

# KEEP LEFT



ORGAN OF THE WEMBLEY NORTH AND WEST HENDON LABOUR YOUTH SECTIONS

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## LABOUR'S OPPORTUNITY

May-day 1956 sees a new upsurge of the workers' movements throughout the world. Despite their H-bombs and guided missiles, the power of the profit-makers is threatened on all sides.

The colonial revolution shakes imperialism to its foundations. All over Asia, Africa and now in the Middle East, working men and women are struggling to free themselves from the forces of oppression which have kept them in such poverty for so long.

In Western Europe also, the Labour movement engages in many battles for better living standards. Finland and Denmark have both seen major strike movements in recent weeks. In Franco Spain, the police regime fails to prevent the working class from uniting against the ruling class.

Even in the U.S.A., the witch-hunters and the anti-Negro forces have been dealt some heavy blows by the American people.

These events find their echo in the changes in the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe, where the totalitarian bureaucrats have been forced to retreat and change their methods.

Here in Britain, the Tory Government hesitates before plunging into an all-out attack on the working class. MacMillan, the strong man, quails before the prospect of the showdown with Labour for which he was appointed and towards which the diehard Tories push him.

In the political and industrial fields, Labour is in as strong a position as it has ever been. But instead of taking advantage of this favourable opportunity, the Labour leaders prefer to mark time, waiting for something to turn up. Instead of coming forward with a bold socialist programme, which could give a tremendous boost to our chances in the coming Council elections,

(cont'd p.2)

Gaitskell and Co. tell us to go back to the schoolroom for three years (Transport House's plans for Party education, very fine in their way, inevitably raise the question: "Who will educate the educators?")

In Britain, as in every other part of the world, the problem of socialism remains the problem of leadership. What our movement needs is a leadership capable of putting forward and fighting for a policy of socialism. Such a policy attacking the aims of Capital at home and abroad, could attract much needed youth to the movement, and draw out the energies of the working-class into the fight. Only such a policy can provide any solution to the problems facing the world.

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## C O M M E N T

### King Street Chaos

The growing confusion in the rank-and-file of the Communist Party of Gt. Britain is matched only by the complete bewilderment of its leadership. After the explosion at the 20th Congress, one revelation after another comes out of Eastern Europe.

The Rajk and Kostov trials are now admitted to be frame-ups. For some reason, the confessions of Rudolph Slansky are still maintained to be genuine by the Czech leaders although Cepika, the Minister of "Justice" has been sacked. The attack on the legal "theories" of the late Mr. Vishinsky, can only be the prelude to an exposure of the fake trials of Trotskyites and Bukharinites in the 1930's, in which he sent many of the old Bolsheviks to their death.

These events shake still further the faith of the membership in the C.P. leaders. Pollitt and Co. are now revealed as mere puppets of the despot Stalin.

Some people think that we in the Labour Party left should tell the C.P'ers to shut up shop and join the Labour Party. But the first aim of our movement should be clarity, and the Communist Party members must put their house in order before they can give us any assistance in clarifying the ideas of the left-wing. When they have thrown out their leaders and really examined their political crimes and blunders - then, and only then, will they be able to assist in building the socialist movement. We should do all we can to help them in this task.

### Ceylon Moves Left

Although Ceylon was given "dominion status" in 1946, it is only now, after the recent general election, that her real independence becomes a possibility. For the Government of the U.N.F. was only a pawn of British capitalism in all important matters. That is why the complete landslide defeat of Sir John Kotelawala is such a blow for imperialism.

Not that the victor in the election, Bandaranaike, is the great revolutionary he tried to pretend - before the election. Before the votes were counted, he was reassuring Whitehall that he didn't really mean all that stuff about nationalization and the evacuation of the British naval bases at Trincomalee.

However, what is important is that a real mass movement has put Bandaranaike in power on a radical programme, and, if he fails to carry it through, will find a way to removing him. The left swing also gave 14 seats to the L.S.S.P. (Trotskyists) who now become the main opposition party. This means that the new Prime Minister of Ceylon will not get away with it for long if he does try to sell out.

WHO'S FOR DEMOCRACY

Time and again we are exhorted by the ideologists of capitalism to rush to the defence of democracy. They assure us that the Western way of life is in danger and that Asiatic despotism threatens the European tradition of respect for the individual. But the phrases of the 'democrats' are not matched by their actions. Across the world they prop up dictatorships. The despotisms of South America have their support; Franco, Strydom and Syngman Rhee are their friends. They support the suppression of Guianese democracy and are guilty of horrible repression in other colonies.

At home democracy also needs protection from its 'friends' and secret diplomacy increases. The right of MP's to question ministers is steadily eroded. The House of Commons diminishes in importance, and power is concentrated in the hands of narrow bureaucratic cliques - subject to no form of democratic control. In the interests of "national security" science is placed in a straight-jacket.

Most notorious of all, is the recent White Paper on security in the Civil Service. Aiming at removing from positions of trust, people whom it considers unreliable, its provisions are intended to apply not only to Communists but to "Communist sympathisers" and those "associating with Communists or Communist sympathisers" - two beautifully vague phrases which can mean anything. It also covers firms carrying out certain types of government work (shop-stewards beware!). All people employed in a supervisory capacity are to have the duty of spying on their subordinates. The victims will have no idea for what reasons or on whose ascertainment they have been purged. And the White Paper recommends the use of evidence which would not be acceptable in a court of law.

Therefore, what we are being asked to defend is not democracy. The 'democrats' support every reactionary movement and oppose every progressive one. They support not democracy but capitalism and it is only by reference to the national and international class struggle that the decay of democracy can be understood. The growth of anti-capitalist forces makes the bourgeoisie abandon 'its own' democracy, remove power from elected bodies and resort to totalitarianism. The witch-hunt which is the product of hysteria, is unnecessary to the preservation of capitalism - but dying ruling classes seldom act rationally.

But retreat from democracy at home is linked with repression abroad. The same social forces which motivated this White Paper inspire the vicious colonial wars and anti-popular intrigue abroad. These developments are moreover connected to changes inside the Labour Party. The growth of a strong left-wing means that the right-wing 'freedom lovers' can only maintain their position by the strangulation of democracy inside the party. In the ideological field, capitalism offers something to everybody. Not only are there the out-and-out Tory witch-hunters, there are also the Liberal hypocrites. They possess tender consciences but are always able to produce some 'half-baked' formula to keep themselves on the side of capitalism. For the left-wing worker, there are the Stalinists. Their joyous support for the persecutions of Trotskyites and other anti-capitalists shows where they stand. Indeed all groups and institutions become contaminated to the extent which they support capitalism. There are no neutrals in the class-war.

Deepening capitalist crises ripens conditions for the emergence of a mass Fascist party. Recent election results show dissatisfaction with the abilities of the major parties to solve the problems set by capitalism. It is necessary for Socialists to resist all anti-democratic trends. Their logical end is in the Fascist police state and hence, they constitute a direct threat to the working-class movement.

The purges in the Civil Service must be halted. We must demand that political views are not taken into account when allocating jobs. Also we must resist any attacks on the power of the House of Commons and ensure that all government actions take place in full view of the people and under the control of elected representatives amenable to pressure by the people. The Civil Service, armed forces, and police must be democratised as far as possible. Members of these bodies must be given full rights to organise and be able to fully participate in politics.

These reforms would be undoubtedly supported by the vast majority of the British people, both Socialist and non-Socialist. However, Socialists must take the lead in this defence and thus help to rally millions to their standard. A militant Socialist party can effectively resist Fascism, as only such a party can offer a programme to eliminate capitalism and can prevent disillusion among the workers, and can stop discontent among the middle classes turning towards reactionary channels. Socialists are the heirs of the democratic tradition. Only in a Socialist Britain can we guarantee the survival of democracy.

ALAN STANLEY  
Leicester Youth Section

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"MAKING MOTION PICTURE HISTORY"

And it came to pass that Krush and Bulj did gird up their loins and did sail forth in their mighty craft for England. For seven days they did sail, but on the fourth they did lose their way by following a faulty star. And they did come upon a foreign shore, the shore of the tribe Monaco, but they knew this not, as it was a foreign shore. They did land and did make friendly faces to the tribe and did give rare spices and press conferences and medals to the cheering throng. A leading herdsman did step forth and spake, "I am Emjee Emm and welcome you to our mighty epic. You and your servant are to join us in the wedding feast we have planned for cinemascope and our Prince and his Grace".

And Krush and Bulj did join in the feasting and laughter and both of them did dance their traditional native dance, the gopak. And they did learn that the foreign shore was not England, but they cared not. The publicity arrangements were exceeding abundant and they were mighty pleased. And then the time did come for them to leave to see how the humble English people did live at Claridges. As their might ship did sail from the shore they did promise to send to Monaco many hundreds of old books, all of them written by a silly old Russian peasant named Stalin.

"TASS AGENCY"

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All articles are the personal opinions of the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of the Editorial Board.

"THO' COWARDS FLINCH".

This pamphlet, published by the "Victory for Socialism" group, discusses the of democray in the Labour Party, and it is one of the best I have seen for a long time. "Tho' Cowards Flinch" is intended to promote discussion inside the Labour Party, trade unions, and all affiliated organisations, discussion that is long overdue.

This first part of the pamphlet deals with the various forms of democracy, and poses the question "Is Democracy a Sham?".

The second part deals with Power in the Labour Party, and how it is distributed, and discusses the unfairness of the Trade Union block vote. There is a section on Party Finance, in which the necessity of the trade union contributions is admitted, but it is stressed that two-thirds of the total outlay is raised by the Constituency Parties. So the belief that the trade unions pay the piper is proved wrong.

Other sections of this part of the pamphlet discuss the structure of the trade unions, methods of choosing Parliamentary candidates, and dicipline.

Then follow some proposals to improve the Labour Party. The first, that the policy meetings of the Parliamentary Labour Party should be thrown open to the Press and Public, is a step in the right direction, as the local Party members have a right to know how their M.P.s' vote.

I do not agree that the Party should retain the right to go into private session on questions of Parliamentary tactics. These "tactics" are all right for Tories, who are trying to hold back Socialism, but a Socialist Party should have an agreed policy laid down before coming to power, so eliminating the need for such things.

I also welcome the suggestion that M.P.s' who repeatedly go against the wishes of their Constituency Party should be liable to recall.

The second proposal is that Standing Orders of the Parliamentary Labour Party be abolished. Now this would be agreed to by most Party members, except those at Transport House.

I would suggest that this kind of freedom should be extended to include the local Council Labour Groups, where, sometimes, ardent Socialists are held back by so-called Labour Councillors, who are quite comfortable sitting on the Council agreeing with nearly everything the Tories do.

These gentlemen thrive on Standing Orders, and its' abolition would release militant Socialists from their chains, and local Councils would be the better for it.

Another proposal is that the political trade union vote at the Labour Party Conference shall be cast through the local Labour Party and not nationally. This seems to me to be the best idea yet to demolish the Block Vote, and would be better for the trade union rank and file.

These are just some of the best parts of this pamphlet, and I urge all members to ask their local Parties to purchase some copies.

GEORGE ANDREWS.  
WEST HENDON YOUTH SECTION.

## ON NATIONALISATION

One of the main points of controversy in the Labour Party at present, is the future policy concerning nationalisation.

The Right Wing say that we should consolidate the industries already nationalised, and only go further if the other industries are proved to be inefficient.

Look at the Labour Party's record since 1945. They nationalised the coal-mines, railways, road transport and the airlines without hardly a murmur of protest from the Tories. When the iron and steel industry was nationalised, it caused some howls of protest from the Tory Press, but the first real opposition came when the Labour Party spoke of nationalising the sugar industry. The owners of Tate and Lyle spent thousands of pounds on propaganda showing that they did not need nationalising and producing reports from contented employees to prove it.

In the face of the onslaught, the Labour Party hastily altered their plans, and capitalism won another victory. Now, why did the capitalists allow us to nationalise some industries, and not others? The reason was that the industries were in such a state that they were no longer profitable to their owners. But firms like Tate and Lyle, Unilevers and I.C.I. are thriving industries, each making millions of pounds profit every year.

You can tell how important the coalmines and railways are to the capitalists, when they have'nt even returned these industries to private ownership. In my opinion we will never have Socialism in this country, until the power of these giant combines is smashed. We cannot ignore them, because they are the main props of capitalism.

While the Government is trying to get us to tighten our belts, these parasites calmly publish their profits for last year which are truly staggering. The Labour Party must face upto this challenge and include the nationalisation of all basic industries in the next Election Manifesto.

Now is the time for the Labour Party to go among the people and put forward a fighting programme based on Marxism. Pamphlets and leaflets should be printed in large quantities explaining true Socialism, and its aims.

At the moment not many people understand the real meaning of Socialism, and the Labour Party must take a large share of the blame for this. Its no good going into General Elections every five years with no real programme and a policy designed to prop up capitalism.

The leaders who advocate this should be removed and men with courage to put forward a Socialist programme put in their places.

GEORGE ANDREWS.

WEST HENDON Y.S.

FRANCE VERSUS ALGERIA

France has become the "sick man" of Europe. The permanent government crises reflect only the impossible situation which faces the French ruling class. The sickness of French capitalism is, of course, only an extreme manifestation of the decay of world capitalism. The situation of French capitalism is not a specifically "French" problem, it is but the logical outcome of the trend of a decaying world economic structure and social order. France is a picture, or a preview of a capitalism in its last stages of decay.

On the one hand, its power and influence in the councils of Europe, forgetting for a moment the councils of the "United Nations", has been progressively undermined by its mighty partner across the Atlantic - the United States. This explains the "anti-American" speeches of Guy Mollet and Christian Pineau, the Premier and Foreign Minister. The State Department has for all practical purposes written France off as a dead loss in the event of a showdown with the USSR. Foster Dulles is backing Western Germany as the shield of Europe from a Soviet "attack". The social unrest in France with its powerful Communist Party, its Algerian minority and above all, the combined weight of the working class parties, is a continuous threat to the master-planners in the Pentagon. Only the absence of decisive leadership in the French situation prevents the potential threat becoming a real one.

The French government is faced, on the other hand, by an even more serious problem than the contempt with which its great American ally views it. French imperialism is fighting its last battle in Algeria. This is the key to the uneasy shuffling of feet in the French Cabinet, the mobilisation of French youth for the slaughter in defence of the "colons" of Algeria, the arrest of political figures like Claude Bourdet, who have cried out against the infamy of colonial repression.

The Algerian revolution is not a peaceful, "democratic", "parliamentary" affair. It is an armed struggle between French imperialism and the armies of the Algerian people. And the man directly responsible for the total mobilisation of the resources and man-power of France (even to the extent of "endangering" the French contribution to NATO) against the Algerian people, is...a Socialist. This is the stage to which French social democracy has reached in its contemptible betrayal of socialism. What is more, Mollet's repressive measures in Algeria have been given a vote of confidence by the French Communist Party.

Against all the forces of repression are arrayed not only the armies of the Algerian people, but the restive Arab population of Morocco and Tunisia. More important still, the working class of France with its militant and revolutionary Algerian minority finds that the colonial revolution and the French Revolution, though not identical, move in the same basic direction - the removal of the French government by the united action of the working class parties and trade unions, and the withdrawal of troops from Algeria and all colonial territories. The Algerian Revolution points to -- the new French Revolution.

ELLIS HILLMAN  
Chelsea Labour Party

YOU, TOO, MAY BE LUCKY.

The first reaction to the Budget was one of anti-climax. While not expecting an exercise in 'massive retaliation' it was to be expected that there would be some coherent pattern about the proposals. The two 'emergency' Budgets since last April were both designed to reduce inflationary pressure by raising the Bank rate, reducing credit facilities and so on. It seems that the Tories have exhausted their arsenal of ineffective financial controls and are waiting for something to turn up.

With regard to the actual proposals they will not cause any decline in spending. The tobacco tax will produce £28 million in a full year and the end of the bread subsidy save £23 million. Neither of these changes are of any significance at all in the broad economic picture; total ordinary expenditure for 1955-56 was £4,656 million. The changes were meant no doubt to 'bring home to the people our serious economic position'. The increase in the childrens is questionable, public sympathy rightly lies with the old age pensioners and they should have been the first for any increase. The increase in the profits taxes is not taken seriously in the City. As the News Chronicle said (18.4.56.) "... but it is a deferred blow, the impact of which will not be felt until next year; and who knows, by the time the higher tax starts flowing into the Exchequer profits themselves may have risen sufficiently to take up this additional encroachment on them." In fact, this tax increase is purely inflationary, business interests will regard it as a slight increase in working costs and raise their prices to cover it.

An unexpected feature of the Budget was the proposal to finance capital expenditure for the nationalised industries directly from the Treasury. The purpose was said to be to save the Treasury from underwriting issues of these industries as without support they do not stand 'a cat in hell's chance'. This is a complete reversal of earlier policy when the BTC, for instance, was told it would have to raise its modernisation plan finance in the money market. The probable reason for this change is to give the Government more direct and tighter control over the nationalised industries, particularly their investment programmes.

The failure of the Tory government to introduce strong deflationary measures is a guide to their weakness. They are forced politically to shun physical controls, at the same time one section of their supporters demands more unemployment in order to discipline the working class. The Budget shows they are not yet ready for the task. The autumn of this year will see another round of wage claims, the scene is now set. Nothing is contained in the proposals that shows the Tories have the inclination, or the ability, to keep down inflation and the cost of living. This 'savings' Budget will be seen then in its true perspective, the labour movement will be struggling to defend its living standards and not concerned with winning a 'fortune' for a pound stake.

R. TRENCH.  
TOKYINGTON WARD.

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