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SIX IN SEVEN TELL LABOUR: TURN LEFT!

'Critics within Labour's ranks are overwhelmingly of the opinion that Labour's policy needs to become "a more definite Labour policy".

'For every one Labour supporter who says that the Labour Party would be less attractive if the party moved to the Left, there are six who say that such a movement would make the party more attractive to them . . .

'Even if Labour were to follow a policy which could be scarcely separated from that of the Conservative

Party, it would not make any appreciable inroads on Conservative support.

'Moreover, the current Gallup poll provides no evidence that a Right-wing Labour policy would be successful with the uncommitted voters . . .

'The poll clearly shows that if Labour is to win the election, by virtue of a positive appeal, the party has to turn to the Left and establish an image that is distinct from that of the Conservative Party.'

—News Chronicle, August 25

By GEORGE CUNVIN

THE Tory Party is preparing for an early General Election. It has changed its views on the validity of public opinion polls. Not so long ago that doughty champion of Toryism, Lord Hailsham, was pouring scorn on 'government by referendum'. Now, as the Gallup poll reveals a swing towards the Tories, a wave of optimism passes through their ranks and the demand for an autumn General Election grows.

They find it difficult to believe the verdict of the public opinion polls. They know that they have done nothing to ease the lot of the great majority of people.

Quite the reverse. So they cannot understand why there should be this swing in their direction. And they know full well that these halcyon days will not last very long.

A grave economic depression, with all that means in terms of unemployment, hardship and misery, is not far off. In the Middle East and Cyprus Tory foreign and colonial policy is leading to disaster for the imperialism it seeks to serve.

The Tories cannot parade Harold Macmillan for ever as a front for Tory mis-government.

Programme needs drastic revision

But what of Labour? The Gallup polls confirm the trend revealed in recent by-elections: that Labour is losing ground. Despite Macmillan and the opportunities he has offered, Labour has failed to rally the working class to oust the Tories, let alone influence the middle classes whom the leaders of our party are always so anxious to woo.

Between now and the election Labour must do some hard thinking. The Scarborough Conference should demand drastic revision of the existing party programme.

We must get rid of the idea that 'uncommitted' voters can be won by passively confining opposition to the Tories to the parliamentary field.

Unorganized workers and the middle classes will suffer greatly in the coming depression. They will look to the Right and the Left for a way out of their difficulties.

They will demand action, not pious motions of no confidence in the House of Commons. And if they don't get it from the Labour movement, we will have all the requisites of a fascist movement in this country.

According to some political crystal-gazers October is the month Macmillan has in mind to go to the country.

Must organize against evictions

October is also the month when the Tory Rent Act will result in thousands of eviction notices being served up and down the country. And in many cases it will be middle-class tenants who will be affected.

WHAT IS BEHIND NOTTINGHAM RIOTING?

HATE SPEECHES ROUSE PREJUDICE, BUT TRADES COUNCIL FIGHTS FOR UNITY

From Our Special Correspondent

NOTTINGHAM

OVERNIGHT, this quiet and prosperous city has become Britain's Little Rock. Knives were drawn, razors flashed and bottles were thrown in last week-end's rioting, in which 1,000 coloured and white people were involved.

The riot was the culmination of trouble that had been brewing for several weeks.

About 2,000 coloured workers live in the St Ann's Well Road area, a dismal district of old houses and cobbled streets.

Began to be molested

They have been received with a mixture of tolerance and prejudice by the old inhabitants. But although the coloured population here has steadily increased, there has never been any outbreak of violence before.

Two or three weeks ago, however, coloured people began to be molested.

On one occasion three or four white youths demanded cigarettes from a young coloured worker, who was forced to turn out his pockets; other coloured men have been badgered in pubs about the colour of their skin and otherwise insulted.

Two weeks ago a group of young coloured lads were beaten up by white youths in the same area.

I asked Mr Roy White, a prominent member of the coloured community if the riot had come as a surprise.

'Not exactly,' he replied. 'Although there have been no previous incidents in Nottingham, I am not altogether surprised.'

'It would appear to me that possibly members of some anti-racial movement have come from outside the town to stir up race prejudice.'

Mr White did not think that unemployment or housing

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COMMENTARY

A WORKERS' CONFERENCE

EVERY reader of THE NEWSLETTER who supports the policy set forth in the discussion statement printed in our issue of August 16 should be asking himself questions such as these: Am I yet doing everything I can to help make the rank-and-file conference on November 16 an outstanding success? Have I made sure that all my workmates, branch members and friends have seen the statement? Have I discussed it with them and encouraged them to send in their views for publication in THE NEWSLETTER? How soon can I get a delegate elected from my shop, pit, building site, union branch or shop stewards' committee? How much money can I collect to help the conference preparations? Can I join—or form—a local campaign committee in my area?

The recent class battles have underlined the need for a conference where direct representatives of the ordinary workers can hammer out a militant policy to resist the employers' onslaught. Now the 'Three Wise Men', with their talk of more unemployment and their call for still smaller wage increases, have outlined the new stage in the bosses' offensive. The employers aim to give just enough in wage increases to ease the union leaders' task, while going ahead with sackings till they have created a reserve army of unemployed, whom they hope to use as strike-breakers.

Unemployment: this is now the main danger facing the British workers. Regardless of the spineless attitude of the leaders of the engineering unions, the fight for jobs must be waged in the most militant and aggressive way. Under the watchword of 'one man on the dole, everyone out' the workers must co-ordinate their fight, so that individual employers, instead of getting away with murder, are taught to respect the workers' power to defend their livelihood. Our conference can help arouse confidence among the workers in their ability to resist sackings; it can link rank-and-file resistance; it can plan a workers' counter-strategy that will be always two moves ahead of the employers.

At the same time there must be no slackening in the fight for higher wages. The engineers are right to reject the 3 per cent. 5s. 6d. a week extra for skilled men is a joke. The 7s. 6d. a week which the dockers' delegate conference accepted—without, be it noted, submitting it to mass meetings of the men—is also totally inadequate. Portworkers should repudiate this decision. And they should be on guard against the attacks the port employers are preparing on their standards under the guise of 'port efficiency'. Rank-and-file dockers should insist that any mechanization scheme must be accompanied by the reduction of working hours; pensions for old dockers; sick pay; longer holidays; an increase in fall-back up to the basic national minimum; no reduction in the manning scales.

Our conference will give workers in all trades the opportunity of thrashing out such problems as these and of laying the foundation for a national rank-and-file movement. There will be no 'big names' there; no inflated expenses, no luxury hotel accommodation. Just ordinary workers, intent on defending the interests of their class, and remembering all the time the lads who sent them and who trust them.

LABOUR (Continued from front page)

Between now and then a nation-wide anti-eviction movement, organized and led by the Labour Party and ready to take direct action—including industrial action—to stop evictions, would bring a surge of support from middle-class voters.

The Gallup poll also shows that more and more people think Gaitskell is not a good leader of the Labour Party. Gaitskell was put in that position because of his policy of reforming and taming capitalism.

It was thought that this would have a greater appeal to the 'uncommitted' voters than a full-blooded socialist policy. This defeatist outlook is now reaping its reward.

But it is not only middle-class voters the Labour Party has to win. It has to battle to retain the support of working-class voters and to win over those misguided workers who still vote Tory or Liberal.

Link political and industrial fight

Here again parliamentary activities alone will not have the desired effect. We are facing great industrial struggles.

Millions of engineers, miners, dockers and other sections of the working-class will be fighting for higher wages and a shorter working week, and against the growing threat of unemployment.

The Labour Party must actively intervene in this struggle and link the political fight against the Tories with the industrial fight against the employers.

The verdict of the Gallup poll must not be allowed to infect Labour's ranks with a spirit of defeatism. Rather it must be accepted as a challenge and a summons to put our house in order.

Only by a fighting socialist policy can we smash the Tories and bring a Labour victory.

INDUSTRY

KRAFT STRIKERS WENT BACK VICTORIOUS

By John Connor

AT 10.30 on Monday morning a bundle of picket posters tied up with string lay on the pavement by the Kraft factory.

The pickets were gone. A ten-day strike had won victory for 800 Kirkby workers in their fight for 100 per cent trade unionism.

Five strikers had been arrested and several injured in the past fortnight when blackleg lorries had tried to break the picket.

But finally the management had been forced to close down production in the factory.

Future condition of employment

On Monday morning officials of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers reported to a mass meeting that the strikers had won the following conditions:

Union membership was to be a condition of employment for all new labour. Those non-unionists who had remained at work during the strike were to be advised by the management to join the union and facilities granted to union representatives to persuade them.

In high spirits the mass meeting agreed to a return to work. At 9 a.m. the main body of strikers returned—the management had agreed to pay them from 8 a.m.

Soon only a handful of workers was left on the green in front of the factory.

Canteen girls were singing

They exchanged jokes as they carried blankets and began dismantling the big white tent which had served as headquarters for the round-the-clock picket.

Someone who had been in the factory came over and said: 'The girls in the canteen are singing "Who's sorry now?"'

Support for the strikers was strong in the Kirkby housing estates where most of the Kraft workers live. The strike can help the complete organization of the surrounding factories.

'See you next time!' called one of the workers as we left.

The bricklayer who was with me and who had worked on building the factory—which only came into full production twelve months ago—declared proudly: 'Well, the tradition went in with the bricks.'

CLOTHING WORKERS DEFY MANAGEMENT

From a Correspondent

AT the Sumries clothing factory, Leeds, 1,150 workers are defying the management's attempt to lengthen hours.

In May 1956 an agreement was reached between the management and the Factory Committee, with the knowledge of the union, whereby a 40-hour week was worked for 45 hours' pay.

In return the workers agreed to a tightening up of factory discipline—cutting out tea breaks, starting work dead on the buzzer, not closing down a minute or two early.

For some time this agreement was worked to the satisfaction of both sides, but just before Christmas last year the management called in the factory committee and informed it that they wished to go back to the former hours—i.e., a 44-hour week at 44 hours' pay.

This meant that the workers would work longer for less pay. They refused.

On Monday, July 28 (just before the summer holidays) the management announced that the factory was returning to the old scheme—without the workers' agreement.

Solid throughout the shop

The workers have refused to accept this and are continuing to work only 40 hours a week.

This is solid throughout the shop, even though they are being paid only for the 40 hours, and not for 45 as before.

They are arriving for work at 8.30 a.m. and leaving at 5.30 p.m., as before, even on the days when they are supposed to start at 8 a.m. and finish at 6 p.m.

Under the new scheme the dinner hour is from 1 p.m.

to 2 p.m. The workers are continuing to take a dinner hour from 12.30 to 1.30.

One day the management locked the doors till 2 p.m., but next day the workers were still solid and the doors have not been locked on them since.

TOOLROOM WORKERS' BONUS FIGHT

By Our Industrial Correspondent

RECENT two-day strike by toolroom workers at the British Motor Corporation firm of Fisher and Ludlow, Birmingham, ended in substantial success.

One of the strikers, Tom Culme, who is a keen and active branch member, told me that the toolroom workers have a bonus that is dependent on the amount of tools turned out.

Two months ago the bonus dropped by 6s. a week, the firm alleging that tool output was down. This led to grumbles.

Straight after the August holidays the firm cut the bonus by another 6s. a week. The shop stewards disputed that output was down, and, in the words of Bro. Culme, 'We all felt there was a little jiggery-pokery going on'.

The 600 toolroom workers decided to take action on Monday, August 18.

Put forward usual formula

The firm put forward the usual formula: 'Return to work and we will discuss this.' The strikers countered by declaring: 'We return only if the tool bonus is immediately frozen and the latest cut restored, to be followed by immediate discussions on the question of this bonus.'

The firm agreed to freeze the bonus, and agreed to give the workers back two weeks of the 6s. cut in the form of an 'ex gratia' payment.

This is to be followed by discussions with the shop stewards for an entirely new bonus scheme that can be acceptable to the men and management.

JOBLESS PLUMBERS GET UNION CRACKING

Out-of-work plumbers on Merseyside have been meeting to discuss unemployment in their trade.

They sent a resolution to the district secretary of the Plumbing Trades Union asking for an emergency district committee meeting to discuss whether a local overtime ban is necessary and the need for a rota system for the allocation of work.

The district secretary has agreed to call the meeting.

Midlands Militants are on the Move

By STAN YAPP, Birmingham AEU convener

DECISION of THE NEWSLETTER to call a rank-and-file conference in London on November 16 is a wise one, and must commend itself to militants who are more than merely concerned about the way things are going.

Even more important, the preparatory work for the conference—mass activity, campaigning, help to militants in their factories and localities—will arouse large numbers of workers from their apparent inactivity (which is to a large extent due to the crisis of leadership in the trade union movement) to meet the onslaught on working-class standards and organizations now developing.

The economic crisis makes it imperative that the workers answer in their own way the employers' 'get tough' policy and the trade union leaders' weakness, vacillation and compromise.

This means the formation of rank-and-file movements, linked regardless of different unions and the formal boundaries between trades.

Large, active and representative

Without mobilizing the whole weight of the working class it is doubtful whether we can maintain standards won in past struggles.

In Birmingham the Militant Workers' Movement, consist-

ing of engineers, building trade workers and public employees, is consciously applying itself to the task of building a large, active and representative organization, aware of the economic situation and the measures that need to be adopted.

This movement grew out of the sell-outs in the Midlands, which showed clearly the need for an alternative trade union leadership.

Our aims are summed up quite simply: 'To ensure that our unions at all times stick to the very cause of their formation, namely, militant organs of working-class struggle.'

Our policies are also clearly expressed, free of the phrases in official union statements which enable officials to talk one way and act another.

Strike to defend jobs

'To vigorously combat redundancy with the demand that the unions be prepared to swing large forces into action behind members who strike to keep redundant workers on the books until alternative employment is found.'

This becomes even more important now that the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions has decided it has NO policy on one of the most crucial issues facing thousands of workers.

(Continued overleaf)

MILITANTS (Continued from previous page)

It was no consolation to hear Bro. Claude Berridge declare: 'There is no virtue in consistency' and 'We may go first one way and then the other.'

Ted Hill, wishing to shelve this problem until the return of a Labour government, can now watch shop stewards' committees and district committees 'fighting' redundancy locally with no real guarantee of official backing even though effective action outside the confines of one firm is the only solution. And this is leadership!

2 The 40-hour week

'The fight for the 40-hour week and less, without loss of pay, to stop growing unemployment.'

This contrasts sharply with the unrealistic attempts by the 'Confed.' to secure agreements with the employers to 'reduce by stages' the present 44-hour week.

In local struggles the four-day or even three-day week has been progressive in order to save fellow-workers from dismissal.

'Sharing of poverty' was thus accepted, on certain occasions, but was in no way meant to be a substitute for an all-out fight for an immediate reduction of hours without loss of pay.

3 Consultation with the members

'No strike to be called off by trade union leaders without first ascertaining, by vote at mass meetings, the views of the workers on strike.'

The capitalist Press calls for secret ballots among workers against strike action. But when sell-outs occur it does not call for those involved to decide whether to continue or not.

During the bus strike the voicing of garages not to wind up the dispute was described as 'the mob ruling the elected leaders'.

4 Weapons of the capitalists

'No recourse to arbitration or courts of inquiry as these have been absolutely proved to be weapons of the capitalist class and its Government, who use the boards to betray the just claims of the members.'

Unfortunately all too many recent examples can be quoted to show that officials, fully aware of the composition and outlook of these bodies, headed off the militancy of their members by reference of claims to arbitration and insisting, in most cases, that they are 'honour bound' to accept decisions with strings attached.

Mepal Marchers Appealed to World Labour

By BOB PENNINGTON

UNTIL very recently Mepal (Cambs.) aerodrome lay in disuse. Grass had begun to sprout on its runways. Its big black hangars were gaunt and empty. Its grey concrete control tower collected only cobwebs and dust. Mepal's contribution to the dispatch of death and destruction seemed to be over.

Now there is activity at Mepal once again. Outside the main gate a black board with yellow letters announces that the Robert McAlpine Construction Co. is at work.

McAlpines are laying the foundations of one of Britain's first rocket bases. Mepal is to dispatch death again—and this time on a more sinister and powerful scale.

SILLY 'SECURITY' BLANKET. But, despite the silly attempts to smother news of Mepal's rebirth in a 'security' blanket, people are protesting.

Last Sunday over 300, at the call of Cambridge Labour Party, marched the six miles from Ely to Mepal to protest against the Tory preparations for thermo-nuclear war.

In the march were lads like Dai Evans, a stocky, 21-year-old Welsh labourer who had hitch-hiked 300 miles from his native Pembrokeshire 'to help bring public attention to what is happening'.

There were men like Councillor W. G. Russell, who had travelled over with a coachload of Romford Labour Party members.

NORWOOD RESOLUTION. Councillor Russell, who was a delegate to last year's Labour Party conference, told me:

'I voted for the Norwood resolution—and I still believe we have to fight to make that the policy of the Labour Party.'

Behind the banner of the Cambridge branch of the Electrical Trades Union marched John Clarke, who is chairman of the Cambridge City Labour Party, and

who believes that 'we should follow the example set by the Yokohama dockers'.

Another supporter of industrial action against the H-bomb and the rocket-bases was Ivor Jordan, a member of the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers and chairman of Cambridge Trades Council.

'My union branch is on record for declaring work on these jobs "black",' he told me.

WORLD LABOUR MOVEMENT. When the marchers reached the site they heard John Horner, general secretary of the Fire Brigades Union, moving a resolution calling for a campaign against the tests, the bases and nuclear diplomacy—and for 'the defeat of the Government'.

The resolution added: 'From this new centre of danger, a rocket base in eastern England, we call upon our fellow members of the Labour movements of the world, east and west, to think and act with us now to save peace.'

NEXT TWO STEPS. What now? Says Peter Cadogan, who organized the march: 'It is rather early to judge but it really looks as though we have beaten the Government in the first round.'

'That is to say, we have utterly destroyed the myth of "security". We have exposed to full public examination the rocket sites and the policy of building them. That was the essential first step.'

'The next two steps are to implement the international Mepal Appeal by active contact with local socialist and trade union organizations throughout the world; and to see that the significance of Mepal is not lost on the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party conference.'

'The Labour Party and trade unions locally must now take matters into their own hands. This is the only way to resolve both the crisis of policy and the crisis of leadership.'

5 Brian Behan was right

'All union officials to be elected and to receive a standard of living no higher than the average wages of the members they represent.'

How right was Brian Behan (The Newsletter, August 23) to point out the grossly inflated expenses paid at conferences. Salaries of certain officials are only half of the expenses they receive in cash or kind.

6 Protect our shop stewards

Protection of shop stewards and militants.

Employers' moves against strong shop stewards' committees in sacking conveners and leading stewards on trumped-up charges are perhaps a prelude to attempts to smash workers' organizations altogether.

Victimizations are not combated as they should be by executive councils, and many suspect that tacit understandings exist between managements and national officials about committees that have caused leaders 'embarrassment' by taking direct action when hours of negotiation have proved fruitless.

* * *

These are some of our policies. But our group is not a discussion forum. We discuss only in order to engender action and we believe in helping every group of workers involved in struggle.

We helped bus strikers

In the London bus dispute we arranged collections, organized factory gate meetings, sold the Strike Bulletin and took a delegation of strikers around branch meetings.

We invite workers involved in disputes to address us. We seek to learn lessons from these disputes. The sacked convener from the Yorkshire Engineering Co. amply justified point 6 of our programme.

Our rank-and-file movement can do much. But very much more can be achieved by hundreds of such committees linked together and fighting for trade union principles.

RENTS**KILMARNOCK TENANTS SMASH A SCHEME TO RAISE COUNCIL RENTS**

From a Correspondent

'WE'VE WON, we've won!' was the cry that rang through the crowded Grand Hall, Kilmarnock, on Monday night, as tenants were told that the Town Council had unanimously decided to rescind its decision to impose a rents differential scheme.

Over 2,500 had gathered to hear the report of the deputation which had attended the Council meeting earlier the same evening.

The news—it meant victory in the first stage of the fight against rent increases—came at the end of a short but sharp campaign.

In July the Labour-controlled Council decided that in order to meet its housing deficit it would apply a differential rent scheme with the object of raising rents according to income.

Missives demanding information about the income of the tenant and his family, details of interest from Co-operative dividends and Post Office savings, national assistance or other money coming into the house, were sent to all tenants.

Support from Trades Council

The local Labour Party was evenly divided on support for the scheme, and local Labour Party members played a leading part in the formation of an ad hoc Tenants' Committee to oppose its implementation.

Full support came from the Trades Council and local shop

stewards' committees, which are already facing extensive short-time working with the prospect of redundancy in local factories.

In face of growing opposition from the tenants, the Council met in emergency session on August 20. Deputations from the tenants and Trades Council were received.

In support of their representatives, over 2,000 tenants demonstrated in pouring rain, bearing the slogans 'End the Means Test' and 'No More Money for the Lenders'. When the Council meeting ended, with the scheme still in operation, the Councillors were besieged by angry tenants and called for a police escort.

Half the missives, unsigned, were collected in the three days following the Council meeting.

Now the local authority has been forced to reverse its decision and withdraw the scheme. At the same time however it was stated that it will apply a flat rent increase, and it is this that the tenants will now have to fight.

But they have shown that by their unity they can win, and have established tenants' associations in every ward, together with a central co-ordinating committee.

FRANCE**WILL THE FRENCH WORKERS ACT?****LEADERS HAVE ABDICATED RESPONSIBILITY, BUT WORKERS CAN DEFEAT REACTION**

By John Archer

In preceding articles we have traced the historical forces which produced the possibility that de Gaulle, himself not a fascist, could come to power as a fore-runner of fascism.

The same prolonged political instability, the same economic boom on rotten foundations, have produced the mighty force of the French working class, which has not yet made its voice heard.

Many of the British Left fatalistically accepted de Gaulle, remembering Hitler's apparently unopposed march to power, and hoping against hope for a miracle.

Maybe after all he will prove to be the 'lesser evil'; maybe he will keep fascism out and leave the unions alone.

This is the last of four articles which John Archer has contributed to the debate on de Gaulle's coming to power. Previous articles appeared on July 12 (p. 188), August 2 (p. 196) and August 9 (pp. 201-2).

De Gaulle's position is precarious because his is a régime of unresolved crisis.

So far the workers have retreated before him, their majority paralysed by the leadership of the Communist Party and the CGT.

What little action the workers have taken this summer has been misdirected and futile. The Communist Party leaders have neglected a chance to wipe out the wretched remnants of the Socialist Party, to start to mobilize the workers for struggle and through them to win the leadership of the poor peasants and artisans.

Major springs remain unimpaired

Sending workers unarmed to 'watch out' for paratroopers when they ought to have been forming united front committees to wage an anti-Gaullist general strike—this simply reinforced the prevailing cynicism.

Yet despite these set-backs the major springs of working-class strength remain unimpaired, though as yet untapped. What are the grounds for optimism?

First, the working class in France has grown substantially since 1946 in numbers and in concentration. The boom has taught millions to aspire to full employment and a rising standard of life.

Secondly, the French workers are more isolated from 'official' society than in Britain, where the Establishment infects the workers with conservative ideas via the Churches, sport, adult education, social clubs and local government.

Thirdly, the Stalinist-controlled CGT can far less effectively paralyse its members—the most advanced sections of the working class—than the more highly organized trade union bureaucracy of Britain.

Thus in the great strikes of August 1953 hundreds of thousands of miners, engineers and railwaymen, in private and public employment, stepped beyond the limits of the official trade union machinery.

Forging a new leadership

The Paris postal workers have been waging a guerilla war for several years against the State employer and their union officials, forging a new leadership in their own ranks.

A few months ago the shipyard workers at Nantes broke through the 'official' barriers and sent the employers and Stalinist trade union officials huddling together in retreat.

This undefeated class hears the Communist Party leaders declaring: 'Central task: to unite in the referendum millions of noes to the fascist dictatorship.' Thus the political report to the meeting of the central committee in June

In this same report can also be found, buried under thousands of words: 'Finally, the defence of the demands and the rights of the workers is an important task.'

The militants cannot fail to see that, to start with, de Gaulle enters the referendum campaign with the odds in his favour—on this particular sector of the class struggle. For he will have millions of Algerians herded by the paratroopers to vote 'Yes'.

Workers who remember

In France the police and Civil Service will work for him. His demagogic but dynamic promises to 'clean up politics' will attract people who are not interested in politics and those who gamble on being on the winning side.

A primarily electoral campaign against those who rely on force and illegality will not rally millions of votes; it will merely help de Gaulle to win, for it offers neither an alternative to him nor a convincing show of force in opposition.

But the workers who remember the Resistance—many of them have retained their arms and have relatives in the barracks and the arms factories—will not want to confine their opposition to peaceful, negative propaganda.

They will see the primary need to answer the threats of the Right, and the dangers contained even in the proposed new constitution, by a show of their own force: by preparing, under the slogans of united class struggle, mass strikes and defence organizations of armed workers directed against the employers and the paratroops.

Nothing could more effectively demoralize the Right, or convince the poor peasants that the workers have an alternative to de Gaulle and that they mean business.

Rallying the workers in such activities would offset the impact of de Gaulle's votes in the referendum, and show the hollowness of whatever mass support he could gain by force, fraud or fear.

The French workers know that spontaneous action born of frustration can be a basis for a new advance. Marxists know that such action cannot carry a movement through to victory; for this a political leadership organized round a Marxist programme and drawing together the sectional industrial demands is necessary.

Not beyond their powers

But to the militant workers of France the very idea of party leadership has become suspect; old anti-political syndicalist ideas of 'direct action' are prevalent, in reaction to the communist leaders' abdication of their responsibility.

To recover from scepticism about politics, to find a programme of struggle which can unite the workers and rally the peasants behind them to build a political leadership which they can trust—this is a tall order, but not one beyond their powers.

For the capitalist class also vacillates; it also has not yet decided its future course. This allows the workers valuable time, which they cannot afford to waste.

Constant Reader | A War was Stopped

NOTHING so far in Harry Pollitt's 'Memories of a Communist Leader', now appearing serially in World News, is so currently relevant as the chapter on the Jolly George affair in his autobiography 'Serving My Time' (1940).

It would be a real service to the Labour movement if the Communist Party were to reprint that chapter now in pamphlet form.

For it shows how direct action against war by men on the job brought the mighty trade union machinery into action—and also that this came about only as the result of many months of slogging preparatory work aimed at just such an incident as the refusal of the East India Dock workers to load the Jolly George with munitions.

'Not by pacifist appeals but by action,' wrote Pollitt, 'can we retard and prevent war and build up that power and organization that can end capitalism, the cause of all wars.'

Counterblast to Cohen?

'If this committee imagines for a moment that we are going to confine ourselves to sterile parliamentary opposition at a time when they are making use of the most ruthless class policy . . . they really must think that all the guts have gone out of Englishmen.'

Thus spoke Aneurin Bevan on September 18, 1931, commenting on the National Government's plan to solve the

crisis of that time by 'economies' at the expense of the working class.

Nevertheless, so far as the official leadership of the Labour Party was concerned, opposition did remain within the parliamentary framework, and so the capitalists had their way.

It is up to the rank and file to decide whether things will take the same course this time.

Overtaken by events

WE hear little nowadays of a theme which only last year was a favourite in Socialist Forum discussions—'Strachey versus Marx', or how capitalism has overcome its contradictions.

Perhaps the recession is responsible for the muting of the trumpets recently. It would not be the first time that a revisionist's book was refuted by events before the printer's ink was dry, so to speak.

Inspired by the absence of a major commercial crisis for two decades, Eduard Bernstein brought out his famous critique of Marxism—and what happened?

Rosa Luxemburg recalls, in her 'Reform or Revolution' how hardly had Bernstein rejected, in 1898, Marx's theory of crises, when a profound general crisis broke out in 1900; seven years later a new crisis, beginning in the USA, hit the world market.

Facts proved the theory of 'adaptation' to be false. They

showed at the same time that the people who abandoned Marx's theory of crisis only because no crisis occurred within a certain space of time merely confused the essence of this theory with one of its secondary, external aspects—the ten-year cycle.

The description of the cycle of modern capitalist industry as a ten-year period was to Marx and Engels, in 1860 and 1870, only a simple statement of facts.

It was not based on a natural law but on a series of given historical circumstances that were connected with the rapidly-spreading activity of young capitalism.

Centralized flatties

THE Home Secretary's veto on the appointment by Gateshead's Labour Council of a locally-bred copper to be Chief Constable highlights an important contradiction between appearance and reality in our State structure.

Though the London police are quite openly outside the control of the London County Council and directly dependent, through the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, on the Home Office, provincial forces are in theory subject to the democratically-elected local authorities.

In practice, however, for a long time now the high cost of modern police technique has enabled the central Government to dictate in all essentials concerning the police in the provinces, as in the metropolis.

Continued refusal by Gateshead to bow to Mr Butler's views on who should be (or, more precisely, who should not be) their Chief Constable could mean withdrawal of the

police grant to the borough—equivalent to a 1s. 3d. rate, in a place which already has, at 23s. 6d., the highest rates of any county borough.

The Lawrence legend

THE revolt in Iraq has put an end to the system of indirect British rule in the Middle East which was devised by Colonel T. E. Lawrence.

It is curious that this subtle-minded imperialist should have been claimed as a sort of muddled anti-imperialist by the two communist authors who wrote about him—Ralph Fox ('A Writer in Arms', 1937) and Christopher Caudwell ('Studies in a Dying Culture', 1938).

Perhaps the best excuse for their illusions is that David Garnett's collection of Lawrence's letters was published too late for them to read (both were killed in Spain).

Lawrence wrote to Professor William Yale in 1929:

'It is my deliberate opinion that the Winston Churchill settlement of 1921-22 (in which I shared) honourably fulfils the whole of the promises he made to the Arabs, in so far as the so-called British spheres are concerned.'

The instrument of ultimate control in Iraq and Transjordan was to be the RAF, and several tribal rebellions were in fact put down by bombing from the air.

Lawrence wrote on this subject to Liddell Hart in 1930: 'It is of course infinitely more merciful than police or military action, as hardly anyone is ever killed—and the killed are as likely to be negligible women and children as the really important men.'

BRIAN PEARCE

LETTERS

THE CONFERENCE DISCUSSION OPENS

NEWSLETTER CONFERENCE MUST CHAMPION THE PART-TIME WOMAN WORKER

I AM sure the rank-and-file conference called by THE NEWSLETTER can play an important part in linking the problems and struggles of various sections of workers.

Many married women are employed full time, and pay insurance and union dues. Many more, however, consider as their three principal functions those of housekeeper, wife and mother, and take on a small subsidiary outside (or home) job.

This 'little job' is viewed as a temporary thing, easily dropped; the wife pays only industrial insurance, and often no union dues.

Many factories, e.g., food and confectionery, are run largely on this type of labour.

The length of the basic working week in itself encourages mothers to keep to the part-time job—in spite of the fact that they may make only £1 or £2 over the expenses incurred in going to work.

The struggle of organized full-time workers is pulled down by this source of cheap labour; and women's work is cheap because the domestic work of housekeeping and rearing children is unpaid.

Ocean of 'women's work'

The 'rate for the job' is an excellent slogan where a male rate exists, and we should remember that in many countries, such as France, equal pay is the general rule.

In many types of work, however, only female labour is used. The full adult rate should enable a woman to pay from her wage for domestic work, labour-saving devices, meals out, laundry etc., and for replacement of labour power (children), just like a man or a professional worker.

The 'little job' often takes thirty hours a week. It seems to be a device by which we earn a little money to make up the man's low wages, and in so doing undercut the men.

Even those sectors of industry which have equal pay are

pulled down by the ocean of unpaid and underpaid 'women's work'.

These are jobs with a scarcity of labour—e.g., teaching and transport—which would be able to achieve much better pay and conditions were it not that female labour generally is cheap labour.

Recruiting part-time workers

Union recruitment of part-time workers is hampered both by the casual nature of the work and by the multiplicity of unions covering such employment. Any rank-and-file links would be valuable to counter this isolation.

The programme for our campaign would cover the main problems if it concentrated on these fundamental points: a shorter working week; increased basic pay; a ban on overtime; the full rate for the job regardless of age and sex; part-time jobs to be reviewed and brought into line with the reduced working week.

London, S.W.2

Betty Russell

SHOULD GRAMMAR SCHOOLS BE 'LEFT ALONE'?

THE series of articles by Peter Cadogan dealing with the Labour Party's document on education, 'Learning to Live', have laid bare the reformist conceptions of the document's authors.

However I must disagree with the sentences in the last article which say:

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

Admittedly they are doing a good job within the limits of the tripartite system of education, which requires a rigid selection system.

They are doing a good job too in preparing children for an 'academic' examination whose only real use is as a stage

on the road to university entrance.

But the content of the grammar school course leaves much to be desired.

Comprehensive school for all

The final aim, which we should state clearly, is that all children should automatically go to the comprehensive school which serves the area in which they live.

When the building programme required to realize this aim has been completed the present grammar school buildings will be used as comprehensive schools for particular areas, i.e., selection at 11-plus will have been abolished.

Until the building programme (to provide new schools where necessary and to extend the facilities of existing buildings) is completed it may be necessary to use existing grammar schools for a while.

But this need only be a short while under a government that is prepared to slash its expenditure on nuclear weapons and war alliances and use the money on educating its future citizens.

Coventry

Joe Davies

ONLY WAY BUSMEN CAN DEFEND JOBS

AN arrogant and confident London Transport Executive has just announced that 600 maintenance men are to be made redundant.

After capitulating in the strike by refusing to extend it, then squashing the attempt of the delegate conference to resist the cuts, the leaders of the Transport and General Workers' Union have prepared the way for these sackings.

NOTTINGHAM (Continued from front page)

was a major cause of the trouble, although he recognized that both problems presented difficulties for coloured workers. (About 430 coloured men are unemployed out of a total Nottingham unemployment figure of about 2,000.)

'I would say the trouble stems from racial prejudice,' Mr White added.

The coloured people point out that some of them have worked and lived here, as other workers do, for up to ten or twelve years.

They are employed in the pits, in engineering factories, on the buses. They have houses and families and are members of their trade union and in some cases of the Labour Party.

On the picket lines

Relations between white and coloured workers have on the whole been good. Nottingham and District Trades Council fought for and won the right of coloured workers to be employed as conductors and drivers on the Corporation Transport.

Last year many coloured workers in the city took part in the country bus strike and stood on the picket lines with their white brothers.

Colour bar incidents in dance halls and pubs have been overcome with little trouble and the 4,000 or so coloured people have been accepted; a relationship which they want to continue.

But now they are afraid that other incidents will take place. A West African miner told me that recently he had had visits from the police on all sorts of pretexts.

On one occasion he was roughly ordered to remove a car from the front of his house, although the car was not his and he did not know who the owner was.

Afraid to answer door

More recently, a white person called at his house for lodgings, but on discovering that the house was occupied by a Negro, became insulting to the miner's wife, a young English

Busmen's working conditions are in jeopardy unless there is real resistance. I suggest that we need the organization of a rank-and-file movement.

The job of such a movement would be to put pressure on the officials, demanding a reversal of policy. Failing that, then a rank-and-file movement must take on itself the job of directly opposing cuts and redundancies, by strike action if necessary.

Holloway Busman

EARTHA KITT HAS A WORD FOR IT!

Eartha Kitt sings: 'The President's face, it gives me a thrill, especially on a thousand dollar bill.'

We got quite a thrill from the sight of his face on the five dollar bill that our friend Rocky Lewis of Guadalajara, Mexico sent us this week.

Rocky writes: 'I hope, and truly, that The Newsletter will continue and grow towards the position which I feel sure it is destined for in the World of Labour.'

It is supporters such as our Mexican friend who are sending regular donations that are going to ensure that The Newsletter is able to publish the special series of industrial supplements before the rank-and-file conference on November 16.

You too can help! First by sending us a donation now. Secondly by placing an extra order for the first of the supplements, which will appear next week. This will deal with the dockers' wage claim and the Cameron inquiry.

We send our thanks to readers in Birmingham who have donated £2 5s., a comrade in Wembley for £4 2s., a reader in Stanmore for £1 and readers in Liverpool, Hull and Nottingham who have sent donations.

IVY READ

girl.

She is now afraid to answer the door and is too nervous to allow her two children out of doors unaccompanied.

Another West African, also a miner, expressed surprise that the attack came from the youth.

'All the time we have been here,' he said, 'in my case over ten years, the young people have always been friendly. Someone has influenced them to do this thing.'

Some of the coloured people talked about speeches made by Lt-Col. J. K. Cordeaux, Tory MP for Nottingham Central, on the Market Square, where he is reported to have opposed the immigration of West Indians, Africans and Indians to Britain.

Fanned flames of hatred

They consider that these speeches have fanned the flames of race hatred, as has one speech made recently in Parliament when he referred to 'Indian parasites'.

Two days after the rioting the area was still heavily patrolled by police on foot, and mounted police and police cars roamed the streets.

There was an air of tension, but one saw nevertheless coloured and white workers walking and chatting together and coloured children and white children playing on the pavements, the best of friends.

ANTI-COLOUR-BAR PAMPHLET HELPS UNITE BLACK AND WHITE WORKERS

'Don't Blame the Blacks' is the title of a timely pamphlet brought out by the Nottingham branch of the Afro-West Indian Union.

It hits back at the 'Keep Britain White' propagandists, showing why West Indian workers come to Britain, and answering the slanders against them. It is a contribution to the fight for unity between white and coloured workers.

This pamphlet, which has a striking cover, can be obtained for sixpence, post free, from R. White, 16 Lomas Street, Nottingham.