

THE BULLETIN

*An Information Service
for
Socialists*

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LETTER TO READERS

Next week's issue will be the Easter one and many of our readers will be attending conferences. We are, therefore, planning to have it ready a couple of days early to be in the hands of comrades before they set out. We are also producing extra copies for those who would like to try to use the conferences to gain extra subscribers. Please let us know if you want extra copies and send in reports to arrive not later than Wednesday. We would also ask comrades to take notes at the conferences so they can send in reports for the Bulletin.

As we go to press reports from France indicate that there is considerable dissatisfaction with the terms of the settlement of the miners' strike. We hope next week to include an 'on the spot' report from a French correspondent giving the background to the settlement.

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LEFT VERSUS RIGHT IN THE BELGIAN SOCIALIST PARTY: Again we are giving over editorial space to reporting the situation inside the Belgian Socialist Party because this information is not generally available. The following report is from a Brussels correspondent and is dated the 20th. of March.

"The struggle inside the Belgian Socialist Party between the right and left wings reached new levels of sharpness when all the socialist dailies in the country published an editorial March 13 signed by party chairman, Leo Collard threatening E. Mandel, editor of the left-wing weekly La Gauche, and E. Glinne, the main spokesman of the left socialists in Parliament, with expulsion. Mandel and Glinne have played a prominent part in the struggle against proposed new antistrike legislation. At a recent emergency congress of the Socialist party, Mandel, in open defiance of party leader Spaak, said that the tendency he represented would fight to the end against such repressive legislation. On March 16 La Gauche responded to the attack on Mandel and Glinne by publishing an editorial signed by Jacques Yerna, secretary of the important Liège Trade Union Federation. Yerna told Collard that if he wanted to expel Mandel and Glinne, he would also have to expel him and the majority of the Walloon trade-union militants."

THE TORY ELECTIONEERING BUDGET: The Tory budget had two main functions: (1) to win votes back for the Tories after their disastrous showing in recent bye-elections; and (2) to use the concessions as an argument against further wage increases and to bolster up the arguments for an 'incomes policy.' The "expansionist" aspect - that of increasing purchasing power thus increasing demand for consumer goods - must be seen in relation to other measures taken by the Government. Increases in postal and telephone charges, increased contributions to national insurance and the prospect of higher fares, etc., will all cut into purchasing power. The big noise the Tories are making about their measures to take industry to areas of high unemployment must be seen against a background of the introduction of the Beeching plan. The latter will not only increase unemployment in the worst hit areas by closing lines and stations but, by denuding these areas of transport, be a powerful disincentive for manufacturers to operate in these regions.

Macmillian's Cardiff speech was, for him, almost explicit on these lines. Speaking of it as a 'people's budget' he claimed that for the average worker the tax concessions were the equivalent to a 2% pay rise. He said that the concessions had been given mainly to the middle incomes and the lower grades of income still liable to tax. Those "whose wise forbearance in claiming salary or wage increases at a rate . . . no greater than the economy can bear" are the hope for the success of a 'policy of expansion without inflation'. The Financial Times, commenting upon the speech said that a major aim of the budget was to win back to the Tory fold the "Orpington man" who had benefitted quite considerably from the concessions made.

Socialists must, of course, attack and campaign against the Tory electioneering budget. They must point out that it is a gigantic confidence trick perpetrated by a gang of discredited politicians in order to hang on to political power. However, the arguments about expansionism and non-expansionism are meaningless unless put into a class context. The main argument against the budget is not its 'timidity' in approaching expansionism but that it is part of the plan by the British capitalist class to rationalise industry at the expense of the working class.

- **1527** At its last meeting, the Ilkeston Branch of the Young Socialists decided upon a plan of action against rail closures in the Ilkeston area. Under Beeching's plan, the town of Ilkeston, in Derbyshire, and the surrounding area will be entirely without a railway service. This, despite the fact that many thousands of people use the trains each day to commute to work, particularly with regard to the hosiery trade in the Nottingham area. Plans already made include the distribution of 2,000 copies of a special leaflet produced by Ilkeston YS, distribution of a like number of the NUR leaflet, and the holding of a joint meeting with the Ilkeston National Union of Railwaymen.

PROTESTS AGAINST BEECHING CLOSURES DEVELOPING.

In Notts. and Derbys. strong feelings are building up against the Beeching proposals that are likely to develop into a vigorous campaign. Mansfield Trade Union Council passed a resolution opposing the plan, and calling for the introduction of a diesel service in the area to connect Mansfield, Nottingham and Worksop. The Town Council is being urged to lodge an objection. A militant call for a lobby of Parliament was voiced, by an N.U.M. delegate at this meeting who deprecated the sending of protests, but said ".... if the Government would not go to the country then representatives of organised bodies should visit the House of Commons and take them out by the scruff of the neck."

Heanor Urban Council has bitterly attacked the Beeching plans, which would close the line through the Erewash valley. This is the only direct link that the area has with Sheffield. In this area, journeys by road frequently take twice, or three times the time of that same journey by train.

Stapleford Labour Party has also voiced its opposition to the Beeching plan and calls for the integration of all forms of transport. Support for a campaign is being sought in the Stapleford Trades Council. This issue of the railways, with its blanket effect on the whole of the population of these outlying areas is causing feelings to mount which must be directed into political channels.

EX - LABOUR MP SUPPORTS "PROSECUTE STRIKERS" MOVE.

Aidan Crawley, Tory MP for Derbyshire West and notorious for his hostility to the Labour movement, (he was once a Labour member), supported a clause in the Tory Contracts of Employment Bill whose object, he said, was to make employers or employees liable to prosecution if they broke or induced others to break a contract. His proposal would "strengthen trade unions by providing them with the moral support for what the ETU has just done with Mr. Doyle." This clause, was defeated in the Commons standing Committee. Perhaps the best comment came from the Minister of Labour, Mr. Hare, who said it was "problematical, to put it moderately," whether Mr. Crawley's provision would improve industrial relations.

MAYOR OF WILLESDEN CALLS FOR RAIL LOBBY.

The Mayor of Willesden has voiced a call for local organisations to lobby MP's against the rail closures next Wednesday at 7.15.p.m. All local organisations have been asked to co-operate in this protest on April 10th.

1528 Aims of Industry, which claims a membership of 4,000 British companies is expected to launch a massive anti-nationalisation campaign later this year. Ideas that the form of the campaign should take will be discussed soon after Easter, at a meeting of the organisation's council, presided over by Sir Ian Lyle. Sir Ian is Chairman of Tate and Lyle, whose Mr. Cube campaign against State ownership caused an uproar among Labour Party members in the late '40's. In finalising its plans, the council will be thinking in terms of a General Election - with nationalisation as a "main political issue" - either in October or the Spring of 1964. Its propaganda will be directed not only against further State ownership but against any extensions of controls or growth of bureaucracy.

Large sums are expected to be spent on advertising, and there is a obvious possibility that more cartoons, along the lines of Mr. Cube, will be created. The advisability of holding public meetings throughout the country will also be discussed. In the past, Aims of Industry has never given any indication of the amount of money it has spent on campaigns of this kind, but there were suggestions during the 1950 election that its expenditure was in the region of £150,000. The Aims of Industry council consists of 17 members, including the President. Among them are Mr. J.E. Reiss, Chairman of Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers, Mr. George Harriman, Chairman British Motor Corporation, Colonel W.H. Whitbread, Chairman of Whitbreads, Sir Kenneth Hague, Chairman of Babcock and Wilcox, and Lord Rank.

It is by means of Aims Of Industry, that the Tories are able to get around the laws regulating the amount of funds that can be spent on elections, and to put into the field the considerable financial assistance they receive from Industry. In this way, they are probably able to double the amount of money they spend on a General Election, which otherwise would be restricted by the laws that govern such expenditure.

SHEFFIELD BOOST FOR "UNION VOICE" From a Sheffield Correspondent

The April issue of Sheffield Forward, official organ of the Sheffield Trades and Labour Council, which has a distribution of several thousand, gives Union Voice a favourable write-up. In his regular column - The Anvil "John Ball" has this to say: "Congratulations are in order for the producers of the new monthly "Union Voice". It is aimed at the shop-floor worker and economically and politically conscious worker. The more its circulation grows, the more powerful the struggle against super-profits, super-bombs, super-Tories. The March issue deals with Hennessy and Fords, employment, youth, union news, the miners and the Bomb etc. I wish the new venture every success and a long life."

FIRE BRIGADES UNION SUPPORTS "UNION VOICE".

In its latest issue, the Fire Fighter, official paper of the Fire Brigades Union reproduced in the form of a four page supplement, extracts from the March issue of Union Voice. Articles reproduced were by Ernie Roberts, Bertrand Russell, Judith Hart, Ken Coates and Bob Edwards, together with the "wall newspaper" in Union Voice. The Fire Fighter is distributed to the entire membership of the 20,000 strong Fire Brigades Union.

"UNION VOICE" SALES ON UNEMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: We haven't full information as to the total sales on March 26th yet. However, two sellers sold just over 100. They also report that a very large number of the demonstrators told them that they had seen the paper already or bought it through their union branches.

1529 The Economic Survey of Europe in 1962, to be published shortly, says that there has been a slackening in the Soviet bloc's rate of growth. National income ^{growth} has fallen from 8 per cent in 1960 to 6 per cent in 1962 (against 8½ per cent planned). In Eastern Europe in 1962, the rate of increase ranged from 8 per cent in Albania and 7 per cent in Rumania, to almost nothing for Czechoslovakia. For Eastern Europe as a whole, national income growth in 1962 was probably in the region of 3 per cent as against 6 per cent in 1960 and 1961. Only in Albania and Rumania were there increases in real wages during the year, and in some countries there may have actually been a decline in real wages. The falls in the rate of economic growth were due in part to the depressing effects of bad weather on farm output; and, in several countries, the consequent rise in food imports or reduction of food exports complicated the problem of assuring an adequate flow of materials and equipment to support the industrial expansion. In most of the countries, states the E.C.E. Survey, a definite deceleration in industrial output has become apparent in the last two years or so; but except in Albania, Czechoslovakia and Eastern Germany, industrial growth rates remain high - 9 per cent, and more, - and in line with or above those foreseen in the long term plans ending in 1965. In dealing with agriculture, the Survey says that throughout the Eastern European region, 1962 was a disappointing year for agricultural planners.

SPEAKERS CALL FOR ARMED STRUGGLE AT CUBA SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE.

Several speakers at American Continental Congress in Solidarity with Cuba which opened in Rio de Janeiro on March 28th, stressed that the only road to liberation in Latin America was that of armed struggle.

Victor Ochoa, Venezuelan delegate, and leader of University Students, said that the youth of his country by fighting guerrilla warfare in the mountainous regions were also defending Cuba. He condemned the Betancourt Government of Venezuela for co-operating with US imperialism in trying to smother the struggle of Venezuelan patriots. Luis La Fuente, Peruvian delegate of the left-wing movement in that country, said, "The only road is that of the Cuban revolution, namely, the road of armed struggle." He added that the Latin American revolution was also a part of the world revolution.

Francisco Juliao, Leader of the Peasants' League of North-East Brazil said that the road of Latin America was that of Cuba. "We have a common cause, because we have a common enemy, US imperialism". Father Alipio De Freitas said that the road of Cuba was the road of all Latin American peoples. "Every mountain in all our countries can be turned into the Maestra mountain".

ALGERIAN JOURNAL SUPPORTS CHINESE LINE.

The March 30th issue of African Revolution contains an editorial which argues "The people are the decisive factor". This is a reiteration of Mao's famous formula, and the Chinese leader is quoted by name in this article. The editorial declared that it was particularly important when imperialism was brandishing atomic weapons to recognise that the decisive factor was not arms but men. This was because the colonial problem was the centre of contradictions in the world today. The crisis of imperialism had become more acute because of the waves of the National Liberation Movements. These waves would be decisive if the liberation struggle was carried to a successful conclusion, the article said. It then goes on to give an appraisal of the 'paper tiger' thesis of the Chinese.

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According to the Financial Times Kremlinologist, there are indications of a political crisis developing in the leadership of the Russian CP. Whilst not wishing to subordinate our own views to his, it is perhaps worth considering the evidence that he musters, and analysing the situation on this basis.

"The first indication in the West of a possible crisis was given in a despatch from Moscow published in the usually well-informed Italian CP paper L'Unita last Sunday. Without mentioning Khrushchev personally, the report spoke of Moscow 'going through a delicate political period'. It spoke of difficulties in foreign policy and in agriculture, and industry at home. Non-Communist newspapers followed this up with an assertion that Khrushchev had been pushed into a minority in the Presidium of the Communist Party Central Committee by Mikhail Suslov, the 'ideas man' generally thought to stand for a 'harder' line in domestic and particularly in foreign affairs. The other Italian Communist Paper, Il Paese, yesterday compared all these rumours with others which proved unfounded in the past. But it found it worthwhile to repeat them all at length, which puts its unbelief in doubt. Besides economic difficulties, it mentioned alleged dissatisfaction among Soviet military leaders over the fact that Mr. Khrushchev has not been able to achieve a U.S nuclear tests ban. As evidence that nothing is amiss in Soviet politics, Il Paese quoted an Izvestia report on Monday to the effect that Mr. Khrushchev was in Gagra on the Black Sea, where he had received a delegation of Somali Parliamentarians. Meanwhile Sunday's edition of the Soviet official newspaper Pravda reached London yesterday (Tues.) Its front page carries a large report of the Gosplan (State Planning Commission) which took place on March 29th. All the top economic planners are reported as having been present..... Mr. Khrushchev's absence is particularly surprising in view of the fact that current Soviet planning methods were subjected to severe criticism.

"The trend of the meeting clearly follows the ideas insistently advanced by economists over the past six months, and only cautiously welcomed by Mr. Khrushchev. The only time that he is known for certain to have had a majority against him in the Central Committee Presidium was in 1957."

CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY EXPOSES NEHRU'S "SOCIALISM". Special Correspondent.

The April 1st issue of "Red Flag", the fortnightly theoretical journal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, featured an article entitled "What kind of stuff is Nehru's much advertised 'socialism' ?" The article makes a critical analysis and exposure, in the light of a wealth of facts, of the "socialism" that is sometimes attributed to Nehru. The article consists of three parts, the first being an analysis of what Nehru terms economic planning, the second part shows how the economic planning only benefits the exploiters and foreign monopolies, and the third deals with the so-called "socialist pattern of society" in India.

The article includes a violent attack on the Yugoslav CP for its defence of Nehru's socialism : "In recent years, however, the Yugoslav Tito group of revisionists - renegades to Marxism-Leninism - have asserted time and time again that the method of national economic planning is being ever more widely applied under capitalism and has become an important requisite for the 'peaceful transition' from capitalism to socialism. They have even used India's execution of an 'economic construction plan' and other things to support their claim that India is realising its goal of socialism", the article says.

An "Aid to Algeria" Committee has been established in London, under the Chairmanship of John Baird M.P. The committee has a substantial list of sponsors including more than a dozen MP's, and a number of prominent figures in the academic and Trade Union fields. More sponsors are to be approached. The Committee has so far concerned itself with guaranteeing the maximum British representation at the forthcoming Conference for Technical Aid to Algeria to be held in Algiers during the last week of May. Algeria Committees throughout Europe, in France, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, West Germany, Sweden and Denmark are all co-operating to make this conference a success and the maximum publicity is being organised for its objectives.

The British Committee is to make a drive for money to finance the British delegation, and Trade Union Branches, CLP's and many individuals are being approached for assistance. Bulletin readers who wish to assist this committee may send their donations, and those of friends to the Treasurer, Aid to Algeria Committee, W. Griffiths, MP, at the House of Commons, London S.W. 1. Recent events in Algeria, full of promise for the Socialist Revolution demand the widest possible support from British socialists in the working-class organisations. The Aid to Algeria Committee has more than a humanitarian impact, insofar as technicians are being encouraged to go to Algeria and assist the farmers collectives and the re-establishment of industry on a socialist basis, the assistance rendered will have political implications. Anyone interested in establishing Aid to Algeria Committees in the provinces, should contact, John Baird MP, 7, Lyndhurst Gardens, London N.W.3.

SWEEPING SOCIALIST MEASURES IN ALGERIA.

Speaking on Television last Friday the 29th March, Ben Bella, the Algerian Prime Minister announced the collectivisation of the so-called abandoned properties. The latter name will no longer be used and the properties will be described as workers' and farmers' collectives in the future. It is estimated that the measures will effect 2,500,000 acres of Algeria's best farmland and more than 500 industrial and commercial enterprises. In his speech, Ben Bella said that the settlers had been given a chance to return and co-operate with the workers' and farmers' collectives which had spontaneously taken over the properties. However, none returned and now the properties would be handed over to the workers' and farmers' collectives.

Meanwhile local committees are taking over estates (not all of them "abandoned") and on March 31st the estate of the notorious colonialist Henri Borgeaud was nationalised, and taken over by a seven man administration committee. This estate, some 22 miles west of Algiers, consists of over 4,500 acres of rich farmland and properties. Borgeaud possessed thousands of acres of vineyards, was the head of ten big companies and the majority share holder in two tobacco firms. The next day, the estates of Germain and J. Aversang were taken over. These comprise more than seven thousand acres of rich land. In the Orleansville department, 3 estates totalling more than 20,000 acres have been taken over, and similar takeovers have occurred in Blida, great Kabylia and greater Algiers. In the latter over 13 people who 'bought' abandoned properties were expelled from them. Last October, the Algerian Government annulled all contracts and transactions in "abandoned properties".

The Spring issue of the International Socialist Review will soon be available to readers, and can be obtained from the International Bookshop. This issue includes an important article by Ernest Germain on the Crisis in the Common Market, in which the idea is again voiced of an all-Europe Trade Union conference, embracing all the different denominations of Trade Unions, to discuss common problems and strategy. A. Sadi writes on "Arab Socialism" and the Nasserite Movement", and there is an article on the phases of the Cuban Revolution by Luis Vitale, together with the usual book reviews, etc. Bulletin readers wishing to obtain copies of International Socialist Review are asked to write to the Bookshop for copies. This issue is of particular interest because it is not confined to North American affairs, but carries articles on different world problems. (Copies 2/6 post free).

MASSIVE ANTI-NUCLEAR DEMONSTRATION IN BRUSSELS. From "La Gauche".

The 29th March issue of La Gauche carries an interesting article on the 10,000 strong march against nuclear weapons held in Brussels the previous Sunday. La Gauche, a colourful left-wing weekly, can also be obtained from the International Bookshop, 8d post free per copy. It is in the French language only, however. Next week we intend to include a precise translation of an article on the dispute in the Belgian Communist Party.

Large contingents flooded into Brussels from towns such as Anvers and Liege and as a result of the march, local committees to prepare similar events are being formed in various areas. One notable fact, says La Gauche, was that thousands of young people, both Flemish and Walloon, co-operated in the march without "a single linguistic incident". As in Britain, La Gauche reports the large numbers of apolitical young people participating in their first political action as a result of the March. La Gauche calls for the formation of March Committees in every school, and calls on the anti-nuclear campaign to adopt a permanent character to popularise its ideas, and develop collective opposition to war. Speaking at a Rally, Claude Thiry, national president of the JGS (Jeunes Gardes Socialistes) called for opposition to NATO nuclear weapons on Belgian soil.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST MASSACRES IN IRAQ.

A demonstration outside the Iraq Embassy in London has been called for next Tuesday, April 9th, to protest against the butchery of peasants and workers in Iraq by the new anti-Communist regime. The participants in the demonstration are to assemble outside the Albert Hall at 7. p.m. This Saturday, April 6th, a demonstration is to take place in Glasgow against the killings.

COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS -- NO FRATERNITY AMONGST THE BROTHERS ?

Recent national CP Congresses in Western Europe have provided opposing sides in the Sino/Soviet dispute and champions of Albania or Yugoslavia opportunity for scoring off their opponents when making "fraternal greetings". It has almost become customary for international differences in the Communist Parties of the world to be settled or aired, in these greetings. But not so with the British CP. They obviously intend safeguarding their neutrality, or perhaps preventing the disputes from involving their members to any great extent. Thus, the Daily Worker: "....owing to pressure on the timetable, no fraternal delegates from other Communist Parties have been invited". Precedent - or precaution ?

1533

The Budget has been the centre of political discussion this week. Elsewhere we have commented on the political aspects of this, but here, for the information of readers, we are including a few notes about the terms, etc., which are used. These are based upon the Treasury Bulletin For Industry, March 1963. Readers will probably find it helpful to have available a copy of a newspaper giving the Financial Statement, when reading this.

For historical reasons - to make it easier for Parliament to keep a check on public spending - most Government receipts and payments have, by law, to be included in a single exchequer account. It is the practice to draw a line across the middle of this account, and to include, above the line, (a) all expenditure which the Treasury does not have statutory authority to finance by borrowing, and (b) receipts which do not have to be applied specifically to service the National Debt. On the expenditure side, the bulk of the items fall under Supply services - the ordinary expenditure of government civil and defence departments, for which Estimates have to be submitted and voted upon by Parliament annually. By the time the Budget is introduced, the Estimates of expenditure will have been presented to Parliament and published, so that the expected total of expenditure which comes under Supply Services will be known. The remaining payments above the line, Consolidated Fund Services - consist of expenditure which does not have to be voted annually by Parliament since this type of expenditure has been authorised once and for all. The greater part of this is the interest on the National Debt, but it also includes payments to the Government of Northern Ireland, the salaries and pensions of judges and other items.

Expenditure shown in the Financial Statement below the line consists of expenditure which Parliament has authorised to be financed by borrowing - mostly loans by nationalised industries, public authorities, overseas governments, etc. These payments are made out of the Consolidated fund, and do not have to be voted annually by Parliament. Receipts below the line include repayment of loans and interest; the interest element goes towards meeting the total interest which the Government pays on the National Debt, the rest of which appears above the line. It is inaccurate to think of "above" and "below" the line as separating all current from capital expenditure. It is true that most of the expenditure below the line is of a capital nature; but some capital expenditure is also charged above the line. Government accounts do not of course, make the rigorous distinction, common in business between current and capital payments. Expenditure of any kind can be charged to revenue; and some capital payments - such as the cost of Government buildings and certain low-interest loans - are usually charged above the line. The character of expenditure below the line has changed a good deal in the last ten years, reflecting major changes in policy. One such change was the decision that the 1955 Budget decreed that local authorities should be encouraged to borrow as far as possible in the open market. This led to a considerable reduction in advances to local authorities

The question of how much of the total government expenditure and Government loans is covered by taxation and how much by borrowing is, of course, the determining factor; and it is this decision which affects the size of the surplus or the deficit above the line and below the line. When there is a surplus above the line, this surplus has to be devoted, by law, to the redemption of debt. But, in practice, it has come to be regarded to be an offset to the increase in debt implied in the net lending programme below the line. An above the line surplus is therefore said to be applied to the reduction of the deficit below the line. Any remaining deficit is sometimes referred to as the overall Budget deficit to the net borrowing requirement on budget account. This determines the size and rate of increase of the National Debt.