Letter to Readers

A year ago we became a fortnightly. At one go we doubled our monthly circulation, doubled the number of our correspondents, doubled our income and also, alas, doubled our deficit. We have had a reasonably successful year. Socialist Review has been able to interpret the sharpening industrial struggle, the deepening colonial crisis and the incident movement for peace clearly and dispassionately. We have shown that the Labour Movement has the resources and strength to kick out the Tories, destroy their capitalist system, and end the abominable threat of nuclear warfare. We have shown that it can accomplish these momentous tasks only if it rid itself of the mental and material shackles imposed on it by the right-wing and Stalinist leaders in the movement.

That we are not alone in these views can be seen on the docks and building sites, in the factories and garages where SR is increasingly being sold. But it hasn't been success all the way. Twice this year we have had to skip an issue when sales promised to show a seasonal fall. Each issue has been an exhilarating search for funds.

We know that you are proud of this paper; send your pride in pennies. SR is a fighting organ; send us some material ammunitions.

Your fraternally,

Editor.

PS.—A number of regulars have not cleared up their 1958 debts yet. Let’s have it, Comrades.

AT LAST we have it—Labour’s new policy, the fruit of the last few years of “re-thinking”, nicely served up to the waiting electorate in the May new pamphlet—The Future Labour Offers You. The Shoreditch electorate, incidentally, found it so inspiring. Two days after its well-published appearance 75 per cent of voters in this working-class constituency did not bother to go along to the polls in the bye-election.

Most of the attention in the pamphlet has centred on the appearance of the pamphlet—the shifty covers, the lavish illustrations, the jargon, the centrist indexes, etc. Technically, the presentation is excellent, and a welcome change from the drabby looks and unconvincing pros and cons of some of its predecessors.

But the policy will not sell on these merits. The contents of the parcel count for more than the wrapping.

The party has launched its “Into Action” campaign on the basis of the pamphlet, with the aim of recruiting more members, improving the organization and generally getting into trim for the coming General Election. So the pamphlet deserves close study and analysis.

It is, of course, a summary of points from the various policy statements the party has been appearing such as Learning to Live, Prosper the Flough, etc., most of which have been discussed in the Socialist Review. But the publication of the new pamphlet provides an opportunity of looking at the policy as a whole. Some of the main proposals—and lack of proposals—are examined below.

Housing: Retreat?

THE FIRST section of the pamphlet deals with housing. Labour is pledged to restore the essentials of the Rent Restriction Acts—fine. The Party’s declared purpose is to ensure that everyone has a decent home with reasonable security of tenure—fine again. But there is an ominous vagueness about method. There is no mention of greater municipalization, unlicated or restricted property and modernization. It what about Tory Councils (and possibly some Labour ones) that will not choose to use their powers or proceed only at a snail’s pace?

Councils are to be helped to speed up their program of new house building by a reduction in interest rates on loans. But there is no definiteness promised as to how many houses will be built. More significant is the omission of any reference to the problems of a capitalist society which underlie the housing question. As the land remains in private hands, the cost of housing will be inflated by the cost of buying or renting land. As long as changing supplies industry is not nationalized the cost of providing houses and other real estate will be controlled by the local authorities. Until government and local authorities are given a definite responsibility for providing homes for all at low rents the problem will only be tinkered with, not solved.

Expanding whose economy?

THE pamphlet promises a restoration of full employment through industrial expansion. Certainly unemployment cannot be tolerated, but how can industrial expansion be guaranteed when the major part of the economy is to be left in private ownership and exposed to all the hazards of capitalist boom and slump? In the section of the pamphlet on public ownership the only industries where an extension of nationalization is promised are steel and road haulage. In other words, there is not going to be even the pretense of coordinated planning of the economy—let alone any attempt to put the planning in the control of workers. The pamphlet does not at any point pose the question of whether socialism should be replaced by socialism, and if so, how. The underlying assumption throughout is that it does not need to be explicitly stated, that is the existing economic order is to remain, with a few minor touch-ups.

Under this heading—“Your Job”, the party leaders offer rather better conditions for the workers. But why tolerate wage slavery at all? Are we back in the nineteenth century when the slogan “A Fair Day’s Pay for a Fair Day’s Work” seemed adequate? Almost this very phrase is used in the pamphlet when it is stated that the trade unions know that “they will not have to struggle against a Labour government to get a fair deal for their members.” What on earth is a “fair deal” for the workers other than the full fruits of their toil, and what then becomes of capitalism and the capitalist?

4-Page Industrial features & forum, letters etc.

BY REFUSING to pledge itself to abolish the public schools as a separate category and absorb them into the national system of education, the Labour leaders believe in the continuance of the class structure in education. The emphasis on new building to abolish slum-like schools and on increasing the number of teachers in order to cut the size of classes are, of course, good reforms. But Labour’s vote-catchers they have lost some of their pull since the government proposed to abolish the fees for secondary education and made much the same kind of promises. (turn to back page)

Yet, when all is said, this is at least not a socialist program—although the word is nowhere in the present edition. It is true that this sixpenny-coloured pamphlet winds up by reproaching the Tories for the “good old days” style, for believing that “the economic future of fifty million people packed on a small island can—and should—be shaped decisively by free-choice for all—socialist and private profits as the prize.” But so apparently, and fortunately, does Labour, now that it has in its stricken expansion instead of equality on its banner. Certainly the Labour Britain suggested by most of the new programme sounds vastly more acquiescent and less confiscatory than anything that the old socialists have ever acknowledged before.

Economist, November 29, 1958
TU COMMENTARY

1 The Right to Work

TEN YEARS AGO, on December the 10th, 1948, the United Nations issued their Declaration of Human Rights. This document was drafted by representatives of the nations throughout the world, for did they not argue that all human beings, irrespective of their accent, their complexion, their language, religion or political opinion, were indeed one, with an equality of dignity, respect and consideration? And so it was agreed by all that none should suffer slavery, torture or attacks upon their health. None should have his property and neither should one have to endure the penalty of unfair terms.

In addition to the rights which must follow, concomitant upon such a Declaration, such as those of freedom of trade, of public security, they also insisted that every human being possessed the right to work.

What is a simple statement is the last? The right to work? And how easy it seemed to say this in 1948, and when the world was in Great Britain with the boom of full employment in full swing. Here was an unrivalled, fully mandated Labour Government, endeavouring, albeit with some trepidation, to achieve a measure of social security and an uninterrupted continuation of this blessing of full employment. It wasn't as yet a "Workers' Paradise", but the door was opening, somewhat slowly it is true, but nevertheless it was opening.

Come forward to 1952, with a change of Government, a change of full employment. Sir William, in his presidential address to the British Association, seems to have forgotten the Declaration, for in his speech, mention of our economy is too full employment, a statement that could hardly be further from the "right of every human being to work", and yet, this same Professor Sir William, the present Conservative Government when deciding the Chairman of an Independent Dispute Inquiry, How, in the light of his own statement, can such a man be impartial? His very words in 1952 expressed his bias, and his direction, revealing itself to the full in his conduct of the Smithfield Inquiry just a few months ago.

Journey forward still further, to the 3rd of December this year: to a luncheon in London addressed by Sir William Garrett, president of the Royal Employers' Confederation, and hear the text of Sir William's address. The latest official estimate of unemployment in Britain was 514,000, but the fact is that of this number, there are only 70,000 adult skilled workers. Sir William's argument is that more than three-quarters of the persons unemployed in Britain are unskilled, and therefore deserve no consideration, for, "The Confederation feel that this opinion is wrong, and according with the present situation that the Government should not return the acute shortage of skilled labour which has so long bedevilled our efforts to increase efficiency. I think the facts show that these are not the times for drastic measures."

Peter Berkeley reviews current issues

In other words, Sir William argues that the Government should not take any positive action to reduce the present unemployment figures, because by so doing, they might create a shortage of skilled labour and in any case, unskilled labour's matter. So much for Sir William Garrett's interpretation of the Declaration of Human Rights, exactly one week before its tenth anniversary.

Employers' contempt

In the light of these incidents, and they are by no means isolated, is it any wonder that relations between employer and employee are deteriorating rapidly and that in the absence of any action from the Unions concerned, the more trade union conscious workers are combining to form vigilant groups designed solely to lead the workers in what might well become a rear-guard action in defence of their working conditions? One thing is more than certain certainly unless the workers realise the full intent of the employers and react accordingly, they will soon find the employers taking rigid steps and carry over all their so-called rights despite the pitifully ill-service accorded the Declaration during its appearance ten years ago.

2 Bans: NASD & Panlighbon

INCONGRUOUS, IRRATIONAL, ILLOGICAL

What adjective can correctly describe the present state of our Trade Unions? Fully armed with the knowledge that they were shortly to introduce a ban on Panlighbon shipping, discussions about which had been going on for weeks extended by Bro. Tom Yates and Bro. Don Jones, these completely inconsistent officials decide to ban from membership the Panlighbon National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers Union for something that happened over four years ago.

Is it to be wondered at, if, when the ban was introduced, a period of four days, the members of the NASD & DU felt themselves unenumerated and continued working? Unlike their colleagues abroad who had to bow to their country's law and work throughout the time concerned, the men of the NASD & DU were completely untrammelled. The ban for them was no longer members of the body that imposed it.

How foolish can you get? Just to add to the inconsistencies of this very peculiar episode, the world's first tanked "Universe Apollo" of 69,000 tons, was launched in Japan on the 6th of December last. Built for Panlighbon, an American company, it will fly a Panlighbon flag.

Annexes

Additionally, it has been revealed of late that no person in Greece is allowed to earn more than £22 every second through their business. Mr. Onassis, a Greek. Could this be just another inconsistency?

3 Nationalization or Socialization?

The control of the nationalized industries, despite the original intention, is far from Socialist in its effect, with the Government using them as the break on the national economy. Price of their products are purposely kept low, despite the higher cost of materials essential for their use are being wiped out by continuous compensation and the wages of the workers in the industries are kept pegged at the western price level. Now, if this wasn't enough, many of the Coal Board's pits are to be shut down in the latest "economy" drive.

If the plan at present in vogue is as suggested by Sir Gerald Elranger early in the New Year whole villages in Wales will be abandoned, men going on in ones and twos to have to move to other areas, despite the ties which bind them to their homes. Unemployment 10 per cent increase in employment once more the depressed areas of the years before the war when unemployment no interest was not but allowed to stagnate and rot.

In view of this, workers everywhere must make the fullest possible support to the miners' massed campaign which is being planned for South Wales and the Forest of Dean areas. Scotland, too, with the highest unemployment in the whole of Britain, is also engaged in a full-scale test. Strike action is not contemplated at the present but most certainly cannot be ruled out. It is possible that we may see unprecedented activity on the part of the current miners, with them leaning over backward in their endeavours to resolve this dispute the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers Union for something that happened over four years ago.

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“Unions' best friend”

Mr C S Garland, President of the National Union of Manufacturers, said in London yesterday that shop stewards were "an execrable on the trade unions."

Speaking at the annual meeting of the union, he said: "The shop steward's role that has developed is thoroughly bad. It is one of the greatest menaces to employers, which have to patch up their mutual grievings as manufacture new ones.

I don't know that these men, very largely Communist inspired, regard themselves as something above the immediate at the trade unions their responsibility for what goes on in the factory, excepting their members work."

Shop stewards would destroy the unions if the evil was not controlled and its growth checked, said Mr Garland. They did not want a body of shop stewards creating grievances as manufacture new ones.

"I don’t know that these men, very largely Communist inspired, regard themselves as something above the immediate at the trade unions their responsibility for what goes on in the factory, excepting their members work."

The Times, November 11, 1958

Everything appertaining to the standards of officials, with the exception of the Archangel Mathews, is recorded as mischievous and disruptive, but, with one exception, the management gets off scoo-free. Bro. Sid Mainland is a Committee member and has been re-elected beyond dispute, despite the old Declaration and its stand for the "right of every human being to work." Every action that he took was wrong in the eyes of the Court. Mikardo too, while on the whole had been mischievous and all this in the face of the facts that a resolution was tendered within the bounds of the strike, which, had it been accepted, could have settled the question.

No mention is made of the real cause of the stoppage, the unwarranted pressure. They had agreed the request for a wage increase although the Court is sufficiently gracious to concede the "right of every human being to work." No mention is made of the real cause of the stoppage, the unwarranted pressure. They had agreed the request for a wage increase although the Court is sufficiently gracious to concede the "right of every human being to work." No mention is made of the real cause of the stoppage, the unwarranted pressure. They had agreed the request for a wage increase although the Court is sufficiently gracious to concede the "right of every human being to work." No mention is made of the real cause of the stoppage, the unwarranted pressure. They had agreed the request for a wage increase although the Court is sufficiently gracious to concede the "right of every human being to work." No mention is made of the real cause of the stoppage, the unwarranted pressure. They had agreed the request for a wage increase although the Court is sufficiently gracious to concede the "right of every human being to work." No mention is made of the real cause of the stoppage, the unwarranted pressure. They had agreed the request for a wage increase although the Court is sufficiently gracious to concede the "right of every human being to work." No mention is made of the real cause of the stoppage, the unwarranted pressure. They had agreed the request for a wage increase although the Court is sufficiently gracious to concede the "right of every human being to work." No mention is made of the real cause of the stoppage, the unwarranted pressure. They had agreed the request for a wage increase although the Court is sufficiently gracious to concede the "right of every human being to work." No mention is made of the real cause of the stoppage, the unwarranted pressure. They had agreed the request for a wage increase although the Court is sufficiently gracious to concede the "right of every human being to work." No mention is made of the real cause of the stoppage, the unwarranted pressure. They had agreed the request for a wage increase although the Court is sufficiently gracious to concede the "right of every human being to work." No mention is made of the real cause of the stoppage, the unwarranted pressure. They had agreed the request for a wage increase although the Court is sufficiently gracious to concede the "right of every human being to work." No mention is made of the real cause of the stoppage, the unwarranted pressure. They had agreed the request for a wage increase although the Court is sufficiently gracious to concede the "right of every human being to work." No mention is made of the real cause of the stoppage, the unwarranted pressure. They had agreed the request for a wage increase although the Court is sufficiently gracious to concede the "right of every human being to work."
ETU what's wrong asks Brother Nero, London

IS THERE NO alternative leadership to the present Communist Party, the General Trades Union except the Catholic Action, Freemasons and other such invisible groups? The CP would have us believe there is none. But the bosses are more clear sighted. Their healthy respect for the Communist Party’s membership to struggle, forces them to realise that a real Socialist leadership is likely and dangerous. Such a leadership would, for the benefit of the main important elements at present corrupted by the Communist Party, and examples of corruption and perverted loyalty are numerous. Here is a recent one. A recent CP-dominated ETU Rules Re-review Conference produced a rule that puts even conservative reaction to shame. It dealt with unemployed miners’ benefits. Benefits, originally paid on a day-to-day basis from the start of miners’ unemployment, had been frozen. The miners’ benefit had to be paid on a weekly basis with the member qualifying after a full week as a waiting period. The ETU, and the Communist Party claims that it seeks to abolish the national three-day waiting period. What hubris! The ETU won the case in the first instance, they have to serve afresh with every period of unemployment. Therefore, if a member is unemployed six times in one year, it means that he has six weeks without any benefits; if he is unem- ployed for one week, he is classified, so that after serving three weeks less one day, you draw one week’s benefit.

Ignoring the members

The title of this article is: What’s wrong? As a member of many years’ standing, and also an ex-Catholic Action, I feel qualified to answer. The main fault is the complete failure to introduce honest policies or reasonable leadership. In the immediate post-war period, while they were shadowing with the employers, the ETU leadership looked reasonably impressive. Later, under double pressure, they capitulated, and today it is only by introducing all the established tricks of right wing leaders can they continue to control the union. It is not my intention to delve deeply into the motives of the Communist Party and its relationship to trade unionism and the CP policy, but I want to make the fact that all CP policies are subservient to the requirements of the Soviets Union.

Current events in the ETU are by no means accidental; if, as I shall prove later, seemingly in- comprehensible events in the authority in the Union, it is for very competent reasons. The Communist Party’s tight control, could have called upon the service of the most militant and capable of the union membership. Looking back, we can say that for obvious reasons the CP

The ETU leadership has given workers a one-hour coating. On the committees their stewards are joined by others from sections which have long-term workers who get the same rate and who serve to ensure the continuity of official policies. These committees endorse policies (usually on wages) after they have been settled and serve as the Official’s excuse for not meeting the members.

Branches & Ballots

Recently the power of the branch members’ vote has been considerably reduced. The distributing of members has been handed over to sub-committees of area committees. Branch members have been abused their duties to dealing with the opposition to the CP. The Leslie Cannon is a classic example. He was absent when the committee put him on trial, fined £5 and suspended him for five years on a minor breach of conduct. Compare this with the fact that "blacklegs" before the com-

READERS might want to know why Porticus, our collective docks correspondent, is not with us this issue, and, indeed, why he won’t be with us in the future. For Porticus is sick—sick at least for the future. Porticus himself has given an outline of his reasons. His column has traced the sharpening tone of the bosses, their growing self-confidence. He has shown that unemployment in this particular industry, and that in the case of the highly successful Upper Pool Distress Fund—they have themselves to undertake the organization of these services. He has shown that their future solidaristic strike this summer has left them somewhat weakened for the battle. The guard lowered. Finally, he has pointed to the growing of the right-wing union, officialism, their witch-hunting growing as an outcome of the desire to be on the safe side body, to be a socialist paper or anything else. They saw the Fleet Street hue and cry after the supposed "trot- skyists" during the strike, they saw the fantastic plot pasting before the Newsletter Conference... no, none of that for them.

Socialist Review regrets the demise of Porticus. Although we understand the reason for it, we believe that this decision should never have been taken. The witch-hunters cannot be allowed. Any sign of militancy will call them to the hunt again.

Finally, Socialist Review remains faithful to its original purpose to serve the movement. If at any time Porticus wishes to return, we shall welcome him. But, for the time being, may be fight truly in the workers’ cause and our very best wishes with him.—Editor.

The ETU has received greatly publicity. Of course the Woodrow Wyatts are not opposed to this—after all, they provided they are done by the right people: these people are ferocious supporters of the "Black Circular"—a very democratic measure—that takes a member’s contributions and deny him the Constitution of his Union! But the ETU’s reply’s to the charges of bribery are worse than pathetic. Woodrow Wyatt, who has a branch figures of over 100 per cent votes cast... The ETU replied quoted a meeting on which abused the ballot in the same manner, and it cut Wood- row Wyatt’s figures for support and branches to the Union! The fact that the average poll in the Union is really 8-10 per cent is kept out of the picture completely.

In fact, both sides fiddled the ballot in the Fraser and Cannon which was the indirect cause of Cannon’s expulsion; but Cannon’s fiddle was discredited. And the ballot in the Fraser has been discredited by the checking of its oversight.

The necessary fiddle

However the fiddle is necessary to get the type of candidate desired by the CP returned. On these matters we are not agreed. The fellows launch this campaign. The bosses’ uncertainty as to what type of leader would replace the present ones prevents them from making a concerted attack on the CP leadership. The ability of the members of the ETU know from experience that character of the Press, and I would venture to suggest that these attacks have strengthened and not weakened the leadership position.

Sectarianism

A factor that has hindered the development of a socialist alterna- tive within the union has been the miserable conduct of the ultra-left members of the union, their sectarianism, their single- issue tactics (a man’s blood group, his every action, must be just right to secure his membership) and their abuse of the ballot as the only serious weapon, of that strike. By their irresponsible conduct they have undermined honesty and allowed the union scope to break strikes.

... and the future

I do, despite many of the things said, hold out hope for the future of the ETU. The membership, as I have said, is a force to be reckoned with. Wages are rising, and the unions are broadening up. The CP must be encouraged to accept criticism as the life-blood of progress and encouraged to give workers a free hand in their struggles for higher wages and living standards.

"Nero" is a well-known member of the ETU in London.
Homes for the future and Direct Labour schemes

HAVE we all forgotten Labour's policy statement, Homes for the Future? How many Labour Party members have read it? How many Labour Councillors on Labour-controlled Local Authorities have read it? If Comrades in our Movement have read it, what are they doing now to make this policy a reality and to overcome the many difficulties it presents? These thoughts have been worrying me greatly. Indeed, they have become an obsession since I read that Harold Wilson has become a "Timber man".

Fire five years to learn

Homes for the Future says that we will need a building force of two million—three-quarters of a million more than we have now. It also says that wherever possible, Local Authorities will introduce Direct Labour schemes which would, of course, do away with the private contractor.

Getting three-quarter of a million extra building workers is easier said than done. It takes five years' apprenticeship to become a carpenter, bricklayer, plumber or plasterer—far longer than it takes to become a teacher or a lawyer. Even the much ridiculed navvy or builder's labourer has to have a wide knowledge and experience of excavation, concrete and masonry—and all of which cannot be learned overnight.

Wanted: policy for recruitment

Now, in the policy statement which deals with education, Learning to Live, the study group understood that we cannot have education without skilled teachers. They therefore dealt very constructively with the recruitment and training of teachers. What has been done in Homes for the Future? The Tories' juggling with Bank Rate and their whole monetary policy has meant that fewer parents are now inclined to send their kids into our industry. You cannot blame them. We find that fewer building employers are even now bothering to take on apprentices.

In the last period of scarcity, after the last war, we had— as an emergency measure—six months training courses, after which one became a bricklayer, etc., etc., I feel that an attempt to try this again would completely prostitute the craft status in our industry and open the door to Jerry-building. Also, with new techniques coming in, we cannot allow any weakening in our bargaining for our share of the wealth created with the help of these new devices. There will have to be immediate and forthright discussion between the Labour Party Executive and every NFTBO on this question of recruitment. I would like you, Reader, to send your views on it.

Direct labour the answer

Direct Labour schemes can help to solve these problems now. Experience in Edmonton, Hammersmith, Jarrow, Glasgow and other places where these schemes have been introduced over the years have shown that opposition had to be overcome from many quarters. There was the "esprit de corps" of the craftsmen. The local authority has had to take a very firm hold on the opposition and meet it head on.

In this connection, I am amazed at the London County Council which has probably the largest building program in the world. If this Labour-controlled Council were to cut itself off from the private contractors, it would be the first major step towards nationalizing the industry. It could provide an apprenticeship scheme and working conditions which would attract the cream of the nation into the industry. It would, of course, save the London ratepayer millions. But above all, HOMES FOR THE FUTURE would be transformed into a concrete and realistic plan overnight.

Why, why, why do our Labour LCC Councillors keep fawning and groveling to the private sector?

Signs—but no life

It is quite true that they have a miserable, puny Direct Labour Section of around 800 men, and that along places like the Wandsworth Road we see sites with huge signs—"LCC Direct Labour". Get on to one of these sites and you will find most of the work being done by private contractors. When asked why the reinforced concrete in floors, staircases, etc., could not be done by Direct Labour, the answer was: "cannot get the plant". Yet the firm that was subcontracting was hiring the plant and still making a fat profit.

Last year, when the London Labour Party sent out a questionnaire to Metropolitan Borough Labour Groups on Direct Labour, only nineteen responded. We found that eight Labour-controlled Councils operated schemes and that eight Labour-controlled Councils did not. We did not, given the fantastic excuse that they could not get plant or craftsmen. About the nineteen, NFTBO Secretary, Sir Richard Copcock, was writing about unemployment in our industry.

A policy from the ground

Comrades in Labour Parties who know nothing about building but believe in decent housing, I ask you to get discussions going in your Parties on Direct Labour. Request speakers from the building unions if there are no delegates from building branches to speak to you on the subject. Report to the building branches any failure to attend on the part of their delegates.

Do these things, or else we shall see building workers springing up overnight like mushrooms and sabotaging our plan for homes, schools and hospitals. We already have 92,000 of these contracting parasites eating up the ratepayers' money. Let us have no more.

Unionists must fight discrimination

Declares Joe Southall, NUR

IT IS NOW a little distance away from the race riots in Nottingham and Notting Hill, but race hatred still exists and animosity between white and coloured workers shoulders all the time, waiting to be fanned into a blaze. The British Union of Fascists' organization—white supremacy which has always based itself on racial antagonism, is busy with its "keep Britains for the English" propaganda. Many well-meaning workers—members of trade unions—falsely believing that they are acting to preserve workers' standards and conditions, have fallen victims and are themselves guilty of chauvinism and making the fascist slogan: "K.B.W."

Patriotism or Socialism?

No amount of resolutions passed by the TUC or Labour Party can remove the feeling of racial superiority which the white worker feels he has over the coloured immigrant. It is of no avail to tell the white worker that the West Indies comes from poverty in search of food, clothing and shelter in greater measure than he can ever hope to get it. It is no use; people look to the land of his birth. It is no use either telling him that the immigrant comes for the same reasons, which force the majority of Irishmen to leave their homeland; or the same reasons that the many thousands left their neighbourhoods in the depressed areas before the war for better chances to live.

And it is no wonder because the British worker has been "educated" to believe that he is superior as a Briton and most of the messages he receives from his Labour leaders are absolutely denigrating of the British race. It has been taught that our "balance of payments" is endangered by the contributions from the supposed "socialist" intelligentsia in the Labour Party. The unions can be enabled to put this in the proper perspective of international appreciation of the problems of mankind. Labour's Colonial policy is couched in the terms of the white man handing out doles to his inferiors.

Officially the TUC and the Unions have no policy of racial discrimination. Legally, Britain does not uphold forms of distinction; but they exist. The NUR, for example, has now enrolled West Indians working on London Transport for the most part, but there is a deep animosity towards them by the other rail workers.

Socialism or Barbarism

And this is how it runs: the railwaymen freely say that before coloured workers were being recruited, the London Transport was secretly short of labour and would have been forced to concede substantial improvements in wages and conditions if not for the immigrants. The basic wage rates of railwaymen are not low, and it is not to be noticed, there is no feeling of reliance on their own organized strength plus solidarity with their coloured comrades, but a hope that full employment will create a labour scarcity condition to

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sackings in Willesden
but workers fight on

IN THE criminal scramble for Africa towards the end of last century, the Cameroonians fell to German Imperialism. After the First World War Germany ceded control over them to Britain and the French. It is famous that the country reached the age of 14, you can see that it is impossible for these Cameroonians to be "bought on the cheap" any more (France Catholique, February 26, 1954).

Conditions have changed much since the above paragraph was written. The appalling health and sanitation conditions are a direct consequence of poverty and negligence by the rules. There is one doctor for every 25,000 inhabitants, one bed for every 366 persons. Even these limited facilities are more for the Whites than for the Africans. After forty years of Trusteeship, barely 6 per cent of the population is literate. The people have no redress for their grievances. As for the "famous" Western justice, M. Aujoult in his book, Le Cameroun de l'Afrique, main says: "in the Cameroons there is a white law and a black law, in other words one type of justice for the whites and another for the blacks."

These conditions are not unique to the colonial territories. Also, because the examples taken here are mostly from the French Cameroons, we must not presume that conditions in the British Cameroons are better in any significant way.

Like the rest of Africa, the Cameroons are also beginning to wake up. Already, brutal repression has to be observed as a case in the French Cameroons, their average income is 1665 francs (Refers D'Airique, June, 1955, p. 2).

We have mentioned import-export monopolies. Their stranglehold can be judged from the following.

The case of the Cameroons

The COLONIAL

The case of the Cameroons

We are happy to reprint a statement issued by the Shop Stewards Committee of Associated Automation, Willesden. Readers will be kept informed of the course of conflict which has its roots in reorganization following the absorption of a relatively small firm into a large, monopolistic grouping.—Editor.

IN 1956 the Halls Telephone facsimile division of the Elliott group was taken over by a holding company ELLIOTT AUTOMATION, which now controls the capital and policy of all the firms in the Elliott empire.

In 1956 an impression of great expansion was created. Old methods of production were changed: there was a new emphasis on production divisions; the machinery was shuffled like a gigantic pack of cards; the staff were changed and new jobs were created.

Then in 1957 small redundancies started. At first very small—twice and threes across on the grounds of cutting unnecessary overheads. But since Christmas last year, the lists have grown; over a hundred hourly-paid workers have been sacked, and on the main divisions, manufacturing vending machines, now employs a mere handful of workers.

Naturally the workpeople look at developments in other Elliott factories; and the fact that the Bristol Instrument factory in Weymouth, acquired by Elliott's three years ago, now completely empty, with a "For Sale" sign swinging outside the gate, causes many people to think twice when they see similar trends developing in the Willesden factory.

Many inspired articles have appeared in the technical and financial Press. They pay credit to the research and new ideas for which Elliott's are partly responsible. Andrew Shonflied, writing in the "Observer" of November 30th, was so carried away by these articles that he referred to Mr. Leon Bagrit (one of the leading persons in Elliott's "visionary whose nearest point of focus is round about the year 2000").

This visionary and his eight co-directors are doing very well out of it all. They collected between them in 1950 a tremendous profit of £46,665 in directors' fees. So the directors, who don't produce anything, pocket £6,000 a month and the workers, who produce everything, get the sack. Did somebody say something about "fair shares"? And some of these directors have their fingers in many pies; and they get a cut out of all the companies as Mr. R. E. F. de Trafford, for example, who is the Chairman of Elliott Automation, is also the Chairman of Phillip Hill, Higgginson & Co., Adias Assurance, and Syrene Co-Polymer, not to mention being a director of William Deacon's Bank, Lewis Berger & Sons, Langley Alloys, Electronic Trust, etc. No doubt about it, the sacked workers can queue up at the Labour Exchange after Christmas when in the knowledge that the directors are not likely to suffer.

Christmas spirit

The Shop Stewards in the Willesden factory have now been asked to agree to some 50 skilled workers being sent from the Instrument division. Curiously enough the sackings are proposed shortly after the announcement that Elliott's have finalised negotiations with Consolidated Electronic, Pasadena, California, for the production in Britain of a wide range of analytical and control instruments of a new type; and when other factories in the group are working excessive overtime, and are miles behind hand with their delivery dates.

Confident that work can be found without any difficulty to keep this excellently-equipped instrument shop in full production, the Shop Stewards have refused to accept the sackings of workers. Nevertheless the Management is proceeding with the sackings, and this issue will be sacked now but paid up until Christmas . . . how the spirit of Christmas lives on, eh? A mass meeting of the factory has endorsed the decision to reject the sackings, and the Union Committee concerned have been asked to convene a Conference to press the matter further for the right to keep their jobs.

with Socialism!

give them favourable bargaining terms.

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give them favourable bargaining terms.

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give them favourable bargaining terms.
Peter Sedgwick, Liverpool answers Emmett in his analysis 'The Pretenders'

NO LEFT-WINGER doubts that the leadership of the Labour movement is in bourgeois hands. Some Socialists, though, seem to think that having said this very loudly, in greater or less detail, with the further proviso that their own brand of socialism, which has been around longer, there is little else to talk about. For such comrades, faulty leadership is the missing sign in the equation, all other things being equal; there is no error. Once again, the part assigned to the working class is one of mute, intuitive approval. In the series of meetings of the ULR Club (though not in most of the ULR magazine) the working class is discussed as the object of colonial or anti-colonial, or as the recipient of social welfare; never as the subject and the agent of social change.

If only Trotsky...

The Pretenders who have excited most recent attention by their narrowly defined unionism are undoubtedly those from the Newsletter brand of Trotskyism. The Thoroe to which these comrades lay claim is that occupied by orthodox Communist; hence the somewhat weird self-description of "Bolsheviks" which is not an easy article to use. An after article is produced in Labour Review and the Newsletter, replete with minute facts and dates, the effect that the Communist Party has for some time been getting the wrong orders from Moscow. If only Trotsky had been running the Krenzlin, one gathers, they would have had the right orders. Strange to say, the whole system of giving and obeying orders from a centralised international office is never challenged. Similarly the satellite organizations of the CP's Rightist periods are roundly lambasted. Yet the CP "for generations" aimed at the working class, such as the Minority Movement, are not only not criticized, but even taken as a model of action. (Of anybody doubt that the Minority Movement was such a "front", let him ask himself why its existence could be "switched off" so easily in 1929).

For the Newsletter, the claim of Trotsky to the Marxist mantle must be kept in view. Soviet degeneracy must not have begun when Trotsky was under attack, not when he shared the power. The butchery of the Kronstadt rebels, the expulsion of the Workers' Opposition, the dragooning of the Soviets and unions, the betrayal of the anarchist army, the destruction of the Party State, all of which took place in Trotsky's hey-day, are passed over in silence. All criticism with the CP takes place within the assumptions of Leninist centralism. "The proletariat can take power only through its vanguard... The Soviets are only the vanguard of the class. A revolutionary content can be given to this form only by the party." (Trotsky, Stalinism and Bolshevism, 1937). The ice-pick that smashed through the Old Man's skull in 1940 was possibly also something of a boomerang.

If only we...

The Newsletter Marxists are Pretenders in a double sense. Not only do they pretend to the title of the old Trotskyite leadership, but also have to pretend, to themselves as much anybody, that the possibility of attaining this title is genuine. The workers' struggles are always being told, are waiting for a revolutionary lead. All that is needed is somebody to tell the workers to act. The working man prefers the TV set to the TU meeting, not because of full employment, not because of 'high prosperity', not because he likes being with his wife and kids, but because the Labour and CP leaders have betrayed their deep militant aspirations. The masses really are with the Trotsky Black The Bases!" the cry goes up from the Bolshevist vanguard; to be parroted enthusiastically by Socialist Reviewers, guiltily by ULR types. The result is just about nothing.

Once again, the workers of Notting Hill are quite obviously dead against the race-riots, and are just waiting for Peter Fryer to tell them how to save the Mosleys (Moyley's belly, of course) off the streets. The Bolshevik vanguard is not slow to oblige: "Form patrols of trade unionists! Check your MP out!" "End the racist attack!".. But it is that the youthful proletariat seems to have got the slogans mixed up; instead of blacking the bastards off and bombing the blacks in Notting Hill.

Hysterical materialism...

Recent industrial activities of the Newsletter group have been analysed by Robert Emmett in Socialist Review a couple of issues back. Some of his allegations misrepresent the Newsletter's case. His implication that the November "Rank- and File Conference" was called to set up a separate union is simply untrue. While the claims of the Conference's sponsors smack of the Hysterical Materialism noted above ("... opened a new chapter have substantial achievement in British working-class history"), it was obviously tremendously useful as a gathering of militant union leaders. The Charter of Demands is an excellent program indeed. This remains true, however much work is done in support of the running of the Conference: the attempted exclusion of Socialist Review, the enmity of the unions towards the platform, the cagey refusal to give the number of organizations represented by delegates, without in fact giving the number of the figure of "300 present" is very vague.

Some responsibility...

Where Emmett is right is in his careful statement that the Newsletter must accept some responsibility for the alienation of bureaucrats and the altogether vicious employers, for the South Bank fiasco. It is quite clear that the Newsletter's other union executives would have let down their workers in any case, even if the Newsletter had not been so present to the union disputes. We cannot tell. But the presence of the Newsletter in force as an outside Pretending body is an unnecessarily provocative attitude of these union executives. In the absence of any union executives, was bound to draw fire from the bureaucrats concerned, and to line up for a very powerful attack by the union officials. Having said that, it still remains that the AUBT official witch-hunt against the Newsletter's case against other militants is disgusting and must be combated by every Socialist. I am sure that Robert Emmett would agree; to compare his criticisms with the smears of Fleet Street, as the Newsletter does, is ridiculous. Pretenders are notorious for the game of identifying their particular interest with the cause of righteousness.

The danger of 'Pretending'

All the tendencies which have been criticised above have in common one important point: their attitude towards their political commitments to the credit in their movement. All of them contain in their numbers many Socialists and Communists who have gained whose experience and principle any of us must feel humble. Any political formation, like all other political animals, is by itself, one "role", one nature, but many, varying- from situation to situation, some good and some bad. "Pretending" is not just a label. Pretending is only part of the collective personality of these formations. In some circum- stances, however, this failing may emerge as a particularly corrosive influence, for other reasons as well as these.
P. Miansell, North London, replies to Geoff West: Work in the Labour Party

The article in the last issue by Comrade West arguing for the immediate establishment of a Socialist Party outside the Labour Party raises very important questions of tactics which should be debated by all sections of the Labour movement.

The C.P. still exists and the CP does need to put itself to the test of political life. How much smaller would have been the impact of a new party starting to-day, certainly without the handicaps but also without the advantages of CP’s tradition. Instead of arguing “the CP exists, therefore a Marxist has the chance of developing a CP”, it would be more profitable to consider whether, even in its palimest days, the CP was ever more than a small sect with totally inadequate leadership and relationships with the mass organizations.

The Revolutionary Communist Party

Comrade West raises the question of whether the Revolutionary Communist Party can justify itself as an independent organization between 1943 and 1948. In my opinion, it was not justified. It is of course always easy to be wise after the event. In 1943 it no doubt seemed that the prospects for an independent party were good. With the Labour and Communist Parties both committed to support of the war, it seemed that a party in open opposition to the war would attract wide support. With the experience of the First War in mind, a revolutionary wave towards the end of the war might have been expected. For various reasons this development did not take place in Britain. The radicalization in 1943 found expression, not in hostility to the Labour Party, but very strikingly in support of it, and even the experience of Labour in power between 1945 and 1948 led to no mass swing away from the Labour Party. It rather—temporarily at least—strengthened reformist illusions. It is little wonder that the RCP failed to appeal to more than a tiny handful.

Far too easy...

It is fatally easy for small Marxist groups to keep on seeing and hailing new and false revolutionary Darwinian. The times they do so is a measure of their weakness and isolation from the mass movement. It is hard to face the fact that building a revolutionary party may mean a long period of political disintegration. Short cuts are impossible, to be realistic is not to be defeatist. What must, at all costs, be avoided, is isolation from the mass of the working class and the development of their political consciousness.

Policy

What Future for the New Town?

The provisions of the Bill dealing with New Towns now before Parliament are in line with the post-war Tories have been saying for some time.

Instead of allowing the appropriate local authority to take over and develop properties when development is in effect completed, it provides for these to be vested in a National Agency to be called the Commission for the New Towns.

This represents a change in the attitude which the Conservative Party adopted when the original New Towns Bill was passed in 1946. At that time, Messrs. Boyd Carpenter, Reid (now Lord Reid), and Molson in the Commons, and Molony in the Lords, expressed support for the idea of local authority control which the Labour Government proposed. This support has now disappeared.

The reason for this change of opinion is not difficult to divine. The fact that New Town Councils are likely to be under Labour control for a long time to come has raised many fears among local industries who, of course, the Conservatives draw what little support they have.

Protect our money!

Mr H. L. M. Wilson, for example, a Harlow Conservative leader and local industrialist, was reported by the local Press as saying that “only a national agency which was directly supervised by the Treasury in what it did with the money drawn from industrial properties would be a real success and that the firms who were putting vast sums into new town factories.” (Harlow Citizen, August 9, 1957).

The root cause of the failure of the Bill as the MP for Harlow saw it was in the New Town rates, part of which industry would pay, could be used to subsidise rents and amenities in the New Town, etc.

The few of the advocates of the Bill have said this in so many words. The Times speaks of “problems which are inseparable from monopoly” and Mr. Benvis, who introduced the Bill in the Commons, argued that it was unwise to mix State management with politics. Basically, however, the objection is to the threat to profits. Labour controlled authorities would be much less likely to safeguard these than a so-called neutral national agency.

Asks Stan Newens, Harlow

From the point of view of the residents of the New Towns, the transfer of Development Commission in two years’ time the Commission will be a heavy blow. For it will mean, if it is carried out, that the possibility of development control, the social resources of the interests of the whole population will have been lost.

Vague

If, as Mr. Benvis suggested in his summing up, the Commission is permitted to sell provisions even the commission, the local authority, it will be very difficult to reverse this, once put into effect. For if site values are taken into account, the private buyer will presumably be able to ask a much enhanced price for his property in the event of re-purchase by the authority.

Labour’s policy on this subject is woefully vague. The 1946 Act, while it provided for the eventual transfer of the New Towns to New Town Councils in principle was much too vague about the manner and time of takeover.

...but a clear statement

Furthermore, at the present time Labour has failed to make it sufficiently clear what will happen if, as is to be expected, the new Bill becomes law. A clear and unequivocal statement that Labour will completely meet the development needs and provide for local authority ownership immediately upon taking office is required. This must be fully publicized.

and a new dynamic policy

The Labour Party must also develop a real policy, a coherent programme, for New Towns in general. The creation of these new centres was one of the real achievements of the Attlee Government, and as Hugh Delilton stated in the debate it is high time the Labour Party declared “We shall build more New Towns.”

It is not enough merely to oppose; positive action is required. For Labour Parties in the New Towns, there is a job to be done. A real policy must be formulated and no effort spared to see that this is accepted and promoted by the Party at national level.
The PAMPHELET completely fails to define a Socialist foreign policy. It is only stated that the world will always be dominated by the "greatest" powers, and that in any international manipulations, disengagement is proposed with a neutral zone in Central Europe, but its economic and security would be guaranteed by the powers concerned. The Labour Party leaders cannot succeed in making the point that any paper agreement between Imperialist powers will be observed only in so far as it concerns the interests of one or other of them, or that these differences can be overcome and resolved? Again it is the great powers who are to settle the Middle East. No whisper about self-determination or even consulting the populations of the area.

In the cleavage between the American and Russian blocs, the Labour leaders take their stand firmly on the American side. And in the "Eastern democracy" unilateral renunciation of the H-bomb is dismissed. In view of the whole issue, Labour and Tory foreign policies are identical. There could hardly be a more complete exposure of the Socialist pretensions of the Labour leaders. On the most crucial issue facing us they have nothing distinctive to offer.

The Socialist alternative must be to repudiate all talk about achieving peace through pacts with Imperialist powers as fostering a dangerous and possibly fatal illusion Peace can be achieved only through international solidarity of the working class—even though such "old-fashioned" ideas are out of favour among the top people in the party. The interests of the workers run counter to, and not in harmony with, the interests of the ruling class and governments. Of course no "respectable" party can put in its program an appeal to the workers of other countries over the heads of their governments, which are not pliable enough according to diplomatic convention. But these artificial barriers between one working class and another must be over- ridden. A Socialist Britain need not confine itself merely to appealing to the workers of other countries for solidarity. It could make a decisive contribution to world peace by refusing to make nuclear weapons, by withdrawing its troops from other countries and by giving economic help to the backward countries free of "strings" or any exaction of interest on investments. In this way it would not only demonstrate its own convictions but expose completely the hollow pacemongering of both the power blocs.

The verdict on "The Future Labour Offers You" must be that it fails dismally to pose a Socialist program either in home or foreign affairs. Its whole purpose is to persuade that the Labour Party will not seek to destroy capitalism and all its attendant evils. On the contrary, it will run capitalism more efficiently than the Tories, always provided it can persuade the workers to remain content with a few crumbs in the way of reform and amelioration.

The task of Socialists in the Labour Party to campaign ceaselessly for the party's policy to be changed. We need Socialism now, not at some vague, unspecified time in the Never Never Land.

More on the South Bank

T he CAN with every justification that the right wing element within the Union and Conservative South Bank disputes sold our members down the river and gave great satisfaction to the right wing leadership. The wingers have shown their true colours consistently. The Right Wing Standing Committee, with Mr. W. F. Smith, convener, has held a meeting in support of "the line" taken by the Unofficials.

The conclusion of the meeting was that the wingers had "no idea of the situation as a whole" and that the Unofficials "must go their own way and stop on their heads to the Ulterior League." This right wing leadership is basically the same as the old left wing leadership who were in the same position over the Regional Committee meeting held on the twenty-ninth of October when the following decisions were made:

A. That an Emergency meeting of the Region No. 1 Building Trade Committee be called immediately.

B. That we request the General Executive Council to enquire into the whole of the circumstances connected with this dispute.

In fact, it can now be seen that the decision of the two officials, i.e.—Keep and Brandon, has been thrown out in favour of the unofficial strike leadership. The wingers were really bowled, and smirking Charlie Brandon for once lost his smile. The right wingers will really have to put their thinking caps on to save face, since they have crossed the deep and digger working being carried on for the very moment.

Whatever will the clever Bro. McCrory in the office of the ASW think up to appease the members whom he has already told them that Sir Robert McAlpine's the Building Contractors and McAlpine Directors, have promised and agreed to take back all the ASW stewards on the 11th of next month. Mr. McCrory requested McAlpine's to implement the agreement. Sir Robert McAlpine's are having one big laugh at him and he, in so many words, informed him that he must be daft—or dreaming—for McAlpine's cannot remember any agreement, and, in fact, McAlpine's have sent Bro. McCrory away with a"scrap of paper written in his handwriting". This right wing leadership must not be allowed to come between our members and their own leaders. This must be what is meant by "the line." We warn the right wing leadership of the only way the issue will be taken to the National Executive Committee at Westminster T & GWU Branch.

A further letter from S. Paper has been held over for reasons of space.

The GEC subsequently vetoed an enquiry and sent the matter back to the Region. Officials seem to be desperately trying to lay a ghost.—Editor.

Terrorism

I n the DECEMBER issue of Socialist Review, in an editorial on Cyprus which I found extremely good, I was sorry to find the following sentence: "No Socialist can condone terrorism." This statement does not make a clear enough distinction between Imperialist terror against an oppressed people, and anti-colonial terrorism by an oppressed people against the oppressor. The word Socialist is something foreign to them, and the quicker the Union leaders wake up to this and clear the right wing element from within, the quicker will we see true Socialists Fraternally,

Westminster T & GWU Branch.

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