

# SOCIALIST REVIEW

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW, BUT INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

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SIXPENCE

This Issue includes :

Strikers' victory turned sour

Roots of right-wing Labour

Another Kenya in Central Africa?

Socialism for beginners

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To all . . .

Dear Reader,

The SOCIALIST REVIEW has just acted as a marriage broker to two groups of Socialists — one in and around Nottingham and the other more spread out in Britain and longer associated with the paper.

Having brought the two together, the SOCIALIST REVIEW cannot bear to part from them and has now—although still active in brokerage—become their common property. The paper's policy will be governed by the commonly-agreed programme featured on the back page. Within that framework, editorial policy will be decided by an editorial board composed of:

TERRY GALLOGLY, *ex-Secretary, Nottingham YCL*;

PAT JORDAN, *Secretary, Nottingham Marxist Forum*;

MICHAEL KIDRON, *Executive Member, St. Marylebone CLP*;

PETER MORGAN, *Editor, Birmingham Journal, organ of the Birmingham Trades Council*.

As a result of our recent festivities, many new names will be featured in our columns. They will be introduced to you briefly when they appear for the first time. They alone will be held responsible for views expressed in their article as only unsigned articles and those bearing the imprint "Editorial Board" reflect editorial policy of the new SOCIALIST REVIEW.

We hope you will bless our marriage in the traditional manner: aim straight when you throw the old shoes of criticism, be generous when you shower us with silver confetti, and don't forget the wedding present in your purse.

Yours fraternally,  
(the new) Editorial Board.

## Don't trust the "swing"

# ATTACK THE TORIES NOW

WHERE is the Opportunity State now? Queuing up outside the Canadian and Australian immigration offices. Where do we stand in the matter of doubling our living standards in 25 years? On the picket line, resisting cuts on a background of stagnating industrial production. What of the plateau of prices? Steeper than ever. Are we any nearer world peace? As near as one would wish to approach the witches' cauldron on Christmas Island.

The Tories are wide open to attack. Even the distorted mirror of local government elections, such as were held last month, shows that. Not many of their floating supporters turned a hair as 343 council seats changed hands. A General Election held now would give a Labour Government a 100-seat majority.

And this is not the end. The Rents Bill will soon be having its effect. Prices are still going up while the Tories are busily packing ice around wages. If the Tory fortunes are at ebb now, they will have reached a neap tide by the time Summer is through.

But there is no point in trusting the "swing" to clear out the Tories. In parliamentary politics whoever gains on the swings loses on the roundabouts. A Labour Government that comes to power by default, on the votes of the Tory abstentionist, is one that is sure to lose it in a similar way. And nothing will remain to mark its passage.

Maybe this is what the Right-wing leadership want. Did not Kenneth Younger MP in a recent Suez debate summon the Tories to return to the "mainstream of our post-war history" and embark once again on a bipartisan foreign policy? Have we seen a campaign worthy of the name against the Rents Bill? Has one demonstration been organized by the Labour Party to protest against the H-Bomb tests?

The opportunities are there, crying out from neglect. The Labour Party could sweep the country on these three issues alone. But for that, the leadership must present an alternative: No Tests, No Bomb, No Arms; Freeze the Rents; A Socialist Foreign Policy, And this they are unwilling, or unable, to do.

They must be prepared to use every means at their disposal—mass meetings, demonstrations, industrial action. And this too, they are unwilling, or unable, to do.

The rank-and-filer of the Movement cannot afford to accept this for long. The Tories are exacting the price of

their international brutality and national cupidity from the British

workers. These are waiting vainly for their "representatives" to tire of the swings and balances of Parliamentary fortune.

The time is ripe. The mood is there. Campaign for a General Election now through meetings, demonstrations and industrial action!

## Cllr. Peggy Duff shows how ST. PANCRAS SHOWS THE WAY

THE ST. PANCRAS BOROUGH COUNCIL, of which I am a Member, has recently caught the headlines by its decision to discontinue Civil Defence.

The matter was first discussed in considering the rate estimates for 1957/58, but the decision is not in any way a financial or economy measure. Our contribution to Civil Defence is under £2,000, out of a budget of nearly £3 million.

The Council decided on this action as a protest against the manufacture and testing of H-Bombs. The White Paper on Future Defence Policy had stated that: "There is no means of providing adequate protection of the people of this country against the consequences of an attack with nuclear weapons . . . widespread devastation could not be prevented."

In a letter to Sir Frank Newsam, of the Home Office, we said:

"According to reliable scientific opinion, society is powerless to prevent the murder of unborn babies through the poisoning of the atmosphere which is even now taking place as the result of the mere testing of thermo-nuclear weapons. Should these weapons ever be deliberately used against the people of this country civil defence would be utterly futile. Under these circumstances, to participate in civil defence is to participate in a cruel deception of the people."

### Political fight

But it is not only because we feel that civil defence can do nothing for a Borough right in the centre of the greatest conurbation in the world if nuclear war comes, it is also because we wish to protest against the policy of the Government which places millions of lives in peril while admitting that it cannot protect them from the consequences.

"You yourself admit" we told Sir Frank Newsam, "that precisely because there is no defence, the overriding consideration must be to prevent war. Every sane man and woman

will agree with that, but when you further state that the only means of preventing war is by a race to create thermo-nuclear deterrents we must register a profound disagreement."

"It is in our opinion," we said, "utterly irresponsible—the more so since the decision as to whether or not we shall suffer such an attack rests largely with the Government of the United States of America over whose actions and policies the British people have absolutely no control."

### Firm against H.O. threats

The Home Office is now threatening to take over Civil Defence in the Borough in the name of and at the expense of St. Pancras and to take over the premises and staff, and have asked for a reply, by June 1st. A special meeting of the General Purposes Committee will be held, and a special Council Meeting so that a reply can be sent in time.

What we shall decide I cannot say, but I believe that St. Pancras will stand by its decision. The debate at the last Council Meeting was impressive precisely because Labour Members of widely differing types and opinions backed the decision.

What is needed now is that other Labour authorities should rally to the support of St. Pancras, should refuse to take part in what is a wicked deception of the people they represent, and an integral part of nuclear war preparations. The only defence for the people of this island is that H-Bombs and all nuclear weapons should be banned as the first step towards general disarmament.

# INDUSTRIAL

## VICTORY TURNED SOUR

By Jack Selvin Secretary, Sudbury Hill AEU

"WE DO NOT believe that the acceptance of our wage proposals in the present case would imperil the engineering industry . . ." is among the conclusions of the Court of Inquiry into the engineering dispute (Cmnd. 159, para. 57). A similar statement was made by the Court of Inquiry into the shipbuilding dispute (Cmnd. 160, para. 72).

That this is so will come as a surprise to those of us in these two industries who get our knowledge only from the newspapers. And a careful, critical reading of these reports will reveal far more.

For as the engineering Report says, "We can appreciate the unwillingness of the Unions to accept this offer (the employers' 3½ per cent), having the knowledge that in other industries which were not profitable or much less profitable than the engineering industry appeared to be, wage increases of 5 per cent had been made." It therefore recommends a 5 per cent increase at least on wage rates.

The same reasoning applied to shipbuilding.

There can be no doubt that the employers are still mentally in the period when eleven men were looking for ten jobs, and would like to negotiate accordingly whilst bitterly complaining about the demands being submitted under threat of strike action.

### The "strings"

It is not surprising therefore that when it comes to Annex B (the "strings," printed elsewhere on this page) both reports have this to say about the conditions which the employers put forward: "The advantages which they think would be derived from them are advantages for which they would be prepared to pay."

**Before workers rush to cash in on this statement they should note that the Courts suggest no more than another 2/6d. per week; and for what! A wage standstill for at least a year (which means, in practice, almost TWO years since new claims must not be submitted within the standstill period); ALL disputes to be settled by Procedure; no opposition whatever to innovations; and, of course, the removal of all means of effective protest should things not go as the workers want them.**

Both Reports urge the acceptance of this set-up. They say: "The principles embodied in these measures are in no sense prejudicial to the interests of the Unions and their members!"

Of course, there would still be the Sick and Superannuation Benefits as a reason for belonging to a Union, and the right to elect a Shop Steward so that he could come round occasionally to see if one is working hard enough. If this were a document offered a defeated army, it would be comprehensible that it should receive consideration from the Unions. But it is not. The magnificent response of the shipbuilding and engineering workers in the recent national strike surely indicates what should be done with Annex B. Anyone with experience in the workshop will know that acceptance would leave the employers to "do as they liked with their own" as it was so arrogantly put by them in 1922.

### National wage policy ? !

Most reasonable people would accept the idea that a dispute between parties should be settled by the case being heard by someone not directly interested and therefore, by implication, impartial. If this could be arranged it would undoubtedly have its advantages.

After their victorious national strike, engineering and shipbuilding workers watched angrily as their

is likely to be that friction is generated and industrial relations seriously strained." They follow this with the statement quoted in the beginning of this article.

### Threat to unions

These two sets of ideas—the ones contained in and lurking behind the aforementioned Annex B, and the other main theme of the appointment of an "authoritative and impartial body" to settle a wage policy for industry generally—are the heart of the two Courts of Inquiry's recommendations. The smooth way in which they are put over conceals an attempt, under the guise of the general welfare of society, to replace the Trade Unions with some other body not controlled by the workers, whether organized or not.

And it is this fact above all else that is of the widest possible importance to all workers. For the underlying philosophy of the Reports is one that totally ignores the fact that the workers have something (their labour power) to sell and are ENTITLED, within the existing framework, to strike their own bargains. It seeks to relegate them to the position of just one more item on the cost-sheet, accepting what is doled out without being able to protest effectively. Of course, since they are human, there is plenty of provision for consultations so that they may blow off steam.

Workers in engineering and shipbuilding particularly must therefore see to it while there is yet time that the current negotiations do not end in exchanging their right to bargain for the mere opportunity to complain. The understandable desire of some Union leaders to avoid a major clash with employers who are intent on "stubborn resistance" to a justified wage claim must not be allowed to bind strings around the increasingly effective workers' organizations. An early appreciation of what is involved and forthright instructions by the workers to their Union Executives can ensure that this does not happen.

### Post-script

Engineering workers, and others too, will be shocked at the decision of the Confed. Executive to accept 11s. plus strings as the basis for negotiations with the bosses. Anyone who wishes to see some of the dangers inherent in this decision should only look at the "strings" reprinted on this page. There can be no doubt that the union leaders, or rather the handful of union leaders who have made this decision, have forfeited the trust of their members by thus jeopardising their real interests in the hope of achieving a phoney "gain" of 2/6d. a week and a period of industrial "peace." The duty of every trade-unionist concerned is to protest as firmly as he can, to show that even if he failed to put pressure on the union leaders before the decision was taken (as advocated in this article) he will not accept the "strings" as binding.—Editors.

## INDUSTRIAL NOTES

By Ron Keating and David Breen

FOR TOO MANY YEARS NOW the only opposition to the right-wing leadership in the trade-union Movement has come from King Street. On a national level the only alternative to the Carrons and Williamsons has been the Birches and the Haxells. Militants in industry have usually had to choose between them, for lack of an independent Left lead.

But times have changed. Once again it is feasible to discuss the possibility of building such a movement in the

trade unions. Why should militants like MacLoughlin of Briggs he compelled to remain in the CP against their will because, as he puts it, "the Labour Party has not got . . . factory organization."

The monolithic front of the right wing—personified until recently by Deakin, Lawther, Lincoln Evans and their like—has shown some cracks—witness the recent struggles of (and within) the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions. These are only small cracks, mind, but they show that the Right is becoming ruffled and losing its grip.

The CP also has lost ground despite Gollan and Co's assertions that the upheavals in that party affected a bunch of knock-kneed intellectuals only. MacLoughlin is but one of many CPers in industry who have expressed disgust with their party. If that were not so, why on earth could Etheridge, Stalinist convener at Austins for many years, not muster more than 800-odd votes against right-wing candidate Cresswell's 3,600 in the recent elections for AEU District Organizer in the Birmingham area? If it weren't for their loss of support in industry, why should the industrial branches have made such a poor showing at the CP's London May Day procession this year? Or Birch and Co. been so roundly defeated at the AEU National Committee?

The Right is organized on the shop floor. The CP is organized. Even the Catholics are organized in an Association of Catholic Trade Unionists. But the independent Left is not.

The difficulties are still tremendous, although the opportunities are greater than they have been for some time. But if we are going to get anywhere in the direction of a genuine Left-wing policy uncontaminated by the bureaucracies of Transport House or King

[Continued on back page]

### Court helpless

And so it is. The Court proceeds to try and find a way out although they are "deeply conscious that the proposals which we have made offer no complete solution to the problem."

They recommend 8/6d. or 5 per cent without "strings", or 11s. with "strings," remarking in passing that "we are justified in pointing out that if any group of Employers offers stubborn resistance to a wage claim which is part of a series of similar claims affecting the entire economy the result

### THE STRINGS (ANNEX B)

1. That any agreements reached on the present national wages applications shall be in full settlement of all existing national and district claims, whether by the Confederation or by individual Unions, for increased wages and differentials (subject to (2) below) and no further applications for such increases or differentials shall be submitted for at least one year from the date of such agreement.
2. That any claim submitted prior to 23rd March, 1957, shall be dealt with under Procedure.
3. That there will be a complete observance of all Agreements, both national and local.
4. That the Executives of all the Unions affiliated to the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions agree that any disputes from whatever cause must be settled by Procedure.
5. That Executives of all the Unions affiliated to the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions will use their full authority and influence to bring to an end without delay all practices which are contrary to the well-being of the Industry, including, for example—
  - (a) Unconstitutional stoppages of work,
  - (b) Embargoes on overtime,
  - (c) All restrictions on output or earnings. This provision will not, by itself, be used to reduce piecework prices.
6. That the Executives of all the Unions affiliated to the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions agree to use their full influence to facilitate the introduction of new machines and techniques and their efficient operation for effective production.
7. That the Executives of all the Unions affiliated to the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions will issue to all their members a statement drawing their attention to the following matters:—
  - (a) The necessity of members starting work promptly at the recognised starting times;
  - (b) The necessity of continuing to work until the recognised stopping times;
  - (c) The fact that men must not stop work during working hours for the purpose of attending Union meetings without permission of the Management.

## FORUM

## Probing into the ECONOMIC ROOTS of REFORMISM, Tony Cliff shows

## WHAT MAKES RIGHT-WING LABOUR TICK

WE LIVE in a critical period for civilisation. During the last half century humanity has suffered two terrible wars and is now living in the shadow of total annihilation. The present generation has witnessed mass unemployment and hunger, fascism and the gas chamber, barbarous murders of colonial peoples in Kenya and Malaya, Algeria and Korea.

However, in the midst of these terrible convulsions, the working class in a number of countries of the West—the United States, Britain, Canada, Norway, Sweden, Holland, Denmark, Germany and others—show a stubborn adherence to Reformism, a belief in the possibility of major improvement in conditions under capitalism, and a rejection of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. Why is this so? Why the general political apathy and rejection of revolutionary changes in society, when humanity as a whole is in the grip of life and death struggles?

Only if we find the correct answer to this question can we answer a further one: For how long can Reformism push aside revolutionary aspirations in the working class? There can scarcely be a question more vital for Socialists in the West, and hence for the world Socialist movement. The present article is an attempt to contribute something towards the clarification of these problems.

## Lenin's theory

The most important Marxist to define the roots of Reformism was Lenin.

In 1915, in an article entitled *The Collapse of the International*, Lenin explained Reformism, or to use the term he coined, Opportunism, thus: "The period of imperialism is the period in which the distribution of the world amongst the 'great' and privileged nations, by whom all other nations are oppressed, is completed. Scraps of the booty enjoyed by the privileged as a result of this oppression undoubtedly fall to the lot of certain sections of the petty-bourgeoisie and the aristocracy and bureaucracy of the working class."

How big was the section of the working class which received these "scraps of booty?" Lenin says: "... these sections ... represent an infinitesimal minority of the proletariat and the working masses."

And in line with this analysis Lenin defines Reformism as "the adherence of a section of the working class with the bourgeoisie against the mass of the proletariat."

The economic foundation of the small "aristocracy of labour" is to be found, according to Lenin, in imperialism and its super-profits. He writes in a preface dated July 6, 1920, to his book *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*:

"Obviously, out of such enormous super-profits (since they are obtained over and above the profits which capitalists squeeze out of the workers of their 'own' country) it is possible to bribe their labour leaders and an

upper stratum of the labour aristocracy. And the capitalists of the "advanced" countries do bribe them; they bribe them in a thousand different ways, direct and indirect, overt and covert.

"This stratum of bourgeoisified workers or 'labour aristocracy,' who have become completely petty-bourgeois in their mode of life, in the amount of their earnings, and in their point of view, serve as the main support of the Second International and, in our day, the principal social (not military) support of the bourgeoisie. They are the real agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement, the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class, the real carriers of reformism and chauvinism."

## Conclusion vs. facts

An inevitable conclusion following upon Lenin's analysis of Reformism is that a small thin crust of conservatism hides the revolutionary urges of the mass of the workers. Any break through this crust would reveal a surging revolutionary lava. The role of the revolutionary Party is simply to show the mass of the workers that their interests are betrayed by the "infinitesimal minority" of "aristocracy of labour."

This conclusion, however, is not confirmed by the history of Reformism in Britain, the United States and elsewhere over the past half century: its solidity, its spread throughout the working class, frustrating and largely isolating all revolutionary minorities, makes it abundantly clear that the economic, social roots of Reformism are not in "an infinitesimal minority of the proletariat and the working masses" as Lenin argued.

Showing where Lenin's analysis went wrong will help us to see more clearly the real economic, social and historical foundations of Reformism.

## How to throw crumbs

The first question one has to ask in tackling Lenin's analysis is this: How did the super-profits of, say, British companies in the colonies, lead to the "throwing of crumbs" to the "aristocracy of labour" in Britain? The answer to this question invalidates the whole of Lenin's analysis of Reformism.

To take an example, the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company has been drawing magnificent super-profits over decades. How does this lead to crumbs being thrown to the aristocracy of Labour? First of all, this company employs only a small number of workers in Britain. And even these are certainly not given higher wages simply because its rate of profit is high. No capitalist says to the workers: "I have made high profits this year, so I am ready to give you higher wages."

**Imperialism, and the export of capital, can of course greatly affect the wages level in the industrial country by giving employment to many workers who produce the machines, rails, locomotives, etc., which make up**

**the real content of the capital exported. This influence on the level of employment, obviously affects the wages level generally. But why should it affect only the real wages of an "infinitesimal minority?" Does the increase of employment possibilities, and decline in unemployment, lead to the rise of a small "aristocracy of labour" while the conditions of the mass of the working class is hardly affected at all? Are conditions of more or less full employment conducive to increasing differentials between skilled and unskilled workers? They are certainly not.**

One may argue that the high super-profits of the capitalists on their investments in the colonies led to a rise of wages in another way: that the capitalists do not oppose labour laws defending workers' conditions as strongly as they would do if profits were low. This is so. But these laws cannot be said to lead to an increasing differentiation of living standards between the different layers of the working class.

## We go up together

Look at simple examples like the prohibition of child labour or limitations on female labour in certain industries. This does not affect the supply, and hence wages, in the skilled labour market more than in the unskilled. The limitation of the workday also does not affect the skilled labour market more than the unskilled. Indeed, everything that raises the standard of living of the mass of the workers, unskilled and semi-skilled, diminishes the difference between their standards and those of

the skilled workers. The higher the general standard of living, including the educational level, the easier is it for unskilled workers to become semi-skilled or skilled. The financial burden of apprenticeship is more easily borne by better-off workers. And the easier it is for workers to learn a skill, the smaller is the wage differential between skilled and unskilled workers.

Again, one can argue that imperialism throws "crumbs" to workers through the fact that it gets foodstuffs (and raw materials) extremely cheaply from the backward, colonial countries. But this factor, again, affects the standard of living not only of a minority of "aristocracy of labour," but the whole of the working class of the industrial countries. To this extent, by raising general living standards, it diminishes differences between sections of this same working class.

The effect of trade unions and the political activity of the labour movement on the whole is similar. The better the general conditions of the workers the less is the income differentiation between its sections. (This was only partly counteracted when the trade unions consisted only of skilled workers.)

In fact, all historical experience testifies that the fewer the workers' rights and the more downtrodden they are, the greater are the differentials, especially between skilled and unskilled workers. This is clearly illustrated by the following table comparing the wages of skilled and unskilled workers between the two world wars in an economically advanced country like Britain and a backward one like Rumania:

	Skilled Wages as Percentage of Unskilled						
	Pattern Makers	Fitters & Turners	Iron Moulders	Plumbers	Electricians	Carpenters	Painters
Britain ...	131	127	130	147	152	147	146
Rumania ...	200	210	252	300	182	223	275

(Clark, *Conditions of Economic Progress*, London, 1950, p.460.)

Or to take another example: "... a locomotive engineer of ordinary length of service and rating receives 3.3 times the wages of an unskilled man of ordinary length of service in Spain, while in New Zealand the ratio is only 1.2." (*Ibid.* p. 461.)

It can be shown statistically that in the last century the differentiation in the working class of Britain (as well as in many other industrial countries) has become smaller, and that not only an "infinitesimal minority," but the whole of the working class, benefited from increasing living standards. To prove this one last point, one need but compare present conditions in Britain, with the conditions of the workers described in 1845 by Engels in *The Conditions of the Working Class in England*.

## Where we came from

This is his description of typical housing conditions: "In the parishes of St. John and St. Margaret there lived in 1840, according to the *Journal of the Statistical Society*, 5,366 working-men's families in 5,294 "dwellings"

(if they deserve the name!), men, women, and children thrown together without distinction of age or sex, 26,830 persons all told; and of these families three-fourths possessed but one room."

"They who have some kind of shelter are fortunate, fortunate in comparison with the utterly homeless. In London fifty thousand human beings get up every morning, not knowing where they are to lay their heads at night. The luckiest of this multitude, those who succeed in keeping a penny or two until evening, enter a lodging-house, such as abound in every great city, where they find a bed. But what a bed! These houses are filled with beds from cellar to garret, four, five, six beds in a room; as many as can be crowded in. Into every bed four, five, or six human beings are piled, as many as can be packed in, sick and well, young and old, drunk and sober, men and women, just as they come, indiscriminately. Then come strife, blows, wounds, or if these bedfellows agree, so much the worse; thefts are arranged and things done which our

(continued next page)

## FORUM

## RIGHT-WING LABOUR'S ROOTS—contd.

language, grown more humane than our deeds, refuses to record. And those who cannot pay for such a refuge? They sleep where they find a place, in passages, arcades, in corners where the police and the owners leave them undisturbed."

Health, clothing, sanitation, education were all of the same standard. One scarcely needs further proof that the conditions of the working class as a whole, and not only of a small minority, have improved radically under capitalism this last century.

## Imperialism and reformism

As we have seen, there has been a close connection between the imperialist expansion of capitalism and the rise of Reformism. Risking some repetition, we think it is worth while summing up the connection between the two.

(1) The markets of the backward colonial countries, by increasing demand for goods from the industrial countries, weaken the tendency for over-production there, decrease the reserve army of unemployed, and so bring about an improvement in the wages of workers in the industrial countries.

(2) The increase in wages brought about in this way has a cumulative effect. By increasing the internal market in the industrial countries, the tendency for over-production is weakened, unemployment decreases, wages rise.

(3) The export of capital adds to the prosperity of the industrial countries as it creates a market for their goods—at least temporarily. The export of cotton goods from Britain to India presupposes that India is able to pay for it straight away, by exporting cotton, for instance. On the other hand, the export of capital for the building of a railway presupposes an export of goods—rails, locomotives, etc.—beyond the immediate purchasing power, or exporting power of India. In other words, for a time, the export of capital is an important factor in enlarging markets for the industries of the advanced countries.

## Boomerang effect

However, in time, this factor turns into its opposite: capital once exported puts the break on the export of goods from the "mother" country after the colonial countries start to pay profit or interest on it. In order to pay a profit of £10 million to Britain (on British capital invested in India), India has to import less than it exports, and thus save the money needed to the tune of £10 million. In other words, the act of exporting capital from Britain to India expands the market for British goods; the payment of interest and profit on existing British capital in India restricts the markets for British goods.

Hence the existence of great British capital investments abroad does not at all exclude overproduction and mass unemployment in Britain. Contrary to Lenin's view, the high profit from capital invested abroad may well be not a concomitant of capitalist prosperity and stabilisation in the Imperialist country, but a factor of mass unemployment and depression.

(4) The export of capital to the colonies affects the whole capital market in the Imperialist country. Even if the surplus of capital looking vainly for investment were very small, its cumulative influence could be tremendous, as it would create pressure in the capital markets, and strengthen the downward trend of the rate of

profit. This in turn would have a cumulative effect of its own on the activity of capital, on the entire economic activity, on employment, and so on the purchasing power of the masses, and so again in a vicious circle, on the markets.

**The export of surplus capital can obviate these difficulties and can thus be of great importance to the whole capitalist prosperity, and thus to Reformism.**

(5) By thus relieving pressure in capital markets the export of capital diminishes competition between different enterprises, and so diminishes the need of each to rationalize and modernize its equipment. (This to some extent explains the technical backwardness of British industry, the pioneer of the industrial revolution, as compared with that of Germany today, for example.) This weakens the tendencies to over-production and unemployment, wage cuts, etc. (Of course, in changed circumstances, in which Britain has ceased to have a virtual monopoly in the industrial world, this factor may well cause the defeat of British industry in the world market, unemployment and cuts in wages.)

(6) Buying cheap raw materials and foodstuffs in the colonies allows real wages in the industrial countries to be increased without cutting into the rate of profit. This increase of wages means widened domestic markets without a decrease in the rate and amount of profit, i.e., without weakening the motive power of capitalist production.

(7) The period during which the agrarian colonial countries serve to broaden markets for the industrial countries will be longer in proportion to (a) the size of the colonial world compared with the productive power of the advanced industrial countries, and (b) the extent that the industrialization of the former is postponed.

## Vested interest in nationalism

(8) All the beneficial effects of Imperialism on capitalist prosperity would disappear if there were no national boundaries between the industrial Imperialist countries and their colonies.

Britain exported goods and capital to India and imported cheap raw materials and foodstuffs, but it did not let the unemployed of India—increased by the invasion of British capitalism—enter Britain's labour market. If not for the barrier (a financial one) to mass Indian immigration into Britain, wages in Britain would not have risen throughout the last century. The crisis of capitalism would have got deeper and deeper. Reformism would not have been able to replace revolutionary Chartism.

Here again the weakness of Lenin's theory of the aristocracy of labour is shown clearly. According to Lenin, Reformism is a creature of the period of what he called "the highest stage of capitalism"—the period of the export of capital which earns a high rate of profit and allows for crumbs from this profit to fall into the hands of the "aristocracy of labour." This period of big export of capital began in Britain in the last decade or so of the 19th century.

## Wages rise before Empire

As a matter of fact a tremendous rise in workers' wages took place long before: in 1890 real wages of industrial workers in Britain were some 66 per cent. higher than in 1850 (Layton and Crowther, *A Study of Prices*). The reason was quite obvious: the most important factor in improving real wages in Britain was the expansion of

work opportunities—the expansion of production—based on an enlargement of the market for the industrial goods. And this took place long before the period of export of capital.

To put it roughly, between 1750 and 1850, when the expanding output of British industry was accompanied by the ruin of many British artisans and Irish peasants, these went into the British labour market and so kept wages very low. But since the middle of the 19th century, British artisans and, after the "Hungry Forties," the surplus agricultural population of Ireland, were either absorbed into British industry, or emigrated. From then on it was the Indian artisan and peasant who were ruined by the competition of British industry—but they did not enter the British labour market to depress wages.

That the turning point in the British wages trend took place long before the end of the 19th century, and actually at the time when indigenous unemployed artisans and peasants were already absorbed into industry while the colonial unemployed were prevented from entering the British labour market, i.e., during the 30's and 50's of the 19th century, is clear from the following interesting table:

Real Wages, 1759 to 1903  
(1900 : 100)

Decades and Trade Cycles	Index
1759-68	62
1769-78	60
1779-88	60
1789-98	58
1799-1808	50
1809-18	43
1819-28	47
1820-26	47
1827-32	48
1833-42	51
1843-49	53
1849-58	57
1859-68	63
1869-79	74
1880-86	80
1887-95	91
1895-1903	99

(J. Kuczynski, *A Short History of Labour Conditions in Great Britain 1750 to the Present Day*, London, 1947, p. 54.)

(9) The effects of Imperialism on capitalist prosperity, and thus on Reformism, do not limit themselves to the Imperialist Powers proper, but spread to a greater or lesser degree into all developed capitalist countries. Thus a prosperous Britain, for instance, can offer a wide market to Danish butter, and so spread the benefits of derived by British capitalism from the exploitation of the Empire to Danish capitalism.

## Economic basis of the Right

(10) The expansion of capitalism through imperialism made it possible for the trade unions and Labour Parties to wrest concessions for the workers from capitalism without overthrowing it. This gives rise to a large Reformist bureaucracy, which in its turn becomes a brake on the revolutionary development of the working class. The major function of this bureaucracy is to serve as a go-between the workers and the bosses, to mediate, negotiate agreements between them, and "keep the peace" between the classes.

This bureaucracy aims at properous capitalism, not its overthrow. It wants the workers' organisation to be not a revolutionary force, but Reformist pressure groups. This bureaucracy is a major disciplinary officer of the working class in the interests of capitalism. It is a major conservative force in modern capitalism.

But the trade union and Labour Party bureaucracy are effective in disciplining the working class in the long run only to the extent that the economic conditions of the workers themselves are tolerable. In the final analysis the base of Reformism is in capitalist prosperity.

## Labour imperialism

(11) If Reformism is rooted in Imperialism, it becomes also an important shield for it, supporting its "own" national Imperialism against its Imperialist competitors and against the rising colonial movements.

**Reformism reflects the immediate, day-to-day, narrow national interests of the whole of the working class in Western capitalist countries under conditions of general economic prosperity. These immediate interests are in contradiction with the historical and international interests of the working class, of Socialism.**

As capitalist prosperity, together with relatively favourable conditions in the labour market, can be helped by Imperialist expansion, by the exploitation of the colonies, Reformism has been to a large extent the expression of the Imperialist domination over backward countries.

As, however, prosperity with more or less full employment and relatively tolerable wages, may be induced at least for a time by the conditions of the permanent war economy (see my article "Perspectives of the Permanent War Economy" *Socialist Review*, May, 1957), Reformism has economic roots also where the Imperialist war economy takes the place of Imperialist expansion.

## The war economy

During the thirties, in face of the deep world slump, unemployment and Fascism, it looked as if the foundations of Reformism were undermined for good. Writing in that period and prognosticating the future, Trotsky wrote: "in (the) epoch of decaying capitalism, in general, there can be no discussion of systematic social reforms and the raising of the masses' living standards, when every serious demand of the proletariat and even every serious demand of the petty bourgeoisie inevitably reaches beyond the limits of capitalist property relations and of the bourgeois state." (*The Death Agony of Capitalism*.)

If serious reforms are no longer possible under capitalism, then the knell of bourgeois parliamentary democracy is sounded and the end of Reformism is at hand.

The war, as a sharpener of contradictions in capitalism, would lead to the acceleration of these processes, according to Trotsky.

However, Trotsky's prognosis was belied by life. The war, and the permanent war economy gave a new lease of life to capitalism and hence to Reformism in many of the Western capitalist countries.

In itself, the increasing dependence of Reformism on the permanent war economy shows its bankruptcy and the need for a revolutionary overthrow of capitalism with its twins—the permanent war economy and Reformism. However, this bankruptcy of Reformism is not yet apparent to every worker through his daily experience. As I tried to show in my article in the May issue of *Socialist Review*, it will be a matter of some years till the permanent war economy leads to a big deterioration of workers' conditions, and thus to a withering away of the roots of Reformism.

[continued next page]

## THE MOVEMENT

# THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT, 1848—1917

By James D. Young

Since the days of Chartism successive working class organisations have been divided between the reformists and the socialists. Indeed the Chartists themselves were similarly divided between the genuine revolutionaries (the representatives of the "school of physical force") and the reformists (the representatives of the "school of moral force"). Even so the Chartist movement (before the conflicting class interests and aims of the movement fully developed) fought a united battle for a better way of life under the slogan "Political Power Our Means, Social Happiness Our End."

But the Chartist movement declined, not because the representatives of the school of physical force alienated the mass of the working class by putting forward revolutionary ideas. The movement declined because British capitalism was entering a period of boom.

### The boom and reforms

With the opening up of Australia, the building of railways in India, and the exporting of commodities all over the world, British capitalism enjoyed a boom from 1848 until the "great depression" of 1873. Meanwhile Britain was still "the workshop of the world." Free Trade meant abundant imports of cheap food and raw materials, and did not yet mean serious foreign competition.

The most politically conscious workers joined forces with middle class Liberals to defend Free Trade against Tory landlords who wanted to bring the Corn Laws back and so raise food prices in their favour. During this period hundreds of thousands of workers (including some politically conscious workers) emigrated to the colonies or to the United States of America. The discovery of gold in

California and Australia led to a booming export trade supplying those countries. By exporting machinery and other capital goods we helped to build up the industrial potential of foreign countries. Capitalism digs its own grave indeed.

The Combination Acts had been repealed in 1825, but the trade unions were still shackled by judge-made law. In 1859, for example, it was ruled that all combinations which tended to "interfere with trade were illegal and even criminal." In other words, the workers were allowed to form trade unions, but not to use them to better their conditions when they had.

That was Capitalist justice in the original land of freedom and democracy. This process was known as fostering the primitive British worker from backwardness to maturity.

Industrialism was spreading to other countries, especially France. The first international working class organisation—the International Working Men's Association—was formed in 1864. Karl Marx was the inspirer and leading spirit of the IWMA. The International prevented the importation of cheap labour as well as international blacklegging. But theoretical Marxism had yet to sink its roots in Britain.

The Reform Bill of 1867 was passed as a concession to mass agitation, in order to allow "our alternating party system" to function smoothly. There was a new alliance between the working class and the middle class in 1866, after the right-wing Liberals and Tories united to throw out Gladstone's Reform Bill of 1866. The trade unions (with the approval of Marx) took part in this struggle. Although the new reform movement did not achieve universal manhood suffrage, the Tory Government was forced to give the vote to the better-paid worker in the boroughs.

## RIGHT-WING LABOUR—end

For this to happen it is not necessary, of course, that the standard of living of workers should be cut to the bone. An American worker would react very strongly to a threat to his car and television set, even if workers elsewhere look at these things as undreamt-of luxuries. To the extent that past reforms are accepted as necessities, a series of new reforms becomes the expected course of events. With the eating comes the appetite. When capitalism, however, decays to the extent that any serious demands of the working class reach beyond its limits, the bell will toll for Reformism.

A realistic understanding of the foundations of Reformism, its strength and depth, as well as the factors undermining it, is necessary to an understanding of the future of the Socialist movement. As Engels put it more than a hundred years ago: "The condition of the working class is the real basis and point of departure of all social movements at present . . . A knowledge of proletarian conditions is

absolutely necessary to be able to provide solid ground for socialist theories . . ." (Preface to *The Condition of the Working Class in England*.)

Of course, even when the economic roots of Reformism wither away, Reformism will not die by itself. Many an idea lingers on long after the disappearance of the material conditions which brought it forth. The overthrow of Reformism will be brought about by conscious revolutionary action, by the propaganda and agitation of consistent Socialists. Their job will be facilitated by a future sharpening of the contradictions in capitalism.

Every struggle of the working class, however limited it may be, by increasing its self-confidence and education, undermines Reformism. "In every strike one sees the hydra head of the Revolution." The main task of real, consistent Socialists is to unite and generalise the lessons drawn from the day-to-day struggles. Thus can it fight Reformism.

The following article, sent us from Scotland, has had to be shortened unfortunately. We hope that, in doing so, we have not misinterpreted the author and that readers will be as satisfied as we were to read a chapter of British working-class history written from a socialist view-point. Despite our guillotine, the lessons are clear: there can be no demarcations in working-class activity between political and industrial action—they serve the same purpose; there can be no substitution of revolutionary struggles by reforms—the latter are often shaken out by the threat of the former. This is not all, but we can leave the reader to draw his own conclusions from this historical survey.—Editors.

Again and again we witness the power of mass agitation. The organised working class can always get its own way.

### The struggle for reforms

British capitalism was now in retreat; other capitalist countries were taking the lead. Besides the nature of capitalism was changing: the building of railways, and the export of capital goods to other countries made the heavy industries the key industries. By exporting machinery and capital goods for profit, British capitalists dug the grave of their own supremacy.

This forced the competitive system to compete still further. Also British capitalists were forced in their own interests to provide the workers with a minimum standard of education. Gladstone's Government passed the Elementary Education Act of 1870. It was a very niggardly affair, empowering school boards to provide elementary education where the churches were not already doing so. Secondary education was not touched at all.

(The Education Act of 1870, like all subsequent educational legislation, was designed to turn out efficient wage-slaves, not cultured human beings. All kinds of defenders of Western Democracy constantly speak about educating the colonial peoples for citizenship and national independence; but Gladstone and Disraeli made no attempt to educate the British worker for citizenship. The process of the British working classes education for citizenship was inseparable from their struggle for political rights. "Education for citizenship" never will come from an imposition from above, but from below, from the actual struggle of the people.)

The trade union movement now began to make great progress. In 1871 the Trade Union Act gave the unions a legal status and protected their funds; trade unions struck successfully for higher wages and shorter hours. Indeed the engineers and the miners won a nine-hour day; while the hitherto unorganised railwaymen and agricultural workers formed trade unions. Meanwhile, the Franco-German War put France, the chief rival of Britain, out of the running; and the British economy continued to expand rapidly. But the boom was almost over, and the class struggle would begin anew.

### Imperialism arrives

"I was in the East End of London yesterday and attended a meeting of the unemployed. I listened to the wild speeches, which were just a cry for 'bread, bread, bread,' and on my way home I pondered over the scene and I became more than ever convinced of the importance of imperialism. . . ." Cecil Rhodes.

The First International had meanwhile collapsed through internal dissension. The year 1873 marked the end of the boom. The Franco-German War was over. German Unification had taken place, and Britain was faced

with a serious competitor in heavy industry. Over-production and slump profoundly upset the economies of all the industrial countries.

Capitalism had to find a way out by finding markets in the underdeveloped countries. Liberal capitalism was passing into imperialism. Increased productivity in the capitalist world had led to glut and mass unemployment. In Britain rich agricultural land had been driven out of cultivation by the importation of American wheat: between 1868 and 1879 acreage under wheat fell by nearly a quarter.

By 1875 the search for the imperialist remedy, combined with cautious concessions to the workers at home, had begun. In the same year Disraeli bought shares in the Suez Canal for the British Government. British capitalists began to control the Egyptian economy. Faced with the rising militancy of the workers the *Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act* was passed. Strikes were no longer regarded as criminal conspiracies.

In 1882 the Egyptian nationalist revolt was put down by Anglo-French intervention. Then France backed out. Britain was left in sole possession of Egypt.

### Roots of Labour Movement

"First, educating people into desiring it, next organizing them into claiming it effectually. Whatever happens in the course of this education and organisation must be accepted coolly and as a necessary incident, and not as a matter of essential principle, even if those incidents should mean ruin and war. I mean that we must not say, 'We must drop our purpose rather than carry it across the river of violence.' To say that means casting the whole thing into the hands of chance, and we cannot do that: we cannot say if this is the evolution of history, let it evolve itself, we won't help. The evolution will force us to help; will breed in us passionate desire for action, which will quench the dread of consequences."—William Morris.

The continuing depression in industry directly led to the formation of the modern British Labour movement. In 1881 Engels pointed out that the working class of this country had become "the tail of the great Liberal Party." But he had also shown how "the manufacturing monopoly of England is the pivot of the present social system in Britain," and that "with the breakdown of that monopoly the British working class will lose its privileged position "and there will be Socialism again in Britain." The Democratic Federation had been formed in 1881. It became the Social Democratic Federation three years later.

The Social Democratic Federation's very sectarian approach to the working class and its contempt for the trade unions was largely the fault of H. M. Hyndman. He was an aristocrat and intellectual, who had turned Marxism into a dogma. The Social Democratic Federation soon split between Hyndman and Morris, a much greater Marxist, who formed the Socialist League.

Turn over

## THE MOVEMENT

Morris unfortunately fell into the error of rejecting all parliamentary action whatever. Nonetheless in his books and articles he made a mighty contribution to Marxist theory.

Morris made many theoretical mistakes, but when measured against his achievements his mistakes pale into insignificance. I need hardly point out that Marxists should not make the same mistakes again. In any case, the task of the historian is to evaluate history as it is, not as he should like it to be.

**Marxists can profitably read the writings of William Morris. But there are too many Marxists who are afraid to examine the works of Morris in case they become confused. The Marxist who cannot develop his critical faculties and who cannot identify Marxism is not worth his salt.**

### Blood in the slump

In 1884 the Liberals extended the vote to the agricultural worker. Democracy was beginning to encroach on the worker's domain. But the mass unemployment of 1886 led to a working class demonstration in the East End of London. Many of the workers were in a revolutionary mood; indeed, Hyndman, John Burns, and two other members of the Social Democratic Federation—the looting and window-breaking which had taken place had frightened the ruling class—were tried for seditious conspiracy. They were acquitted.

On "Bloody Sunday" the Socialists defied the Government's ban on political meetings in Trafalgar Square. The troops were called in; two men were killed; and Burns and Cunninghame Graham were jailed for unlawful assembly.

Meanwhile the imperialists were scrambling for Africa. In 1887 British capitalists dug into East Africa; known today as Kenya. Cecil Rhodes, the diamond millionaire, secured rights in the gold-bearing region of South Africa. By sinking mines and building railways in these territories, the depression in British industry was temporarily relieved.

But discontentment was still deep and widespread. In 1889 Ben Tillett and Tom Mann led the London dockers' to victory. The dockers' secured a minimum wage of 6d. an hour. The London Dock Strike led to the spread of trade unions among the unskilled workers—the "new unionism"—and to a demand for an eight-hour day. Though the movement was not consciously Marxist, it was led by Marxists.

### Zenith of Imperialism

And now the Second International was founded with the object of linking up various national working class parties. Within the next year the TUC passed a resolution demanding an Eight Hour Bill for all trades. The workers were on the move.

In 1891 the Government introduced free elementary education.

The scramble for Africa continued. Uganda and Northern Rhodesia were added to the Empire.

Joseph Chamberlain, the Imperialist Liberal, defended imperialism quite crudely in the House of Commons as the only way of "feeding our enormous population." He was also an advocate of "municipal socialism at home."

The workers were learning from their experiences in capitalist Britain. In 1893 the Independent Labour Party was founded by Keir Hardie and others. Though the ILP drafted a Socialist Programme, it had no Marxist basis. It was, nevertheless, an

## BRITISH WORKING CLASS HISTORY—contd.

advance.

Two years later Cecil Rhodes' imperialist policy culminated in the Jameson Raid: an illegal (even by the standards of the capitalist Jungle) attempt by Rhodes' subordinate, L. S. Jameson, to annex the Transvaal Republic (rich in goldfields) to the British Empire.

These were boom years in British industry. Britain conquered the Sudan...

In 1889 Britain claimed the right to interfere in the internal affairs of the Transvaal Republic. The Boers kept the British forces busy for three years before the two small Republics were forcibly annexed to the British Empire. This was a tremendous shock to British prestige.

### Boom ends; L.P. begins

The boom reached its culmination in 1902; before the end of the year British capitalism had once again gone into slump. Wages were forced down. This was the period of the **Taff Vale judgment** under which trade union funds were liable for damage incurred by employers in a trade dispute.

The Taff Vale judgment intensified the demand for a Labour Party in Parliament independent of Tories or Liberals. Under the pressure of German and American competition the British capitalist class attempted to crush the unions through the Taff Vale judgment. The Labour Representation Committee was, of course, formed in 1900; but it was largely under Liberal influence. Indeed, Henry Pelling (in his book, **Origins of the Labour Party**) has pointed out that "after Chamberlain was finally discredited, the ex-Liberals had it all their own way in the leadership. Ramsay MacDonald, whom Hardie described as the Party's 'greatest intellectual asset,' sided with the Liberals against the Fabian 'old gang' on almost every issue of the time; and Hardie, who had been much

more friendly to the Radicals since the outbreak of the South African War, in 1903 actually wrote an open letter to John Morley, the great Liberal opponent of State intervention in industry, asking him to act as leader of the Labour Party. It was just at this time that Ramsay MacDonald, with Hardie's connivance, was arranging a secret electoral understanding with the Liberal Whips. With the leaders of the Socialist wing acting in this fashion, how could the non-Socialist elements be expected to keep clear of Liberalism?" (Page 240.)

The foundation of the Labour Party was, nevertheless, the workers' answer to the capitalist challenge.

### Growth in militancy . . .

A step nearer to the imperialist war of 1914 was taken in 1904, when the British Government lined up with France. The British ruling class was becoming increasingly aware of the danger of the growing German Navy. The Trust movement in industry and the rise of millionaire press marked the growth of monopoly capitalism.

Twenty-nine members of the Labour Representation Committee were returned to Parliament in the election of 1906. The Labour Representation Committee changed its name to the Labour Party. In this year the **Trades Disputes Act** nullified the **Taff Vale judgment** by exempting trade unions and employers combinations from legal action for "civil wrongs committed on their behalf." This Act was clearly a concession to working class pressure.

In 1912 the miners had won a district minimum wage. And in 1914 the miners, railwaymen and transport workers formed "the triple alliance" to fight disputes with the employers. Thus the years between 1910 and 1914 were remarkable for the growth of working class militancy and organisa-

tion. The sharp fall in real wages had, of course, opened up fierce and bitter class battles — battles which were extended into the next decade.

The imperialist powers (Britain, France and Russia against Germany and Austria-Hungary) had begun to line up long before the First World War.

### . . . halted by war

The war for the redivision of the world was finally launched when Germany declared war on Russia and France. Germany invaded Belgium, and saved the British Government the delicate job of explaining their secret diplomacy to the workers. And Britain entered the war to the popular cry of help brave "Little Belgium."

The First World War found the Labour movement tragically unprepared. The working class parties in the Second International were (at least theoretically) opposed to imperialism and war. But the reforms which they had won from the ruling powers had undermined their belief in the necessity of actively struggling against war and imperialism. The profits of imperialism had destroyed their revolutionary outlook. So, when the war came, the political parties of the working class voted for "national defence" and in effect mutual murder. Only in Russia, where the workers had got absolutely nothing from Tsarism, did the majority of the representatives of the working class oppose the war.

Before the war was over the Russian workers had begun to build a new social order.

We all know why the **Revolution was betrayed.**

### Stop Press:

In its debate on May 23rd, the St. Pancras Borough Council stood by its decision, 43 for to 23 against.

## YOUTH

## SOCIALISM

by Stan Newens

*In recent months, a number of requests have been made by "Socialist Review" subscribers for articles dealing with the most elementary problems of socialism, suitable for the newest recruits to the socialist camp. Bearing in mind the reviving interest of young people in Labour Party Youth Sections and other socialist activities, we are therefore publishing the article below which we hope will be the sort of contribution required to meet the needs of the situation. We apologize to those of our readers who have been familiar with the ideas expounded for many years, but they may find such an article useful for consumption by newcomers to socialism with whom they may be in contact.—Editors.*

Most of us, if asked what we needed to enable us to achieve a happy life would give a different answer. If, however, we sat down and thought the matter out, we would almost all say amongst other things that we required a good income. For with a good income, all those other things that we wish to have, according to our tastes—fine clothes, good meals, holidays, motor cars and radiograms, etc.—are brought within our reach.

Those of us who only remember pre-war days rather hazily, if at all, tend to assume that a fairly good income is within the reach of the majority of folk, either through promotion—usually as the result of study—or at least through working plenty of overtime. Unless we are very attentive readers or listeners, we normally overlook the fact that a time when such opportunities were available to the majority of people has never been known before in this country and is still not known to by far the majority of people in the world!

At this very time for example something like four-fifths of the world's

population suffers from malnutrition in some form or another. Twenty years ago in this country over a quarter of the children in certain British towns were recognised as suffering from malnutrition and there were no jobs for about 1½ million men.

Now it is very easy for us to scoff at these facts and say that these things have disappeared from Britain for ever. If we are thoughtful, however, we will remember that only last year men working in the motor industry were suddenly thrown out of work and we shall try to decide if there is really anything to prevent a return to pre-war misery and bad conditions.

### Sources of wealth

What ensures Prosperity and Progress?

To answer this we must ask ourselves a number of questions. First of all, what is the basis for our present standard and way of life?

Many suggestions have been put forward to answer this question in the past—intelligence, willingness to work hard, a series of lucky accidents—but if

you really consider it, the basis must surely be the **highly developed Social Review—TWO — — x... machines and methods of production in use today.** To take an extreme example, a man living in the Stone Age obviously could not have any of the things we require as essential—motor cars, libraries, railways, wireless, etc.—for the simple reason that the highly developed machines and mode of production of today did not exist then.

Consequently, his way of life, his customs, his knowledge, his laws, i.e. his form of society, etc., would all be different: they would be adapted to his methods or mode of production. Practices such as leaving the old people to die or killing off several of one's children and many others which we regard with horror were part and parcel of his society because his mode of production made them necessary if man was to survive at all. Later on when man domesticated animals and invented agriculture, such things were outdated and had to be dropped for progress to go ahead.

The fundamental basis for a high standard of life is therefore a highly developed mode or way of production, and improvement in machinery and new inventions are the essential requirements for a rising standard of living. Atomic energy and automation are the means of improving our living standards today.

Unfortunately, however, there is a

[continued next page]

# COLONIAL

## Are the white settlers in Central Africa preparing

### ANOTHER MAU MAU ?

By Patricia Rushton

WHEN MAU MAU first erupted in Kenya its unexpectedness added to its horror. The average person in Britain, who has heard nothing of African unrest, looked upon it as an inexplicable reversion to primitive violence. To those who had been following events in Kenya for some years previously Mau Mau did not come as such a surprise, though admittedly the horrifying form of its first manifestations did shock.

It is a matter of historic fact that in any country where the majority of the people are frustrated economically, socially and politically by a minority, and no constitutional methods exist whereby they may remedy matters, violence will sooner or later break out.

For many years in Kenya the Africans had been endeavouring to put forward their grievances and have them remedied. In the years preceding Mau Mau many African organisations grew up aimed at giving voice to African complaints. But each was, in turn, declared illegal and suppressed or in some other way made ineffective. To those who knew the circumstances it was obvious that the frustration of the African people would sooner or later find expression in violence.

#### Preparing a Kenya

Today exactly the same position exists in Central Africa. The Central African Federation was imposed on the African population against their will and they have never ceased to oppose it. When Mr. Lennox-Boyd visited Nyasaland in January this year all African assemblies and individuals declared for secession. The same demand is voiced in Northern Rhodesia.

The African in the Federation suffers from political, economic and social frustration. Politically the vast majority of the African population have little if any representation. There are 220,000 Europeans in the Federation and seven million Africans. The Europeans have 26 representatives in the Federal Assembly, the 7 million

Africans have nine . . . of whom they are allowed to choose four themselves! No African member of any legislature holds any office or ministry and none are on the Executive Councils.

In Southern Rhodesia all members of Parliament are Europeans. There are 50,000 European and 500 African voters.

In Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Africans are British Protected persons and can only become British subjects on application. They are reluctant to alter their status . . . but only British subjects have votes. There are therefore only eleven Africans with votes in Northern Rhodesia.

In Nyasaland there is no common roll and African representatives are chosen separately. There are six members elected by roll for Europeans and Asiatics and five members chosen by Africans . . . and twelve official members, all Europeans. The Nyasaland African Congress has asked for 'parity' . . . an equal number of African and non-African unofficial members as a first step to political responsibility. This has been refused.

#### Rigged constitution

Recent proposals made by the Tredgold Franchise Commission would give a limited vote to selected Africans in Southern Rhodesia. The Minister for Justice, Mr. A. R. Stumbles, has assured the Southern Rhodesian Parliament that voters of the 'special type' would never be allowed to count for more than half the total of the ordinary voters in any constituency. He

#### Profits, unemployment, slump

This brings us to the question of unemployment: in order to make a profit the employers endeavour to keep wages down. By keeping wages down, however, they keep down the amount of money the workers will have to spend, i.e. their purchasing power.

If the textile manufacturers think they can sell more textiles they build new factories. But, if they discover that they cannot sell all they produce, they will put workers on the "dole" or on short time. The result will be that some of the textile workers will not be able to afford to buy the new shoes or television set, etc., they planned. A fall in the demand for new shoes and televisions will follow with the result that the shoe and television employers will lay off their workers who will therefore be able to buy even less new textiles. Thus the demand for textiles will decline even further and more textile workers will be put off.

Worst hit of all will be the workers normally employed by firms building new factories or new machinery, or turning out the iron, steel and coal for them (i.e. workers in the producer goods industries). Merely the decision not to renew, let alone expand existing plant and machinery is sufficient to throw this vast army of workers out of jobs with the consequent effects on their spending powers and thus on markets.

It was this process which caused the slumps in the past—slumps every few years. Every ten years or so there was plenty amidst poverty. This explains

added that "the ground would be cut from under the feet of 'extremists' if the vote could be given to 'responsible middle class Africans'." He also made it clear that the proposed new Trade Union legislation would only apply to certain African workers.

African political organisations are continually refused recognition, banned or suppressed. Their leaders are exiled, gaoled or prohibited from speaking in public.

#### Suppression of trade unions

During the recent strike in the Copperbelt a state of Emergency was declared and 70 leaders of the African Mineworkers' Union were arrested and detained without charge or trial. Soon afterwards 16 were released but the remaining 54 were detained for nearly three months. At the end of this time the High Court declared their arrest invalid and they were released . . . but meanwhile the Government has introduced a new Bill which prohibited any of the 54 (who constituted the 'Supreme Council' of the Mineworkers' Union) from going back to the Copperbelt.

The Northern Rhodesian African National Congress leaders are forbidden entry into Southern and Nyasaland.

Recognition of the Nyasaland African Congress has been withdrawn by the Nyasaland Government because it is opposed to Federation. Many of its leaders are exiled from their homes and restricted to other areas because of their opposition to Federation.

#### Real reason — cheap Labour

Economically European domination enables the African to be 'kept in his place' as a poorly paid unskilled worker to supply the demand for cheap labour for the copper mines of Northern Rhodesia and other industrial projects in the Federation.

The total output of the Rhodesia Copper mines today is £120 million yearly. The labour to extract this copper is supplied by 7,660 European

workers who receive an average wage of £2,390 a year (a total of £15 million a year) and 50,000 African workers who receive an average of £143 a year (a total of £10 million a year). (These figures are taken from the Brannigan Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Unrest in the Mining Industry in Northern Rhodesia, 1956). African miners in Northern Rhodesia are paid three times as much as those in Southern Rhodesia where Trade Unions are restricted.

The average wage of the African civil servant in Northern Rhodesia is £113.

In addition to these political and economic frustrations there is the application of the humiliating colour bar. There is practically no ordinary friendly social contact between Europeans and Africans. There is racial segregation in many churches. All public transport, public conveniences, station waiting rooms, etc., have racial divisions. In many shops Africans are still served separately, often through hatches in back walls where they cannot see the goods.

#### History repeats itself

Writing recently in *Encounter of India*, Colin Welch said "By 1857 we were half strangers in India, arrogant and aloof; and our aloofness deprived us of any foreknowledge of the revolt our arrogance had provoked."

This is the situation in Central Africa today. The European may talk of "racial partnership" but as an African leader recently said, "They have partnership on their lips but apartheid in their hearts."

Those who know the country fear what will happen unless the European can be persuaded that the African Congresses not only represent African opinion, but in fact represent the most organised and sophisticated section of it. If the present leaders of African opinion are swept aside unheard, as they were in Kenya, Mau Mau, or its equivalent, in Central Africa is inevitable.

### SOCIALISM — ctd.

very big snag to overcome. Just as the primitive social habits of stone age man like killing off surplus children would have prevented the growth of population and man's progress when a new mode of production came into use, so there are many practices in present day society which will prevent and are preventing progress today. Unless society is fundamentally changed, in fact, atomic energy and automation are fearful threats, not wonderful boons, to our living standards and lives.

#### What capitalism is

Our present system is called capitalism, which means that:

(1) The means of production (i.e. the factories, mines and land) are owned or controlled by a small minority of rich people.

(2) The mass of the people can only earn a living by selling their labour power to the rich or the employees of the rich, i.e. by becoming workers.

(3) More or less everything which is produced is produced to sell to others (not to be used by the producer) for profit.

Now this third point is most important. It means that the rich who control the means of production will produce only for profit and not for need. Thus, if people need houses, but it is more profitable to produce luxury and giant stores, under capitalism the latter will be produced. Furthermore if it is not profitable to produce anything that people need the employers will cease production.

why in the 1930's corn was burnt, oranges were thrown into the sea, fish was used as fertilizer, herds of pigs were slaughtered and their bodies destroyed—all while people starved. Even today in the U.S.A., the Government is paying farmers to take land out of cultivation for fear of unwanted harvests.

#### War or Socialism

There is only one reason why a slump has been avoided so far since the Second World War—war production. As Tony Cliff pointed out in last month's *Socialist Review*, unemployment only really disappeared with the coming of the Second World War and a post-war slump has only been avoided by devoting an enormous proportion of the production of the leading countries in the world to manufacturing armaments.

Thus we are walking on a tight-rope today. If we slip one way it will be into the horrors of a terrible slump; if the other way it will be an even more terrible war.

There is only one answer: socialism, which is a system in which control of industry will be taken from the few who seek only profits and put into the hands of the people as a whole who will carry on planned production of whatever is needed without reference to short-sighted gains for a small minority.

It is the need to wrest power from the few and vest it in the hands of the majority, i.e. the workers or proletariat, which is the task of our generation. Being a Socialist does not mean devising an alternative means of keeping the present capitalist system

running or of contesting with the Tories for the joys of becoming a Councillor or an MP. It means preparing to change the very nature of the system under which we live before its terrible contradictions destroy not only our present living standards, but also the lives of a very large proportion of our kind.

This is the task which the younger generation must face up to. The future is in our hands. We can make it by embracing the socialist cause and working for a socialist society or mar it by turning aside to other things of lesser import.

#### NCLC Socialist Forum:

Sunday, June 2, Professor J. D. Bernal, author of *Science in History*, will speak on the H-Bomb.

Sunday, July 7, there will be a lecture and discussion on John Strachey's controversial book, *Contemporary Capitalism*. It is hoped that Strachey will be able to introduce the subject in person.

All meetings of the NCLC Socialist Forum are held at 7 p.m. at The Prince of Wales's Hotel, 1 Bishopsbridge Road (near Paddington Station and on bus routes 7, 15, 27 and 36).

#### Sunday School for Socialists

every Sunday evening at 7 p.m. at Michael Kidron, 30 Hamilton Terrace, London, N.W.8. (Buses along Edgware Road).

# CASSIA'S CALUMNY

WHEN THE BULL-NECKED, balding Republican senator from Wisconsin shuffled off his mortal coils last month most of the obituary notices published in Britain featured him as a changed character in his later years. McCarthy, they implied, had retreated into semi-obscure as a sort of chastened penitent after his censure by the America Senate in December, 1954.

The truth is, however, that although cut down in size by his Senate censure, McCarthy pursued his extreme reactionary policies right up till the time his liver turned sour on him and caused his death.

Only a few weeks before he died McCarthy's policy of reaction led him to adopt a new role—the defender of Dave Beck, right-wing president of the Teamsters' Union now impeached by the AFL-CIO executive for alleged shady deals involving union funds. While defending Beck, McCarthy tried to smear Walter Reuther, president of the Auto Workers and mainspring of the drive against union racketeers.

As a member of the McClellan committee making a government-ordered probe into unions, McCarthy used his talents to defend Beck's refusal to give evidence before the committee concerning his personal finances. When Reuther lambasted Beck for his silence McCarthy rounded and said that Reuther had not been so outspoken when trade unionists had remained silent about their "Communist" connections before McCarthy's own witch-hunting committee.

This provoked a stinging attack from Reuther who said McCarthy's defence of Beck was not unexpected because McCarthy himself had refused to give evidence concerning his personal finances when appearing before a Senate committee investigating charges that he had used funds sent to him to "fight Communism" for speculating in various business concerns.

Just for good measure Reuther also recalled that in the 1946 elections McCarthy had received Communist support which he did not reject or repudiate. This, added Reuther, was before McCarthy "decided that fighting Communism as a matter of political expediency was a road to personal power."

Although he did not realise it at the time, Reuther was in fact writing the most penetrating obituary of McCarthy I have yet read. Pungent and devoid of crocodile tears, it had the added merit that McCarthy was able to read it himself.

SIR HARTLEY SHAWCROSS, occasional Labour Member of Parliament for St. Helens, is certainly having a big switch around. Recently he announced his virtual retirement from the legal profession in order to make a new start in the world of commerce and big business. Now Sir Hartley is moving house.

His new abode, so I am told, set him back around £20,000. But it seems well worth the money for, not

only is it a spacious house, but it also includes some 30 acres of the surrounding English countryside.

I remember how, at the 1953 Labour Party conference at Margate, Sir Hartley appeared on the rostrum to tell delegates why the land should not be nationalised. Maybe he had his eye firmly fixed on the future?

IN LAST MONTH'S *Socialist Review* my colleague David Breen had a few hard words to say about various leading members of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation. These sprang to my mind a few days ago when reading the monthly journal of the iron and steel union, *Man and Metal*.

It carried, as it always does, some half-a-dozen full page advertisements inserted by iron and steel companies. This set me wondering whether the bosses of the iron and steel business were so stupid as to think that they could increase the sales of pig iron or steel ingots by advertising in a union journal.

The thought of hundreds of steel workers doing a bit of steel smelting in the back-garden shed as a side line after working hours taxes even my elastic imagination. I know that the do-it-yourself craze is spreading but I am sure it has not yet reached such proportions.

I HEAR the Electrical Trades Union is closing down its college at Esher. The reason, according to the Stalinist leaders of the ETU, is that recent strikes have emptied the coffers and the college is being shut down as an economy measure.

It has not escaped notice, however, that the director of ETU educational work is Les Cannon who quit the Communist Party last year. Many people have always said that the ETU college was, in fact, a training school for Communists (present or potential). If this was so one can easily understand the dilemma of the ETU chiefs and, as one ETU rank-and-filer said to me: "If the financial crisis did not exist it would be necessary to invent it."

VISITORS TO THE HOUSE of Commons are very often impressed by the clever fashion in which some MP's use Question Time to put Government spokesmen on the spot. Unfortunately these efforts are not always given the publicity they deserve, so, just for the record, I feel I must relate the commendable effort of Fred Lee, Labour MP for Newton, last month.

Fred Lee asked the Prime Minister what guarantees he proposed to seek against the testing of H-bombs in the Atlantic. To which Macmillan replied, in the best of stilted Parliamentary language: "None, sir."

This brought Fred Lee to his feet again to ask: "Is it not possible other nations might decide if there is as little danger as the Prime Minister has indicated by our tests in the Pacific, it would be no less dangerous if they tested in the Atlantic?"

Macmillan was on the spot, all he could do was to say: "I do not think any Government would be so irresponsible to wish to stage tests in the Atlantic Ocean." Which is pretty much the same as what many Asians think about British and American tests in the Pacific.

## WHAT WE STAND FOR

*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:*

- [1] 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.
- [2] Workers' control in all nationalised industries, i.e., 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.
- [3] The inclusion of workers' representatives on the boards of all private firms employing more than 20 people. These representatives to have free access to all documents.
- [4] The establishment of workers' committees in all concerns to control hiring, firing and working conditions.
- [5] The establishment of the principle of work or full maintenance.
- [6] The extension of the social services by the payment of adequate pensions, linked to a realistic cost-of-living index, the abolition of all payments for the National Health Service and the development of an industrial health service.
- [7] The expansion of the housing programme by granting interest free loans to local authorities and the right to requisition privately held land.
- [8] 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.
- [9] 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.
- [10] Freedom from political and economic oppression to all colonies. The offer of technical and economic assistance to the people of the underdeveloped countries.
- [11] The reunification of an independent Ireland.
- [12] The abolition of conscription and the withdrawal of all British troops from overseas. The abolition of all weapons of mass destruction.
- [13] A Socialist foreign policy independent of both Washington and Moscow.

## INDUSTRIAL NOTES

*continued from page two*

Street, we have to start now, from below. Left trade-unionists have a job to hand: building Labour Groups in the factories.

MR. CHARLES J. GEDDES is a dangerous man. He himself is harmless but the ideas he represents could be ruinous to the trade-union Movement if they were adopted.

The Tory Minister of Labour has embraced avidly an idea suggested by the courts of inquiry into the ship-building and engineering disputes—the idea of "an authoritative and impartial body" to determine a national wages policy. The courts of inquiry themselves must have got the idea from somewhere, and this is where Geddes comes in.

In 1954, while he was still secretary of the Union of Post Office Workers, he served as a member of a similar court of inquiry. That was where the scheme first bounced up. Today, having more time to deal with labour policy as a whole (he has left his secretaryship)—and having once again been a member of the courts of inquiry in the recent dispute, up pops the same suggestion, only this time it has all the trimmings designed to placate other union leaders who rejected it before.

What a national wages policy means in our present system is simply another attempt to disarm the workers of their only effective weapon—strike action. The bosses tell their government that strikes are wasteful, that they cut into profits, that they harm the "nation's" economy and that, therefore, they should be curbed and replaced by friendly discussions around the bargaining table. They turn to the union leaders that are frightened to see their funds dissipated through strikes, that exist by virtue of the fact that they can "compose" differences between bosses and workers, and show how easy it is to add to their statesmanlike glory by sitting on yet another

permanent body, above and apart from the turmoil of industrial struggles.

And of course bosses, government and trade-union bureaucrats are all agog with this newly-found constitutional device which promises to chain us firmly to "industrial peace." Except that in the case of the last-mentioned—the trade-union bureaucrats—there is a nauseating feeling that maybe this time they will be going a bit too far if they accept, maybe their long-suffering membership will react to this slap in the face.

In its usual gentle way, the *Railway Review* has warned the trade-union leadership what it can expect if it follows Geddes' advice and accepts the plan. "The consequence of that stripping of the trade power," it writes editorially (May 10th), "would so emasculate them that they would in fact cease to earn the allegiance of their members."

## Our new contributors

Page one:

*Who could be better situated to write on St. Pancras Borough Council's tussle with the Tory Government about Civil Defence than Councillor Peggy Duff, a member of the Council?*

Page two:

*Jack Selvin, Secretary, Sudbury Hill branch of the AEU, speaks with some authority on trade-union matters. He was a member of the Southall District Committee for a number of years.*

Page five:

*Jimmy Young is vice-chairman of the Central Scotland branch of the Association of Scientific Workers, an NCLC lecturer and a regular contributor to trade-union journals.*

Page seven:

*Patricia (or Peggy) Rushton was once an Executive Member of the Irish Labour Party, the editor of "Irish People" and is now Joint National Secretary of the Movement for Colonial Freedom. She will contribute a regular monthly column on Colonial Affairs.*

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