

THE END OF THE 'COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP' MYTH

WITH dramatic suddenness the fissures within the leadership of the Soviet Communist Party have been revealed to the world. The lid has come off the seething cauldron with a vengeance.

When Stalin died the Daily Worker declared: 'Strong hands are at the helm of the Soviet State.' Four years later, of the triumvirate who made orations at Stalin's funeral, one, Beria, has been shot as an imperialist agent, the second, Malenkov, has now been disgraced for the second time, and the third, Molotov, has been ignominiously branded as 'conservative', 'narrow-minded' and 'anti-party'.

What does the Daily Worker say now? That the 'principles of inner-party democracy' have been 'meticulously applied'. Indeed? What opportunity did Molotov, Kaganovich, Malenkov and Shepilov had to put their views before the party members, or even before a congress, before they were slung off the Central Committee?

What a light is cast on the docility of the leaders of the British Communist Party! How does the Daily Work-

er know who is right and who is wrong in this matter? If Molotov and Kaganovich had succeeded by alleged 'factional methods', 'intrigue' and 'collusion' in throwing out Khrushchev, it would have applauded just as dutifully—and probably with more enthusiasm.

For Molotov and Kaganovich are the Duff and Pollitt of the CPSU, the die-hard Stalinists. They are sacked for plotting a full-scale return to Stalinist methods. To cover up this concession to the enormous anti-Stalinist pressure from the Soviet workers, to balance his action against the 'Right', Khrushchev also sacked Malenkov and Shepilov on the 'Left'.

This technique of hitting simultaneously at the two wings is not new. It continues the pattern woven by the Soviet bureaucracy since 1923, as a study of history proves.

The myth of 'collective leadership' and 'party unity' has been exploded. The bureaucracy has shown once again that it is unable to solve its problems—or those of the Soviet people.

THE NEWSLETTER

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a service to socialists

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THIS RENT ACT WILL RAISE AN ANTI-TORY STORM

By Ex-Councillor David Finch, Chairman of Lambeth Council Tenants' Association

THIS morning's post will bring tens of thousands of tenants their first notice of a rent increase under the new Rent Act. From October 6 landlords can start to collect increases of not more than 7s. 6d., provided they have given three months' notice. After another six months rents can rise to the maximum.

PRESS

FLEET STREET'S JITTERIEST SUMMER

By a Pressman

THE jitters, half drowned in gin and tonic, are the chronic state of the workaday journalist. He is used to insecurity. It is part of his trade.

But this summer the ragged nerves of Fleet Street are jangling as never before. 'The Street' is wallowing in a crisis bigger even than it is accustomed to face.

Three great newspapers, the Daily Herald, the News Chronicle and the Star, totter on the brink of oblivion. Week after week, each is 'making' losses that in any normally prudent industry would have led long since to the doorstep of the Official Receiver.

For the men who are unlucky enough to work on them, the outlook is bleak. And it is little better for the men who work on the prosperous papers. Both groups face a future of too many journalists chasing too few jobs.

Balm to their battered ears

So last week's news that Odhams Press, publishers of the Daily Herald, had finally sloughed off the TUC was (whatever the readers thought) balm to the battered ears of Fleet Street. What did it matter that Labour had lost its only daily voice? There was new hope for the survival of at least one of the threatened trio.

The rumours speeding through the reporters' pubs took on a more cheerful tone . . . the Herald would become a money-spinning, sex-spattered tabloid . . . it would outdo the Sketch . . . the mammary gland, the reporter's friend, would come to the rescue . . . there would be jobs for all.

But hardly had the drinkers raised their glasses to the bright
(continued on back page)

The Labour Party has summarized the Act in a leaflet headed 'The Landlord's Charter: Higher Rents for All':

All dwellings with rateable values of £40 or over in London or Scotland and over £30 elsewhere are decontrolled. . . . There are about eight hundred thousand houses in this category.

The rents of four million houses remaining in control will eventually go up by anything up to 15s. per week.

Nearly half a million will go up by over 15s.

If you refuse to pay the increases you can be evicted. . . .

All properties, whatever their rateable value, will be decontrolled when they fall vacant. . . .

Some 20 million men, women and children will be affected. In England and Wales the increases in controlled dwellings depend on the rateable value. In Scotland there is to be a straight increase of 25 per cent.

Once notices go out to private tenants there is likely to be a rapid change in the mood of those affected, working class and middle class alike.

So far the Labour Party and trade union leaders have done their best to confine all opposition to Parliament. The cam-
(continued overleaf)

ALISON MACLEOD AND THE NEWSLETTER

Alison Macleod, who recently resigned as television critic of the Daily Worker after many years' association with the paper, has agreed to contribute regular articles on cultural questions to The Newsletter. Her first article, on the current production at Unity Theatre, appears on page 68.

COMMENTARY

PRICES AND WAGES

SOME say that since 1945 there has been a basic structural change in the nature of British capitalism and that the traditional Marxist explanations of the working of the capitalist system and Marxist prognoses of its future development are out of date. This is a matter for debate elsewhere (though it might be mentioned in passing that what Strachey is writing in 1957 often merely echoes what Bernstein wrote in 1899, Brailsford and Snowden in 1926, Hilferding and Citrine in 1927, Coolidge in 1928... and no one in 1930). But whatever one's views about the validity today of the Marxist critique of capitalism, announcements such as the one this week about a ten per cent increase in railway freight charges arouse similar feelings in all of us, no doubt, about the absurdity of an economic system where prices go up endlessly in this fashion. On Tuesday the tribunal which is hearing the British Transport Commission's proposals for fare increases in London was told that the recent eight per cent increase in the cost of coal made higher fares even more necessary. No doubt the increase in freight charges will soon result in yet another increase in the cost of coal and of other goods transported by rail.

If the Tory Government and its friends expect the workers to accept these continual inroads into the buying power of their wages, they will soon be disillusioned. The miners will not stand for it and said so this week; the railwaymen, too, gave a pretty clear warning this week through the mouth of their general secretary; several of the unions affiliated to the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions are already restive. Whatever the economists say, the workers will defend their standards by struggling for higher wages. An even surer defence will be action to bring down a Government which encourages employers to resist wage demands, and to replace it by a Labour Government with a real socialist policy.

THE FLOWERS ARE NOT FOR THEM

THE news that Communist Party tutors and education organizers who are opposed to the decisions of the Hammersmith Congress are being replaced by party functionaries hardly inspires confidence in the instruction which members are to receive. Nor does the ruling that party education, in Yorkshire at least, must be based on the Congress decisions. The object of Marxist education is to train people to use their minds as Marx, Engels and Lenin used theirs: critically, creatively, with iconoclastic disrespect for 'authorities'. If King Street wants to lay down a sacred exegesis of sacred canons, no doubt it will succeed. Perhaps we shall soon see a full-blown CP *index expurgatorius*, to complement the proscription on associating with the Socialist Forum movement. It is always easier to encourage conformity and mental laziness than to make people think for themselves. But conformity leads to sterility and the parrot-like 'repetition of well-known truths' and falsehoods. This is not thought, but its caricature. How the founders of Marxism would shudder at the intellectual desert that James Klügmann is creating by nipping the other 99 flowers in the bud.

RENTS (continued from front page)

paign promised by the Labour Party National Executive early this year seems to have been mislaid.

Because of this the rank and file have been rather quiet—but I am not the only one to believe that opposition is going to grow. The Economist, a class conscious journal if ever there was one, also thinks so.

In its issue of June 8, while congratulating the Government on continuing relentlessly with the Rent Act, it says:

'For the next nine months or so it will now have to brace itself to stand up to a storm in the country... the main working-class storm may fall on the Government between about October of this year and April 1958.'

The Economist believes that middle-class resistance will come a little later. 'The time-table of storm and subsequent benefit [!] in middle-class housing is difficult to gauge.'

The reasons for the Economist's hesitancy lie in Clause 10 of the Rent Act. There is a fifteen-month period (up to October 1958) before decontrol occurs of those dwellings with rateable values exceeding the statutory minimum.

At that time the landlord can resume possession, or charge any rent obtainable, provided he gives six months' notice of his intentions. Alternatively he can make an agreed contract with his tenant before this date, so long as it gives three years' security of tenure.

The storm can become a hurricane

The storm predicted by the Economist can develop into a hurricane to sweep out the Act and the Government, provided that the Left of the Labour Party, Socialist Forum supporters, militants in the trade union movement and members of the Communist Party get weaving.

There must be pressure on the Labour Party and trade union leaders to call mass protest demonstrations, as the first step.

There will be need for campaign committees in the localities, which will prepare tenants and the Labour movement for a struggle against the rent increases and evictions which this Act is going to cause.

There will be need, too, for pressure on Labour-controlled local authorities so that they stop increasing rents and rates; instead they should challenge the Government by going into deficit and beginning a wide movement locally and nationally.

A 1957 'Poplarism' is sorely needed.

INDUSTRY

THE FIGHTING DREDGERMEN GO BACK

By our Industrial Correspondent

THE 800 Merseyside dredgers have returned to work after a strike lasting more than a fortnight.

They have won a pay increase of ten shillings a week, and an agreement that discussions shall begin immediately with the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board on their general conditions of employment.

From beginning to end the strike was marked by the challenge of a militant rank and file to the attitude of the Transport and General Workers' Union officials.

This was the keynote of a 'closed' meeting of Liverpool South (Power Workers' Group) TGWU last Sunday. Though the strike was 'unofficial', the members insisted on a full discussion.

Unanimous vote of no confidence

Strike committee spokesman Joe Maclean complained that 'We are unable to get contact with and assistance from our union's official representatives'.

A vote of no confidence in Mr. Law, Executive Council member for the area, was moved and carried unanimously—'because of his attitude to us during this strike,' as one speaker said.

A feature of the strike was the magnificent solidarity displayed by dockers—who collected £42 in one day at the pay controls—and building workers at Garston Gas, who levied themselves 5s. a week each while the dispute lasted.

The Week at a Glance

AT HOME

FRIDAY: The Government appointed a committee of three Privy Councillors to report on the Home Secretary's use of the power to tap telephones.

Representatives of 100,000 country bus employees threatened to strike on July 20 if the employers do not improve their wage offer of 3s. a week; delegates of 77,000 municipal bus workers told their employers they must at least double their offer of 7s. 6d. before it will be considered.

The Government majority dropped by 4,057 in the North Dorset by-election.

MONDAY: The British Transport Commission announced that freight charges on British Railways will be increased by ten per cent from August 1.

TUESDAY: The western powers on the disarmament sub-committee put forward for the first time proposals on the suspension of nuclear tests as part of a first-step disarmament agreement. Soviet representative Zorin welcomed the proposals, but said he must have further clarification before committing himself.

WEDNESDAY: Mr. Patrick Marrinan was debarred and expelled from the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn for associations with criminals. The most important evidence against him was the transcripts of telephone conversations between him and Mr. Billy Hill, which the Home Secretary had made available to the Bar Council.

ABROAD

INDIA: To stop the drain on its foreign exchange the Indian Government made big cuts in the amount of imports to be allowed.

MALAYA: The constitution for the Federation of Malaya on its attainment of independence on August 31 was published.

USA: One of two counts on which Arthur Miller had been convicted for contempt of Congress was quashed by a Federal judge.

SINGAPORE: Lee Kuan Yew, leader of the People's Action Party, won a seat in one of two by-elections which reduced the strength of the ruling Labour Front Party to the same level as the Right-wing Liberal-Socialist opposition.

HUNGARY: At the conference of the Socialist Workers' Party Minister of State Marosan said careerists were 'splintering and tearing the party asunder'; Minister of the Interior Bisku said most of the rank and file of last autumn's revolt remained 'deeply involved in illegality'.

FRANCE: Aneurin Bevan told the Socialist Party congress that British Labour was solidly behind the minority in favour of immediate self-government and eventual independence in Algeria. 'We have no lessons to receive from others,' said Guy Mollet. Ending the war by granting independence would benefit only the Bolsheviks. The Congress approved the policy of Mollet and Lacoste.

LABOUR'S SHARE-BUYING SCHEME

WITH its customary lack of consideration for the rank and file, the National Executive of the Labour Party has issued to the Press a preliminary report on its forthcoming document on nationalization.

The members of the party will have to wait till July 18 for the full version; meanwhile they must content themselves with the interpretations placed on the new policy by a Press which is not exactly friendly to the cause of Labour.

What emerges from the published versions of the new policy is causing great uneasiness in the ranks of the Labour Party for it clearly makes an abrupt departure from the traditional socialist attitude towards nationalization.

Indeed, it is plain that the party leaders have become enamoured of 'public ownership' as a substitute for nationalization.

The two terms are by no means identical, as was recognized in the Discussion Notes on Nationalization published by the Labour Party as recently as February of this year.

A definition of public ownership

These define 'public ownership' as the 'ownership by the community of any property, whether the whole of an industry or only part of it, and whether by the nation or by a local authority'.

And as an example of 'public ownership' the shares held by the British Government in the British Petroleum Company are cited.

Nationalization, on the other hand, is defined as 'the taking over by the State of a complete industry or service, so that it is owned by the nation and managed for it'.

It looks as if the new policy statement will reaffirm Labour's determination to re-nationalize the iron and steel industry and road transport. It will be interesting to see what it proposes to do about compensating the present owners of these industries, who did so well out of the Tories' de-nationalization.

As far as the rest of industry goes, it is proposed to buy shares in and get control of some 600 leading British firms. Shares will be acquired, not compulsorily, but by purchase on the Stock Exchange. Final judgment cannot be pronounced on the scheme until the published pamphlet is in our hands, but it does seem to bear a closer resemblance to the Tory ideal of a 'property-owning democracy' than to the socialist aims of the Labour pioneers.

There was food for thought in the remarks of the Political Correspondent of the Observer (June 30, 1957).

'To mark down 600 firms in this way,' he writes, 'not only spreads uncertainty over as wide an area as possible but may frighten off the foreign investor. In that case the next Labour Government may be greeted by a slump on the Stock Exchange and a panicky flight from the pound.'

'Of course, if the entrepreneur is half as wily as he is supposed to be, he will take precisely the opposite view. Those, in fact, who have any money to spare should, in the happy event of a Labour Government, invest it in leading industries. They can then sit back and wait, certain that the moment the Government's broker puts in an appearance their shares will soar to high heaven.'

G.C.

NO ONE WHO THINKS CAN BE A TUTOR

TUTORS and education organizers in the Yorkshire Communist Party who disagree with the decisions of the Special National Congress have been replaced by full-time party officials.

This follows a meeting of the Yorkshire District Committee at which it was laid down—in the words of one full-timer—that 'party education is indoctrination, and we shouldn't be afraid of saying so'.

Marian Ramelson, reporting for the secretariat, told the committee that the aim of party education was to explain the correctness of the party's decisions. It was impossible to have party education propagating a policy which was a challenge to Congress decisions.

A comrade in charge of education, or a tutor, who maintained a point of view in opposition to Congress policy had not the right to go around branches propagating a policy against Congress decisions.

Four have left the committee

Branch education must be based on the National Education Department's syllabus on the Special Congress.

Since this meeting of the District Committee there have been four resignations from the committee; and many of those responsible for education in the areas have been replaced.

Another decision of the Yorkshire District Committee takes the King Street proscription of the Socialist Forum movement (The Newsletter, May 31, pp. 26-7) a stage further.

According to the minutes 'the holding of the School at

Wortley Hall by the Socialist Forum was considered. The aim of the Socialist Forum is to bring together anti-party people, Trotskyites, ex-party members and party members with a view to influencing the policy, programme and leadership of our party from outside its ranks and its democratic organization.

Its activities are therefore harmful to the well-being of our party. Comrades helping to establish the Socialist Forum and similar groupings by attending schools and conferences organized by them or contributing to journals sponsored by such groupings are objectively helping to establish an anti-party organization and therefore harming our party.

The democratic organization of the Yorkshire Communist Party is illustrated by the proposal to postpone the District Congress and the election of the new District Committee from October 1957 to March 1958. The Congress had already been postponed—against the rules—from March 1957.

NOW LIVERPOOL DEFIES THE NEC

The June monthly meeting of Liverpool Trades and Labour Council rejected the National Executive Committee circular instructing the Council to meet quarterly.

It was decided to circularize other trade councils and borough Labour Parties asking them to support Liverpool's action.

Walton's resolution to the Labour Party annual conference urges that the party adopt the slogan of the 'Socialist United States of Europe'.

The resolution says European unity as proposed by the capitalists is only an illusion and an attempt by the capitalist class to solve its economic problems at the expense of the working class.

Delegates to Walton Labour Party Management Committee collected £4 0s. 10d. for the dredgermen on 'unofficial' strike.

It was decided to organize raffles and collections in the constituency's two Labour Clubs to raise cash for the strike fund.

SCR LEADERS WIN AT SPECIAL MEETING

THE special general meeting of the Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR, held at London's Conway Hall on June 29, gave a technical victory to Mr. Pritt, Mr. Rothstein and their associates on the Executive Committee.

Mr. Donald Veall had put down a motion criticizing the EC for using the Society as an instrument of Stalinist propaganda, and the EC had countered with an amendment whitewashing themselves.

This amendment was carried by 141 votes to 24, with eight abstentions.

Present at the meeting was a remarkably full turn-out of the surviving Stalinist intelligentsia: A. L. Morton, R. Page Arnot, Alan Bush, Archibald Robertson, etc.

Much of Mr. Veall's support is in the provinces, in places like Leeds and Hull, and it is probable that a postal ballot of the SCR's 1,200 members would have produced a somewhat different result.

Use of tactical devices

The EC's success was due mainly, however, to their use of two tactical devices. A number of members felt that Mr. Veall's motion was not satisfactorily worded, and preferred a variant proposed by a group of Birmingham University members of the Society.

Although this variant had been submitted as long ago as May 17, it had not been circulated by the EC, and the chairman of the meeting, Mr. L. Kessel, refused to allow any discussion on it, in spite of protests by Mr. Veall and several others. (Delegates to the recent Communist Party Congress will recognize this tactic of selecting only the most 'extreme' motions for debate; so as to minimize the opposition vote.)

The other device was a kind of blackmail; it was openly

said that if the EC's amendment were not passed the entire EC would resign forthwith, leaving the Society headless. This threat undoubtedly influenced a number of the members present.

EC speakers, including Messrs. Pritt and Rothstein, spoke in detail of their constructive work (in organizing concerts, etc.), but only in the abstract of possible 'errors and misjudgments', not a single specific admission or apology being made.

The Hon. Ivor Montagu proudly claimed that the SCR had never been included among the 'satellite organizations'—though that same week the IRIS pamphlet on 'The Communist Solar System' had appeared (with an introduction by Herbert Morrison), with several pages given to an analysis of the SCR.

Other contributions included one from Judith Todd, who explained the Society's net loss of a hundred members a year by the 'psychological inability of people to sign cheques', and one from Dorothy Ferguson, who contrasted conditions in East End schools with the high cultural level of Soviet sailors, as an argument for supporting the EC.

Significant speeches were made by middle-of-the-roadsers Joan Robinson, Professor J. D. Bernal, Robert Browning and Mary Barber, warning the EC not to presume too much upon the success of their amendment.

The annual general meeting in December would judge the EC harshly if, between now and then, they had not modified the Society's work (especially the conduct of the Anglo-Soviet Journal) in accordance with the criticisms voiced at the meeting and in many letters from provincial members.

With Mr. Pritt and Mr. Rothstein still in office it will be surprising, however, if any substantial improvement takes place, though they may well show more discretion.

ALGERIA

WHAT REALLY TOOK PLACE AT MELOUZA

By an Algerian in London

MANY will have read with horror of the massacre, on May 28, 1957, of the 302 male inhabitants of the Algerian village of Melouza.

In periods of war and civil war truth is always the first casualty, and charges and countercharges are already being bandied by the political spokesmen of French imperialism and of the Cairo-dominated Front de Liberation Nationale (FLN).

The French Government, in its latest pronouncements, claims that the victims were pro-French Moslems, massacred by the FLN. The FLN, on the other hand, maintain that the massacre was perpetrated by the French Army. Both sides, for various reasons, have sought to hush up what probably really happened.

This however leaked out in the early interviews by on-the-spot observers, some of which were published in sections of the French Press shortly after the massacre.

For an independent Algeria

Probably on Government instructions, the French Press later adopted the completely different version of the episode, referred to above.

The Kasba of Melouza is situated in Eastern Algeria, not far from the town of Msila, in what used to be the 'departement' of Constantine. Its northern boundary is the Bibans mountain range, which links up the mountains of Kabylie with those of the Aures.

All the country around Melouza, known as the Hodna, was one of the strongholds of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Freedom (MTLD). This party, made illegal by the French on November 5, 1954, was re-formed next day under the name of Mouvement National Algerien (MNA).

It stands for a secular, democratic and independent Algeria and its programme includes radical agrarian reform and social policies strongly influenced by Western socialist thought.

The party has the backing of the overwhelming majority of the 500,000 Algerian industrial workers at present in France.

The memory of Messali Hadj, founder of this movement, now again detained by the French after spending the major part of the last twenty years in the jails of French imperialism, is very much alive in the hearts of the simple inhabitants of this region, whose daily life is one of utter poverty.

All this part of the Algerian territory situated between Aumale, Bordj Bou-Argeridj, Biskra and the Sahara Desert is held by MNA maquis under the command of Belounis.

The recently-created FLN has tried—unsuccessfully—to make the people of this region forget the name of Messali Hadj.

This organization has no clear social policies and derives much of its support from the urban artisans and the narrow strata of petty bourgeois and bourgeois nationalists.

It is partly influenced by religious ideas and its object is the establishment of an authoritarian Algerian State moulded on the lines of Nasser's Egypt.

It is in close liaison with Cairo, where its leading forces are trained and from where it undoubtedly obtains the major part of its arms. On this basis alone it has been able to build up an effective military organization in Algeria.

Seeking to eliminate rivals

In anticipation of victory in the fight against French imperialism it has been seeking to eliminate its potential political rivals, often utilizing the armaments received to fight the French in order to settle accounts with the MNA maquis.

That this is what occurred at Melouza is strongly suggested by the statements of some of the rare survivors.

Certain papers persisted in their on-the-spot inquiries and on June 6, France-Soir related the words of a survivor, Nabar Mohammed, who was asked questions by the paper's correspondent in Bordj Bou-Argeridj.

"In the two small prayer rooms we found ourselves, 95 of us, hands bound behind our backs," relates Nabar Mohammed.

"Suddenly, one of our captors called for Toumi Saïd, vice-president of our Djemaa [village council]. Some time afterwards, our friend returned. "The fellaghas," he said, "want us to join the FLN. For myself, I am for Messali, and shall remain so, even if I must die."

"We all approved. Toumi went back outside, to take our answer to the rebels. When he returned, he reassured us: "The FLN soldiers have understood. They said that two other Mechtas [villages] had, like us, kept faith in Messali Hadj. In my opinion we have nothing more to fear."

"But a few minutes later, called out again by the rebel chief, Toumi disappeared. A burst of machine-gun fire broke out. In the door-frame we saw him crumple over a tomb in the old cemetery . . ."

USSR

LENINGRAD WRITERS UNDER FIRE

THE party onslaught on the editors of *Literary Moscow* has now been followed by a similar onslaught on the group of Leningrad writers associated with the collection entitled *Priboi* [*Breakers*].

The *Literaturnaya Gazeta* report (June 15) of the general meeting of Leningrad writers held for this purpose relates:

"It was only due to intervention on the part of the secretariat and party bureau that the situation was rectified.

"It must be said that *Priboi* editor Vera Panova reacted to criticism in a wrong way, by "tendering her resignation".

"*Priboi* deputy editor P. Daletsky then took the floor to make a futile attempt to vindicate the wrong stand taken up by the editorial board."

Indignation was expressed by one A. Dymshyts at the fact that a number of the writers under fire had "simply not deigned to attend".

A resolution was duly passed, condemning "manifestations of moth-eaten scepticism in literature" such as Dudintsev's novel and Granin's story 'Private Opinion'. (A translation of the latter appeared in the May-June issue of *Labour Review*.)

WHEN REHABILITATION IS NOT ALLOWED

IN the June issue (No. 8, 1957) of *The Communist*, I. Boytsov (deputy chairman of the Central Committee's Control Commission) discusses and criticizes the methods employed by lower party committees in expelling members, in dealing with their appeals, and in cases of readmission to the party.

He reminds his readers of the directives of the January 1938 Plenum 'On mistakes committed by party organizations in expelling members; on formalistic and bureaucratic attitudes to members' appeals; and on the adoption of measures against these shortcomings'.

These directives are said to have been issued with a view to 'ending the formalistic, callous and bureaucratic approach to people, to members of the party'.

Yet in spite of the 'reintroduction into party life [by the Twentieth Congress] of Leninist norms that in the past had been disregarded because of the widespread cult of the individual', the 1938 directives are not being observed everywhere.

Boytsov quotes a number of instances in which undemocratic, 'bureaucratic and callous' methods were used in disregard of party rules.

He condemns, for instance, the practice of party committees' taking decisions on the status of individual members without inviting the member to participate in their discussions: the Chkalov Area Committee in 1956 discussed 378 such cases, but only 133 members were invited to participate.

No 'inadmissible leniency'

At the same time Boytsov warns against inadmissible leniency in dealing with applications for readmission to the party.

"Recently," he writes, "a number of ex-members who participated at one time or another in one of the anti-Leninist groupings have applied for readmission."

"Of course their applications also must be considered carefully, taking into account all the relevant circumstances."

"But we must never forget the main point: that the uncompromising and principled position of the party in the struggle against the Trotskyites and the Right liquidators has been proved correct by the development of Soviet society and the victory of the party's policy of socialist construction."

"The party has never betrayed and can never betray its attitude to trends hostile to Leninism."

"There is no basis for a reconsideration of expulsions from the party of active participants in anti-party groupings, if the reasons given for the expulsion are found to be correct."

"The Party Control Commission, for example, recently considered an appeal by T., who was expelled from the party in 1937 by the Kiev Area Committee because he had concealed from the party his participation in illegal Trotskyite meetings in 1927-29."

'Influenced by demagogic appeals'

This charge was found to be correct. T. had really, during those years of sharp struggle against the Trotskyite opposition, allowed himself to be influenced by the demagogic appeals of the Trotskyite leaders, had participated in illegal meetings and had invited fellow-workers to participate.

"In 1929, after his return from the countryside, where he had been sent by his party unit, T. expressed his disagreement with the party's policy in the countryside, and as a protest he stated that he was resigning from the party."

"The question now arises: why should we now, after many years, reconsider T.'s case? Can there be any doubt that by his behaviour T. has harmed the party? Obviously, no. That is why T.'s appeal was rejected."

Can there be any doubt that many Soviet people will ask in earnest, without Boytsov's rhetorical flourishes, why T. should not be rehabilitated?

A.D.

SAYING OF THE MONTH

"Complete calm now reigns in Hungary."—N. S. Khrushchev, in an interview with a Japanese journalist, June 18, published in *Pravda*, June 30.

WORKING CONDITIONS OF SOVIET WOMEN

LITERATURNAYA GAZETA of June 11 carries a survey of numerous letters to the editor dealing with the working conditions of women in the USSR.

One correspondent writes: 'The Soviet Constitution has made women equal with men. But does it follow from this that women must undertake heavy work?'

'Women are weaker than men and when they do heavy physical work the productivity of their labour is much less than men's. Yet the output norms are the same for them as for men.'

Examples given of the use of women for unsuitable work include one of women being made to carry barrels of wine on the ground that the men workers could not be trusted not to drink from them.

The writers urge that more attention be given to the mechanizing of loading and carrying work, that the trade unions draw up a list of occupations to which women should not be admitted, and that men be debarred from working in shops and other institutions where women could do the work just as well.

PUNISH THESE WOMEN, SAYS TRUD

The pretence that there is no prostitution in Russia has been abandoned by the Soviet Press.

An article in the trade union newspaper Trud discusses the activities of three Moscow street-walkers, and complains that all that happens to such women is that they are taken to the militia station and 'given a good talking to'.

They have no economic excuse for their way of life, says the writer, and should be punished.

A CLUE TO TWO MISSING NATIONS

Two of the nationalities which were deported en masse by Stalin were omitted from the list given by Khrushchev in his speech at the closed session of the Twentieth Congress—the Crimean Tatars and the Volga Germans.

A clue to their present whereabouts is given by an advertisement in Pravda Vostoka, a newspaper published in Tashkent (Central Asia), for two new journals, Neues Leben [New Life] and Lenin Bairagi [Lenin's Banner], in the German and Crimean-Tartar languages respectively.

'YELLOW METAL' DOES NOT GLITTER

THE following is an extract from an article entitled 'For a Further Advance in Book Publishing', in Sovetskaya Kultura [Soviet Culture], of May 4:

Some books have been published that are permeated with alien ideology.

A case in point is Valentin Ivanov's novel "Yellow Metal", recently issued by the Young Guard Publishing House.

The book deals with the Soviet militiamen who ensure the observance of socialist law. The author's intention was certainly praiseworthy. But on opening the book and reading it one realizes that it is simply a piece of libel.

The author presents Soviet life in a grossly distorted light. Failing to understand the national policy of the Communist Party, he makes derogatory observations about certain nationalities, and his characters utter chauvinistic remarks.

The author resorts to completely inadmissible devices in depicting the negative characters. The book is full of vulgar expressions.

POLAND | Some Notes on the Dark Years

By Stanislaw Kowalski

(This is the second in a series of occasional articles on recent Polish history by our Warsaw correspondent, a young Polish journalist.)

THE TRAGEDY OF ROKOSSOVSKY

PRE-TWENTIETH CONGRESS Poland's dependence on the Soviet Union was symbolized by the appointment of Rokossovsky as Minister of Defence.

It was said that when appointed to this post by Stalin he was not enthusiastic about it, for although a Pole by birth, with a sister living in Warsaw, he knew he would be identified with the Soviet Union in the minds of the Polish people.

Rokossovsky is supposed to have said this openly to Stalin, who in reply merely reminded him what had happened to him in 1938-39, when he was thrown in jail and severely beaten—he still limps as a result.

So Rokossovsky accepted. But in spite of all rumours to the contrary he was not happy about leaving Poland last year.

After a period of leave in the Crimea he went back to Warsaw just after the Eighth Plenum, and asked Gomulka if he could be given a job as chief lecturer at the Military Staff College. This request Gomulka could not grant.

So Rokossovsky's stay in Poland was tragic, not only from the point of view of the Polish people, but from his own personal point of view. The odd thing is that, though detested by the Polish people, he nevertheless won the affection of his troops through following the Red Army tradition of sharing hardships with them during manoeuvres.



WHO SUPPORTED GOMULKA?

In 1948 Gomulka had a group of comrades around him who were also victims of Stalinism. These names, less known to the British public, included Marjan Spychalski. His case is typical.

An architect by profession, Spychalski joined the illegal Communist Party in 1936. During the war, on party orders, he held a minor job in the German-controlled Warsaw City Council.

Then he became commander-in-chief of the People's Guard, later the People's Army. In 1948, because he supported Gomulka, he was removed from the post of chief of the political department of the army.

After taking over as Minister of Defence last year, Spychalski abolished a number of the privileges enjoyed by Army officers under the former regime—special ('yellow curtain') shops, 'generals' villas' at the holiday resorts, for instance.



THE CHARGES AGAINST GOMULKA

Three main charges were made against Gomulka and his group.

First, they had adopted a 'nationalist' position towards the Soviet Union—I think this meant they had protested against the exploitation of Polish coal by the Russians, and were speaking of a 'Polish road to socialism'.

Secondly, they were alleged to be opposed to the socialist rebuilding of agriculture and the introduction of collective farms. I think this meant they were opposed to the use of pressure in this sphere.

Thirdly, they were attacked for their position on Tito and Titoism. Gomulka had met Tito in 1948, and they were in agreement on many questions.



POLAND'S NUMBER ONE STALINIST

Boleslaw Bierut, who was primarily responsible for Gomulka's expulsion—but who, it must be said to his credit, was also instrumental in preventing his execution—had been an NKVD judge in Russia in 1935-37.

Bierut was not a pleasant man. He lived, remote from the people, in the vast Belvedere palace. (Gomulka is still living in a small house.)

At May Day and other celebrations Bierut was always surrounded by rows of secret police and soldiers. He probably knew how much he was hated by the people.

He was very angry on his sixtieth birthday when a cheering crowd came closer to him as he left a theatre than he had ordered the security police to allow.



ECONOMIC PLANNING

The first three-year plan, immediately after the end of the war, greatly improved living standards.

But when the six-year-plan came along, though Poland has no iron ore, Stalin ordered Bierut to alter the basic structure of the draft prepared by Minc, and to concentrate on building a steel industry.

It must be admitted that, though living standards did not improve, there was vast industrial development.



THE SECRET POLICE

In 1951 there was a trial of 19 officers, three generals and a few others on charges of plotting against the regime and espionage.

I was present in court and I was convinced that they were guilty. I could not believe that brutal atrocities in order to force confessions from people were possible in a socialist society.

When I heard rumours I dismissed them as fascist propaganda. None of these accused was a party member.

But in January 1953 Komar was arrested, who had been

the commander of a battalion of the International Brigade consisting mainly of Serbs and Croats.

It was not until July that the people were told of his arrest. He was not tried, but tortured in order to persuade him to be a witness in the projected trial of Spychalski and Gomulka.

The first three weeks, although not beaten, he was kept standing up against the wall. He had to sleep standing. Then he was told to sign some documents, which he refused to do.

Then they beat him for 72 hours without stopping. They broke his ribs and most of his teeth. They threw him into a cellar, three feet high, and filled with water to a height of fifteen inches.

He spent three weeks in that cellar. There he had to eat, sleep, urinate. . . .

Komar is now commander-in-chief of Poland's internal security troops—i.e., the frontier guards.

CHINA

CHINA'S PLANNERS CORRECT MISTAKES

Because of planning mistakes last year some of China's national reserves have been eaten away, said Po I Po, chairman of the National Economic Commission, reporting to the National People's Congress this week on the fulfilment of the economic plan for 1956 and the draft plan for 1957.

The mistakes, he said, included too many loans to the peasants, too great an increase in the number of workers, many of them not directly productive, and too great an increase in the number of students.

LETTERS | Which Party—or Neither?

MARXIST LEADERSHIP IS URGENT

My recent letter on the need for a revolutionary party in Britain has been misunderstood by both Beatrix Tudor-Hart and Alison Macleod.

The point I was trying to make was that the existing Labour Party and Communist Party policy and leadership are incapable of measuring up to the task of leading the British workers to socialism, and that what was required was a party of a mass character with a revolutionary programme and leadership.

How this can come into existence is a point for discussion; I was stating the urgent reason for one—the need for leadership based on genuine Marxism.

Directed to the rank and file

Our education and propaganda should be directed to the trade unions and Labour Party rank and file. There is a vast amount of criticism of the 'official' policy that has not yet found an effective voice.

If we can prove that Marxist and revolutionary ideas have nothing to do with the Communist Party leaders, and that they answer the problems set in day-to-day work, then I am confident that out of the crumbling of reformist and Stalinist pretensions will come a healthy respect for scientific socialist ideas.

When these ideas grip the workers and are translated into practice, then the new party will arise.

London, N.W.9.

Ron Grange

IS THIS CLAIM OF DUTT'S VALID?

In his Notes of the Month in the July Labour Monthly, R. Palme Dutt, vice-chairman of the Communist Party, writes:

'It is true that there are not the same facilities for the majority of the membership to discuss and determine official policy in the Labour Party, to the same extent as in a fully democratic organization like the Communist Party.'

I should be interested to see other readers' views on this comparison.

London, N.W.3.

J.E.

HONESTY, HUMILITY, STUDY ARE NEEDED

We should like to reinforce some of the remarks made by Peter Roe in your issue of June 15.

Whether sincere socialists and particularly ex-communists should join the Labour Party is not the important question at the present stage.

Do any ex-communists really believe that having been deluded about so much for so long they left all their illusions behind them upon leaving the Communist Party; and that they can now enter the Labour Party knowing all the answers and calmly proceed to provide 'leadership'?

The only course for honest and sincere ex-communists is complete abandonment of any spurious moral and political superiority they have acquired.

Honesty, humility, and a willingness to learn and think independently are the supreme necessities. It is vital to study politics seriously and objectively.

Fruitful discussion will not come out of thin air. The first requirement is independent private study so that discussion in forums or elsewhere is really well-informed.

Well salted with socialists

A movement well salted with thinking socialists, capable of making up their own minds, solving problems and taking decisions without 'leads' or 'directives' from 'above' may well put an end to those twin plagues of the Labour movement, bureaucracy and pragmatism.

Surely the great lesson for ex-communists is never again so to humiliate yourself as to allow someone else to do your thinking for you.

We are not urging people to shun political activity. There is a lot to be done, but unfortunately much of it is of a negative character—against the H-bomb, against the Rent Act, against inflation. Who can say what socialists are fighting for?

By diligent inquiry and debate we can find out where we are and where we go from there; only then will our political activity cease to resemble the donkey on the treadmill—hard, honourable toil but without an end in view! As someone once said, 'practice without theory is blind'.

London, S.E.23.

M. and A. Freedman

THEATRE

SEE THIS PLAY—AND SAVE UNITY

By Alison Macleod

'THIS time we mean it,' said the man taking the collection at Unity Theatre. 'If we can't raise the money in a fortnight, we'll have to close down.'

He added that Unity was in debt to the tune of £16,000, which took the audience's breath away—until somebody shouted a correction: 'Sixteen hundred, not thousand.'

'Sorry,' said the man who took the collection. 'I meant hundred. But it might as well be sixteen thousand, for all the prospect we have of paying it.'

The first-night audience responded, to the extent of £31. If audiences go on responding there's temporary hope for Unity, for something like £200 will stave off those creditors who absolutely refuse to wait.

But of course the problem is to get the audiences there. During its 21 years of life the reputation of Unity Theatre has fluctuated wildly up and down.

Great achievements like the first (and still the only) English-speaking production of Sartre's 'Nekrassov' have alternated with shows which nobody could be blamed for not flocking to see.

But the present production, 'Cyanamide', is an example of Unity's policy at its most courageous; and it breaks new ground. Unity has always shown enterprise in presenting the works of American playwrights who afterwards became world-

famous. Clifford Odets was one, and Burt Marnik, who wrote 'Cyanamide', looks like being another.

This play is, I think, the first ever shown at Unity which has a tragic ending. Not tragic for everyone in the play, certainly. The author could have brought down his curtain on the picket line bravely confronting the boss; and this would have been the traditional Unity style.

But he has chosen instead to show the isolation and despair of the blackleg. To be serious, at Unity, is a risk; the biggest

The next article in the series 'Talks with Soviet Leaders on the Jewish Question', by J. B. Salsberg, will appear in the following issue.

audiences have always come in for the rowdy musical shows. To be tragic is an act of heroism.

But heroism has kept Unity alive for 21 years. Everyone who wants it to stay alive now should go and see this play. You may not like the tragic third act; but there can be no doubt about the liveliness, the humour, and the honesty of the first two.

The Unity actors give it what actors from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art could not give—the authentic feeling of working-class life. By any standards, Joe MacColum's production is brilliant.

But don't wait—go and see it this weekend. There won't be another weekend, if Unity's old supporters don't rally around it now.

FLEET STREET (continued from front page)

new future when a new rumour burst through the swing doors: The Chronicle, last remaining 'respectable' popular, was on the way out after all.

The rumour had a frighteningly firm foundation. Word had come from The Feathers, the Chronicle pub at the back of the Temple, that editorial costs were to be slashed by a third. Drastic economies were to be made in running the paper's newsgathering side.

In future the primary question for Chronicle staffmen would not be 'Is it a good story?', but 'What will it cost?' And—Oh sacrilege!—reporters' cherished tax-free expenses were to come under the axe as well.

The news staggered Fleet Street. It was justly said that a newspaper that had to save on its news service must be nearing the end. People who had never before believed that 'the good old Chron.' could really go out suddenly changed their minds. It was only a matter of time, they said.

And, with the barometer well back at 'stormy', more grim thoughts came crowding in. A thirty per cent cut in editorial costs must mean an imminent wave of sackings.

Worse still, a new regime at the Herald could only lead to more sackings. A major upheaval was clearly on the way.

What the ulcerated Pressman likes

Soon the pub chatter turned naturally to drawing up the executioners' lists. For, where the ordinary man loves to discuss the next test team, the ulcerated journalist likes nothing better than to list his choice for 'the twelve most sackable men'.

On two candidates there was universal agreement. Mr. Michael Curtis, unsuccessful editor of the Chronicle, and Mr. Sidney Elliot, even-more-unsuccessful editor of the Herald, headed all the lists.

Poor Mr. Curtis, so recently the industry's proud young Napoleon, would have to go—for the typically topsy-turvy reason that astonishing appointments must succeed astonishingly or git.

Poor Mr. Elliot would have to go too—but for the more pedestrian reason that he had been at the Herald too long and too ineffectually.

There was less agreement on replacements for the fallen. Only the editorship of the Herald seemed to be agreed. The man voted most likely to succeed was Mr. Sam Campbell, now editor of Odhams' money-making People. His formula of

words-of-one-syllable sex had put the People on the map. It could do the same for the Herald.

And so it went on—and still goes on this very day in the countless pubs around the Street of Ink. But one topic you will not hear mentioned. No word will be uttered of the grim political implications of this latest Fleet Street crisis.

Yet the prospects are that within a very short space of time there will be only five popular daily newspapers left. And of those, only two (the Daily Express and the Daily Mail) will even maintain a pretence of selling news.

One, the Daily Sketch, will continue its shameless semi-fascist parade.

Another, the Daily Mirror, will maintain its peculiarly damaging 'Labour sympathies'.

And the Daily Herald, once the pride of George Lansbury, will display its socialist bias by presenting only left legs and left breasts for its readers' entertainment.

That, dear reader, is your future. Take your pick.

JOURNAL

Paul Hogarth resigns

Just as we were going to press this week there arrived a letter from Paul Hogarth announcing his resignation from the Communist Party—and his departure for Moscow with Ruskin Spear and Penrick Greaves.

Paul Hogarth enclosed a statement of his reasons for resigning. Rather than mutilate it, we will print it in full next week. We hope to have something else from his pen—and his pencil—when he returns from the Soviet Union in three weeks' time.

Advice from Dutt

In his Notes of the Month in the current issue of Labour Monthly, the editor of that journal deigns to notice the 'little magazines' that are springing up on the Left.

He advises them to follow Labour Monthly's example and print fewer 'philosophical lucubrations'.

Lucubrations is a snooty word for meditations that smell of the midnight oil. The smell of Mr. Dutt's own lucubrations about sun-spots is still lingering in many of his readers' nostrils.