

# THE NEWSLETTER

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## ALL-LONDON SUPPORT FOR SOUTH BANK STRIKERS

By BRIAN BEHAN

(In a speech to last Tuesday's demonstration of central London building workers)

**T**HIS is an historic meeting. This is the first time we have had in London such a big gathering of building workers round a dispute. It should settle the argument whether we want a rank-and-file committee to organize ourselves and struggle against the employers.

McAlpine does not want a works committee on the Shell-Mex site, because a works committee would represent a united trade union movement at site level.

This is not the first occasion that Sir Robert McAlpine has done this. On the Isle of Grain McAlpine persistently refused to accept normal trade unionism on his job. If McAlpine is the enemy of the trade union movement, then the official trade union movement should declare war on McAlpine.

Because unemployment is developing in the building industry these employers cannot get back quickly enough to the 'good old days' when you drank your tea out of a dirty mug and had no canteen.

(Continued overleaf)

### WHAT THE STRIKE IS ABOUT

One thousand building workers employed by Sir Robert McAlpine and Sons Ltd on the Shell Mex site, South Bank, have been on strike since February 28.

In the twelve months since work began on what is the largest building site in Europe the management has constantly tried to whittle away normal negotiating rights and to impede working agreements. In particular the workers make the following complaints:

1) McAlpines have refused proper negotiations with site representatives over site welfare and conditions.

2) Without consultation (i.e., contrary to procedure) a notice was pinned up announcing that holidays would be taken from April 2 to April 10—from the middle of one week to the middle of the next. This is a breach of the agreement in the industry that holidays will comprise six consecutive working days.

3) A large 'redundancy' occurs each week. Then more labour is taken on. Those stood off are union members; those taken on are preferably non-unionists.

4) The management insists on the men working 56 hours a week on days, 70 hours a week on nights, and apparently denies the men's right not to work overtime.

5) Site conditions are very poor. The lavatories are inadequate, and the washing-up arrangements for cups consist of one bath of water used by hundreds of men.

At Tuesday's demonstration hundreds of workers from jobs all over the City of London made their way to a mass meeting, addressed by stewards from various jobs (including Abbey Wood, where 150 carpenters are on strike) who pledged solidarity with the McAlpine men, and agreed to the setting up of a solidarity committee. The workers then marched to the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers head office to demand that the strike be officially recognized.

## Rocket Bases Campaign Forges Ahead

### 'BLACK THE SITES'—N. LONDON ENGINEERS

London (North) district committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union is to send a resolution to the AEU executive asking it to use all power at its disposal against rocket bases, even to declaring work on them black.

### 'BLACK THE SITES'—CAMBRIDGE CHIPPIES

Cambridge no. 2 branch of the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers has called on its executive committee to instruct members not to work on rocket sites. The resolution will be circulated to all branches through the union journal.

Management committee of Cambridge Labour Party has unanimously gone on record against British manufacture of the H-bomb and against the construction of rocket bases in Britain.

Cambridge Trades Council wants the ending of H-bomb tests and the grounding of American H-bombers in Britain.

### AND LAMBETH WORKERS SAY 'BLACK THEM'

Lambeth Trades Council has passed a resolution asking the Trades Union Congress to declare all work on rocket sites black.

The resolution was submitted by Brixton branch of the Electrical Trades Union.

### MANCHESTER SHEET METAL WORKERS, TOO

Manchester branch of the National Union of Sheet Metal Workers and Braziers has submitted a resolution to the union's annual conference on the blacking of rocket bases.

It calls on the executive to propose to the Trades Union Congress and to the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions that all work on the construction or maintenance of rocket bases be declared black.

### 'RENOUNCE BOMB' CALL BY BOILERMAKERS

Out of 70 motions on the preliminary agenda of the Boilermakers' Society's annual conference (to be held in Scarborough on June 3-6), 24 refer to nuclear weapons and rocket bases.

Glasgow no. 11 branch believes that 'Britain should—unilaterally, if necessary—renounce the use of nuclear weapons' and 'advocate the destruction of existing stock piles of these weapons'.

## COMMENTARY

### LABOUR AND THE BOMB

A STORY is circulating—and there is good reason to accept it as authentic—that at last week's meeting of the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress international committees, which issued a milk-and-water statement on nuclear weapons, Bevan proposed a pledge that the next Labour Government would never use them. The proposal was rejected. Seven years ago Bevan resigned office over something much less important than the H-bomb. Today, seeing the growth of public feeling against the bomb and the rise of a Labour Left independent of his influence, he makes, first a speech that defies the efforts of the most charitable interpreter to grasp his position, and now a feeble attempt to ride two horses at once.

The H-bomb is tearing to shreds the reputations of reformists of all shades. It is the supreme touchstone by reference to which social and political trends are being judged. The dangers involved in the continued manufacture of this weapon are so appalling to contemplate that the workers have the right to put to every public figure, every party and every movement the simple question: 'Are you for or against British manufacture of the bomb?' To support British manufacture means to support a weapon being in the hands of men who (a) cannot foresee more than the immediate, short-term effects of its testing and use; and (b) are imperialists who hate Soviet Russia and for forty years have itched to destroy it. This weapon would bring incalculable harm and suffering to the Russian people and would make life in Britain at the least a misery and very likely impossible.



The question to ask, then, about last week's Labour Party and TUC statement is: 'Does it support unilateral renunciation?' No, it does not, and only a shameless sophist or one utterly blind to the scientific, military, medical and political realities of the nuclear world could welcome this statement as a step forward. To postpone renunciation or make it contingent on any conditions whatever is to enter into a conspiracy with Duncan Sandys. If the leaders of the Labour movement do not come out unreservedly against the bomb, then they are aiding and abetting a policy which could mean disaster for Britain. And the same goes for the leaders of the Communist Party, who congratulate the Labour leaders on their temporizing statement, and who are therefore failing miserably to defend the Soviet Union against imperialism. Rank-and-file members of both the Labour Party and the Communist Party must speak out against their leaders' policies before it is too late. On the H-bomb there can be no compromise. It is a filthy weapon. It is a boomerang. The British workers should have no part in it. They should declare all work on the bomb and the rocket bases 'black', appeal to the workers of other countries to follow their example, and fight these things with the same ardour and militancy they display in their struggle for jobs, wages and workshop rights.

### SOUTH BANK STRIKE (Continued from front page)

We should congratulate the men on the Minter site on their successful go-slow which got back the shilling that was knocked off their bonus.

I think the building employers are being encouraged by the Tories. But above all else they are being encouraged by our official trade union leadership.

This Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers with 200,000 members, this Transport and General Workers' Union with over a million members, have got the power to crush McAlpine tomorrow if they would use it.

The only serious struggle that the ASW has led in the past five years has been a struggle as to who would bore a hole in a Merseyside ship. They called for union solidarity against another union.

These people are not fit to lead a trade union movement. In my opinion they are traitors to the class they represent.

We must say to them we want holes bored in McAlpine! That is what we want our trade union strength used for.

### Fight the employers' lackeys

Don't become down-hearted and leave the unions. Remain within the unions and drive out those who are the lackeys of the employers.

If a rich man has a little dog he puts a band round his neck and inscribes it 'Fido' or 'Tiddley'. There are many of our trade union leaders who are knights or MBEs.

In my opinion they are wearing the gold band of the employer. The sooner they get back to reality the better.

We should consider first of all a declaration of solidarity with the McAlpine men. We should send resolutions from our jobs and branches to the union executives asking them to fight.

We should raise the utmost finance to send to these men to maintain them in their dispute. I would like to see a meeting of all the shop stewards who are here, plus the McAlpine stewards, so that we can plan a common struggle.

~~We should give all our best wishes to the McAlpine men and hope their victory will be one step towards the nationalization of our industry in a socialist manner, towards getting rid of these employers altogether.~~

## RENTS

### THE WORKERS MEET THE HARD-FACED MEN

By Coun. David R. Smith

THIRTY delegates representing town councils, trade union branches, factory committees and tenants' associations all over Scotland met the management of the Scottish Special Housing Association, which is trying to put rents up.

The management—the most hard-faced collection of business men I have yet encountered—sat in complete silence for two hours listening to delegate after delegate denouncing the proposed rent increases in the most militant terms.

Shop stewards from the Clyde shipyards and Rolls Royce factories made it quite clear that, with the rent increases coming on top of growing unemployment, they would be prepared to lead the workers into open struggle in the streets.

One housewife said how dependent she had been on her husband's overtime—now that had disappeared along with his job. She did not know how she was going to pay the existing rent, let alone an increase of 7s. 6d.

Coun. Knox of Easthouses (Midlothian) said he did not suppose that one of the prosperous-looking gentlemen on the other side of the table drew an income of less than four figures.

Yet they were seeking to pass vicious measures against working men trying to raise a family on less than £10 a week.

## Kelvingrove Is Katie's Toughest Fight

**D**EATH of Walter Elliot left his wife Katie, who 'would like to keep [Kelvingrove] as a kind of memorial to her husband' with the toughest battle of her career. If she manages to retain the seat as a monument it will rest on a large, hostile, but split anti-Tory vote.

The prevalent mood of the voters is one of fear and anger. Increased rents, probable evictions, rising unemployment and the hydrogen bomb are the dominant issues.

With an electorate of 40,000 Kelvingrove contains within its bounds the University, the 'posh' Park Ward (severely hit by the Rent Act), the 'poor' Anderston Ward (a sprawling mass of degrading slum tenements, with their 'single-ends' and outside lavatories) and a heavy concentration of industry. Hotels, hostels and 'model' lodging houses contain the floating voters.

**FIRM 'OFFICIAL' LINE.** 'Follow Rochdale', plead the Labour posters, and the candidate Mrs Mary McAlister tours the constituency on this platform.

Though supporting speakers demand the repeal of the Rent Act, local voters question the candidate's admitted support for a 'review' of all rents by the Glasgow City Council.

Declared support for the manufacture of the H-bomb, and firm support for the 'official' line, leave the impression that if Labour wins it will be despite the candidate and despite policy statements.

Mrs. Elliot has left her 5,000-acre farm on the Border

and her fox-hunting to fight on a 'Defend the Pound' programme. To constituents faced with increasing local redundancy and higher rents this offers little encouragement.

Tory meetings have been well attended, in the main by hostile audiences.

Vague warnings to landlords and evasive answers on the unemployment problem, even to the extent of the candidate admitting that she was unaware that ships were lying idle in the Clyde, have failed to satisfy questioners.

Of the intruders into this battle, Mr William Park (Independent Labour Party), declaring himself to be the only socialist in the election, will take some votes from Labour. His support for unilateral action on the H-bomb is the cornerstone of his campaign.

**POSITIVE PROGRAMME NEEDED.** The Liberal-Home Rule candidate Mr David Murray is a man who has made a habit of standing under many banners. His entrance, after the announcement of television coverage of the by-election, will take a few dissident Tory votes.

Committee room reports indicate that a high poll is to be expected in this first by-election on the Clyde since the Tory offensive got under way.

Whatever the result the reaction of the voters in the preliminary rounds shows that an anti-Tory platform is not enough. Labour must bring forward a positive alternative programme.

**MATT MCGINN**

When I spoke I warned the management that the Dalkeith tenants would resist; that if new missives were served they would be destroyed; that if court action were attempted the town council would consider giving financial help to the tenants from the Common Good Fund.

The Association chairman said no increase would be made until all views had been considered.

It is quite clear that the mass pressure since the Association first tried to increase the rents last October has forced them to retreat.

A liaison committee has been formed between the Dalkeith and the Easthouses tenants to co-ordinate activity.

Unfortunately the Labour-controlled Midlothian County Council has increased its rents by 6s. a week, and in the absence of organization the tenants have signed the new missives.

A resolution condemning the increase was defeated, after a stormy three-hour debate, by the casting vote of the chairman at a special Labour Party conference.

The Left is now charging the executive with manipulating the vote by unconstitutional means and is demanding another conference and another vote.

Two Labour councillors have openly defied their group's decision and have lined themselves up with the Easthouses tenants.

## INDUSTRY

### NUFTO DECLARES BURY STRIKE OFFICIAL

From Our Industrial Correspondent

ON Wednesday the strike against redundancy at E. Moorhouse (Apex) Ltd, Bury (Lancs) was declared official by the National Union of Furniture Trade Operatives; the whole factory—about 200 workers—is now on strike.

This followed a meeting on Monday between the management and the national organizer of the NUFTO bedding

group, Mr Tom Cheney, the district organizer, Mr George Kelly, and the chairman of the Shop Stewards' Council, Mr Bill Caldwell.

They offered an immediate return to work if the fifteen sacked workers were reinstated and a disputes panel were set up to discuss alleged wrongful dismissals and the whole question of redundancy. The management rejected this offer.

'The feeling of the workers is very strong. The solidarity is terrific,' says Mr Caldwell, who is a Labour Party member and a former Councillor.

Men and women have turned out on the picket line in the bitter cold. Neighbouring houses have given them hot drinks.

'We are fighting a return to the thirties,' Dennis Barker, secretary of the local branch of the National Union of Furniture Trade Operatives, told me.

There have been many expressions of sympathy from other trade unionists and Labour Party member in Bury, where there is increasing short time in the cotton and woollen mills, in the slipper works and engineering factories.

### GEORGE MANN STEWARDS FIGHT FOR JOBS AND BACK UP THE MINERS

By Stewards' Convener J. Walls

RECENT months have shown how disastrous Tory financial policy has been in restricting industrial production.

Credit restrictions themselves very much reduced the amount of orders on the books of engineering firms.

Together with the lift in the Bank Rate, the result was that workshops began to look as bare as Old Mother Hubbard's cupboard.

It was soon apparent that the employers meant to break down the shop floor organizations.

It was these organizations that had built up earnings in excess of negotiations at national level and needed to be curbed.

Part of the plan was, of course, to make jobs scarce in order to spread real fear of unemployment.

Men would not be prepared to fight so much if it meant being out of work—or so the bosses think.

In the face of many attacks that are being made and will be made, the massive strength of the trade union movement must therefore consolidate itself in preparation for struggle.

This is why the shop stewards' committee at George Mann's (Leeds) unanimously passed the following resolution:

'We feel the Cohen report presents a determined attack on the workers of many industries and as such stands to be condemned.

'It becomes more apparent that the intention is to create further unemployment and also to reduce earnings by various means which at all costs must be opposed.

'At this stage the miners are in the forefront with their wages claim and therefore will need the full co-operation of the whole of the trade union movement.

'The constant attacks that are being made on the miners are a deliberate attempt to break down the benefits obtained under nationalization and it is highly necessary that the claim they are pursuing be secured. It can be if other unions pledge their support to them.'

## COAL BOARD CHALLENGES THE MINERS

By Coun. Price Jones

BIGGEST 'economy' drive since nationalization is under way in the Lancashire coalfield.

Pit officials have been told that no overtime must be worked unless 'absolutely necessary', and one of the first steps will probably be to abolish the 'voluntary' Saturday shift.

All this clearly means a big reduction in the earnings of day-wage men, whose claim for an increase of 10s. per week has just been turned down by the Coal Board.

This was the first time since Vesting Day that a wage-claim has been turned down flat with no compromise offer.

Then came the statement that recruitment has been stopped 'until it is sure that all the present labour force is efficiently employed'.

In turning down the pay claim NCB chairman Sir James Bowman—he gets £7,500 a year—said the industry could not afford it, as it would cost £11 million a year.

### Abolish this yearly ransom

Miners contend that what the industry cannot afford is the £14 million a year compensation to ex-owners. If this yearly ransom was abolished the Board could give the miners the increase they need.

There is little doubt that the claim will be turned down by the industry's arbitration tribunal, and the miners will expect action from the National Union of Mineworkers.

The policy of 'No jobs here' in place of 'Make mining your career', along with the attempt to form absentee committees, makes it pretty clear that the Board intends to 'discipline' the miners.

The NCB would have preferred to do this in collaboration with the union. But there is no doubt that such collaboration will meet with rank-and-file opposition, as in Lancashire, Yorkshire and South Wales.

But the Board now feels strong enough to 'discipline' the miners without union help. The West Midlands area has announced that absentees will be warned once, then sacked by the colliery manager. It is expected that all areas will follow this pattern.

### 'LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE' IS THEIR LINE

The Communist Party, which is not putting up its own candidate against a Right-wing candidate in an election for a seat on the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers executive, is refusing to support Brian Behan.

Behan, a well-known militant, used to be on the executive of the Communist Party.

Prominent communists in the building trade say they are not sponsoring a candidate of their own against the sitting member, Mr Alf Thorne, MBE, because they 'have not got

one groomed'. But they will not back Behan, who is standing—their policy in this election is to 'let sleeping dogs lie'. Voting takes place in June.

## CUT DOWN PRIVATE CONTRACT BUILDING

INCREASE in the amount of building which is being done for local authorities in Yorkshire by private contract was noted with concern by the annual conference of the Labour Party's Yorkshire Regional Council.

The conference said this would be 'neither in the interests of the ratepayer nor of the workers directly employed by local authorities'.

It called on Labour-controlled authorities to reverse the process in their districts and wherever possible to use their own labour.

Leeds no. 9 branch of the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers has submitted a motion to the ASW annual confer-

## STUDENTS VOTE AGAINST THE BOMB

IN a poll of 1,200 Nottingham University students (about half the student population) taken in one day by about 100 members of the Labour, Liberal, Pacifist, Quaker and International societies, these results were obtained:

53 per cent. said Britain's possession of the H-bomb does NOT decrease the risk of total war.

58 per cent. said the argument that Britain's possession of the bomb gives her greater influence in negotiation does NOT provide enough reason for indefinite retention of the bomb.

57 per cent. said Britain should press for agreement on nuclear disarmament without necessarily linking it with an agreement on general disarmament.

32 per cent. said Britain should stop H-bomb tests unconditionally, and another 39 per cent. said Britain should stop tests until new attempts have been made to reach agreement with the USSR.

31 per cent. said Britain should stop the establishment of missile bases on her territory unconditionally, and another 34 per cent. said she should do so until new attempts have been made to reach agreement with the USSR.

56 per cent. said Britain should suspend patrol flights of H-bomb-carrying aircraft over her territory, even at the risk of straining the Anglo-American alliance.

ence reaffirming belief in the principle of public ownership of the building and civil engineering industries, and instructing the executive to seek the co-operation of affiliated organizations in the production of a pamphlet supporting this principle.

## THE ECONOMIC LEAGUE IS WATCHING US!

THE Economic League is paying a great deal of attention to the building workers' rank-and-file movement and to THE NEWSLETTER.

Issue no. 63 of the League's 'confidential' bulletin, Spotlight on Subversion, dated February 13, 1958, gives the list of speakers at the building workers' conference on January 19. This bulletin is circulated to employers, and the black-list intention is obvious.

There is also a story on The Newsletter, headed 'The New Left Develops', and stating that this paper devotes itself 'to the joint tasks of industrial agitation and "gingering-up" the Left wing of the Labour party'.

Issue no. 56 of the Economic League Bulletin, dated March 1958, calls the building workers' movement 'a new extremist organization' and adds:

'It is clear that at the moment this new organization is

not under party domination. Ex-members of the Communist Party, most of whom resigned over Hungary, played a big part in establishing the new set-up, and are now in control. Indeed, some opposition to the new organization came from party members . . .'

The Economic League forecasts that The Newsletter will be used to 'convey directives' (!) to similar movements in other industries, and promises that 'in future issues we will have more to say about the activities of ex-party members who are now banding together in groups for the purpose of conducting industrial agitation on exactly the same lines as the Communist Party itself'.

The Economic League's 'Two Minute News Review' no. 142, dated March 10, 1958, quotes from the Newsletter pamphlet 'Black the H-bomb and the Rocket Bases'.

Under the heading 'Industrial Agitation and National Defence', that passage is quoted which suggests an appeal by the British Labour movement to the workers of other countries to follow our example in blacking this kind of work. This internationalism seems to have outraged the Economic League.

### WHISTLING THEM UP

'Mr Gaitskell, in order to harry those Left-wingers whom Right and Centre Labour MPs most like to see annoyed, has whistled up his trade union bodyguard; it is a matter of great significance that they have immediately rallied, massed like so many Arthur Deakins, with their knobkerries at the ready.

'And this has happened despite all the talk of supposed de-Deakinization of the trade union leadership.

'Mr Cousins has not yet said a word.'

—(The Economist, March 8, 1958)

## LABOUR

### THIS YEAR I'LL STAND AGAINST THE BOMB

By Ursula Verity

MUNICIPAL Elections approach us fast and I, as a candidate, have to write a letter to the electors in my ward, telling them why they should vote for me.

As I have already told you, mine is a Tory ward; so, whatever I write about, we are not likely to win. This is why I am tempted to change tactics this year and measure our strength on a different battleground.

Instead of the old arguments—'Labour built more old people's homes', 'Labour empties more dustbins', and so forth, I shall invite all those who want to abolish the H-bomb terror in our country and those who want to oppose rocket bases, to vote for me.

I believe that, even in a Tory stronghold, there are thoughtful people who feel that this is the most important problem confronting our generation.

They are denied the right to question the actions of the Tory government in building rocket stations without a mandate from the country, and there is no way for them to express their profound fear of a future haunted by the H-bomb.

Would it be a good idea for all Labour candidates in Tory strongholds to do the same? If the response is as great as I believe it can be, no government can be ignorant of the people's will.

\* \* \*

OUR women's section had a discussion on 'The Women's Press' at its last meeting. Members had been looking at the latest glamour-glossy, *Woman's Realm*.

Opinions varied, of course. Mrs. Hill, forthright matron that she is, said: 'Terrible tripe. Everyone marries young advertising executives or commercial artists. Never a working

man in the lot. They probably think that workers are sexless, like worker bees.'

Young Jeannie, who is politically undeveloped (I said politically), though very useful at manifesto-delivering time, murmured: 'I don't know—probably the girls of today are nicer to be with than their grandmothers were, just because of all these women's papers.'

'Why?' we asked.

'Because these papers nag at us to bath often, and wash our hair and use deodorants. Just imagine, the first Queen Elizabeth never . . .'

'Next business!' we told her, firmly.

The outcome of the discussion was that we wanted women's papers which catered for real women, with real-life problems.

'Woman' has several million readers, and they can't all marry advertising executives. Some must be married to miners, or dockers, and work in factories and shops themselves.

Some day, perhaps under socialism, women will have papers whose interests are healthy and realistic, rather than falsely emotional. But then women's whole lives will be different.

## Cunvin's Column

### GOOD RIDDANCE!

SIR HARTLEY SHAWCROSS'S decision to resign from his parliamentary seat will be received with a sigh of relief throughout the Labour Party.

As a Member of Parliament, Sir Hartley has scarcely functioned for years. He made his last speech in the Commons in May 1954.

It is outside Parliament that he has made those anti-socialist speeches which endeared him to the capitalist Press.

### HIS BASIC PRINCIPLES

In his letter to his constituents announcing his retirement, Sir Hartley wrote: 'I still believe as strongly as before in the basic principles which led me to join the party 40 years ago.'

Was Sir Hartley ever aware of these basic principles? In the same letter he refers to his much-publicized differences with the party over fundamental issues such as nationalization, foreign policy, defence and education.

Surely a lawyer of Sir Hartley's eminence must know that the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange is enshrined in the Labour Party constitution and that from this 'basic principle' should flow the party's policy on foreign affairs, defence, education and so on.

Just which of the basic principles of socialism does Sir Hartley still believe in? And how will he serve those principles as legal adviser to the Shell combine or on the board of Ford's?

### SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE

Hugh Gaitskell said last week that there was always room in the party for differences of opinion, though members were expected to abide by party decisions.

Up to now the leadership has shown great tolerance of differences expressed from the Right but has come down heavily on any criticisms from the Left.

Witness the immunity of Sir Hartley Shawcross despite his oft-declared differences with official party policy; and compare this with the threats Nye Bevan was subjected to when he still led the Left wing, and the attitude taken up by the national executive to those MPs associated with Victory for Socialism.

No one on the NEC contested Sir Hartley's right to represent Labour in Parliament—but Tom Braddock, fifty years a member of the party, has been vetoed once again, though

nominated by a constituency Labour Party (Kingston-upon-Thames) as its prospective candidate.

The Labour Party, we boast, is the party which stands for equality of opportunity. Let's have some of it inside the party, too!

## LIBERALS AND VFS

**S**IGNIFICANTLY, it is the Liberal newspapers, the Manchester Guardian and (still more) the News Chronicle, that have shouted loudest and longest about the so-called split in the Labour Party.

These papers know very well that a victory for the Left within the Labour Party would spell the end of the much-boasted Liberal revival.

It is only because the Labour Party fails to offer a constructive socialist alternative that those disillusioned with Toryism turn to the politically bankrupt Liberal Party.

A strong lead from Labour on those issues which millions of men and women are worrying about today—the H-bomb, missile sites, rents and the spreading unemployment, would put an end for all time to Liberal hopes of forming an alternative capitalist government.

## APARTHEID FUNERALS

**C**APE TOWN'S Road Transportation Board is insisting that before permits are granted for undertakers' cars to carry mourners to the cemetery and home again certain cars have to be set aside for Europeans only and others for non-Europeans.

Even in death the South African Herrenvolk must not get their lily-white bodies contaminated.

GEORGE CUNVIN

## USA

### FLOUR AND DRIED MILK HAND-OUTS FOR AMERICA'S JOBLESS

From Our New York Correspondent

**D**ESPITE the Administration's efforts to cushion the blow, the news that unemployment in the USA has risen to the alarming figure of 5,173,000, highest since Pearl Harbour, has hit the American people's confidence hard.

This is particularly so since the Government statistics are doctored to bolster confidence. Unofficial estimates put the figure at well over six million.

Nor is this all. Millions are working part time. And millions more live in daily dread of lay-offs. Eisenhower's much-boasted unemployment relief plan, extending unemployment benefits by another thirteen weeks, cannot do more than scratch the surface of the problem.

Here are on-the-spot reports from four major American cities.

In **Detroit** 13½ per cent. of the labour force is out of work. Tens of thousands are working three-day or four-day weeks or less.

'I used to run an ad for a typist for a whole week before I could fill the job with a girl who could type 50 words per minute,' said a compensation office personnel manager. 'We ran the ad two days this week and got 75 applicants for the job.'

In **Pittsburgh** each unemployed man and each dependant is to receive free once a month out of federal surplus food stocks the following: 4lb. of flour and 1lb. each of cheese, corn meal, rice and dried milk. Total value: one dollar. Number of applicants expected: 160,000.

In **Buffalo** steel production has dropped to 37 per cent. of normal, and about 5,000 motor-car workers are jobless. Beth-

lehem Steel is operating only twelve of its thirty-five open hearth furnaces. Republic Steel is down to two out of its nine.

In **New York** over 340,000 people draw unemployment benefit each week. Less than half the insured unemployed get the maximum compensation benefit of 36 dollars a week.

## FRANCE

### FRANCE'S NEWEST NEW LEFT WINS YOUTH

From Seymour Papert

PARIS

**T**HE significant fact about the Party of Socialist Left Unity (PUGS) is that it is growing.

It is not going to get big enough to win elections in the foreseeable future, but it has proved itself capable of attracting large numbers of the sort of people who in England would be active in the constituency parties, the youth sections, Victory for Socialism and so on.

In social composition it is largely intellectual and white collar: industrial workers make up 10 per cent. of its membership at the very most.

The creation of the new party last December by the merger of Claude Bourdet's New Left with a number of other Left-wing groupings reflects the impetus given to French political life by the Hungarian Revolution, the continuation of the Algerian war and the consequent cuts in the standard of living.

Many who had put their faith in Mendès-France or Mollet were brought to realize that these men offered no solution to the social problems.

Many who had drifted into political apathy were brought back to life and, perhaps most important of all, many young people were jolted into thinking politically for the first time.

For a British reader the best characterization of PUGS is: Bevanism without the Labour Party.

### Like Bevan at his best

The leadership of PUGS adopts a political position essentially similar to that of Bevan at his best: Welfare State, nationalization, colonial independence on a not very clearly defined basis and so on.

Claude Bourdet boldly takes the Left wing of the Parliamentary Labour Party as his model.

But this position is one side of a contradiction which will sooner or later burst PUGS or profoundly change it. The other side is that the young people who come to the organization

### GAILLARD HITS AT LEFT-WING PRESS

France's police government again hit out at Press freedom last week in an effort to silence its critics and ruin their Press financially.

In addition to action against the Sartre pamphlet 'La Victoire', the Mendèsist L'Express, the Communist Party's La France Nouvelle and—for the second week running—France-Observateur were seized.

Standpoint of the offending article in the latter journal was liberalism and enlightened self-interest. There is not a word of criticism of French colonialism in it, nor does it mention the tortures carried out by the paratroop 'pacifiers' in Algeria.

The author, André Philip, a university teacher of moderate socialist views, fears however that a military-fascist anti-American movement will push the weak Gaillard Government aside and seize power without the working-class movement being able to do anything about it.

(like many in the British youth sections) are looking for something very different from what this leadership offers.

Though most of them would find it hard to formulate just what they do want, this shows itself in a willingness in the branches to hear and discuss a more radical and coherent socialist outlook.

A particular feature of PUGS policy which is bound to lead to conflicts is its refusal to take up any stand on the question of industrial organization.

In a situation where the problem of bureaucracy and conservatism in the unions is very much more acute than in Britain this is enough to explain the inability of PUGS to get an effective working-class base.

On the other hand the question is already being raised within the party by rank-and-filers who are concerned by this inability, and who are more interested in the evolution of the working class than in the building of a new parliamentary party for its own sake.

Closely related to this is the question of working-class action on political issues.

The fact that the Communist Party deliberately squashed a large-scale wave of spontaneous workers' action against the Algerian war only two years ago shows that the problem is a live one.

But the PUGS leadership has had nothing to say and would not be able to say much without provoking serious internal dissensions.

An idea of the limitations of PUGS and of the reason for its ability to attract serious young socialists is given by a comparison between the election slogans put out for the forthcoming Paris by-election by it and by the Communist Party.

On Algeria the PUGS demands peace 'by negotiation with a free and independent Algerian people'. The Communist Party candidate refers to Algeria only in the following terms: 'To end the war in Algeria will contribute to world peace and restore France to the rank of a Great Nation.' (Notice the very typical appeal to chauvinism.)

On economic questions PUGS demands wage increases, nationalization of big industry and tax reduction (in that order!).

The Communist Party confines itself to the remark that a policy of peace will be beneficial to workers crushed by the high cost of living.

It will be interesting to see whether the presence of PUGS forces the Communist Party to put up some façade of a socialist programme in the future.

## Constant Reader | Oh, Mr Chancellor!

### Church and State

IN the February issue of *New Hungary*, organ of the British-Hungarian Friendship Society, a report of a discussion in the Hungarian National Assembly includes the following:

'Chancellor Janos Mate, a Catholic priest, spoke appreciatively of improved relations between Church and State. "The counter-revolutionaries damaged and destroyed churches, while the revolutionary workers' and peasants' government is restoring them", he said.'

Well, there it is. You may have thought hitherto that the Hungarian rebels were a lot of Catholic Action boys, rarin' to put Cardinal Mindszenty in power.

But it turns out that more probably they were Spanish-type anarchists, intent on church-burning.

Whichever way you slice this stuff, it's still boloney.

### Dr Kettle's advice

'The people of Hungary live to fight another day,' writes Arnold Kettle in the *March Marxism Today*. But he doesn't mean what you and I mean; for he goes on to tell us that 'at a grim cost the socialist revolution has been saved'.

In the same article, by the way, he makes a mysterious reference to some recent British ex-Stalinist having made 'a passage from communism to open bourgeois liberalism via Trotskyism'. No name, of course.

Incidentally, I hear that Dr Kettle recently shouted to a friend who was offered a Newsletter leaflet: 'Don't read it—it's Trot stuff!'

One wonders if he has applied this principle to what some consider a major Marxist contribution to his own subject—'Literature and Revolution', by L. D. Trotsky. (What prospects, by the way, of a review in *Marxism Today* of the recent reprint of that remarkable book?)

### Lenin on the Jews

HYMAN LEVY'S study of the Jewish question reminds me of a once-famous statement of Lenin's, made in a lecture he gave in Switzerland on the Russian revolution of 1905:

'The Jews provided a particularly high percentage (compared with the total Jewish population) of leaders of the revolutionary movement. In passing, it should be said to

their credit that today the Jews provide a relatively high percentage of representatives of internationalism compared with other nations.'

This statement, though included in the useful pamphlet 'What Lenin Said about the Jews', compiled by R. F. Andrews (Andrew Rothstein) and published by the Communist Party in 1936, practically disappeared from circulation in Stalinist literature after 1937.

It had become one of those items from what were still called 'the immortal writings of great Lenin' which it was not done to publicize, because they reflected too sharply upon the practice of would-be-great Stalin.

### Worker's Notebook chauvinism

In the same connexion, I note that Walter Holmes, in his 'Worker's Notebook' in the *Daily Worker* of February 28, refers to the economist Paul Einzig as 'the Transylvanian oracle of the Financial Times'.

That Einzig is an enemy of the working class is undoubted, but to use his national origins against him is too much like the Mosleyite approach to politics, which would make the most significant thing about the Cohen Council the name of its chairman.

Chauvinism of this sort, previously anathema, began to be injected into the British Communist Party in 1935, and developed rapidly in the years immediately following.

Challenge, the organ of the Young Communist League, used to refer to Franco's soldiers from Morocco as 'black troops' and publish 'anti-wog' type cartoons about them.

That Franco was able to use these Moorish regiments at all was, of course, a result of the Spanish communists' refusal to call for recognition of the right of Morocco to self-determination, 'in order not to antagonize' the Spanish (and French) bourgeoisie.

### William Paul's best-seller

WILLIAM PAUL, a famous communist propagandist of the 1920s, has died. The *Daily Worker* of March 11 recalled that 'his book on the State . . . was a best-seller towards the end of the first world war'.

It was indeed, and 'The State, Its Origin and Function' makes good reading even today. Thus: 'The revolutionary socialist denies that State ownership can end in anything other than a bureaucratic despotism . . . Industry can only

be democratically owned and controlled by the workers electing directly from their own ranks industrial administrative committees.'

Another famous work of Paul's was 'Communism and Society', published in 1922. Communist Party branches now discussing 'The British Road to Socialism' would find it stimulating. For example:

'If the communists did get a majority in the House of Commons they would destroy the political power of capitalism and hand over all governmental functions to the new industrial government that would have its being in the local and national administrative committees created and built up by the working class . . .'

### Rothstein and Ulbricht

THE recent troubles in Ulbrichtland remind me of a curious incident at the 'brains trust' held by the British-Soviet Friendship Society in London's Conway Hall, shortly after the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party.

Pat Sloan, John Platts-Mills and Andrew Rothstein disgraced themselves by the frivolity and evasiveness of their replies to questions; the only member of the panel who seemed to appreciate the seriousness of the occasion was the Rev. Stanley Evans.

One persistent questioner kept demanding to know what the 'brains' thought of the statement then just made by Ulbricht that 'Stalin had done a lot of harm to the Soviet Union'.

At length Rothstein replied: 'Yes, Ulbricht was reported as saying that, and you, being a Trotskyist, agree with him.'

The Reasoner pamphlet by Joseph Redman on the changes in the British Communist Party in 1929 and how they were made contains the probable reason why Rothstein was so bitter against Ulbricht. What a whiff from the Stalinist snake-pit!

### On workers' councils

A BOOK about workers' councils, incorporating the experiences of Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia in recent years, would be a useful contribution to the literature of the movement just now. I wonder if anybody is writing one?

Looking through a file of the Daily Worker recently I noticed a letter in the issue of September 28, 1936, from Pat Sloan:

'For the purposes of a book which I am writing on "Soviets", I want all the material I can get on Soviets outside Russia—dealing with Germany in 1918, the Hungarian and Bavarian Soviet Republics, the occupation of the factories in Italy in the autumn of 1920 and Saxony in 1923, and anything that has been published on Soviets in Cuba in 1933-34 and Asturias in 1934.'

This book appears never to have been completed.

Presumably developments in Spain made Sloan realize that to be keen on 'Soviets' was now 'anti-Soviet'—so instead he gave us, in May 1937, his book 'Soviet Democracy' in praise of the Stalin Constitution which had liquidated the last vestiges of the original Soviet system in Russia!

BRIAN PEARCE

## LETTERS

### INTERNATIONAL CLASS ACTION IS NEEDED

How welcome is The Newsletter's call for a National Anti-H-bomb Week. Many Labour Parties and trade unionists are engaged in local campaigns against the bomb and they can become disheartened if their call for a socialist policy to get rid of the bomb and the Tories is not taken up nationally.

The Labour Party to which I belong, Norwood, is itself waging a campaign against the rocket bases and the H-bomb. Our policy is as it was at Brighton—for a lead by the British Labour movement in unilaterally stopping tests and manufacture.

To this is now added our opposition to the establishment of bases anywhere in this country and support for the blacking of the bases.

The issue of the bomb and the bases is not a question of national salvation alone, but a question of action by the British working-class movement, linked with their comrades all over the world in the fight against the threat of war. A National Anti-H-Bomb Week, if it puts forward such a policy, can be a powerful weapon in our fight against the Tories.

London, S.E.27

Vivienne Mendelson

### ANTI-H-BOMB WEEK COULD BE DECISIVE

YOUR open letter, appearing in last week's issue, should be sent to all constituency Labour Parties and trade union branches in the country.

Reports from meetings in every town indicate the overwhelming support for a positive policy to meet the H-bomb menace. What is lacking is a decisive lead.

Demonstrations, poster parades and petitions are useful expressions of opinion, but they must be linked with direct measures of industrial action if the Tory Government is to be defeated in its war preparations.

A National Anti-H-Bomb Week, in which every form of protest would be brought into play, could be decisive in this struggle.

A week in which mass meetings were backed by strike actions could bring down the Tory Government and return a Labour administration under conditions in which it would be forced to take a positive lead on both the H-bomb and rocket bases.

Glasgow

Norman Tennant

### DORA SCARLETT'S BOOK ON HUNGARY

DORA SCARLETT, who worked for three years on Budapest radio and was in Budapest throughout the Revolution, has written a book on the uprising and the events which led up to it.

Though Dora Scarlett spoke Hungarian and has inside knowledge which makes her evidence especially valuable, she has been unable to find a publisher, since the market for books on Hungary was glutted by the time she had finished hers.

If she can obtain enough orders, she will have the book produced herself. Entitled 'Window on Hungary', it will make a 240-page volume, with map and index, costing 8s. 6d. in paper covers or 10s. in stiff covers.

Many readers will have heard Dora Scarlett lecture at socialist forums or elsewhere, or will have read the section she contributed to 'Hungary and the Communist Party', by Peter Fryer. They will undoubtedly find her book a valuable document.

Orders should go to Miss D. Scarlett, 41 Denman Drive North, London, N.W.11. It is important to order as quickly as possible, since Miss Scarlett has only a limited time in which to let the printers know whether it is worth-while to produce the book.

### FRIENDSHIP

'At the invitation of the Minister, members of the [British Hungarian Friendship] Society went to the Legation in Eaton Place, S.W.1, at the close of the meeting.

'There, they were entertained to an excellent buffet supper which included Hungarian goulash, salami and poppy seed pastry.

'Many toasts to lasting friendship between the British and Hungarian peoples were drunk in Tokaj and Balaton wines, spirits and other drinks.'

—(Report of British Hungarian Friendship Society's annual general meeting, Diplomatic Bulletin, February 15, 1958)