

YOKOHAMA DOCKERS SHOW THE WAY

'I agree with this pamphlet. But how can we be sure that workers in other countries will take similar action to us?'

These were the words of a Glasgow convener last March, when he read the Newsletter pamphlet 'Black the H-Bomb and the Rocket Bases!'

Last Sunday Japanese dockers at Yokohama refused to unload from the Akima Maru ten Oerlikon guided missiles bought from Switzerland for research.

Their action followed picketing by other workers and by members of organizations opposed

to nuclear weapons.

It shows how right were those members of the Labour Party who, at last year's Brighton conference, sponsored and supported the Norwood resolution, which called for the mobilization of the full force of the international working-class movement against nuclear weapons.

And it shows the urgent need to take the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament into British factories and pits, behind the slogan 'Black the Bomb'. For the British workers will respond as the Yokohama dockers responded.

THE NEWSLETTER

180 Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper

Vol. 2, No. 65

Sixpence

August 23, 1958

ONLY RANK-AND-FILE MOVEMENT CAN CHANGE T U C

By BRIAN BEHAN

(building trade militant, delegate from the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers to last year's TUC, and member of the Editorial Board of The Newsletter)

OVER a thousand delegates to the 90th Trades Union Congress will meet in Bournemouth next month with the supposed aim of discussing what policies the trade unions should pursue in the coming year on behalf of their members.

Great prominence will be given by the newspapers and television commentators covering the event to the 'clashes' between Left and Right, and many will feel—mistakenly, in my opinion—that the real interests of the working class are being carefully studied and plans laid for the workers' betterment.

Some Left-wing newspapers, not quite convinced that all is as it should be, from time to time appeal to the TUC to really co-ordinate trade union struggles for better conditions.

Others assure us that, come what may, the Left will do its best to reverse the decisions of the Right, and therefore the TUC should be watched carefully as a barometer of social change.

Would be mightiest arm

Of course the TUC is important. On paper at least, eight million trade unionists are represented there.

Given a policy that started from the assumption that the capitalist system is rotten and that the working class should combine its strength, not only to win immediate advances, but also to overthrow capitalism, then the TUC would indeed be the mightiest arm that Labour could devise.

However if any change is to be made in the TUC militants must state clearly:

WHAT the TUC is now;

WHY it takes action that is against the interests of the working class; and

WHAT we must do to change it.

The TUC is controlled by Right-wing reformism. Its leaders pursue a policy of stabilizing capitalism. It acts as the disorganizer of genuine working-class struggle.

In the 1957 report which the General Council presented to

(Continued overleaf)

VETERAN HAILS OUR CONFERENCE

THE rank-and-file conference called by The Newsletter can play a very important part in mobilizing the working class to resist the employers' offensive.' This is the personal view of Bert Aylward, national docks secretary of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers, about the conference to be held in London's Holborn Hall on November 16.

'The busmen were allowed to fight alone, which prevented them from achieving their original demands,' says Bro. Aylward. 'This must not happen again.'

'Such a conference as you intend holding can lay the basis for solidarity committees in the various industries, which can mobilize support for their fellow-workers in struggle. In this way we can defeat the whole strategy of the employers and their Government.'

A veteran of the trade union movement, Bro. Aylward was a delegate to the founding conference of the National Minority Movement and served on the London committee of the National Unemployed Workers' Movement.

In the 1945 national dock strike he was national organizer of the unofficial portworkers' committee that led the dispute.

'The Minority Movement,' he says, 'did a fine job, particularly in its early days. I hope that the Newsletter conference will help foster the same spirit of solidarity and militancy. I hope workers in all industries will give it their support.'

COMMENTARY

SPUR TO ACTION

OUR comrade Brian Behan's article on the Trades Union Congress was already in type when the General Council, in its report, provided new and arresting evidence of how it stabbed the London busmen in the back. In so far as the General Council did *anything* it 'had to be prodded forward step by step by Mr Cousins', as the Manchester Guardian puts it. But what it did do was in fact a cover for an act of betrayal worthy to rank beside the 1926 sell-out. Because it was not willing to challenge the Tory Government politically, the General Council refused to extend the strike. The plaintive question 'How soon is this strike going to be developed into something that somebody is going to take notice of?' will find a place in all future histories of the British working-class movement. Both he who asked it and they who answered it by turning their backs on the busmen's plight will be condemned.

So will all who foster illusions in leaders of this kind, including R. Palme Dutt, who in the June 1958 Labour Monthly praised 'the majority of reformist trade union leaders' as 'respectable, conscientious, serious, hard-working, responsible officials, genuinely trying to do their best, according to their lights, for their membership'. *Before* the betrayal Mr Dutt gives the Right-wing traitors his blessing. *After* the betrayal comes the Daily Telegraph's vote of thanks: 'Compliments are due to the good sense of Mr Yates and his colleagues.'

Against this unholy alliance of reformists, Stalinists and Tories, the warnings and alternative revolutionary policy of British Marxists are sounding with far too little force. We say frankly that we are incensed at the General Council's impudent report. Let it be a spur to action! Let all who read these lines explain its significance to their workmates and campaign for the success of the rank-and-file conference called by THE NEWSLETTER on November 16.

The day after the report was made public, officials of the Transport and General Workers' Union once more did their utmost to crush the busmen's militancy; and the dockers were offered a piddling 7s. 6d. These new developments flow inevitably from the stand taken by the General Council. Its sabotage of the busmen's fight put new heart into the employing class and its Government, gave them the green light for 'economy' cuts, sackings, attacks on workshop organization, wage awards that are no better than a slap in the face. On the dockers now devolves the responsibility of declaring that 7s. 6d. is just not good enough; that it compensates them neither for the rise in the cost of living nor for the drop in earnings in the past year; that the most militant and conscious section of the working class cannot be bought for three half-crowns.

There is still time to prevent the splitting and demoralization of the working class by the bosses and by Yates and Co. United, displaying militancy and solidarity, the workers can beat back the attacks and conquer new advances for themselves. To this end our conference will be dedicated. All who support this aim should set to work now to ensure that this gathering is a resounding success.

TUC (Continued from front page)

the members, thirty-eight pages were devoted to ways and means of increasing productivity.

This at a time when the shadow of the economic crisis, and the employers' preparations for an attack on the workers, were evident to all.

There was a small reference—a page or so—to the Government's economic policy.

Since then, in a year that has seen some of the sharpest conflicts between Capital and Labour, the TUC General Council not only did nothing to co-ordinate the activities of the unions concerned, but actively sabotaged the busmen's strike.

(This sabotage has been abundantly documented this week in the General Council's 1958 report.)

Sir Tom as prophet

Not only did they make no preparations whatever to meet the coming employers' attack, but on the contrary Sir Thomas Williamson, disguised as a prophet, had this to say of the coming year in his presidential address on September 2, 1957:

'There is a widespread feeling, partly fostered by the Press, that relations in industry are worse than they were, and that industrial peace is in jeopardy.

'Frankly I cannot accept this . . . [In 1956] industry as a whole did almost as good a job as ever in settling its problems peacefully.

'It need not be otherwise next year, nor in any following year provided all concerned honestly face their responsibilities in striving for the same aim of peace in industry.

'Peace in industry is not a political issue . . . As a movement we renounce any challenge to the sovereignty of Parliament. If we dislike a government . . . we resist the temptation to dislodge it by industrial action . . .

'What do I, as a trade union leader, expect from our people? I expect them to honour agreements and to use established machinery to make new ones . . .'

We cannot draw the conclusions that Brother Sir Tom was just a poor prophet. His and his colleagues' actions during the bus strike were quite consciously aimed at restoring 'peace in industry', even at the expense of the working class.

In recognition of this great work the Tory Press was moved to congratulate the General Council on its 'wise and statesmanlike approach' during the bus strike.

Nor have individual members of the General Council gone unrewarded for this great work in the shape of 'honours'.

Members are not consulted

So this year's Congress opens once more under a predominantly Right-wing leadership, with individual delegates drawn in the main from the unions' executives, with a sprinkling of rank and filers.

Influenced heavily by reformist ideas and methods of work, the executives make little or no attempt to consult their members on the type or content of the resolutions they place on the agenda.

They never consult the members as to whom the union's vote should be cast for in the elections to the General Council.

They never tell their members that the General Council at last year's TUC occupied one of Blackpool's biggest hotels, the Imperial, which cost each of them £2 10s. a day.

How many union members are aware that the executive members and lay delegates each receives in delgation fees and expenses between £30 and £40 for the week?

Surely, even allowing for hotel bills and so on, such an amount is not likely to be a spur to militancy? Is it not far more likely to produce a holiday atmosphere and help the pushing through of reformist policies?

I would venture to prophesy that when the smoke and fury of the sham debates are over the TUC will not take one single decision to co-ordinate the actions of the individual unions against unemployment and war.

Nor will they take any decision to throw all the weight of

the trade union movement behind the dockers if they are forced to strike for higher wages.

Of course resolutions will be passed opposing the Government, and calling for peace and higher wages. The social democrats are past masters at accepting declarations that lack one little thing—action to enforce them.

While watching the proceedings of the TUC working-class militants should be under no illusion—that there will be any change in the TUC until a strong rank-and-file movement is built in each union around a clear policy.

The starting point of such a movement can be the wages question in general, solidarity with the dockers in particular; resistance to redundancy by every means in our power, including strike action; cuts in leaders' salaries, expenses and delegation fees; and the fostering of confidence among the members that they alone can do the job.

This is what we must work for.

KRAFT WORKERS TAKE A STAND

800 STRIKERS SOLID FOR 100 PER CENT. TRADE UNIONISM

By John Connor

'EITHER you're out or we're out.' This was what workers in the stores department of Kraft Foods Ltd, Kirkby, near Liverpool, told the one remaining non-unionist.

This man's refusal to join the trade union sparked off a strike which spread through every department in the factory last week.

Said Councillor Fraser, chairman of the factory branch of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers:

'Three weeks ago the only non-unionist in the stores department agreed to join the union and accepted a membership form from a union official.

'But when he was approached later by the shop steward and then again by the branch secretary he refused to join.

On August 13 the workers in his department gave him an ultimatum.'

The shop steward, Bro. Floyd, told me: 'The issue at stake is 100 per cent. trade union membership. The union and the management have been discussing it for months, but the company will not accept.'

'The night shift is 100 per cent. organized,' said Bro. J. Penrose, who helped to recruit the night shift workers. 'Now we want to see every department the same.'

Last Friday a mass meeting of the 800 strikers—most of them are women—roared approval when they learned the strike had been made official. USDAW divisional organizer R. A. Barnett declared:

'It looks like being a scrap. Not one individual must pass the gates until the issue is resolved.'

On Monday the strikers unanimously passed a resolution declaring their united stand for 100 per cent. trade union membership and their determination to take every step to achieve this aim, and calling for 'the official support of the whole of the organized trade union movement on Merseyside to help us in our struggle by every possible means'.

'WORK-TO-RULE' PROPOSALS NOT STRONG ENOUGH, SAY LONDON BUSMEN

By Bob Potter*

REPLY of London Transport Executive to the busmen and the travelling public, following the strike, has been a widespread slashing of services.

From August 20, 530 central London buses and 60 trolley-buses are taken out of service. Twenty-two services are completely withdrawn Monday to Friday and 30 Sunday services have been withdrawn.

Sixty per cent. of central bus routes are affected.

Three garages—Clapham, Putney Bridge and Old Kent Road

*London bus conductor whose pamphlet 'London Busmen in Battle' has sold 3,500 copies in garages and depots.

The Week in Industry

BUSMEN. About 300 employed by Southend Corporation stopped work on Saturday in protest at 'unworkable' summer schedules. The strike will be repeated every Saturday until the Corporation revises the schedules.

MINERS. Men at the Ynisedwyn colliery in the Swansea valley stopped work over a pay dispute. The strike may be resumed.

SHEET METAL WORKERS. Strike of 200 at Mulliners' vehicle body works, Birmingham, ended.

TRAWLERSMEN. Sacking of a deck-hand trimmer led to strike that stopped Aberdeen trawlers leaving for the fishing grounds.

CAULKERS. Eighty at the Linthouse shipyard of Alex. Stephen and Sons, Glasgow, downed tools in protest at the months-long delay in dealing with their claim for revised piece rates.

BLAST-FURNACE WORKERS. Nearly 100 at Clay Cross Iron Foundries, Chesterfield, have been sacked with two weeks' notice. The firm is to close its furnace plant.

STEEL ERECTORS. At Stanton ironworks, near Ilkeston (Derbyshire) 150 workers downed tools because the Moxey Conveyor Company refused to re-

instate five men who had been sacked for refusing to work on wet girders 50 feet above ground.

STEELWORKERS. About 100 of the 2,000 at Colvilles' steelworks, Clydebridge (Lanarkshire) were paid off. Number of weekly shifts has been cut from 18 to 17.

FOUNDRYMEN. Union officials and the management of Argus Foundry, Glasgow, met to discuss reports of redundancy at the plant.

ENGINEERS. The Amalgamated Engineering Union and the National Union of General and Municipal Workers rejected as 'absolutely unacceptable' compensation terms offered to 500 men who will lose their jobs when the Blackness Engineering Works, Dundee, closes at the end of the month.

Already 300 men have received dismissal notices. All men with over five years' service are offered 30s. for each year as compensation.

* * *

Industrial Disputes Tribunal has given 1,600 silica brick workers 1½d. per hour (claim was for 3d.) . . . Typewriter mechanics are to get 5s. 6d. a week more, government messengers 6s. 6d. . . . The Government has agreed in principle to an increase for chief fire officers . . . National Health Service workers have been awarded a new grading structure by the Industrial Court.

National Union of Railwaymen is to consult the other two rail unions about the form of the proposed railway wages review.

—are to be closed before the end of the year and the 574 crews transferred to other garages.

It is expected that this latter step will lead to some redundancy among the inside staff of these garages.

London Transport expect to save £3,250,000 from these economies, which are only 20 per cent. of the total cuts planned.

Nothing for the staff

Simultaneously an increase in 'sub-standard' fares will bring in an extra £7,000 per week, which means that altogether London Transport expect to save £5,500,000 per year, even though they intend to apply for a general fares increase early next year.

Union delegates asked if some of this saving could be passed on to the staff, and were met with a definite 'No'.

Indeed, the LTE indicated that the average earnings of bus crews in the new year would be approximately the same as last year, if not 'a few coppers less'. This in spite of the recent 8s. 6d. award.

On August 1 a three-section delegate conference passed a resolution of 'no co-operation' with London Transport in the carrying out of this policy. This means that crews are recommended to:

- (1) Refuse to make up time when late.
- (2) Refuse to leave terminal points early or late to cover service gaps.
- (3) Take full scheduled meal relief.

(4) Refuse to be turned short to cover service gaps.

(5) Refuse to work unscheduled overtime.

(6) Refuse to do any other duty than that on the rota.

(7) Strictly adhere to standing passenger numbers and times.

(8) Not take buses into the garage if there are no relief crews.

General feeling among the busmen is that the proposals are not strong enough. I have not yet met a busman who believed that these 'work-to-rule' proposals, if carried out, will lead to a restoration of the cuts.

Good leadership is needed

Nothing short of partial or complete stoppages, as in Southend, would be an effective reply to the LTE.

It is true that the men are to a large extent frustrated after the seven weeks dispute, and it would need good leadership to bring them out again.

The advice of full-time official P. Prater against working to rule is the very reverse of good leadership.

It is an outrageous intervention, calculated only to confuse and split the members and hamper the work of building morale and militancy.

The appeal of the busmen for a public campaign by the London Labour Party and London Trades Council must be developed widely.

We'll Never Get Unity by 'Sinking our Differences'

By G. GALE

IN accusing The Newsletter of sectarianism (August 2, p. 198) Ron Florey raised an important question. He suggested that instead of there being a number of separate publications in the Labour movement—The Newsletter, Labour Review, Daily Worker, New Reasoner and so on, each with its own followers—they should all get together, sink their differences and produce a daily Tribune.

It is not sufficient to brush this aside as a 'hoary old argument . . . which [has] been answered again and again' (Michael Banda, August 9, p. 204).

Our movement is facing a dynamic new situation: an imminent industrial offensive and an explosive international situation overshadowed by the hydrogen-bomb. It is not surprising that people should be concerned about the disunity in Labour's ranks.

What kind of unity?

Nobody questions the need for unity. The question is what kind of unity is possible and what is the best way to get it.

Some people would apply to Tribune the same arguments as Ron Florey applies to The Newsletter. They would say that in the interests of Labour unity Tribune should cease publication and rally everyone behind the official publications of the Labour Party.

Ron Florey would not agree. I think he would argue that there are differences of principle within the Labour movement and that the Left wing has the right to publish a paper expressing its views.

But if the existence of Tribune is justified because it presents views which are not available elsewhere, then the existence of The Newsletter is justified on the same grounds.

It would be foolish to pretend that there are not serious differences within what is loosely termed the Left wing of the Labour movement. It is possible for us to work together despite these differences, but it is wrong to pretend that they do not exist.

For instance, many people opposed the intervention in the Middle East. We should all demonstrate together against it.

But, within that broad opposition, some are for summit talks to work out a mutually satisfactory solution among the great powers; others hold a pacifist position; others are for western dominance in the area, but by more peaceful means; others support the Arab struggle against imperialism and call for working-class action to stop intervention.

To back up his call for the sinking of differences, for broad unity, Ron Florey has to show how all these trends can be brought together without completely paralysing any effective action.

There is only one way to do that. And that is not by pretending there are no differences, but by recognizing them and bringing them into the open.

Each trend must accept the right of the others to their points of view. We can all march together—but with our own slogans and our own publications.

What else can we do? Since there is no blanket formula which would cover all the different positions, we can work together only by recognizing the rights of conflicting ideas.

The only alternative is to insist on all trends subordinating themselves to one. That is what splits the movement, because in practice it boils down to everyone's accepting the most Right-wing position.

If we gave up

The Right wing in the Labour Party wants unity—on the basis of no opposition to the Right wing.

The Stalinists want unity in the Communist Party—on the basis of no opposition to Stalinism.

We would have complete unity within the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament—if we gave up pressing for direct action by the working class.

Ron Florey left the Communist Party because he had differences of principle with Stalinism, which outweighed the call for unity.

He puts forward Left-wing ideas in the Labour Party; he does not shut up in the interests of unity. He fights in the

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament for linking up with the Labour and trade union movement and for industrial action.

He himself has shown that his argument does not stand the test of action.

Thrust to the front

He says in effect: 'We all want the same things, though we differ on how to get them, so why can't we come together?'

But it is possible to forget such differences only so long as the movement is quiet and academic. As soon as it is brought into action the differences on what to do—for example, direct action or moral persuasion?—are thrust to the front.

If we have not honestly brought these questions into the open, then the movement will be thrown into confusion at the most critical time.

If the brakes on a car are faulty, you can pretend there is nothing wrong as long as it is stationary. But if you set it going without a thorough, critical check-up the results will be disastrous.

The same applies to the Labour movement. We cannot overcome weaknesses by pretending they are not there.

Ideas are no good at all if we never try them out in action.

Should we keep silent?

Does Ron Florey think it is wrong for supporters of The Newsletter to carry banners calling for industrial action

against the H-bomb and the rocket bases?

Is it wrong to bring Labour Parties, union branches, youth sections and so forth into these marches, bearing their own banners for everyone to see who they are and what they stand for?

Was it wrong to produce a pamphlet, 'Black the H-Bomb and the Rocket Bases!', calling for industrial action—or should we have kept silent in unity with everyone else?

Was it wrong to produce a weekly Strike Bulletin, selling up to 20,000 copies per week, during the London bus strike? Nobody else did it. Should we have kept silent—or made the call alone?

Was it wrong to produce a broadsheet—'Hands Off the Arab Peoples!'—which sold thousands of copies throughout the Labour movement? Nobody else did it. Should we have kept silent—or made the call alone?

The Newsletter is of course prepared to work alongside people without insisting on full agreement.

We claim same right

It recognizes that people have differences, and respects their right to put forward their own views and to try to win people to those views.

But The Newsletter claims the same right itself. And it is right that it should.

For only by honestly facing facts can people who have disagreements work together. To pretend that things are not as they are is dishonest. And that is not the way to make progress.

EDUCATION

LABOUR PLAYS FOR SAFETY, AND IT COULD BE DISASTROUS FOR OUR CHILDREN

By Peter Cadogan

'LEARNING TO LIVE' recognizes that children are divided into A, B and C streams at the age of 8 or 9.

It fails to recognize that up and down the country certain primary schools have abolished streaming and are successfully combating the general practice.

Large classes tend to make streaming seem desirable. The practice is supported by teachers who would otherwise be

This is the last of five articles, designed to provide facts and arguments for Labour Party members and conference delegates, discussing the party's policy document on education, 'Learning to Live'. An introductory article appeared on June 8 (pp. 167-9), and articles in Peter Cadogan's series on July 5 (pp. 178-9), August 2 (pp. 195-6) and August 16 (pp. 208-9).

faced by what they would regard as an impossible range of ability in any one class—the backwards and the brilliants all put together.

To persuade teachers otherwise there must be a fundamental change in teaching conditions, of which the most important is the size of classes.

In some quarters it is held that large classes are more permissible in junior than in secondary schools. This is not the case. The 15-20 children limit to classes should apply to all schools.

Under the present system, with large classes, some 5 to 10 per cent. of children arrive in secondary schools without the necessary elementary grasp of the basic subjects. The whole of the rest of their education, and possibly the rest of their lives, is dogged by this failure.

We need an onslaught on backwardness, urgent research into its highly complex character and the training of teachers

as specialists to deal with it.

The objective of small (not just smaller) classes is part of the means of abolishing streaming, removing the stigma of failure and giving all an equal chance.

We should frankly admit that so long as we have different kinds of secondary schools, with more advantage to be gained from one than from another, then selection at eleven will be bound to continue no matter how much may be done to disguise it.

ELEVEN-PLUS EXAMINATION

The only honest answer to the problem therefore is to have all children going to the same kind of school (or to schools of really equal merit) at the age of eleven.

Then there will be no point in having an examination and it can be done away with. The long-term socialist objective can be no less than this and all short-term proposals should lead towards it.

COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS

A fully comprehensive school is one to which ALL children are admitted at the age of 11. It makes provision for all levels of ability and every course of instruction.

Comprehensive secondary education for all is endorsed by 'Learning to Live'. All sorts of excellent experiments in this direction are now being conducted throughout the country.

It has to be an experimental development because conditions vary so much throughout the country that it would be quite wrong to insist upon one particular blue print.

The sections on comprehensive education are the best parts of 'Learning to Live'. The success of existing comprehensive schools in London, Coventry, Anglesey and elsewhere has been an immense stimulus to socialist educational thinking.

In advocating comprehensive schools however it would be quite wrong for us to attack existing grammar schools. They are doing a first-class job and should be left alone, although there may be exceptional cases.

In London, children in certain areas who pass the eleven plus and who are therefore qualified to go to grammar schools can choose if they wish to go to comprehensive schools instead.

The quality of these schools is such that quite a number

do in fact make this choice. This is a good precedent for the whole country.

HEADMASTERS AND HEADMISTRESSES

The document ignores a prickly problem. No country in the world gives such extraordinary authority as we do to the Heads of schools. A bad Head does immense harm.

In practice he or she is appointed for a period of up to thirty years. The future of a school for a whole generation can be determined in an interview lasting a few minutes.

The process of appointment should be altogether more exacting. Experienced teachers and educationists, best able to examine a candidate for his professional qualifications, should play a much bigger part in the process of selection. This involves giving teachers full rights of election to local authorities.

But still more important is the question of inner-staff democracy. A good school is based on the ideas and convictions of staff as expressed at staff meetings.

A bad school is one in which the possibilities of staff meetings and staff consultation are not realized.

There are unfortunately too many schools in which the Head rules like a dictator, with tremendous damage to school morale and school work.

The answer must come from below, in particular from the teachers themselves. It can be greatly facilitated by intensive activity by the Labour Party, the National Association of Labour Teachers, the National Union of Teachers and other teachers' organizations.

ADULT EDUCATION

On this subject we are told that the Workers' Educational Association and the National Council of Labour Colleges are both held in 'high regard' by the Labour movement.

Is the Labour Party never going to examine the reasons for the gradual decline of these organizations?

Instead of being militant socialist educational bodies based on substantial working-class activity they have become dull, 'respectable' and thoroughly middle class in their ideas and in the character of much of their support.

Making a new start is not going to be easy. It requires above all a new interest in socialist theory in the Labour movement, and that can only come by means of the rediscovery of the scientific method.

This means a new development of Marxism freed from the deadly suffocating influence of the Stalin tradition.

A new approach to political and economic theory, to historical study, to internationalism, to problems facing us under capitalism, to ideas related to the conquest of socialist power and the building of socialism—this is the answer for the WEA and the NCLC.

TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC EDUCATION

When dealing with the problem of how best to lay the foundations of technical and scientific education in the schools, 'Learning to Live' simply asks a series of questions instead of giving the answers and then presents us with this classic piece of buck-passing:

'A Labour Minister of Education will promote enquiry into these questions; then, in the light of informed opinion, it [?] will take such action on them as Government can properly take' (p. 42).

This is incredible! At this point the drafting committee must have been in the depths of despair.

Teachers have been slogging away for years at this question, countless investigations have been made and the answer is quite clear. But we are nevertheless to set up yet another body of inquiry to make the same 'discovery' all over again!

Here it is: in the considered judgement of the great majority of people whose business it is to understand these things, the best basis for technical, scientific or any form of further education is a good general schooling up to the age of 16.

This rules out vocational training as such but permits a

measure of specialization between the ages of 14 and 16.

The only problem that arises is that of constantly reviewing and improving our understanding of what is meant by general education.

Now why can't the party say this and be done with it?

EDUCATION AND THE HOME

The place of the home needs to be much more clearly defined. Every teacher knows that problem children are the product of problem homes.

Therefore a political party should be very conscious of the fact that it can influence education profoundly by its policy in fields other than education.

Especially is this true in relation to housing. If secondary modern schools, for example, are to be transformed into real secondary schools it will mean systematic homework for every boy and girl.

Thus from the educational point of view the problem of domestic overcrowding has an urgency comparable to that of the building of schools and the training of teachers.

CONCLUSION

'Learning to Live' is not good enough. There are, in or near the Labour Party, a host of enthusiastic parents, teachers and educationists who from their knowledge and experience would be prepared to support a much more imaginative and far-reaching statement of policy.

There are others who are open to persuasion. But the practice of being non-controversial will inspire no one. Playing for safety by the minimum disturbance of things as they are is educationally and politically disastrous.

We have a tremendous opportunity to chart a new course for English education. If it is presented in a way that is both realistic and challenging the people of this country will endorse it.

But such a claim cannot be made for 'Learning to Live'. It must be drastically amended—better still, entirely rewritten—to match the temper of the times and present a truly socialist policy.

BOOKS

PETER WORSLEY COMES UNDER FIRE FROM A DIE-HARD SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGIST

By Cliff Slaughter

PETER WORSLEY'S book 'The Trumpet Shall Sound' (MacGibbon and Kee, 1957, 25s.), which aroused a great deal of interest in Left-wing circles, is the subject of a lengthy attack in the current issue of the British Journal of Sociology.

The attack is delivered by Dr Lucy Mair, Reader in Social Anthropology in the University of London.

In his book Worsley gave a social-historical explanation of a special type of religious cult which sprang up under colonial rule in the South Seas.

These 'Cargo cults', in which the believers act on the assumption that the oppression and inequality of imperialism will be replaced by the millennium, were shown to be a confused and elementary form of social revolt, eventually giving way to political movements and trade unions.

It was also made clear that similar movements occurred at comparable periods in the history of other civilizations, including our own.

Not allowed to land

Dr Mair is very upset by this kind of approach, and she warns that the ease with which the layman might read this book will give a misleading impression of British social anthropology.

Her main complaint seems to be that Worsley did not carry out an individual intensive field study of one of these

cults, by the yardstick of which he could have judged other evidence.

As she herself says, however, Worsley was prevented from landing at the place in New Guinea where he intended to carry out such a study, because of his Left-wing affiliations.

Dr Mair's article is of greater significance however. British social anthropology has for years been little more than a series of small-scale descriptive monographs about particular colonial peoples, a reflection of and a useful adjunct to the colonial administration, with its method of 'indirect rule'—

Will Capitalism Let Us Achieve Socialism Peacefully?

By HARRY FINCH

LAST week we showed that to allow society to move forward the social ownership of all the means of production is essential.

How can the working class achieve this? Can the full take-over be achieved peacefully? This has been the main point of controversy among socialists over the last hundred years.

The title of this article is deliberate. For everyone would like to see industry taken over peacefully and smoothly; but we do not live in a peaceful society, nor in a society which develops smoothly.

Exploiters always use violence

We should like to take industry over peacefully. But will the giant monopolies and banks let us?

The whole history of human society, where new classes appeared and overthrew the old ruling classes, provides no example of any ruling class giving up its power without using violence against the rising class.

The capitalist class itself came to power only after the most stormy and convulsive revolutions.

In Britain Cromwell led an army against the absolute monarchy, and this gave the rising capitalist class the freedom to develop its new social system.

America had to declare a war of independence against Britain for capitalism to flourish there, and later had to crush the slave society in the South.

The French capitalists would like to forget the French Revolution, the Napoleonic campaigns and so on.

In its death agony

Today it is the capitalist system which is in its death agony and which is prepared to maintain itself by the use of terrible violence—against the colonial peoples, for example.

Would the capitalists use violence against their 'own' peoples? Why not? Have the Tories and capitalists ever shown any mercy here when their privileges and power have been seriously challenged?

The Chartist struggle . . . miners shot down at Tonypany . . . the army prepared for civil war in the 1926 General Strike: was not violence inflicted on our workers? Have we forgotten how our unemployed were batoned by police before the second world war?

In 1956, in the Midlands, mounted police ran their horses through mass pickets to scatter them away from the BMC gates.

And only a few months ago police kicked and beat seated crowds in an anti-H-bomb demonstration in London.



THE Tories and many Right-wing leaders tell us that the State is above classes. But the Tory Government has exploded this myth.

It quite openly steps into every industrial struggle on the side of the employers.

It tells them to resist wage claims. It tells arbitration

which means keeping the 'natives' in their place with the help of the traditional authorities and customs.

There was no place in such a discipline for historical interpretations or for anything which smacked of opposition or lack of harmony.

Worsley, already well known as a writer and speaker on behalf of the Movement for Colonial Freedom, has aimed the first blow at this conservative servitude in anthropology, and this is why he receives such 'unacademic' treatment.

boards not to 'give in', or even, as with the health workers, refuses to accept an award.

How will Labour fare when it takes office? The present leaders do not pretend that they intend to bring socialism in when next they form a government.

From the old theory of 'socialism coming gradually' taught by the Fabians, these leaders have arrived at its end product—shares in capitalism!

We badly need to step up the struggle to get a full, socialist programme for Labour.



THERE are those who maintain that, given a strong enough Labour government, it can introduce socialism peacefully by using the present State machine. This is the view of the Communist Party leaders.

What is the State? Is it just Parliament?

No, it includes the **ARMED FORCES**. The Army, Navy and Air Force are run by capitalist generals, admirals and air marshals. Will these gentry just sit back and allow their class to be dispossessed?

In Spain twenty years ago, where a government introduced a few reforms under mass pressure—not socialism!—the generals raised an army revolt and finally imposed a brutal fascist dictatorship.

The **POLICE** and the **LAW COURTS**, with ruling-class judges administering laws essentially designed to maintain capitalism, would be used to stop Labour bringing in real socialism.

The **MONARCHY** and the **CHURCH** would be used as rallying grounds for the privileged classes. The capitalist **PRESS** would fling its weight against any socialist measures.

And, as in Germany and Italy before the second world war, the capitalist class, once it saw a real struggle unfolding against it, would not hesitate to finance extra gangs like Mosley's fascist thugs.

Would arm the workers

Thus if Labour really intended to bring in socialism it would have to use other institutions than the present State institutions.

It would have to abolish the House of Lords.

It would have to mobilize the soldiers to refuse to obey their officers, even to arrest them.

It would have to disband the police and create a workers' police force.

It would have to disarm the capitalists.

To do all this it would have to arm the workers, and bring the workers' own factory committees and councils into the running of the economy, so preventing sabotage by the dispossessed owners.

These committees and councils would be linked up nationally. In other words a new State, a workers' State, would

(Continued overleaf)

have to be created if socialism were to succeed and if the resistance of the capitalists were to be overcome.

⊙

RIGHT-WING Labour leaders and the present leaders of the Communist Party tell the workers that they can achieve socialism without their own organs of struggle and of power—factory and strike committees, workers' councils etc.—playing the leading part.

They thereby lull the workers and help the capitalists prepare their violence against socialism.

To achieve socialism we must be ready for capitalism in its death throes to be very violent indeed. If we are prepared we are forearmed.

From the lessons history teaches, many socialists believe that the workers are most likely to take power as a result of big mass struggles that reach the point of challenging the whole capitalist State.

Workers' councils would be thrown up, link themselves nationally and become the new governing body.

This workers' State would decree the take-over of all the basic industries, disarm the capitalists and their agents and proceed to the construction of socialism.

Germ of a workers' State

In 1926 the germs of such a State were here in Britain. Local councils of action controlled all food passing through many of our cities. They were running part of the economy.

Unfortunately the trade union leaders did not want to go ahead and remove capitalism. They sold out.

Our task today is to build a leadership that will go all the way; a leadership that will not shirk the final challenge to capitalism; a leadership that will put before the workers at each stage of their struggles the ultimate aim of taking power.

LETTERS

CRISIS MUST NOT BE OVER-SIMPLIFIED

IN Harry Finch's interesting article 'Why You Should Be a Socialist' I was surprised to find the following sentence:

'Eventually more goods are produced than can be sold, for the workers of the world are never paid enough to buy back the total amount of goods they produce.'

This statement does not correspond to the Marxist explanation of slumps.

First of all, the workers would have no wish to 'buy back' the majority of the goods they produce, for a large part of these take the form of producer goods: pig iron, machine tools, railway engines.

Secondly, the producers have never consumed the whole product of their labour, and will certainly not do so under socialism, for otherwise production could not expand.

The basic contradiction of capitalism, as Harry Finch himself points out, lies in the fact that the social surplus is privately owned and controlled.

Spreads to world economy

This surplus is allocated in the interests of expanding the profits of individual firms.

The anarchic, unplanned expansion of the economy takes place at the same time as the consuming power of the wage-earners is kept down.

Since production is socially tied together, the resulting collision between the expanded means of production and the limited market spreads from one or two sectors to the entire world economy.

Harry Finch's over-simplification—no doubt due to the need for brevity—is a common one in the Labour movement, but

it can lead to many false political conclusions.

I look forward to the remaining instalments of this series, which is very timely.

Wembley (Mx)

Cyril Smith

PROSTITUTION: WE MUST BE NEITHER CONFUSED NOR SELF-RIGHTEOUS

K. LIPSCHITZ, who last week criticized attacks on Communist Party Councillor Borman's 'anti-vice campaign', typifies the kind of confused thinking about prostitution which has no place in the Labour movement.

Obviously no socialist would wish his children to be exposed to any of the sordid sights that capitalist society produces. But persecution of the human victims is no answer.

As for Lipschitz's reference to the French Communist Party, the latter supported many questionable measures when it was in the French Government after the war; closing the licensed brothels has not ended prostitution in France.

A call for administrative measures without prior social ones reads strangely from the pen of anyone professing socialist convictions.

Hounded from 'better' districts

At present we have few beggars in Britain. But in fascist countries like Spain and Portugal, where begging abounds, the authorities protect tourists and the children of the well-to-do from 'poisonous' sights. They viciously hound beggars out of the 'better' districts.

This does not stop begging or end the misery from which it springs.

There is no immediate solution to the problem of prostitution. Only the overthrow of class society can begin the process of putting an end to it.

To place the question in any other terms is to obscure the real nature of a system which deprives men and women of their human dignity in every sphere. This is the primary reason why obscurantists like Councillor Borman must be combated.

No less important, however, is the relation of this question to the entire problem of women's position in class society.

Saturated with self-righteousness

Stalinism poses as the defender of economic, social and political equality for women. But it is a valid question whether the inferiority of women has really been overcome in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe, whatever the constitutions of these countries may stipulate.

Certainly Councillor Borman's attitude is saturated with the self-righteousness of male supremacism.

As for the individual problem of parents, in Stepney or elsewhere, they must simply face facts.

Children in capitalist society are exposed to a myriad of evils from the moment they draw breath: atomic radiation, poverty, malnutrition, bad education, the stunting of their personalities by a commercialized civilization, the thousand and one prejudices and superstitions they absorb on every side.

What parents can do instead of supporting cul-de-sac administrative measures is to join the fight for socialism, and try to give their children an understanding of this fight.

London, N.W.6

P. McGowan

CONSTANT READER

Brian Pearce is on holiday. The 'Constant Reader' column will be resumed next week.

Printed by Plough Press Ltd. (T.U.), r.o. 180 Clapham High St., London.
Published by The Newsletter, 180 Clapham High St., London, SW4.