Our task this year—STRIKE THE TORIES OUT!

1958 promises to be as different from 1957 as any two years in British working-class history. As we go to print in mid-December, the "statesmen of the Western world," consulting in Paris to make their contribution to the abominations of the nuclear cold war, are showing us that atom-weapon is now the essential hard-currency for bargaining between the ruling classes of East and West, and for clearing accounts within each separate camp.

And it's a currency hard to come by.

British capitalism is finding this out. Unable to keep abreast of competition because of weight of arms, unable to disarm because of competitors, it is looking more and more to a showdown with the workers for its salvation.

To all.....

Dear Readers,

You are looking at the first number of the twice-monthly Socialist Review. We have taken a risk in changing from a monthly. It will not be easy to double our circulation at one go; to double the number of correspondents; to receive double the amount of cash contributions. We cannot promise to keep always to the eight pages you are used to.

But we believe the risk is necessary and justified. The Tories are hammering home the need for class politics; British workers are learning that bosses are dangerous as well as nasty; that the struggle between labour and capital is the inexcapable crux of our lives; that, in this age of nuclear weapons and inter-continental ballistic missiles, our very existence depends on the outcome of this struggle; that our sharpest weapon is a socialist program and leadership.

Some have learned to condemn the pretenders to socialist leadership; the right-wing Labour and trade-union leaders who hold working-class democracy by the throat in the colonies and at home; the Communist Party leaders steeped in its blood where they are in power and coming very near where they are not.

Some have learned, not all. Our duty is to drive the lessons home; to show that the Tories can be finally defeated only after a real battle; to show that the battle is for the defence of our right to exist; that the future of humanity is the future of socialism, despite the pretenders to socialist leadership.

To do this, we need a paper. A paper with a program; that expresses, without censorship, the views of its readers; that stimulates discussion in its columns; that thereby educates and organises.

Such a paper is the Socialist Review. Help it. Don't bring our hopes to naught. Build it. Sell it. Write for it. Fill our yawning deficit. We need you to keep up the fortnightly Socialist Review, to lay the basis for a weekly one.

Yours fraternally,

Editor.

This issue includes:

Builders and busmen in the forefront
Memories of John McLean
The Young Socialist
Workers' control of industry
Parliament etc., etc.

The Tories Block Grants
By Peter Ibbotson

What is all this fuss about the "block grant"? Briefly, it is about the way in which local authorities shall get the money to pay for all the things they do. All the services now provided by local authorities in England and Wales cost about £1,100 million a year. Of this, about £400 million comes from the rates, the rest from the Exchequer grants.

Most of the Exchequer's share of £600 million comes in grants earmarked for specific purposes; education is the most important and by far the biggest. And most of these specific grants are worked out on a percentage basis; that is, the Exchequer pays a fixed percentage of the total expenditure on an approved object.

The formula

This is what happens as regards education. Each local education authority — there are 146 in England and Wales — gets from the Exchequer to help to pay for its expenditure on education a percentage of its total expenditure. The formula is: 100 percent of expenditure on school milk and meals; 75 percent of expenditure on advanced technological education; and 60 percent of all other recognised expenditure; plus 5 per pupil, less the product of a certain rate in the £. For years it was the product of a 2s. 6d. rate but due to revaluation in 1956 it is now a 1s. 6d. rate whose product is deducted from the grant.

This percentage formula was devised 40 years ago by the then President of the Board of Education, H. A. L. Fisher, who piloted through the Commons the 1918 Education Act (which Tory economy sabotaged three years later). Introducing the percentage grant, Fisher said: "I propose a formula for the automatic expansion of grant to follow and keep pace with the expansion of the cost of education"; and this raison d'être of the percentage grant is the foundation of the widespread opposition to the present proposals to do away with it and substitute instead a block grant to help to pay for local authority expenditure.

Make no mistake — educational expenditure has expanded enormously during the last ten years; and it must go on expanding for years to come

Building Workers
Brian Behan  Eric Heffer
on page 2

London Busmen
Bill Jones
on page 3
BUILDING WORKERS! Fight now for LESS HOURS, MORE WAGES!

writes ERIC S. HEFFER, President, Huyton ASW: SIS, Liverpool building site

RECENTLY in the Socialist Review (November, 1979) I developed a general argument explaining why the NFBTO was needed by the building industry. In this short article, I wish to particularize and concentrate on the immediate problem of the 40-hour week as demanded by the NFBTO for a 40-hour week and an extra 8d. per hour.

In the past, because of the growth in the industry, the 40-hour week demand grows in importance. However it will not be maintained, and the employers will call for exceptions, and preparations should be under way now; unfortunately, the signs of such preparations are not too apparent, and the time has come for the rank and file to press for decisive action.

The claim

The claim was formulated on October 24th at a meeting of the Executive Committees of the eighteen unions which comprise the NFBTO; the claim has two sides—the demand for the 40 hours plus an increase of 5d. per hour to compensate for the loss of four hours' wages, and also, a demand for 3d. per hour to meet the continued rise in the cost of living.

The claim is well-crafted and extremely strong, and meets all the arguments of those who talk in terms of wages being related to inflation. The latest statistics available on the number employed in the industry show that since June 1955, the number of operatives employed in the industry has dropped by 32,000, while output in the first half of 1977 was up by 3 per cent over 1956. This can only mean one thing: output is up per man and the rate of exploitation is being increased. This is reflected in the upward spiral of profits for the large building and civil engineering employers: Wimpey increased their profits from £3,840,256 in 1955 to £4,474,414 in 1975. Taylor Wimpey, the 'Ceiling Society' and the Co-op, Sir Lindsay Parkinson, all showed the same trend, while the medium-sized firms are likely to show the future, to maintain their same level. The present level of profits proves that the employers have the power to force any general strike. Let us consider the balance of forces between the cases of the employers and the workers.

Meetings of operatives should be called in all the main provincial centres, as well as in London. Local NFBTO branches should convene meetings in their own areas.

Leaflers and pamphlets should be issued, giving the general public the facts of the claim, explaining the true nature of the industry and the justice and moderation of the demands.

At a first blow in the struggle, a rigid control of overtime (as laid down by rule) must be enforced. In this way, some of the unemployed can be temporarily employed, and necessary cash put aside (even in small amounts) to help those for the day, when the battle fully opens out.

Close liaison

Often in the past, wage campaign committees have sprung up to press forward the workers' demands. At one time when wage-freeze was the accepted policy of the Trade Union leadership, and class-collaboration the main feature of union policy, such committees played a vital and important role. Today, I feel it is necessary to get a closer liaison between the shop stewards on the sites and the rank and file, to convene meetings of stewards as an opening of the campaign. These stewards, who play close on the rank and file, being part of it, together with the District officers, should plan out the best forms of immediate activity. Meetings should be held on site, at the direction of the stewards, and the employers given an emphatic 'no.' The TUC are on record for the 40-hour week, and at Congress this year, a resolution was passed which promised support to any affiliated organization which became involved in the struggle on this issue. Don't let us fight it out in isolation, but let us co-ordinate our efforts and challenge the employers together.

In this way, we can have a decisive influence on the construction of the country. If a General Strike is necessary to enforce our demands, let us not shirk responsibility. Our leaders will, no doubt, prefer to fail now would be disastrous, and would result in further disillusionment and increased suffering for the working class.

From inaction to worker control, BRIAN BEHAN presents PROGRAM FOR BUILDING WORKERS

In his article on the crisis facing building workers (Socialist Review, November, 1979) Comrade Heffner writes: 'Above all else, our industry needs a powerful as its aim the defence of our conditions and union movements.'

This will not be easy. Comrade Heffner correctly points to the causal nature of the industry; the near impossibility of maintaining site organization as the jobs themselves end; and the ease with which employers can blacklist militancy.

Then there is the Working Rule Agreement, shackled on to building workers in 1927, which gives the employer incredible powers, some of which are mentioned by Comrade Heffner. By this Agreement, the employer can sack or transfer at two weeks' notice on any grounds. Any man, including stewards, no mass meeting may be held without his permission; no political strike, the strike official is instructed to (a) get a resumption of work no matter what crimes workers (Socialist Review, November, 1979) Comrade Heffner writes: 'Above all else, our industry needs a powerful as its aim the defence of our conditions and union movements.'

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The lesson is obvious. The workers are solid enough, but the right-wing and employers hold a noise around their necks choking them to death.

Program

I would suggest that we include in our program for building workers, the demand:

that the Federation judge each dispute on its merits and act as its constitution lays down, namely, to co-ordinate the defence of trade-union conditions;

that we struggle in our unions against the poisonous idea that the Disputes machinery and not class struggle can solve our problems;

that we organize solidarity actions with each job that comes into dispute; and the workers who are most affected, particularly so-called ‘left-wingers,’ that they cease to play the employers’ game.

Our attitude in electing all officials must become more serious. Before elections, we must know our attitude and be prepared to demand it. After elections, the job of electing officials must be made easier and the rights of all officials must be expanded.

In the case of a strike, the Committee should order an immediate resumption of work. In this case, however, as we had expected, the employers merely asked that work on the site proceed without interruption, and so gave every encouragement to the scabs already there.

The unification and apathy created by such events can well be to such matters as have been raised above, and we must have an answer to

(continued next page)
BILLY JONES recently re-elected to the Central Bus Committee, answers some questions on the LONDON BUSMEN'S PAY BATTLE

I

How have London Bus Workers reacted to the rejection by the LTE of their recent wage claims?

"In order to answer this question it is necessary to retrace the steps leading up to the claim."

"When the claim was first placed before the General Executive Council of the Union it was suggested that before such an application was made, a National Conference of all bus workers should be held at which agreement could be reached on a national wages policy and the thorny question of the wages differential as between London and the Provinces might be settled for the first time. It also suggested that the men on work to be selected by the men's garage representatives, who would then on to demand that the application should be made immediately to the LTE."

Turned down

"As we know the LTE turned down the application in the sharpest possible fashion. Following this, the committee decided to recommend to the men's representatives that the claim should now be taken to arbitration. The one question: are they prepared to use their position to fight the employer and the committee to keep the claim alive if the right-wing remove them because of this, and will they then be prepared to keep the claim alive if the Left-wing removes them because of this."

Over and above this, we must demand workers' control of the industry.

In my opinion, we can begin to win the public and the industry for socialist control in a simple way by the achievement of Direct Labour (not hiding, at the same time, its shortcomings) and where possible, the building worker has a thousand times more security and dignity than a labourer in a private building. The houses produced are at least as cheap, if not cheaper, than those of Direct Labour and are of better quality. Here is an opportunity for us to campaign immediately for Direct Labour, particularly with large Labour Authorities. Here is also an opportunity to demand within them schemes greater control by the workers.

Our industry is the first to be marked out for the axe. Our employers are probably the most vicious animals alive. Yet I am confident. One thing has stood out in all our disputes: given any sort of leadership, the workers are prepared to fight. They are prepared to sacrifice themselves in defence of their standards.

It is our task, through the rank and file movement, to build up a chain of programs of industrial struggle that can smash the employers and their benchmen in their own rear guard.

In London, we are hoping to begin a rank and file campaign around wages, hours and the defence of job organization. We are calling a meeting at the Holborn Hall on Sunday, January 19th, at 11 a.m., to which we hope all branches will which send delegates or messages of support.

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.

E. Sop's AEU Fable

The other day I was told a true and cautionary tale by my friend, Comrade Wise. A year ago the Chairman of a certain London bus company. He was an old and well respected war-horse and his collapse was rather sudden. When the news meere there were some half-dozen candidates for the post:

Comrade Wrench (a Moral Re-armament waffle).

Comrade Snake (a Stalinist).

Comrade Rabbett (middle-of-the-road).

Comrade Mouse (middle-of-the-road).

A. N. Other.

In the end Comrade Absolute was top of the poll; Comrade Wise a close runner-up; Comrade Snake third; and the others string down the course.

Came the elections for the same position this year, and about a fortnight before the closing date Comrade Wise receives a visit from Comrade Snake.

"says Comrade Snake: "We gave the public a fair deal last year, and the Left-wing candidates ought to get together and nominate a common running horse.

"This year, I think, the candidates for the Machiavellian plan. Nominations for the election closed on October 14th, and Comrade Wise submitted his on October 20th, three nominations had been received:"

Comrade Absolute (a certain of course).

Comrade Snake and I am loath to doff to describe to you the apoplexy of Comrades Rabbett and Mouse as well. They were furious that they had been beaten. Comrade Wrench was not present at the meeting when there were any comments. After a good deal of puffing and cajoling, Comrade Absolute promised, "I didn't know the nominations were due in so soon.

"My friend, do you not think that, night, so my friend was in the chair (he being vice-chairman). Having read the nominations, the meeting was suddenly interrupted. Comrade Absolute said, "I think my friend's nomination. When Comrade Snake heard it, he turned on my friend with a look of mixed incredulity and hatred.

It so happened that Comrade Absolute had been ill that night, so my friend was in the chair (he being vice-chairman). Having read the nominations, the meeting was suddenly interrupted. Comrade Absolute said, "I think my friend's nomination. When Comrade Snake heard it, he turned on my friend with a look of mixed incredulity and hatred."

There seems to have been some slip-up at the Post Office," said my friend. "I don't think they'll be able to do anything about the 1000 nominations. There seems to have been some slip-up at the Post Office," said my friend. "I don't think they'll be able to do anything about the 1000 nominations."

"This does mean however that London's Bus-Workers, given leadership and organization, could not fail to make a sharp lesson to the Tories just as the House of Commons who are as firmly convinced as ever were that the "PAT is the way to do it," whilst the LEAN is for US."
THE MOVEMENT

The revolutionary tradition in Britain owes much to

JOHN MCLEAN

By Harry McShane

ONE OF THE MOST STIRRING EVENTS I CAN REMEMBER TOOK PLACE ON A COLD WINTER’S NIGHT IN DECEMBER 1918. THOSE OF US WHO HELD JOHN MCLEAN IN HIGHEST ESTEEM AS THE PLANE MARCHING TOWARDS THE VICTORY MOVEMENT WERE DELIGHTED AT THE GREAT CROWD OF WORKERS WHO TURNED UP AT BUCHANAN STREET HALL TO MEET THE TRAIN CARRYING HIM FROM ABERDEEN AFTER HIS RELEASE FROM PRISON SENTENCE.

JULY 1919

WE ARRIVED AT A RUGGED GORBALS. HIS OPPONENT WAS GEORGE N. BARNES. BARNES LEFT TO REFUSE THE CABINET JOB OFFERED BY THE LABOUR PARTY, THE CANDIDATES FOR GORBALS COULD SPEAK WITHOUT FACING INTERRUPTIONS OR THE CONTINUED IMPRISONMENT OF A FRIEND BEFORE POLLING-DAY HE HAD TO BE RELEASED.

THE TRAIN WAS LATE. OLD JIMMY JOHNSTONE, A RIGHTEOUS MANSION, AND JOHN WAS ON TOP OF IT. A MONSTER RED FLAG APPEARED AND JOHN GRABBED HOLD OF IT. THE WAGONS WERE PULLED DOWN THE MAIN STREETS AND JOHN MCClean, ALTHOUGH WEAK AFTER HIS BATTLE, CAST THE WAGON FOR A GIGANTIC JOURNEY. ON ARRIVAL AT CARLTON PLACE SPEECHES WERE MADE TO THE EXCITED CROWDS.

JOHN MCClean, HIS SISTER AND HIS PARENTS MOVED TO THE HOME OF THE REV. JAMES MAXTON, THE THEN FIERY NEIL MCClean, WILLIAM GALLACHER, HARRY HOPKINS AND OTHERS.

CLASSES IN CLASS WAR

I FIRST HEARD JOHN MCClean SPEAK IN THE EARLY PART OF 1919. HE WAS ASKING FOR A HENRY F. NORTHCOE WHO WAS DELIVERING A LECTURE ON THE SOCIAL DIGNITARY OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY. JOHN DENOUNCED LLOYD GEORGE’S FAMOUS BUDGET AND CRITICIZED THE ORGANIZATION AS A SOCIETAL BUDGET. JOHN WAS ALREADY WELL KNOWN BECAUSE OF HIS CLASSES IN ECONOMICS AND PROPAGANDIST ACTIVITIES.


IN 1911, THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY AGREED TO MERGE WITH THE BRITISH SOCIALIST PARTY. I WAS THEN TO SEE AND TO MEET THE GREAT MAN. I ATTENDED HIS CLASSES AND RECEIVED WEEKLY INSPIRATION. THERE WAS NO THING NEW ABOUT JOHN MCClean. HE DREW HIS IDEAS FROM THE PAST AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE WAS THERE ALL THE TIME.

LATER, THERE WAS, AT THAT TIME, A BODY IN Glasgow, known as the Catholic Socialist Society led by John Wheatley, one of the leaders of the movement. The Catholic Socialist Society held a meeting of the working class movement. The man was the man behind Maxton, Kirkwood and the others who went from Clyde to Westminster in 1922. The Catholic Socialist Society held indoor meetings on Sunday afternoons.

I WENT TO HEAR JOHN SPEAK TO ONE OF THESE MEETINGS ON ‘THE COMING OF SOCIALISM’. JOHN ENJOYED HIMSELF, AND SO DID THE AUDIENCE. HE STARTED WITH THE NEBULAR THEORY AND THE FORMATION OF THE EARTH. THEN HE CAME TO DEAL WITH THE ORIGINS OF CHRISTIANITY. HE TOOK THE AUDIENCE TO A SPEEDWAY RACE AND THEN TO THE JAIL. HE TOLD THE STORY OF HIS JAIL EXPERIENCE.

I REMEMBER BEING TOLD THAT THE LECTURE CONTINUED.

PROVOKES DISCUSSION

THE HIGHLIGHT CAME WHEN JOHN DECLARED THAT THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT WOULD RUN THE WORLD AND THAT IT WOULD BE A SOCIALIST. THIS WAS NOT A CONCISEM. I REFER TO THE INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY. THERE WAS ANOTHER MEETING AT THE CATHOLIC SOCIALIST SOCIETY. IT WAS ALREADY AN ALIENATED BUDGET. JOHN HAD NEVER LISTENED TO A BETTER DISCUSSION THAN ONE HE HAD THAT DAY. IT SEEMED TO COVER EVERYTHING. I CAME AWAY WITH A GREATER ADMIRATION FOR JOHN AND HIS IDEAS THAN I HAD BEFORE.

WHEN THE FIRST WORLD WAR BROKE OUT, JOHN WAS ON DUTY AT TARBET. POLICE RAIDED HIS HOUSE IN COMMONS, HE CHASED THE TARBET WITH THE WORDS, ‘SIR EDWARD GREY IS A LIAR’. HE RETURNED TO GLASGOW WHERE HE SPOKE AT A MEETING AT NELLSON’S, GLASGOW, GREEN, THEN DECIDED TO RETURN TO THE WAR. THE SOCIALIST PARTY, THE INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY AND THE SOCIALIST LABOUR PARTY WERE ALL SPLITTED ON THE WAR AT THIS STAGE, BUT JOHN DID NOT WAVE.

WAR AND PRISON

IT WAS IN FEBRUARY, 1915, THAT THE FIRST STRIKE IN THE WAR TOOK PLACE. THIS LED TO THE FORMATION OF THE CYDE WORKERS’ COMMITTEE. ITS CONCENTRATION ON ECONOMIC QUESTIONS ENDED THE DISILLUSION OF THE WAR LEAD TO SOME DISAGREEMENTS. JOHN MCClean HAD OTHERS HELD AT ARM’S LENGTH.

LATER THE SAME YEAR WAS GIVEN FIVE DAYS’ IMPRISONMENT DUE TO THE ASKING OF THE PRESIDENT OF SCHOOLS. HE REFUSED TO PAY A FINE AND HAD DURING THIS TIME HE WAS DEPORTED TO THE INTERNATIONAL HALLS. ONE MAN WAS MISUSED AND THAT WAS JOHN MCClean. FROM THAT NIGHT FORWARDS, HIS RELEASE WAS INTENSIFIED. HE WAS ULTIMATELY ALLOWED OUT, ENTAILING LIVES, HIS HEALTH WERE INOBVIOUSLY AFFECTED BUT HE DID NOT REST.

LENINISM AND WORKERS’ POWER

I REMEMBER ONE NIGHT AFTER THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AT A MEETING IN THE INTERNATIONAL HALLS WHERE HE DECLARED HIMSELF A LENINIST IN A SPEECH IN RALPH MACDONALD WHO, AT A MEETING IN GLASGOW, HAD SAID THAT HE WAS NOT A LENINIST.

HE SPOKE OF THE STEPS THE WORKERS WENT TO WHEN SEIZING CONTROL OF THE MATTER. THEN SAW THAT THESE WERE NOT THE STEPS THAT WOULD BE TAKEN BUT HE HAD OUTLINED THE METHOD TO PROVOKE THINKING ON THE MATTER. THIS AND OTHER MEETINGS LED TO HIS BEING ARRESTED AGAIN.

FOLLOWING HIS RELEASE IN DECEMBER, 1918, HE THREW HIMSELF INTO THE STRUGGLE FOR THE RIGHTS THAT HAD BEEN MISUSED FROM THE CYNICAL LEADERS. HE FELL OUT WITH SOME MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH SOCIALIST PARTY AND WAS SEEN TO BE TRYING TO GET HIM TO DROP HIS WORK AND CONCENTRATE ON THE HANDS OF THE NSRF COMMITTEE. IN WEFT THE BP AND RE-ESTABLISHED THE VANGUARD.

THE BRANCH OF THE WHICH HE WAS SECRETARY, BROKE FROM THE PARTY THE SAME TIME. IN 1920, I WAS DISMISSED FROM MY JOB. HE PROPOSED THAT I WORK WITH HIM ON A PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN. THIS LED TO THE FORMATION OF A TEAM KNOWN AS THE TRAMP UNION. I WAS A MEMBER OF THE TRAMP UNION. THERE WERE CONFIRMATIONS THAT THE COMMUNIST PARTY FORMED LATER IN 1923. JOHN HELD THAT MOSCOW COULD NOT DICTATE TO GLASGOW.

HE AGREED WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY BUT WAS OPPOSED TO ITS MAKE-UP AS LEADERSHIP WAS CONCERNED. HE LATER ADVOCATED THE FORMATION OF A SCOTTISH COMMUNIST PARTY.

UNEMPLOYED STRUGGLES

IN NOVEMBER, 1920, WE CONVARED THE FIRST MEETING OF THE UNEMPLOYED ON JOHN’S SUGGESTION THE UNEMPLOYED MARCHED TO THE CITY ROOMS WHERE A DEPUTATION MET WHEATLEY, SHINWELL, DOLLAN AND OTHERS. THIS BEGAN A NEW STRUGGLE. SIMILAR ACTIVITIES WERE LED BY W. HANNINGTON, IN LONDON, LED TO THE FORMATION OF A NATIONAL UNEMPLOYED ORGANIZATION.

JOHN MCClean WAS TAKEN AWAY FROM THIS, IN 1921, WHEN HE WAS ARRESTED FOR SPEECHES HE HAD GIVEN. HE WAS GIVEN THREE MONTHS’ IMPRISONMENT. HE WAS TRIED IN AIRDRIE AND MADE A SPEECH IN DEFENCE.

AGAIN IN 1922 HE WAS ARRESTED FOR SPEECHES TO THE UNEMPLOYED. DURING HIS TRIAL HE WAS ALLOWED THE FREEDOM OF MEANING GIVEN TO STATEMENTS HE MADE. HE WAS GIVEN A TWELVE MONTHS’ SENTENCE. LATER, I WAS ARRESTED. ON MY RELEASE I JOINED THE COMMUNIST PARTY. I LAST SAW JOHN IN MAY, 1923, AND HE TOOK MY INEVITABLE EVICTION FROM MY HOUSE. WE BOTH MARCHED CROWDS TO THE PLACE AND SPOKE ON TWO DIFFERENT PLATFORMS.

A STEP AHEAD

I LEFT GLASGOW ON AUGUST OF THE SAME YEAR AND LIVED IN THE SHORES OF THE OCEAN. THOUSANDS OF WORKERS ATTENDED HIS FUNERAL, HIS COFFIN BEING CARRIED BY ONLY FOUR ILP MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

THIS WAS THE END OF A MAN WHO DEDICATED HIMSELF FOR THE MOVEMENT. HE WAS RECOGNISED BY LENIN. HIS CLASSES WERE KNOWN IN GERMANY AND A FEW YEARS LATER, HE BECAME THE SECRETARY OF THE SOCIALISTS OF GLASGOW AND OF SCOTLAND.

THERE ARE MANY GAPS IN THIS ACCOUNT OF MY MEMORIES OF JOHN MCClean. LET ME TELL YOU THAT THE MOVEMENT IS NOT ONE MAN ANY MORE THAN I HAVE EVER KNOWN. I WAS OFTEN OUT OF STEP BECAUSE HE WAS A STEP AHEAD.
Editorial

THINGS ARE MOVING: the formation of new Sections is reported in many areas, but from these reports two conflicting aims can be made out: in some cases, party officers look down from their aldermanic seats to fill the odd job with the willing wheeler-dealer, or Regional Office hopes that 'young blood' will add the chrome to the Winton machine and perhaps set up the Labour Hall in contemporary colours (careful, chaps, easy on the red!); Sections are organised with a heavy emphasis on socials and record evenings, with 'politics' confined to canvassing and the de-recruitment seminar; in other areas the value on the work of the youth on the wage board. The weakness of such Sections, custom-built to the measurements of the Transport House bureaucracy, provides the NEC with an admirable excuse for denying national status to the Youth Movement. They rightly say that we can't have a viable superstructure if the foundations are rotten. And while Sections go on being formed on the basis laid down by the Handbook, demand will naturally call for us to be safely ignored.

There is, however, a healthy minority in the Sections which feels that for us to try to copy the local lick-head's dance hall or youth club is to squander our resources; for us to be forever glancing over our shoulders at the 'success' of the Young Conservatives will only make us fall down. The political conviction that only the organization for Sections is political; that therefore the main emphasis in planning our activity must be given to political education, discussion, and everything else must flow from this. We must realize that the form that a labour youth movement should take is not only an organizational question; it is political.

We have to know whether to be socialists or socialites.

It is a political question, comrades.

Letters

Dear Comrade,

Referring to your editorial in the December, 1957, issue, I would ask you to consider the following.

If we are to consider the activity of young people today in Hungary and Poland, is it correct to say that their desire to be set free from their long association with Socialism is necessarily a true indication that they want Socialism (as defined by Michael Kidron in his pamphlet: 'Socialism is a type of society in which all the members of the community collectively determine their conditions of life and their way of living'). Don't they have doubts about this, and perhaps it would be as well to tell you that I am not of the same opinion. It is as a result of this line of thought.

History shows that youth becomes impatient from time to time in remarks in their own country become oppressive, but there are few examples to show that by its remarkable activity, has fought solely for the liberation of those suffering from oppression in the whole of our country. Possible events in Hungary, where some young Russian soldiers gave up their arms to young Hungarian Socialists, is an indication that there is an international understanding between youth. If we do not for one moment think that the youth of an imperialistic state could by themselves bring about the overthrow of capitalism in one go, I would contend that youth is, generally speaking, more concerned with problems, whether it be Capitalism or Fascism, or anything else which at the moment is a variation on their own type of Society.

Owing to lack of space, the second instalment of MICHAEL KIDRON'S coming pamphlet on the struggle for socialism has been held over to our next issue.

On the next page we print the first article from our new music columnist, TOM HOLLO.

W.Y., who was 'Disc-rite' for the late Socialist Advance.

I am of the opinion that Trade Union activity is possibly the only positive practical outlet for young people in the British situation today, and I am surprised to find that you have omitted any reference to the Trade Union movement in your recent discussion of the problem of organizing the youth of the country.

Perhaps the problem of assessing the direction of thought of young people today is unfortunately, directly associated with TV and the Capitalist Press. Unemployment is, I believe, considered by young people to be a challenge to find the job that everyone else unemployeed is also seeking. And I am also of the opinion that too many young people look upon unemployment as something of a novelty or lark. Therefore, I would agree that, whilst asking for a youth conference, the leaders of Socialism is the only solution, this must be considered as the end, and turned down with the excuse that 'Trade Union activity, to ensure the absorption of only large groups of Bureaucrats, so that we demand a complete control over their destiny.'

L.J.B., Wafford

We agree with Comrade L. J. B. in his stressing the importance of Trade Union activity and organisation; in the article which we print below, some of the reasons are adequately set out. We do not feel that the process of education in socialism can be so easily divided into 'first steps' and 'second steps'. If as Comrade L. J. B. says, young workers think of unemployment as a lark, and that revolutionary activity is taking on a new form, or that they are taken consciously as part of their struggle to control their own destiny, then our job is so much the bigger.

We, like you, welcome your comments, but we like you much better if you keep them short...

YOUTH CHARTER

The time has come for the trade union movement to start an organizing drive among young workers. The sharpening industrial struggle as employers push down workers' standards because of the Tory economic squeeze means that for the first time, with the very real problems of taking an attitude towards trade-unionism. And the way they react will be largely determined by the way the trade union movement looks upon the young people who come into their factories.

So far the signs are not good. Far too many adult union leaders adopt the attitude that young people can live in the same old world of high wages, short hours and regular employment. These leaders (living on the memory of union struggles in the 'twenties and thirties) argue that young workers cannot be expected to worry about trade unionism while they are living in the lap of relative luxury.

Another attitude of adult unionists is that young workers cannot be trusted to build up their own areas of activity within the organized movement. Youth, they argue, is heretical and unorthodox. It is everywhere a threat to the established hierarchy and therefore to give youth special media of expression and organizational aid is just asking for trouble.

From these attitudes stems the general approach of British trade unionism to youth. With only a few exceptions, individual unions refuse to organize special youth conferences. Time after time delegates to the Trade Union Congress toss out resolutions calling for the setting up of special youth committees, to no avail. Similar, pleas for the formulation of a special programme for young workers are turned down with the excuse that there are few and (or only minor) issues applicable to young workers and these are handled through the "normal machinery" of the trade union movement.

Common Problems

Just how wrong these ideas of the old guard are can be seen when dealing with the tremendous towards the end of last year when 31 young people (all but two of them trade unionists and most of them active trade unionists) met in Brussels for the World Assembly of Youth. Among the resolutions they agreed on was the

continuing next page)
CONFEDERATION of Free Trade Unions, which is the same conservative attitude towards youth as does the British trade union movement. The question is one of whether the principles of the Charter are being adopted more than a week discussing common problems of young people in the four countries of which they are born. At the end of their discussions they produced a Young Workers’ Charter which, although it has yet to receive any publicity in Britain, could well form the foundation of an all-out drive in which every trade union should actively support trade unionism.

From bench to work-bench

The issues tackled by the Young Workers’ Charter are bread and butter issues, and they begin with education.

All young people, demands the Charter, must have compulsory education up to the age of sixteen. Bracketed with this is the demand for free school and technical educational materials, the opportunity for all young workers to proceed to higher education and the establishment of some scheme of vocational guidance for young workers.

Switching to the workplace the Young Workers’ Charter points out a series of demands which will receive the enthusiastic backing of every worker—young or old.

First, the charter wants the minimum age for starting work fixed at sixteen for general employment and eighteen for heavy industries, and kinds of heavy labour. Every worker should have medical examinations on starting work and at regular intervals there after.

Working conditions

A minimum wage, says the Charter, must be guaranteed to all young workers. This wage must be of a size which will be sufficient to enable him to employ a decent standard of living and the harmonious development of his personality. The Young Workers’ Charter demands also, “the principle of equal pay for work of equal value should be applied without discrimination on grounds of age, colour or sex.”

Nationalization—first step

The act of nationalization has never been regarded by socialists as anything other than the transfer of ownership to the state, a first step in the struggle for socialism. And within those limits of course, nationalization has worked. Solely needed capital has been injected into moribund industries, and a wide measure of reorganization and rationalization has taken place. These measures have increased efficiency, have provided a base from which increased tempo in industrial activity has sprung, but they have not provided the worker (with the possible exception of the miners) with any very apparent benefits. Neither has the consumer been made aware of any startling advances for the price. The change most easily and therefore most often recognized by both worker and consumer, is the reduction in the price of the new units, the remote- less of the controllers, and a growth in work benches. But in actual fact there are consumers’ councils and workers’ joint consultative committees, but these are not yet put into full operation. They are at best, policy-sounding boards, and more often than not completely ignored by the oligarchs in all fundamental matters. This growth in size, accompanied by a concentration of power into fewer hands, is not served to accent the individual’s feeling of impotence in his relations with society both as a worker and as a consumer and as a result, he rejects further nationalization. It is his defence against the total deprivation of his right to have a voice in the community.

Ownership is NOT control

The responsibility for the fact that many workers now reject the concept of ownership, is squarely upon the heads of the industrial leaders aided and abetted by many notable is a socialistic workers that salvation lay in the ownership of the means of production alone, and not in a socialistic workers control as denounced as utopian in trade-union circles, and not the even more fasismatically Fascist LITT in the Labour Party. The most important task confronting the Left today in Britain, is to investigate the problems

THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET

THE MODERN JAZZ MOVEMENT has been feeling its way towards a new classicism for a long time now, since the mid-forties, in fact, and although the music of the British groups we hear prefer to stick to the tried and trusted theme and variations form, one or two have taken the plunge and tried some tiddly business; the odd rondo or so here, a little daring counterpoint there, but if you drop into any of the Soho Jazz clubs any night you can be sure of a good stodge of mainstream. Only in the States has any real advance been made, and smack in the front of the cool movement is the Modern Jazz Quartet.

Recently we’ve had the chance to hear them without the aid of a record player and very good it was too. Connie Kaye is surely the world’s most refined drummer, but he’s never been one of those that take the bit between their teeth in order to bolt through their solos, and it’s he that sets the pace (if you can use that expression) for the others. I kept getting the feeling that this was the group interested in playing to each other, and not too interested in being heaved by the size of the Royal Festival Hall audience as well as by the reverence with which they play. Also they had the good fortune to be preceded by a well-known British Group, by comparison with which they could hardly fail to benefit.

MUSIC

Polo Shering

Tom HOLLOWAY
Workers Control

continued

serve on Boards of Management is not enough. The function of real power must be exercised regularly by the workers as part of their everyday work.

The base of this control will be the factory where the workers meet at the end of the day, elect a small committee which is to be responsible for conditions of service, hiring and firing, etc. All decisions of this committee would have to be easily understood and endorsed by the full assembly of the workers. The members of the committee would have to be re-elected each month, so that they would receive and discuss reports from their delegates to the higher control, and, if necessary, present a level of the level of their product to be plunged back would be carefully examined.

Functional organization

Quite obviously, not every decision affecting an industry can be taken in isolation by single units (i.e. factories), for their greater interest must also be considered. To achieve this, the workers' powers would need to be delegated to other units. These might be briefly defined thus:

(a) Departmental Committees. These would be needed only in large-scale national industries. Their function would be to decide power, transport and certain sections of the national administration. In the main, they would be provided by the workers' committees and concern themselves primarily with efficiency.

(b) National Committees. These again would be needed only in large industries. Their powers would vary according to the nature of the commodity, but where the region consisted of a self-contained unit they would deal with professional technicians and the larger bodies within the role ascribed to them, in matters of investment, production levels, etc., by the industry's national committee.

(c) National Committees. These would be called upon to deal with other commodities and industries and would work in the same way that boards of directors would be to lay down broad policy.

(d) Inter-industry committees would as a rule be in some way to coordinate the activities of allied industries. These would consist of representatives of the national committees concerned.

(e) A Central Planning Council. Government would be limited to that of a better expression, I have called a planning council. This would decide general industrial policy and would, in the early days of industrial democracy, work with the government. Later on, however, it might well become a new elected assembly having absolute authority.

Election and recall

The manner of the election of members of the above bodies would vary according to the size of the industry. In small industries, workers and employers would select the national body by the workers would be practicable; the workers would have to be elected from and by the regional committees. But whatever the manner, the principle must be to obtain a direct control of the worker and to write into the constitutions of all future bodies the principle of loyalty to the people; the workers must always remain the right of immediate recall of their elected representatives.

In addition to the powers exercised by the workers, the consumer too must be enfranchised, for control of industry exclusively by the worker would be one-sided.

Serious and whether to blast us all into H-bombs by the hands of councils and parliament, freely chosen by the people, then it is the duty of every socialist to say that such a control bars the worker from exercising the same right in his factory.

We are rich enough

Is the industrial product large enough to permit popular control of productive processes? The answer is in the affirmative.

This is the key question, indeed it is the only real question that needs to be asked about workers' control; all the other problems are merely problems of organization. For socialists are first to recognize the part played in the development of our society by the minority control of investment. The division of labour, the state, and especially the control of the modern industrial society owes its existence to the fact that a minority was able to rob the worker of a large slice of his product and use this for the wealth-producing capacity of the community.

The rock upon which many early attempts to secure an equitable distribution of wealth from the foundation of poverty of the national product. In so far as Stalinism was a reaction to the problems of the Russian economic situation, it had its roots in the necessity to build wealth-producing machinery, to develop the living standards of the workers. It is most unlikely that this could have happened without the destruction of the nascent workers' democracy proclaimed in 1917, although different political action might have produced changes in the West which would have ended Russia's economic isolation.

The world is rich enough

But now even Russia is over her long haul, and together with the rest of the developed world, possesses a sufficiently expanded industrial base to support the control of its production by the majority instead of the minority. Only social and political obstacles remain in the way.

So far as the rest of the world is concerned, the problem of development is infinitely more simple than the growth of all industrial societies hitherto, provided that the developed world is prepared to co-operate. Science is on the threshold of providing cheap, easy to distribute power: automation, when geared to full utilization, will enable capital industries to have a sufficiently productive capacity in the world to enable modern societies to live in the world. This will be insufocated without their people or ours having to go through the "heroin" of Livingstone to create the necessary capital.

Minority control of investment has political economic rules; it should not be got rid of, together with collective expression—"the Nation-State.

III

HOW WILL worker's control be organized?

To have any real meaning, worker's control must involve the whole of the workers in the activity of control; mere election of representatives to

is not easy to define the exact forms which consumer representation will take, for they will be far more varied, depending on the type of industry, the size of the worker. For example, consumer influence on the primary producing and secondary producing industries may take the form of representatives of the workers' representatives from the industries using the raw materials; from their control over the quality, quantity, etc., of the finished article will be best exercised through co-operatives. In some cases the consumer concerns their distributive functions could be separated from the production side and administered by a modified form of local government.

All these measures would involve considerable changes in the economy. Many functions now administered by one authority would have to be separated. On some bodies, the workers' freedom of action will have to be balanced by consumers' requirements. All consumer councils cannot work at once, but when this reorganization is complete, the National Council itself will have been negated for it is merely the instrument of exploitation.

WHAT WE ARE TOLD!

We are consistently being told that the colour bar is justified, for despite everything that has been done to destroy it, the negro is incapable of reason. He is also, it seems, clearly unable to produce either an atom of wealth. Two truths that unite, for we cannot have limbo.

1. That the colour bar is justified, for despite everything that has been done to destroy it, the negro is incapable of reason. He is also, it seems, clearly unable to produce either an atom of wealth.

2. That a civilization reaches its highest point when it welcomes none.

3. That the defence of nationhood and economic privilege justifies the use of arms.

4. That the South African Government is the only body accepting and acting upon the most universal definition of democracy (adapted to modern conditions, it is true), that it shall be the function of democracy to give the greatest happiness to the greatest European many.

The colour bar is, however, a symbol of decay.

6. That the meek shall inherit the earth. If this is the case, anyone holding this to be true should be forcibly psychoanalyzed.

7. That an atom of weakness unbecoming to virile communities and something that they must destroy if they want to continue to exist. In order to this end they have to be placed into a new aristocracy. The workers must always remain the right of immediate recall of their elected representatives.

In addition to the powers exercised by the workers, the consumer too must be enfranchised, for control of industry exclusively by the worker would be one-sided.

WILLY SEGAL
Tories Block Grants—continued

if we are to have all the reforms promised in the 1944 Education Act and, as well, at least one reform (the abolition of the Five 'O' Clock bell) act, regrettably, mentioned in the Act.

The Government’s plan is to lump together 15 percent grants (education is one) into a general grant. At present the amount of grant paid on all education, excluding transport and meals, is £270m; and of this, 87 percent is the percentage grant for education. If the Government's proposals pass into law—and with the assured steamroller majority it has in both Houses of the Lords and Commons, we can be certain that they will do so—there is no guarantee that local authorities will continue to give the full 87 percent for block (or general) grant to education. They may choose to spend less on education than libraries and more on child care or local health or the fire service.

Tory teachers turn

The Government’s Bill to replace percentage grants by a block grant is opposed by all organizations of teachers and education unions, with one exception—the Conservative Teachers’ Association. Bodies outside the educational field united in condemnation of the TUC for example. Everyone fears that the block grant is a step back down the line of falling expenditure and educational standards. In 1922 the Geddes Committee, and in 1931 the May Committee both committees whose object was to recommend to the Government fields of possible economies in public spending, suggested block grants as means of reducing expenditure; but their suggestions were not acted on. The present Government says that the block grant does not mean economizing; but it has been avoided. Everyone who has seen how big the block grant will be. Without any figures, the Local Government Bill is not even a pig in a poke for local authorities, it is a poke in which there may perhaps be a pig.

If the block grant to be distributed were in the same sum as it is distributed in percentage grants, it is possible to work out (according to a formula which the Government has prepared) what each local authority would get. In some cases, authorities would get more, in some cases less, and some would get more include backward areas, those who would get less include the more advanced areas. Alas! The Chairman of the Select Committee (Mr. H. C. Fears) Paper which preceded the Bill made it clear that behind the revision of the

basic of calculating Exchequer grants lies the intention to reduce the proportion of local expenditure paid for by the Exchequer. The authorities will have to be increased in order to relieve taxes.

Dr. Alexander is secretary of the Association of Education Authorities which shares with the National Union of Teachers the most non-political organization in the country. Speaking at a meeting of the Association, organized by the National Union of Teachers on December 2, last year, he summed up the fears of all educationalists about the Government proposals. According to the Times Educational Supplement (which, unlike the TES, has standing on the floor of the House of Commons from the start), he said: "The block would mean that the cost of the whole of what was now being done would be borne by the Government and the rates. The whole cost of any new proposals would fall on the rates alone.

In five years' time the education service would cost £700m, a year £150m, more than it did at present. If the block grant were introduced the amount to be found by the local authorities would be £700m or £400m. This would mean an increase of 7% in the £ in rates. What will local authorities do?"

The Workers’ Educational Association has vigorously condemned the proposals. The Education Act of 1944 either have to cut the education service and abandon development, or else put up with the inadequate expenditure and housing standards which are bound to happen, or have to be the end of education as a national service. (But then, the Tories have never taken education as a national service). With the wra’s frank and forthright condemnation of the retreat from equality of educational opportuni-

we are all, as Socialists, in complete agreement.

Fears as to the orderly development of educational policies are expressed by protests by teachers and education committees against the Bill. Sir Robert Hardie, of the National Union of Teachers, has said the Bill shows contempt for education.

7-point program

A seven-point program of opposition to the Bill has been issued by the Association of Education Committees. They are:

1. Block grants lead to reduced expenditure.
2. Since 87 percent of any future block grants would be paid by rates, expenditure on education, educational expenditure will inevitably be reduced.
3. The block grant will be a step down the line of falling expenditure and educational standards.
4. The block grant is a step back down the line of falling educational standards.
5. Block grants will tear up the Education Act of 1944; they are not allowed under the Act.
6. Education represents essential investment in the future. A country’s greatest capital assets is its children. Block grants threaten the future of the nation, an economy which would be a national disaster as far as education is concerned.
7. Workers’ control in all nationalised industries is an economy which would be a national disaster as far as education is concerned.

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 the nationalisation of industry must be brought to power on the basis of the following programme:

1. The complete nationalisation of the heavy industry, the banks, insurance industry, land, with compensation payments based on a means test. The nationalisation of the great industries will force nationalised industries to form an integral part of an overall economic plan and not to be used in the interests of private profit.
2. Workers’ control in all nationalised industries, i.e., a majority of workers’ representatives on all national and area boards, subject to frequent election, immediate recall and receiving the average skilled wage ruling in the industry.
3. The inclusion of workers’ representatives on the boards of all private firms employing more than 20 people. These representatives to have access to all documents.
4. The establishment of workers’ committees in all concerns to control hiring and working conditions.
5. The establishment of the principle of work or full maintenance.
6. The expansion of the social services by the payment of adequate wage to those linked to a worthless dead-end job.
7. The expansion of the housing programme by granting interest free loans to local authorities and the right to requisition privately held land.
8. Free State education up to 18. Abolition of fee paying schools. For all prospective workers’免费 maintenance grants—without a means test—for all university students.
9. Opposition to all forms of racial discrimination. Equal rights and protection for all races, without discrimination on the basis of the country of origin, freedom of migration for all workers to and from Britain.
10. Freedom from political and economic oppression for all colonies. Control of technical education grants by the people of the newly developed colonies.
11. The reunification of an independent Ireland.
12. The abolition of the withdrawal of all British troops from overseas. The abolition of all weapons of mass destruction.
13. A Socialist foreign policy independent both of Washington and Moscow.

MICHAEL MILLETT

MR. MARQUAND (Middlebrough East, Lab.) asked: "Was there were two strange coincidences. One was the increase in the retirement pension which was announced in the Budget. It is there in the next full year, should be exactly met by an increase of £16,000 in the home charge. The other was that the cost of war pensions, £16 million, was less, or in fact, met by the cost of the withdrawal of the benefit.

By such ingenious calculations as these the Government have got Tories to have given a pension increase that will save them money. The insurance, said by being paid for by contributions, is used to justify the termination of the cheap tobacco allowance. The whole of this allowance is therefore a profit to the National Insurance fund, for if anything is justified as a whole it is an increase in war pension.

Taking the reduction in National Assistance into account, the Government shows and has done quite out of its little bag of tricks. Indication of a previous financial emergency, that noted business man Mr. Sidney Stanley, once said that if he were made Prime Minister the Americans would soon be owing us money. By the same token, if a group of Americans that showed such ams as does the Government in this pension scheme went into one of the most speculative schemes—foreign dealers, say, or secondhand motor cars, where the quickness of the hand has to decide the eye, they could soon wipe out the National Debt.

Not, let us say, in passing, that this would be the end of it. But the end of it is oved to them anyway and they still raise taxe to pay the pensions. Let them on the other hand, why super-tax is such a grievous a illegal to the governing classes.

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Full employment by English standards probably would result in a wage rise to £5 a week, as it would mean about 15,000 out of work. The Labour Party made a big issue of it here, when the numbers rose from £1. 10s., up to 3s. 10d. a week.

MICHAEL MILLETT