

A Coal Board? Yes But of Workers' Representatives

The activities of the National Coal Board in the mining industry relating in particular to the recent strike struggles in South Yorkshire, Lanarkshire and Ayrshire, have embittered the miners.

The "Economist" of September 20th sums the question up clearly: "The first difficulty... arises from a misconception by the rank and file of the miners or at least by a substantial number of them—of what nationalisation meant. To them nationalisation signified handing over of the mines to the miners, not to a remote London-bound board; it meant giving the management of the mines to the men—or at the very least to their direct representatives. INSTEAD, CONTROL FOR ALL DAY-TO-DAY PURPOSES APPEARS TO THE WORKING MINER TO BE VIRTUALLY UNCHANGED."

The problem is not one of de-centralisation, making for increased flexibility on the part of local Coal Board officials. What determines the attitude of the Coal Board is not its administrative form, but the class character of the control that it exercises. The local officials are produced from the same mould as the national body: they have the same attitude towards the miners. Major-General Sir Noel Holmes, of the North East Regional Board, who declared that the Grimethorpe miners did not "do a fair day's work", has no more in common with the miners than has Lord Hyndley, ex-Director of Powell Duffryn's.

The real policy dictating the nationalisation of the mines was clearly indicated by Shinwell at the beginning of last year when he stated: "Nationalisation is not intended primarily to benefit the miner. There is the coal consumer to be considered, the interests of the nation, our export trade and all that."

When Shinwell spoke about the "coal consumer," he did not mean the worker-consumer; he meant the big industrial consumers who sit on the Consumers' Council and who have a directing influence upon the administration of the mines. Emphasising this, Shinwell went on to say: "We have to cheapen the cost of production because this industry ministers to the needs of the basic elements of production."

Morrison assured Parliament that the nationalised industries will be run on strictly orthodox "business" principles exactly like the individually owned industries directly controlled by the capitalists. A policy in which the State operates for all the capitalists collectively, instead of individual control of the industry. In such a set-up there is not the vestige of control by the workers.

Until now, the miners have placed great hopes in the promises of the Labour Government. This tendency has been strengthened by the reforms that the Government has granted during the past two years in order to attract labour to the industry and under the pressure of the miners. The miners are even prepared to excuse the Labour Government for the misdeeds of the N.C.B. But Shinwell will not be able to avoid giving an answer to the fact that the Government appointed the present N.C.B. officials.

The excuse that they had no alternative because the workers have no technical experience cuts no ice. Control of the policy has nothing to do with working out technical improvements for technical equipment, sinking new shafts, etc. If technicians are needed, as they are, they will be drawn onto the committees by whoever controls the industry. While the ex-owners controlled the mines, very successfully from their own point of view—it is not an exaggeration to say that probably the bulk of the shareholders had never seen a pit-head, and had not the most elementary knowledge of the workings of a mine. They employed the technicians. But they, the shareholders, reaped the benefits from the industry. Control is a class question. Whichever class controls the policy of the industry, determines in whose interests the industry shall be operated. The class interests of Lord Hyndley are opposed to the class interests of the miners. That is the crux of the conflict between the miners and the N.C.B.

The problem is not that the weight of responsibility should be shifted and differently distributed among various departments of the N.C.B., but that the whole present administration should be cleared out, lock, stock and barrel. The present Pit Consultative Committees are merely an appendage of this capitalist control. It is the N.C.B. which fashions the policy for the industry. The Consultative Committees are merely advisory bodies, which have the task of assisting the efficient carrying through of the Coal Board's plans.

The Coal Board should consist of delegates elected from each mining area together with appointed representatives of the Government. The Centralised National Coal Board would rest on and be supported by Committees directly elected by the miners, controlling every aspect of the running of the pits—from the purchase of supplies to the price fixing and marketing of the coal. The pits and areas would be directly linked through a network of committees; the technicians, mining engineers and specialists, who are indispensable to scientific and planned Socialist production, would be represented on these Committees and their abilities fully utilised and skill given full expression.

Together with representatives from other industries elected by the workers, the production and distribution of coal would be planned in the interests of the miners and the working class. This form of organisation would be a real step in the direction of Socialist nationalisation. It is the form of organisation the workers must fight to enforce upon the Government in opposition to the bureaucratic State-Capitalist National Coal Board.



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Subsidy Cuts Will Mean ATTACKS ON WORKERS' LIVING STANDARDS

BY G. NOZEDA

PLANS TO SLASH DRASTICALLY OR ABOLISH THE PRESENT FOOD SUBSIDIES ARE NOW BEING PREPARED BY THE GOVERNMENT. BY SLASHING AT THE FOOD SUBSIDIES, THE GOVERNMENT DEALS A BLOW TO THE WORKERS WHO WILL SUFFER THE MAIN BURDEN OF INEVITABLE RISES IN FOOD PRICES.

This threat to the living standards of the workers is receiving the wholehearted support of the Tories and capitalist press, who have long campaigned for an end to the subsidies.

Total subsidies paid out by the Government amount to £425,000,000, of which £392,000,000 goes for food. It is this which has kept the present cost of basic rations within the reach of the workers. The removal of the subsidies, on the basis of the existing rations would mean that the approximate cost of each person's ration would increase by 2s. 3d. each week, which, for an average working class family of four, means a reduced income of almost 10/- per week.

Some idea of the extent to which food costs would rise is indicated in the following comparison of present prices and as they would be, at the minimum, without the present subsidy. Butter now 1/4d. a lb. would cost 2/3d.; Margarine, now 0d. would increase to 1/1d. a lb.; Bacon, now 1/10d. a lb. would be 2/4d.; 7 lb. of flour, which now costs 1/5d. would rise to 2/5d.; Sugar, 3d. a lb. to 7d.; Cheese, now 10d. a lb. would cost 1/6d.; and shell eggs, now 1/9d. a dozen when available, would rise to 3/8d. Similarly, other food prices would increase.

It is not the wealthy who will be affected by the food subsidy cuts. They have no need to fear high prices.

Profits Left Free

The Labour leaders claim that it is necessary to restrict the spending power in Britain to prevent further inflation. Apparently, it is only the "spending power" of the working class that the Labour Government finds it necessary to restrict. For while the enormous profits now being

accumulated by the capitalists, are left free, the burdens are passed onto the worker, who are discouraged by the Labour Government from asking for more wages to meet the increased cost of living. The danger of inflation does not come from the restricted buying power of the workers, but from inflated profits of the employers.

Today, the average weekly wage for all workers in Britain is about £5 1s. 0d.; while this average includes workers who get a bit more than £5 1s. 0d., it also includes a great number who receive even less than £5 per week.

The workers' share of the National Income in the period between 1938 and 1946, fell from 59.3% to 36.8%, while correspondingly, the share taken by the capitalists in the form of rent, interest and profits, rose from 40.7% to 43.2%.

In the just year, profits of capitalist enterprises in Britain have continued to increase. ("Economist", September 19th, 1947.)

(Continued on page 4.)

CHASE THE FASCISTS OFF THE STREETS

For a United Front of
All Workers Organisations

BY T. REILLY

Indignation at the spread of fascist propaganda in many parts of Britain by the Mosley thugs, is rousing sections of the working class into action.

From Trades Councils and Trade Union branches have gone forth motions demanding the banning of anti-semitic propaganda and fascist organisations. The T.U.C. and the National Council of Labour have paid lip-service to this pressure from the rank and file. In a few weeks' time, the London Labour Party will discuss this problem.

To the shame of the Labour movement, not only does the Labour Government allow the fascists police protection against the workers, but it approves of the best anti-fascist fighters being slung into prison for the "crime" of shouting "DOWN WITH FASCISM!" Fascist thugs are usually let off scot free.

Regular Scene at Ridley Road



What is the crying need of the hour? For the leaders of the Labour movement to drop their puerile attitude of toleration of the fascist activity, and to organise the workers to smash all efforts of the fascists to regroup their scattered forces, and drive them completely off the streets.

The slogan "BAN THE FASCISTS" can only mean something to the fascists if solidly backed up by organised action on the part of the members of the political and industrial workers' movement.

True, the fascist movement does not present an immediate danger to the working class. But it must be clearly understood that in the days to come of capitalist crisis, this insidious body will grow. In his book "Fascism and Big Business", Daniel Guerin describes the fatal policies pursued by the German and Italian Labour and Trade Union leaders towards the rise of fascism in their countries. An analysis that can equally apply to the Labour leaders of this country. "Let us be careful not to reply to fascist violence", the reformist leaders said in Italy and Germany. "We only arouse 'public opinion' against us." Above all, let us avoid forming combat groups and semi-military bodies, for we should risk antagonising the public authorities, who we are confident, will dissolve the semi-military groups of fascism."

It is impossible to expect the leaders of Transport House to learn the lessons of history and avoid the sell-out enacted by their colleagues in Italy and Germany.

Most militant workers are bewildered at the latest turn of events by the desertion of the Communist Party leadership of the anti-fascist struggle. When the mood of the militant workers reached its highest pitch, the C.P. leadership packed its bag and left the struggle, going over to the camp of the legal merchants in the Liberal and Labour movement. With disgust, Communist Party members have had to listen to a directive from the Party platform instructing them not to participate in an active capacity against the fascists. At Ridley Road, London, for three consecutive Sundays, the fascists have been allowed to take the pitch with all the paraphernalia of an army loud speaker lorry, without organised opposition from the Stalinist leaders.

No wonder the fascist thugs, thickly ringed round with police, cry out each Sunday that they have won the "Battle of Ridley Road."

UNITED FRONT PLATFORM AT RIDLEY ROAD

It was left to Common Wealth last Sunday to take over the platform—a task that should have been undertaken by the mass organisations of the organised workers' movement. Trotskyist speakers—Comrades T. Reilly and J. Haston—put our point of view from the united anti-fascist platform offered by Common Wealth. Our policy for a united front and the formation of workers' defence guards got a great reception from the crowd which at one stage reached 2,000.

There was not one voice of opposition from the anti-fascists. A young N.C.L.P. took the platform and fully supported workers' united action on this issue, realising clearly that he was speaking against the party line.

By participating at Ridley Road and other areas where the fascists are active and fighting side by side with rank and file members of the Communist Party and other anti-fascists, our comrades are gaining increasing support for the demand for a united workers' front against fascism. Our leaflet calling upon the workers to smash fascism has received an excellent reception from militants.

Trotskyist Victory in Ceylon Election

BY CARL DUNCAN

The first elections in Ceylon since the end of the war have shown an unprecedented growth of Trotskyism on the island. The Lanka Sama Samaj Party, Ceylon Unit of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India (Official Section of the Fourth International), has returned five candidates. Among them is Comrade R. de Silva, former General Secretary of the Party.

Ten representatives were returned from the dissident Sama Samajists. The largest organised parliamentary opposition will be the Trotskyists.

In the face of the counter reform of the Soulbury Constitution and the promises of Dominion status from the British Labour Government which have been servilely accepted by the local capitalists, the masses, by their vote for the Trotskyists have demonstrated that the demands for complete independence and a Workers' and Peasants' Government are gathering tremendous strength.

15 Trotskyists Elected

Out of 95 members in the Lower House, the native capitalist United National Party—the ruling Party—obtained 42 seats and has formed the Government.

The largest organised parliamentary opposition will be the Trotskyist organisations who have returned 15 representatives. The Stalinists have gained only 3 seats.

Some indication of the mass swing to the left can be seen in the fact that our comrade who opposed D. S. Senanayake, the "Churchill" of Ceylon, in his own constituency (which he has held uncontested for 20 years) polled 10,773 votes against 26,700. This was a great achievement against terrific odds. The polling dates, the sites of the polling stations had been arranged to suit Senanayake. Even the Elections Order in Council was amended on the eve of the poll to allow the use of 1,200 motor cars to convey his voters. Practically every village headman acted openly as an Election Agent and in the areas surrounding Senanayake's manor, the pressure on the voters was so great that all support for the L.S.S.P. (Ceylon Unit of the Bolshevik Leninist Party of India, Section of the Fourth International) had to be underground. In these areas the

register was polled through automatically and there were large-scale impersonations.

Senanayake's experience was not an isolated one. Another Minister lost his seat to Comrade Robert Gunawardene of the dissident Lanka Sama Samajists, and yet another scraped in by only 200 votes. The election of our comrades reflects a thoroughgoing turn to Trotskyism in the island which was reflected in every constituency which we contested.

Revolutionary Tradition

This resounding victory reflects the outstanding history of struggle in the trade union and political fields by our party in Ceylon. Evolving in the immediate pre-war period from the old Lanka Sama Samaj, the party was subjected on the outbreak of war to a vicious repression which placed most of the leading members in jail, drove the others underground and made the party illegal right up to the end of the war. Four of the imprisoned comrades escaped from jail and with others of the Ceylon Unit, participated in the building of the Bolshevik Leninist Party on the Indian Mainland.

Throughout the war clandestine activity was continued in spite of the repression. During this period our tendency held its ground despite the tremendous advantages enjoyed by the Stalinists who were allowed full freedom of action from

the moment they began to support the "people's war."

Militant Role in Strikes

Since the war, the masses of Ceylon have carried through a series of strikes under Trotskyist leadership. The resolute and uncompromising character of the Ceylon Trotskyists was clearly shown during the militant upsurge of the working class which culminated in the General Strike of October 1946. The Governor showed the hatred and fear of the Imperialists and their native capitalist lackeys in attempting to break the strike by arresting the leadership.

The response of the workers to this arbitrary act was to refuse to negotiate for the ending of the strike without the attendance of their leaders, and the Governor was forced to release them for this purpose. These elections show that far from having declined under the blows of the ruling class, the Ceylon Trotskyists are moving from strength to strength.

It is unfortunate that the elections should have been preceded by a split in the Lanka Sama Samaj (Ceylon Unit of the B.L.P.I.) which took place some months ago. We are confident, however, that the Trotskyist deputies (10 from the dissident organisations and 5 from the official section) will utilise the House as a forum for revolutionary propaganda and as a means to raising the ear of still wider sections of the masses. The L.S.S.P. (Ceylon Unit of the B.L.P.I.) will, where practicable, carry out United Front policies with the dissident L.S.S.P. and with the other Left-wing Parties. The workers and peasants of Ceylon have given an unmistakable vote for the revolutionary struggle against Imperialism and Capitalism. Forward to the Workers' and Peasants' Government. For the conditional freedom for the Colonies.

Grimethorpe

The Fact Finding Commission set up to investigate the matter of the "stint" at Grimethorpe has issued its report. While claiming that the strike was not justified, the Report states that the addition of the two feet to the stint was made without proper investigation, and that the objection of the men who said it was physically impossible to fill the additional two feet, was justified. This, according to a "Daily Express" report by Trevor Evans. Later reports indicate that the miners may be asked to work an extra one foot. But even in this event it demonstrates that the miners action was fully justified, and the Coal Board has been compelled to climb down.

This is a complete vindication of the miners and an absolute justification of the strike. It refutes and exposes the arguments of all who urged the miners to work the extra feet during the negotiations. Experience teaches that had the miners listened to this advice and overtaken themselves for a few weeks during the investigations, the Fact Finding Commission would have decided against them and they would have been expected to continue and carry the additional burden from then on.

The lesson of this experience is clear. While any section of the workers objects to an addition being made to their working day or task the status quo must operate during negotiations.

WORKERS! LEARN THE LESSON OF GRIMETHORPE!

Behind the Lanarkshire Miners Strike

BY DOUG GARBUTT

Within a day of the return to work of the Grimethorpe miners, oncost workers at Priory Colliery, Blantyre, Lanarkshire, came out on a strike which spread throughout Lanarkshire, Shropshire, Ayrshire, and Shotts coalfields, affecting 48 pits and involving 16,000 men. At least 35,000 tons of coal were lost.

The oncost workers work underground, operating the haulage machines and effecting the repairs. They earn a minimum of £5, but after deductions, this means approximately £4 5s. Like all underground workers their minimum is subject to the "Penalty Clause" of the five day week agreement. Should they miss a shift, for any reason, they lose pay for two shifts. Discontent at the low rates of pay and the "Penalty Clause" has been growing since the introduction of the five day week. The oncost workers who call themselves the "Cinderellas of the Industry" claim to be the only section of the workers who have not received any increase since Nationalisation.

The strike was precipitated by the increase of 5/- per shift awarded to the overmen and firemen, after they had threatened to strike. Many of the strikers stated that "the strike threat of the overmen and firemen in England got results whilst our claims are still unsettled." Their demand was for an increase in line with that awarded to the overmen and firemen. The attitude of the strikers can be gauged by the resolution which was adopted by the men on their return to work at Priory, Blantyre. "We wish to make our position clear that in taking strike action we did so reluctantly and only for the purpose of showing the urgency of our claim. . . . We wish to state our loyalty to the Labour Government and to the N.U.M. It is our intention to return to work tomorrow pledging ourselves to our utmost to achieve the target set for us by the N.C.B."

This statement contrasts with the wild accusations made by the N.C.B. and N.U.M. against the men during the strike. The Scottish Divisional Coal Board had predicted at the start of the strike that "failure to resume work immediately would end in disaster." The Executive of the Scottish area N.U.M. had cried "Our enemies will gloat over the fact that un-

official stoppages are taking place as they want nationalisation to fail." Whilst it is true that the loss of coal by the strike is serious and that the Tories will use the strike as a means of discrediting the Labour Government (their argument is that they would soon show the miners what's what) among the middle class, it does not alter the fact that the responsibility for the strike rests not with the oncost workers who have waited patiently for months for a settlement of their demands, but with precisely these bureaucrats of the N.U.M. and capitalists of the N.C.B. They are prepared to slander and vilify the workers whose support they claim as soon as they show signs of taking independent class action to secure a settlement of their grievances. But they neglect to rectify the workers' legitimate grievances till the workers force them to do so.

Pearson, the secretary of the Scottish Area N.U.M. went so far as to state in justification of his opposition to the strike that this was "a national, not a Scottish question. . . . This is not a time for hasty decisions but (a time) for the miners to realise that they can go forward on a national basis." It is true that one of the lessons of the Grimethorpe strike and of the Blantyre strike is that the miners must go forward on a national basis. But not in the sense in which Pearson means. Not to the interminable negotiations and unbearable delays of the Arbitration machinery which provides the means whereby the N.C.B. is able with the co-operation of the bureaucrats of the N.U.M. to resist the demands of the miners.

The miners must set up national committees, elected directly by the rank and file in every county to exert pressure on the national leadership and the Coal Board. They must demand the granting of a Minimum of the Wages Demands of the Miners. The On Cost workers, with the full support of their mates, should press for the immediate granting of their modest claims unconditionally.

PARTY ACTIVITY

BY T. REILLY

Our comrades in South Wales have given the lead by the way they have put the Congress decisions into effect. At an Aggregate meeting it was decided to improve party work all round. Since then, sales of the "Socialist Appeal" have gone up in Neath by 150. The miners' special supplement on Grimethorpe has sold well. In one little village, untouched before, 35 copies were sold and the miners were very friendly to our programme. Two educational lectures were given in Swansea by F. Lee. A hold plan of increased future activity has been planned.

Liverpool. Our comrades increased their "Socialist Appeal" sales during the Edge Hill by-election by 60.

Newcastle. Comrades active in holding open-air meetings in Newcastle and surrounding areas. Anti-semitism exposed and our special supplement sold. Sales of "Socialist Appeal" around 850 each issue.

London Anti-Fascist Campaign. Meeting with a sympathetic response. 20,000 - Smash the Fascists - leaflets being distributed at public meetings and pasted on walls. North London comrades whitewashed the Hackney area with our slogans in preparation for a Town's Meeting against the fascists. Other branches are following suit. At the "Prince of Wales", Paddington, our comrades continue to hold their weekly meetings in opposition to the fascists. An offer was made to the Secretary

of the local C.P. to share our platform when the fascists took their pitch, but he turned it down, preferring to go squealing to the police.

Hford. The branch took the pitch from the fascists and prevented them from holding meetings. C.P.ers and Y.C.L.ers have congratulated us, as the pitch was formerly held by the C.P. but taken from them by the fascists.

Kilburn. Comrades have taken part in opposing the fascists at a local meeting.

Hyde Park. Our weekly meetings receive a good reception.

The Social held for Ajit Roy was a huge success. £25 was collected for Comrade Roy as a gift from the Party to assist in paying his fare to India.

Liverpool. Our comrades are undertaking sales of "S.A." at the Greshford Colliery. Despite opposition from the management who will not allow them to meet the men in the compound, 36 papers were sold. Dock sales are regularly held. 1,000 copies of our anti-Fascist leaflet are being distributed.

Yorkshire. Since the Grimethorpe strike the reception to our paper continues to be excellent. About 800 copies of the last issue of "S.A." were sold in the coalfields. Our sellers were welcomed in the miners' clubs, pubs and at door-to-door canvasses, and pit-heads.

SEPTEMBER FUND

Comrades!—Double Your Contributions for October!

FIGHTING FUND	
SEPTEMBER, 1947.	
West London	5 8
Anonymous, Bristol	1 0 0
Hampstead	1 13 7
Charlie White	2 0 0
Croydon	17 6
Birmingham	18 9
Thames Valley	1 6 8
Hford	1 7 0
F.J.	3 0 0
Liverpool	3 5
Manchester	2 2 0
M.L.	2 0 0
Leeds	3 6

J.O.A.	1 9 6
per H.A.	50 0 0
Exeter, per R.S.	5 0
T.N., Glasgow	7 6
Amn.	2 6
G.L. (U.W. Co.)	10 0
East London	1 14 11
Southall	2 6
J.G.	2 0 0
Newcastle	7 8
"Beer Bottles"	9 0
Hampstead	1 12 0
South Wales	5 6
R.B., Gravesend	5 0
R.J., G.C.G.	10 0
B.D., Manchester	5 0
Glasgow	4 9 6
Total	£76 19 2

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

HOW TO DEFEND THE N.U.M.

"An Injury to One is an Injury to All"

BY ROY TEARSE

The most dangerous feature of the situation in the mining industry is the manner in which the leaders of the National Union of Mineworkers have allied themselves with Lord Hyndley and the Coal Board instead of defending the interests of the men against their attacks.

The Yorkshire strike had no sooner finished than Horner whitewashed the Coal Board in a speech at Workop on September 15th. He said: "Of course, there are faults on the National Coal Board. But this I will say: That we have secured greater reforms in nine months from the N.C.B. than in 90 years under private ownership."



ROY TEARSE

Horner forgets to mention that whatever concessions have been obtained have not been due to magnanimity on the part of the Coal Board. They have been made only because of the pressure of the men, and a recognition by the Coal Board that it would be compelled to grant certain reforms before it could effectively begin to operate its policy.

Horner's evolution is not difficult to understand. It is much more comfortable to live on a fat wage, provided by the shillings of the miners, and to castigate those very same miners to press reporters, than it is to be confronted with an increased "stint" at the coal-face.

In standing with Hyndley and the Coal Board against the Grimethorpe men whom he described as "reactionary", Horner transforms the idea of Trade Union democracy into its opposite. The leaders of the trade unions are paid to serve the wishes of the men.

Bennett Explains C.P. Policy

Horner's policy was explained in the "Daily Worker" of 25th September, by Mick Bennett, Yorkshire District Organiser. Writing on the lessons of Grimethorpe, Bennett had this to say: "The Communist Party is the first to recognise the profound value of the unity of the miners which says, 'An injury to one is an injury to all. . . . The Party considers, however, that the miners understand and appreciate a reasoned argument showing that the Yorkshire strike was, in fact, an injury to all the 700,000 miners of Britain, who can only maintain the five day week agreement, and secure other advantages for which the Union is striving, if the conciliation machinery is made to work."

But this is how the miners reasoned: "We are struggling against the old scourge, sweated labour. If you want more coal, spend more money on mechanisation, not the miserable £9,000,000 that has been placed in orders for coal cutting machinery. Improve the conditions of the miners and attract the necessary labour-power. We work hard enough as it is. We are dog tired when we get home. You are not going to break our backs. We will take strike action to prevent you doing this."

The injury in this particular case, Comrades Horner and Bennett, was to the Grimethorpe men. But the miners of South Yorkshire understand much better than you do, that the slogan "An injury to one is an injury to all" means that when workers are defending their conditions their fellow workers must stand by them. They saw their own class interests involved, their own conditions affected. And despite the pleas of the "Daily Worker" to abandon the Grimethorpe men, they took action in the best traditions of the trade union movement in the mining industry.

Attacks Trotsky Supplement

Bennett complains in the same article that:

From LEFT and RIGHT

BY AGITATOR

IS TWO A NUMBER?

THE Journal of the Indian Trotskyists "New Spark", recently contained the following letter published under the caption "Bombay Government Requests 'Correction'."

"Home Department (Political) From The Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Home Department. To: The Editor, 'New Spark,' 34-A Salamat Mansion, Sayani Road, Bombay 28. Sir,

With reference to the article headed 'Aftermath of Bombay Railworkers' Strike' which appeared in the 'New Spark' dated 19th July 1947, I am directed to state that the allegation made therein that 'the strike led to a number of deaths due to police firing' is misleading, as actually only two persons died as a result of the police firing on 27th June 1947. I am therefore to request you kindly to issue a correction in the next issue of the 'New Spark'.

Your obedient servant, Sd., A. Dalal, for the Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Home Department." "New Spark" published this without comment. We trust it

actions of the prominent local Stalinist, Sammy Taylor, who was one of the signatories to increasing the Grimethorpe "stint", without consulting the men. "Daily Worker" statement condemning the miners for not going back to work without assurances that they would not be forced to work the new stint. This was a defence of the N.U.M. and of trade union democracy.

How To Defend The N.U.M.

Far from meaning the "end of the union, the five day week, and nationalisation", the action of the Yorkshire miners was directly in defence of those gains. These so-called "Communists" have forgotten the elementary ideas of the class struggle on which communism is based. Only militant action on the part of the workers gains concessions, and retains them. A servile grovelling to the managers and the capitalists will mean the end of the Union. A servile acceptance of the dictates of the union bureaucrats would soon see the end of democracy and the rights of the unions. Only a membership which is not prepared to tolerate any deals between the union leaders and management without the agreement of the rank and file, can protect the members. Only thus can the present gains be maintained, and conditions and wages be bettered.

The miners must struggle to democratise the N.U.M., ending all life jobs, paying the officials the same wages as the working miner, subjecting them to re-election every year and immediate recall, if necessary. The miners must raise the demand that the Labour Government remove the Capitalist Coal Board. It must assist the miners to establish democratically elected committees composed of miners to operate the pits at the point of production, on the basis of a general Socialist plan.

By such a struggle, the miners will be taking steps which will ensure the realisation of the aspirations they held when the Labour Government nationalised the mines. This will strengthen the N.U.M., the five day week, and make the nationalisation of the mines work to the benefit of the working class.

In the same way we attacked the Communist Party because of the policy it pursued in allying themselves against the miners in their struggle. We condemned the



"IT'S SO DIFFICULT TO KNOW WHAT TO INVEST IN THESE DAYS."

From LEFT and RIGHT

BY AGITATOR

satisfied the authorities whom they had so cruelly wronged!

METHINKS HE DOTH PROTEST TOO MUCH

STALINIST writer, Allen Hutt, has been complaining in the "Daily Worker" against historical falsification. The Russian Revolution. Yes, really!

Temperly & Grant (no relation to the Editor of "Socialist Appeal") have written a work entitled "Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries". Allen Hutt (playing safe!) hands down the criticism of Moscow "New Times."

On Russia, for instance, it is pointed out that the book totally ignores or distorts the history of the revolutionary movement. We share in Hutt's indignation. But we draw attention to a few examples of historical falsification of the Stalin school, to which he himself belongs, which merit even fiercer condemnation. Stalinist "historian", Page Arnot, wrote two "Histories" of the Russian Revolution, one in the nineteen-twenties and one in 1938. The second one (published by the moralizer, Gollancz) is a falsification of the role of Stalin and Trotsky from beginning to end. It ignores and completely contradicts the first work. John Reed's famous

SAVOY BOSSES

Break Agreement

BY MARION LUNT

The position at the Savoy Hotel with regard to the victimisation and non-implementation of the agreement has reached a stage where only the action of the workers through their union organisation can force the reactionary Savoy bosses to carry out the decisions arrived at by the London District Council, and by the National Arbitration Tribunal.

At a meeting of 200 workers of the Savoy Group at Victory House, Leicester Square, on Sept. 19th, the District Secretary, Bro. Watering, gave an outline of events at the Savoy which have culminated in the present situation.

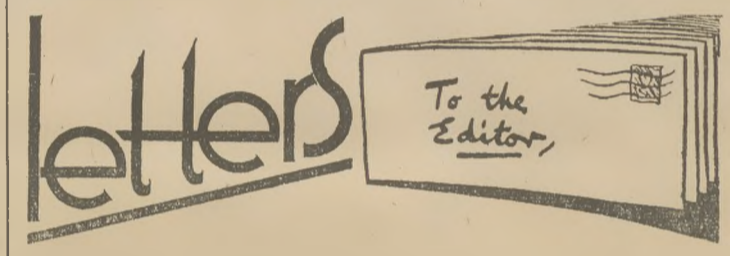
In March the workers of the Savoy group struck work in defence of a Shop Steward, Bro. Piazza who had been victimised. They went back on the advice of the Union officials, who proceeded to put the case through the arbitration machinery. An ad hoc committee was set up of employers' representatives and officials of the union, who gave a satisfactory verdict, i.e., that Piazza be suspended for 14 days, which meant his immediate re-employment.

The Savoy bosses, having formerly agreed to accept the decision of the Committee, now refused to implement the findings, and the case was taken, after a great delay on the part of the management of the Savoy, to the National Arbitration Tribunal, which body agreed in turn with the findings of the London District Council. Still these bosses of the Savoy arrogantly refuse to carry out their part of the bargain.

Bro. Watering, at the conclusion of his chronicle of these events, advised the Savoy workers to "keep their powder dry and trust their Union officials." They are proposing to take the case again to the London District Council, and to the Ministry of Labour, which has already been approached by them and asked if measures can be taken by the latter against the Savoy management, but without any success.

When asked by a worker from the floor what guarantees he and the National Executive could give that these bosses would carry out any further decisions by any other independent bodies, of course, Bro. Watering was quite unable to give such assurances. A resolution was passed, with only two voting against, demanding that the National Executive prepare for strike action within one month. The workers started the job, and the workers must finish it. As events have proved, only their action through their Union organisation can force the Savoy bosses to implement the decisions of the London District Council, the National Arbitration Tribunal, and the terms of the agreement relating to house committees, house representatives, etc.

All measures of negotiation attempted so far have failed to bring successful results. A strike committee should immediately plan a campaign to ensure a complete boycott of materials for the Savoy, by contacting sympathetic sections of the workers who will assist by refusing to allow goods such as oil, meat, foodstuffs, etc., to go into the hotel until the workers' demands are realised.



From S. Africa

African Unions In Danger

18 Roeland Street, Cape Town. August 29th, 1947.

The Secretary, R.C.P., London. Dear Comrade,

The Fourth International organisation of South Africa requests you to acquaint the British working class with some of the terms and the meaning of the Industrial Conciliation (Natives) Bill which is due to be discussed at the next session of the Union Parliament in January, 1948, and to publicise our campaign against it as much as you can. The following are some of the clauses of the Bill:

1. No European, Coloured person, Indian or anyone who is not an African may join or organise an African Union.
2. No one may organise an African trade union unless he is specially authorised by the State.
3. No one may hold office in any African union unless he is approved and appointed by the State. The African Mineworkers Union is banned.
5. No African union may go on strike.
6. A Central Mediation Board will decide all issues regarding wage levels and wage demands.
7. This board will be appointed by the State and will consist of State Officials and representatives of the employers only. (Of course the board will be all white.)
8. All African unions which are not registered in terms of the Act and continue to function are illegal and liable to prosecution.

It will be clear that far from "reorganising" African unions under a form of Industrial Conciliation machinery, the South African ruling class is out to crush the African trade union movement, handicapped as it is by being semi-legal by not being registered with the Industrial Conciliation Act (like European, Coloured and Indian workers). Africans are, therefore, not able to negotiate with the employers and resort to strike action failing settlement of disputes by arbitration, which procedure is allowed to other unions under the Industrial Conciliation Act.

It is clear that if the Bill is passed, African unions will become mere State agencies like the Nazi Labour Front and similar fascist bodies for enslaving the workers.

Although the Bill applies only to African workers it is a grave threat to the entire non-European people as it is a viciously anti-colour as well as anti-working class measure. Its danger to the Labour movement in South Africa as a whole cannot be over-estimated. For African workers the maintenance of the status quo would be

far preferable and not even the white unions will be safe if the Industrial Conciliation (Natives) Bill becomes law.

Yours fraternally, NANNET (Sec.)

From an 'S.A.' CANVASSER

30 September '47. The Editor, "Socialist Appeal".

Dear Comrade, While out on my usual "Socialist Appeal" rounds, one of my regular readers, a working-class housewife, spoke to me in very bitter tones about what she called "the continual miners' strikes." She repeated all the propaganda of the Beaverbrook press and it was obvious that she was much impressed by it.

The issue of the "Appeal" which I was delivering, happened to be that of Mid-September. I showed her the article by Roy Tearse dealing with the Grimethorpe strike and she asked me to have a cup of tea while she read it. When she had finished reading it, she looked up and said: "That shows the whole business in rather a different light. One reads so much about the good times the miners are enjoying today under nationalisation, that we are rather inclined to swallow it all. Its a good job there's papers like the "Socialist Appeal" to let us have the truth."

I left with a shilling in my pocket instead of the usual two-pence, with the promise of regular donations in future. C.V.G.

For a Marxist understanding of the Spanish situation, read:

"Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain"

by Felix Morrow 5/-

Obtainable from: Business Manager, 256, Harrow Road, London, W.2.

SOCIALIST APPEAL

Organ of the Revolutionary Communist Party,
256, HARROW ROAD, LONDON, W.2.
Phone: CUN 2526.
EDITOR: E. GRANT.
BUSINESS MANAGER: D. GRAY.

Editorial

The Functions of Joint Production Committees

Joint Production Committees as instruments for speeding up production without attacking the rights of capitalist management was the doctrine expounded by the Minister of Labour, George Isaacs, when he addressed the 50th Oxford Conference of the Confederation of Management Association last month.

"Joint consultation, rightly understood," said Isaacs, according to the "Daily Herald", "was not a usurpation of the functions of management, nor did it touch in any way the normal machinery for negotiating terms and conditions."

The "Daily Telegraph" reports that in reply to questions, Isaacs said: "The best way to deal with malcontents among workpeople was to get them on to the committees."

The "Daily Mail" (27.9.47), commenting on Isaacs' policy to re-establish Joint Production Committees in industry at the factory level, commented as follows:

"At the same time Mr. Isaacs makes it quite plain what these Joint Committees are NOT to attempt to do.

They are not to attempt to usurp the functions of management. They are not to encroach in any way on the normal machinery for negotiating terms and conditions of employment.

These are wise and necessary embargoes. The management must have the final responsibility for the conduct of the business. That is what management means. It is not to be attempted here by Soviets in the works."

Isaacs' statement that the "malcontents", in other words, the factory militants, should be put on Joint Production Committees clearly reveals the way in which the Labour and Trade Union leaders believe it possible to bribe or discredit the most active workers. Having themselves gone through this process and become mellowed with the policies of class collaboration, they believe that every militant shop steward, subject to the same pressures and "opportunities" to which they succumbed themselves will be mellowed in the process of "joint production."

But it should act as a warning to militants who have illusions in "joint production" with the managements and capitalists. For it is precisely these two points that reveal the whole nature of the process which goes under the name of "Joint Production."

Either there is real joint production, in which case the functions of management ARE taken over by the workers, or the management continues to function in the same old capitalist manner, in which case the talk of "joint production" is nothing but a racket to fool the working class.

The present Joint Production Committees are a facade whose object is to speed up production and to strengthen the hands of the management. But not at all to usurp the functions of management. The workers are not allowed to "interfere" in really organising production. They do not see the books, nor are they allowed access to the minutes of the management's own Production Conferences where the real decisions of production policy are taken.

Production Committees, set up as democratically elected bodies, representing managements and workers of the various departments in any given enterprise, which would give the workers' representatives the decisive voice on all questions affecting production, and whose findings and decisions the management were compelled to carry out, would be real organs of production. Such organs would express the real desires of the workers at every level of production, including the management.

The technical knowledge and experience associated with management would then be linked to production in the interests of the workers, and not organised against the workers in the service of capitalist profit.

These are the only form of Production Committees that Trade Unionists, Socialists or Communists, if they are true to their principles, can support. They are the type of Production Committees workers must fight to force upon the employers, managers and government, in opposition to the boss-controlled Joint Production Committees.

Harry Pollitt's "Looking Ahead"

Reviewed by David James

TO THE WORKER WHO IS BECOMING DISILLUSIONED WITH THE LABOUR PARTY'S "SOCIALISM", POLLITT'S PAMPHLET "LOOKING AHEAD" PRESENTS AN ATTRACTIVE ALTERNATIVE. ATTRACTIVE BECAUSE IT IS WELL WRITTEN, AND BECAUSE IT DOESN'T ASK MUCH OF THE READER.

He can keep his illusions in patriotism, in reformism, in class collaboration. None of these are attacked. He is promised a "peaceful transition to Socialism." At the same time there are radical phrases to persuade him that this is a real, communist programme.

Therein lies the danger of this pamphlet, its capacity to delude people with cheap promises, easy solutions.

LOOKING BACK A LITTLE . . .

Not long ago, Pollitt wrote two pamphlets: "How To Win The Peace" (1944) and "Answers To Questions" (1945). It is a good test of the honesty and value of this latest one, to see how these appear today, and how far Pollitt reaffirms their conclusions.

In the introduction to "Looking Ahead," he gives an able review of the decline of British capitalism, whose effects, particularly as regards the Labour leader's reformist plans, are so obvious today. But in 1944, he was saying (page 21) that if full employment were maintained there need be no fear from a worsening of "our" international trade position, that consumption and capital replacement could continue on a high level, that the Beveridge Plan could be implemented—all without destroying capitalism.

At that time the Trotskyists were saying that British capitalism could not afford these reformist plans, and that revolutionary struggle would be on the order of the day. In fact, America propped up British capitalism for a while. But whose predictions were right in the long run?

On the international field, he ridiculed the Trotskyist predictions that U.S. and British Imperialism aimed to dominate the world. No, the "people" would stop these schemes of the "reactionaries." "Who really believes the scare stories of the coming domination of the rest of Europe (outside the Russian zone) by Anglo-American Imperialism?" He specifically stated that the biggest section of the American capitalists favoured international economic and political "progress".

"Since many people in this country have regarded this as merely Roosevelt's personal policy, and still see America as the inevitable obstacle to any progressive international economic development, it is worthwhile underlining the serious support given to this policy by sections of American business interests."

("Answers to Questions," p. 14) Can it be the same Pollitt who is now painting U.S. Imperialism as the sole reactionary power in the world?

The same reason which caused him to paint up the "progressive" aims of U.S. Imperialism—which was then collaborating with Stalin—led him in 1945 to demand an alliance with "progressive" capitalists in Britain: "This new National Government shall include representatives of all parties supporting the decisions . . . of the Cymean Conference . . ." (p. 45). As representatives of the Tory Party in its Election Statement, the C.P. suggested Churchill and Eden.

Today, Pollitt denounces Bevin for pursuing a policy which the Tories support. All these predictions and policies have been quietly ditched (and many more, that we have no space to deal with). There is no attempt at an accounting for this, in his new pamphlet. Can one have any confidence in a man and a Party that gives up its own immediate past in this fashion?

THE WORKING CLASS AND ITS LEADERSHIP

A whole chapter is devoted to a lyrical description of the advances made by the working class, its increased power and influence. Some of it is true, some not, as we shall see. But the whole is misused, in order to foster a policy of class-collaboration.

There is no such thing in this epoch of declining capitalism, as a permanent equilibrium of classes. Either the workers secure and extend their gains, by overthrowing the capitalist class; or the capitalist class "secures" its position by Fascism. There is no "middle road", such as the German Social-Democracy dreamed of during the Weimar Republic.

What Pollitt "forgets" is that while the reaction has (temporarily) been forced to retreat, the workers' leadership has become more degenerate, less capable or desirous of conducting the class struggle. This very fact threatens to undo the gains themselves. How can Pollitt refer to the gains in membership of the French and Italian Communist Parties, and "ignore" the disillusion that has resulted from their parliamentary manoeuvres, the growth and increasing self-confidence of reaction (De Gaulle, Giannini)? How can he refer to the 70 million members of the W.F.T.U. and "ignore" that organisation's disgraceful failure to mobilise those members for struggle during the Indonesian War, the Antwerp dockers' strike?

Pollitt argues that the working-class is strong now, it should not be "afraid" of collaborating with "progressive" capitalists, of entering capitalist cabinets, etc. The truth is that this argument, which

is retailed by every Social-Democratic and Stalinist politician, every yellow Union leader, is the surest way to destroy the workers' strength. The task is to use that strength by pursuing a policy of class independence.

THE ROLE OF RUSSIA

Pollitt, who is so quick to see changes in the world situation—when it is a question of justifying reformism—pretends that nothing has changed as regards Russia.

"Since November 8, 1917 . . . right down to the present time, the Soviet Union has never once formulated a policy that was not in the interests of the common people of the whole world." (p. 43).

No, and of course if you believe this, all you have to do is zealously follow every twist and turn of Stalin's policy, even if it means biting your own tail.

But we beg to differ. Here are one or two examples—among many—of Russia's reactionary policy:

- (a) Sowing illusions in the League of Nations and telling the working class to support "democratic" bourgeoisie.
- (b) Making secret pacts with Hitler to divide Poland and other countries of Eastern Europe between the U.S.S.R. and Nazi Germany in 1939 (revealed at the Nuremberg Trial).
- (c) Making a secret pact with Britain and the U.S.A. at Yalta, to annex certain portions of China as a "reward" for fighting against Japan.
- (d) Looting and despoiling in Eastern and Central Europe, sometimes in the guise of reparations.

Pollitt apparently is a little ashamed of (b); he re-writes the history of Soviet diplomacy leaving out the Stalin-Hitler Pact! (pp. 43-44).

No, there is a big gap between Lenin in 1917 and Stalin in 1947. Today, the Soviet Government pursues a policy of agreement with the capitalist classes—first one set of Powers, then another. There would be nothing wrong with manoeuvring with capitalist powers if it was confined to Russian diplomacy for the purpose of gaining time for the world struggle for socialism. But in this, the Communist Parties, including the British C.P., are hired out in the service of this or that

(Continued on Page 4.)

CAPITALIST STATIFICATION

CONCLUDING SECTION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

State Capitalism—Ownership, Management, Control

When the capitalist system was in its ascendancy, the industrialist was generally the owner and manager of his enterprise, having full control over its activities. With the construction of joint stock companies, and the rise of a financial oligarchy, the three functions of management, ownership and control became separated from one another.

The technical management of the enterprises is in the hands of salaried people who either have no part in the ownership at all, or only an insignificant measure. The overwhelming majority of the shareholders have no say whatsoever in the control of the enterprises, in the big decisions of the directors. The control is in the hands of a tiny group of financial oligarchs who either themselves sit on the board of directors, or else appoint someone to do so for them. The three groups are united as exploiters against the working class, but the salaries of the high managers are not equal to the value of their labour power, but as a rule are in inverse proportion to the amount of labour they really perform. The overwhelming majority of shareholders receive their part of the surplus value in the form of dividends; but this is a relatively much smaller part of the total surplus value than their share in the formal ownership of the total capital. The financial oligarch receives the cream of the surplus value, his part of it being much greater than his share in the ownership of capital—his control over the enterprises gives him great possibilities of looting, etc.

The capitalist personalities two processes: firstly, the wringing of surplus value out of the workers; secondly, the conversion of surplus value into new capital. Connected with these two functions, the capitalist has another function which is not specific to capitalist relations; consumption—wastage on luxury, etc. In the joint stock companies, the function of wringing out the surplus value is in the hands of the managers; the function of accumulation and control over accumulation in those of the financial oligarchy; the third function—unproductive consumption of surplus value—is carried on by the three groups.

State capitalism brings the separation of the three functions—management, ownership, control—to its highest stage. Management is in the hands of salaried people; ownership (even if restricted, partially negated) in those of government bondholders; control in those of the state.

From the above it is clear that capitalist ownership becomes more and more parasitical. The concentration of control in the hands of either the financial oligarchy or the capitalist state—the collective finance capitalist, who is collective industrialist, banker and merchant—makes the controller more and more predatory towards other nations and exploitative of the working class.

(The dependence of the managing factor on the controlling factor, the latter being fundamental for the economic system, reforming Burbanck's theory of the manager—representing a new system of the owner. The steward of the minor of the absentee feudal lord did not represent any special form of production different to feudalism, so the capitalist manager who is subordinated to the financial oligarchy or to the capitalist state, cannot represent a special system of production.)

State Capitalism—A Transition to Socialism

Everything that centralises the means of production centralises the working class. State capitalism brings this concentration to the highest stage possible under the capitalist system.

The partial negation of capitalism on the basis of capitalist relations of production, means that the productive forces which are trapped in the bosom of the capitalist system so overgrow it, that the capitalist class is compelled to use "socialist" measures, and manipulate them in their own interests. In spite of themselves, the capitalists are dragged, as it were, into a new social order, a transitional social order, a transitional social order from complete free competition to complete socialism. (Lenin, "Imperialism," p. 20). The productive forces are too strong for capitalism, and "socialist" elements therefore enter into the economy, but they are subordinated to the interests of the preservation of capitalism. In a workers' state, because of the insufficiently developed productive forces for socialism, the working class is compelled to use capitalist measures (e.g., the capitalist law applied to distribution) in the interests of building socialism.

State capitalism and a workers' state are two stages in the transition period from capitalism to socialism. State capitalism is the extreme opposite of socialism—they are symmetrically opposed, and they are dialectically united to one another.

Under state capitalism the three functions—ownership, management and control—are separated. In the workers' state there is the unity of these three in the hands of the working class. If, under state capitalism wage labour is partially negated, because the worker is not free to choose his employer, under conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, there is already a partial negation of wage labour from a different angle. The workers cease to be "free" as a collective, from the means of production. At the same time, wage labour ceases to be a commodity. The content of the "selling" of labour power is different from the selling of labour power under capitalism, because under a workers' state the workers as individuals do not sell their labour power but put it in their own service as a collective. Thus, labour power ceases to be a real commodity, as a commodity is something that is given in exchange by one man to another. In this case, the exchange is between the workers as individuals, and those same workers as a collective. If state capitalism means the fusion of the unions with the state until their annihilation as unions, the workers' state brings the influence of the trade unions to their maximum. If state capitalism means historically totalitarianism of the state, a workers' state means the highest form of democracy society has ever known. State capitalism means the most extreme subjugation of the working class by the capitalist class which controls the means of production. A workers' state means the suppression of the capitalist class by the working class which controls the means of production.

State capitalism means that relations become crystal clear. It transforms every economic struggle into a struggle with the state machine, posing the question of state power. Capitalist statification brings into being all the material elements necessary for socialism. The only thing which is needed to transform society from state capitalism to socialism is the revolutionary activity of the workers. State capitalism poses the problem of the social revolution in its most immediate and acute form, but it does not solve it. The solution is the smashing of the capitalist state and its substitution by a workers' state.

Italian Workers Strike to Live

By N. PENTLAND

In the greatest strike struggles for over 30 years nearly 2½ millions of Italian industrial and agricultural workers have recently placed radical demands before the Government and landowners for a higher standard of life.

One and a half million workers in the Po Valley and provinces of Piedmont, Emilia, and Veneto, after many months of arduous negotiations refused to harvest crops till their demands were met in full.

Unable to keep pace with the terrific upswing of the cost of living which has risen 60 times above the 1938 demands for payment of overtime, cost of living bonus, family allowances, and an 8 hour day, were presented to the semi-feudal landowners by the Communist controlled "Confederterra".

A further demand to thwart the arbitrary sackings by the land barons, was that of workers' control of dismissals.

Shops Overflowing

Shops in the main Italian centres are at present stacked with every conceivable necessity of life. Yet the workers are only able to stand and gaze with bitterness at this spectacle. Wages as low as £7 to £11 per month fail to provide workers with a standard of life that is required for heavy work. On a continual diet of bread, potatoes and spaghetti-like foods, very few working class families taste meat at all.

Civil servants receive even less than manual workers. Their wages are as low as 14,000 lire—£5 per month.

The Italian unemployed exist on the pittance of 70 lire per day! This is the background to the wretched state of pauperisation that obtains while the food speculators and black marketeers go unchecked.

Landowners Take Fright

Wary of fruitless negotiations with the landowners, the Italian farm workers refused passively to stand by and starve any longer

and watch the landowners exploit them and at the same time send the prices of food sky high.

The C.P. controlled unions, no longer able to hold the workers back, declared a strike. The solidarity that ensued augurs well for the future. The Italian workers have not lost the fighting militant class consciousness that Mussolini attempted to destroy.

Faced with the workers' threat of reaping the harvests and placing it at the disposal of the Government, the landowners took fright and capitulated. After twelve days of solid and determined action, they consented to discuss with the workers—while they were still on strike.

Seeing the determination and feeling which dominated the strikers, and viewing with alarm the joint week-end demonstrations of the Communist Party and Socialist Party, the landowners retreated, granting some of the biggest concessions yet demanded from them by agricultural workers.

Steelworkers Strike

A few days prior to the termination of the agricultural workers' strike, the metal workers in the industrial centres staged a general strike to win a national collective contract. 800,000 workers from Naples, Rome, Genoa, Milan and Turin called a halt to the delaying tactics of the industrialists who were directly prolonging the negotiations. While negotiations slowly

continued so the cost of living rose higher every month. The metal and chemical workers gained concessions of increased wages and paid holidays which had hitherto not existed for the Italian factory workers.

The very unstable regime of the capitalist class totters from one crisis to another. This is the background to the struggle which is taking place in Italy.

C.P. Demonstrations

Following the recent formation of the Christian Democratic Government, the Italian C.P. and S.P. have made common cause for joint pressure demonstrations for a higher standard of living.

Countrywide demonstrations for the week-end of 25th September were proclaimed. Taking into account the strong following the C.P. have—they claim some 23 million members—the largest C.P. outside Russia), the Italian bourgeoisie could not conceal their unmistakable fright. Rumours of a second "March on Rome" were rife. During the preceding week, vigorous counter-measures were discussed by the Cabinet. The police in every town were drilled specially to combat cases of rioting. Such was the tense situation. Strikes coinciding with the popular strikes of metal and agricultural workers, has given the Christian Democrats in office a rough time.

But as it has been noted in other countries where the C.P. have a strong influence among the working class (France), they did very little other than let off hot air.

Given the huge support these two parties have, with the workers in a militant mood, plus the fact that the Italian capitalists are in a very unstable position, the C.P. and S.P. were in a very favourable position to call a general strike.

But the leaders of these parties do not desire such a situation. (Continued on Page 4.)

Special Appeal to Readers

£50 NEEDED for a MICROPHONE

COMRADES: To aid us in our present all-out campaign against the Fascists it is essential that we have a microphone and loudspeaker equipment. We can purchase this for £50. Surely, this important side of Party activity must not be handicapped through the lack of technical aid. We appeal to all anti-fascists to rally to our aid with cash. Help us to obtain £50.

Send in your donations NOW and immediately collect cash from your friends.
T. REILLY, London Organiser.

The Menace of Fascism

and the Need for a United Workers Front

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Speakers: JOCK HASTON and TED GRANT

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Platform Open to Speakers from other Working Class Parties

Organised by London District Committee Revolutionary Communist Party (Trotskyist) 256 Harrow Road, Paddington, London, W.2.

At 7.30 p.m.

Admission 6d.

RUSSIAN WORKERS IN BRITAIN

Barred from Joining Trade Union by Russian Delegation

BY TED GRANT

AN INSTRUCTIVE LIGHT ON THE BUREAUCRATIC ATTITUDE AND METHODS OF THE STALINIST BUREAUCRACY IN RUSSIA HAS BEEN PROVIDED BY THE CASE OF THE FIVE RUSSIAN WORKERS AT THE HANGAR ARTIFICIAL LIMB FACTORY AT ROEHAMPTON.

Under instruction from the Soviet Trade Delegation, these workers have refused to join the appropriate British Trade Union. This episode has become an international scandal by the obstinate and high-handed refusal of the Stalinist bureaucrats to adhere to democratic working class principles and procedure.

These workers started as trainees at the Hangers factory at the beginning of May in order to learn British methods for use in the Soviet Union.

In the usual way, after they had settled down, the question of membership of the appropriate Trade Union was raised with them. A letter published in the September issue of the N.U.P.T.O. "Record", journal of the National Union of Furniture Trade Operatives (and significantly enough written by W. Zak, a prominent member of the "Communist" Party in London who would naturally enough try and present as favourable a picture as possible for the Stalinist bureaucrats) gives the facts of the dispute which followed.

The Russian workers through their translator expressed agreement to joining the British Union and said they "would fill in nomination forms for membership and hand them in on the following day."

On the next day, however, they stated that they had instructions from the Soviet Trade Delegation not to join a British Trade Union.

The ostensible, obviously feeble excuse given was that the rules of the Soviet Trade Unions forbid dual union membership, and that they would forfeit their rights if they joined a British union! As if such a situation could arise in democratically controlled unions with the facts before them! As if a single word from the present Russian authorities, who completely control the Russian "Unions", would not have been sufficient to settle the matter!

Then followed a great deal of bureaucratic mishandling of the situation by the Russian Trade Delegation. According to the Union Journal, despite the attempts of the London District, in whose hands the matter had been placed, to contact Kuchurov, a responsible member of the Trade Delegation he ignored their approaches and visited the Managing Director of Hangers before contacting the London District Committee of the Union.

After the interview which did not reach a satisfactory conclusion, Kuchurov was asked to raise the question with a higher authority and give the answer within eight days. As no reply had been received by June 13th, Mr. Kuchurov was phoned but again was not available, nor was he available on the 16th, but on the statement that unless we had a reply that afternoon we would have to raise the matter with the Soviet Ambassador, Mr. Andrienko promised a favourable reply for the 18th. It could be added, however, that within an hour Messrs.

Kuchurov and Andrienko were at the Head Office of our Union at Golders Green interviewing the two Assistant General Secretaries."

"On the 18th June a letter was sent to the Soviet Ambassador enclosing copies of the letters already referred to and pointing out that as a result in the main of long struggle, the Trade Union workers have established in... the artificial limb factories a position where the management has been forced to agree that only workers belonging to appropriate Trade Unions shall be employed or work in the factory. This arrangement covers skilled workers, unskilled workers and trainees. In the circumstances, therefore, for the workers to agree in any such particular factory that a worker being trained or otherwise employed shall be considered as excluded from such agreement would, in fact, be the thin end of the wedge to enable once again the introduction of non-unionism. This is more especially true in the artificial limb factories at Roehampton, in view of the fact that workers from countries all over the world, as well as from this country, are trained there in this kind of work. It should of course be added that the breaking down of the principle of 100 per cent. trade unionism in the appropriate Trade Unions would bring with it the undermining of wages and working conditions."

It is further necessary for me to point out in view of the arguments advanced, that—

1. Nobody is querying the fact that the workers in question are members of their appropriate Trade Union in the Soviet Union.

2. The Soviet Trade Unions cannot be considered as being appropriate Trades Unions for workers in this factory.

3. While the Soviet Trade Union rules exclude membership of two unions within the Soviet Union, this cannot be considered as applying in factories outside of the frontiers of the Soviet Union.

This moderately worded and reasonable presentation of an unanswerable case from the point of view of workers democracy and trade union struggle did not receive even the courtesy of acknowledgment let alone a reply. The Union even though the Stalinists have a powerful fraction within it faced by this contemptuous attitude sent a telegram appealing to Kuznetsov, Chairman, All Union Council of Trade Unions of the U.S.S.R., requesting his... immediate intervention as position extremely difficult friction arising between Soviet trainees and British workers...

On 30th June, the General Secretary of the Union, together with Zak himself, met representatives of the Ministry of Labour who had requested the meeting. The Russian Ambassador had raised the question with Bevin! Apparently the Stalinist Government considered it so VITAL as to get the Russian Ambassador to raise it with the British Government. He had disdained to consult the direct representatives of the workers concerned, but hoped to achieve his object by diplomatic pressure.

Meanwhile, the Russian press and the wireless had come forward with the usual distortions and lies of the Stalinists against working-class opponents. The stand of the Union leaders under the pressure of the workers at Hangers, as well as of the workers in the London District of the Union on the question of elementary trade union organisation was described as an appeal "to the basest instincts of the most backward section of the workers of this Trade Union..." The Russian bureaucrats pictured the situation as one of "discrimination" against Soviet workers, despite the fact that it had been explained that the principle applied to all workers from other countries abroad, as well as at home.

In fact, the workers at Hangers had regularly organised collections for the Stalingrad Hospital during the war.

As the letter of Zak correctly comments: "Yes there was 'discriminatory' action regarding the Soviet workers. They were re-

quested to become members of an appropriate union in accordance with the custom and practice established over a number of years in regard to foreign and other trainees; but contrary to the normal procedure of giving them seven days to join, ten weeks went by in negotiations before the workers took any action, and then did not do what they would have done in any other case; demand the removal of the offenders from the factory."

"On the 8th July at the regular shop meeting the workers heard a full report of the attempts to settle the matter and decided:

(a) that the agreement on 100 per cent. Trade Union membership must be upheld;

(b) that the Soviet workers not holding membership of appropriate Trade Unions would not be allowed to use tools, but could remain in the factory as observers."

Subsidy Cuts

(Continued from Page 1.)

1947, gives the figures of profits made by some 2,040 companies. In 1945, these companies made a profit of £319,500,000; and in 1946 it jumped to £349,000,000, an increase of £30,000,000 in one year! This is the general tendency among capitalist undertakings in Britain today. But no real measures are taken against these profits.

The possibility of a Profits Tax being introduced in an Autumn budget is expected by capitalist interests. But it is clear that they are confident that any such tax will be nothing drastic or calculated to cut very deep into their profits. The Financial Editor of the "Observer", of September 28th, writing on the likelihood of such a tax said:

An increase in the distributed profits tax (introduced in the last Budget, G.N.) seems a virtual certainty. Politically it has attractions of its own. The general guess is that the rate may be raised from 12½ to 25 or 30%. But that, by itself, would go virtually nowhere towards closing the gap, for after allowing for income tax, it would only bring in another £20 or £30 million in a full year.

Hands Off The Subsidies

The Labour Government does not hesitate to take action against the interests of the workers, but is timid and fearful to "interfere" with the interests of the capitalists. It is time for the working class to remind the Labour leaders of the fact that they were returned to power to further their interests, not to place more burdens upon the backs of the working class while the capitalists sacrifice nothing. The Labour movement in Britain must campaign against the attack on the food subsidies and put pressure on the Labour leaders to keep Hands Off The Food Subsidies!

Pressure from the workers through the trade union, co-operative and Labour movement, must be put on the Labour Government to force it to operate a wage-policy based on a sliding scale of wages to correspond with the rising cost of living. Based upon trade union rates, with a minimum established by the unions, such a sliding scale of wages would be drawn up by the elected committees of the workers concerned. Only such a wage policy will safeguard the living standards of the working class.

Instead of slashing at the food subsidies the Government must be forced to take action against the profits of the capitalists and the fortunes of the rich. The profits of the capitalists must be confiscated. This money must be used to cheapen present food costs and thus benefit the working class.

Until the present, the C.P. have held the workers on a tight rein, but with their desire to re-enter a government of coalition, it is highly probable that the C.P. will embark upon a future campaign of strikes and demonstrations against Dr. Gasperi.

C.P. Bankrupt

This is where the crassest form of C.P. bankruptcy lies. Wielding

the most crushing comment of Zak is:

"In capitalist countries the question of the establishment and maintenance of 100 per cent. Trade Union membership in appropriate unions is a fundamental corner stone to class action. And let it be added that the 'duty of proletarian solidarity' is not a one-sided one."

Stalinist Fear Truth

But any worker would scratch his head over such a hulloballoo and din for what, after all, to such a mighty state as Russia should seem a trivial matter. Why should a fuss? Why antagonise a powerful British Trade Union, and the workers in the furniture trade on what is an elementary trade union necessity, over FIVE PEOPLE?

Why the antagonism and fear at joining a Trade Union in Britain?

In this incident can be seen the symptoms of the Stalinist disease. The Stalinist bureaucrats are afraid of the contact in the democratic organisations of the trade unions of even a handful of specially selected workers for fear that they should contrast the comparative freedom of British unions with the totalitarian set-up in Russia. It is the same fear which leads the bureaucrats to refuse exit visas to the Russian brides of British and other peoples. No one must leave Russia, over whom the G.P.U. has not got entire control. They may talk too much and reveal the truth about the Stalinist dictatorship. No Russian worker must have even the remotest connection with British or other unions for fear it might loosen their tongues. Even the smallest particle of truth is dangerous to the Soviet bureaucracy.

Smash Fascism

LAMBETH TRADES COUNCIL CALL

(AN EXTRACT)

To All Workers And Anti-Fascists:

Once again the fascists are showing themselves in the streets of Lambeth, in Rusheroff Road, spouting their anti-labour and anti-semitic filth. They masquerade in the name of the British League of Ex-Servicemen. Big business finances and sets the fascists into motion in order to attack and divide the working class, by attempting to set non-Jewish worker against Jewish worker. They lie to the middle class and workers that they are against the capitalists—the very class which supports and pays them. Already in areas the fascists have attacked Labour and Communist party rooms.

Do not be misled by the fascists' demagoguery. The workers, whether white or black, Jewish or non-Jewish, must be prepared to struggle against the fascists and the system which breeds them.

The Lambeth Trades' Council is holding an open air meeting on October 17th, in Kellett Road, at 7.30 p.m., where Trades' Council speakers will point out the dangers of fascism and how to fight it, and we want every worker and every anti-fascist in Lambeth to attend in order to show their hostility to fascism.

Workers of Lambeth: Demand with us that there be no further police protection of the fascists. Support our demand that the Labour Government make anti-semitism illegal. Demand that the Labour Government pursue a policy of solving the economic crisis by making big business pay for housing and improved conditions out of their exorbitant profits. Demand a bold policy of nationalisation of the key industries, commencing with immediate nationalisation of the Iron and Steel industry, which, in every country where fascism was found, were their biggest backers. Compensation to the industrialists places terrific burdens on the nationalised industries and the workers, and allows the co-owners to finance the fascist thugs. Demand no compensation. Put workers in control of the nationalised industries—not ex-owners and brigadier generals.

Anti-Fascist Committee
Lambeth Trades' Council.

RALLY TO OUR MEETING

ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17th at 7.30 p.m.
IN KELLETT ROAD.

Pollitt's "Looking Ahead"

(Continued from Page 3.)
capitalist power, depending on the current line.

"THE BRITISH ROAD TO SOCIALISM"

Pollitt has now arrived where the leaders of the Labour Party arrived decades ago. He claims that in Eastern Europe there is occurring a transition to Socialism "without the dictatorship of the proletariat," and claims that similarly there is a "British road to Socialism, in which British democratic institutions will be preserved and strengthened."

If the whole idea of Marx and Lenin on the State is to be rejected in this way, we should expect a clear analysis of where they went wrong, and through what stages Pollitt expects the transition to Socialism will occur. Unfortunately he doesn't tell us.

"The success of our programme will not give us Socialism," he says, "but it will change the country in which we live." To what? Capitalism will not be abolished, although the State will be "democratised" and the wealth of the capitalist class will be reduced.

In 1945 he was not afraid to say that he stood for a policy of State Capitalism. Today he just doesn't say... But what else is this regime he describes, and the regimes that exist in Eastern Europe? And how does his conception of "peaceful growth into Socialism" differ from the traditional reformist Utopia?

The petit-bourgeois democrats, those alleged Socialists who substituted dreams of class harmony for the class struggle," said Lenin in "State and Revolution," "even pictured the Socialist reformation in a dreamy fashion—not in the form of the overthrow of the rule of the exploiting class, but in the form of the peaceful submission of the minority to the majority which has become conscious of its aims."

Pollitt, it seems were not unknown in 1917.

But we are not reformists, says Pollitt; no, God forbid! "We know that the State must be changed, that new personnel must be found at every level, that all

obstacles to the expression of popular will by obsolete State organs must be removed... (p. 93).

Is this a new idea? Apparently Lenin had heard of it, long before the "new events" which prompt Pollitt to his revision.

"A democratic republic is the best possible political shell for capitalism, and, therefore, once capitalism has gained control of this very best shell... it establishes its power so securely, so firmly, that no change, either of persons, of institutions, or of parties in the bourgeois-democratic republic can shake it." ("State and Revolution"). But the social-chauvinists and opportunists expect "more" front universal suffrage, Lenin went on to explain. They justify the idea that it can "really express the will of the majority of the toilers and ensure its realisation."

What is Pollitt, with his idea that "the whole people (!) should find unity in carrying out the programme for the prosperity and independence of Britain"? A social-chauvinist, perhaps? Socialism in words, chauvinist in deeds.

When the Communist Party is put to this class test, it fails miserably. In every strike since 1941, with the inglorious exception of the Cossor strike, it has sided with the Union bureaucrats and the capitalist class in demanding a return to work. When the Gimethorpe strike took place, instead of supporting these miners and developing an attack on the Coal Board, demanding workers' control, the "Communist" Arthur Horner, denounced the men, and the "Daily Worker", editorially, remained dead silent.

Pollitt writes several pages on the Unions, but does not once mention the need for a fighting leadership to replace the class-collaborators. No wonder, for "Communists" like Horner are well to the fore among these "leaders".

Pollitt writes movingly about the need to struggle against fascism. But out in Dalston, the Communist Party refuses to mobilise the local workers in defence guards. Although with its influence it could easily move the local Labour movement to do this. Instead, it preaches reliance on the police to guard its meetings, and implores the Government to "Ban the Fascists." When the Trotskyists ask for a united front against Fascism, the Communist Party ignores them.

Pollitt likes to use blunt language, to pose as a "realist." Very well, there is an old and blunt saying which applies very well to "Looking Ahead," "the proof of the pudding is in the eating." Don't be dazzled by the red holly-berries on this Christmas pudding. They're only there for show.

Pollitt is a "realist": the Trotskyists are "extremists." But Pollitt's realism brings him in practice to the side of the Labour and Union Bureaucrats: our "extremism" brings us to the side of the workers in their struggles. And it is precisely these struggles that will take us forward.

WORDS AND DEEDS

After this, it comes as a shock to hear Pollitt describe his policy as a "class policy."

It is impossible here to discuss his proposals in detail. Nor is it necessary, because we can dispose of the whole lot with one simple question: if yours is a class policy, how do you suppose it is going to be carried out? "A single real step forward of the movement is worth a dozen programmes," as Engels said. Does Pollitt show us how to take this step?

He does not. Nowhere in the pamphlet is it possible to get an idea of how he expects his programme to be carried out. He puts it in the form of exhortations to the Labour leaders: he asks the Labour "lefts" to follow his line; Labour leaders, in concrete terms of mass pressure and the class struggle, there is not a word.

Yet the Socialist struggle is not a mere matter of passing resolutions, of voting, of demonstrations and propaganda. These are important; but the main motive force is the struggle in the factories over day-to-day issues. This is how the working class comes in practice up against the ruling class. Any genuine Socialist tendency must base itself on this struggle, develop it and give it conscious leadership. Otherwise it is an empty sham, though it have on paper—the best programme in the world.

The Labour Government pursues a policy of State capitalism. Correct? Even Pollitt agrees.

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What's on

OCTOBER 14th — 7 p.m.

LONDON SOCIAL, 256 Harrow Road, London, W.2. To collect funds for a loud-speaker essential for anti-fascist meetings.

WALENS. Fortnightly lectures by Heaton Lee on 2nd and 16th October, 1947, at 7 p.m., Room 6, Elysium Buildings, High Street, Swansea. Everyone welcome.

WALENS TOUR. A series of meetings have been arranged by our comrades in South Wales for Comrade Houston's tour. Readers of "Socialist Appeal" are asked to give their full support and bring along friends. Take a note of these dates. Further details will appear in the next issue of the "S.A."

Nov. 5th.—Tredegar.

6th.—Swansen, Elysium Bldgs., High Street, at 7 p.m.

7th.—G.C.G., Elysium Hall, Committee Room at 7 p.m.

8th.—Neath. Open Air Meeting in afternoon.

9th.—Neath Day School: Evening Public Meeting at Unemployed Hut.

10th.—Ystalyfera.

11th.—Meet contacts.

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256, Harrow Road, London, W.2.

(Continued from Page 3.)

Togliatti, leader of the Italian C.P., scoffed at rumours of "revolution" and urged, and allayed all fears of any possible action on the part of the workers. Not desiring any extension of real workers' power, the C.P. are quite content with constitutional government. Providing, that is, that they are able to ensure the continuation of Stalin's foreign policy, instead of Britain's and America's policy which the Christian Democrats support at the moment.

Until the present, the C.P. have held the workers on a tight rein, but with their desire to re-enter a government of coalition, it is highly probable that the C.P. will embark upon a future campaign of strikes and demonstrations against Dr. Gasperi.

C.P. Bankrupt

This is where the crassest form of C.P. bankruptcy lies. Wielding

tremendous power, with 21 million members, plus millions of sympathisers, the Italian C.P. refuses to use it in a real struggle for workers' power. At the same time, by their failure to pose the question of power, they confuse and betray the workers into the hands of the capitalist class.

With the support such as they have, the C.P. could not only shake but destroy the very foundations of Italian capitalism. The workers, distracted by years of wars of intervention (Abyssinia and Spain), twenty-two years of fascism, would readily respond to a party that posed the question of workers' power. The C.P. have no such policy of Socialist revolution which would lead to the establishment of a workers' state. Their very actions and policy point in the opposite direction to a policy of bankrupt parliamentary reformism.

Workers' Power Only Solution

The task of the Italian workers is to demand from the mass workers' organisations, the C.P. and S.P. that they break with the capitalists and take power.

The demand must go forward for the expropriation of the industrial and agricultural barons. For the placing of the factories and the land under the direct control of the workers and peasants who will plan the economy in the interests of the toiling population. Votes of no confidence in a capitalist parliament by Togliatti and Nenni will not solve the problems of the masses. They must make use of their working class support to take over the means of production as the only way for the Italian workers and peasants to get out of the present crisis and conditions of poverty and starvation and to obtain a secure standard of life.

Catering Workers Discuss

WAGES BOARD PROPOSALS

BY MARION LUNT

The Licensed Residential Establishment Wages Board has published proposals to submit to the Minister of Labour, and will consider any written representation with respect to these proposals if made before October 21st, 1947.

A copy of these proposals has been sent to every employer, each of whom is required to exhibit the pamphlet in a prominent place for the workers' inspection. In the greater number of West End Establishments the workers have not seen these schedules. Even where exhibited, one copy is entirely inadequate to afford the workers an opportunity to study the proposals they are being offered.

Realising the growing militancy of this section of industry, the fact that October brought many hundreds of workers who, for years have been amongst the most exploited and unorganised, into a trade union organisation, the employers have been forced to make small concessions. During and after the war, the bosses have been piling up enormous profits at the expense of the platenmen, who are paid £4 weekly to keep their home and family, and at the expense of waiters who depend upon the good graces of customers' tips to support themselves, and at the expense of all the catering workers who for long hours of split duties, receive little in their wage packets at the end of the week.

London No. 1 N.U.G.M.W.

Press Demands

The London Catering No. 1 Branch of the N.U.G.M.W. has examined the statutory minimum remuneration and decided to press forward on the basis of the following:

1. Demanding £6 per week as a minimum wage as against the offer of £4 10s. 0d.

2. Demanding a basis of a 44 hour week, as against 48 hours offered.

3. Demanding "the rate for the job": that women doing the same work, be paid at the same

rate as men, and youths performing similar jobs be also paid at the rate offered to men.

4. Demanding that the catering workers be able to "contract out"—that the 12/- food and 29/- board and lodging allowance be available to any workers wishing to purchase meals and lodgings elsewhere.

5. Demanding that Sunday work be paid at the rate of double pay.

6. Demanding the abolition of split duty.

It is necessary that the catering workers in every London and provincial establishment campaign for 100% union organisation. On this basis they must organise rank and file committees of trade union members, who will redraft these schedules on the lines of trade union rates of pay and conditions.

Together with this must go the demand for a sliding scale of wages to meet the rising cost of living.

The catering workers know that great struggles lie ahead around these issues. Full union strength in each establishment, direct contact maintained between the union officials, house representatives, and the rank and file will be the greatest guarantee of success in these approaching battles.

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