

# Socialist Review

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW,  
BUT INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

NOVEMBER 1961.

4 d.

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## LABOUR AND INDUSTRY

JOHN FAIRHEAD

**BLACKPOOL** confounded the impressionists. Those who, bemused by the image of Gaitskellism triumphant created by Tory political commentators, prophesied total defeat and demoralization for the Left, were confounded. The Left, on the contrary, emerged from the 1961 Conference toughened and better organized.

Before proceeding to describe and exemplify this stiffening of the Left and to build a tactic around it for the coming months, it is necessary to recognize that on the two main questions of policy—unilateralism and *Signposts*—the Left sustained heavy formal defeats. The Scarborough decision was overturned by a majority of four to one, and *Signposts* went through without a card vote. What has to be borne in mind in assessing the importance of these victories for the Right is the traditional empiricism of the British movement: delegates and organizations which have gone down the line for a policy in the abstract are quite capable of speaking and acting quite differently when the issues are posed concretely.

This happened, already on the floor of Conference, on the question of Polaris and the training of German troops in Britain. The strand of anti-German chauvinism, well to the fore in the propaganda of *Tribune* and the Communist Party, was a factor in the latter decision; but it should not be overstressed. Indeed, those supporting the tailors' motion went out of their way to oppose xenophobia and to express solidarity with the German workers, and were loudly applauded.

The remarkable feature of this year's conference was the superior organization of the Left. This had nothing to do with the Parliamentary

"Lefts" at the head of Victory for Socialism, who were as much surprised (and alarmed?) as the Gaitskellites. The grassroots efforts of a number of local constituency parties, who certainly made effective use of the rather ramshackle machinery of VFS, ensured a virtually united front of the Left in the decisive defence compositing committee. Delegate after delegate announced the withdrawal of his resolution in favour of four key motions selected in advance. This high degree of organization paid off on Polaris and German troops, though the vote at the previous month's TUC had al-

ready sealed the fate of the TGWU resolution reaffirming Scarborough. The very high vote (846,000) for the first neutralist, anti-war-pact resolution ever to come before a Labour conference since the war is a remarkable indication not just of the continuation, but of the deepening and development of unilateralism in the constituency parties.

That the much-publicized Campaign for Democratic Socialism had failed to make a decisive impact was further shown in the elections to the constituency section of the NEC. Of the candidates favoured by the Campaign only Callaghan was re-elected, but in seventh place. Some of its nominees, such as Richard Marsh and Gerry Reynolds, received a derisory vote.

The pricking of the CDS bubble was, indeed, a feature of this conference. Its secretary, Rodgers, could be seen, grim and white-faced, pacing the corridors, a Savanarola silent amid the crumbling pillars of his Fabian Florence as he saw the reward for a job well done elude his grasp. There is a sense in which Blackpool was the Brighton of the extreme Right: the public rebuke of Gaitskell administered by Roy Jenkins on the eve of conference was a squeak of protest at the liquidation of the Gaitskellite faction as the Leader set out to woo the massive battalions of the trade-union Right Centre.

It is, paradoxically, precisely here that the Achilles' heel of Gaitskell is

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**THIS** *Socialist Review* is different; it reflects the changes in our recent political work. When *Socialist Review* was founded it tried to speak on the basis of internationalist, socialist principles to a wide audience: workers and students, Labour Party members and trade unionists, veterans of the movement and new Recruits.

But the editorial board now has a different task. For we fully support the work of *Young Guard* among the youth, of the *Industrial Worker* on the industrial front, and of *International Socialism* in the realm of theory. We neither want nor need to reduplicate what they do. Instead we aim to provide a political notebook, a running commentary on the scene, containing as much useful information as possible. The principles on which we stand are unchanged: they are:

*War is the inevitable outcome of the division of society into classes. Only the working class, controlling and owning the means of production, distribution and exchange in a planned economy, can guarantee the world against war and the annihilation of large sections of humanity. Planning under workers' control demands the nationalisation without compensation of heavy industry, the banks, insurance and the land. International collaboration between socialist states must replace aggressive competition between capitalist states.*

*The working class will reach the consciousness necessary to change society only by building upon the experience in struggle of the existing mass organizations and organizing around a revolutionary socialist program, independent of Washington and Moscow, based on:*

*The unilateral renunciation of the H-Bomb and all weapons of mass destruction*

*The withdrawal of all British troops from overseas*

*The establishment of workers' control.*

# THE STRIKES I:

## THE ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

MICHAEL KIDRON

WORKERS at British Light Steel Pressings, Acton, the Rootes Motors subsidiary, and at the Steel Company of Wales, Port Talbot have nailed the charge of apathy and I'm-all-right-Jackism levelled against them. Solidarity at both of these major strike fronts was tremendous; and rank-and-file militancy at Acton was great enough to have both nullified Carron's strike-breaking moves and shoved aside the Communist Party ban on street demonstrations supported by neighbouring factories. If this is going to be the reaction to the 'pay pause', the Tories had better watch it. There is hardly a section of workers in the country that hasn't got a pay claim in; and the mood is hardening.

But Acton and Port Talbot are not only examples of working class militancy in action. They can tell us something about the intentions of the bosses. The Rootes group has been doing worse than any other member of the Big Five this last year and the motor industry as a whole has fallen on comparatively hard times: at forty seven thousand odd, sales this September were one-fifth below the figure for September 1960.

The motor industry is the single largest customer for the steel industry so that its decline (and the switch to smaller cars) is a major factor in the build up of surplus capacity in the mills. What could be more convenient for them than to force a showdown now, when stocks are piling up and orders slack? There is nothing new in this. Last summer, the *Bulletin of the Oxford Institute of Statistics* featured an article by HA Turner and J Bestoby on the pattern of strikes in the motor industry since the war.

They showed that the hardening of attitudes on the part of the bosses in slack times, and the greater willingness of unions to lend official support to strikers at times when they can both please the workers and do little harm to the bosses, combined to bump up the number of workdays lost at precisely those periods when production was down. This time, the union leadership are less willing and the bosses, faced with a greater than normal slow-down in the economy and with the growing threat of Common Market competition are proving more than willing to force the pace. The result—lockout. Or in the words of *The Economist* (21 October),

'What people do realise, at last, is that the employers mean business when they talk of economies. Perhaps this is not such a bad way to face up to the foreign challenge after all'.

So we are back to the slogan of the 1920s—'all wages must come down!' And this after a decade in which rent, interest and dividends have risen by over £1000 million before tax; in which dividends doubled and capital values have soared without being taxed; in which rents for dwellings have gone up nearly two-and-a-half times, and other rents doubled; in which tax revenue from death duties, surtax and profits tax, at £639 million in 1959 (less than the yield on tobacco) was only £59 million more than in 1951 while the yield on national insurance contributions, the tax which hits the lowest earners hardest, doubled between the two

dates to £898 million in 1959; and in which, despite these and other 'incentives' to capital, the real investment on plant and machinery was no higher in 1959 than in 1951. (These facts are to be found, together with other useful information in Michael Barrat Brown and John Hughes' New Left pamphlet, *Britain's Crisis and the Common Market*, 3s., from 7 Carlisle Street, London W1).

The record is clear: however great the concessions made to the bosses, they do not result in greater efficiency on their part. They have had the opportunity and failed miserably. It is not the 'foreign challenge' we have to face up to, but the bosses' challenge. BSLP and SCOW workers have shown what can be done. Let's have more of the same, so that we may drag the unions officially into battle and put paid to the pay pause.

# STRIKES II:

## THE FIGHT AGAINST REDUNDANCY

JOHN PHILLIPS

IT is by now quite apparent that the current struggles in the motor industry are almost entirely over redundancy. This is the background to the dispute at British Light Steel Pressings. Without doubt the Rootes management fully intended to lay off some BLSM workers this autumn and no doubt the excuse to lay off 8000 in the Midlands is a 'result' of the BLSM strike was gladly seized by the management.

This pushing of the blame onto the Acton men for putting thousands of their 'innocent' brothers out of work is sheer nonsense. The most significant thing to emerge about this is the statement from the shop stewards from Coventry, Luton and Dunstable after meeting the Acton stewards fully endorsing the Acton strikers' actions and even backed the Acton men in refusing to apply for their own jobs back. This is surely an indication that the stewards in Rootes' other factories know that redundancy faces them also.

This raises the question of to what extent did Rootes deliberately engineer the strike? Normally one could accept that no one firm would deliberately hold up its own production in face of competition from other firms in the same industry. But at the present time Rootes are not the only

motor manufacturer suffering from the now almost seasonal recession. Ford, BMC and other midlands factories are experiencing a minor recession and the need to slow down production.

One other aspect of the BLSM strike cannot pass without mention, and that is the complicity of the AEU leadership with the Rootes management in trying to smash the strike. The AEU executive ordered the men back to work three days after the strike started, which was well over a week before the district committee was officially informed of the strike. Therefore the action of the EC could only have been decided on a complaint from the Rootes management. Also the action of the EC in supporting Rootes in their attempt to victimize the strike leaders. On this the *Guardian* of October 19th said

*"The union leaders recognise that there are trouble-makers and have been after some of them themselves. But in order to provide the strike committee with a face-saver they are asking for the dismissed strikers to be re-employed followed by negotiations on which should go."*

The lesson for us here is clear. We firmly support the BLSM workers in their fight against redundancy and re-

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AT the recent Conservative Conference a motion calling for the restriction of immigration from the Commonwealth was overwhelmingly passed. And what is more important, Mr Butler promised to write the wishes of Conference into the law of the land during this winter.

There are now about 230,000 coloured people living in Britain, about half from the West Indies and the rest mainly from India and Pakistan. Many of these have come to study or work for a few years only. Others—no one knows how many—would like to make a permanent home in Britain. This year more will be arriving than ever before. It is not how-

sist all attempts by Rootes and the AEU EC to victimize. Carron must be told clearly that his job is to implement the Engineering Unions redundancy policy of no sackings, not to try and emulate the employers militancy against the workers.

THE strike at the Steel Company of Wales is similar in one respect. The following quotation (the *Times* October 13th) shows that, like Rootes, the company perhaps wouldn't mind a little strike to avoid paying workers during hard times.

*"Output of the Steel Company of Wales has fallen by nearly 450,000 tons in the past year. Figures released by the company last night show that total output of steel and coke for the year ended September 30 was 7,941,000, compared with 8,367,000 tons the previous comparative year. The fall was spread over coke, pig iron, steel ingots, tinplate, sheets and plates."*

Surely, one might say, redundancy agreements should be drawn up. Equally surely the employers say no. They know that if agreements were reached with local factory committees it would work against them. The essence of 'no sackings' is that, even if wage rates are cut owing to work sharing, and a shorter working week, the factory organization remains intact. This is what we have to fight for. Fortunately the workers are suspicious enough of their leaders not to allow national agreements on redundancy to be made. While the tendency of individual factory organizations to try to negotiate their own agreements continues we can be sure that the employers will continue to avoid the question by acting in the same way Rootes and the Steel Company of Wales are acting now. We must be quite uncompromising—NO SACKINGS.

## BRITAIN'S COLOURED CITIZENS

J. KINCAID

ever the numbers that worry the Tories. They are more obsessed with the notion that the migrants lay an intolerable burden on the Welfare State.

A horrific image of the typical immigrant was sketched out at Brighton. He arrives in Britain illiterate, unskilled and suffering from a variety of tropical diseases which he has expensively cured for free in British hospitals. A horde of what the Conservatives refer to as 'picaninnies' spring from his loins crying for family allowances and free schooling. Meanwhile, Daddy is perpetually out of work and of course drawing his lavish unemployment benefit. While not actually present at the Labour Exchange, he devotes his time to exotic forms of criminal activity, and the long-suffering tax-payer has to fork out to provide policemen to catch him and prisons to punish him. Meanwhile he and his friends are not only occupying an enormous number of houses but also packing themselves into the same house, thus creating those conditions of overcrowding that so trouble the sensitive social conscience of the Tory.

And let us be frank. Immigration restrictions will be popular in other quarters as well as the Tory party. There are many ordinary people who believe that the above story is more or less true. According to the proposed law, no immigrant will be allowed into the country unless he has a clean bill of health. As if any sick man could save enough out of low wages to pay the fare to England. Anyone with a criminal record will be turned back at the port. No second chances here—though the record shows that the coloured community is as law-abiding as the white. More stringent still, in future the Commonwealth citizen will be kept out of Britain unless he has the promise of a job or can show that his services are needed.

A lot of people on the Left are saying that this new policy is simply due to colour prejudice. True enough, prejudice plays its part. But the emphasis on the Welfare State is significant. Tories think of the coloured person in the same way as they think of the average working man. The Welfare State, so the story goes, is a device for enabling the working class to live at the expense of the middle class. It was always a lie, and it's even more

of a lie when applied to the coloured workers. All recent surveys show that the coloured worker pays the same contributions and gets fewer benefits back than does the average white worker.

There are far more young men than old among the coloured workers, and the demands they make on the Health Service are so much the less. The majority of those who come are skilled workers, and though they seldom have a chance to use their working skill to the full, their working standards are high. Many of the immigrants' wives and children and most of the old people are still in the home country. When the coloured worker pays his taxes he is helping to support white pensioners and to educate white children. Often his own children get no return for the welfare contributions he pays. The clearest example is perhaps our hospitals where there are always far more coloured people working as doctors and nurses than there are coloured patients. At Brighton they kept talking about worsening housing conditions—and well they might! But what would happen to the building program were it not for the great number of coloured workers in the industry? From the Tory point of view the system is wonderful. The coloured worker helps build the new houses and is left with the slum to live in.

The new policy of restricting immigration is vindictive and backward looking. It is designed to delight the 'country' element in the Tory party. But of course the government will not greatly reduce the numbers coming to live in Britain. Business and commerce are too dependent on a continual stream of coloured labour. Stop the flow and a labour shortage will bid up the wage levels of unskilled and clerical workers.

It does not follow from this that the Left should therefore support restrictions. For us there is a simple principle involved, namely that anyone should be allowed to live in any country he wishes. Secondly, it may be true that certain sections of the working population would in the short run get higher wages if immigration were restricted. But the point about these great movements of population is that they help to level up standards between the rich countries and the poor, and this, in the long run, is in the interests of us all.

# THE 22nd CONGRESS

The 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union will without doubt be a turning point in the history of world communism. Its effect on the fate of the international labour movement will be deep and prolonged. Much of what happened was unexpected. On July 30th, 1961, a new draft of the Party programme was published, the core of which was a promise of the millennium: Russia would catch up and overtake the United States standard of living over the next decade or two. The complete transition from socialism to fully-fledged communism would be accomplished. "Happy, beautiful and moving days!" as the Minister of Culture, Madame Furtseva was to call them. The Soviet press prepared for a great celebration of the bright future; Khrushchev's 20-year programme was to be the main dish. Instead an extremely peppery course was served.

The Congress served as a rostrum for a bitter attack on two main apostates—Albania and the "Anti-Party Group" of Malenkov, Molotov and Kaganovich. There were three main accusations against the accused: 1) Opposition to Khrushchev's "policy of peaceful co-existence between capitalism and socialism"; 2) opposition to Khrushchev's reforms in the management of industry and agriculture introduced during the last few years; 3) support of the Stalinist cult and of Stalinist atrocities.

Both accused groups, tiny Albania and the few people mentioned at the Congress as belonging to the "Anti-Party Group" are too insignificant to explain the ire of the mighty Khrushchev, who has been brandishing his power—expressed in sputniks and the 50-megaton bomb—for all to see.

It is clear that by Albania Khrushchev meant China. His strictures on Albanian Stalinists met with a prompt complaint from the Chinese Premier, Chou En-lai, that "to disclose a dispute between fraternal parties in the face of the enemy cannot be regarded as a serious Marxist-Leninist attitude." Chou's reproaches were ignored. Speaker after speaker took up Khrushchev's attack. In the middle of the Congress Chou left, and flew home, to be demonstratively welcomed at Peking airport by Mao Tse-tung and other top Chinese leaders. The Chinese press continued to praise Albanians a most loyal socialist country, and on 26th October published in detail her bitter charges against Moscow.

If Tirana stands for Peking, the "Anti-Party Group", as we shall show, stands not for a tiny group of individuals, but for a broad section of the Russian bureaucracy.

To disentangle the forces in conflict, an analysis must be made of the various issues involved.

## "Peaceful co-existence"

Regarding the global effect of war, Khrushchev and Mao have spoken in tones differing more and more widely. Speaking at Vladivostok on 8 October 1959 Khrushchev made it clear that "Only an irresponsible person can be fearless of war in our days". He repeated the point to members of the French Peace Council shortly afterwards (on 23 March 1960): "Imagine what will happen", he said, "when bombs begin to explode over cities. These bombs will not distinguish between Communists and non-Communists... No, everything alive can be wiped out in the conflagration of nuclear explosions". Repetition had little effect on his Chinese opposite number, however. Mao Tse-tung's view was quoted *in extenso* in **Red Flag**, the theoretical organ of the Chinese Communist Party, on March 30 1960: "If the imperialists insist on unleashing another war", said Mao, "we should not be afraid of it... World War I was followed by the birth of the Soviet Union with a population of 200 million. World War II was followed by the emergence of the socialist camp with a combined population of 900 million. If the imperialists should insist on launching a third World War, it is certain that several hundred million more will turn to socialism."

For a number of reasons Khrushchev and Mao differ sharply regarding "peaceful co-existence". For the former, so long as his sputniks and H-bombs can ensure "peaceful co-existence", there is the perspective that the dynamic of Russia's economy will lead her to catch up and overtake Western capitalism. His greatest weapon is mighty Russian industry. Mao is out of the nuclear rocketry coterie, and it will take decades before China's industry could possibly match that of the West. Indeed, it is China's industrial backwardness that allows Mao to shrug away the danger of nuclear bombardment. Hundreds of millions will die, but the scattered, primitive people's commune could serve as a base for economic reconstruction.

"Peaceful co-existence" economically means something else for China too: even if her prospective rate of industrial growth were larger than Russia's (which is not the case at present) the **absolute** gap between the two countries will increase and continue to increase for decades.

A national industrial base ordains a certain investment policy. A million rubles invested in Russia will play a much greater positive role in catching up and overtaking the USA than a loan or gift of the same amount to China. The same applies to the use of the services of technicians. Russian capital is to be invested outside the country, it is much more fruitfully put in the advanced European People's Democracies, which are

largely integrated with the economies of Russia, than in backward China. (It is no accident that China does not belong to Comecon—Council for Mutual Economic Assistance that covers Russia and her European satellites).

To add to the causes diverting Russian capital away from China, "peaceful co-existence" aids Khrushchev's effort to win the neutral countries away from Washington. Since 1953 Russian credits to the backward non-Communist countries have risen from nothing to \$850 million, and are now over one-third of the American flow. Russia tries to buy the rulers of these countries, not to overthrow them. Hence Nasser can keep his Communists in goal and still get Russian aid, Sukarno and Kassem can outlaw their Communist Parties without fear of reprisal. Rubles are required to flirt with these countries. But Mao is not being courted by Kennedy, so why waste rubles on him?

Relying on the national industrial base as the main launching pad, the Russian rulers, in trading with China, will incline to drive quite a hard bargain. Time and again it is announced that the prices charged by Russia for her products and paid for China's products are world market prices. Now world market prices entail the exploitation of backward countries by advanced countries. To explain this: the Marxist law of value shows how industries with a high "organic composition of capital"—i.e., with a great deal of capital compared with labour—acquire part of the surplus value produced by workers in industries with a low "organic composition of capital". This applies also to international trade between more developed and less developed countries, i.e., countries which have relatively more capital and those with relatively less. As Marx put it, the "favoured country obtains in such an exchange more labour in return for less labour."

To further dry the flow of capital resources to China, "catching up with the United States" must mean their diversion in Russia itself towards consumer goods industries, housing, etc. As Khrushchev said in Moscow on May 20, 1961: "Now we consider our heavy industry as built. So we are not going to give it priority. Light industry and heavy industry will develop at the same pace." (**New York Times**, July 31, 1961).

The extremely difficult job of pulling China out of her present backwardness by her own bootstraps, makes severe demands on the morale of the Chinese people. It requires maximum national unity under centralised command. An atmosphere of siege helps to justify the sweat and toil. Hence a border dispute with India is manufactured and inflated to threatening proportions, although the tracts of land in question are strategically and in every

# OF THE C.P.S.U.

Tony Cliff

other way worthless to China. So deep is the siege mentality in Peking that it has yet to accredit an ambassador to Britain some eleven years after recognition.

"Peaceful co-existence" punctures this siege mentality. To accept tremendous sacrifices over decades is bad enough. But to have to do so without the conviction or illusion that it is dictated by a besieging enemy is worse. The loss of another element in the siege—the feeling of togetherness—will make it yet more difficult to discipline the Chinese masses. Khrushchev strikes at the heart of this feeling. In effect he says to Mao: We are not in it together. While your people are practically starving, we will gorge. (In 1961, while China had to spend millions of scarce foreign currency buying grain from Canada and Australia, Russia flooded the West European market with cheap barley!). For China to belong to the same bloc while getting less and less materially from her rich partner is hard enough in itself. But as a morale-buster, the effect on Mao's highly disciplined camp can in the long run be catastrophic. If one of the main functions of the Iron Curtain from Stalin's standpoint was to prevent Russian workers from comparing their lot with workers in the West, a much thicker bamboo curtain will have to be built between China and Russia to prevent the Chinese toilers from making comparisons and rebelling against what they find.

## Struggle around the Management of Industry and Agriculture

In a siege economy the language of administration is a military one. And so, in China at present, as in Russia under Stalin, the language used in economic affairs, is that of "campaigns", "mobilisation of forces", "attacking and storming the enemy", etc. The campaign method, however wasteful, is quite successful in the period of forced industrialisation and collectivisation. It leads to a series of bottlenecks which lead to new campaigns, much waste, and also successes. Economic calculations, rationality in the allocation of resources, play a very secondary role. However, at a certain stage this method starts becoming less and less satisfactory.

Forced collectivisation in Russia managed to syphon off millions of people to the towns as well as the food necessary to feed them. The peasant or his son went to town and there consumed the product he would previously have consumed in the country. This process could continue to a certain limit without a rise in the volume of agricultural output but simply through an alteration in the distribution of the agricultural output as between town and country. Beyond a certain point, expanding agricultural output is a precondition for getting surpluses to support industrial growth.

Stalin's method of compulsion after a time proved an impediment to raising agricultural output. Russia's grain output, 80.1 million tons in 1913, rose to an average of only 89.1 million tons in 1951-55. (Khrushchev's Report to 22nd Congress). The livestock situation fared no better. The number of cattle was 58.4 million in 1916 (i.e. after two years of war) and 58.8 million in 1955. The corresponding figures for cows were 28.8 and 27.7 million. (*Ibid.*)

Productivity of labour in Russian agriculture remained extremely low. Thus Khrushchev stated on September 15, 1958; that the number of hours spent on the production of one unit of grain was 7.3 times greater in the Soviet kolkhoz than on an American farm; potatoes 5.1; beetroot 6.2; milk 3.1; weight-cattle 14.2; and weight pigs 16.3. (Plenum of CC, CPSU, December 1958, Russian, Moscow, 1958, p. 80)

It would take us too far afield to describe all the complicated bureaucratic impediments to agriculture existing under Stalin. Khrushchev has introduced a number of reforms aimed at rationalisation. The carrot has to some extent replaced the stick. Prices paid to the agriculturists have been raised radically; the kolkhozes have been given a greater say in planning; The state Machine Tractor Stations have been abolished and agricultural machinery transferred to the kolkhozes. Unfortunately Khrushchev did not, and for deep historical reasons could not, rely only on the carrot to encourage the agricultural population to expand its output. Therefore side by side with the above-mentioned reforms, he carried out measures aimed at strengthening state control over the rural population: the level of obligatory working days imposed on kolkhoz members was raised; the size of the private plot cut; the system of obligatory deliveries, even if in altered form, maintained; kolkhozes have been "encouraged" to transform themselves into sovkhozes (state farms); and, last but not least, agricultural policy in the expanding areas of the newly reclaimed virgin lands has been to build sovkhozes.

In industry the set-up inherited from Stalin was practically chaotic. In spite of this, as much greater resources were poured into it, the achievements of industry were much greater than those of agriculture. It has become increasingly clear, however, that the results have not been concomitant with the resources put into this branch of the economy. Up to now, the productivity of labour in Russian industry has lagged far behind the technical level of its equipment. New, and built in very large units, its equipment comes up to American standards, and is certainly far more advanced than that of Western European countries. Comparative labour

productivity does not show this. Russian productivity being only half American.

To raise the productivity of industrial labour, incentives have to be increased, e.g., housing improved, the quantity and quality of industrial goods improved etc. It is also necessary to get rid of the plethora of officials and paperwork weighing upon industry. A few examples of this burden:

The Georgian Oil Trust "has three oil fields and 12 officers to serve them. There is one official for every four or five employees. It is not surprising, therefore, that the administrative expenses for one ton of oil drilled by the Trust total 60 rubles, while in certain areas the full cost of drilling one ton of oil amounts to only 22 rubles." (*Pravda*, August 13, 1954) Again, in the Moldavian Fishing Industry "there are 112 officials as against 163 workers at the fisheries, of which only 98 are employed in catching fish." (*Pravda*, December 6, 1954)

The journal of heavy industry, *Industria*, of July 18, 1940, compared two coal mines, the Pittsburgh Coal Company in Pennsylvania and the Lenin Mine of the Kizel Trust in the Urals. Production in the former was three times as great as in the latter. However, the Russian mine had 165 administrative and technical personnel compared with 15 in the US mine, and there were 8 office workers in the US mine, compared with 67 employed in the Russian mine. The number of actual miners was only twice as big in the Russian mine as in the American.

The organisational structure of Soviet industry under Stalin was very hierarchical and centralised. Beginning at the lowest level, it had the following rungs: brigade, shop, department (comprising several shops), firm, trust, chief subdivision (glavk), Ministry, Economic Council attached to the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union, and finally the Council of Ministers.

Intertwined with these chains of administration in industry were a number of other chains which criss-crossed at different levels, thus making the set-up much more discordant and irrational, and also causing a series of tensions in the factory. They included: inspectors of the Ministry of agents of the District Prosecutors, agents of the State Planning Commission, agents of the State Arbitration Board, agents of the Ministry of State Control, "special sections" of the Secret Police, the Party apparatus in the factory.

This is not the place to elaborate on the measures Khrushchev has taken to introduce some rationality into this chaos. They include the decentralisation of the administration of industry, efforts to cut down irrationalities in the price mechanism and strengthen cost accounting, enlargement of supply resources, so as to

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prevent overloading of the industrial machine, encouragement of workers' and technicians' efforts by offering them incentives, etc. etc.

Khrushchev's measures have been only partially successful. To give a few examples: First as regards agriculture. Grain output rose from 127.6 million tons in 1956 to only 133.2 million in 1960. The number of cattle increased from 70.4 million in 1956 to 75.8 million at the end of 1960. The corresponding figures for cows were 30.9 and 34.8, pigs, 56.4 and 68.6 (*Pravda*, January 31, 1957 and January 20, 1961).

In speeches in Leningrad and Moscow on May 21st, and June 2nd, 1957 (*Pravda*, May 24 and June 3, 1957) Khrushchev came out with a plan to overtake the USA in per capita meat output by 1960 or at the latest 1961 (speech in Leningrad) or 1962 (speech in Moscow). To reach the same meat consumption level in USSR (assuming the population to be 220 million in mid-1961) Russia would have to produce 20 million tons of carcass meat. In 1960 meat output was announced to have been only 8.7 million tons (*Pravda*, January 21, 1961).

The administrative changes in industry have also not achieved notable success. The plethora of officials and paper work continues. The irrationalities in the price mechanism persist. (It is true that Khrushchev promised that a completely new price structure would be introduced in 1961-2). Tendencies towards autarchy even between neighbouring economic councils abound, etc. etc. However, efforts to streamline and improve the administration continue, even though it is inevitable that they cannot achieve complete success. The multiplicity and different degrees of efficiency of the control systems in themselves lead to increasing arbitrariness and wastage, and thus to the same conditions that make strict and multitudinous controls necessary.

Unable to rely on the self-activity of the people, denying all working class democracy, the Kremlin has to rely on bureaucrats to control other bureaucrats. The hydra of bureaucratic anarchy and its concomitant, bureaucratic control, grows on the soil of workers' alienation from the means of production and the exploitation of the labourer.

Inside the ruling Russian bureaucracy, there are sections—and these are not small—accustomed to the old methods of command. The number of people engaged in the "control" of management reaches many hundreds of thousands. For them Khrushchev's reforms must mean a decline in status. On the other hand, sections of the bureaucracy—the more modern, technically competent—must feel frustrated under the regime of irrationality and arbitrariness.

Even if Khrushchev's reforms were completely and demonstratively successful, the old sections of the bureaucracy, accustomed to military commands, would have resisted them. With their success limited, the resistance is inevitably greater. Molotov and Kaganovich are the symbols, if not the actual spokesmen, of this sect-

### INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM DAY SCHOOL

19th November, 10.30 am-4.30 pm  
"The King and Queen", 67 Harrow Rd., W2 (nearest tube Edgware Rd.)  
Agenda:  
10.30-1 p.m. The Debate in the Labour Movement on the Common Market. Discussion to be opened by M. Kidron  
2 pm-4.30 pm The 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Discussion to be opened by T. Cliff.

ion of the bureaucracy. In the struggle, Khrushchev is careful not to appeal to the mass of the workers, who are kept right out of the dispute. This of course prolongs the struggle.

Molotov and his friends find a natural ally in the Chinese bureaucracy. Both represent the command economy. Both need the siege mentality as a lubricant for economic effort. Both believe in the "priority of heavy industry as the supreme law of socialism", for both Stalin was the embodiment of all they believed in and stood for.

#### The effect on the international labour movement of the open split between Khrushchev and Mao

The Communist parties of the world, with few exceptions, sided openly and completely with Khrushchev. Mao's "revolutionism", his rejection of "peaceful co-existence" for reasons of nationalist expediency as seen through the eyes of a ruling bureaucracy, shows dismal disregard of the very existence of humanity. This can hardly appeal, especially in the more industrial, thickly populated, bomb-prone countries. His open glorification of Stalin and his regime tarnishes his image in the eyes of the labour movement of the industrial countries.

Khrushchev's version of "peaceful co-existence" in the context of the cold war, his damping down of revolution everywhere, his penchant for summitry as part of a bargain with Washington, based on defence of the social *status quo*, and above all his total disregard of the feelings of the world labour movement, including those of the Communist parties—shown in the 50-megaton test—must weaken his appeal in the workers' movement internationally. The open attack on Moscow by Peking, when it comes, as it is practically sure to do, will damage the standing of both.

Whether the crisis of the world communist movement is of a convulsive nature, or of slow attrition—or a combination of both—the beginning of the end of the world communist movement is plain to see. Where the communist parties are mass parties, as in France and Italy, and where their main appeal to the workers is that of left reformism, their decline and atrophy will in the main be slow, especially if Western capitalism continues to ex-

## EDITORIAL

BY the time that this is published history's first 50-megaton bomb will possibly have been exploded. Not many such bombs will ever be exploded if the human race survives. The sheer monotony of protest at the abominations of the nuclear arms race is beginning to dull our responses. How much we are all able to take for granted now, which would have once shocked us.

Let's just concentrate on two things. The H-bombs will not explode themselves; men will do the job. And there are men prepared to do it. They've done it already. "*The West would never use nuclear weapons first.*" No? Remember this bit of history?

May, 1945. *Sato, Japanese Ambassador in Moscow, is instructed to approach Stalin to discuss ending the war.*

July, 1945. *Stalin refuses to see Sato until he has had talks with the USA and UK. The US intercepts a Japanese telegram stating that but for the allied demand for unconditional surrender Japan would make peace.*

July 16, 1945. *First successful test explosion of an atomic bomb.*

August 2, 1945. *Sato is instructed that Japan is now prepared to discuss unconditional surrender.*

August 6, 1945. *Hiroshima destroyed.*

August 8, 1945. *Russia declares war on Japan.*

August 9, 1945. *Nagasaki is destroyed.*

The type of men who did it before, would do it again. But these men are not just individuals. They are allowed this power, they have this power thrust on them, by social systems which divide mankind into the few who dispose and the millions who are disposed of. The few who would press the trigger are those in power in Moscow and Washington and London. We shall only have banned the bomb when we ban the system which puts the men of the bomb into the positions which they hold. Mr. Khrushchev's 50-megaton bomb is among that system's biggest crimes to date.

pand over the coming few years so that no convulsion will shake it.

With traditional Social Democracy turning more and more to undisguised liberalism, and the atrophy of the world communist movement, the international labour movement will face the need to start from new beginnings.

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

IN July this year *Labour Monthly*, the magazine of R Palme Dutt, Vice-Chairman of the British Communist Party, celebrated its fortieth anniversary. Its commemoration issue contained greetings from several Labour M.P.s, Sir Richard Coppock, Hannen Swaffer and Sir Compton Mackenzie. A double-page spread featured congratulatory letters, with photographs of their authors, from Nkrumah, who was billed under the title of "Osagyefo" (variously translated as "Leader" or "Redeemer"), and (quote) "The Rt Hon Nnamdi Azikwe, PC, Governor General of Nigeria." Typical praises printed are those of Sir Charles Snow: "The best demonstration of the (Marxist) analytic tool that I know of in the English language... Its intellectual level has commanded respect for forty years"; and of the art critic John Berger: "the most intelligent journal I have come across written in English... the finest British working-class journal."

We are happy to present the following samples of *Labour Monthly's* wisdom:

*Labour Party embarks upon its open Social-Fascist course the more dangerous become the "Lefts", the most dangerous enemies of the revolutionary proletariat within the working-class movement.*" William Rust.

May 1933: "Only the united working-class front can defeat fascism"—RP Dutt. August 1933: "The fight against modern imperialist war can only be revolutionary civil war"—RP Dutt

May 1933: RP Dutt advocates "a Government whose outlook in international politics corresponds to the outlook of President Roosevelt and the Soviet Government" and "a united 'Peace Alliance' combination, combining Liberals, Labour, Co-operatives, Communists and the Conservative opposition elements".

October 1939: "In fact the overthrow of the Hitler regime is the task, not of military action to impose from without a new regime on the German people, but of the German people"—RP Dutt

November 1940: "British Labour support for Churchill, so far from serving an anti-fascist aim, rallies support in Germany for Hitler"—RP Dutt

April 1941: section-headings from the prospectus for the book "Crisis of the British People" by R Palme Dutt "to be published in June"—it never was published: *The Labour Party as a War Party; Towards the Hitlerisation of Britain; Opening of the Gates of War; The Labour Party's Betrayal of Peace; National Unity for War; The*

*Struggle for Socialism and People's Peace; etc etc.*

July 1941: The defeat of fascism and the liberation of Europe "can only be achieved if the working class organisations fulfil their responsibilities of leadership and break with the policies of coalition with Tory reaction." RP Dutt

September 1941: Two articles on: HOW TO INCREASE WAR PRODUCTION, one of them referring to "a danger fostered by the 'leftist' type of person, that is, to just criticise the management and then refuse to do anything until the cause for the criticism has been removed."

November 1941: Report on a national conference on production by GA Hutt: "... some speeches (which won a measure of applause) showing how old ideas are clung to even though they have become shibboleths. I have in mind references to workers' control, control of labour supply by the unions, to the suggestion that total war could only be waged when capitalism had been swept away."

December 1941: (Criticising an ILP statement on "the paramount necessity of replacing the Churchill government by a Socialist government"—cf Dutt in July 1941 above)—"Black treachery could go no further." Also: *the Labour movement "would stultify and not strengthen itself if it came out for a Labour or People's Government..."* Also: "the Trotskyists—the agents of the Gestapo in the Labour movement... the vile

*anti-Soviet campaign of these loathsome political degenerates... The Hess men of Trotsky, traitors of the Soviet Union, saboteurs of production, must be driven out of the workshop and of the Labour movement."* JR Campbell on "How 'Leftism' Helps Hitler"

August 1942: "Playing with strikes at this moment is playing with fire"—JR Scott

December 1944: "A Labour and Progressive Alliance, that is, an alliance of the Labour Party, the Communist Party, the Liberal Party and Common Wealth, would be virtually certain to win the victory at a general election... On the other hand, in the event of all parties contesting independently, the main advantage would go to Toryism."—RP Dutt

December 1949: "...the leader of mankind in the change from capitalism to socialism... richness of genius of the first order... eternal glory... eternal gratitude... inspiring and guiding world communism and all progressive humanity... etc." RP Dutt: "Honour to Stalin"

December 1949: "little tin god of Yugoslavia... detention and torture of political opponents... spy network and assassination... nationalisation a means of annexing resources for his own domain... propaganda an empty jargon... the 'Communist' party itself a private tool when it is not a mere pretence... tawdry pawn.. Tito gang"—Ivor Montagu: "Wall Street Glamour Boy"

May 1956: "What are the essential themes of the Great Debate? Not about Stalin. That there should be spots on any sun would startle only an inveterate Mithras-worshipper. Not about the now recognised abuses of the security organs..."—RP Dutt

April 1961: "...the still persistent spreading of the falsehood (despite frequent exposure) in the millionaire press that the Communist Party only began to campaign for British unilateral nuclear disarmament in the most recent period, supposedly joining the bandwagon of the broad movement only after this had won broad support..." RP Dutt (naturally)

July 1961: "...this unique journal..." Maurice Dobb, MA.

# IN THE RED

## THIS COLUMN

Everyone, except those who saw the Hollywood film made out of Howard Fast's novel about the rebel leader of the Roman slaves, wants to know who *Spartacus* is. For weeks the competition to get the job of columnist on *Socialist Review* has been very strong. We have had to point out firmly to applicants that the job could not be combined with that of General Secretary of the Labour Party nor even with that of editor of *New Let Review*. But my secret is in safe hands.

### PRIMITIVE REBELS

Talk of rebel leaders reminds me that Eric Hobsbaum's excellent book on *Primitive Rebels* (Manchester University Press, 25s.) has not aroused all the interest which it deserves. Hobsbaum discusses movements of revolt among pre-capitalist sections of society, who are reacting to the impact of the modern world. He narrates the stories of movements as different as Spanish and Italian peasant anarchism on the one hand and city mobs on the other.

Among the many good tales is that of the village of Casas Viejas where in 1933 the anarchist villagers proclaimed the revolution. Two families played the leading role. Old Curro Cruz was the great anarchist teacher in the village. "His grand-daughter Maria ('La Libertaria') was engaged to Jose Cabanas Silva ('The Little Chicken'), the chief of the younger militants..." The Cruz and Silva families led the villagers in the task of proclaiming the revolution, cutting off communication with the outside world and dividing up the land. Then the troops came; the leaders sent the villagers into the hills and all died after a twelve hours gun battle.

Just a good story? I suspect a lot of socialists believe that if only you proclaimed that the revolution had occurred, it would have occurred. A very simple story like that of Casas Viejas pushes you to ask why revolutions are in fact defeated. The story of the beginning of the Cuban revolution and Castro's first expedition and defeat is very similar to that of Casas Viejas.

### POWER

What Castro learnt was that to defeat the state machine you must build up a force as powerful as the state machine itself. But we can misunderstand the kind of power that you need. What made the revolutionary

## "SPARTACUS"

army powerful in Cuba was not primarily that it outmatched Batista's army in guns or in discipline. But by winning mass support, especially from the peasants, the will to fight in Batista's army was broken. In the end Batista's army melted away.

You destroy the state machine by depriving it of servants, and so revealing that in the end the state is not a machine at all, it is just people. So the critical point in the military operations of the Bolshevik rising in 1917 was when the first regiment, called out to put down the Bolsheviks, began to change sides. Guns have to be fired by people. The socialist revolution will not defeat guns with bigger guns; it will deprive the ruling class instead of hands to fire them.

### AFRO-ASIAN SOCIETIES

But I've wandered away from Hobsbaum's book, which has a lot more practical importance than I've indicated. For many revolts in colonial territories are not like classical socialist revolutions at all, but are very like the primitive revolts which he describes. Another worthwhile contribution to this discussion is Raya Dunayevskaya's pamphlet on *Afro-Asian Revolutions* (price one shilling: it can be obtained from Peter Cadogan, 5, Acton Way, Cambridge). Dunayevskaya is wrestling with the problem of whether revolution in underdeveloped countries can avoid the industrialising road to state capitalism. The development of the world market has been such that the primitive rebels of tribal society today often confront directly the power of world capital. There is here a whole group of problems which have not yet been solved in any way at all.

### IMPERIALISM

Lastly a note for students of Lenin on Imperialism. Dunayevskaya's pamphlet sent me back to Barbara Ward's book, *Five Ideas That Change The World* where she notes that "America's foreign ventures are barely one fifth of Britain's in the heyday of foreign lending... Shortage of capital is the world's trouble today, not the struggles of rival capitalists to go out and invest". Lenin's picture of imperialism as associated necessarily with the export of capital is liable to lead to serious misunderstanding in the present situation. It's just not a fact that the underdeveloped countries provide profitable markets for the capitalist to compete in. The motives behind the drive for investment in

such countries are political, rather than economic. Does any Leninist reader want to reply?

## LABOUR AND INDUSTRY

★ *contd from page 1*

located, as his defeat on Clause 4 in 1960 must have forewarned him. There have been few press photographs of more grim significance than those published immediately after Conference of Cousins and Williamson in happy conclave, sheltering each other from the hot breath of the masses at their heels.

It is not within the Parliamentary party that the decisive conflicts of the coming year will be fought out. It is true that the sudden resurgence of self-confidence in the breasts of the Greenwood gang is at one and the same time a response to the demand of the rank-and-file Left, expressed so stormily at the VFS pre-Conference rally, for greater action, and a warning to Gaitskell by elements within the Labour bureaucracy far more powerful than Greenwood. But it is even more undeniable that the sharp class battles which will be fought out in industry this winter will impose upon the parliamentary leadership the need to swing verbally far to the Left, or perish.

*Socialist Review* forecast correctly that Blackpool would provide no sensations and few surprises. We are delighted that our warning against demoralization and defeatism on the Left has proved largely unnecessary. The main task of Marxists in the months ahead will be to link the wave of militancy which will develop in the industrial field to a heightened understanding of the political issues; to campaign to transform every local Labour Party and trades council into centres of resistance against the Tory-employer offensive; to fight for inner-Party democracy and to prevent the gagging of the Left; and to drive home the main lesson of Blackpool—that self-confidence and assertiveness by a grass roots Left-wing movement can stiffen the backs of such as Cousins until such time as they, too, must bow to the will to power of the class, or stand aside.

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