Whether our message of greetings will reach Tibor Dery and Gyula Hay, Laszlo Benjamin and Miklos Gemes, we cannot know. But we salute their steadfastness, and that of the Hungarian working class, while dissociating ourselves utterly from the false 'friends' of the Hungarian people, the imperialists of Britain and America.

In honour of this first anniversary, and to answer some of the 'comfortable lies' that the Stalinists have sought to spread about 'White Terror' and 'counter-revolution', we print below the evidence of three witnesses little-known in Britain: a socialist journalist and two communist journalists.

LUIGI FOSSATI, star reporter of the Nenni socialist paper *Avanti*, was in Budapest when the Revolution broke out. His articles were afterwards collected into a book, to which Nenni wrote the introduction.

FRANZ XAVER PHILIPP was the representative of the East German news agency ADN in Vienna, and monitored Budapest radio broadcasts there for his employers. Philipp had been editor of the *Taegliche Rundschau*, the official Soviet daily in East Germany, for ten years. He resigned from ADN after the second Soviet intervention in Hungary.

MARIAN BIELICKI was special correspondent in Budapest of the Warsaw paper *Po Prostu*.

RED CSEPEL WAS VANGUARD OF REVOLT

By Luigi Fossati

BUDAPEST, November 4, 1956

ONCE MORE blood is flowing in Budapest. It is not a fight among Hungarians; nevertheless it is a *war of brothers*. Soviet tanks are shooting against Hungarian workers and students.

The new, cruel decision increases the tragedy of Hungary, which has become the tragedy of the whole working class . . .

Already the intervention of Soviet troops on October 24 had deeply stirred their minds, when the ruling clique admitted its bankruptcy and became the bitter enemy of the working class in whose name it had ruled.

No doubt the Nagy cabinet was faced with a difficult situation; danger threatened from the Right; that was admitted by the chairman of the Social-Democratic Party, Anna Kethly . . .

But it was not the manoeuvres from the Right which determined the political life of these anxious days, any more than it had been possible for the provocateurs to force their programme on the people's great protest demonstration.

I have experienced an attempt to falsify the truth, when this demonstration was slandered in its totality as fascist and chauvinist. Is this version going to be maintained?

In Csepel, the factory district, the battle rages.

Before comfortable lies are produced, I want to emphasize that the fighting in Csepel was always especially bitter. The workers in the plant named after Matyas Rakosi were the strongest vanguard of the insurrection. They delivered arms and ammunition to all freedom fighters of Budapest. Today the renewed battle of Csepel proves that the issue is one of NATIONAL RIGHT.

BUDAPEST, November 11, 1956

THAT THE Hungarian uprising was a people's rising cannot be denied . . . In the last twenty days, full of horrors and cruelties, I have talked with many workers and students of Budapest.

I have distinguished their faces clearly from those of fascist provocateurs. The workers and students instructed me to tell with scrupulous accuracy what I saw and experienced.

I have tried to follow these instructions. I consider it a moral obligation.

HOW EAST BERLIN LIED ABOUT HUNGARY

By Franz Xaver Philipp

The main part of the Berlin ADN transmission of October 31 was attributed to the Austrian correspondent under the label ADN Vienna.

But it did not originate from him, and was from beginning to end a tendentious invention. Here is what ADN Vienna reported on October 31:

VIENNA, October 31 (ADN). According to Free Kossuth Radio (this is the name of Budapest Radio since Tuesday evening) the revolutionary council of the Hungarian police command has expressed special pride in the fact that the police did not take action against the people's uprising. A list of factories demanding thorough examination by the United Nations of the Hungarian problem was read in the 12 o'clock news reports. A further number of plants are demanding once more the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary. The revolutionary council of the army has agreed on a joint programme of demands including immediate negotiations with the Soviet command over the departure of the Soviet troops from all of Hungary . . . Free Kossuth Radio expressed satisfaction on Wednesday evening over the fact that the foreign Press was reporting the Hungarian freedom fight so positively. It was painful to hear the old Stalinist tune from the Press of Czechoslovakia and Rumania . . . The Revolutionary Council of the Budapest Electricity Works declared that no current would be supplied to industry until Soviet troops had left Hungary . . .

And here is the text put out by ADN Berlin:

83. ON THE SITUATION IN HUNGARY. FASCIST 'ARROW CROSS' ORGANIZES. VIENNA 31 OCT 56 (ADN) — ACCORDING TO REPORTS ARRIVING IN VIENNA FROM HUNGARY COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY GROUPS IN BUDAPEST ARE CONTINUING THEIR

ARMED ACTS WITH THE AIM OF ABOLISHING THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM. WITH THE INTENTION OF PROVOKING AN ATMOSPHERE OF PERMANENT CIVIL WAR AND IN ORDER TO PREVENT NORMALIZATION OF LIFE, COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES ARE SHOOTING FROM APARTMENT WINDOWS AND FROM ROOFS. PYRES ARE BEING ERECTED ON WHICH BOOKS, DOCUMENTS AND PICTURES TAKEN FROM A LARGE BOOKSHOP AND FROM THE HOUSE OF SOVIET-HUNGARIAN FRIENDSHIP ARE BURNED. EVEN A MOZART SCORE WAS THROWN INTO THE FLAMES BY THE FASCISTS . . . THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY TERROR IS DIRECTED WITH SPECIAL FURY AGAINST WORKING-CLASS FUNCTIONARIES . . . AS FOR THE SITUATION IN THE CITY OF GYOR, IT IS REPORTED THAT HERE TOO AGITATORS WITH FASCIST SLOGANS ARE ATTEMPTING TO WIN SUPPORT FOLLOWING SUNDAY'S DECISION BY THE CITY COMMITTEE OF GYOR TO SUPPORT THE NAGY GOVERNMENT. ESPECIALLY IN THIS AREA MANY HORTHY AGENTS, ARROW-CROSS MEN AND FORMER SS MEN ARE BEING BROUGHT INTO THE COUNTRY AND THEY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN GAINING A CERTAIN INFLUENCE. THEY ARE NOW CONDUCTING A HUNT FOR COMMUNISTS.

On November 2 the Vienna correspondent of ADN sent the following story:

VIENNA, November 2 (ADN). Free Kossuth Radio reports at 2230 hours that a Borsod mine has already produced 790 wagon-loads of coal after resuming work. In the Salgotarjan district more than half of the 13,000 miners have returned to work. A delegation of miners from the Petofi mine, Borsod, told a Free Kossuth Radio reporter that they were prepared to resume production. They appealed over the radio to the miners to resume work immediately, explaining that this 'resulted not from pressure but is for ourselves, for our country' . . . The radio reported on Friday that autumn work is being done in the fields. In all districts food for Budapest is being collected.

But this is what ADN Berlin reported in No. 118 of its foreign service dispatches on November 2:

DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS OF THE CURRENT HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE PRESS INDICATE THAT THE HUNGARIAN CAPITAL FACES A CATASTROPHE. QUEUES IN FRONT OF BAKERIES GREW EVEN MORE ON FRIDAY. SUPPLY DIFFICULTIES ARE EVIDENTLY CONNECTED WITH THE SERIOUS COAL SHORTAGE.

On the evening of November 3 I put an urgent call through to Berlin-East 20 04 21. I asked for the chief of the foreign section . . .

In the course of the telephone conversation I found out that ADN Berlin had issued a report of its own geared entirely to 'terror'. I said this was not correct; Radio Budapest had on the contrary reported that the whole country was quiet. The reply was that this could be taken into consideration 'tomorrow'. The conversation turned to my story of the previous day that a mixed Hungarian-Soviet commission was already negotiating the withdrawal of Soviet troops. I asked whether that story had already been issued. The reply was 'Not yet.' It was being held for the inclusion of the result of the negotiations. I was urged to get a good night's rest after the days of hard work. It would not be necessary to report before noon on Sunday.

Sunday came. I was awakened by the insistent ringing of the telephone. (The office was also my home). A special edition was being sold in the streets. Someone was knocking at the door of my room. It was a messenger bringing the early Sunday material. A woman interpreter had monitored the Budapest radio at home. A colleague was on the phone:

'The Russians have attacked.'

'No.'

'Yes.'

On the desk lay the monitor's report for the morning of

November 4. I read:

'At 5.14 a.m. Prime Minister Imre Nagy issued a statement in which he informed the world of the Soviet Union's aggression against Hungary, maliciously and contrary to all international law: "The Soviet Union wants to overthrow the legal government of Hungary. I am notifying the people of our country and world public opinion."

'Free Kossuth Radio, Budapest, 7.45 a.m.: The writers and scientists appeal to the whole world to come to the aid of the Hungarian people, workers, peasants and intellectuals. Only very little time remains! Help! Help! Help! This SOS was sent also in English, German—and Russian.

'Free Kossuth Radio, Budapest, 8 a.m.: Only static noises.'

I put through an urgent call to Berlin. At the door the bell is ringing loudly. Two young Austrian painters, both communists, wanted to know what had happened in Hungary. They could not believe the special editions.

'It is true,' I said.

'But that business about a Kadar government is a joke. Yesterday he was still in the Nagy cabinet.'

Both were agreed that the attack of the Soviet Union was 'naked imperialism' . . .

* * *

My Berlin call came through. In the foreign section joy was raging over the 'turn in Hungary'.

'Everything is fine! And London is demonstrating in Downing Street because of the attack on Egypt.'

'Here they will demonstrate because of the attack on Hungary.'

After a long pause came: 'You think so?'

'I am quite sure. The feeling here is that way.'

'What do people say?'

'Vicious assault . . . communist aggression . . . Soviet treachery against Hungary and against the whole world.'

Again a pause. Then: 'Do you have anything for us?'

'Yes. Nagy's last declaration, the appeal of Hungarian writers and scientists to the world and the message of Free Kossuth Radio reporting the Soviet attack against Hungary on a broad front.'

This time the pause was still longer before the reply came:

'No. We won't need that now.'

ALL HUNGARY SUPPORTED THE INSURGENTS

By Marian Bielicki

OUR PILOT taxis the plane to the airport building. I can make out a group of people near a blue bus, with white flags and red crosses; we have brought medicine and blood plasma . . .

In the distance we hear machine-guns. A heavy tank drives in; from another side an armoured car; soldiers with red-starred helmets jump out and surround our plane. Light machine-guns are pointed at us. The soldiers' faces are

FOR 'ENTENTE' READ 'STATE DEPT'

'The name of Karl Liebknecht was used in the whole of the Entente bourgeois Press during the war in order to deceive the masses—in order to depict the pirates and plunderers of French and British imperialism as sympathizing with this hero, with this "only honest German", as they said.'

Lenin, July 1919 (Selected Works, vol. 10, p. 50)

covered with dirt; they are unshaven and sweating. My heart beats. Why are they pointing their weapons at me? An officer in a leather coat leaps out from the tank and explains that they have come to ensure the security of the plane . . . I look at the faces of the Soviet soldiers. I see not only tiredness on their faces, not only the burden of days spent in fighting and under fire, but their eyes express insecurity, something uncomfortable, something which suggests how ill at ease they feel in their present role. It is not only

my impression; my friend R. feels it too: the Russian uncertainty, and the stiff silent hatred of a group of Hungarians . . .

We had left Warsaw convinced that Hungary had become peaceful, and here before reaching Budapest, we hear about the war, about 'front lines'. We hear shooting. E. takes me aside towards a young woman in a dark blue coat over a white nurse's uniform. The woman speaks slowly, but with obvious emotion:

'You are a journalist—you simply don't have the right to lie! It is a lie that fascists and counter-revolutionaries are fighting in the city. We are fighting, our nation is fighting, for real democracy, for real socialism, for freedom and independence! You will be convinced about this yourself. Our aims are the same as those which your own nation put forward . . .'

The woman (a surgeon, as I learned later) goes off into the Red Cross bus. A big black motor-car of our Polish Embassy is waiting for us; we follow the bus. There is deadly silence in our car.

In front of us is the road to Budapest. At the Soviet post, heavy weapons, nests of machine-guns. All the soldiers are in position, with their fingers on the trigger. An officer with a small machine-gun and several soldiers come forward

A YUGOSLAV JOURNALIST'S EVIDENCE

'Although fascist elements have also been taking part in the uprisings, this has not been a counter-revolution. Rather, this has been a protest against attitudes which had blocked the efforts of the working-class towards socialist democracy. The less the leadership was prepared to meet the workers' demands, the more bitter the people became, and this finally culminated in the Budapest events. Danger of a counter-revolution existed, because fascist elements created trouble. But this danger has, in the main, been overcome now.'

Djuka Julius, Politika (Belgrade), October 26, 1956

with their guns pointed at us. 'From the Polish Embassy?' He takes a rapid look at the passengers. We can proceed. Two kilometres further at a cross-road, we are stopped again. Another armed checkpoint. 'Lengyel (Pole)?' Friendly smiling faces. 'Poles are friends. Poles are brothers.' This happens again and again before our car enters the streets of a workers' suburb.

Long walls of empty factories. Little houses in front of which a few people hover, ready to hide. Something uncanny in the air. An atmosphere which I cannot yet define. Is it horror, fear, hatred or despair? . . . Behind the iron gates of one of the industrial works, a group of armed people. They explain that they are workers, revolutionaries who are defending their factories . . . At one of the insurgent posts we are advised to take a longer road because on the Ullei Street there is heavy fighting going on between Hungarian soldiers, defending their barracks, and Soviet tanks . . . From windows and balconies heavy wet flags are drooping, white-green-red, and also black colours of mourning. The symbol of freedom and the symbol of death, the price of freedom.

Broke human minds and hearts

The national flags have a jagged hole in the middle. A few days ago there was a coat of arms there. Why? . . . The answer is cruel but I must face it. The coat of arms which was cut out was the symbol of a régime which was not a régime of freedom and of human happiness, although those aims presided at its birth. I don't know the details. I cannot yet give a full analysis of the past ten or twelve years in Hungary, but I know that it was a cruel period. I know that Stalinist terror broke human minds and hearts. I know that freedom was transformed into slavery, truth into falsehood and hypocrisy. I know that the noblest of all ideas has been polluted with mud and blood, and that crimes were hidden by hollow phrases.

The system which was proudly called 'people's democracy' had definitely less in common either with people or with democracy than in any country. I know about this from many personal accounts, from deeply anguished letters of

Hungarian friends; I know it from the tears of Laszlo Rajk's widow; I feel it from the terrifying coldness of these flags with the hole in the middle . . . Here is the square, spacious and empty, with high houses on all sides. In the middle, a block of granite with two enormous bronze boots on it, and above them a fluttering white-green-red flag. There is something deeply moving in the sight which contains the tragedy and the greatness of these days. I see it as the symbol of the Hungarian Revolution . . . This happened during the evening of the 23rd, when the crowd, enraged at the criminal murder of young people by AVH troops, seized arms. Those who called for democracy, freedom, socialism, were murdered by police machine-guns . . .

A good which did not exist

It is not easy to write about all this. For so many years I believed in a good which did not exist, in a nobility which turned out to be only depravity, in a greatness which was nothing but vileness. To understand now does not ease one's conscience. The pain, the anguish, the anger are all the greater . . . Thus the people smashed the statue, breaking the symbol of slavery and wild oppression and crime. The statue resisted. But the man of bronze fell . . . This is the fall of a new Bastille. Here, on its ruins, we see the flag of freedom which opens the road towards the future of a socialism freed from lies and vices, from a system which falsely paraded as socialism. We have only one thought: the tanks should vanish as soon as possible from this road. Those tanks should, after all, be defending freedom and not strangling it with gun-fire.

Another turn, a street full of autumn trees, a street named after Gorky. What would you say, Comrade Maxim: 'Man—how proud a word?'

Whole nation supports insurgents

One thing emerges from all the chaotic information—the whole nation is on the side of the insurgents. The division is clear: the nation on one side, and on the other the Stalinist faction of the government and the AVH. There are thousands of communists among the insurgents. The Hungarian Army is either neutral or takes the side of the Revolution. The workers have occupied their own plants. The whole working-class youth and the students are on the barricades. The Soviet Army was called in by Gerő.

'It would be criminal to call us fascists or counter-revolutionaries,' shouts T. on the telephone. T. is a communist, an intellectual, a man of great heart and keen mind. In the voice of R. there is a pained sadness and anguish. 'I fought in Spain. I fought in the underground against Hitler. And now I am called a counter-revolutionary. Judge for yourself . . .'

I shall have to get more details. But one thing is certain. One cannot talk to one's own nation in the language of guns, and foreign guns at that, when the nation demands the recognition of its inalienable right to freedom and justice . . .

(Po Prostu, November 25, 1956)

'Each word was a reproach'

I spent the night with Hungarian friends. In the room more than thirty people were sprawled about on improvised couches. I knew some of them. The small man next to me was a steel worker; another was a skilled worker in the shipyards; there was a plumber, a book-keeper and a young medical student.

I asked them: 'But what do you really want? What are you fighting for?' About fifteen people answered my question. The answers were different, but the essential themes were the same: a free and independent Hungary, a country in which nobody will land in prison just because of a bureaucrat's fancy. They want a Hungary free of 75,000 irresponsible AVH agents. They want a Hungary where you can talk freely to your neighbour, without being afraid that he might be a police informer. They want a Hungary where power will belong to the people, and not to a small élite abusing the slogans of socialism.

Did they want socialism?

The steel worker answered fiercely: 'We want justice, freedom, truth. If socialism doesn't give that to us, we don't want socialism.'

Each word I felt as a reproach . . . These people identified the system in which they live with socialism. The ship-

worker then said: "We are going to build our own socialism." But the book-keeper was sceptical. "Ideas are beautiful, but people are capable of spoiling everything."

"We are not going to allow anybody to spoil anything now," protested the medical student.

"And fascism," I ask. "Aren't you afraid of fascism?"

Everybody shouted, but I understood the words of the student. "Nobody wants fascism . . . We won't allow it."

(Po Prostu, December 9, 1956)

FRANCE

GAITSKELL DISAPPOINTS THE FRENCH LEFT

From Our Paris Correspondent

A LEATHER MANUFACTURER from Lyons, adviser of Marshal Petain during the crucial period of the German occupation of France, has been called upon by President Coty to form a government.

Curiously enough it is this man, Antoine Pinay, who conceded independence to Morocco, which was refused by the liberal Premier Mendès-France.

Expectations have once again been aroused that this Right-wing leader may very well go further than the socialists in granting home rule to Algeria.

Right could pose as peacemakers

Such speculations are hardly extravagant, since none would dare accuse the Right of scuttling Algeria—and such accusations usually come from the Right.

If French socialists, headed by Guy Mollet, gave their support to Pinay, the Ministerial crisis could end. This would enable the Right, having forced Mollet to carry on the Algerian war on their behalf, to emerge as peacemakers in Algeria.

The Right-wing strategy is quite cunning. They left the socialists to "win the war" in Algeria, which was a trifle difficult despite the claim of the socialist proconsul in Algeria about a year ago that he had to wait only till "the last quarter of an hour" to finish the job.

This "last quarter of an hour" has lasted too long. Today the Right are more realistic. They would like to win the peace after the socialists have lost the war.

How socialists can get support

But if Pinay is unable to obtain socialist support, he will undoubtedly bring the socialists back to power to continue the blood-letting in Algeria.

It is only on that basis that the socialists, who have only a hundred deputies in the House, can have the support of the others. They do not mind since they can have cushy jobs. Anyway they have long ceased to be a working-class party.

The decisive fact about the French Socialist Party is that for the last ten years it has been largely the party of the lower middle class. It is not accidental that at the session of the Socialist-International recently held in London this party was represented by a small-time functionary who some time ago created a sort of national scandal when he was appointed director of the Oversea Radio—a post for which he had no qualification.

Is this committee a substitute?

Yet this Robert Pontillon could obtain the whole-hearted support of Hugh Gaitskell for a mission to Algeria which is to refrain from any political conclusion on the question of the Algerian war.

Do British socialists believe that a committee of inquiry is a substitute for Algerian independence?

Is Gaitskell already thinking as a Premier-to-be who will want French support for the bloodshed in Cyprus? In his official support for the Suez adventure still fresh in his mind?

The French Left is grievously disappointed in the Labour Party leader and is wondering if he would be another Mollet when he comes to power.

USSR

BUT WHAT ABOUT OUR SATELLITE, EH?

Literaturnaya Gazeta of October 10 carries an open letter from the editor of Tekhnika Molodyozhi [Technical Knowledge for Young People, a popular science magazine] to David Scott, an American journalist who recently visited Moscow in a car of advanced design which attracted much attention wherever it went.

The theme of the open letter is—all right, you people can make fine cars, but what about our satellite, eh?

MOSCOW FROWNS AT WARSAW REVIEW

Appearance in Warsaw of a new quarterly, called Opinie [Opinions], specially devoted to Soviet culture, is greeted sourly by Literaturnaya Gazeta in an article entitled "Whose 'opinions' are these?" (September 26).

Exception is taken to the publication of poems by Tsvetayeva (widely regarded, though not in official Soviet circles, as the best poet of the Soviet period) and of two stories—"Levers", by A. Yashin, and "The Light in the Window", by Yu. Nagibin—from the collection Literaturnaya Moskva, which was condemned by the party leadership not long ago with bell, book and candle.

A BEGGAR WHO FOUND HIS TONGUE

"Disabled persons and aged citizens are provided in our country with all they need for a comfortable life . . .

"Unfortunately there are people in our midst who, having become partially disabled, do not care to undertake honest work to the extent of their strength and abilities . . .

"Most of those who ask for alms are drunkards and loafers who collect money merely to buy wine . . .

"A beggar who claimed to be deaf and dumb was arrested recently on the train between Odessa and Kishinev. Under interrogation the 'deaf-mute' found his tongue, and it transpired that he was a convict who had escaped from exile."

(Sovietskaya Moldavia, August 6)

THE NAME 'BLANK' IS LEFT . . . BLANK

ONE OF the pettiest and at the same time most impudent manifestations of the chauvinism that developed in Russia during Stalin's last years related to the parentage of Lenin.

It was not done to acknowledge the fact that his mother was of German origin.

That this taboo continues is shown by an article in the August issue of the popular magazine Rabotnitsa (Working Woman).

The article is entitled 'Lenin's Mother' and traces her life from girlhood, but though it records that she was the daughter of a doctor, a progressive man for his time, her maiden name, which was Blank, is never mentioned.

THE UNBURNING OF AN 'IMMORTAL' BOOK

NOT ONLY human victims of Stalin's despotism but also the books he suppressed are from time to time quietly 'rehabilitated' in the Soviet Press.

These included not only works allegedly infected with deviations from the party line but also ancient epics.

The most treasured monuments of the literature of certain of the eastern peoples of the USSR came under Stalin's ban in 1948-53. If it could be shown that Russians (or Georgians) figured as 'the enemy' in some old ballad or legend it was put down as 'bourgeois nationalist'—while Russian (and Georgian) work in which, e.g., Tatars played the villains' role were held in higher esteem than ever in that period.

It was as though in Britain Scottish 'tales of the Border' were to be officially frowned upon as subversive.

One of the victim-books was the collection of Azerbaijani folk-tales called Kitabi-dede-Korkud. An article in

Bakinsky Rabochy [Baku Worker], quoted in Literaturnaya Gazeta of September 7, now refers to the 'immortal and unfading beauty' of this work, and urges the publication of a new edition of it.

RUSSIANS DRIVE AGAINST SPECULATORS

A DECREE dated September 12, issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic, has for its purpose, states the preamble, 'to intensify the struggle against petty speculation'.

This is defined as 'the purchase and resale for profit by private persons of small quantities of consumer goods and

agricultural produce, cashier and goods checks and coupons, tickets to amusement places and other institutions, books, music and other valuables'.

First offences are to be punished by a prison term not exceeding fifteen days or a fine of up to 500 roubles, without right of appeal. For repeated offences a sentence of one year's corrective labour or a fine not exceeding 2,000 roubles may be imposed.

Taken together with the discussion of measures for the banishment of 'parasitic elements' from large centres of population, this decree suggests that the big gap between wages, which have considerably increased in recent years, and the actual availability of consumer goods has given rise to a serious wave of speculative activity of various kinds in the USSR.

OPERA

WAGNER IS STILL MOST POPULAR OF ALL

The Ring of the Nibelung (Covent Garden)

THE ADVENT of a new Brunnhilde is always awaited with great excitement. Birgit Nilsson, the Swedish soprano, has proved herself worthy of the role, and her singing brought enthusiastic applause from the audience during the recent Ring cycle.

The stage-effects were a great improvement on previous performances. We are convincingly placed at the bottom of the Rhine at the beginning of the prologue, and imprisoned in a ball of fire at the close of the Valkyrie.

Climbing the Valkyries' rock with Siegfried was exhausting, but well worth while. Wolfgang Windgassen as the young hero lived and looked the part, but Hans Hotter as Wotan dominated the stage whenever he appeared.

It is interesting to note the way Wotan develops as the dramas unfold, as fate forces him into despairing impotence. He represents law, but is swept along the path of doom.

Götterdämmerung sees the death of Siegfried and the destruction of the old order. 'Heroism is not enough. The world has finally to be saved by self-sacrificial love,' is the last message of the tetralogy. Elizabeth Lindermeier deserves special mention for her beautiful singing of Guttrune.

So ends the greatest feast the world of music can offer. And it is pleasing that Wagner is still overwhelmingly popular. Booking for the cycle opened six months in advance, and within a week all individual seats were sold.

Surely this is a strong argument in favour of more performances, and an increased State subsidy to cover the cost of providing the best artists?

Bob Potter

LETTER

WILL MR. ROTHSTEIN GIVE HIM SPACE?

A RECENT MEETING of communist writers in Moscow, reported in *Pravda* of October 3, seems to have resembled to some extent the commination meeting at the Comintern School described by Wolfgang Leonhard in *The Observer* of October 6.

We learn from this report that N. Atarov, editor of the journal *Moskva*, who had come under heavy fire for publishing 'Dudintsevish' stories, spoke at the meeting.

But we are not told what he said, only that his self-criticism was not satisfactory—he did not reveal the essence of the mistakes made by the journal under his leadership.

* * *

Now Mr. Andrew Rothstein's *Anglo-Soviet Journal* once published an article by Nikolai Atarov. Written in August 1953, it was an appeal for the restoration of universal co-education in Soviet schools.

When it was finally clear that the Soviet government intended to carry out this reform, the *Anglo-Soviet Journal* published Atarov's article in its issue of Summer 1954—a year after the article's original appearance.

It would be a real service to Anglo-Soviet understanding if the *Anglo-Soviet Journal* were now to offer Atarov space to explain his views on the current controversies between the party and a section of the writers—since he can evidently no longer get them published in his own country.

Or do I misunderstand the function of Mr. Rothstein's organ?

Oxford

W. Herbert

The Week at a Glance

In his capacity as secretary of the Soviet Communist Party Khrushchev appealed—over the heads of the western European governments—to the socialist parties for their help in ending the dangerous tension in the Middle East.

Khrushchev said he feared that U.S. policy towards Syria might set off a new war. Turkish troop concentrations on the Syrian border have alarmed the Syrian government, which fears a Turkish attack backed by the U.S.A.

First act of Britain's Labour leaders Bevan and Gaitskell on receiving this appeal was to go and see the Prime Minister. Bevan and Gaitskell were 'particularly concerned that there should be no impression of a breach of protocol on their part', wrote the *Manchester Guardian*. Labour Party members, however, know that American oil interests have no regard for protocol.

YUGOSLAVIA: The Yugoslav government decided to recognize the government of the German Democratic Republic, a move which shocked public opinion in West Germany.

FRANCE: Strike of electricity and gas workers in Paris stopped the capital's light, radio, Metro and electric trains, shut down most big factories for a day.

7 DAYS SUSPENSION FOR HARRY CONSTABLE

By Our Industrial Correspondent

Harry Constable, well-known militant London docker, faced with dismissal from the industry for allegedly swearing at an official, left the National Dock Labour Board's appeal tribunal on Tuesday with a 'sentence' of seven days' suspension.

A number of dockers from the West India and Millwall docks were waiting outside the offices to hear the result.

Feeling had been running high at what the men felt was taking advantage of a trivial offence to weed out one more militant from industry. A leaflet giving the facts of the case had been put out by a dock liaison committee, and there is no doubt that if Constable had been sacked the workers would have taken action.