

SOCIALIST REVIEW

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW, BUT INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

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Industrial Militant —

for

International

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SIXPENCE

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WHERE IS LABOUR GOING ?

Where are the 105,000? What has the leadership of the Labour Party done to drive away so many members in one year? Not since 1941, when the war drained them off, have so many dropped so quickly.

It is easy to say that over sixty thousand were disaffiliated without their having any say in the matter, and that forty thousand or so individual members disappeared because collectors did not come to their doors. But why did the General Secretaries get away with it, and what has happened to the collectors who used to go on the knocker? Is it that members are beginning not to care?

It seems so, and there is reason for it. In Liverpool and Newcastle, thousands of seamen stuck out on strike for nearly two months in defence of the most elementary trade union principles: the right to negotiate better conditions and to have direct representation on the job. Their union bosses denied them the use of their own union machinery in defiance of its constitution and in defiance of their duty to serve the men who pay their wages. And yet the Labour Party kept quiet. Industrial disputes are beyond the pale in the upper reaches of the party.

In St. Pancras, a major rents struggle has been smouldering for months. Time and again the local party has missed an opportunity to show its solidarity in action with the tenants, to direct the struggle against the Tory council and the Tory government. The slightest encouragement from 'on high' would have swept aside the doubters in the local party, would have enthused its members to bring a political message and a large organization to the tenants. But no. Rents and struggles do not seem to fit the vocabulary in use in our upper reaches, and the local party woke up too late and too gorgy to snatch the initiative.

These are not isolated instances. Throughout the country, whenever workers find themselves in action against employers and landlords, they meet at best a deafening silence; at worst, they find the party ganged up on the side of the bosses. No wonder there is not much interest shown in it, and no wonder too that a sense of isolation, impotence and demoralization is common currency in the constituency organizations. But the party leaders refuse to recognise the problem. They look round at their handiwork, talk in a tone of restrained disgust about 'working class apathy' and proceed to do the same as before.

We have reached a critical stage in the history of the party. Members are voting against leaders with their feet; leaders are becoming more and more impatient with 'apathetic' members and are straining against every vestige of control still exercised by the rank-and-file. The danger of final estrangement at Scarborough this year is serious. The platform has already been defeated on nationalization; there is every likelihood that it might have to accept a 'reference back' of its recommendations on the subject in its Annual Report. It is facing another defeat on defence or, at best, the most ignominious of pyrrhic victories. It will have every temptation—plus the reiterated advice of the capitalist press—to cut free from Annual Conference and declare the independence of the Parliamentary Labour Party and so reject the few remaining restraints exercised by the rank-and-file.

If we allow this to happen, the party is doomed. Its links with the trade unions will weaken, its working class content will dwindle even more; its name will be a confidence trick. The mighty British Labour Party will begin to look like that middle class rump headed by Guy Mollet in France.

Our job this Conference is, more than anything else, to defend the party constitution. Not only Clause 4 and the idea of nationalization, but the subservience of the parliamentary wing to Annual Conference, that is, the idea that the party leadership is there to defend the interests and further the policies of the party membership, the idea of democracy within the party.

It is only if this line is held that we can think of pressing the party into the service of the working class it is supposed to represent. Its job is to lead the industrial battles, to lead the rent strikes, to plunge into every attack on capital and landlordism—to organize workers and increase their self-confidence. It cannot remain alive unless it does these things. It cannot do them unless Gaitskell and his clique are foiled in their attempt to reduce the rank-and-file to the props and supernumeraries of their parliamentary pirouettes.



POLICE SEIZE RENTS DEMONSTRATOR

(by courtesy of the *Daily Worker*)

See "Glasgow to St. Pancras" p. 8.

THE SEAMEN'S STRUGGLE

BY OUR LIVERPOOL CORRESPONDENT

THE Seamen's Reform Movement had all the cards stacked against it: the indefinite imprisonment of Patrick Neary, which simultaneously deprived the strike of an outstanding leader and diverted attention in the Labour movement from the broad issues of wages, conditions and union democracy to particular clauses in the 1894 Merchant Shipping Act (important as these are); the success of the employers' scabbing apparatus, complete with NUS support and fares provided for scabs from Labour Exchanges at the public expense; the vicious sabotage of the NUS, which denied even branch meetings, first of all to strikers on the grounds that they went on strike (a situation unparalleled in any other union) and then seamen on leave, on the grounds that they were not members of the Liverpool branch (although their ship had docked in Liverpool, and presumably they would otherwise have to travel down to London for the branch meetings!); the isolation of the seamen in the face of dormancy from other sections of portworkers, the mood in the docks being such that the dockers were unwilling to have more than a one-day token stoppage even for their own demands; the passivity of the Labour movement generally, trade-union and Parliamentary, before the outrageous conduct of the ship-owners and NUS, and the heroic display of principle and stamina from three thousand men on the cobbles for six weeks, without dole, National Assistance, or strike pay, or even (in many cases) the wages due to them from their last trip.

COMPELLED TO RETREAT

The seamen were eventually confronted with a choice between methods of retreat: retreat through a gradual drift back to work, leaving a minority of the most militant exposed to reprisals from the employers and the union; or retreat in an organised fashion, collectively agreed and carried out, with the best bargain that could be obtained from the union in the form of verbal guarantees against victimisation and verbal promises to fight the 1894 Act. Wisely, the seamen decided on the latter course. It is to the shame of the Labour movement that the choice had to be made in this way at all.

The part played by the Liverpool Trades Council in the dispute was unique in an unofficial strike. It is to the credit of the mediation provided by the Trades Council that, before a return to work was agreed, delegates from the Reform Movement were given bargaining status with the NUS. However, at an earlier stage, the mediators issued an "agreement" between themselves and the NUS whereby a union official would address the men in return for the magnificent concession of branch meetings after a return to work.

It is also unfortunately true that the efforts of the local Labour movement were concentrated upon mediating an orderly return to work, rather than on assisting the men to win the strike. The President of the Trades Council ruled out of order a resolution for a one-day stoppage in solidarity with the seamen.

The seamen have gone back, scattered to the corners of the globe. The issues remain: their scandalous wages and conditions, the worm-eaten bureaucracy of the NUS. The Reform Movement must go on receiving the unstinted support of the Labour movement; a Liaison Committee of seamen, dockers, tugboat-men and other Labour workers has now been set up with an eye to the future. Solidarity cannot be limited to pious expressions of support for the repeal of the 1894 Act, although it is very

necessary to create a broadly-based lobby for this end to put pressure on, and when necessary expose, the NUS, which is committed formally to this demand. Certain questions must be put

BOSSSES' MAN

"I had fought, with other unions, against employers; I had fought, with the employers, against revolutionaries; now I was to fight, with the employers once more on my side, against other unions."

Captain Edward Tupper, former Organiser of the NUS, in *Seamen's Torch*, 1938, p. 284.

before the Trades Union Congress: the TUC expelled the NUS after the General Strike for supporting a breakaway miners' union; should not urgent outside pressure for democratisation be brought to bear on Yates, Scott and Co. to forestall the possibil-

ity of a breakaway seamen's union, which, however doomed, may be seen by angry mariners as the only alternative to the present state of corruption?

It is all very well for union officials to acknowledge privately, behind closed doors, the squalid character of the NUS. It is up to the rest of the movement to denounce the NUS openly and officially, from branch to Conference level. Paddy Neary was jailed, and his comrades risked the same treatment, for campaigning against the unholy alliance of ship-owners and union. By comparison, the inconvenience of moving a resolution or persuading a meeting is rather mild; our duty is very trifling by the standards of what has already been done and suffered, and yet upon it, multiplied a thousandfold, may depend any result that the seamen achieve from their struggle.

WILDCATS, BUREAUCRATS AND BOMBS

BY JAMES R. HIGGINS

THE annual Trades Union Congress junket was held this Year in the Isle of Man. The General Council big guns were as usual loaded to the muzzle with assorted clichés, platitudes and carefully prepared impromptu witticisms.

The first day of conference was, as is the way with such gatherings, a dull one with discussions on white collar organisation occupying much of the time. Although word was spreading that the Engineers were having difficulty getting round their mandate, the feeling was that Mr Carron would find a way, a surmise that was all too horribly justified.

One of the really big debates was that on the Tuesday, dealing with the General Council's so called report on Disputes and Workshop representation, which was introduced by Mr Williamson, who dealt briefly with the shortcomings of the bosses and at length on the alleged shortcomings of shop stewards. The main bone of contention (And on this point the NUM moved the reference back of the report) was the report's conclusion that drastic disciplinary action should be taken against leaders of Un-

official strikes. Moffatt of the mineworkers in moving the reference back, suggested that the door would now be open to victimisation and persecution of militants. Mr Cousins, however, despite his self appointed role of darling of the left, sprang to the aid of the General Council, presumably on the principle that if the bureaucrats don't stick together in the face of a challenge from the rank and file there might be a move for workers' control in the Unions. In the event the reference back was lost by a show of hands and trades unionists can expect attacks on stewards to be intensified in the future.

The next big debate was of course Wednesday's debate on Nuclear Disarmament; this was the debate in which Mr Carron managed to look to the left and the right and silly all at the same time without doing himself a mischief. The story of how the AEU voted for the official statement on defence and the contradictory motion from the Transport and General is too well known to bear repeating. The debate was interesting however in Frank Cousins' refusal to face up to the logic of the unilateral case necessitating a withdrawal from what he chose to call the aggressive NATO alliance. Nor would he face the fact (In this he is in the company of the orthodox CND leadership) that the only force that can destroy the bomb is the organised working class including the members of his own union. However the unilateral case won a resounding moral victory despite the acrobatic behaviour of the AEU delegates.

The revisionists were decisively rejected in the Clause 4 debate and the General Council were instructed to prepare a comprehensive report and conduct a vigorous campaign on

nationalisation which was to be expected after the various union conference decisions this summer.

The congress went on to accept a Post Office Engineering Union demand for an inquiry into hire purchase. The AUBTW had their resolution calling for the nationalisation of the Building Industry passed a long overdue policy decision.

That then was the 1960 conference marred by the ridiculous antics of Mr Carron (No doubt AEU branches will be letting Carron know what they think of his action in good time for the Labour Party conference). Cousins pursues his contradictory way and no doubt the pressure of events will convince him of the need for full scale mobilisation of working class strength against the bomb or consign him to the limbo which is already overfull of would be leaders of the militant left.

PALMY DAYS FOR UNILEVERS

"Those of us who have read the Report cannot fail to have been impressed with the best record achieved in the Company's history", remarked a delighted stockholder at the Annual General Meeting of Unilever on April 26th.

Unilever is the third largest concern in Britain. Only ICI and Royal Dutch Shell are larger. Its sales rose from £623 million in 1950 to £1,329 million in 1959. Trading profits soared from £52 million to £113 million. The capital employed rose from £319 million to £577 million. The rate of profit—i.e., the return of capital employed—was in 1959 just under 25 per cent. Not bad! (*Labour Research*, August 1960)

PROPERTY-OWNING DEMOCRACY

Mr Thorpe, Liberal MP, said that 0.2 per cent of the people held "at least half of the ordinary share capital" (*Hansard*, June 24, 1960)

The tiny minority of share owners had "never had it so good." Shares which were valued at nearly £11,000 million in mid-1957 were worth £19,000 million at the end of 1959. The 100,000 to 150,000 people who had some £5,500 million in mid-1957 were worth £9,500 million.

Busmen's struggle

WE print below a letter from London Busworkers addressed to Members of Parliament representing constituencies or residing within the operating area of the London Transport Executive. Copies have also been sent to Local Authorities within the LTE area, and a campaign is being conducted to inform the public about the facts of the busmen's case.—EDITOR.

SIR, We, the undersigned representative body of London busmen, invite your urgent consideration of the truly critical state to which the bus services operated by the London Transport Executive have now been reduced.

As a member of Parliament, representing a London constituency, and/or resident in London, you cannot fail to be aware of the widespread public concern and dissatisfaction that exists. We would like to acquaint you with certain facts and to suggest certain steps that might be taken with a view to remedying what is rapidly becoming a public scandal.

1. When the transport industry was nationalised in 1948, two main obligations were placed upon the London Transport Executive. (a) To provide an adequate and efficient public service. (b) To ensure that the undertaking pay its way. The London Transport Executive has monopoly rights for providing public transport facilities within an area of 2,000 square miles in which some ten million persons are resident.

2. When the London Transport Executive began its work in 1948, it operated 10,175 red vehicles manned and serviced by a staff of 56,339 drivers, conductors and maintenance men. Today, the number of buses operating has fallen to 8,712, and the operating staffs to 37,408. This has produced an overall decline in the service provided for the public expressed in the following figures: Vehicles operating 14.4% decline; Passengers carried 25.0% decline; Car miles run 30.0% decline; Staff employed 30.3% decline.

3. While the fall in the number of vehicles operating is smaller than that shown under other headings, the passengers carried and mileage run clearly indicate that a large number of vehicles are not now used to full capacity. The true measure of the level of public service provided is shown in the passengers carried and car miles run. These figures indicate that, since nationalisation, not less than 25% of the service previously provided has completely disappeared. In practical terms, these figures mean that, since 1948: One bus in every four has disappeared; One passenger in every four has deserted L.T.E. buses; One mile in every three has been cut from operations; One bus crew in every three have quit their jobs.

4. While the year 1959 represented by far the lowest level of transport service ever provided for the people of London

(and it has worsened at an accelerated rate in the first half of 1960) the financial results for 1959 were the best of any year since the industry was nationalised. More than £6 million profit resulted from L.T.E. operations, after payment of £4 million through the penal diesel oil tax, and a further £1 million in vehicle licenses and tax.

5. Even at the present depleted level of public service, the L.T.E. finds itself short of more than 5,000 drivers and conductors, a fact which daily makes the services more unpredictable and unreliable. This chronic staff shortage stems directly from the very poor working conditions and quite inadequate wage rates of bus crews. The measure of the decline of the wage level of the London busmen is shown by the fact that, whereas in 1939, they occupied 2nd place in the national scale of industrial wage rates, they have now fallen to 57th position. The basic, top-rate of the London bus driver is—£10.12.0d. compared with the £13.6.0. paid to the tube-train driver. Yet, both these men stood level on a £4.10.0d weekly wage in 1939. In such circumstances, the failure of the L.T.E. to either retain existing staffs—or to attract new recruits—is not difficult to understand.

6. In our view, all the foregoing facts clearly indicate that the London Transport Executive has failed to honour one of the principal obligations placed upon it by Parliament, i.e., to provide an adequate and efficient service for the people of London. We further fear that, unless urgent steps are taken to grapple effectively with this situation, a large scale breakdown of these vital public services is inevitable. The continued cuts in the bus services made by the L.T.E. clearly indicate that their whole approach to the question is purely economic—buses now run—or are cut out—purely on the score of whether profit can be derived—with no regard whatever for public service.

7. It is against this background of continued and systematic decline in L.T.E. services that we, through our trade union, have suggested that an Independent Public Enquiry should be set up to examine the reasons for the present situation of the L.T.E., both as our employer—and, in the wider and more important role as custodians of the people's transport services.

8. So far, the London Transport Executive has not appeared anxious for such an enquiry. We London busmen are acutely conscious of our public duty, and, in the most difficult circumstances, we endeavour to carry out our obligation. We feel, also that in return for the arduous and irksome duties we are called upon to perform, we are entitled to expect reasonable conditions of employment, and a wage level that does not lag behind comparable employment elsewhere.

We are confident that, as an elected representative of our people, you will give your support to our request that such a

Historic document

TO older workers, active in the Labour Movement 40 years ago, the names — Ramsay MacDonald — Philip Snowden — Jimmy Thomas — J R Clynes — have a familiar and distasteful ring. Thomas and Clynes were bosses of the NUR and NUGMW respectively. All four were leading Labour MP's. MacDonald subsequently became Prime Minister, all were Cabinet Ministers — Thomas, alas, being ultimately driven out of political life for "leaking" Budget secrets.

Both then and now, in socialist terms, all four would be classified as extreme right-wingers. Indeed, much harsher terms were used about them in their hey-day. Many a London demonstration has marched to the tune: "*Here's to Jimmy Thoms — the man who done it on us — here's to Jimmy Thomas — string him up.*"

How right this judgement was is borne out by the historic fact that MacDonald, Snowden and Thomas subsequently ratted on the Labour Movement and formed the notorious "National Government", whose slogan: "*The wages of all workers must come down.*" expressed very clearly the undying love of Toryism for all things working class.

Yes, this little bunch were undoubtedly a bad lot. Yet, ironically enough, it was this group that staged the only real and positive debate on Socialism that has ever taken place within the sacred precincts of the House of Commons. On 20th March, 1923, Philip Snowden, on behalf of the Parliamentary Labour Party Moved:— "*That, in view of the failure of the Capitalist System to adequately utilise and organise natural resources and productive power, or to provide the necessary standard of life for vast numbers of the population, and believing that the cause of this failure lies in the private ownership and control of the means of production and distribution, this House declares that legislative effort should be directed to the gradual supercession of the Capitalist System by an industrial order based on the public ownership and democratic control of the means of production and distribution.*"

The motion was opposed on behalf of the Tories by Sir Alfred Mond and defeated by 368 votes to 121. Much water has flowed under many bridges since that historic debate. All the principal protagonists are long since dead. Yet, the fundamental question raised — Capitalism or Socialism — is still the burning issue in the Labour Movement.

If Gaitskell today was asked to move such a motion in the House of Commons he would have an apoplectic fit. Indeed, today Labour leaders move motions — not FOR Socialism — but AGAINST it. Gaitskell wants "Clause 4" — the Socialist heart of the Labour constitution — cut out. Nationalisation, or anything smelling even remotely of Socialism, should be quietly buried. Some "socialist" (?) MP's believe that even the name "Labour" has become a political handicap. Platform, Rank-and-File Busmen's paper June, 1960.

SOLIDARITY WITH BUSMEN

BY JOHN CHILTON

THE bus workers who have taken the initiative to inform other members of the working class about the critical state of the London bus service are to be warmly congratulated; other trade unionists are interested in justice in pay and conditions and generally realise, when they are informed, that the busmen's fight for better treatment is their fight.

Unfortunately a strike by busmen immediately inconveniences other sections of the working class, but that inconvenience, and the effect on the capitalist pro-

duction machine is really a measure of their strength. But it must not be lightly used and, above all, other workers must be presented with the facts about their problems. The working class has always shown their solidarity when they understand and, despite bantering and moans, factory workers generally are realising that a shift-work job on the buses is underpaid and is no joke; otherwise we could assume that many would prefer to leave the factories and become transport workers.

The six weeks solid, democratically run bus strike of 1958 was a wonderful part of the post-war history of the working class. The London men and women, white and coloured together, fought solidly, as firm as a rock, for the principle of a wage increase to be spread over to include staff on the L.T.E.'s country-bus services. There was some sympathetic rank-and-file action by NUR members employed on the L.T.E.'s underground system in the form of a day's stoppage, and had the bus strike continued much longer, it would have snow-balled. *But the NUR officially let the busmen down by declaring that they were not in dispute with the L.T.E.* That

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Committee of Enquiry as we suggest is warranted by the critical state of the L.T.E. bus services.

We shall be happy to receive your views on this urgent matter and to provide you with any further details you may require. Trusting to have your sympathetic consideration and co-operation.

Sincerely yours,
Barking — Chelverton Rd. — Dalston — Kingston — Merton — Middle Row — North St. — Southall — Stockwell — Willesden — Enfield — Elmers End — Croydon — Loughton Victoria — Seven Kings — Branches. T.&G.W.Union.

LABOUR HISTORY

William Morris: REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST

BY HENRY COLLINS

"Was it all to end in a counting-house on the top of a cider heap, with Podsnap's drawing-room in the office, and a Whig committee dealing out champagne to the rich and margarine to the poor?"

ON October 3, 1896, William Morris died at the age of 62. Artist, craftsman and poet of considerable talent, he was first drawn into politics in 1876 by the threat of war against Russia in defence of the Turkish Empire. "I cannot help noting", he wrote in a letter which appeared in the *Liberal Daily News* on October 24, "that a rumour is about in the air that England is going to war: and from the depths of my astonishment I ask, On behalf of whom? Against whom? And for what end?" In May of the following year, as Treasurer of the Eastern Question Association, he felt able to answer his own rhetorical questions. In a manifesto addressed "To the Working-men of England" he wrote that the threat of war came mainly from a class of men who, "if they had the power (may England perish rather) would thwart your just aspirations, would silence you, would deliver you bound hand and foot for ever to irresponsible capital—and these men, I say it deliberately, are the heart and soul of the party that is driving us to an unjust war."

By 1883 Morris had broken with radicalism and joined the Democratic Federation, precursor of the Social Democratic Federation, Britain's first Marxist party. Although his main inspiration was aesthetic he soon came to realise that a society based on exploitation was ugly in its essence and could only cheapen life and debase art, life's highest product. In an article in *Justice* two years before his death Morris explained that "the desire to produce beautiful things" had been the leading passion of his life and that this had inevitably given rise to a "hatred of modern civilisation." "What shall I say", he wrote, "concerning its mastery of and its waste of mechanical power, its commonwealth so poor, its enemies of the commonwealth so rich, its stupendous organisation—for the misery of life!... So there I was in for a fine pessimistic end of life, if it had not somehow dawned on me that amidst all this filth of civilisation the seeds of a great change, which we others call Social-Revolution, were beginning to germinate."

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE

Quarrels within the S.D.F., arising out of Hyndman's personal autocracy and political intrigues, resulted in a split at the end of 1884. Morris, together with Eleanor Marx, Edward Aveling and Ernest Belfort Bax, seceded and set up the Socialist League. Its monthly journal was *The Commonweal* which Morris edited and, in large part, financed. During the four years of his editorship Morris contributed a large number of articles, many of them showing a remarkable creative insight into the nature of society and the future development of Socialism. The new society, Morris insisted, must not be merely a capitalism reorganised, with its frictions ironed out and its values retained. On his right he found Socialists, principally Fabians, so immersed in institutional reform that they lacked all vision of the quality of life as it might be under Socialism. "Surely they must allow", he argued, "that such a stupendous change in the machinery of life as the abolition of capital and wages must bring about a corresponding change in ethics and habits of life". This change must include the equality of social life, sex and family relations, education and leisure. As things were, the model Victorian family man was "an affectionate and moral tiger to whom all is prey a few yards from the sanctity of his domestic hearth", his wife's physical charms "but an appendage to her property" and the education of his children "a system of cram begun on us when we are four years old, and left off sharply when we are eighteen."

From Marx and, more directly, from Engels, with whom he had some personal contact, Morris learned to see Socialism as the product of a historical process and as the result of forces engendered by Capitalism's contradictions. Economics he never claimed to understand. "I put some conscience", he told the readers of *Justice*,¹ "into trying to learn the economic side of Socialism, and even tackled Marx, though I must confess that, whereas I thoroughly enjoyed the historical part of *Capital*, I suffered agonies of confusion of the brain over reading the pure economics of that great work." Perhaps it was as well that he remained ignorant of economics, since his Marxist contemporaries who prided themselves on their understanding of *Capital* predicted the absolute impoverishment of the workers as an inevitable outcome of Capitalism's economic laws. Understanding nothing of this, Morris foresaw another kind of obstacle to the achievement of Socialism. "I want to know and to ask you to consider", he wrote in a Fabian Tract in 1893, "how far the betterment of the working people might go, and yet stop at last without having made any progress on the direct road to Communism. Whether in short the tremendous organisation of civilised and commercial society is not playing the cat and mouse game with us socialists. Whether the Society of Inequality might not accept the quasi-socialist machinery... and work

it for the purpose of upholding that society in a somewhat shorn condition, maybe, but a safe one."

As it happened, Morris's remarkable insight led him into some serious errors in tactics. If reform was to be regarded as the enemy of revolution then, it seemed to Morris, the task of "making socialists" must absorb not their main but their total energies. Work in existing trade unions was irrelevant and the attempt to get socialists returned to Parliament positively harmful. Defending his policy of abstention from parliamentary activity, Morris emphasised "the necessity of making the class struggle clear to the workers, of pointing out to them that while monopoly exists they can only exist as its slaves: so that the Parliament and all other institutions at present existing are maintained for the purpose of upholding this slavery".

Abstention from parliamentary politics and from trade union work kept the Socialist League, for the most part, a propagandist sect remote from mass movements and from the vast, unorganised majority of the working class. Isolation bred despair and a tendency to look for short cuts. In this atmosphere the Anarchists secured control of the Socialist League and succeeded, in 1889, in deposing Morris from his editorship of *Commonweal*. After that he withdrew from the League and from active politics, founding, in 1890, the Hammersmith Socialist Society, a small body which concentrated on discussion, education and local propaganda. At about the same time he began the publication, in *Commonweal*, of *News from Nowhere*, perhaps the noblest and most inspiring Socialist utopia ever conceived.

ART AND SOCIETY

Despite declining health, Morris, together with Bax, revised and republished in 1893 an earlier joint work with the new title, *Socialism, Its Growth and Outcome*, one of the most comprehensive statements of Marxist political philosophy to appear in English in the nineteenth century. And on November 10, 1893, the *Daily Chronicle* published a letter from William Morris which gave perhaps the clearest expression to his views on art and its relation to the working class movement. He strongly disbelieved "in the possibility of keeping art vigorously alive by the action, however energetic, of a few groups of specially gifted men and their small circle of admirers amidst a general public incapable of understanding and enjoying their work." To live, art must break through to the people and, in an age in which the working class was rising to power, art must be democratised. So confident was Morris in the wholesomeness of this development that he was even "prepared to accept as a consequence of the process of that gain, the seeming disappearance of what art is now left us; because I am sure that that will be but a temporary loss, to be followed by a genuine new birth of art, which be the spontaneous expression of the pleasure of life innate in the whole people."

Visions of the future did not blind Morris to the realities of the present. As he wrote, the great and terrible miners' lock-out, which lasted for fifteen weeks, was drawing to a partially successful close. "The first step", he told the editor of the *Daily Chronicle*, "towards the new birth of art must be a definite rise in the condition of the workers; their livelihood must (to say the least of it) be less niggardly and less precarious, and their hours of labour shorter; and this improvement must be a general one, and confirmed against the chances of the market by legislation. But again this change for the better can only be realised by the efforts of the workers themselves. 'By us and not for us' must be their motto!" The enemy of bureaucratic, Fabian, reform-from-above, Morris had come to see the value of reforms extorted by working class struggle from the capitalists and their state machine.

¹. See E. P. Thompson: *William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary*, 1955, pp. 230-1.

². "How I Became a Socialist", *Justice*, June 16, 1894, republished as a pamphlet, 1896.

³. *Ibid.*

ROSA LUXEMBURG

a critical study by TONY CLIFF 4/6 (bound copies 8/6)
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From: 117, Carmelite Road, Harrow Weald, Middlesex.

CONGOLESE RAPED BY U.N. GENERALS

BY JOHN FAIRHEAD

PRESSMEN have made the most, as is their job, of the stories of rape and arson in the Congo. They have failed to report the biggest rape of the lot—the ravaging of a whole nation, its resources and its people, by the United Nations acting in the interests of international finance capital.

The pickings are not negligible. Whoever wins out stands to gain a lot of bomb-packing uranium as first prize, resources in copper and other ores which coined one billion, 810 million Congolese francs for the Union Minière in one year alone (1957) as a chaser, with the power potential of three new hydro-electric power stations in Katanga thrown in as consolation.

THE BELGIAN SCHEME

The attempted secession of Katanga under a Belgian-staffed administration with Moïse Tshombe as figurehead happened so soon after “independence” day that pre-planning is obvious. Unable to hold down the whole country by force and lacking the resources to wage an “Algerian” war, the Belgian rulers determined to sit tight in the wealthy Katanga mining province and let the rest of the country sink, pending the arrival of the Americans.

If possible an alliance could be made with Britain, behind God’s (Eisenhower’s) back, to link Katanga with the Central African Federation. This idea, said to be the brainchild of former Tory MP and Suez rebel Charles Waterhouse, a director of Tanganyika Concessions

(controlling transportation of Union Minière products) back-fired for political reasons. The British government could not afford to allow countries like Ghana and Tanganyika to pass directly into the American orbit, which they threatened to do if Waterhouse’s scheme went through and Rhodesian troops marched.

U.S. INTERESTS

The American capitalists, by contrast, are interested in an United Congo. They are staking their claim for the whole market and are certainly not interested in seeing the richest part of the country cornered by their rivals of the European Common Market. Because of Britain’s conflict with the latter, they have been able to count on London’s support, and have been in a position to act through the United Nations rather than going it alone, and with the aid and benefit of Dag Hammarskjöld and the Holy Bible.

They have made Joseph Kasavubu their mouthpiece. Lumumba and Lundula, his commander-in-chief, were already showing signs of following in the footsteps of Nasser and Nehru in manoeuvring between the power blocks (without, unfortunately, a base from which so to manoeuvre). This has driven Lumumba for the time being to lean heavily on the rival world bloc headed by the USSR.

CONGOLESE WORKERS

In all the chaos one small item of news has been almost

overlooked. On September 6 the workers of Leopoldville staged a 24-hour general strike, reminding the authorities that they were without wages and still had an interest in keeping alive.

It is a small beginning. Yet it is an indication that the last word lies, as always, with the producers of wealth if they choose to speak it. Instinctively the Congolese workers recognize that their interests lie not with Tshombe and the Belgians, nor Kasavubu and the Americans, nor even Lumumba and the évolués resting on Nasser and Nkrumah, supported for the moment by the Russians.

Their interests are simple, but sweeping. They want the Belgians and the Americans and the Russians out, and deserve the help of the international working class in carrying out that eviction. They want the factories for themselves and the land for their brothers, who till it. They need, and eventually are bound to get, a Party which will unite and prepare and organize them in the performance of these tasks.

CLASS AND PARTY

Surprising as it may seem, it is still necessary to insist on these two points: the primacy of working-class interests in any revolution and the need for a Party to lead the class. This would hold true even if there were ten industrial workers in a population of ten million. Luckily this is not the case.

It is sometimes forgotten (perhaps it is not known) that, after South Africa and Rhodesia, the Congo is the most industrialized sector of Africa. There were 1,198,000 industrial workers in 1956, before the rapid industrialization of the last three years. In May, 1957 there were in the Congo 89 enterprises employing more than 1,000 wage-earners each, of which 11 employed more than 10,000 each.

Basil Davidson wrote in *The*

IT'S RICH

An Indian-owned and managed engineering firm... has had an agreement with a Communist union representing 80 per cent of its employees. This followed a strike in 1953, and the basis for the present relationship is the insistence of the management that the union follow the Soviet Labour Code in which the responsibility of workers' unions for good discipline, observance of production standards, and low absenteeism, is stressed.

A. Myear, *Labour Problems in the Industrialisation of India*, Harvard UP, 1958, p. 122.

From Venezuela I travelled to Panama, where the Socialist Party was in the process of co-operating to gain the return of a liberal President. His success will probably mean that the Socialist Party will be represented in overseas Panamanian diplomatic missions.

Morgan Phillips, reporting on his Latin-American tour, *Labour Press Service*, July

Motorists who are killed to-morrow, the Fourth of July holiday in the United States, will be able to get a free funeral if they are registered with radio station KPAY, of Chico, California.

Observer, July 3

During his stay in Britain he had Stock Exchange ticker tapes installed in most rooms of his residence, including the smallest room in the house.

Daily Worker on Joseph Kennedy, father of the Presidential Candidate, and Ambassador to Britain, 1937-40, July 16

“I was unhappy because I could not get on with my wife. She would not do what I told her.”

John Whitehead at Central Criminal Court, reported in *St. Pancras Chronicle*, July 8

African Awakening: “It is a fact that the development of the towns has reached down into the tribal areas themselves. Tribal organizations run counter to the wishes of those who want to share in this development. The villagers seize hold of the ideas of urban civilization. They seek ways to apply them in their daily lives”. The population which had left the tribal areas increased from 1,017,000 (ten per cent) in 1945 to 3,047,000 (23 per cent) in 1957.

CONGO'S FUTURE

So much for the picture, foisted on the public by the Press, of the Congo as a sticky mass of peasants only waiting for the drums to bid them reach for war paint and feathers. It is most unfortunate that precisely this naiveté underlines the extraordinary article of Ioan Davies in *Socialist Review* (September, 1960), who tells us that UNO’s presence is essential to stave off tribal chauvinism.

It were kinder, in the light of events, not to remind Comrade Davies of his remarks about “naiveté” and “misinformation”. Let us instead repeat the twofold duty of socialists: to fight their own governments and force withdrawal of UN troops, and to speak out ceaselessly for the socialist programme in the Congo as elsewhere. Our voice is small: let it be clear. Right now tone is important. Volume comes later.

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Socialist Review

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During the last month we have received from:

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Hackney	4	10	0
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Islington	5	14	0
Lewisham	1	12	9
Harrow	2	19	6
Birmingham	3	10	0
Ramsgate	3	8	0
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REVIEWS

POLITICS THROUGH CRITICISM

The *Socialist Review's* inclusion of a Reviews page—this is the first—is not a cowardly retreat from the struggle on the political front, nor an attempt to extract free tickets for contributors; nor do we want it to become a place where readers are lectured in five-syllabled words. We intend not only to review books and films with obvious political content, but, without taking up too much of "*Socialist Review's*" valuable space, to discuss other important works of literature, theatre, cinema, music etc... An examination of these works need not be cocktail-party small-talk, but can serve two very important

political functions: one as showing the many possibilities of life in human society through the artistic expression of both individuals and groups, the second as being a way of criticising the existing society in further detail, as Geoffrey Weston does in his film review, and so supplementing our earlier conclusions about capitalism. Critiques like this will probably bring hand-grenades upon us from all sides—we hope so, and we shall include them in the next Reviews page; because we want this to be a discussion forum, not just setting things in their social and economic context in steady prose, but exposing them like the "Calypso" below; we don't want it to be the page of the pompous Critic.—Reviews Editor.

"SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER"

BY GEOFF WESTON

BASED upon Tennessee Williams's one-act play, "Suddenly Last Summer" is a strange combination of myth, symbolism, homosexuality and cannibalism and possesses all the ingredients of the Hollywood formula for sensation. Upon that level, the film fails, partly because William's eloquent and poetic dialogue, rich in image and suggestion is so different from the terse and emotive texts the commercial cinema has had us grown accustomed to, and partly because of the restrained and dignified yet dramatic performances of Elizabeth Taylor and Katherine Hepburn.

The plot is improbable. It tells of a wealthy New Orleans heiress (Katherine Hepburn) offering a mental institution a vast sum of dollars if a young surgeon is prepared to perform a brain operation, a frontal leucotomy, on her niece (played by Elizabeth Taylor) in order to eradicate the memory of the final fate of the heiress' son.

This young man, a poet named Sebastien, wealthy, idle and suffering from a severe Oedipus complex, spends his summers travelling in Europe that he may enjoy a suitable environment in which to write. His mother accompanied him and used her considerable charms to procure eligible young men to have homosexual relations with Sebastien.

During the summer with which the film is concerned, the heiress is unable to travel with her son to Spain and persuades the niece to go instead. Her task is the same: to procure for Sebastien. At this point the unexpected and the improbable occurs; Sebastien is chased and set upon by a gang of young Spanish urchins. On a hill, on the site of an ancient temple they catch him and in the sight of the niece, Sebastien is caught, struck down and eaten by these urchins.

This sequence of events is unfolded in a mental hospital wherein the niece is kept pending this operation and in a con-

dition of traumatic amnesia, the gradual breaking-down of which is encouraged by Montgomery Clift as a brilliant young neurosurgeon-cum-psychoanalyst. It is here that the director Joseph Mankiewicz gives us two sequences of a genuine and horrifying reality when the girl mistakenly enters the recreation room of the inmates, who then set up a vocal and physical reaction of great intensity.

In terms of characterisation "Suddenly Last Summer" fails to give a satisfactory explanation of the relationship between the poet and his cousin, (for example it is not clear how far she originally knew and approved of his homosexuality and whether she was prepared to assist him) but, far more important, it seemed that the character of the heiress was revealed in a series of visual images that were unacceptably ambiguous. Thus we see her descend into her audience room (like a Mexican Indian emperor of old) in an ornate lift or watch her in the garden; a garden created for her son, with strange sweating plants almost as from a prehistoric age, of ferns and drooping plants, of flesh-eating plants fed on insects imported at great cost. One felt that somehow this garden was the clue to the whole problem, yet was so obscure as to be meaningless.

As a piece of indirect social commentary, the film was interesting. Set in Louisiana, in New Orleans, in the Deep South in real Tennessee Williams country, "Suddenly Last Summer" evokes a feeling of utter decadence and an almost total disregard for common values that are generally accepted even in our affluent society. It is not so much the physical decadence that one felt most strongly, one has only to think of other Williams' plays and Governor Jimmie Davis, but the complete lack of moral integration that all the leading characters displayed. This can only be a

cont on page 7

THE ROYAL COMMISSION

Recently we been battered by hailstorms of Royal Commissions, each more "a revelation" than the last. As comment, especially on Monckton, we reprint the Calypso "*The Commissioner's Report*" by a Trinidad militant writing under the pseudonym of "Attila the Hun". This Calypso reviews a Royal Commission report on the Trinidad oil riots of the thirties.

THE recently published Corfield Report on the Mau Mau has blamed "long-distance liberalism", and insufficient firmness by the authorities, for the growth of terrorism in Kenya. As comment upon Corfield we reprint the words of the Calypso "*The Commissioner's Report*" by a Trinidad militant writing under the pseudonym of "Attila the Hun". This Calypso reviews a Royal Commission report on the Trinidad oil riots of the thirties.

The report of the Commission of Enquiry
Has arrived in this colony.
The report of the Commission of Enquiry
Has arrived in this colony.
It touches health and sanitation,
Housing, wages and education,
It states that the riots were terrible
And declares Butteler was responsible.

On account of the trouble we have had recently,
A Commission was sent from the mother country
To investigate and probe carefully
The causes of all the disharmony.
They collected a book of evidence,
I cannot speak of its consequence,
But I can state independently,
The report was a revelation to me.

They criticized our ex-governor
The beloved Sir Murchison Fletcher
And state that on several occasions he
Had uttered speeches wrong to a marked degree.
They castigated M Sibly
Our ex-Colonial Secretary,
But all this criticism seems to me
An example of British diplomacy.

They declared from the evidence they had
That the riots started in Fy'sabad
By the hooligan element under their leader
A fanatical Negro named Butler.
They collected a bulk of evidence,
I cannot speak of its consequence,
The only time they said the police was wrong
Was that they waited too long to shoot people down.

A peculiar thing about this Commission
Is that in ninety-two pages of dissertation
There is no mention of exploitation,
Of the workers and their tragic condition,
Read through the pages, there is no mention
Of colonial oppression—
Which leads me to entertain the thought
That perhaps this is a one-sided report.

P I C A S S O

BY THEO MELVILLE

FOR most people, modern art is identified with Picasso. Practically deified in his own time, many of the knowledgeable regard him as head and shoulders above the other leading modern artists. The Tate gallery with great fanfares of publicity has staged a fascinating exhibition of the master's art. The historians will quibble, have quibbled, over exclusions and inclusions, but apart from one's inevitable wish that sculpture had been included (besides "Guernica" and "The Massacres in Korea") the representation is a reasonable view of Picasso's achievement.

And how do we evaluate this most arbitrary, audacious, restless artist? In the array of these paintings, a vast gamut of emotions and experience is presented for inspection. During the early Blue period, Picasso expressed a closed world of delicate lyricism, sometimes, in-

deed, poignant and grieving. With his cubist revolution, he withdrew hermetically and placed fragments, objects and people into minute planes. This analytical phase is ambiguous, the restraint of colour and the remote style makes it seem harsh, almost inhuman, but close acquaintance reveals a poetic and enigmatic atmosphere which pervades the whole tendency. The painter emphasises his craft and his solitude, but his interior life never ignores reality entirely. Gradually the planes become broader and the world of men and nature reasserts itself, until in the "Three Musicians", the human forms made up of abstract shapes seem and are joyous.

With the early twenties, Picasso created his neo-classical style, redolent of classical antiquity but dreamlike and sometimes disquieting. A sense of history, under the influence mainly of faceted African sculpture, had penetrated his work,

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CANDID COMMENTARY

BY JOHN WILKES

WHATEVER happens at the Scarborough conference, it is almost certain to register a swing to the left within the Labour Party. The rising tide of support for nuclear disarmament compels Canute-like Carron to adopt desperate measures. He knows that, in the rising water, not only the official 'back-the-bomb' policy is likely to go under, but also the right-wing leadership. His tactic at the TUC, likely to be repeated at Scarborough, of supporting both contradictory statements on the H-bomb must be viewed in this light.

The virtue of Carron's position, from a right-wing standpoint, is that it helps to discredit the Party's annual conference. If, as is probable as a result of the AEU vote, the Party faces both ways in the Bomb, then the Gaitskellites will be able to echo Bernard Levin's question: "And where then are those who insist that the wise, grave, un-hurried decisions of the Labour Party conference are binding upon the leader and the Parliamentary Party which alone elects him?" Of course, they'll fail to mention that this ridiculous position arises, not because of the befuddled thinking of delegates and the organisations they represent, but because of the unscrupulous, undemocratic use of the block vote by Carron, the greatest fiddler since Nero. This type of action will not harm the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, which is winning fresh supporters daily; it can only harm the Labour Party. Slick manoeuvres, aimed at flouting the wishes of the Party's

membership, will result in an even greater torrent of rank-and-filers leaving the Party in disgust. And the general public will view the Labour Party with ever-growing contempt.

A welcome sign is that CND is now devoting more attention to the Labour Movement. The speakers on the recent Edinburgh to London march dwelt at length upon the arguments advanced by Gaitskell & Co. This is all to the good—but it does not go far enough. The Campaign must broaden and widen its base. When unions go unilateralist, often it means very little, except there is a vague, inarticulate opposition to the arms race. The union leadership still backs the Bomb and does everything it can to discourage union members from supporting CND. This situation can only be altered when CND seriously gets down to addressing union branch meetings and holding meetings outside factory gates. If this was intensively done for 12 months, the weight of union feeling would be so strong as to prevent the backslidings of Carron, as well as bring unions like the NUM and Municipal and General behind the unilateralist banner.

★ RUSSIA AND S. AFRICA

Where does the Communist Party stand on the South African boycott? The *Daily Worker*, on its masthead, urges readers to support the boycott. It prints pious articles against apartheid and the South African Government. But it fails to advocate hitting them where it hurts most.

Russia, unlike Ghana and Malaya, has not instituted an official boycott of South African goods. Indeed, during the last six months Russian trade with South Africa has increased. Now if countries like Ghana and Malaya, with weak, backward economies, can institute an official boycott, why shouldn't Russia? How refreshing it would be if the Communist Party showed just a little independence by sending a resolution criticizing Russian trade with South Africa. People might come to regard it as a genuine British political party, not as Mr. Khrushchev's obedient lap-dog.

BUSMEN

cont from page 3
statement itself revealed the NUR General Secretary, Mr Sydney Greene, as a typical right-wing labour leader—playing the usual bosses' game of keeping the working class divided on sectional and craft lines, seeking to destroy their natural solidarity and class consciousness.

All transport workers must realise that they have a common interest, one with the other. What is required is the building of unity between all transport workers (the recent seamen's struggle has emphasised this). Officially this will not be worked for, for there are too many lucrative jobs to lose; therefore solidarity must be built at rank-and-file level, to build the maximum unity of action between all transport workers, and also the greatest measure of understanding with other workers

PICASSO

cont from page 6

and during this period Picasso produced some of his most superb nudes, heavy, introspective and timeless. Just as suddenly, the passionate, diabolical insolent visions of Surrealism became paramount in pictures of horrific intensity. This influence is most revealing in Picasso's characterisation of women. The traditional artistic view of women as cornucopia of fertility, or as the serene source of sensuous pleasure, disappears, to be replaced by woman as chained fury, dynamic and awesome. Just as easily this is contrasted with the many drawings by Picasso of artist and model, where the idyllic, the archaic and the pleasurable reappears.

As a man genuinely involved in the grandeurs and miseries of his time, Picasso, at moments of political crisis, such as the Spanish Civil War and the Korean War, has expressed his feeling for humanity against the forces of war and reaction.

Greatly impressed by the

militants in the Communist Party, particularly during the Second World War, Picasso joined that organisation.

However, the period 1945-60, despite the cataclysmic crises internationally, has seen a relative stabilisation of Western European capitalism. Picasso's work has reflected this, broadly speaking, despite an irrational current underlying his work. Unfortunately, the later work culminating in the studies after Velasquez "Las Meninas", has become superficial, often formally inventive but lacking the emotional tempests of earlier times. Unlike some artists, Picasso has not become more profound with age.

Clearly Picasso is a great artist, but precisely because he lacks the rounded harmonious world-views of earlier times he seems less complete than masters such as Giotto or Velasquez. Nevertheless his achievement is quite remarkable, and one might think that for younger artists, his energy and ceaseless appetite for experience is a splendid example (although in very blasé style many young artists seem to treat him as old hat). Further-

more his love of the work of primitive societies and later artistic civilisations such as the Egyptian is part of that revolution in cultural outlook reflecting the bigoted obsession of the capitalist mentality with ideas and things only for profit, which involves castrating men of their precious gift of imagination. Picasso is the perfect confirmation of Nietzsche's view that the coming epoch would see a transvaluation of all values. Picasso has epitomised the whole frenzied and chaotic tumult of the 20th century—hence the willingness of many critics to see him as easily the colossus of modern art. To do this is in my opinion quite unreasonable; artists such as Matisse, Bechmann and many others made equally significant contributions.

Whether the period in formation will see the beginning of a new artistic synthesis or a comparatively moribund creativity, it is too early to predict, but at least in the Western world, the spectacular success of decorative and nihilistic types of abstraction does not augur well in the immediate decades to come.

★

SLEUTHS AT WORK

IRIS—or, to give it its full title, Industrial Research & Information Service Ltd.—stands "for 100% democratic and informed trade unionism". At the present time, I would have thought, they would have had their time fully occupied trying to get a little democracy—a 100% is rather too ambitious—into the National Union of Seamen. And then, as regards helping "informed trade unionism", a few facts on the way Sir Tom Yates has gained the confidence of the shipowners, but not the seamen, would be highly instructive. But no—no mention is made of these things, except to urge disciplinary action against AEU members who have shown solidarity with the striking seamen.

September issue of IRIS contains a full-scale 'exposure' of the *Socialist Review*. The Editor and some of the contributors are mentioned, along with the position they hold in the Labour Movement. The article ends with a warning: "Once a Trotskyist cell has been formed in a local Labour Party or trade union it is not easy to cope with it. And over the past ten years there have been several local units of the Labour Movement where revolutionary dissidents were sufficiently powerful to impede normal activities."

As readers know, *Socialist Review* has always sought to deepen the struggle against the bosses. It has always argued that the sham, feeble 'fight' put up by the right-wing leadership is one of the main reasons for the continued success of the Tories. We want an all-out fight against MacMillan's Government, like most rank-and-file do. Perhaps that's why IRIS and their associates find us so difficult "to cope with". And as for impeding the Labour Movements normal activities, it is Labour aristocracy which prevents the Movement from carrying out its proper function of furthering workers interests, not *Socialist Review*.

SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER

cont from page 6

reflection of the society in which the author and his characters live. "Suddenly Last Summer" is symptomatic of a society, that at heart is sick. It represents a set of values, a smugness and a hypocrisy that in real life is expressed in prejudice, callousness and violence.

That any country pretending to be the moulder of world opinion and events should be able to produce such a film, speaking of such negative values in a manner, so technically convincing and so often dramatic troubled me.

Thus, go you too, and be troubled likewise.

Geoffrey S. Weston

GLASGOW TO ST. PANCRAS

THE RECENT STRUGGLES IN ST. PANCRAS IN WHICH TENANTS JOINED, WITH INDUSTRIAL WORKERS TO FIGHT THE TORY COUNCILS RENT INCREASES AND, BEHIND THIS COUNCIL, THE TORY GOVERNMENT, BRINGS US BACK TO THE MIGHTIEST RENT STRIKE OF THEM ALL, THAT OF GLASGOW IN 1915, WHEN WORKING-CLASS CLYDESIDE ROCKED LLOYD GEORGE AND THE WARTIME GOVERNMENT AND FORCED IT TO RUSH THROUGH THE FIRST RENT RESTRICTION ACT IN BRITISH HISTORY.—EDITOR.

45 YEARS ago this month, the struggle to defeat grasping landlords won its first great victory, a victory that created the first Rent Restriction Act and kept the 1914-18 war economy going a few years longer. With the landlords' field-day of this year and Brooke's defending Tory freedom to exploit the working-class in their own homes, how an earlier attack on living standards was defeated is of immediate importance.

Up to 1915, housing was completely 'free'—ie there were no council houses, and all private housing was fair game for as much as the owner could suck. The tenants paid up or got out. With the outbreak of war, thousands of new workers flooded into the cities to work in the munitions factories and housing was crowded to capacity and beyond—rents soared. The final blow came in Glasgow in Feb., 1915, when a 25% increase in the industrial areas was announced, in some cases the second major increase since war broke out. The war profits were in the saddle, urging more patriotism with one hand and demanding more rents with the other. With many husbands away at the front on low military pay, the increases were impossible for many families. Angry meetings were held all over working-class Glasgow, and a movement to refuse to pay the increases spread rapidly—the Labour Party Housing Committee which had already done a good job in exposing the slum conditions in Glasgow gave full support to the resistance movement. Municipal tramways and gas already existed in the city, and the Committee pressed that the profits of these undertakings be devoted to the purchase of housing.

INTO BATTLE

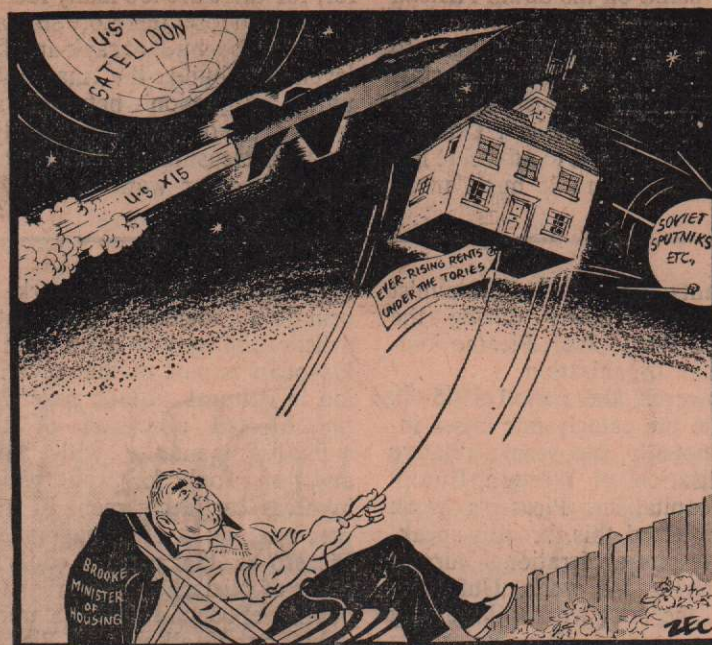
In Govan district a Housewives' Housing Association was set up under the chairmanship of a housewife, Mrs Barbour, and set about agitating amongst the housewives for a firm stand on the rents issue. In Sept. 1915 the great Rent Strike began and by November 25,000 working-class families were refusing to pay rent. Empty houses were picketed, and people who had agreed to the new rent level were prevented from entering their houses. The Housewives' Committee took charge of driving the bailiffs from the door when they arrived with eviction orders. On the doorstep, prospective renters who had come to view the property were quietly but firmly refused entry—any furniture that arrived would not get through intact.

However, militant as the housewives were, they had no heavy truncheon to use against the landlords—time and violence would shift the opposition to rent increases. The movement really gathered force when the workers in the great engineering factories, working full time on the war effort, were affected—the newly formed Shop Stewards Movement took up the issue: and downed tools in support of the housewives when the bailiffs arrived. Davie Kirkwood, Convenor of Shop Stewards at Parkhead Forge, made explicit the direct threat in a letter to Glasgow's Town Clerk when he warned: 'the men here wish to make it perfectly clear that they would regard this (the rent raise) as an attack on the working-class' (quoted from *Forward*, Oct. 9, 1915).

By now the Government was alarmed at the threat to production and intervened to set up a Committee of Inquiry to which the Labour Party Housing Committee put its case and made it plain that if landlord pressure continued industrial action would

be taken. The final phase of the struggle came in November when the landlords made a last desperate bid to capture the situation by suing eighteen rent defaulters in the Small Debt Court. Immediately the Housewives' committee organised a mass march of rent strikers to the Court. On route, industrial workers downed tools and joined the march—the great Albion Works stopped and both day and night shifts joined the march. The different sections of the march met in the centre of the city to form a crowd of some 10,000 surrounding the court. The meeting demanded that, unless by the end of the week the government had forbidden any increase in rents, a general strike would begin on the following Monday. Inside the court, a deputation demanded to be received by the Sheriff, who, hearing the crowds outside, acceded. For two hours the deputation put the case: no increase in rents or war production stops. After a hurried telephone call to Lloyd George, the Sheriff gave in.

But the issue was not won immediately—the threat of a strike was continued and demanded a visit to Glasgow by Lloyd George (Minister of Munitions). In November 1915 the first Rent Restrictions Act became law, and rents were frozen—the first government measure to protect the working classes had been won through direct industrial action.



Britain's effort in the space race!

By Zec of the Daily Herald

(by courtesy of the Daily Herald)

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The SOCIALIST REVIEW stands for international Socialist democracy. Only the mass mobilisation of the working class in the industrial and political arena can lead to the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism. The SOCIALIST REVIEW believes that a really consistent Labour Government must be brought to power on the basis of the following programme:

- The complete nationalisation of heavy industry, the banks, insurance and the land with compensation payments based on a means test. Renationalisation of all denationalised industries without compensation.—The nationalised industries to form an integral part of an overall economic plan and not to be used in the interests of private profit.

- Workers' control in all nationalised industries ie, a majority of workers' representatives on all national and area boards, subject to frequent election, immediate recall and receiving the average skilled wage ruling in the industry.

- The establishment of workers' committees to control all private enterprises within the framework of a planned economy. In all instances representatives must be subject to frequent election, immediate recall, and receive the average skilled wage in the industry.

- The establishment of workers' committees in all concerns to control hiring, firing and working conditions.

- The establishment of the principle of work or full maintenance.

- The extension of the social services by the payment of adequate pensions, the abolition of all payments for the National Health Service and the development of an industrial health service.

- The expansion of the housing programme by granting interest free loans to local authorities and the right to requisition privately held land.

- Free State education up to 18. Abolition of fee paying schools. For comprehensive schools and adequate maintenance grants — without a means test — for all university students.

- Opposition to all forms of racial discrimination. Equal rights and trade union protection to all workers whatever their country of origin. Freedom of migration for all workers to and from Britain.

- Freedom from political and economic oppression to all colonies. The offer of technical and economic assistance to the people of the underdeveloped countries.

- The abolition of conscription and the withdrawal of all British troops from overseas.

- The abolition of the H-bomb and all weapons of mass destruction. Britain to pave the way with unilateral renunciation of the H-bomb.

- A Socialist foreign policy subservient to neither Washington nor Moscow.