WHERE IS LABOUR GOING?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

POLICE SEIZE RENTS DEMONSTRATOR
(by courtesy of the Daily Worker)

See “Glasgow to St. Pancras” p. 8.
THE SEAMEN'S STRUGGLE

By our Liverpool correspondent

The Seamen's Reform Movement had all the cards stacked against it: the indefatigable impropriety and irresponsibility which simultaneously deprived the strike of an outstanding leader and deprived it of the vital support of the Labour movement from the broad issues of wages, conditions and union democracy, particularly to the 1894 Merchant Shipping Act (important as these are): the success of the shippers' scale-breaking strike with NUS support and fares provided for scabs Labour Exclusion from the public expense: the vicious sabotage of the NUS, which denied even branch meetings, first of all to strikers on the grounds that they went on strike (a situation unparalleled in any other union and then the men on leave on the grounds that they were not members of the Liverpool branch (although their ship had laid in Liverpool), and presumably they would otherwise have to travel down to London for the branch meeting!); the isolation of the seamen in the face of dormancy from other sections of the working class, the mood in the docks being such that the dockers were unwilling to strike for more than a one-day token strike even for their own demands; the passivity of the Labour movement generally, particularly the trade unions before the outrageous conduct of the ship-owners and NUS, and the complete unreasonableness of principle and stamina from three thousand men on the cobbles for six weeks, without diet, National Assistance, or strike pay, or even (in many cases) the wages due to them from their last trip.

COMPELLED TO RETREAT

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

The part played by the Liverpool Trades Council in the downfall of the seamen was an unofficial strike. It is to the credit of the mediation provided by the Trades Council that, before a refusal of terms was agreed delegates from the Reform Movement were given bargaining status in full at every meeting. Even at an earlier stage, the mediators issued an "agreement" between themselves that in every case, where by a union official would address the men in return for the magnificent concession of branch meetings after a return to work it is also unfortunately true that the efforts of the local Labour movement were concentrated upon mediating an orderly return to work, rather than on assisting the men to win the strike. The President of the Trades Council ruled out of order a resolution for a one-day stoppage in solidarity with the seamen.

The seamen have gone back, scattered to the corners of the world and to the deep seas. Today, the various disputes, the scandalous wages and conditions, the worm-eaten bureaucracy of the NUS, The Reform Movement must go on receiving the unattended support of the Labour movement: a Liaison Committee of seamen, dockers, tugboat-men and other Labour workers has now been set up with an eye to the future. Solidarity cannot be limited to pious expressions of support for the repudiation of the 1894 Act, although it is very necessary to create a broadly-based lobby for this end to put pressure on, and when necessary expose, the NUS which is muddling formally to this demand. Certain questions must be put to the Labour Movement.

BOSSES MAN

"I had a chat, with other unions, against employers; I had fought, with the employers, against revolutionaries; now I was at it, with the employers once more on my side, against other unions."

Captain S. Toogood Turpin, former Organiser of the NUS, in Seamen's Torch, 1938, p. 84.

Before the Trades Union Congress the TUC expelled the NUS after the General Strike for supporting a breakaway miners' union; should not urgent pressure for democratisation be brought to bear on Yates, Scott and Co. to forestall the possibility of a breakaway seamen's union, which, however doomed, may be seen by angular thinking as an alternative to the present state of corruption?

It is all very well for union officials to describe themselves as "neutral" and to be, obviously, behind closed doors, the squalid character of the NUS. It is up to the rest of the movement, especially the breakaway NUS openly and officially, from branch to Conference level. Paddy Neary was jailed, and his comrades risked the worst treatment, for campaigning against the unholy alliance of shipowners and union. By comparison, the inconvenience of moving a resolution or persuading a meeting is rather mild; our duty is very trifling by the standards of what has already been done and what can yet be done. Multiplying a thousandfold, may depend any result that the seamen achieve from their struggle.

WILDCATS, BUREAUCRATS AND BOMBS

By James R. Higgins

The annual Trades Union Congress junket was held this year in the Isle of Man. The General Council big guns were as usual loaded to the muzzle with assorted cliches, platitudes and carefully prepared]interface positions.

The first day of the conference was, as is the way with such gatherings, a gathering in disarray, the bickering on white collar organisation occupying much of the time. Although word was spreading that the Engineers were having difficulty getting round their mandate, the feeling was that the conference would find its own way, a surmise that was all too horribly justified.

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

Mr. Thorpe, Liberal MP, said that 0.2 per cent of the total number of shares held in the ordinary share capital (Horsman, June 24, 1960) owned by property owners had "never had it so good." Shares which were valued at nearly £11,000 million in mid-1957 were worth £9,000 million at the end of 1957, and 9,000,000 to 10,000,000 shares which people had some who had almost £5,500 million in mid-1957 were worth £9,500 million.

The revisionists were decisively rejected in the Clause 4 debate and the General Council instructed to prepare a comprehensive report and conduct a vigorous campaign on nationalisation which was to be expected after the various union conference decisions this summer.

The congress went on to accept a Post Office Engineering Union demand for an inquiry into a proposed price increase. The FWU had their resolution calling for the nationalisation of the Build

In the event the reference back was lost by a show of hands and trade unionists who attack the steward's case, should be intensified in the future.

The next big debate was of course Wednesday's debate on Nuclear Disarmament: this was the only debate in which Mr. Coonan managed to look to the left and the right and sly all at the same time without doing himself a mischief. The story of how the AEU voted for the official statement on defence and the contradictory motion from the Transport and General is too well known to bear repeating. The debate was aimed at demonstrating to Frank Cousins' refusal to face up to the logic of the unilateral case necessitating a withdrawal from what he chose to call the aggressive NATO alliance. Nor would he face the fact (In this he is in the company of the orthodox CND leadership) that the only force that can destroy the bomber is the bomber (at least in the view of working class including the members of his own union. However the unilateralists will not accept moral victory despite the acrobatic behaviour of the AEU delegates.

PALMY DAYS FOR UNILEVERS

"Those of us who have read the Report cannot fail to have been impressed with the best record achieved in the 'Company's history', re-confirmed by yesterday's stockholder 'meeting at the Annual General Meeting of Unilever on April 26th.

Unilever is the third larg-

est concern in Britain. Only ICI and Royal Dutch Shell are larger. Its sales rose from £263 million in 1950 to £1,329 million in 1959, Trad-

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SOCIALIST REVIEW

Three

Busmen's struggle

We print below a letter from London Busworkers addressed to Members of Parliament representing the constituencies or riding within the operating area of the London Transport Executive. Copies have also been sent to the Ministry of Transport and the Labour Department of the House of Commons, and the Leader of the House of Commons, and is addressed to Prime Minister, which is addressed to the Prime Minister, and to all the Cabinet Ministers - Thomas, alias, being ultimately driven out of political life for "long". Badgers of £4 million through the penal diesel oil tax, and a further £1 million in adequacy wage rates.

5. Even at the present depleted level of public service, the L.T.E. and the shortcomings of bus services were by far the worst in the industrial sector, with a certain amount of industrial order. This chronic staff shortage stems directly from the very poor working conditions and quite inadequate wage rates of bus crews. The measure of the decline of the wage level of the London busmen is shown by the fact that, whereas in 1939, they occupied 2nd place in the London wage industry, they have now fallen to 57th position. The basic, top-rate of the £12.00, paid to the tube-train driver, has now been reduced to these men some level of a £4.10.0 weekly wage in 1939. In such circumstances, the failure of the L.T.E. to either retain, replace staff, or to attract new recruits—is not difficult to understand.

6. In our view, all the foregoing and more clearly indicate that the London Transport Executive has failed to honour one of the most basic obligations of public service facilities within an area of 2,000 square miles in which at least ten million people are resident.

2. When the London Transport Executive began its work in 1948, it operated 10,175 red vehicles manned and serviced by a staff of 56,395 drivers, conductors and maintenance personnel. Today, the number of buses operating is 8,712, and the operating cost has increased by 344%. This has produced an overall decline in the service provided for the public, which is apparent from the following figures: Vehicles operating 14.4%; passenger carriage 80.0%; working 75.0%; staff employed 30.3%.

3. While the fall in the number of vehicles operating is smaller than that shown under other headings, the passengers carried have been cut by 9.4%. The level of the level of public service provided in the passengers carried have been cut by 9.4%. The level of public service provided is shown in the passengers carried and miles run. These figures indicate that, since nationalisation, not less than 25% of the service previously provided has been discontinued. In practical terms, these figures mean that, since 1948: One bus in four has been cut; One in four in the year has been cut; One passenger in every four has deserted L.T.E. buses; One mile in four has been removed from operations; One bus crew in every three have quit their jobs.

4. A bus service - as the letter is presented by far the lowest level of transport service ever provided for the people of London (and it has worsened at an ac- celerated rate in the first half of 1960) the financial results for the first three months of any year since the industry was nationalised. More than £6 million profit resulted from L.T.E. operations, after giving effect to a £10,000,000 through the penal diesel oil tax, and a further £1 million in adequacy wage rates.

TO older workers, active in the Labour Movement 40 years ago, the names — Ramsay MacDonald — Philip Snowden — Jimmy Thomas — J R Clynes — have a familiar and distasteful ring. Thomas and Clynes were boxes of the NUR and NUGMW respectively. All four were leading Labour M.P.'s. MacDonald subsequently became Prime Minister, all were Cabinet Ministers — Thomas, alias, being ultimately driven out of political life for "long". Badgers of £4 million through the penal diesel oil tax, and a further £1 million in adequacy wage rates.

Both then and now, in socialist terms, all four would be classified as extreme right-wingers. Indeed, much harsher terms were used about them in the times Mac had been demoted. Mr. MacA herd the tune to the tune: "Here's to Jimmy Thomas — the man who done it on us — here's to Jimmy Thomas — string him up!" How right that MacAheralded to the tune that MacDonald, Snowden and Thomas subsequently ratted on the Labour Movement and formed the notorious "National Government", whose slogan: "The wages of all workers must come down." Mr. MacAheralded very clearly the undoing love of Toryism for all things working class.

Yes, this little bunch were undoubtedly a bad lot. Yet, ironically enough, it was this group that staged the only real and positive debate on Socialism that has ever taken place within the sacred precincts of the House of Commons. On 20th March, 1923, Philip Snowden, on behalf of the Parliamentary Labour Party Moved:

"That, in view of the failure of the Capitalist System to adequately utilise and organise natural resources and productive power, or to provide the necessary standard of life for the masses of the population, and believing that the cause of this failure is to be found in the private ownership and control of means of production and distribution, this House declare that legislative effort should be devoted to the introduction and development of a new industrial order based on the public ownership and democratic control of the means of production and distribution."

The motion was seconded by Sir Alfred Mond and defeated by 368 votes to 121. Much water has flowed under many bridges since that historic debate. All the principal arguments are still in force today — Capitalism or Socialism is still the burning issue in the Labour Movement.

Gaitskell today was asked to move such a motion in the House of Commons. The Labour Party would have an apocalyptic fit. Indeed, today Labour leaders move motions not FOR Socialism but AGAINST it. Gaitskell wants "Clause 4" — the Socialist heart of the Labour constitution — abolished. The left-wing Socialism, highly remotely of Socialism, should be quietly buried. Some "socialist"(?) MP's believe that even the name "Labour" has become a political handicap. Platforms, Rank-and-File Busmen's paper June, 1960.

SOLIDARITY WITH BUSMEN

BY JOHN CHILTON

The bus workers have taken the initiative to inform other members of the working class about the state of the affairs of the London bus service. We are not the only ones who have given evidence of this. The London bus service are to be warmly congratulated, other trade unions are interested in the pay and conditions and generally realise, when they are informed, that the busmen's fight for better treatment is their fight. Unfortunately a strike by busmen immediately inconveniences other sections of the working class, but that inexperience, and the effect on the capitalist pro-

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

The six weeks solid, democratic-run bus strike of 1958 was a wonderful part of the post-war history of the working class. The London busmen, women, white and coloured together, fought solidly, as firm a rock, as the principle of a union struggle to be spread over to include staff on the L.T.E.'s country-bus services. There was some sympathetic action by NUM members employed on the L.T.E.'s underground and the form of industrial action, the bus strike continued much longer, it would be all right if the busmen were officially let the buses down by declaring that they were not in dispute with the L.T.E. That is a cont on page 1

Historic document

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LABOUR HISTORY

William Morris: REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST

BY HENRY COLLINS

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

ON October 3, 1896, William Morris died at the age of 62. Artist, craftsman and poet of considerable talent, he was first drawn into politics in 1876 by the threat of war against Russia in defence of the Turk, a cause which he supported, as he wrote in a letter published in the Liberal Daily News on October 24, "that a rumour is about in the air that England is going to war: and from the depths of my astonishment I ask, On whom? of whom? Against whom? And for what end?" In May of the following year, as Treasurer of the Eastern Question Association, he felt able to answer his own rhetorical questions. In a manifesto addressed "To the Working Classes of England" he wrote that the threat of war came mainly from a class of men who, "if they had the power (may England perish rather) would thwart your just aspirations, would set back the bound hand and foot and for ever to irresponsible capital—and these men, I say deliberately, are the heart and soul of the party that is driving us to an unjust war."

In 1883 Morris had broken with radicalism and joined the Democratic Federation, precursor of the Social Democratic Federation, Britain's first Marxist party. Although his main inspiration was aesthetic, he soon came to realise that a society based on exploitation was ugly in its essence and could only cheapen life and debase art, life's highest product. In an article in Justice two years before his death he declared that "the desire to produce beautiful things" had been the leading passion of his life and that this had inevitably given rise to a "hatred of modern civilisation." "What shall I say", he wrote, "as the creation of man and its instrument of mechanical power, its commonwealth so poor, its enemies of the commonwealth so rich, its stupendous organisation—for the misery of life... So there I was in for a fine pedagogic end of life, if had the education of my children 'a system of cram begun on us when we are four years old, and left off sharply when we are eighteen'.

From Marx and, more directly, from Engels, with whom he had some personal contact, Morris learned to see socialism as the product of a historical process and as the result of forces engendered by capitalism's contradictions. Economics he never claimed to understand. "I put some conscience", he told the readers of Justice, "into trying to learn the economic side of socialism, and even tackled Marx, though I must confess that, whereas I thoroughly enjoyed the historical part of Capital, I ignored all the agogies of confusion of the brain over reading the pure economics of that great work. Perhaps it was as well that he remained ignorant of economics, since his Marxist contemporaries who prided themselves on the education of a very different insight into the nature of capitalism and predicted an absolute impoverishment of the workers as an inevitable outcome of Capital's economic laws. Understanding nothing of this, Morris found another kind of satisfaction in achievements of Socialism. 'I want to know how to get you to ask me to consider', he wrote in a Fabian Tract in 1893, 'how far the betterment of the working people might go, and yet stop at last, leaving nothing to be done by a social democracy to the commonwealth of labour. Whether in short the tremendous organisation of civilised and commercial society is not playing the cat and mouse game with us socialists, whether the society, in equality might not accept the quasi-socialist machinery... and work for the purpose of upholding that society in a somewhat shorn condition, maybe, but a safe one."

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

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

ART AND SOCIETY

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

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

3. Ibid.

ROSA LUXEMBURG

a critical study by TONY CLIFF 4/6 (bound copies 8/6)
post free

From: 117, Carmelite Road, Harrow Weald, Middlesex.
CONGOLESE RAPED BY U.N. GENERALS

BY JOHN FAIRHEAD

PRESSMEN have made the event, which is the latest in the storied panorama of rape and arson in the Congo. They have failed to report the biggest rape of the lot—the ravaging of a whole nation, its resources and its people, by the United Nations acting in the interests of international finance capital.

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

THE BELGIAN SCHEME

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

If possible an alliance could be made with Britain, behind God’s (Eisenhower’s) back, to link Katanga with the Central African Federation. This idea, said to be the brainchild of former Tony MP and Suez rebel Charles Waterhouse, a director of Tanganyika Concessions (controlling transportation of Union Minière products) back-fired for political reasons. The British government could not afford to allow countries like Ghana and Tanganyika to pass directly into the American orbit, which they threatened to do if Waterhouse’s scheme went through and Rhodesian troops marched.

U.S. INTERESTS

The American capitalists, by contrast, are interested in an united Congo. They are staking their claim for the whole market and are certainly not interested in seeing the richest part of the country cordoned by their rivals of the European Common Market. Because of Britain’s conflict with the latter, they have been able to count on London’s support, and have been in a position to act through the United Nations rather than going it alone, and with the aid and benefit of Dag Hammarskjöld and the Holy Bible. They have made Joseph Kasavubu their mouthpiece. Lumumba and Lumumba, his commander-in-chief, were already showing signs of following in the footsteps of Nasser and Nehru in manoeuvring between the power blocks (without, unfortunately, a base from which to manoeuvre). This has driven Lumumba out of the tent being used to lean heavily on the rival world bloc headed by the USSR.

CONGOLESE WORKERS

In all the chaos one small item of news has been almost overlooked. On September 6 the workers of Leopoldville staged a 24-hour general strike, reminding the authorities that they were without wages and still had an interest in keeping alive. It is a small beginning. Yet it is an indication that the last word lies, as always, with the producers of wealth, if they choose to speak it. Instinctively the Congolese workers recognize that their interests lie with Tshombe and the Belgians, nor Kasavubu and the Americans, nor even Lumumba and the evildoers resting on Nasser and Nkrumah, supported for the moment by the Russians.

CLASS AND PARTY

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

IT’S RICH

An Indian-owned and managed engineering firm... has had an agreement with a Communist union representing a majority per cent of its employees. This followed a strike in 1953, and the basis for the present relationship is the insistence of the management that the union follow the strict Labour Code in which the responsibility of workers’ unions for good discipline, observance of production standards, and low absenteeism, is stressed. A. Myer, Labour Problems in the Industrialisation of India, Harvard UP, 1958, p. 122.

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

George Phillips, reporting on his Latin-American tour, Labour Press Service, July 16

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

Observer, July 3

During his stay in Britain he had Stock Exchange ticker tapes installed in most rooms of his residence, including the smallest room in the house. Daily Worker on Joseph Kennedy, father of the Presidential Candidate and Ambassador to Britain, 1937-40, July 16

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

John Fairhead at a Central Criminal Court, reported in St. Pancras Chronicle, July 8

African Awakening: "It is a fact that the development of the tribal areas has been down into the tribal areas themselves. Tribal organizations run counter to the wishes of those who want to share power. The villagers seize hold of the ideas of urban civilization. They see them as the means by which they can get ahead."

Population which had left the tribal areas in 1950 had increased by 1960 by 200,000 (per cent) in 1945 to 3,047,000 (23 per cent) in 1957.

CONGO’S FUTURE

So much for the picture, foisted on the public by the Press, of the Congo as a skinny little sheep, being only waiting for the drums to bid them reach for war paint and feathers. It is most unfortunate that the American and British cold-war propagandists, the villagers seize hold of the ideas of urban civilization. They see them as the means by which they can get ahead.

It was kinder, in the light of events, not to remind Comrade Davies of his remarks about “naïveté” and “mind-inflation.” Let us instead repeat the twofold duty of socialists: to fight their own governments and force withdrawal of UN troops, and to speak out ceaselessly for the complete independence of Congo as elsewhere. Our voice is small: it let be clear. Right now our task is important. Volume comes later.

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REVIEWS

POLITICS THROUGH CRITICISM

The Socialist Review's in- clination to the Review—this is the first—is not a cowardly retreat from the struggle on the political front, but a symbol of the desire to extract free tickets for contributors; nor do we want it to become a placard by our readers and a club by five-syllabled words. We intend not only to review books and films with obvious political implications, but also to deal forthrightly with important works of literature, theatre, cinema, music etc. An examination of these works need not be cocktail-party small-talk, but can serve two very important political functions: one as showing the many possibilities of life in human society through the artistic expression of both left and right groups, the second as being a way of criticising the existing society in further detail, as we do in the next Reviews. This is what Weston does in his film review, and so supplementing our earlier conclusions about the dangers of Capitalism, let us hope that he will probably bring hand-grand-nec- es up from all sides—we hope so, and we shall include them in the next Reviews; because we want this to be a discussion forum, not just putting things in their social and econom- ic context in steady prose, but exposing them like the "Calypos" below: we don't want it to be the page of the pompous Critic—Reviews Editor.

"SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER"

BY GEOFF WESTON

BASED upon Tennessee Wil- liam's one-act play, "Sudden- ly Last Summer" is a strange combination of melodrama, symbol- ism, homosexuality and cannibal- ism and possesses all the ingre- dients of the tried and true formula for sensation. Upon that level, the film fails, partly because William's eloquent and poetic dialogue, rich in image and sug- gestion is so different from the terse and emotive texts the com- mercial cinema demands; partly because the restrained and dignified acting of Elizabeth Taylor and Katherine Hepburn.

The plot is unimpressive. It tells of a wealthy New Orleans heiress (Katherine Hepburn) offering a mental institution a vast sum of money if a young surgeon is prepared to perform a brain operation, a frontal lobotomy, on her niece (played by Elizabeth Taylor) in order to eradicate the memory of the final fate of her mother, a sexual blackmail of the poet and his cousin, (for- example it is not clear how far she originally knew and approved of his homosexuality and whether she was prepared to assist him) but, far more important, it seems that the character of the heiress was revealed in a series of visual images that were un- apparent, that the film's thrust is not to see her descendant into her audience room (like a Mexican Indian or the primitive old) in an ornate lift or watch her in the garden: a garden created for her son, with beds of flowering plants, almost as from a prehistoric age, of ferns and drooping plants, of flesh-eating plants fed on insects imported at great cost. One felt that somehow this garden was the clue to the whole problem, yet was so obscure as to be meaningless.

As a piece of indirect social comment it is the film which is most interesting. Set in Louisiana, in New Orleans, in the Deep South in central Tennessee, with the counts "Suddenly Last Summer" evokes a feeling of utter decadence and an almost total collapse of the social structure. One feels that one had most strongly, one has only to think of other Fellini's and Goddard Jimmie Davis, but the complete lack of moral integration that all the leading characters can only be a cont on page 7

THE ROYAL COMMISSION

Recently we were battered by hailstorms of Royal Commissions, each more "inquisition" than the last. This one, however, has been more divided into groups, the second as being a way of criticising the existing society in further detail, as we do in the next Reviews; because we want this to be a discussion forum, not just putting things in their social and econom- ic context in steady prose, but exposing them like the "Calypos" below: we don't want it to be the page of the pompous Critic—Reviews Editor.

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

The virtue of Carron's position, from a right-wing standpoint, is that it helps to discredit the Party's annual conference. If, as is probable as a result of the AEU vote, the Party faces both ways in the Bomb, then the satellites will be able to echo Bernard Levin's question: "And where then are those who insist rustily, unhurriedly, decimated the Labour Party conference are binding up the leader and the Parliamentary Party which alone elects him?" Of course, they'll fail to mention that this ridiculous position arises not from the befuddled thinking of demented old men who profess to represent, but because of the unscrupulous, undemocratic use of the block vote by the fiddler oldest, sicest fiddler since Nero. This type of action will not harm the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, which is winning fresh supporters daily; it can only harm the Labour Party. Siriono may yet be able to floating the wishes of the Party's membership, will result in an avalanche of rank-and-file letters leaving the Party in disgust. And the general public will view the Labour Party with ever-growing contempt.

A welcome sign is that CND is now devoting more attention to Labour's work. The speakers on the recent Edinburgh to London march dwell at length upon the many aspects union feeling Gaitskell & Co. This is all good—but it does not go far enough. The Campaign must broaden and widen its base. When unions go unilateralist, often it means very little, except there is a vague, inarticulate opposition to the arms race. The union leadership still holds the most powerful cards. There is everything to discourage union members from supporting CND. This situation could only be altered when CND seriously goes down to addressing union branch meetings and leadership meetings outside of factory gates. If this was intensively done for 12 months, that the union can unite, it could be strong as to prevent the backslidings of Carron, as well as bring unions like the NUM and his Municipal and General behind the unilateralist banner.

RUSSIA AND S. AFRICA

Where does the Communist Party stand on the South African boycott? The Daily Worker, on its masthead, urges readers to support the boycott. It prints pious articles against apartheid and the South African Government. But one must also add that, contrary to the wishes of many workers, it hurts most.

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

BUSMEN

statement itself is sufficient to establish the NUR General Secretary, Mr. Sydney Greene, as a typical primitive labour leader, ignoring the usual bosses' game of keeping the working class divided on sectional and special interests and seeking to destroy their natural solidarity and class consciousness. Politicized workers must realise that they have a common interest, one with the other. What is required is the building of unity between all transport workers (the recent seamen's struggle has emphasized this). Officially this will not be worked for, like for there are too many lucrative jobs to lose: therefore solidarity must be built at rank-and-file level, to build the maximum unity of action between all transport workers, and also the greatest measure of understanding with other workers.

PICASSO

and during this period Picasso produced some of his most superb nudes, heavy, introspective and timeless. Just as suddenly, the most pictorially insistent visions of Surrealism came paramount in pictures of horrific intensity. This intensity is most revealing in Picasso's characterization of women. The traditional art of eroticism of women as concomitants of fertility, or as the source of sensuous pleasure, disappear, to be replaced by woman as chained furies, dynamic and awesome. Just as easily this is contrasted with the many discussable influence by Picasso of artist and model, where the idyllic, the archaic and the pleasurable reappear.

Greatly impressed by the militants in the Communist Party, particularly during the Second World War, Picasso join- ed that organisation.

The period (1945-60), despite the cataclysmic crises internationally, has seen a relative stabilisation of Western Eu- ropean capitalism. Picasso's work has reflected this, broadly speak- ing, despite an irregular current un- dertones. Unfortu- nately, however, the work culminating in the studies after Velasquez, Picasso's own obsession has become superficial, often formally in- ventive but lacking the emotion- al undertones of earlier times. Un- like some artists, Picasso has not become more profound with age. Clearly Picasso was a great artist, but primarily because he lacks the rounded harmonious world-views of earlier times, he seems less unified than masters such as Giotto or Velasquez. Nevertheless his achievement is quite remarkable, and one might think that for younger artists, his energy and ceaseless appetite for experience is a splendid inspiration. (Although in a very bland style many young artists seem to treat him as old hat).

SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER

reflection of the society in which the author and his characters live. "Suddenly Last Summer" is symphonic of a society, that at heart is sick. It represents a set of values, a smugness and a hypocrisy that in real life is expressed in prejudice, callous- ness and violence. The country pretending to be the moulder of world opinion and events should be able to produce such a film, that, creative in a manner, so technically convincing and so dramatic triumphs. The same society, the same truth. But you go to, and be troubled likewise.
TO ST. PANCRAS

THE RECENT STRUGGLES IN ST. PANCras IN WHICH 15,000 OF ITS INDUSTRIAL WORKERS FIGHT THE TORY COUNCILS RENT INCREASES AND, BEHIND THIS COUNCIL, THE TORY GOVERNMENT, BRINGS US BACK TO THE MIGHTY MACHETE OF THEM ALL, THAT OF GLASGOW IN 1915, WHEN WORKING-CLASS CLYDESIDEROCKED LLOYD GEORGE AND THE WARTIME GOVERNMENT AND FORCED IT TO RUSH THROUGH THE FIRST RENT RESTRICTION ACT IN BRITISH HISTORY — EDITOR.

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

Up to 1915, housing was completely 'free'—if there were no council houses, and all private housing was fair game for as much as the owner could suck. This was to all intents and got out of hand. With the outbreak of war, thousands of new workers flooded into the cities to work in the munition factories and, housing was crowded to capacity and beyond—rents soared. The final blow came in Glasgow in Feb., 1915, when a 25% increase in the industrial areas was announced. In some cases, the second major increase since war broke out. The war profits were in the hands of foreign investors, along with one hand and demanding more rents with the other. With many husbands away at the front, on low military pay, the increases were impossible for many families. Angry meetings were called. A second Rent strike, Glasgow, and a movement to refuse to pay the increases spread rapidly. The Labour Party Housing Committee had been recently formed in Glasgow gave full support to the resistance movement. Municipal tramways and gas already existed in the third party. It was committed to the fact that these benefits be devoted to the purchase of housing.

INTO BATTLE

In Govan district a Housewives' Housing Association was set up under the chairmanship of a housewife, Mrs. Barbour, and set about agitating amongst the housewives for a firm stand on the housing issue. From 1915 the great Rent Strike began and by November 35,000 working-class families were refusing to pay rent. Empty rooms were picketed, and people who had agreed to the new rent level were prevented from entering their houses. The Housewives' Committee took charge of driving the bailiffs from their homes when they arrived with eviction orders. On the doorstep, prospective renters who had come to view the property were quietly but firmly refused entry—as furniture that arrived would not get through intact.

However, militant as the housewives were, they had no heavy truncheon to use against the landlords—time and violence would shift the opposition to rent increases. The movement really gathered force when the workers in the great engineering factories, working full time on the war effort, were affected—the newly formed Shop Stewards Movement took up the issue, and downed tools in support of the housewives when the bailiffs arrived. Davie Kirkwood, Convener of Shop Stewards at Parkhead Forge, made explicit the direct threat in a letter to Glasgow's Town Clerk when he wrote:

The men here wish to make it perfectly clear that they will regard any attempt by the rent raisers as an attack on the working-class (quoted from Forward, Oct. 9, 1915).

By now the Government was alarmed at the threat to production and intervened to set up a Committee of Inquiry to which the Labour Party Housing Committee put its case and made it plain that if landlords' pressure continued industrial action would be taken. The final phase of the struggle came in November when the landlords made a last desperate bid to capture the situation by suing eighteen rent defaulters in the Small Debt Court. Immediately the Housewives' committee organised a mass march of rent strikers to the Court. On route, industrial workers downed tools and joined the march—the great Albion Works stopped and both day and night shifts joined the march. The different sections of the march met in the centre of the city to form a crowd of some 10,000 surrounding the court. The meeting demanded that, unless by the end of the week the government had forbidden any increase in rents, a general strike would begin on the following Monday. Inside the court, a demonstration demanded to be received by the Sheriff, who, hearing the crowds outside, acceded. For two hours the delegation was in the case and, in future, any increase in rents or war production stops. After a hurried telephone call to Lloyd George, the Sheriff gave in.

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

WHAT WE STAND FOR

The SOCIALIST REVIEW stands for international socialist democracy. Only the mass mobilisation of the working class in economic and political arenas can lead to the overthrow of capitalism and the construction of Socialism.

The SOCIALIST REVIEW believes that a really consistent labour movement demands the power on the basis of the following programme:

- The complete nationalisation of all land through the abolition of tenure and the land with compensations 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 elected on the basis of the number of members in each national and area boards, subject to frequent election, immediate recall and receiving the average skilled wage rate in the industry.
- The establishment of workers' committees to control all private industries within the framework of a planned economy. In all instances representatives must be subject to frequent election, immediate recall, and receive the same skilled wage rate in the industry.
- The establishment of workers' committees in all concerns to determine 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 and proper standards of pay and benefits 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 for all workers whatever their country of origin. Freedom of migration for all workers to and from Britain.
- Freedom from political and economic oppression to all colonies. The offer of technical and economic assistance to the people of the underdeveloped countries.
- The abolition of conscription and the withdrawal of all British troops from overseas.
- The abolition of the H-bomb and all weapons of mass destruction. Britain to pave the way with the complete elimination of the H-bomb.
- A Socialist foreign policy subservient to neither Washington nor Moscow.

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