ONCE AGAIN the Labour Party mountain has been in travail, and once again it has brought forth a mouse. But this mouse hardly even squeaks.

Plan for Progress, the latest in the series of policy pamphlets, deals with Labour’s economic policy. It is concerned with the most fundamental questions facing our society, it should give a thorough analysis of the contradictions in the capitalist system and explain the Socialist solution. But it does none of these things.

It seems that “capitalism” has become one of the words that is just not used in polite Labour Party circles. It does not appear anywhere in the pamphlet. The title of the first chapter counterposes Tory stagnation to Socialist expansion. The very first page contrasts the British economy today with that of most other West European countries. Presumably Adenauer’s Germany is to be taken as a model for so-called Socialist policies.

No hint of class

There is no hint that opposing class interests exist, even less that the struggle between them is inherent in capitalist society. “The Government must . . . consult with all the parties affected by its policies. Most people, if they understand what is needed in the public interest, will try to fit in . . . A partnership between the state and both sides of industry is essential to democratic planning.” (p.10). That neatly disposes of, by avoiding, any awkward questions about what happens if the two sides of industry cannot agree, if the workers demand a wage increase and the owners say they cannot afford it.

The keynote of the pamphlet is the need for expanding the economy, that is, the capitalist economy. The policy it advocates would be quite reasonable if it were possible to conceive of a capitalism freed from the contradictions between a social mode of production and individual appropriation, between potentially vast productive capacity, and the artificially restricted capacity of the masses to consume what is produced.

The pamphlet describes the techniques that might be employed to make such a capitalism work more efficiently and more humanely. To increase efficiency the rate of investment must rise, exports must expand in order to avoid a balance of payments crisis, there must be “restraint” on the part of the majority. (p.35). It sounds very like the Crippsian mixture as before. The high-sounding policy of fair shares for all apparently boils down to the fact that company directors and shareholders must not receive too scandalously high a rate of profit.

Making capitalism tick

To find a method of dealing with a slump (p.13) the pamphlet merely brought out again the Keynesian “solution” of increased public spending. Even judged on its own level that is considering only devices for making capitalism tick over, the pamphlet is unsatisfactory. For example, it is at pains to stress that planning does not mean a return to detailed controls, obviously because controls are thought to be unpopular and associated with food rations and other shortages. Planning is to be concerned “with the larger decisions” (p.9). Similarly “the main purpose of building licensing will be . . . the control of major projects.”

Planning and workers’ control

But how is planning to be confined to the larger decisions when to often a “large decision” is the sum total of a number of small decisions and when policy must be executed in a series of day-to-day operations? In conditions of workers’ control throughout industry the government at the centre might reasonably deal only with broad policy because there would be watchdogs in every factory to ensure that individual decisions conformed to the general policy. But PLAN FOR PROGRESS does not envisage any form of workers’ control. The workers are expected to play an entirely passive role.

Keynes vs. Keir Hardie

The Government, in consultation with the trade union bureaucracy, will intervene at certain points of the economy. For the rest Private Enterprise will carry on.

A review of the pamphlet in the New Statesman for July 19th suggests that the line it takes is designed to win votes at the next election by offering expansion rather than equality as the main slogan of the Party. In the words of the review, Keynes is preferred to Keir Hardie. Whether or not this will bring success at the polls is arguable. Many workers obstinately stick to old-fashioned aims such as equality. They have no interest in expansion of the economy if the main benefit is to the capitalist.

The old, old story

But the policy put forward in this pamphlet is not a new departure in the thinking of the Labour leaders. It is basically the same policy as they pursued when they were in office. Socialist analysis and socialist solutions are repudiated. Reform of capitalism is the slogan. Conference must reject this attempt to do the Tories’ job for them and demand that the NEC sets itself the task of showing not how to save capitalism but how to supersede it.

DOCKS

Lessons of the London Strikes p 4

BUILDING

London Strikes p 4

MID-EAST

Crisis Background p 7

To enable the editorial board to take their annual holiday, there will be no mid-August issue. Subscribers will sustain no monetary loss.—Editor.
The complete nationalisation of heavy industry, the banishment of capital and land with compensation payments based on a means test. Re-nationalisation 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 of all nationalised industries, i.e., a majority of workers' representatives on all national and area boards responsible to frequent election, immediate recall and receiving the average skilled wage they have earned.

The inclusion of workers' representatives on the boards of all private firms employing more than 20 people. These representatives to have free access to all documents.

The establishment of workers' committees with full power to address all concerns to control hiring, firing and working conditions.

The establishment of the right to work or full maintenance.

The extension of the social services by the payment of adequate pensions, linked to a realistic cost-of-living index, the abolition of all payments for school meals, for meals in hospital, services and the development of an industrial health service.

The expansion of the number of schemes for guaranteeing 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 the cultural, political and economic oppression to all colonies. The offer of technical and economic advice to the people of the underdeveloped countries.

The unification of an independent Ireland.

The abolition of conscription and the withdrawal of all British troops from overseas.

The abolition of nuclear weapons of mass destruction.

A Socialist foreign policy independent of both Washington and Moscow.

**LF COMMENTARY**

- **The Poll**

The Gallup has recently taken another reading of the pulse of our body politic and the result confirms the impression given by recent Labour losses in local by-elections resulting from the usual round of promotion to the aldermanic bench, namely that the lead we had over the Tories is now gone. Today, the two parties stand level, which, because of the disposition of Labour's strength into relatively fewer constituencies, means that the Tories would probably win.

I regard this as further proof that Bertie was not only bad from a Socialist point of view, but is not going to attract a majority. For a couple of years now, Gaitskell and his friends have been trying to remove all traces of "doctrinaire" Socialism from the Party's program.

The Red Flag may still be the banner of the Labour Party: Keynes has become something of a forgotten Capitalist, so far from being destroyed, is to be made even more powerful.

The Labour Party is trying to become a better capitalist than the capitalists. Today, it will have to win the confidence of the businessmen.

With astonishing naivety it appears to assume that will be easy. — Manchester Guardian, July 21st.

Nationalization has been abandoned in favour of share buying, we have agreed to carry on with the H-bomb, and the policy documents so far issued this year could almost have emanated from the Tory Central Office, and indeed, probably all in an amended form before the next election.

In addition to this, the Tories have, during this period, lost the confidence of the significant number of voters who were shocked by Suez, a greater number by the Rent Act, and millions by the wage freeze.

But still we don't make any progress and this failure to attract electoral support should be used now by the Left against Right-wing policies.

- **The Plough**

Throughout recent history the peasants stood head and shoulders above other groups in the community as a bulwark against social progress. Even the Russians, with all the co-operative machinery at their disposal have, to put it mildly, had their troubles with them. And while I am not going to suggest that the next Labour government should implement a policy of forced collectivisation, I do feel compelled to utter a word of disgust at the Party's surrender to the Farmers' Union in the policy statement, Prosper the Plough.

What is wrong with this document?

The chief fault is that it does not mention the nationalization of the land. Without this, thousands of drones will continue to live on unearned rent. Without this, there can be no Socialist policy for agriculture. To attempt to increase output, efficiency, output by other means simply will not work. Indeed, the chief result is to create a continuing sore of antagonisms which in turn divert people's minds from genuine infringements of freedom to parlour liberal concern for the right of business men to avoid tax and enjoy the bucolic life with only the waving beacon of Bevanism to lighten the darkness, we must recognize that all this activity is useful and worthwhile: and apart from VSF activities as such, its leaders did a first-class job at Altrincham and a second-class job in the Anti-Bomb campaign.

Problems and policies

But to be equally fair, we have to remember that the last six months have been politically the hottest since the war; in Europe, France saddled with a proto-Fascist government, Spain and Portugal fighting to overthrow their governments; with the real power of land ownership will ever be in any position to treat with the farmer on an equal basis. Without land ownership, it is not possible to get the best use out of our land, for both the Agricultural Act of 1947 and the Town and Country Planning Act only enable the state to supervise development on a permissive basis.

What we need are the means to plan partially at least, the whole of the agricultural industry including, of course, marketing. To do this we must be in a position to use land freely, having regard only to its suitability and not to its price. This the Party has not recognized in Prosper the Plough, and so the document is merely a repetition of past policies. The aim was to secure some redress of the problems created by the crash of 1930, in an amended form, but the aim was high production regardless of cost.

Mr Brown MP

George Brown is a unique fellow. Firstly, he believes that one should not take any notice of people who attend trade union branch, Ward and GMC meetings. George claims to be the representative of the people who do not attend meetings. No doubt he was thinking of these people when he abstained in the vote on Jordan.

Secondly, he has managed to betray the principle of collective responsibility without, so far as can be seen, suffering any disciplinary action.

Thirdly, he is remarkable for wanting to remain in the Labour Party at all."

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**VFS**

What next?

by Robin Fior

The OIL CRISIS MEETING at St. Pancras Town Hall on July 20th marked the first six months of the reorganized VFS victory for Peace and gave an occasion for a friendly assessment of what has been done and what remains to be done.

On the credit side, the membership has increased from 150 to 1,000; although constituency branches have not been formed, area groups are working, with varying success in provincial centres; week-end schools have been held in various parts of the country, to discuss Party policy, and three policy statements have been issued to try to smooth the retreat from socialism by the NEC.

When we remember that the left-wing of the Labour Party for so long had to work in a vacuous vacuum, with only the waving beacon of Bevanism to lighten the darkness, we must recognize that all this activity is useful and worthwhile; and apart from VFS activities as such, its leaders did a first-class job at Altrincham and a second-class job in the Anti-Bomb campaign.

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MIDDLE EAST
continued from back page

Palestine represented the regime of subjugation, exploitation, repression and black reaction. In the Middle East, whether Hitler and Mussolini with whom British-French imperialist struggle for the monopoly over the exploitation of the proletariat of the capitalist countries and the oppressed nations of the colonies” (Kol Ha’am, July, 1940). From now on the Communist Party is the representative of democracy and “we keep in our hearts his good personal features . . . the manifestation of his true socialist character as the leading organ of Arab Stalinists in Palestine, 3rd September, 1944)

It was the time to appeal for “national unity,” for moderation, and to suppress the class struggle. Khalid Bakdash, the General Secretary of the Syrian Communist Party, concluded that the line of the Bourgeois Party is really a very modest “demand”.

Again, after the war, the Communist Party of Palestine called for a bi-national (i.e. Arab-Jewish) solution to the conflict, but on the contrary, we want them to help them by demanding the construction of large-scale irrigation enterprises, the facilitation of the import of fertilizer and modern machinery. All we demand is that they exchange for this is pity on the fellah, and that he be taken out of his poverty and illiteracy and that he be able to spread the village! These are our economic, or if you can say so, social demands. They are demands for the peoples of the Arab world and their movement for the establishment of a Jewish state.

A man who steers a large vessel is not the same as a man who steers a small boat. Stalinist policy is inefficient and its results are not the same as those of our policy. The Senate of the United Nations spoke in favour of partition. So the Communist Party had to change course 180 degrees, and its policy on the national question became practically identical with that of the Zionist movement.

It supported the Israeli state against the Arab states in 1949. Then it set its face against the occupation of Gaza by the Israeli regime of the Negev, and complained that Premier Ben Gurion had given orders to continue the offensive in the direction of Suez.

Stalinist attitude to Nasser
Stalinist attitude to Nasser was no more honest or consistent. For instance, in November, 1953, the Egyptian Stalinists referred to a change in the regime of the Shah of Iran. Again in 1954 the Soviet expert on Egyptian affairs, LN Vatolina, characterized the Nasserist regime as “radically reactionary, anti-revolutionary, anti-democratic, demagogic,” etc. (Quoted in Laquer, ibid., p. 262). A volume published in May, 1955, attacked Nasser’s regime for “anti-Soviet measures,” as restricting the rights of the workers, defending the big feudal landlords against the peasants, nationalizing foreign enterprises, etc. (Kol Ha’am, Ramkazy Arabshikhe Pisateli, Moscow, 1955, p. 182). However, in July, 1955, Sheriyev attacked the Nasser in Cairo, and a month later an arms deal was transacted between Moscow and Cairo, amounting to between 300 and 350 million dollars! For this they now write one word of criticism was directed at Nasser!

As a matter of fact Nasser’s regime is no more than the Stalinists painted it before July 1955: as well as it has been painted since. Nasser is actually balancing between the two poles of Egyptian Society: on the one hand he controls all the land, over 200 acres per landlord, in return for compensation. The 14 per cent of landowners who owned half the land of Egypt now own a third. However, the land taken from the landlords is not enough to give plots of 2 acres to even a quarter of the landless villagers, and it has to cut land by 30-50 per cent. On the other hand, he severely suppressed any attempt on the part of the peasants to carry out the land refrom independently (by seizure of land, rent strikes, etc.). He adopted the same policy to ward the workers; on the other hand new labour laws were enacted which gave the workers certain rights they had not previously enjoyed (such as the right to organize agricultural workers’ trade unions national federations of trade unions, etc.); on the other hand he suppressed strikes with an iron fist, arresting and imprisoning people. (See “Whther Egyptian Bonapartism” by Babat, Socialist Review, May, 1954). On the one hand he made an anti-imperialist struggle, on the other he does his best to divert it largely into anti-Israeli channels. The miserable showing put up by the Egyptian army in the anti-Israeli campaign in 1956 shows clearly how little real enthusiasm Bonapartist military regime inspires among the masses of peasants and workers.

Compared with Farouk or Nuri Said, the puppets of British imperialism, Nasser represents material interests and progress. But his fight against imperialism should be supported by every socialist. However, such support has nothing in common with the stirring Poweramatism. The Arab people have no more hope of disinterested and honest help from the rulers of Moscow than the Hungarian workers had from those of Washington.

Socialist program
The British Labour movement should mobilize all its forces to help the Arab people to get rid of imperialist rule and aggression. The Labour movement should fight for:

The immediate withdrawal of British troops from Jordan and from the rest of the Middle East.

The transference of all foreign capital—all that of the oil concerns—into the hands of the workers.

An end to the threat of a spreading dirty war for oil profits.

In view of the facts of Stalinist policy in the Middle East and elsewhere, it is astonishing to see the role of the delegate of the United States Congress at the Summit Conference for What? July, 1958); “The role of the United States is right and a duty to defend the colonial peoples against any imperialism aggressor.” What Socialist workers, the United States have dared to say: “The United States or Great Britain has a right and a duty to defend the Hungarian people against Russian imperialism.” Do the butchers of Hungary have “a right and a duty” to defend the victims of Lebron and Jordan?

VFS ctd

for Summit Talks; by relying on the Arab people to take care of the US, by forgetting the US, by forgetting the US, by forgetting Arab state at Yalta, for example, the author ignores the existence of an international working class, that the H-Bomb is a deterrent aimed at both the H-bomb and that without it, the very existence of the international working class, that the H-Bomb is a deterrent aimed at both of the imperial powers imperialism would be the forerunner of world revolution. The second policy statement, Equality in Education was a fine, but the fact that In the Your Servant, has just appeared and I cannot comment.

Kindergarten or Konni
And these defects mentioned above were even reflected in the critical disagreement in the crisis meeting. The previous week, Universities and Left Review Club called a meeting at the same place in solidarity with democracy in Europe. And in spite of some phonies on the platform, solidarity with workers and students in the fight for socialism in Spain and Germany continues. From the pen of Comrades Juan Kinderan and Theo Pirkler to the audience, and meant something. Most of the people of this country are in the fight to the second. But Konni Ziliac reading his last year’s speech. It is a lesson. The unique delight of a lady in front of me, meant nothing.

Both meetings drew about

1,300 people, which is good. But if VFS is to serve any deep impact on the political life of Britain the membership must be mobilized on the level of political action. Why can’t that be done?

On the shop floor
Immediately after the Scarborough Conference a Members’ Meeting is scheduled; ordinarily, it was promised for before, but the Executive Committee is anxious to avoid hurting the feelings of the NEC. Resolutions are invited, nominations are invited. The 1963 meeting will be accepted. Organizationally the EC must be compelled to indicate whether it considers the shop-workers sufficient to have the membership to shop-workers. To make sure this is done, it might be worthwhile electing shop-stewards to the new EC. And not only must shop-workers be co-ordinated at Branch level, but must be initiated on the shop-floor. It can lead the fight against Blacklisting, by mobilizing the membership on an industrial basis, in the Unions, and on the shop-floor, to demand Blacklisting the shop-floor, to demand Blacklisting, etc.

And once VFS has to face foremen and managers in the shops (on the other side) instead of shop-stewards. We can test how seriously it is in its fight for socialism.

* How many battles has the international working class, including Ziliac in a letter to Tribune not so long ago.

De Murarka replies: Reader Clarence is putting the cart before the horse. At this stage of Arab history, national interest is more important, progress. It is anti-imperialist and anti-feudal in character, and, owing to the disintegration of the countries in question, can pave the way to a solution of Arab problems.

I would also like to point out that my piece on the Lebanon question was not an attempt to undermine the revolution in Iraq transformed the situation. Had it not occurred, there would have been no intervention. In any case, intervention does not alter the basic fact that the revolution is bound to succeed and spread. The Western imperialists are already looking for face-saving devices to hide their total failure to contain it, let alone defeat it.

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of the UN. It seems that some members on the Lebanon by contributor Dev Murarka in the Daily number 14 could easily mislead some of our younger readers.

His position is to refer to para. 4 where Murarka supports — unconditionally it seems — the — "pro- the terror — revolutionary force — in the Middle East. If he were to say that these existing nationalist forces are reactionary than the former counter- ruling cliques, he would be nearer the truth and would clearly show only the problems of the Arab world and to the misery of the fellahin as well.

However understandable Murarka’s singularly national approach may be, it could only open the way to more national strife as happened in India, Ceylon, etc. Don’t let us forget that the Socialist Blacklist, supported once Nasser’s men took over Syria.

At the present moment while we are campaigning against Western intervention on the side of the Princes, we must see the situation with clarity. Cllr. Bert Crane

London, NW10
MEAT AND DOCK STRIKES

In analysing the recent Dock Strike it is necessary to consider both the Meat Transport Drivers’ Strike and the stoppage in Smithfield Market. Although the two strikes are not directly comparable, a true perspective of the events can only be arrived at by any real conclusion.

The original cause of the Meat Transport Drivers’ Strike is now extremely well known, it arose consequent upon the failure of previous dock workers to work under the unrealistic terms and conditions imposed by the previous Labour Governments but allowed by the present Government. The Meat Transport Drivers were considered, in view of the extra work that might arise, that they should have been paid in accordance with their basic pay of 15 per cent.

The question reasonable was that 32 of the firms concerned agreed without demur, whilst the Blenkinsop’s meat packers drew their offer after domestic problems had prohibited them. The Meat Transport Drivers engaged in meat transport that had not accrued in this matter, and they were the Union Cartage Committee of the dockers and the Lorry Carriers, all very large concerns in themselves, with whom they could reach an agreement.

The men, through their Union, followed the course of action to reach agreement, but dilatoriness and procrastination engendered by the employers lasted over nine months, until the men, realising the necessity, drew their labour as from April 12th. The result of their action might have had a vastly different conclusion, but for the fact that the men did not stop work until April 19th and to call out only those men whose firms had not given the required 15 per cent compensation. The men were paid on April 2nd.

On April 19th, the dockers stepped down work with the result that the Union Cartage Company, operating in Smithfield Market, dismissed 600 of their porters. This was in the nature of a reprisal for they informed the men that because the drivers had stopped work there was nothing for the porters to do. It was in effect the withdrawal of labour because of this action on the part of the employer that the men decided to go on strike, for at this stage the dockers were able to carry their point of view to the men, but for their withdrawal of labour if these men were not reinstated, and, as everybody knows, they too stopped work as from May 12th.

Throughout this period, the drivers had been trying to get reinstatement and Union support and had asked the men in the cold stores to black Wednesday. This request had been refused on the grounds that their situation was not so bad. The drivers explained that the reasons they were operating their stoppage in that way was because they had no fuel, but the, their families were not getting along and that their houses were not being paid for, and they were not trying to stop all men in the cold stores but only those whom they believed had been able to withdraw labour because the meat transporters who had refused to pay the increase. Unfortunately their explanation was also rejected and they remained alone until the end when the dockers from Smithfield, which brought the remainder of the meat transport to a standstill.

The cold stores

With the market closed, the cold stores which normally operate mainly as a stockpile for the market, suddenly found themselves swamped by frozen goods. Frozen goods cannot be disposed of by delivering them to all those who housewife and they weren't trying to stop all men in the cold stores but only those whom they believed had been able to withdraw labour. These men in the cold stores who had refused to pay the increase, but some refused to pay the increase, and accepted without dissent, which meant, of course, that the men in all three sectors were out until their request was accepted by the employers or the dispute in Smithfield Market was resolved.

The Strike Committee thus constituted informed Mr. Riddocks that the men at that time could not remain at work all the time that their employers accepted all he asked.

At this meeting it was decided that the strike should be continued. In accordance with this decision the men went to the dockers at Smithfield Market and were told that because of the financial plight of the dockers, the men could be paid for nothing without hesitation immediately the position was explained.

Unfortunately, this whole-hearted action on the part of the men emphasised the complete indifference of the employers, for on the day follow

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MEAT AND DOCK STRIKES

In the recent dock strike in support of the Smithfield meat transport drivers over thirty years and a member of the Labour Party for thirty-six. He came to the docks via Covent Garden.

He is the first of a series of articles drawing the lessons of the recent strike by experienced dockers. Foreword by Fred Francis, editor of SR will feature the lessons as learned by the busmen and the Smithfield Market men—Editor.

Fred Francis, the author of this article, knows what he's talking about. He acted as Press and Public Relations Officer for the Tooley Street Strike Committee, the heart of the recent dock strike in support of the Smithfield meat transport drivers over thirty years and a member of the Labour Party for thirty-six. He came to the docks via Covent Garden.

The workers, the dockers from Smithfield Market and the men in the cold stores who had refused to pay the increase, and accepted without dissent, which meant, of course, that the men in all three sectors were out until their request was accepted by the employers or the dispute in Smithfield Market was resolved.

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MEAT AND DOCK STRIKES

In the recent dock strike in support of the Smithfield meat transport drivers over thirty years and a member of the Labour Party for thirty-six. He came to the docks via Covent Garden.

The workers, the dockers from Smithfield Market and the men in the cold stores who had refused to pay the increase, and accepted without dissent, which meant, of course, that the men in all three sectors were out until their request was accepted by the employers or the dispute in Smithfield Market was resolved.

The Strike Committee thus constituted informed Mr. Riddocks that the men at that time could remain at work with the employers accepted all he asked.

At this meeting it was decided that the strike should be continued. In accordance with this decision the men went to the dockers at Smithfield Market and were told that because of the financial plight of the dockers, the men could be paid for nothing without hesitation immediately the position was explained.

Unfortunately, this whole-hearted action on the part of the men emphasised the complete indifference of the employers, for on the day follow

NY Daily Journal is an independent content provider specialising in news and analysis on the subjects of global politics, culture, and social issues. Our mission is to provide readers with accurate, on-the-ground reporting that illuminates complex issues and offers new perspectives on current events.
the LESSONS
by Fred Francis

wharves in dispute and had enjoyed a medium of camaraderie with the police, but with the introduction of the "Scabs" recruited from City offices, this camaraderie was destroyed, and arrests were made. So bitter, in fact, did relations become that the Trades Union Congress was asked in Parliament by Bob Mellish, MP for Nottingham, to look into the matter.

National newspapers who visited the area were given conducted tours of the "trouble spots" to see exactly what was going on in relation to picketing. They were allowed to speak to any man they chose in compliance with the Strike Committee's desire that the truth be known, but unfortunately only two newspapers presented the facts to the public through the medium of their news columns, to attack the strikers despite the evidence produced. The stoppage at its height

In spite of the disorders Press reports and the union's desire for a "cooling off" of the dispute, officials, who, in Tooley Street, were allowed to use the Strike Committee's platform to speak to the men every morning, before the Strike Committee, the strikers themselves remained firm in their resolve and rejected resolution after resolution. The Strikers of the United Tramways Management Division had, for the first time, to refer the men to the official by the man on May 22nd, was the infamous amendment in relation to the bus strike to be rejected in other ports throughout the country. In Tooley Street, it was presented in Tooley Street. Obviously the aim of uninformed majority in favour of informing the men in Tooley Street that it was the port's decision. Fortunately the sight of the men elsewhere had prevented such a fait accompli.

True, sporadic successes were recorded these pernicious resolutions and some men went back to work, especially in the Royal Group, but the adamant resolve of the men in Tooley Street to keep up the fight would not be broken. The final move was to withdraw the "black labour" as a ruse to ensure that the last days of the Port Group did not at least be interpreted as recognition. No longer was there any need to employ untrained men of 800 men. Despite all their efforts, they guaranteed that they would completely withold it upon those very conditions.

Again, this move was successful in part and did ensure the return of the 800 men. Some Royal Group, but the Royal Group, was carrying on a strike or day or so, with a consequence which could only suggest Government backing of the Royal Group. The remainder were brought in and the Port came to a standstill.

The resolution was then taken to the men at Tilbury in consequence of a request for information, and on June 4th the men there withdrew their labour. It is true that various conditions were next outlined to the men before they resumed work for the following hours.

on the site

bences for the taking of meals, (ii) facilities for those working on the docks, (iii) the employment of scabs by operators, (iv) the number of operators, (v) machinery, which is insufficient, (vi) reasonably to warrant such facilities, arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (vii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (viii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (ix) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (x) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xi) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xiii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xiv) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xv) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xvi) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xvii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xviii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xix) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xx) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxi) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxiii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxiv) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxv) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxvi) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxvii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxviii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxix) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxx) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxxi) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxxii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxxiii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxxiv) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxxv) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxxvi) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxxvii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxxviii) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xxxix) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens, (xl) arrangements for the making of all approved canteens.

Bank Supervisors Issue.

The conditions on the site

bank

The main road you look like a tram."

Toilet: The WBA said that "sanitary conveniences" should be provided on the basis of not less than one for every 25 persons employed.

Which Working Rule Agreements?

On the site there are six toilets, enough for 300 men only. Toilets are also specified to be "made of the most reasonable material." Perhaps it should be noted that Robert McAlpine were to use one of the toilets he might alter his views on what constitutes reasonable material.

Drying Sheds: It is not quite true from the WBA: . . . . there shall be provision for depositing clothing not worn during work, with such arrangements as may be reasonably practicable for the convenience of the men.

The drying sheds on the South Bank are quite a farce, just converted air raid shelters with roofs that let in the water, and are so small that rats from the Thames find it comfortable enough to make a home for themselves there.

Lack of space precludes the inclusion of our usual TU Commentary, Readers are requested to wait patiently for the next issue. —Ed.
LESSONS OF THE STRIKES

continued

stores to function normally, but there were certain complications both with the drivers and the Smithfield Market men for the employers suggested that the hours of work would be continued until the Wednesday morning.

For this reason, some of the problems were over-
come and a full return was made, with Mr Tapp, the Chairman of the Joint Industrial Council for London Metro and Else, more emphatic in his statement that there must be no viciniza-
tions that the men are working together agreed.

In the light of this most emphatic statement by Mr Tapp, he would not, at the same time, accede his further statement that there would be some redundancy and its corresponding settlement which was pro-
duced at the meeting the following day. The for-
mula, accepted by the union, read:

Subject to the recognition of the rights of the employer to adjust at any time the number of men he employs it is agreed that joint men will be held as quickly as practic-
able to deal with resulting redundancies, if

Again, despite his avowed desire that there should be no forced redundancies on any side, this same Mr Tapp also declared that the men had, by virtue of taking part in an unofficial strike, in fact lost all their rights to holidays both for 1958 and 1959. Now this, to me, irrespective of the legal position, as far as Mr Tapp, is victimization of the most vindictive nature and suggests that it is possibly wise to take place too much reliance upon the statements of employers.

When one turns to the Committee of Investi-
gation, set up to inquire into the CAUSE of the meat drivers' strike, it is surprising to discover that the chairmanship was Professor Jack, who in his 1932 Presidential Address to the British Asso-
ciation claimed that the trouble with the British economy was too full-employment. This was the man empowered to investigate an industrial dis-
pute. There can be no question that it was this bias on his part which allowed Mr H F Minter, speak-up for the employers, to castigate both Mr Jeff Parquet and Mr Erik Recknitz for creating an atmosphere of mistrust and many of the claims of the strike after it had become a fact. How it is possible to speak of a strike once it has begun with the actual cause of the strike itself is beyond me. It is one thing to be a normal person, but to misunderstand on this point comes with erudition, unless, of course, one is singularly biased.

Credit and discredit

With the facts before us, what is to be learned from an event like this? What is the lesson for the future that can be useful to the country? Let us start with the trade unions, the traditional bastion of the working man. The question of how to prevent strike action is of utmost importance to society today.

Firstly, the solidarity of the meat drivers them-
sew, who, after nine weeks without money, still had the courage and determination to continue their struggle despite the thought and possibility of being fired. This is a reminder that their struggle was not in vain and that the appreciation of their fight in the belief that they would receive a fair settlement.

Secondly, the Joint Industrial Council's role and the management's decision to call for a meeting to discuss the dispute, an instance of the admirable early action which union officials and employers took to resolve the situation.

Southbank

number. The situation at present is that on Friday evenings, when the Stewards meet, all work on the site stops at five o'clock, in con-
sideration of all those who have worked since then. The Stewards do not lose time (and the money that goes with it).

Fares under the Workings Rule Agreements, any worker who lives more than four miles from the site is entitled to a payment of 5s per mile. There are quite a large number of miles to be covered. In terms of this radius, McAlpine's avoids paying this rather cleverly. When it comes to paying out money or improving working standards as specified in the Working Rule Agreements for the Building Industry, McAlpine makes advantageous use of the Working Rule Agreements for the Civil Engineering Ind-
ustry, which are different on many issues, including the payment of fares. In the Civil Engineering Industry, there is no provision for the payment of fares.

A new offensive

The question that naturally arises from this is: what is the difference between building and civil engineering? There are some conflicting views on this. Some workers on the site were of the opinion that there is no difference at all, while others say that any construction below first-floor level comes under civil engineering, and above the first floor is considered building. Whichever point of view one accepts there is no excuse for Mc-

Alpines to use both WRAs. This point is not without some significance. Sir Robert Mc-
Alpine happens to be the Chairman of the Master Builders' Federation, which as many building workers believe, is the body that is supposed to launch a new offensive on the working stand-
ards of the builders. The rule books play an important part in this.

If this is so then the initiative that has already been won through the Steel Fixers and Benders' strike must not be lost. The union officials and Stewards have done a fine job in getting the site fully organized. Many men on the site thought, however, that the Unions are not pushing their case with enough strength or vigour. This must not be allowed to happen. If the Unions took

Safety on the sites

The problem of safety is becoming a very serious one on big building sites and promises to become more so with the multi-million pound building projects already under way in London. How serious it is can be seen from the fact that on one site alone—
the Belvedere Park Station site where three workers have already been killed and six more are in hospital, three of whom are seriously injured.

A stand must be made before the situation deteriorates even further. As a first step, every support should be given to the Drakes and Gorhams —
Burroughs Welcome Site, Beckenham, which has been in dispute with main contractor Wallace's since July 21st. The problem—safety. Already factory inspectors have had to be called in on three separate occasions. Latterly, after an injury at work, Wallace's repudiated the agreement on the site agent to keep two maintenance electricity on the spot. The agent subsequently refused to reopen negotiations with Bro. Bal. the full time official.

Pending official recognition, the strikers need support. Send material and other aid to Treasurer Bob King, 5 Hamlet Road, Upper Norwood, London, SE19.

FOOTNOTE: As we go to press, work on the London Southbank site, has come to a standstill. This has been caused by the tragic death of a worker—the third fatality (who and knows how many near-fatalities?) since work began. The day shift have sworn not to return to work until a trustworthy full-time safety officer is en-
rolled by McAlpine, the contractors.

enough trouble over dealing with their mem-
ers' grievances as they do over getting members then there wouldn't be quite so much clash between militant trade unionists in the move-
ment.

The victory on the South Bank has been won in part. The next step is to show the bosses (and the unions?) that any reduction in working standards will not be tolerated.

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Tony Cliff presents the background to the MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

THE MOTIVE for imperialist aggression in the Arab countries is the search for and defense of oil profits. To get a clear picture of the situation in the Middle East, therefore, it is important first to see the extent of the oil interests.

The world’s oil industry is controlled by eight big companies, five American, one British, one Anglo-Dutch, and one French. The percentage controlled by the eight companies of each section of the industry outside the United States and the Communist bloc is as follows:

- Ownership of reserves: 92%
- Production: 88%
- Refining: 79%
- Cracking: 85%
- Tanker fleets: 66%
- Pipelines: 98%


“The interests of the eight companies have been closely woven together by joint ownership of subsidiaries, which are the actual operating companies in the production, transportation, refining and marketing of oil. Typical of such joint bodies is Aramco, owned in the Middle East by the American Oil Company and the Iraq Petroleum Company, owned by five of them. On the marketing side there are joint companies such as Coltex (Standard of California and the Texas Company) which has 35 subsidiaries including Regent Oil in the UK.

“It is clear that such a joint ownership implies considerable co-operation between the companies on such vital matters as levels of production, policies towards governments, etc.” (Ibid., pp. 4-5.)

The picking of the pickers

At present the US has a decisive position in oil production in the Middle East, as may be seen from the following figures: US interest in 1955 oil output in the Middle East—91.6 million tons, or 58.1 per cent of the total. Of these eight companies, two American, one American-Dutch, and one French, produced 91.6 million tons, or 35.3 per cent; France—10.4 million tons, or 6.6 per cent. In 1944 the US share was only 16 per cent, while that of Britain was 79 per cent, and of France, 5 per cent.

The profits derived from a ton of oil extracted are considerably higher than those derived from oil extracted elsewhere. By arrangement between the eight big companies, the price is determined by the price of Texas oil, even though the Middle East has superseded the US as the major oil exporter.

The price of Middle East oil, therefore, bears no relation whatsoever to its cost of production. Middle East costs are considerably smaller than those in the United States for a variety of reasons, notably the far greater productivity of the wells and the much lower labour cost. In fact, by the example, the average output per well in the US was 31 barrels a day. In Venezuela it was 20, and in the Middle East 5-00—so that Kuwaiti wells even reaching 9,000 a day.” (Ibid., p. 9.)

The result is extremely high profits. “Standard of New Jersey and its 51 affiliates and subsidiaries throughout the world made a net profit in 1956 of $808 million ($288 million). It not only paid a dividend of just over $2 on every $7 share, but also issued a new share for every one already held. Shell, the Anglo-Dutch giant, made a net profit of £179 million and declared a dividend of 18½ per cent. Standard Oil of California with $267 million ($96 million) and Socony-Mobil with $207 million ($74 million) were not far behind. They declared dividends of 26 per cent and 17 per cent respectively.

“As the Chairman’s reports of Jersey and California both point out, the oil business is the most profitable in the whole free world.” (Ibid., p. 9.)

The impact of Imperialism

Even in the Arab countries which do not produce oil, the key positions of the economy are in the hands of foreign capitalists. For instance, in Egypt foreign capital just prior to the second world war amounted to 47 per cent of the total capital of the country, including land, and, excluding land, to somewhere between 53 and 83 per cent. (A. Bonné, The Economic Development of the Middle East, Jerusalem, 1945, p. 73.)

Seeing that imperialist capital desires to monopolize the markets of the Arab East for its manufactured goods, and the raw materials produced there for its industries, it strives to hinder industrial development there and especially the rise of a machine industry which would make for economic independence. Seeing that the profits of imperialist capital are dependent on the low wages paid to the Arab workers and the low prices paid for the products bought from the peasantry, the imperialist is interested in keeping the countryside in the most backward conditions, so that it will be an inexhaustible reserve of cheap labour power and cheap raw materials. Imperialism is further interested in this for socio-political reasons: firstly because only backward, illiterate and sick masses dispersed in tiny villages far away from one another can be ruled easily, and secondly because the Imperialist fifth column in the colonial countries, its most faithful agents, are the feudal landlords. Thus imperialism is intricately involved in the agrarian question.

Three-quarters of the Arab population lives in the country, subjugated to a tiny handful of big landowners. In Egypt prior to land reform 0.5 per cent of the landowners had 37.1 per cent of all the land, while 70.7 per cent had only 12.4 per cent of the land. Three hundred and thirty one men had three times more land than 1½ million poor peasants and there were more than a million land cultivators who had no land of their own.

Thus a few thousand landowners received twice the sum of the average peasants received. On an average, a poor peasant before the war did not earn more than £7-£8 a year. During the war his nominal income rose, per cent bettered his living more, and his real income therefore decreased. The income of the agricultural worker was even lower. The daily wage of a male worker before the war was 3 piastres (about 1d.); of a female 2; and of a child 1-1½, and they were reduced, in addition, to extended periods of unemployment every year as the work season lasts 6-8 months. Even a foreman did not receive more than £2 a month, a clerk £3, and a cart driver £1 to £1 4s. Since the war, although wages have risen, they have barely caught up with prices.

With such low incomes the position is obviously terrible. As a matter of fact it is comparable only with that of the Indians. It has been calculated that approximately two-thirds of the average Egyptian, which is, of course, much higher than that of the poor peasant worker, is only 46 per cent of the optimum in wheat, 25 per cent in sugar, 23 per cent in meat and fish, and 8 per cent in milk products. Furthermore, the nutritional position is not improving, but steadily deteriorating.

Health, Poverty, Ignorance

The hard economic conditions of the masses impair the health of the Egyptian: he causes a very high death rate—26-4 per 1,000 in 1938 as against 24.3 per 1,000 in India and 11.6 in Egypt. Mortality rate at birth is 133, and 163 died in the first year in Egypt, as against 167 in India and 52 in England.

The expectation of life is very low: males 31 years and females 36. In the United Kingdom the expectation of life is 68 years for a male and 73 for a female, who live to be adults are very weak. Among those conscripted from the villages in 1941, only 14 per cent were medically fit for army service. Ninety per cent of Egypt’s population suffers from trachoma, 50 per cent from worm disease, 75 per cent from bilharzia, 90 per cent from ankylostomiasis.

Poverty is inevitably accompanied by ignorance, which in Egypt reaches fearful dimensions. Slightly over a half the population can be gained from the very succinct remark of the paper el-Musawar when discussing the results of the census (November 1942): “We have 30,000 holders of diplomas as against 14 millions who know neither how to read or to write.

Ignorance is the product of the existing social system, and also one of its pillars. Indeed, the ruling class knows very well that the illiterate is one of the greatest assets of the regime. Thus a certain Egyptian senator thanked God that his country look ‘first place in ignorance.’” (Al-Ahram, July 7th, 1944.)

[turn to next page]
MID-EAST—ctd

Riches, pleasure and hilarity of some tens of thousands of Egyptians and foreigners on the one hand, and hunger, disease and ignorance of the millions on the other—this is the picture of Egypt!

Is it any wonder that after 70 years of British rule in Egypt hatred of Imperialism is so deep and strong!

The last few years have seen a rising national liberatory movement starting to engulf the citadels of Western Imperialism in the Middle East. In 1951, Mousadegh, Premier of Iran, decided to nationalize the oil industry, until then British controlled. The British Labour Government replied with the dispatch of warships to the Persian Gulf.

Shock to Imperialist System

However, notwithstanding this sabre-rattling and in face of the refusal of the United States to back British military action in Iran, Abadan had to be evacuated in October, 1951. But British oil interests did not give up, and, by using the weapon of economic boycott, supported by all the big oil companies in the world, they managed to bring the Iranian oil industry to a standstill. Eventually in August, 1953, the Mousadegh government was overthrown and a government more amenable to Western Imperialism—the military dictatorship of General Zahedi—was established. In the resulting settlement, however, British interests were able to obtain only a 40 per cent share in the new concessionary company (they had previously held 100 per cent).

A bigger shock to Western Imperialism was the overthrow, in 1952, of the corrupt puppet King Farouk of Egypt.

The strategic importance of Egypt to Imperialism was emphasized by the British

Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Field Marshal Slim, in his conversations with the Egyptian Premier, Nahas Pasha, in the summer of 1950: “Anyone who wants to hold the Middle East must hold Egypt. . . . Egypt is the key to the Middle East.” (Quoted in R. Palme Dutt, The Crisis of Britain and the British Empire, London, 1957, pp. 237-8).

Two years later Britain was compelled to withdraw her troops from the Canal Zone.

Retreating from one position of the front, British Imperialism tried to strengthen its foothold in another. In 1955, in opposition to nationalist Egypt, the imperialist-sponsored military pact linking Britain, Britain, Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan—the Baghdad Pact—was established.

At the end of 1955 a military mission headed by General Templer to draw Jordan into the Baghdad Pact aroused a storm of popular indignation. As a result, not only did Jordan not join the Pact, but in addition the British Commander of the Jordanian Army, General Glubb, was thrown out, and in November 1956, the Anglo-Jordan treaty was denounced by a new Government.

WHERE EAST MEETS WEST

The British-French-Israeli war of aggression against Egypt—the Suez adventure—which ended in the United Nations forced the Western Imperialist foothold in the Middle East even more. To retrieve the position, in January, 1957, the “Eisenhower Doctrine” was announced. And now, in pursuance of this policy, US troops are in Lebanon and British troops have invaded Jordan.

However, all these are only holding operations: imperialism is doomed to defeat.

When Kirchschel’s hands were covered with the Hungarian workers’ blood he had to wash them in the Suez Canal. The reactionary nature of his role in the Middle East and that of his predecessor, Stalin, can be made no clearer by following the unprincipled, dishonest twists and turns of the Kremlin agents in the area—the Stalinst Party.

We shall have to limit ourselves to a few examples.

The Stalinst Corkscrew

After the Hitler-Stalin Pact, a leaflet of October, 1939, of the Central Committee of the Palestine Communist Party said: “The Hitler against whom Chamberlain fights is not the same Hitler who was led by him against the Soviet Union. This Hitler who cannot make a campaign against the Soviet Union, but must obey (now on its left—the TC) the instructions of Moscow is today no more the gendarme of Chamberlain and Daladier. Apparently he was the gendarme of world peace.

When Russia was at war with Germany, the line of the Communist Parties in the Middle East changed completely. Whereas till now the whole East was the foe of imperialism and "the masses of Indians and Arabs were on the eve of open revolts against imperialist rule" (Kol Ha‘am, Hebrew organ of the Palestine Communist Party, June, 1940), now a decisive change occurred in the situation: “The government must understand that it has an important region of friends in the Middle East” (Kol Ha‘am, December, 1942). Till now, the “British Government in

Socialist Review published this leaflet at the height of the recent crisis

MID-EAST!

Once again the Middle East is the centre of world conflict.
Once again war is being waged to protect oil profits.
Once again lives are being sacrificed in order to maintain imperialist control.
Reactionary puppet kings, hated by the people, are being shored up by British and American troops.

No foreign intervention has the power to hold back the rising tide of the Arab peoples.
For generations they have been slaves to the strategic and economic interests of the West. For generations they have lived in squatter and ignorance, ground by ceaseless toil. Now they are determined to control their own future free from the stranghold of British and American oil profiteers.

This war is not being fought to protect the interests of the British people. Only the interests of capitalism are at stake. The Arab and the British peoples have common enemies. Only our common efforts can end this war.

It is up to the British Labour Movement to use its political and industrial power to put an end to this aggression against the Arab peoples.

We cannot leave it to the governments to decide our fate. The murderers of the Hungarian people and the butchers of Cyprus and Kenya cannot, must not, be allowed to use us as pawns in the international diplomatic game.

In this we cannot rely on Summit Talks. In 1955 the Geneva Conference took place. The heads of state conferred and reached an “agreement in principle.” What happened? The search for ever more deadly weapons continued unabated; the struggle for influence in the Middle East did not stop for one second; the ‘Geneva spirit’ evaporated during the butchery in Egypt and Hungary. And the cold war continued with unreduced ferocity.

What is needed is not a conference of the warmongers, but international, socialist activity in defence of peace against war and its instigators.

As long as foreign capital controls Middle Eastern oil the danger of war will be with us. The Arab people’s right to their wealth cannot be questioned. As we supported Egypt’s nationalisation of the Suez Canal, so must every socialist support the Arab people’s seizure of foreign oil companies’ assets.

From every factory, from every Labour Party ward and Youth Section we must demand:
1—STOP THIS DIRTY WAR FOR PROFITS.
2—WITHDRAW ALL TROOPS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING CYPRUS.
3—END THE EXPLOITATION OF THE ARAB WORKERS BY THE OIL-BARONS.

[turn to page 3]