

SOCIALIST REVIEW

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW, BUT INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

FORTNIGHTLY
for the
Industrial Militant —
for
International
Socialism

8th YEAR No 11

JUNE 1, 1958

SIXPENCE

STRIKE AGAINST THE BOMB!

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST NUCLEAR DEATH is growing in intensity. Meetings, resolutions and demonstrations, the Aldermaston march and the mass lobby of May 20th—all demanded a return to sanity, to peace.

* * *

More. The peace campaign is spreading to ever-wider sections of the population. As protest succeeds protest, so the voice and the wrath of the people mounts—a million-voiced crescendo demanding END THE H-BOMB THREAT, is heard throughout the land.

* * *

The people's confidence increases. Ordinary folk, many for the first time, are taking their destinies into their own hands, are joining in the battle, and this is most important, indeed, essential. Essential, because the success or failure of this great campaign will be determined by the extent to which the people really do determine the fate of humanity.

* * *

Therefore a word of warning is not out of place. Let us answer the war-maniacs with EFFECTIVE action. Let us not be content with mere appeals and protests, however necessary they may be. To leave it at that is tantamount to political beggary. Let us go beyond Aldermaston, beyond May 20. Trust not the diplomats, makers of two world wars; trust not Governments, avidly preparing a third. Summit talking is not good enough. Pay no attention to those who advise, "It is Governments which will take the decision—not individual peace-lovers or peace organizations," (*World News*, Communist Party weekly, March 15th) for this way leads to a political cul-de-sac.

* * *

Effective action—but what kind? The working class, we who make the Hydrogen Bomb, we who build the rocket sites, we whose skill turns the wheels of industry, we CAN and MUST decide which road humanity will take—death

or life, Capitalism or Socialism. Our action is decisive, is effective and sure.

The working class movement must declare with one voice: Industrial action against the H-Bomb and the capitalist war machine.

Black the Bomb!

Black the Bases!

FRANCE

Report from Seymour Papert, Paris

IN 1956 the French electorate gave a majority of votes to the parties putting forward a platform of Peace in Algeria. But once in Parliament these parties combined to continue and intensify the war. The Socialist Prime Minister, Mollet, asked for, and was given with the help of communist votes, special powers to crush the Algerian national movement. The communist and socialist trade unions effectively squashed widespread working-class resistance to mobilization. Why?

War or what?

The recent events in Algeria spotlight an essential aspect of the explanation. For the big industrialist, the Algerian question is a matter of balancing cost against benefits; but there are a million settlers in Algeria, and several million, namely petit-bourgeois, hangers-on in metropolitan France by whom it is seen as a matter of life and death. Thus a compromise in Algeria would mean throwing down the gauntlet to a large section of the population who have shown that they are ready to resist by force if pushed too far. The parliamentary parties from the communists to the representatives (Mendes-France radicals) of the liberal bourgeoisie were (and still are) faced by a naked choice: carry on the war or face a trial of force that would immediately put in question the existing parliamentary state. They unanimously turned in horror from the latter possibility. The war continued.

The war continued. The cost mounted. The Algerian move-

ment grew by its own dynamic and through the ideological and material backing of the Arab and Russian sectors. Western countries became more and more concerned about the gaping hole in their myth of a "free world." France faced bankruptcy. More and more people in France—including the clearer-sighted sections of the ruling class—whispered: "the war must stop." Fears and tensions grew amongst the direct exploiters of Algeria. A whispered hint from Pflimlin, prime minister designate, that a cease-fire might be considered, was enough to precipitate the Algerian settlers. Overnight Paris lost control over Algeria except on the terms of the insurgents who recognise no authority but that of the generals and their own "Committees of Public Safety." Their demands were direct: intensification of the war, formation of a strong-arm national government in Paris.

Parliament's Paralysis

The choice which faced all parties in 1956, now took on a new burning urgency. At all costs, the trial of force had to be prevented; the pretence that parliament rules the country in the name of the people had to be maintained. Backed by a united vote of the "left," Pflimlin gave in to the chief demands of the Algerians: the war effort is being intensified; military service lengthened; the war budget was immediately increased by eighty thousand million francs; emergency laws have effectively freed the government from all constitutional restraint;

turn to back page

BUS STRIKE :

Stop the Black Trains ! p 3

BUILDING

A Socialist Policy p 2

FRANCE

Crisis Background p 1

TU COMMENTARY

WITH THE LONDON BUS STRIKE being recognised as the fight of all organised labour against the Tory Government, messages of support and financial contributions have come in from every corner of the country. Against this background it is hard to appreciate the reasons for the three railway unions' settling their claim for a miserly three per cent. With the railwaymen and the busmen the Government were in a tight corner. How pleased they must now be to have calmed the railway men for a few paltry shillings and at the same time have only a bus strike to deal with in London. Maybe some of the railway workers will not be as happy when under the Government's modernization scheme they find themselves out of work, for it is well to remember that the 3 per cent was given on the understanding that economies were made.

● It pays to Organize

ONE INCIDENT during the bus strike is worthy of mention for the lesson that can be handed on to other workers in disputes. At Harrow Weald garage the strikers put their own cars at the disposal of sick, aged and crippled people. One of the local papers, the *Harrow Post*, distorted the motive behind this move by the busmen. Angry representation was of course made to the editor, who in the next issue put in an apology. The damage had, however, been done. At the end of the second week of the strike, the *Harrow Post* required some further information from the strike committee. The reporter who turned up at the strike HQ was asked to produce a union card. Unable to do so, being a non-unionist, the reporter was sent packing without the information his paper desired. It will soon be obvious even to the editor that it pays to organize.

● Rate for the Job!

THE ANNUAL NATIONAL COMMITTEE Conference of the AEU was unanimous in its condemnation of the Rent Act and called for the return of a Labour Government. The Conference also passed a motion urging the nationalization of engineering, shipbuilding, aircraft, machinery industries. Among the decisions made was one to campaign for women's minimum pay to be that of the adult labourer. Whilst it is true that women have been regarded as second-class citizens in industry and have been used for decades as a cheap labour force, it is not to the credit of the AEU that their policy should tag along in this reactionary manner. The demand for equal pay for equal work irrespective of sex, has been voiced from every socialist platform in

this country, all the trade unions pay lip service to it, yet from the powerful AEU National Committee we have a decision to engage in a campaign which in itself is a denial of basic trade unionism, that is, the rate for the job.

● Support for Swindon

AT THE TIME OF WRITING, about 10,000 car workers in the Midlands have been laid off as a result of the strike at the Pressed Steel Company at Swindon. The strike, which has received official recognition from the unions concerned, is over wages, which at the Pressed Steel Company are considered to be the lowest in the car industry. The workers at Pressed Steel have no intention of being used as the cheap labour force which, if allowed to continue, would bring down wages in other sections of the motor industry. To the credit of the Midland motor workers who have been hard hit by the strike, the call has come from their shop stewards for full support, and a demand that the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions take action.

● Out of Work

THE NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED in Great Britain rose by 11,000 to a figure of 440,000 on the 14th of April, according to the Ministry of Labour and National Service. The number of operatives working short time was 119,000, an increase of 16,000. Out of the total unemployed, over 200,000 have been out of work for more than 8 weeks. Whilst the 440,000 represents only 2 per cent in Great Britain, the figure of 51,276 in Northern Ireland represents 10.8 per cent of the working population. These figures call to mind the slogan, "Tory Freedom Works." If the unemployment figures get any worse then Tory freedom will be the only thing that works.

● Black the Bases

ONE OF THE CURRENT DEMANDS of the *Socialist Review* is to Black the Bomb, Black the Bases. From the Head Office of the ETU a circular has been sent to all branches requesting them to participate in "all organized activity" to prevent the installation of rocket bases in the United Kingdom. With this request was sent a joint statement signed by the leaders of the French electricians' union. It would be a great day for the British working class if all unions could discuss this issue and come to the conclusion that all work on rocket sites should be declared black.

GEOFF CARLSSON

BUILDING A Socialist Policy by

SOME TIME AGO I wrote an article for SR which the Editors were pleased to title "A Socialist Policy for Building." Whilst it is true that in the five most coherent lines in the whole article I did suggest

- 1 Nationalize the land.
- 2 Nationalize the materials industry.
- 3 Nationalize the plant-hire firms.

It is also true that I did not go on to state further proposals which would be necessary to justify the title "Socialist Policy for Building." The reason for this is quite simple. I am not at all clear as to what constitutes such a policy. The reason for the confusion is the lack of clarity as to the nature of transitional demands and the character of the struggle around them. I hazard a guess that the confusion is quite widespread. Two extremely useful pieces of reading on this question are a pamphlet by Trotsky called "The Death Agony of Capitalism" which I believe is out of print, and an address, again I fear by Trotsky, on "Radio, Science, Technology, and Society" published in the Nov.-Dec. issue of *Labour Review*. The point of going into such detail in relation to the building industry is not just to get political clarity, but also because the beginnings of a very good rank-and-file movement amongst the building workers has as one of its points "nationalization of the building industry" which I think is inadequate as a transitional demand.

Transitional Demands

Correct transitional demands raise doubts in the minds of the workers fighting for them about the ability of capitalism as an economic system to satisfy their material and cultural requirements, and suggest the necessity of replacing this system by Socialism. Perhaps it would be more true to say that militant marxist workers are able to raise, in the course of joint struggle with other workers for correct transitional demands, the issues of capitalism or socialism on the basis of these demands. Equally important however, is the need to make clear, over and over again, that socialist forms of property relations are no guarantee against the growth of a bureaucratic strata who can hold back the advance of the workers materially and culturally. These bureaucratic strata spring as easily from the ranks of the working-class as they do from the petit-bourgeois or the "intellectuals." How often in the biographies of the Morrisons and the Deakins does one read, in the early chapters of militancy, mass struggle and even marxism. The proposals to nationalize land, materials, monopolies, and plant-hire firms must therefore of necessity include proposals aimed at preventing not only

- a these industries being run to benefit other private sectors of the economy, and
- b centralized boards being set up as a refuge for retired army Generals, Labour Peers and industrial relations experts,

but also

- c proposals aimed at raising the whole issue of workers control, workers councils, election of officials, right of recall, limitation on salaries and "disbursements," and direct creative participation in the day to day running of the industry by everyone including the tea-boy.

Having written this, one has written nothing either original or profound. Whilst a glow of self-righteousness comes over one when attacking "the bureaucracy" whether in the working-class organs of struggle the Trade Unions, or in the socialist property framework in the Soviet Union, one still has not tackled the adequacy of nationalization proposals in terms of the struggle of British workers in the coming months of 1958. Since the land, the materials industry, and the plant-hire firms are centrally organized monopolistic groupings, I can see no alternative to the slogans of nationalization with workers control. Even if under a reformist Labour Government these demands were only partially carried out, as in the case of transport and mines, they would nevertheless constitute a rationalization of parts of the industry which could lead to more homes being built quicker and cheaper, a result which only the most sectarian would dismiss.

PAUL SIMON, is the pseudonym of an architect, member of the Communist Party. We are publishing this second article of his as an important contribution to the argument on the future of the building industry—a future fouled by capitalist control at present—and a contribution to the formulation of socialist policy. Replies and criticism are welcome.—Editor.

So far as the industry itself is concerned however, we have no centralized anything to take over. It therefore seems to me, and this is made as a suggestion for discussion, that we can make a call for alternative organizations even within the framework of capitalism which will challenge the system of capitalism effectively. The one which suggests itself most readily is of course the direct labour schemes operated by local authorities. It is interesting to note that the Federations proposals for nationalizing the industry only mention direct labour schemes as something that would not be "taken over." Bill Hilton, research officer of the AUBTW writing recently in *Tribune* said however that many Labour councillors would rather "howl for parliamentary action, where MP's would have to take administrative and electoral risks than try to build up a Socialist Unit locally which would have a greater element of democratic control than is possible for a nationalized structure." The point, I hope, will not be lost at Cedars Road. Direct labour schemes in themselves do not, however, contain any guarantees of democratic control. So far as the building worker is concerned, he works for the Council like the

Paul Simon

rates collector or the refuse collector, rather than for a private boss. Working conditions are better of course, membership of a Union is compulsory, but getting wage increases out of even a 100 per cent Labour Council is like trying to break concrete with a bath sponge. **The building worker owns the means of production no more than the dustman owns the dustcart, and his participation in the control of production is as great as the worker in any privately owned factory with a JPC.** Direct labour schemes are however a challenge to the local building firms, and as such they are hated and feared. Provided the same attention was paid by the rank and file to questions of control and participation, there is no reason however why a fight for an extension of direct labour schemes should not raise within the industry the very questions "who controls whom" in its sharpest forms.

Direct Labour enough?

A fight for a democratic direct labour scheme, or for democratizing an existing scheme is a question which union branches can take up locally, and which can be related to local tenants struggle. Such a fight would concern itself with:

- municipal bureaucracy or workers control
- private ownership or public ownership
- the role of labour local authorities as instruments of central state control or as local "vanguards" of the class struggle.

There is no reason, for instance, why such an issue cannot be taken to county council level, particularly on the question of school building. **It is particularly scandalous in this connection, that the Labour Group on the London County Council have only recently started direct labour, preferring to guarantee to pay to private contractors wages bills, materials bills, and what it calls a percentage for "organizing ability" and "technical know-how," which is of course a guaranteed profit.**

If direct labour scenes could be seen as alternative firing positions for attacking capitalism and not a socialist solution, then I think Marxists should fight for their extension.

Co-operate against capital

I would like to turn now to a suggestion which, to my knowledge, receives little support and less comment in Marxist circles. I refer to the idea that workers should themselves build producer and consumer co-operatives which seek to challenge capitalism. Such a suggestion is of course pregnant with confusions and idealisms. Anyone associated with the CWS could elaborate on the points already made on lack of workers control, growth of bureaucracy and wasteful and inefficient methods of bureaucratic administration. Anyone who shops at the Co-op, particularly the LCS, knows that with isolated

These pages have been set aside for a socialist review of the industrial struggle. Help to make them complete by sending in news and comments.

INDUSTRIAL

STOP the BLACK TRAINS

BROTHERS: Since midnight on Sunday, 4th May, not a bus wheel has turned on the 2,000 square miles of roads serviced by London Transport. We 50,000 busmen and women are waging a solid and united strike to defend our standards of living. We are fighting for our lives—and for the future of our wives and children—against the biggest monopoly employer in the country—and against the most vicious, anti-working-class Government of our time.

From the very moment that the strike began—on every yard of line—at every minute of the day and night—the London Underground Railway System has been used as an organised strike-breaking instrument against us.

Underground trains are full to bursting point. Millions upon millions of passengers normally carried on buses have gone underground. So great has been the pressure—so acute the danger to life and limb—that stations have had to be periodically closed to avert a major disaster.

And that Underground Railway System is being operated by our fellow trade unionists. By men and women who—like us—work for the London Transport Executive. By men and women who—like us—have had their just pay claim rejected. By men and women who—like us—are being pushed around and treated like cattle by a Tory Government whose declared aim is to beat down the living standards of all working people.

These are facts—unpleasant—but true. Every heavily over-loaded train that moves under the roads of London is helping to break the strike of the busmen up on the surface. Every time a guard gives his driver a starting bell—every time a station woman calls "mind the doors please" a blow is struck at the London busmen.

The press knows it—the employer knows it—the Government knows it. They glory in it—and, if they succeed in their strike-breaking—if they can beat the London busmen—then your turn will be next. They will spit in your faces—just as they have spat in ours.

We know that you do not like this set up. We know that you would rather be fighting alongside us. We know that we are all paying the penalty for stupid trade union methods that keep men doing the same class of job separated into different unions. We know from our own experi-

ence just how tied up in constitutional red tape trade union affairs are. We know that you wait for a lead—a lead that does not come—from your top officials.

But, when one's house is on fire, one does not wait for a handbook of instructions on fire-fighting methods. One gets cracking right away—to save the home and rescue the children. And, if the fire is at the house of your neighbour, you do not wait for a formal invitation—you just wade in and help.

To-day it is the busmen's house that is on fire—to-morrow it will be yours. Next week it will be the turn of the engineer—the miner—the docker. And so it will go on—so long as we are prepared to stand quietly in our separate folds—like sheep waiting for the slaughter.

We again repeat that we understand the constitutional difficulties, but blood—working-class blood—is thicker, and infinitely more precious than constitutional red tape. Red tape that permits one trade unionist to be used against another must be broken. If those at the top of our unions will not act—then we busmen, who stand alone in the front line of danger—feel we are entitled to appeal direct to our brothers who man the strike-breaking trains.

We know that if you come to our aid—and stop the trains now—you will suffer hardship. We know from bitter experience that a strike is no picnic. Yet we believe—in all sincerity—that if you do NOT stop the trains NOW—you will pay an even more bitter price in the future.

Never did the old trade union maxim—"An injury to one is an injury to All" ring so urgently true as to-day. Never before was it so patently obvious that—"United we stand—Divided we fall."

We busmen are solid and united—we are determined to fight on—we will not give up. From the front line of the battle we call upon you—our brothers and fellow trade unionists to come to our aid.

Stop the trains—stop the strike-breaking. Stop the piecemeal—section by section attack by the Tories on trade union standards. Joint action NOW can shorten our strike—defeat the employers—and put the Tory Government in the garbage can—where it belongs.

Reprinted from Platform

and a footnote on South Bank

by E. J. Scott, T & G No. 1/721 Branch Sec.

BUILDING OPERATIVES should take warning and make bigger efforts to organize. Once again, as in pre-war days, our livelihoods are being threatened. I have been constantly receiving reports of men offering themselves for work at a rate below the trade union rate. For example, one of my stewards recently told me that a man applied for a job and informed the general foreman that he would do

operatives in house building. If such co-operatives were formed (as they will be formed) with the active participation of Marxists, then they will give the working class rich experiences. With the participation of Marxists there is a chance that revolutionary perspectives will not become blurred. Without it, of course, such co-operatives can become merely another adaptation, another compromise along the rocky road of reformism.

I think considerations such as those outlined in this article should engage the attention of rank and file militants in the working class movement.

any work, and that he was prepared to work for any wage the foreman gave him. In this particularly case the site was an LCC Direct Labour site, and the LCC will pay the trade union rate only. **But a private contractor, or at least many of them, will take advantage of such opportunities to exploit workers and weaken union organization. It is therefore most important that we redouble our efforts to organize the building workers.**

During the recent elections the Tory Government has been told in no uncertain manner to get out, yet they hang on like a drowning man clutching a straw. The building workers are prepared to fight the Tory Government. For example, on the large sites in the City of London the workers are voluntarily imposing a levy of 2s. a week from each man in support of our comrades on the buses. **Let all stewards on sites, in workshops and factories show 100 per cent solidarity with the busmen. Their fight will be our fight tomorrow, if they lose today; their loss will be our loss. Let our motto be "Unite to Fight."**

exceptions you can get better value and service at Sainsburys and Marks and Spencer, or a bigger dividend at many multiples. The Co-operative Movement has carved itself as large and secure a place in the capitalist sun as the TUC General Council, and is subject to the same stresses. One is also aware of the confusion generated by "Co-op-Ownerism," ideas that workers and even capitalists will be converted to Socialism by the example of co-operative ownership, or that groups of artisans-producers banded together under one roof constitute a "socialist outpost." **There is no solution to the problems of the working-class under capitalism except the building of a socialist society. There is no alternative to taking state power by the working class and imposing class rule for the protection of building Socialism. Such a possibility is not however, continuously on the agenda.**

Only when capitalism is gripped by an economic crisis, when the capitalists as a class are divided and confused, and when the workers as a class are confident, clear of any reformist illusions and led by a revolutionary party can we speak of taking state power. In the meantime we have to have to start with the working class where it is, try to solve the problems it has now, and go through historical experiences which, when conditions are right, will repay dividends.

The way forward

Alongside the right to work at a living wage there is at the moment as great or greater a problem facing masses of working class families. The right to a home at a rent they can afford. There is not the space to go into the ramifications of interest and profit which go to make a typical Council house something like three times as expensive as the value of labour used up in its production, but it is clear that as part of the fight for a home at a rent they can afford, the working class have to engage directly with private land owners, city financiers, the bank and insurance companies, and the vested interests in the building industry. Many working-class families however, despairing of the waiting list and a homeless prospect, are mortgaging themselves and their future to buying houses from private and speculative developers and builders. Unless capitalism declined into a critical slump condition, and I am not competent to speak on this, this process will increase, even under a Labour Government inherited from the wartime, or unless it is prepared to, say, nationalize the land. **My belief is, that unless the situation sharpens such that we get the revolutionary situation outlined above, the labour leaders will be prepared to let private building have its head on housing, and will concentrate on rented property.**

If this analysis is correct (and it does need substantiating), then there is a case for the formation of producer and consumer co-

LP COMMENTARY

SR Columnist RON LEWIS looks at the state of the Party

THE LATEST GALLUP POLL confirms our assessment of the current political feeling in the country, viz.—that while the Tory Party is in a state of rapid decline, the Labour Party is not winning a new support.

Not that we need Dr Gallup's magisterial assurance on that point, the Borough and Urban District Council elections were proof enough. For though we won seats, it was not on the scale that we lost them in 1955. And here and there, stiffened by its defeats a month ago in the County elections the Tory Party managed to fight back successfully and produce majorities against us in seats we won in April. In my own County seat, this happened, and my majority of 536 on April 12th was transformed into a Tory majority of 150 on May 10th.

BIRTH OF A STATESMAN

"I am profoundly opposed to the manufacture of the (H) Bomb." (Chesham, April 29th, 1955).

* * *

"I wish to heaven that Britain would rise to her moral stature by surrendering her hydrogen bomb experiment. I can see no good purpose at all in Britain also arming herself with that useless weapon." (New Delhi, March 28th, 1957).

* * *

"If Britain had the moral stature she could say we can make the H-bomb, but we are not going to make it." (Reading, 5th May, 1957).

* * *

"The moral responsibility for stopping H-bomb tests lies with Russia. (BBC Press Conference, May 1957.)

* * *

"The only conclusion that a calm appraisal justifies is that the existence of nuclear weapons can no longer be regarded as a deterrent to war, but as making war a certainty." (Tribune, 24th May 1957).

* * *

"With the H-bomb Britain is as much a dictatorship as any dictatorship in the world." (Cardiff, 8th June 1957.)

* * *

"If you carry this resolution, calling for unilateral abolition of the H-bomb you will send a British Foreign Secretary naked into the conference chamber." (3rd October 1957.)

from the 'Welsh Nation'

What is wrong?

Clearly, the Party is failing to make any impact. That it gets any votes at all is because,

- there is no alternative
- voting habits take a long while to die, and a hard core of over-thirties will continue to vote Labour no matter what, for their image of the Party was born a long while ago.

But the young, what of them? The Party must look a poor, dismal, cynical thing to them. For on the really big issues such as the H-bomb, the worker's share of his product and the control of industry, the Party talks out of the side of its mouth.

Until the Party produces a policy in which the Party-activists can believe this state of affairs will continue to exist. Sincerity is an important factor in politics, or at least

the appearance of it is. And as clever as some of our leaders think they are in the field of television performances, their insincerity all too often shows through, and they must remember that lower down we are not such good liars, and we are the people who count!

● The Bomb

ON THE FIRST ISSUE, the Bomb, why they don't give up their lost cause of trying to convert the Party to nuclear warfare? I shall never understand unless I mug up my Freud, Jung and Adler. For the more speeches they make on it to Party conferences the more they antagonise people. Whether they like it or not the campaign against the Bomb is becoming the biggest thing we have had in British politics for a generation. It is even frightening the Tories, but Gaitskell, Bevan and Strachey seem to be unaware that anything is happening.

● No Wage Freeze!

THEN THERE IS THE WAGES QUESTION. After a spirited debate on the busmen's dispute, everything has gone quiet again. Here was a splendid opportunity to strike at the very roots of the Government—indeed, we owe it to them to use their sacrifice to bring down this government by mass agitation and by extending the strike.

However, one suspects that on this issue as on so many others they are speaking with two tongues. For it is reported that in the policy statement to be issued soon on controls in private industry, the policy sub-committee are anxious to include a reference to a wage freeze.

At a time when it is apparent that our economy is under-used and unemployment is beginning to assume dangerous proportions such a suggestion is criminal. But such is the obsession of the leadership with the balance of payments that they are prepared to risk electoral disaster not merely by resolving to try to introduce a wage freeze, but by publishing the fact beforehand.

The response to the call for a wage freeze 10 years ago was magnificent, but it was a sacrifice betrayed. For far from improving their standard of living as a result of this self-denial what happened? Since 1948, the average hours worked have gone up by over one hour per week. And the amount of goods and services available per hour worked are less today than they were in 1938! If we add the benefits of the social-wage there is a marginal increase of 1 per cent.

This is the truth. No amount of double-talk about paying our way and all that sort of eye-wash can disguise the fact that as the worker's output goes up, his share goes down, and if this has not resulted in the worker's absolute impoverishment as Marx thought it would, that is solely because capitalism developed sufficient consciousness to stabilise the workers' subsistence level just a fraction or two above par.

But today if the workers have cars, television sets and go abroad for their holidays let us not forget that for most of them, it is paid for out of overtime, and the wife's earnings.

Although I described the workers' response to the wage freeze of Cripps' day as mag-

nificent, I referred to the trust which the workers were prepared to put in a Labour Government of that time. I thought then, and I think now, that that appeal was misguided. But if it was misguided then, it is folly now. For with automation already causing sackings all over the place and even in the white collared professions, it is obvious that we must increase demand if every-one is to be employed. Demand is synonymous with high wages.

It is reported that the TU leaders are unhappy about the proposal to seek a wage freeze. Let us hope for once, that they manage to exert sufficient influence upon the policy sub-committee to prevent such a proposal from being included. For such a freeze is not only in my view economically reactionary, it is politically unworkable. To persuade the workers after the war was not easy and then one had the easy story about the loss of our assets, etc., and the need to replace machinery which could not be made during the war. But now after 13 years of 'peace' the workers are expecting to see some reward for their labours. As for the 'inflationary' effect of high wages—so what! Since when have the propertyless had to worry about inflation? And as Keynes himself remarked on more than one occasion, it is a great debt payer.

The future lies in an expanding economy with the worker getting each year a larger real return for his work. If 'savings' have to be made, let them come first from the arms bill and when that waste ceases to figure in our budget, there are still the hundreds of millions that are being fiddled out of taxation, and the vast army of drones and spivs who live like leeches off the backs of those of us who work.

No. The wage freeze must be fought bitterly and without quarter. Under no circumstances must the worker surrender his right to fight for his share of the national product, for to do so is to embark upon a road that can lead to Stalinism.

● Abolish Public Schools

A FURTHER POLICY STATEMENT which is in the course of preparation is on Education. It is reported that the Party have agreed a compromise which would still leave the Public Schools in existence. Our society is riddled with freemasonry of one sort and another, and none is more omnipotent than the old-school-tie. Scholastically these schools have little to commend them, even though in organization they are 'comprehensive.' The quality which these schools produce lies in the creation of an elite not of intellectuals but of people distinguished by their accents and their acceptance of the belief that they are the herrenvolk of Britain.

This is a quality that we do not need in a socialist society. Therefore there should be no compromise. They should be taken over by the state and dismantled. Of course the buildings might well house other types of school, but that they should exist in any form at all whether run by the state and admission by scholarship or not, should not even be worth five minutes of the NEC's time. That it apparently was is another sad commentary on how far we are drifting from basic socialist ideas.

SOCIALIST REVIEW BULK ORDER (Six or more copies post free)

Please send me.....copies of the next.....
issue(s) of SOCIALIST REVIEW, for
which you will bill me.

Name.....

Address.....

Send to SOCIALIST REVIEW, 35B Priory Terrace London NW6.

YOUNG SOCIALIST

NOW
TWICE
MONTHLY

NUMBER 13.

JUNE 1, 1958

OFFICE-WORKERS — a reply

By John Crutchley, Willesden Youth Section and NATSOPA Member

I FEEL THAT THE ARTICLE about young clerical workers misses the point it wanted to make and is merely a summary of the text book case against monopoly capitalism. It lacks insight into the problems of clerical workers and raises the question of whether the authors have worked as clerks.

To dismiss clerical work as repulsive, uncreative and stunting character development is to fail to relate the job to alternative employment in the social environment. Why do teenage girls spend as many as three nights a week and much of their spare time wrestling with the intricacies of shorthand, as difficult to learn as a foreign language? Why does even the most militant factory hand want to get his child a job on the staff? Why is the working class grammar school boy willing to become a uncreative toiler instead of earning twice the money as a building labourer? These questions the authors do not answer, indeed they do not seem aware they exist.

White-collar status

A tradition has been built up of the superiority of the office staff over manual workers which is accepted by all grades of workers and the boss. Originally this was because there was a social status in being able to read and write for which the boss was willing to pay. Office workers also worked shorter hours because at that time selling was not as important as producing. They have always been white collar workers, never working under the degrading physical conditions which is the lot of most factory workers even today. Clerks were originally drawn from the petty bourgeois section of the community which meant that the boss always trusted them more than the 'factory scum', and for their loyalty they were given such sops as sick and pension funds. Lastly, and one of the most significant features, they were never tied to the work situation in the same way as the factory worker WAS AND IS. This vicious aspect of capitalism, reminiscent of slavery, has never effected the office workers. For these reasons the clerk achieved an elite status which has lingered on despite a worsening of financial conditions compared with their factory comrades. Office workers were working a 5½ day week long after the five day week had been established in the factories. Since the war manual workers have maintained their living standards because of the strength of their

trade unions, whereas the living standards of the unorganized clerk have fallen.

. . . and satisfaction

Despite this decline in money wages office work still retains its attractiveness for many youths beginning their industrial life. Office work provides a more pleasing work situation than the factory. You are not geared to a machine but to the established rhythm of each individual office. This rhythm is established by the interaction of the personalities of the workers and the boss of the department. Even the most junior office boy contributes to this interaction and derives satisfaction from it. **Imagine the factory apprentice influencing the rhythm of the machine!** Naturally this situation leads to many frustrating situations but even unpleasant social interaction is preferable to endless isolated hours contemplating a conveyor belt. Furthermore most office work entails interaction with other departments and firms, either by telephone or by personal contact and this is a further source of personality development and social satisfaction.

Automation although it is industrializing office work will not proceed as far and as fast as the authors believe. **Only routine work can be automated and this has always been the most boring aspect of office work.** Social interaction between other industrial concerns and the public will always be needed and can be potentially rewarding.

The real problems

I do not want to make out that office work under capitalism is milk and honey. It isn't. The office worker is acutely aware of the inefficiency and contradictions of capitalism. **This has led to a class consciousness but because of their elite status it is a 'petty bourgeois class consciousness', the belief that he would be able to run the enterprise better 'if he had the chance'.** Effective trade union organization is also hindered by the large proportion of girls earning their cosmetic money and hoping to marry in a few years and the fact that it is impossible to lay down fixed standards of work for all office workers. Office workers are what American sociologists call 'marginal men' the people between the two camps. By economic definition working class, by aspiration ruling class. **Bureaucrats or potential bureaucrats 'lording it over little guys'.**

These are the problems that

confront young clerical workers and have to be overcome if strong militant trade unions are to be built up. This should be done by concentrating on large industrial concerns where a large body of unorganized clerks exist. **This has been partly successful in the printing trade and civil service but is hindered in other industries by staff associations, sports clubs**

and other activities inspired and financed by the boss to induce loyalty to the firm. Unfortunately administrative difficulties prevent the widespread unionization of clerks in smaller offices and this problem cannot be tackled until our comrades in the larger concerns achieve better living standards through their trade unions.

The Fight for Socialism: 5

Mike Kidron examines Nationalisation and Workers' control

EVEN IF THE BRITISH ECONOMY were completely nationalized we would still be dependent on the world market. The Control Plan would still have to take account of the fact that more than half of our food and vast amounts of raw materials must be imported and paid for with exports. We would still have to compete with foreign capitalists in selling our goods. Accumulation would still appear as an imperative necessity and wages would still have to be kept down in order to allow this accumulation. Otherwise we would lose our export market, be unable to import and be starved out of existence. **Socialism in one country is impossible.**

That this is not simply a nightmare but a fact is borne out by the experience of Russia. In November 1917 the Russian workers took power. The capitalist class was eliminated. The revolutionary movement swept over Europe and almost engulfed the whole European capitalist class. Almost, but not quite. In the event, Russia was left isolated. The pressure put on her by world capitalism in the form of military invasion and economic embargo, forced the pace of accumulation in Russia. Whatever could be invested in industrial power was invested, only the remainder was left as workers' wages, only what was strictly necessary to keep them alive and able to produce the capital goods. The workers had to be subordinated to the process of accumulation; whatever else happened, accumulation had to go on if Russia was to remain on the map. And where the job of accumulation must go on and the workers have to pay for it in much the same way as they do in Britain, somebody has to see that it will be done. Somebody who can carry it out in spite of working class opposition, somebody who is not responsible to the workers. The old capitalists had been wiped out; a new bureaucracy (a 'collective' capitalist class) stepped in. The job that the old capitalists did so badly was now done with ruthless efficiency by the bureaucracy. They could do it better because Russia was now one big 'firm' with one plan and one directing centre; they had to do it because Russia was only one 'firm' amongst many competing ones.

Full nationalization in one country is possible. Russia proves that. Socialism in one country is impossible. Russia proves that too. As long as competition exists, whether in the market or on the battlefield, production for accumulation will go on and production for consumption will be only incidental to it. There can be no Socialism until the working class kills capitalist competition internationally. To do this, **the workers must control production in all countries.** **Nationalization has Nothing to do with Workers' Control:**

Every railwayman will agree that little has changed for him since Vesting day. Before then he worked for a private boss; since he has worked for a public one. Bosses come and go but the relations between boss and worker remain (or have done until now). The change in the form of ownership does not mean an automatic change in the **relations of production.**

This can be seen in many ways. A couple of pages back we saw how the representatives of Big Business packed the economic posts of the Government. Even in the nationalized industries where Business was supposed to have been bought out, the same applies—the previous owners and their friends still formulate policy. **Of 272 Members of National and Regional Public Boards of a Commercial Character, in March 1956, 106 were Company Directors, 9 were Landowners, 5 were Regular Officers, 15 were civil servants, and 71 were managers.**

So much for workers' control!

YOUNG SOCIALIST. NOTEBOOK

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND why the Government decided to bring the Isis prosecution, unless it was to intimidate the thousands of young people who are determined to make it give up building, testing, storing nuclear weapons. The attempted seizure of reprints at the Mass Lobby (which was much bigger, much better than the newspapers would admit), and the questioning of prominent leaders of the student campaign by Special Branch men, can only reinforce this view.

I don't believe anyone will be scared off in this way. The issue is too serious.

Incidentally, copies of the leaflet "**Official secret? that Isis article**" may be had from ULR Club, 41 Croftdown Road, NW5, price 3d. each. Sections should place their orders now before stocks run out . . . Mention **YS Notebook** and help us to know more about you.

AT LONDON'S YOUTH 'conference' on May 18 many delegates stressed the importance of close relations with local TU branches and Shop Stewards committees, and of getting young trade unionists into the socialist youth movement. Uxbridge Section followed this up when their Chairman brought a message of support to a local busmen's meeting and appealed to young workers on the tubes, in the generating stations, on the tankers and docks to come out and win the strike. He told me how pleasantly surprised he was at the warm applause which greeted this appeal; later in the week, the local garage delegate, Jock Anderson, spoke about the strike to the Section. This is the way to build up the solidarity with the local labour movement which a successful section must have.

BOB FLAGG

CONSCRIPTION LEAFLET

The YS is reprinting this leaflet for distribution by Youth Sections at Labour Exchanges on Registration Day for National Service.

Order your copies now from us at 6s. per 100

JUNE 14

SIGN UP FOR WHAT?

TODAY THOUSANDS OF YOUNG MEN LIKE YOURSELF are registering for National Service. Why do we have National Service? The Tory Government and the British employing class needs a conscript in order to wage its bloody colonial wars in Cyprus, Kenya, and Malaya. British conscripts are being used to oppress people whose only demand is freedom from oppression.

The colonial peoples wish to rid themselves of poverty and injustice, a result of the greed of British shareholders for Malayan rubber and the oil of the Middle East.

As well as being used in the colonial wars of the Tory Government, young conscripts may be used by the rulers of the Great Powers to deliver the H-Bomb. Wars in which these weapons are used would destroy all humanity.

In solidarity with the just struggles of the colonial peoples whose only wish is to determine their own lives and future, we must fight for the withdrawal of all troops from overseas and the abolition of conscription.

This is an essential part of the struggle of young British workers against the bosses' government and for Socialism.

But in order to struggle against war we must organize ourselves. This can be done by building up a strong militant Socialist youth movement in the Labour Party Youth Sections which will fight against the H-Bomb, against war and the system that breeds it.

SIGN UP WITH US!

I wish to join the.....
Labour Party Youth Section

Name

Address

Hand this form to our representative or send to

REVIEWS

They're getting at us warns Mr Packard

YES, THEY REALLY ARE GETTING AT US, if Vance Packard's disclosures are reliable and not latter-day myths and fairy stories. They, are the motivational researchers, the merchandising experts, the brainwashers of the Western world, whose sole function is to persuade and cajole us into becoming super-consumers.

Mr Packard's book is frightening, fantastic, funny and inconclusive at one and the same time. The sub-titles—"Self-Images for Everybody"; "The Built-in Sexual Overtone"; "Back to the Breast, and Beyond"; "The Packaged Soul," to quote but a few—are enough to make us wide-eyed with incredulity. On putting the book down, however, we cannot be blamed if we have a nightmare sweat on our brow, for we have had a glimpse of a world that bears uncomfortable resemblances to George Orwell's "1984." But the tales the author has to tell are of events happening at this very moment in this country as well as in America.

Contempt for consumers

How do these manipulators—who persuade us to buy ideas and attitudes as well as cars and detergents—go about their work? They use the techniques of psycho-analysis (are you turning in your grave Dr Freud?) to probe our subconscious and unconscious minds, to search out our hidden fears, preferences and prejudices. **The ad men and their armies of psychologists and sociologists have discovered that human beings—visualized as a mass of insatiable consumers—are not, after all, motivated entirely by reason and logic. They have concluded, remarks Mr Packard, that "it is dangerous to assume that people can be trusted to behave in a rational way."**

Having discovered the key to the consumer's soul, the ad men can henceforth plan their publicity campaigns with a vastly increased arrogance and optimism—or so they lead us to believe. The old statistical research methods—contemptuously referred to as "nose counting"—are deemed archaic and are thrown into the dustbin of memory. Yet despite the startling and revolutionary claims put out by the motivational experts on the strength of increased sales of products these same experts do occasionally have their doubts about the validity, the efficacy and sometimes the morality, of the "depth" techniques.

Dangers to workers

"Capitalism is dead—consumerism is king!" exclaimed the President of the National Sales Executives early in the 1950s. He was referring to the changes wrought in marketing policies in the United States by the advent of the hidden persuaders. **A classic crisis of capitalism—that**

of overproduction—had been adverted thanks to the new selling methods.

Much more dangerous, though, to the labour movement is the insidious advance of the brainwashers into management and employee selection. There is a growing force of "social engineers" willing and eager to help business managements with their personnel problems. The social engineers, points out one authority, "suffer no qualms" at the thought of manipulating men. One of these experts reportedly received 125 dollars an hour for giving managements fresh insights into the causes of their difficulties with labour. **This pundit poured scorn on the usual theories for labour unrest and concluded that "management has failed to be the kindly protective father, so the union has become the caressing mother who gets things from that stinker of a father."**

Getting us taped!

In recent years several American companies were reported to be employing a psychiatrist on a full-time basis. This was in addition to the policy of administering personality and other psychological tests to prospective employees. **Are these, by any chance, ways of eliminating industrial militants?!**

An indication of the present sinister trend reveals itself in the case of the Boston department store where employees "had to wait on customers with the knowledge that a psychologist was somewhere in the background watching them and recording their every action on . . . a tape recorder. The notation made of each girl's talk, smile, nods, gestures, while coping with a customer provided a picture of her sociability and resourcefulness."

But the ultimate feeling of horror must surely be reserved for the implications contained in a social engineers' report on some 8,000 American executives. "Because," it states, "of his (the executive's) single-minded concentration on his job, even his sexual activity is relegated to a secondary place." We are, it seems, only waiting for managements to issue breeding instructions.

No answer

Mr Packard roams far and wide in his Orwellian survey, but does not come to any radical conclusions. He apparently hates the work of the persuaders, but clearly avoids attacking the source not pose the basic question:—capitalist economy in the modern, streamlined form of the corporation. He agrees that we should avoid being conditioned, but does not pose the basic question:— "What is to be done?" Vance Packard is, without any doubt a rebel, but alas, like all rebels, he is no revolutionary.

MIKE MADDISON

The Hidden Persuaders. Vance Packard. Longmans, Green. 18s.

TONY CLIFF examines the

BACKGROUND to the FRENCH CRISIS

INTERNATIONAL

THE LAST COUPLE OF WEEKS have witnessed a deepening political and social crisis in France and Algeria. French militarists, together with fanatical colonists in Algeria, who look upon themselves as the "Herrenvolk," are trying to impose on France a right-wing dictatorship under de Gaulle.

This is a new chapter in the dreary history of the Fourth Republic, which cannot be understood without reference to the continued weakening of the French labour movement since the war. This weakening has been caused by the betrayal of the French labour movement by their official "leaders."

Revolution betrayed

In August, 1944, the armed resistance movement, consisting mainly of workers, used the fall of German power to take control of Paris. They seized the main factories, and, arms in hand, patrolled the town, disarming the collaborating police. The "200 families"—the financial magnates of France—had no popular support at all, as they had willingly collaborated with Hitler and done good business under Nazi rule. Indeed, one can unquestionably say that the knell of French capitalism had sounded. How, then, did it survive? **The answer is to be found mainly in the conduct of the French Communist and Socialist parties.**

After de Gaulle signed the 20-year Franco-Soviet alliance in December 1944, Thorez, the General Secretary of the French Communist Party, declared him a "great friend and ally of the Soviet Union." The Party acted in the spirit of this "friendship" and immediately after his return from Moscow agreed to the disarming of the popular militia, a measure which they had opposed successfully when it was proposed earlier in the year by General Koenig. Thorez then raised the slogan, "One Government, one army, one police force"; and the Stalinist Cabinet ministers, Tillon and Billoux, voted for the decree dissolving the people's militia.

Keeping the Workers Quiet

The "one police force" which was to remain was the very same as served the strike-breaking government of Daladier, and later that of Vichy and the Gestapo, the same force which persecuted the Resistance for four years and which had not since been purged. Thorez could shamelessly declare: "We do not put forward any socialist demands." And another leader of the party, Duclos, could say on 19th November, 1945: "Since the Liberation we have contributed to the re-establishment of order in the country. We have led a campaign for the disarmament of the armed groups and for production."

At that time the Communist Party, together with the Socialist Party, collaborated with the bourgeoisie in opposing every strike. The Stalinist Ministers

were given all the ministries of production: Tillon—the Ministry of Armaments, Paul—the Ministry of Industry, Billoux—the Ministry of National Economy, and Choizat—the Ministry of Labour. The bourgeoisie was happy to give the Stalinists the job of keeping the workers quiet. During this revolutionary period, the superpatriotic Stalinists openly supported French imperialism. Thus, for instance, at the tenth congress of the French Communist Party (June 1945), Caballero, General Secretary of the Algerian Communist Party "concluded by emphasizing that the Algerian people had the same enemies as the French people, and do not want to be separated from France. Those who claim independence for Algeria, are the conscious or unconscious agents of another imperialism." (L'Humanite, 30th June 1945.)

Support to Imperialism

Again, on 4th April 1946, the Stalinist Deputies in the French parliament voted for the following message of congratulations to the French troops fighting in Indo-China against Vietnam: "The National Constituent Assembly sends to the troops of the Expeditionary Force in the Far East and to their leaders the expression of the country's gratitude and confidence on the morrow of the day in which their entry into Hanoi sets the seal on the success of the government of the Republic's policy of peaceful liberation of all the peoples of the Union of Indo-China." Again, "On the occasion of Christmas, the Commission of National Defence sends to the French soldiers in Indo-China the expression of its affectionate sympathy and salutes their efforts to maintain in the Far East the civilizing and peaceful presence of France." (10th December 1946.)

Fascism threatens

The same years, 1944-47, in which the working class was hamstrung by the Stalinist and "Socialist" leadership, saw the return of confidence to the discredited bourgeoisie. It took the offensive; it accepted the Marshall Plan, thus openly declaring its orientation towards the United States, and on May 3rd 1947, it threw Thorez and the other Communist Party members out of the government. Nor did it stop at this. De Gaulle, who prior to the war had been a member of the Fascist organization, Croix de Feu, and during the war had been comrade-in-arms to Thorez, now declared the need for an authoritarian, totalitarian fascist dictatorship and organized the Rally of the French People (RPF). In October, 1947, he put his strength to the test, coming out with flying colours in the municipal elections.

The RPF got 40 per cent of the total vote, as against 29.3 per cent for the Communist Party. In Paris the RPF got 55 per cent of the votes. It controlled the municipalities of Paris, Marseilles,

Bordeaux, Lille and many other important cities and towns. It seemed that after the revolutionary situation immediately following the war had died down, a counter-revolutionary situation arose. Fascism was an immediate threat.

Balancing Act

But on his side, too, de Gaulle could not consummate his victory. In November, one month after his electoral victory, mass strikes broke out all over the country. In a number of places the workers took to arms spontaneously, and in a whole series of enterprises—power stations, mines, etc.—the police were disarmed, and the workers were in power in actual fact. But again these strikes petered out to nothing, as the Stalinist leadership was too frightened of any serious, independent activity of the working class. Instead of a general strike that would have brought the capitalists to their knees, the Stalinist leaders adopted the method of a strike wave, shifting from one industry to another. As workers in one industry got a wage increase, prices immediately rose, and workers in another industry came into the fray. Thus wages ran after prices, without ever catching up. The net result was that the workers lost their self-confidence, and became apathetic. Nothing symbolises this better than the change between the strikes of November-December 1947, in which four million workers participated, and the Stalinist organised demonstration against General Ridgway on May 28 1952, in which not more than 20,000 people took part. The apathy of the working class is expressed in the decline in the number of members of the CGT—the Stalinist-controlled trade unions—from 6 million to barely one million, the decline in the membership of the Communist Party, from one million at the end of the war to 430,000 today, and the decline in the circulation of L'Humanite from 601,000 copies in 1945/6 to 173,000 copies in 1954.

Disintegration

Even sharper was the decline of the Socialist Party. As the party of "social order," defending capitalism at home and imperialism in Indo-China and North Africa, it lost practically all working-class support. The membership of the Party declined from 353,742 in 1946, to 96,000 in 1957. In the trade union federation controlled by the Socialist Party—Force Ouvrière—there are not more than 300,000 members. The Socialist Party paper, Le Populaire, dropped from a circulation of 278,000 in 1945/6 to a bare 10,000 (paid) circulation today of a poor-looking one-sheet newspaper.

Fourteen years of damping the spirits and misleading of the working class led to such a weakening of the labour movement that the capitalist right wing dares to take the offensive.

The right wing of the bourgeoisie, however, is not free of serious crisis. After de Gaulle's October 1947 election victory, his hopes for the establishment of a fascist dictatorship were high. But the mass strikes of November-December made it clear to him that the forces of the working class were not yet exhausted, and a French Hitler would not find his path to power smooth. The result was that the de Gaullists themselves did not dare to cast aside the traditional parliamentary system, and establish a fascist dictatorship. The RPF began to ebb—disappointments and disagreements were reflected in splits. In the end, de Gaulle found that the other de Gaullist leaders were ready to take part in all the parliamentary horse-deals—enter governments without having control, etc. De Gaulle resigned from the organization, and the RPF as a united Party is no more.

Thus it is clear that after 14 years of the Fourth Republic of France everybody is sick of it. **The workers are disgusted with a regime that lets speculators and people who collaborated with Hitler rule supreme, in which wages lag far behind prices, in which corruption eats into every fibre of the state.** The "200 families" are sick of a regime that cannot crush the workers successfully, does not smash their organizations, does not establish firmly "the rule of order." The workers are sick of a regime that sacrifices the lives of thousands of people and millions of francs on an imperialist war in the French colonies. The bourgeoisie is sick of a regime that is unsuccessful in its attempt to wage an imperialist war. Everyone hates the present regime. No political regime was more isolated from mass support than the present one in France.

In the teeth of the right-wing offensive, the chief working class parties in France limit themselves to verbal statements of support for the Pflimlin Government: the Socialist Party takes part in the Government, and the Communist Party votes to give it emergency powers in Algeria. At the same time this Government declares solidarity with the militarists in Algeria.

What Next?

The workers cannot, must not, rely on the police or army to prevent a right-wing dictatorship. It is up to the working class movement, by mass strikes, demonstrations and other means of direct action to prevent this menace.

The present capitalist parliamentary regime, corrupt, indecisive, and in permanent crisis, will, sooner or later, be swept away, either by a right-wing dictatorship, or by the self-mobilised, fighting working class. **To quote the great French revolutionary leader, Danton, only by "audacity, more audacity and yet more audacity," can the workers of France avert the threat of a right-wing dictatorship.**

FRANCE—ctd

in Algeria General Salan, deeply implicated in the insurrection and a vociferous supporter of de Gaulle, has officially been given dictatorial powers.

The most ambiguous aspect of the situation is the role of the emergency laws under which all public meetings and demonstrations have already been banned. Against whom are they directed? Against whom will they be used? The CP voted for them on the grounds that they aimed at the "fascists." But Pflimlin sees things differently. He has repeatedly declared that there is a danger from the left as well as from the right. And elementary common-sense leaves no doubt that a capitalist government armed with totalitarian powers, will not consider Queensbury rules in dealing with working-class action, which can easily develop.

Laws against the left

The laws have already hit the left far more than the right. The Algerian events did not provoke any large-scale right-wing demonstration in Paris—the two or three which have taken place were attended by only a few hundred people, and were treated infinitely more gently by the police than a demonstration of progressive students, of whom 160 were arrested. Right-wing leaders such as Soustelle are able to travel to

Algeria, and de Gaulle is able to hold a conference in Paris. In Algeria the insurgent settlers and generals are in full control and there is no hint of action being taken against them.

Who can stop de Gaulle?

It is not likely that de Gaulle will try to seize power illegally. But even if he is planning a putsch, the CP line is utterly unjustifiable in terms of working-class interests. In the first place, the police and large sections of the army would be with de Gaulle, so that the emergency powers would act in his favour. In the second place, if he tried to establish a "fascist" regime, the determining factor would be the strength of the working-class, which, in the meantime, is undermined by the emergency laws.

CP exposed

Thus the collaborationist nature of the CP stands exposed. When the republic's bankruptcy and corruption is more apparent than ever before, the party's only slogan is "defend the republic." The government has capitulated to the most reactionary war party; but instead of intensifying the campaign to end the war the CP votes new powers to the government to intensify the war **and has dropped even its half-hearted slogans for peace in Algeria.** The government has dissolved all democratic liberties—and the CP supports it in the name of defending democracy!

If the recent events dramatically show up the un-proletarian nature of the CP's policy, they prove even more dramatically the extent to which the party has lost its influence on the workers. In the first days of the crisis the CP union called a meeting at the Renault factory. Out of 33,000 workers only a few hundred attended. A strike called to coincide with de Gaulle's famous press conference was supported by only a handful of workers. No Parisian factory was seriously affected. The underground stopped for two hours, but mainly because a few strategically placed militants were able to turn off the electricity.

Who will give the lead?

The reaction of the workers is far from being simple apathy. Everywhere, in the streets, in the cafes, in the factories, everyone talks politics. The most obvious manifestation of the crisis in the streets of Paris, is the number of newspapers. Political leaflets are ardently read. But the workers are confused and do not know what to do. They distrust the CP because of past experience, and because its present line appears senseless. Amongst the party militants there is a great deal of unrest and complaints are widely expressed against the policy of "demobilisation" dictated by the acceptance of emergency laws. There is no doubt that the situation is pregnant with the possibility of a new crystallization of working-class militancy.

PARLIAMENT

FOR BUTTER FOR WORSE

IF TELEVISION is to be called "the idiots' lantern," radio ought to be named the "disaster box."

The thing is switched on with a little click, waits some seconds to gather its electrons together and then bursts into its tales of confusion in the various parts of the globe.

The most worrying news of all, however, was announced today. The Board of Trade has decided that butter will be going up by (about) 6d. per pound.

But, surely, that's Government control? Didn't the Conservatives set the people free?

All right, all right, there's nothing you can't expect from the Conservatives. They'd tax people for their own funerals if there was only a way of collecting.

But why won't they let butter be sold at whatever price it can get?

SOCIALIST REVIEW is published twice a month by Socialist Review Publishing Co. Ltd., 35b Priory Terrace, London, N.W.6. (Tel.: MAlda Vale 9258). Subscriptions, from this address, post paid: 1 year: 16s. 6 months: 8s. 3 months: 4s. Opinions and policies expressed in signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the views of **Socialist Review** which are given in editorial statement. Editorial communications should be sent to Michael Kidron, 30 Hamilton Terrace, London, N.W.8. (Tel.: CUNningham 9616). Printed by H. Palmer (Harlow) Ltd. (TU), Potter Street, Harlow, Essex.

The answer is so fantastic that it has to be looked at twice: **some foreign Governments are selling Britain butter for less than it costs to make. This is considered to be a grave commercial sin!**

It is certainly unusual, but, one would think, an occasion for national rejoicing. (After all, the Coronation cost money.)

Of course the truth of the matter is that Belgium, Finland, Poland, Ireland and the rest just have to get rid of the stuff. Probably the inhabitants of Helsinki are already sniffing suspiciously as they go about their business.

For these Governments to give butter away to their working classes might only lead them to believe that they were working too hard. As it is, they now have to work harder to pay the taxes which pay the subsidies. Which is good for morality—and manufacturers.

Or if the butter was given to the third of the world's population who are in doubt as to where the next rice is coming from, it would only encourage them in extravagant tastes.

Margarine is the right food for working class people. The manufacturers of that delicious commodity have to pay for all their expensive machinery, so carefully installed.

If this is so, the situation is something like this:

Overseas countries raise taxes which are used to subsidize butter exports to Britain.

Britain then, in effect, taxes this butter so that other overseas countries will be able to buy English exports which they otherwise couldn't afford.

And so it goes round and round...

Incidentally, it is a curious thing that Poland, claimed to be a Socialist country, is coming in on this act.

But to return to the UK, which looks like being swamped in more butter than there has been since the publication of Churchill's "History of the English Speaking Peoples."

The Conservatives are going to restrict butter imports because, they say, it is unfair on the New Zealanders to be so undercut. Now New Zealand is a lovely country, full of lovely people, but what the British Government is really doing is taxing butter to help them.

In all fairness, it must be said that if we are going to be taxed to help other countries, there are some in much more desperate need of assistance.

Would this generous help be perhaps connected with the need for such British firms as car makers to find overseas markets?

MICHAEL MILLETT

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:

- The complete nationalisation of heavy industry, the banks, insurance and the land with compensation payments based on a means test. Renationalisation of all denationalised industries without compensation.—The nationalised industries to form an integral part of an overall economic plan and not to be used in the interests of private profit.
- Workers' control in all nationalised industries, 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.
- 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.
- The establishment of workers' committees in all concerns to control hiring, firing and working conditions.
- The establishment of the principle of work or full maintenance.
- The extension of the social services by the payment of adequate pensions, 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.
- The expansion of the housing programme by granting interest free loans to local authorities and the right to requisition privately held land.
- Free State education up to 18. Abolition of fee paying schools. For comprehensive schools and adequate maintenance grants—without a means test—for all university students.
- Opposition to all forms of racial discrimination. Equal rights and trade union protection to all workers whatever their country of origin. Freedom of migration for all workers to and from Britain.
- Freedom from political and economic oppression to all colonies. The offer of technical and economic assistance to the people of the underdeveloped countries.
- The unification of an independent Ireland.
- The abolition of conscription and the withdrawal of all British troops from overseas. The abolition of all weapons of mass destruction.
- A Socialist foreign policy independent of both Washington and Moscow.