

# SOCIALIST REVIEW

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW, BUT INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

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SIXPENCE

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Young Socialist

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IRA, etc., etc.

To all . . .

Dear Readers,

We haven't always been like this. One year ago the SOCIALIST REVIEW was a small paper in size, in circulation and appeal. But one year ago, under the pressure of events in Suez and Hungary, feeling the demand growing for a paper that stood for international socialism, independent of the blocs ruled either from Washington or Moscow, we took the plunge and increased our size by 300 per cent.

At first it was difficult to keep it up. But we won through. Our readership has doubled over the last twelve months.

The time has come to plunge again. The Tories' attacks, the sharpening industrial struggle, the attempt to sacrifice full employment to the needs of the City—all these, and more, make the need for a fighting organ greater day by day.

We hope to provide this organ. We hope to become one of the clarions in the class struggle in Britain, gaining in volume and strength as workers gain in militancy and experience.

To this end we are turning into a fortnightly next year. Help us. Send articles, money, orders. Write more, pay more, sell more. Build the fortnightly SOCIALIST REVIEW; lay the basis for a weekly one.

Yours fraternally,  
EDITOR.

Now is the time to

## WAGE WAR AGAINST CAPITALISM

1957 IS ENDING, and with it a period in British working class history. "The important domestic development of the past ten days . . ." writes the bosses' organ, the *Economist* (November 9), ". . . is that the Government has made plain its view that the nation would be better served this winter by standing up to strikes, rather than by giving way to inflationary wage settlements." The private employers "are saying," according to another of their organs, that "strikes are not necessarily a national disaster and are less disastrous than surrender" (*Times Annual Financial and Commercial Review*, November 18).

There is nothing new in the words. We've heard them before. But the tone is different. There is a hardness in the air, a mood we haven't felt for a long time.

And they are organized. Private capital in engineering, in building, everywhere, is limbering up. State capital has already struck the first blow and rejected a wage award granted to health workers by their arbitration body. And the Government, their government, is deploying their forces, instructing their troops in the strategy and tactics of class struggle.

They are organized. Are we? Must we allow them to pick time, place and victim? What plans have been made to spread the strikes that the bosses are touching off? Where is our alternative to their combined power in industry and government?

It is no good waiting for the top to move first. Transport House is not known for its mobility. The TUC is rusty with "responsibility." The British workers must build an alternative in the localities. We must, as Comrade

. . . and its H-BOMB

adds Cllr. W. Albrighton, Greenwich

LAST MONTH I resigned from the Civil Defence Committee of Greenwich Borough Council. I did so because nothing I had learned during my sixteen months' membership of that Committee was sufficient to change my firm opinion that **the only defence against nuclear weapons is a political campaign.** I quit because I am convinced that the civil defence recruiting campaign currently being conducted is hypocrisy and humbug, deliberately designed to lull the population into a false sense of security.

A good case in point is the ninepenny pamphlet, "The Hydrogen Bomb," issued by the Home Office last month. With a façade of coloured pictures and a jazzed-up lay-out, it aims at convincing people that vacuum-cleaners and whitewashed windows can do what the Minister of Defence himself admits is impossible: provide the people of Britain with defence in the event of an H-bomb attack.

Let us examine briefly what this pamphlet has to offer for the protection of the civil population. After assuming that a ten megaton bomb is most likely to be used (a "conserva-

tive" estimate?) the pamphlet then describes what happens when the bomb is exploded. The chain of events is now so well known it is not necessary to repeat them here, except to remind readers that total or irreparable damage up to five miles and severe damage up to 13 miles can be expected.

A slit trench covered with a few feet of earth will give best protection from blast and radiation, we are told. So come on Dad, out with that spade, and you'd better make the trench comfortable because you may have to stay there a few days.

Of course, if you're unlucky enough to be within five miles of the bomb you will probably stay there for ever.

Other "helpful hints" such as whitewashing windows, switching off gas and electricity, filling bath and buckets with water, etc., are offered by the pamphlet. Presumably the enemy is going to behave like a gentleman and wait until these chores are completed before exploding his H-bomb. These and other fatuous suggestions are liberally sprinkled throughout this ninepenny "Funny Wonder."

[Turn to back page

Heffer points out in an article on page 2, revive the Trades and Labour Councils and make them the organs of class defence where each can be helped by all.

**And their task? and the task of every other working class organ? To support fully, with every weapon in the armoury of solidarity, every strike in defence of standards, every strike at Tory policy. The bosses attack where they are strongest; we must counter-attack where we have power—in the factories.**

**NEXT PAGE — THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT:**

**BILL JONES,**  
the London bus crews' leader  
**FRED TINSLEY,**  
the Briggs militant  
**ERIC HEFFER,**  
the Liverpool activist

"I am not here, then as the accused; I am here as the accuser of capitalism dripping with blood from head to foot."

These words are taken from a speech made from the dock by John McLean when charged with sedition during the first world war. His closing words were:

"No matter what your accusations against me may be; no matter what reservations you keep at the back of your head, my appeal is to the working class. I appeal exclusively to them because they and they only can bring about the time when the whole world will be in one brotherhood, on a sound economic foundation. That, and that alone, can be the means of bringing about a reorganisation of society. That can only be obtained when the people of the world get the world, and retain the world."

John McLean stood out against war. He supported every effort of the workers to secure higher wages. He took part in the rent fight of 1915. He organised the unemployed. He helped the miners.

Next month, Harry McShane, friend and disciple of the great revolutionary, writes in memory of his death just over 34 years ago.

# INDUSTRIAL

**ERIC HEFFER,** EC Member, Lancashire Federation of Trades Councils,  
EC Member, Liverpool Trades Council and Labour Party,  
shows the

## NEXT STEP FOR TRADES COUNCILS

MANY YEARS AGO, Robert Blatchford, through his paper, *Clarion*, issued a small pamphlet on what the functions of Trades and Labour Councils should be. His work was a pioneering one, but retains an amazing freshness even to-day. The conception developed, was one of Trades and Labour Councils being the local fighting unit of the workers' movement.

It must be admitted that although at certain historical moments, Trades Councils have come close to that conception as, for example, during the 1926 General Strike, today they are in danger of becoming mere talking shops, places where steam is let off, without any real influence.

There are two types of Trades Councils. The purely industrial one, which is considered by the TUC as its local agent, and the Industrial and Political Trades Councils, which are both TUC instruments, and City or Borough Labour Parties. These joint bodies, include not only TU delegates but also delegates from the Co-operative Party, the Labour Teachers, University Labour Clubs, Poale Zion, the Socialist Medical Association, the Fabian Society, and other bodies.

### Conference curtain?

To-day, some of these bodies are threatened by the decision taken at the Labour Party Conference, that City Labour Parties should meet only quarterly with two special meetings in addition.

This decision coupled with the rumour that certain leading Trade Union figures would like even industrial Trades Councils to have less meetings or eliminated altogether, should make all those active in Trades Councils sit up and take notice, and to act before it is too late.

The danger in all working-class organizations is over-centralization with a bureaucracy resting on the backs of the lower bodies. That danger exists, and to some extent is already there, in relation to the Trades Council movement.

**Initiative from below is being gradually stifled, and increasingly the position is that Trades Councils are expected to act on circulars from above, rather than the General Council of the TUC act on instruction, and requests from below. Federations of Trades Councils and Trades Councils themselves are discouraged from making any move, which has not first got the approval of the General Council.**

I could give a number of examples when the TUC officials have discouraged Conferences and other action. The agenda of the Annual Conference of Trades Councils is so designed that the most controversial issues are kept off, with the result that the conference in the main is as dull as ditch-water.

Sometimes delegates are able to enliven it by challenging the TCJCC's (the leading committee, elected half by the conference and the other half appointed from the General Council) report by reference back, but usually these are small sparks in a dying fire.

It would appear that an attempt is being made by the leadership to convert Trades Councils into mere rubber-stamps. If this is carried out successfully, Trades Councils will die, as no organization can live unless it is able to express itself not only by resolutions, but also able to act on decisions taken.

The General Council places great emphasis on Trades Councils partici-

pating in productivity councils, and supporting Civil Defence, also on the need to ensure nominations for Hospital Management Committees, National Assistance Tribunals and Road Safety Committees, etc., but do not encourage Trades Councils to show local initiative in relation to strikes, rent struggles and demonstrations.

I do not deny that nominations to Assistance Tribunals, Hospital Management Committees, etc., are important, but they ought not to be the Trades Council's main function.

### TCs—our weapon

Trades Councils, precisely because they are made up of delegates from most workers' organizations in a locality, are of vital importance in the struggle for socialism. They can and should be the local workers' parliaments, and unlike Westminster not merely talking-shops, but co-ordinators of the workers' struggles in a locality. **They should give a lead on all issues facing the workers (rents, unemployment, etc.) and should be responsible, for example, for organizing Tenants' Committees, calling Rent Demonstrations, and linking up the struggle on rents with the factories directly. They can be the body which brings shop-stewards committees closer to the Tenants' Associations and the initiative should not be left to those outside the official movement.**

**Trades Councils, should together with bodies like the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, the NFBTO, the Furnishing**

**Trades Federation, etc., have the power to call a local stoppage when this is required in order to fight any particularly vicious act of local employers or as part of a national campaign on a specific issue. During strikes they should not confine themselves to issuing collecting sheets, but organize assistance in every possible way, by assisting to man the picket lines, organizing food supplies etc. In times of great industrial struggle, Trades Councils as in 1926, can quickly become the organs of working-class power, but unless the trend towards bureaucracy is defeated, their power to act constructively may be lost as was the case of local bodies in Germany where the national leaders stifled the local organizations but were themselves too cowardly to act, which led to such disastrous results.**

At a time when the employers' offensive, ably assisted and to some extent directed by the Government, is now under way against the workers, the role of Trades Councils becomes of greater importance.

Trades Councils can be the restraining hand on those leaders whose whole outlook is dominated by a policy of class collaboration.

**Trades Councils, must demand greater recognition in the workers' movement, by insisting on having direct representation at the Annual Conference of the TUC. This occurs in Scotland and is a right which was once held by Trades Councils in England and Wales also. After all Trades Councils were responsible for the organization of the TUC. They should**

also demand, as an interim measure, that the Annual Conference of Trades Councils have greater power, and that the agendas be more controversial, with items included on the agenda even if the TUC have already taken a decision at Congress. A standing orders committee should be elected from the conference itself.

Trades Councils must have the right to be joint bodies, or purely industrial, according to local feeling, and must be allowed to meet as often as they wish. This must not be determined either at General Council level or NEC Labour Party level.

### Organs of struggle

**They must become what they were intended to be, organs of struggle, which embrace all sections irrespective of craft or industry. They should broaden out, and invite the Tenants' Committee, Old Age Pensioners' Associations and such like bodies, to participate in their work, and fight for this to be officially accepted.**

At all times they must watch over the workers' interests by ensuring proper representation on all committees possible, but should reject participation in production and civil defence drives and anything which smells of class collaboration.

They must take up seriously the problem of non-unionism, and overcome all sectional interests, in the interests of all. In the fields of youth and women in particular, much remains to be done.

(continued next page)

The Ford Management is working for a showdown with the well-organised Briggs workers. This is the culmination of a long, bitter campaign; but it is also an indication of the type of struggle facing workers in general. This article, written by FRED TINSLEY, a toolmaker at Briggs who was on the Negotiating Committee and Works Committee for seven years, gives the background to the present situation.

## BRIGGS — THE FACTS

By Bro. Fred Tinsley

SINCE the lurid pronouncements of the Cameron report, and the subsequent national publicity, the happenings at Briggs Motor Bodies ceased to be of any interest to the newspaper world until a letter was sent to the *Times* by one of the Briggs workers indicating possible future trouble in regard to the Ford standardization proposals.

The current agitation can best be understood when seen against the background of events at Dagenham.

Until the Ford takeover of the Briggs concerns the Briggs workers had one of the most unique organizations in the country. The old Briggs management, acting as a caretaker organization for the principle shareholders in Detroit, recognized the Trade Unions in their establishment at a purely local level. This meant that under procedure agreement there were only two stages of negotiation, first, the Shop Stewards Negotiating Committee, and second the District Officials of the London District of The Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions.

### Local negotiations

Faced with a phalanx of progressive local Trade Union officials the management found that there was **nothing to be gained by taking any question to the final stage of procedure so on most questions in dispute agreement was usually found at the shop-stewards level. Wage claims affecting 10,000 workers and other major items were negotiated at this**

**level so that the Briggs workers established comparatively short negotiations and the negotiators were rank and file workers elected for the job and under democratic pressure to obtain the best results for their fellow workers.**

### Ford moves in

On the death of old Walter Briggs, it was decided to sell the majority shareholdings in the company. The Ford company had been quite content to let the Briggs concern produce their car bodies for them at what were very competitive prices but faced with the possibility that one of their largest competitors might step in and purchase the plant they made an offer of 6 dollars for every 1 dollar original Briggs share plus shares in the Ford Motor Company. In this way the old Briggs shareholders got a handsome return for their money, Ford got a plant at bargain prices, and the Briggs workers were left to face a formidable employer who had secured from national trade union officials a more favourable (for him) procedure agreement and working conditions agreement than that which existed in the Briggs

factories.

Since then there has been a constant round of negotiations with the Ford management endeavouring to get trade union agreement for their proposals. At the first stage a compromise was effected and a procedure agreement alone was established leaving the question of working conditions to a later stage. The procedure agreement, which covered all Ford factories, was a considerable improvement on previous Ford agreements. Despite this arrangement the Ford Company never lost sight of their objective and during the last three years of negotiations have not been prepared to amend any of the conditions they wish to impose on the Briggs workers.

### The conditions

**These conditions include the loss of stipulated washing time (5 minutes at lunch and end of shift); loss of afternoon teabreak, inability of workers to hold meetings during meal breaks, the lowering of craft differentials within a new wages structure, and the imposing of compulsory overtime. In an endeavour to gain acceptance of these anti-trade union conditions Ford dangles the bait of wage increases for the lower paid workers in the Briggs factories. Like all workers the Briggs lads are not averse to accepting**

[continued next page]

In order to develop closer links with workers in other countries, Trades Councils should develop the movement for a two-way exchange of delegations from all countries, particularly Western Germany, France and Italy, also the Colonial countries.

Trades Councils must increase their political consciousness and should clarify their attitude on all political issues, even if they are purely industrial bodies. The General Council discusses political issues, from international affairs, the H-Bomb, to pensions and the Rent Act, and Trades Councils should refuse to accept a double standard, one rule for the General Council and something different for the lower bodies.

All existing bans, on Communist Party members, or others who are barred from the Annual Conference, and certain Trades Councils meetings, should be lifted. The branches must have the right to elect whom they wish, and in any case the arguments of the Stalinists can only be defeated in open debate.

Trades Councils should also consider the establishment of youth sections, and having the existing Women's Advisory Committees strengthened.

Some may argue that I have painted a too gloomy picture, that most Trades Councils are active, virile organizations. That is a point of view I do not quarrel with, but the trend is apparent, the signs are there, especially where direct interference takes place with regard to meetings etc. After all we have the bitter experience of the London Trades Council before us, and the result is there for all to see.

The task now, is to reverse the trend, to fight back before it is too late, make ideas a two-way process, with those of the rank and file equal to those of the General Council. We shall need the Trades Councils as the struggle unfolds. Let us make sure they are worthy of the task history has set before them.

## BRIGGS — end

more cash but there is a sense of frustration felt by the workers who believe they are entitled to these increases by virtue of their productivity without having to accept such stringent conditions. **Whilst there is sectional opposition to all the Ford conditions, there is virtual unanimity among the workers against acceptance of compulsory overtime and loss of meeting rights.**

### Union attitude

From statements made by some national officials of various unions it appears that several trade union executives are prepared to sign the standardization agreement as laid down by the Ford Motor Company. The executives argue that the members are losing money by not complying, and that anyway these conditions are in operation at the Ford factories. One might be inclined to ask why the union executives have not used their strength to obtain the money without the conditions for the Briggs lads and improve the conditions for the Ford workers.

It is further argued that the overtime arrangements are not compulsory anyway! Fords have made it quite clear that workers must be prepared to bring their domestic arrangements into line with company requirements and that any worker not working a particular overtime period must have a reasonable excuse prior to the overtime working.

Small wonder that workers like Brother Jim Sparkes, who wrote to the "Times," should feel that against the background of quiet during the last six months, the management are not content with industrial peace and are deliberately provoking trouble. How-

## BILL JONES, London's veteran busmen's leader writes on BUSES and WAGES

IS A LONDON BUSMAN, in spite of his reputed skill, his responsibility for his human freight, worth £13 10s. 0d., a week? Whatever your answer, the fact is, if his 1957 wage packet had the purchasing value of his 1939 wages, he would be drawing that amount. That however is another story, so let's begin at the beginning.

In 1939, a top grade Central London Bus Driver was on a basic weekly wage of £4 10s. 0d. for a 48-hour week. To drive or conduct a London bus in the pre-war years you had to conform to the highest physical and mental standards, to be of a certain age, a certain height, etc., etc. You were compelled to satisfy the Police that your personal record was clean, that you had, at no time, committed murder, arson, rape or any of the lesser crimes in the calendar, before you could obtain a Public Service Licence, without which you could not drive or conduct a bus.

### As we were

Highly organised within the London Bus Section of the T and GW Union, the pre-war London Busman was one of the aristocrats of the wages tables of the organized workers in this country.

With a progressive and militant outlook, he won a place in the history of industrial struggle second to none. The London Busmen's Rank and File Movement, with its paper, "The Busmen's Punch," was outstandingly the largest and most powerful organization of its kind the trade unions movement has ever seen.

In the decisive years of struggle during the depression, the years of the hungry thirties, with two million unemployed, London Busmen were the only section of the British trade union movement which successfully fought and won out against the wage cuts being imposed by the Tory Government of that period.

What has happened to this once-proud trade-unionist, the London Busman, with his high wage standards and his readiness to fight at all times to improve his standards? With a wage increase application now being made on his behalf by his union, this is surely a good time to take a further look at him.

**From £4 10s. 0d. per week in 1939, he now stands, in 1957, with a weekly basic wage of £9 13s. 6d. per 84-hour fortnight. He has just managed to**

ever don't do the Ford Motor Company an injustice. The Ford management don't spend their time thinking up attacks on Trade Unionism. They are much too busy thinking about building motor cars for profit! Like the rest of British capitalism they are faced with a growing crisis that involves demanding increasing sacrifices on the part of the working class in the loss of rights of skill, leisure, living standards, and democracy. Conscious planning and conscious improvements for the workers are impossible under capitalism. Ford Sales Division like any one else can only make inspired guesses into future orders. The £74,000,000 expansion program that seemed so necessary some time ago might seem a little too ambitious in the future.

**With the general picture of national industrial disquiet now coming into focus, what's going on at Briggs may seem of small concern. Nevertheless it is indicative of the relentlessness of capitalism to secure its objectives and shows the need for the working class to build and maintain an industrial and political organization, just as disciplined and determined as the employers', to combat it.**

**double his wages with 13/6 to spare.**

The previous high medical and mental standards for his job have been slashed and slashed again. For some years there have been some 3,000 drivers and conductors short of service bus requirements; at the same time, those services and buses have been cut, cut and cut again. From January, 1949, to January, 1957, some 55,580 new drivers and conductors have been recruited, while some 62,155 have left the job. In other words, the whole of the LTE's labour force has turned itself over in eight years.

The bottom of the labour market has been scraped. So desperate has their need become that agents were sent scurrying to the West Indies and the remotest parts of the Emerald Isle, for labour.

This, then, is how the wage standards of London Busmen have been debased. The London Tube driver, with whom the bus driver was on equal wages in 1939, is now 25/- per week in front. The policeman, the fireman, the postman and many others in public or semi-public services have left him well behind.

What of his working conditions? In spite of his 84-hour fortnight, compared with his pre-war 48-hour week, his work has become more intensified and concentrated with increased speed, highly developed schedules, plus a terrific increase in traffic on the roads.

### Conditions, wages and fares

He hasn't got the five-day week: he can only look forward, very occasionally, to a week-end off. Saturdays and Sundays have become for him his heaviest days' work. If the "parrot cry" of "no wage increases without increased production," was applied to the London Bus Workers, then we are certain that a Public Enquiry held now into the increased productivity of the busmen would earn them a wage which might make the salary of an MP look like chicken feed.

**The travelling public have been told repeatedly that it is the increased wages costs which have sent up fares; well, keeping in mind the wages facts we have already dealt with, we should remember that the basis of fares on London Buses, when the men were on a wage packet of £4 10s. 0d., was 1d. per mile. The 1d. fare has now become 3d., for most cases less than a mile . . . that's not double, that's treble, with a bit to spare.**

### A job to be done

It was not the purpose of this article to apportion the blame or analyse the reasons for the progressive sliding back in both the wages or conditions of London busmen, nor of their loss of their once proud place in the ranks of London's trade unionists.

The past leadership of the union with its insistence upon wage restraint must be given its share of the blame. The continuing changing staff and the difficulties, therefore, in organizing a really stable fighting force is another important factor.

**It would appear to me, that every sincere trade unionist and socialist will be watching out for signs and activity supporting any steps taken to put this section of London's workers where they once belonged, in the forefront of the industrial and political struggle of London's working-class.**

## INDUSTRIAL

### from the Midlands :— AEU PROFILE

SO ERNIE ROBERTS has finally made the grade. After a second ballot—in which he beat Manchester's Jim Conway by 32,914 to 27,549—Cllr EAC Roberts has been elected Assistant General Secretary to the Amalgamated Engineering Union. No one would begrudge Ernie his moment of triumph. For he has come a long road and a hard road.

In his early thirties, Ernie presents a tall, slim, trim figure with the good looks of a film star (although of pre-war vintage) and enjoys a tingling, persuasive voice which he uses to good effect whenever he enters discussion. He knows how to wear clothes well—an added advantage.

### Cradle cars

A Coventry man, he was born in the cradle of the British motor industry. He soon made a mark in the AEU and has served as District President and Trades Council President. He has probably been victimised at more Coventry factories than any other man in the town (although his enemies hint darkly at "professional martyrdom").

He was one of the youngest Councilors ever to be elected hereabouts when he became representative for the Holbrook Ward in May, 1949—the first year that municipal elections were run in the spring. He was re-elected in 1952 and 1955. He has served on the Education, Finance, Housing, and Planning and Re-development Sub-Committees and has been the City Council's representative on a number of outside bodies.

These included the Coventry Employment Committee and the Coventry Health Executive Council but even more important he has been a Governor of Birmingham University since last December.

However, his greatest impact on local government must surely be his part in the epic work of the City Council in the last five years. Decisions included the suspension of Civil Defence; the payment of wages and salaries in excess of the nationally-agreed union rates; and the early introduction of automation in their offices.

### In, out and up

My principal impression of Ernie is that he has always been a rover. Never (according to my information, anyway) a member of the CP, he "fellow-travelled" for quite a few years. He was also one of about a dozen of us who gathered in a Midlands schoolroom to inaugurate the Midlands branch of the Socialist Fellowship—though Ernie didn't stop . . . He has also turned up at meetings of the Victory for Socialism, Movement for Colonial Freedom and 101 other bodies on the Left.

He has set his cap at a number of Parliamentary candidatures though he has never been successful in obtaining that goal of all aspirants—a safe seat. So his eventual arrival at Peckham Road must seem like the Travellers' Rest at the end of a stony road to Ernie.

Bemoaning the low poll (which is, of course, no fault of the victor) 'Iris,' the anti-communist monthly, said, "(We) think that they made a poor choice . . ." The author feels they have little to worry about, Ernie's wild days are over. He has arrived . . .

MORGAN JONES

## INTERNATIONAL

## Algerian freedom is being murdered

## SILENCE WOULD BE COMPLICITY!

By Andre Giacometti, Paris

ON SEPTEMBER 1 Messali Hadj, the founder of the Algerian nationalist movement (MNA) and its present leader, addressed an appeal to the Algerian people.

For several months, the fight between the two nationalist parties MNA and the National Liberation Front (FLN) had grown worse. The slaughter by the troops of the FLN of whole villages, near Melouza, in the Soumman valley, near Relizane, near Saida, near Massena, were bloody episodes in this struggle. In France, assassinations and attacks on the nationalist militants became increasingly frequent. As we have explained in detail in earlier issues of *Socialist Review*, there cannot be any doubt that the primary responsibility for this situation lies with the leadership of the FLN which, in the absence of a firm political basis and programme, falls back on terror as a means to monopolize the coming negotiations with the French government.

## The appeal for truce

This is not to say that the MNA has not used terror itself. However, in the assessment of responsibilities, two facts stand out: the military units of the MNA have never resorted to wholesale slaughter of whole groups of population in regions that supported the FLN. Further, the MNA has never denied the right of the FLN to exist as an independent tendency, and the right of the FLN to participate in negotiations with the French government. The FLN, on the other hand, has always defined the MNA as a "counter-revolutionary" tendency which must be wiped out, if necessary by terror.

In his appeal to the Algerian people, Messali Hadj pointed out the tremendous danger inherent in this situation. Not only does the French colonialist press spread these crimes all over its pages to justify the perpetuation of the colonialist war, but the spectacle of division within the Algerian nationalist movement alienates even those sectors of French and international public opinion who are ready to support the struggle of the Algerian people for self-determination. Every political crime thus represents a weapon of the French government before public opinion and at the United Nations. The public support which the Algerian revolution has acquired in all circles, Messali continued, is one of the conditions of its success. The Algerian people cannot afford to allow a handful of adventurers to jeopardize its

## AEU Elections

A POLITICAL PROGRAM means something, even in the conditions of such a low poll as was registered at the latest AEU elections for national organizer. Geoff Carlsson, whose election address was reprinted in last month's *Socialist Review*, had little experience compared with the other candidates; he is comparatively young; and comparatively unknown. **But he has a program, and he fought the elections on this program.**

This means something. It meant just under two thousand votes for Carlsson (Howarth, top of the first ballot received just under 7,000); and it meant thirteenth place. It meant—in its small way—that a socialist program means something to many trade unionists, and could be made to mean more to many more.

common cause. The vast majority of the Algerian emigration in France is opposed to murder as a means of settling political differences: it must isolate and remove from its midst the irresponsible elements that discredit its cause.

For over two weeks after the appeal, the political murders ceased completely. Then came the answer of the FLN.

## The bloody reply

Ahmed Semmache, the treasurer of the USTA in France, was shot at Colombes (Paris) on September 20.

Mohammed Nadj, regional secretary of the USTA in Paris, had been killed at an earlier date.

Hocine Maroc, an auto-worker at Panhard, member of the USTA regional organization for Paris, was shot on the Boulevard Saint-Germain on September 24. His brother, Mohammed Maroc, is one of the leaders of the MNA now serving a two-year sentence in Paris for his activity in the nationalist movement.

Mellouli Said, secretary of the USTA at the Renault works, was heavily wounded by a gunman on the Boulevard Diderot, also on September 24.

Abdallah Filali, Assistant General Secretary of the USTA in France, was shot on October 7 near the headquarters of the union on the rue d'Enghien. He survived in spite of having been hit by four bullets—in the back, as always—but he is not yet out of danger.

Mansour Bouali, who had replaced Semmache as treasurer of the USTA, was shot on October 11.

Ancene Lahouati, regional leader of the MNA in Clermont-Ferrand, was killed by a gunman on October 17.

Ahmed Bekhat, General Secretary of the USTA in France, was killed on October 25. His body was found on a vacant lot in Colombes, a suburb of Paris. He had been kidnapped and shot. He had narrowly escaped an attempt on his life a few months ago.

## The guilty men

**The striking circumstance about this series of murders, is that it is directed primarily against trade-unionists, militants of the USTA. What we are witnessing here, is a deliberate attempt to decapitate and to smash the Algerian trade-union movement.** It is well known who the killers are. These assassinations are carried out by professional gunmen of the North African underworld in France, who are paid for each job done (the equivalent of £70, it seems). The important question is: who is behind the killers? Traditionally, the responsibility for a crime is laid to those who benefit most by it. By these standards, circumstantial evidence points to three groups, which have been prominent in organizing political murder in the past:

(1) The bourgeois leadership of the FLN, which is interested in destroying the USTA as the main base and strong-point of the MNA. From its point of view, these crimes are simply a continuation of its policy, in France and in Algeria, of exterminating political opponents by wholesale murder.

(2) The Communist Party, which is interested in eliminating the only independent, democratic and militant working-class organization that can block its path in Algeria. The affair of the CGT arms cache in Lyon, among other

incidents, has proven that it actively helps the FLN in the organization of its political murders. This is its calculation: if the USTA takes these blows lying down, it will eventually be smashed; if it retaliates against the Stalinists, the CP will be able to cry that the "Messalist provocateurs" are "turning against the French working-class".

(3) The French police, who would be delighted to smash the spearhead of the Algerian revolution while putting the blame on the other nationalist organization. Since the 'thirties, the police has always tried to infiltrate the Algerian nationalist movement; it is naive to assume that it has not succeeded to some extent. The loose, heterogenous structure of the FLN, its lack of internal control and discipline, are elements which favour such infiltration.

**This is a "united front" of a new kind: a political cesspool in which professional criminals, police provocateurs, political adventurers and Stalinist agents can operate at ease. The men of the FLN who have ordered these murders have taken a terrible responsibility before the Algerian people and before the international labour movement; they have turned a significant part of the Algerian nationalist movement into a tool of its worst enemies.**

## The victims

Who are the victims? The personality of the two main leaders will serve to further clarify the significance of these murders.

Abdallah Filali, who narrowly escaped death, is an outstanding veteran of the Algerian working-class movement. In 1927 he was one of the co-founders with Messali Hadj of the "Etoile Nord-Africaine", the first proletarian party and the first nationalist organization in North Africa. Since then, he has participated in every struggle against colonialism. Under the Vichy regime he was first condemned to forced labour for life, then to death for contumacy. He is one of the founders of the USTA, and represented this organization, with Bekhat, at the recent congress at Bamako of the "Rassemblement Démocratique Africain", the leading nationalist organization of French West Africa.

Ahmed Bekhat was twenty-seven years old. He had been a metal-worker and a welder since the age of sixteen. At twenty years, he was one of the leaders in the trade-union work of the MTLN (forerunner of the MNA) and of the MTLN fraction in the CGT. He was one of the outstanding leaders of the North African labour movement. All who have known him will remember him for his clear intelligence, his warm humanity, his absolute honesty and integrity.

The men who are being killed now represent the hope and the best human potential of the labour movement in North Africa. Their death is an irreplaceable loss. The movement will continue and grow, as it continued after the murder of Ferhat Hached, founder of the Tunisian UGTT. But its progress will be slower and less steady than it would have been had these men lived.

In a statement, signed by leading French and African intellectuals, socialists, and trade-unionists of different tendencies (\*) after the attempted assassination of Filali, it was written:

"We do not know who has armed

**The only viable trade union organization for Algerian workers is being crushed in France. Gangs of thugs hired by the capitalist-led National Liberation Front, aided by the French Communist Party and ignored by the French police, are systematically assassinating leaders and rank-and-file workers' organisation, USTA. Readers should mobilize opinion in their unions for the defence of their Algerian brothers, protest through their branches to the union headquarters, to the TUC and to the ICFTU, and send all possible material help to Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs Algériens, 13 Rue d'Enghien, Paris, 10e.**

the assassins, and it is astonishing indeed that the recent attacks were directed particularly against the trade-unionists of the USTA. But, even if these crimes were committed at the instigation of nationalist leaders, they nonetheless remain crimes. . . . We cannot but cry out in anger over crimes against men of the value of Abdallah Filali and his union brothers. What is involved here is our basic conception of human dignity and brotherhood.

"Moreover, these acts hurt terribly the Algerian cause and build up a wall of hostility between the French and the Algerian workers.

"Only the ultra-colonialists can welcome such acts which eliminate men who have survived the repression.

"As to those organizations and militants who have always advocated opposition to colonialism and support to the Algerian people, they must cry out in indignation.

Silence would become complicity.

## Our task

**We await the statement by the leadership of the FLN and of the UGTA dissociating itself from these murders, condemning the practice of settling political differences by murder and expressing their willingness to make an agreement with the MNA to end all mutual aggressions.**

**We await a statement from the French CP, condemning the murders of the trade-unions of the USTA.**

**We await the appointment by the ICFTU of a neutral investigation commission into the murders of Algerian trade-unionists, and speedy action with all means at its disposal to protect the USTA from further repression.**

**We await statements from the Moroccan UMT and from the Tunisian UGTT, whose founder Ferhat Hached was assassinated under not dissimilar circumstances, condemning the murder of Bekhat and of his comrades.**

Silence would be complicity.

(\*) among which Jean Cassou, Claude Gerard, Andre Breton, Yves Dechezelles, Marceau Pivert, Jean Rous, Edgar Morin, Colette Audry, Paul Ruff, Alexandre Hebert, Daniel Guerin, Pierre Lambert, Daniel Renard, and others.

# THE YOUNG SOCIALIST

NUMBER 2

DECEMBER, 1957

## EDITORIAL

FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS youth has been stirring into revolt. In Hungary and Poland, young workers and students fought back against extreme political and economic oppression with the techniques and slogans of socialist revolution; here, in Britain, it was only a politically conscious minority of young people who came out into the streets to stop the Suez War. But although tempers in Britain have been cooled with the usual bromides since then, undercurrents of resentment and rebellion remain.

Militant young socialists can get more than nostalgic memories from those heroic days last November. We can see what huge powers exist in youth, what huge energies are released under pressure; under pressure and with a militant lead, these powers, these energies will be transformed into action.

Over the next few months, the direct attacks of the Tories on our living standards—short-time working, higher rents, dearer food, cuts in social services—will make young workers start looking around for a lead. This we in the Youth Sections must provide, but if we are to do the job properly, we must educate ourselves for it. If we want to translate energies from jeering at policemen, laughing at the Queen's voice, dressing up like James Dean, we cannot be content with routine denunciation of Tory methods and motives. We must present constructive, radical socialist alternatives. We must show the need to transform society. We must make Socialists. And to make Socialists we must educate ourselves. Keir Hardie's slogan can serve us well today:

EDUCATE, AGITATE, ORGANIZE. And Education must still come first.

The aim of THE YOUNG SOCIALIST is to help us in these tasks: to examine the issues affecting us, and present them in socialist terms; to work out a programme, and see how to bring it into effect; to weld together individual Youth Sections and college Labour Clubs into an effective movement for international democratic socialism. And socialist education is the tool.

## YOUTH SCHOOL

### Report from Guildford

NINE MONTHS AGO the London Labour Party Conference rejected the advice of the Executive and insisted that youth organization should be taken seriously in future. A sub-committee was set up, a meeting of Youth Officers and Party Secretaries was called, and at last on November 9/10 we saw the result: a week-end school.

The living conditions, in the words of an organizer, were grim; the program was grimmer. As we expected, over one-third of the time was devoted to electioneering; but much of this could have been far better put over at individual Sections in 'live' conditions, while the rest was so skimmed as to be largely useless. The prospect of a captive audience was obviously too good to miss, and since the Wilson Report on organization, London Regional Office has felt it has a mandate to convert the Party into an annex of the Electoral Registration Offices.

The opening session of the School was, however, devoted to 'politics.' Michael Stewart MP gave an address smartly tailored to the political build of the audience on 'The Task of the Young Socialist' and presented four subjects for discussion by the School, which split up into four groups for this purpose; the subjects—the plan of an introductory primer 'What is Socialism?', the three main planks of a socialist policy, techniques of propaganda and education, and a model program of Youth Section activities—all gave a broad basis for discussions of varying value. The minute amount of time allotted, could not prevent the acceptance of the principle of Workers' Con-

trol by the first group. Our elders' eyebrows were duly raised . . .

The final session of the school was intended for political discussion, and was to take the form of a parliamentary selection conference for the constituency whose organizational problems we had been so busily solving all morning. Meanwhile the Organisers had made up a list of candidates of varying competence but all quite 'safe.' We were told by the Chairman, Bob Mellish MP, without a touch of conscious irony, that our democratically-elected EC had made its short-list selection and after the four short-listed had carefully shown they were not socialists, Phil Sheridan of St. Pancras moved that no selection be made; the Chairman asked for a show of hands; it looked as though it would be carried by a small majority; there was no count; Resolution lost. The selection proceeded, and after the Chairman had pointed out that there was no time to get further nominations, the ballot was taken. The least objectionable candidate, who is sure to go far, got 24 votes; there were 14 blank papers, and the three others shared 16 between them. It was all most instructive.

As I was leaving, the Regional Organizer told me how pleased he was that I had come; I don't know whether they'll ask me again. Meanwhile, London's EC has promised more schools, more activity for the future; amongst other things, they hope to have members of the NEC working-parties open discussions on the subjects of the 1958 Policy Statements, before publication. This is good news.

ROBIN FIOR, Uxbridge.

The need in Youth Sections for a primer of Socialism is generally recognised. Here The Young Socialist prints the opening of our new pamphlet, **What is Socialism?** by MICHAEL KIDRON, which will be out in the new year.

## WHAT IS SOCIALISM? - I

SOCIALISM is a type of society in which all the members of the community collectively determine their conditions of life and their way of living. In order to do so, they must control, collectively, the use to which machines, factories, raw materials—all the means of production—are put. Unless the means of production are effectively in the hands of the whole society, not as in Britain today where 1 per cent. of the population owns more than half the national capital, there can be no question of the collective control of the conditions of life. This can best be illustrated by seeing how Capitalism works.

Every capitalist competes with every other one for a market. When they sell similar goods, their competition is obvious. Even when they sell altogether different goods, like TV sets and houses, they still compete for the limited wage-pocket of the worker. If one capitalist does not compete, he is lost. Others will nab his buyers.

Competition means underselling and price-cuts on the one hand, and on the others, advertising wars (fully 25 percent of the price of a packet of detergent is the cost of advertising.) Whoever can undersell or spend more money on advertising is sure to win and knock the others out of the running. In other words, the bigger the amount of capital under your control, the bigger it is going to become. Only the very big capitalists can afford the techniques of mass—and cheap—production (conveyor belts, breaking up highly-skilled jobs into many semi-skilled ones, automation, and so on). Only the big ones can buy raw materials in bulk at lower prices, or employ special staffs of lawyers, market researchers, advertising men and so on.

To become big the Capitalist must either squeeze out his weaker competitors and add their capital to his—**centralization of capital**—or make as much profit as possible from his current sales and reinvest it—**accumulation of capital**. The first method is of no direct interest to the worker as it matters very little who the boss is. If the capitalists want to fight things out amongst themselves, it is their business. It is of little interest for another reason: it adds nothing to the productive powers of society; the national wealth does not grow as a result of it. In fact, all it leads to is the concentration of the same amount of wealth in fewer and fewer hands.

We are interested mainly in the second form of capitalist growth: the **accumulation of capital**. It is accumulation which has made capitalist society the dominant form of society in the world. This is what affects the worker most directly.

How do capitalist firms accumulate? Where does the money which they reinvest come from?

### The source of accumulation — surplus value

In order to produce commodities for the market, every capitalist must buy other commodities which he uses in production. The things he buys are mainly: machines, raw materials or semi-finished goods, and labour-power. Machines, raw materials or semi-finished goods, although an item of expenditure on the part of one capitalist, are commodities sold by other capitalists and appear as part of their incomes. Those capitalists also spend money on machines, raw materials or semi-finished goods and labour-power, the money spent on machines, raw materials and semi-finished goods being the income of yet another group of capitalists who spend money on . . . and so on indefinitely. Whenever one capitalist spends money on machines, etc., that money is part of the income of other capitalists who then hand it over to yet other capitalists for machines, etc. If all the capitalists belonged to one great trust these transactions would not take place and the only buying and selling that there would be is the buying of labour-power by the capitalists and the selling of it by the workers and technicians in exchange for wages and salaries. Taken all in all, the capitalist class (not the individual capitalist) has only one expense—buying labour-power. Whatever remains to that class after its purchase of labour-power is profit (**surplus value**).

Before going on to see why the existence of these profits makes the world the Hell it is, let's discover where they come from.

That part of the capitalist's expenditure which is spent on machines, raw materials and unfinished goods goes the rounds from one capitalist to another in a perpetual circle—this is the social wealth that has already been created. If the productive forces of capitalism were to remain static and not increase, this expenditure would appear like a constant, fixed fund thrown from hand to hand in an endless relay race of production, each capitalist handing on to the next the exact amount required to renew his stock of machines and raw materials. No profit would be made on such sales as each capitalist would swap exactly that amount of machines, etc., for an equivalent amount, and, when all the exchanges were done with, everyone would be where he started.

There is, however, one item of expenditure which makes all the difference, namely, wages and salaries—the expenditure on labour-power. This expenditure is the only one which is not a transfer of goods already produced from one capitalist to another. It is the only item of expenditure which is productive in the dual sense of producing the wealth of society and in the sense of producing profits for the capitalist. **Labour alone produces wealth.**

[continued next page]

## FORUM

Why have the Tories got cold feet about the Wolfenden Report on Homosexuality and Prostitution? Why are they willing to implement its recommendations on prostitution but not those on homosexuality? What should the Socialist attitude be? This article explains the social background to these abnormalities and the political background to the recommendations.

## THE MEANING OF WOLFENDEN

A CRITIQUE of the Wolfenden Report presents problems which spread beyond the sphere of our normal daily activity in the Socialist movement. Our routine activity is a constant strengthening of the means whereby men and women will be liberated from the bonds of class society. A critique of the Report must necessarily enter the realm of the ends themselves, the ethics and morality of man under Socialism, for the simple reason that the sores of homosexuality and prostitution, touching as they do on man's basic urges, on his innermost being, can scarcely be alleviated except by a violent rebellion of his crushed and wounded spirit and its uplift to the heights of real liberty, equality, dignity and all that we aspire to for the individual under Socialism. Between the hurt, perverted person of today, and the proud, free man of tomorrow there is an abyss that cannot be crossed in little steps.

## I

Homosexuality is rare in some societies—feudalism, for instance—but very prevalent in others, such as Greek slave society.

In capitalist society homosexuality is quite widespread. Dr. Kinsey, in the United States, "found evidence to suggest that 4 per cent of adult white males are exclusively homosexual throughout their lives after the onset of adolescence. He also found evidence to suggest that 10 per cent of the white male population are more or less exclusively homosexual for at least three years between the ages of sixteen and sixty-five, and that 57 per cent of the total male population have at least some overt homosexual experience, to the point of orgasm, between adolescence and old age." (p. 17).

There is no equivalent statistical evidence for Britain, but some medical witnesses before the Wolfenden Committee suggest figures somewhat lower for Britain, others, comparable figures.

The causes may perhaps be sought in the inferior position of women in the home. The all-pervading money element in capitalist society turns the

male breadwinner into the head of the family, the authority and arbiter of its destiny to which the rest have to submit. The young boy looks up in admiration to the strong man, finds the woman an inferior being, and with a fitting mental make-up and/or suitable contributory circumstances, will develop into a homosexual.

The contributory circumstances may be the segregated school, where homosexual experiments take place.

It may be the army, where the forced contact of men with men only, leads to a number of at least temporary homosexual acts. Another important breeding ground of homosexuality is prison. And finally, there is the pernicious aspect of money-ridden capitalist society where widespread submission to homosexual acts for financial or other gain takes place.

## A legal matter?

The actual number of persons against whom proceedings were taken in respect of homosexual offences in 1955 was 2,504.

The Wolfenden Report starts by stating that the Committee was concerned throughout with the law and offences against it, which were indeed its terms of reference. Such a committee, appointed by a capitalist government, is bound to take as its point of departure bourgeois morals and prejudices and the institutions built to materialise and defend them. This by its very nature excludes any radical change of attitude to the problem based upon a fundamental analysis of it—and may even exclude the analysis itself, as it has done in this case. The Report says explicitly: "... we do not consider it to be within our province to make a full examination of the moral, social, psychological and biological causes of homosexuality or prostitution, or of the many theories advanced about these causes. Our primary duty has been to consider the extent to which homosexual behaviour and female prostitution should come under the condemnation of the criminal law..."

The law it manipulates and makes more easily workable in present-day society is the law by which the ruling class defends its privileged and strong position—this is the constant purpose of law as such. If it is the strong who are to be defended, it is the weak who are going to suffer, the poor, the misfits, the abnormal. The Report never strays from this path of thought.

I shall give examples later of its hard and arrogant attitude. Any progressive measures it recommends—in particular "That homosexual behaviour between consenting adults in private be no longer a criminal offence," merely make the law smoother and more consistent, and bring it into line with legal practice in a number of other countries, for example, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Sweden). Whatever the origin of the recommendation, we must without doubt support this measure which is quite a step forward in Britain.

## A Socialist Critique by C. Dallas

In line with its general outlook, the Wolfenden Committee refuses to consider homosexuality a "disease" and therefore makes the homosexual entirely responsible for his behaviour. (I may mention in passing that in Russia after the Revolution homosexual acts were not punishable by law and homosexuality was treated as a disease. By a law of 1934, "sexual intercourse between two men—homosexuality—is punished by deprivation of liberty from 3 to 5 years."—Article 154a of the Criminal Code, 1934—and at the same time homosexuality ceased to be considered a disease—a rather significant indication of the social changes taking place in Russia at the time.) The Report neither seeks nor finds the basic causes of the abnormality and admits no factors in society contributing to its spread. The limit of its analysis is that there is an inborn "propensity" toward homosexuality in some people that in the absence of counter-vailing factors might lead them to commit homosexual acts.

Again in line with its general outlook, the Committee makes the commission of homosexual acts easy for the rich, more difficult for the poor.

It says: "It is our intention that the law should continue to regard as criminal any indecent act committed in a place where members of the public may be likely to see and be offended by it, but where there is no possibility of public offence of this nature it becomes a matter of the private responsibility of the persons concerned, and as such, in our opinion, is outside the proper purview of the criminal law." (p. 25). This makes it easy for those with housing to spare, difficult for those without, particularly if they may try to hide their acts from those near to them, as conventions push them to do.

## Prison and police

In spite of the damning evidence, the Report continues to justify prison sentences for a number of homosexual "offences": "... prison will always have its place as a method of dealing with the homosexual offender, whether as a salutary deterrent for some offenders, or as a place of detention for those who in the last report must be put away for the protection of the community." (p. 70). Besides its complete futility as a cure, prison life is so degrading for a man who might be

highly-strung and very sensitive, that it might cause permanent mental damage.

The Report further completely justifies police snooping in plain clothes. "It must, in our view, be accepted that in the detection of some offences—and this is one of them—a police officer legitimately resorts to a degree of subterfuge in the course of his duty." (p. 43). It does also say: "It has been suggested by more than one of our witnesses that in carrying out their duty in connection with offences of this nature police officers act as agents provocateurs." (p. 43). To disprove this, where did the Committee seek evidence? From the police themselves. "We feel bound to record," says the Report, "that we were on the whole favourably impressed by the account they gave us of the way in which they carried out their unpleasant task." (p. 43). The victims have a different tale to tell.

In addition, the Report fails to take cognizance of the fact that those who desperately seek psychiatric treatment to normalise their lives have the great-

est difficulty in getting it, and then prison might thwart attempts at treatment. Peter Wildeblood, who wished to have psychiatric treatment in prison, was told by the psychiatrist (after waiting many months to see him): "Even if we had time, I rather doubt whether it could be carried out satisfactorily in prison. You might, perhaps, consult a psychiatrist about it when you are discharged." (p. 145). In fairness, it must be said that the Committee recommends wider psychiatric reports on "offenders," particularly "first offenders" before a decision is taken on the method of punishment, but past experience such as that described makes the prospect look anything but bright for the sufferers.

## The real solution

As I pointed out before, the possibility of a solution of the problem under class society is remote. It is only when there is complete equality between the sexes in all respects, beginning with economic equality and extending throughout all aspects of life; when psychological development will be more balanced through freedom from the struggle for existence we fight today, and people more tolerant; when submission for gain is unnecessary because the poisoning effect of the money cancer is absent, that homosexuality would disappear naturally. If nature then produced an abnormality which it might do in a small number of cases, medical treatment would take good care of it.

Meanwhile some alleviation of the problem could be achieved even today by instituting universal co-education, by doing away with conscription, by taking cases which might harm weaker members of the community (those who are attracted to young boys, in particular), into hospital where they should have a minimum of restriction in their daily lives while undergoing treatment, and by making a much needed scientific study of the subject and spreading psychiatric treatment as widely as possible.

## II

WHEN THE REPORT deals with prostitution, its submission to prevailing prejudices, self-righteousness, lack of human sympathy, and intolerance towards the victims of the system are even greater. Any Socialist who reads this section must be angered by its

[continued next page]

## SOCIALISM I — continued

The capitalist controls the physical means of production; the workers control nothing but themselves, the capacity to work. They are driven to work, to sell their labour-power to the capitalist, in order to keep themselves and their families. When they sell, they demand a 'living wage' for their labour-power, and, if unions are strong and there is not much unemployment, they usually get it. Of course there are exceptions, but by and large, for the working class as a whole, this is true.

If the worker produced exactly that amount of products which he could buy for his weekly wage plus what would replace the raw materials and machinery used up in its production, the capitalist would clearly not make a profit. Profit can only be made when the workers produce more than their wage bill and the depreciation of machinery and the depletion of stocks of raw materials put together, i.e. when they produce surplus value, value over and above the wages necessary to maintain themselves and their families.

To take an example, in ICI in 1955, for every 11/- paid in wages and salaries (including some fat salaries for Directors and others on the 'managerial' side) the bosses made a clear profit of 9/- after all expenses for raw materials and depreciation had been met. To put it differently, in a 40-hour week the worker put in 22 hours for himself and his family and fully 18 hours for the boss. On a national scale, the picture is very similar. In 1956, for example, out of a total net national income (i.e. after the stocks and machines used had been replaced) of £16,465 million, £7,375 million were paid out in wages (before taxation), £3,715 million in salaries, including the fat ones (before taxation)—altogether, only 69 percent of the new wealth produced in Britain that year. The other 31 percent (£4,977 million) was surplus value, i.e. rents, interest, profits paid out to the capitalists.\* So that again, for every 13/9d. paid out in wages and salaries (including the fat ones) the capitalists made a clear (net) 6/3d. over and above replacements. Part of that surplus went in taxes, part on living (on the Riviera and elsewhere), but the biggest single portion of it (£1,487 million) went on the accumulation of capital—investment.

\* Surplus value amounted in fact to more than this figure—no account has been taken of taxation out of working-class incomes, the payment to workers of wages for non-productive labour and much else.

# In Defence of IRA

By W. P. Lavin, Glasgow

MAY I BE ALLOWED to express regret that Mr. Owen Sheehy Skeffington should have used the columns of a Socialist publication to make a cowardly attack on the Irish Resistance movement? His article might have been written by an official agent of the British Government.

Many weird things have been said by Ireland's enemies about the struggle for Irish freedom, but it has fallen to the lot of an Irish senator to plumb the uttermost depths of fatuity by suggesting that the Irish Republican Army demands the unconditional surrender of the British Empire. Not content with this gem, he goes on to inform us that "it is Ireland, North and South, that produces the IRA." I should have thought that anyone would have known that the IRA was "produced" by the British Government and that as long as there is a British Army in Ireland the IRA will be there too.

Mr. Sheehy Skeffington maintains his form by truckling to British Jingo opinion in blaming Hitler for the last war, just as Imperialist propagandists blamed the Kaiser for the previous one. There is no hint that the war was in any way the outcome of the rivalry

of competing imperialist and capitalist groups. Then there is the easy assumption that "Nazism" is something more evil than capitalism and that (of course) its evil characteristics are shared by the soldiers of the Irish Republican Army. Mr. Skeffington does not stick at trifles.

He quotes with evident approval a letter written by his father (whose name is held in esteem by all right-thinking Irish people) saying that he dreaded the temper of men who could say that they preferred to see the hills of Ireland crimsoned with blood rather than that the country should be partitioned. But is not that exactly what happened, and is still happening, as a result of partition—the kind of procedure that Socialists used to condemn in unmeasured terms but which was actually approved in the case of Ireland by a treacherous Labour Government? And of course uncompromising hostility to British rule is no new thing in Irish history. Mr. Skeffington's status as a senator forbids me to conclude that he does not know this. It was well expressed by James Fintan Lalor more than a hundred years ago when he wrote: "Deliverance or

death—deliverance, or this island a desert."

As for the IRA being in honour bound to produce a blue-print of the social content of the republic which they hope to establish "by violence": it would have been interesting to see what would have happened to Mr. Skeffington if he had made such a proposal to, say, a member of the French Resistance movement a few years ago. And with regard to violence: was not the so-called treaty partitioning Ireland imposed by violence? Did not the British Prime Minister threaten the unfortunate Irish delegates (emphatically not plenipotentiaries) with "war without stint" if they did not sign the wretched document? Is not, in short, the present unhappy state of Ireland, like many an honoured peerage of the United Kingdom, a "Lloyd George creation"?

Mr. Skeffington speaks of the desirability of "earning, as well as seeking, the goodwill of the rest of the world." Well, the Hungarian counterparts of the Irish Republican soldiers had the goodwill of the rest of the world last year—and much good it did them. The men of the IRA prefer their own watchword: Sinn Fein, otherwise Self-Reliance.

Does Mr. Skeffington really believe that the soldiers of the IRA are murderers? If so, I should like to remind him that at a time when this mons-

## FORUM

trous accusation was being freely made by arrogant British partisans the Bishop of Killaloe, Dr. Fogarty, was moved to say: "The fight for Irish freedom has passed into the hands of the young men of Ireland . . . and when the young men of Ireland hit back at their oppressors it is not for an old man like me to cry 'Foul!'"

### Neither Stormont nor Dublin

I should like to comment upon many other points in this offensive letter, apart from its misleading title—"Ireland versus the IRA"—which prejudices the whole question, but considerations of space forbid. May I, however, say a few words on an aspect of the subject which seems to puzzle some of our British comrades. They are, as a rule, willing to concede that there may be some justification for opposing the Stormont "Government," as it represents a quisling minority with the mentality, if the word may be used in such a connection, of the backwoodsmen of Arkansas, who interpret the constitution of the United States to mean that it guarantees to them the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of negroes. The comrades in question, however, see no reason why the Dublin Government should be opposed. The reason is that the successive governments which have held sway in Dublin since the Irish Revolution have been false to their trust. Upon them has descended the blood-stained mantle of the British rulers of Ireland. They have done little or nothing to re-unite their country or to endeavour to have it take its old and rightful place amongst the nations of the earth.

### Prison torture

As an instance of their methods of dealing with those of their fellow-countrymen who expose their treachery I take the case of one Sean McCaughey—one of many. Sean McCaughey was charged with assault and unlawful detention, punishable at common law by fine or imprisonment. Under an Emergency Powers Order the Government decreed that he should be tried by a military court. He was sentenced to death on 18th September, 1941. The sentence was later commuted to one of penal servitude for life. He was confined in Portlaoighse Convict Prison for four years and nine months. In all that time he was not allowed to receive any visitors. He refused to wear prison clothes and during the whole term of his imprisonment the only clothing he had was his prison blankets. He went on hunger strike on 19th April, 1946, and on thirst strike on the 24th of the same month. On the eleventh of the following month he died in his prison cell. An inquest was held in the prison, the jury having been obligingly selected by the police. The Deputy Coroner refused to allow counsel for the next-of-kin to cross-examine the Governor. I give a few details of the admissions made by the medical officer of the Prison, Dr. Duane, under cross-examination:

Mr. McBride: Are you aware that during the four and a half-years he was here he was never out in the fresh air or sunlight?

Dr. Duane: As far as I am aware he was not.

Mr. McBride: Would I be right in saying that up to twelve or eighteen months ago he was kept in solitary confinement and not allowed to speak or associate with any other persons?

Dr. Duane: That is right.

Mr. McBride: Would you treat a dog in that fashion?

Dr. Duane (after a pause): No.

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## WOLFENDEN REPORT — end

affront to human sensibilities. Perhaps the reason it is so much more severe towards prostitution than homosexuality is that homosexuals come from all walks of life, are sometimes in high places in the social world, or the arts, whereas the prostitute is nearly always from the poor, is much more abject and crushed by circumstances. This explanation, even if tentative, fits in entirely with the general outlook of the Report.

### A social problem

Prostitution is even more directly a social problem than homosexuality. In the past in Britain, and in poorer countries today, girls adopted this way of life, or were pushed into it by their fathers or husbands merely to get bread and butter for themselves and their families. This led to a big international traffic in girls. Today in many countries this is not at all the case, and the fact that the traffic has practically ceased is proof that prostitution is on the whole not brought about by the pure need for money. It goes deeper than that. Mammon indeed, is still the evil genius lording it over the market, but it is for the desire of easy money, rather than just money itself, that drags the girls down. As the Report says: "Our impression is that the great majority of prostitutes are women whose psychological make-up is such that they choose this life because they find in it a style of living which is to them, freer and more more profitable than would be provided by any other occupation." (p. 79).

This sheds a morbid light on the corruption of the human spirit engendered by a class society, which makes labour a drudge, a struggle in which the worker is always the loser, instead of an uplifting activity in which you want to participate because you help yourself and others to win the joys of life in that way. Only a degraded, stunted, crushed spirit could become a prostitute. The sight in Amsterdam, for instance, where prostitution is legal, of women sitting in windows abutting the street in their underwear with all but a price tag on them, the atmosphere in which prostitution is sustained, through "entertainments of a suggestive character, dubious advertisements, the sale of

pornographic literature, contraceptives and "aphrodisiac" drugs (sometimes all in one shop), and the sale of alcoholic liquor in premises frequented by prostitutes" (p. 100), plumb the depths of human degradation.

The "offenders," whatever their apparently strong or defiant face, are the underdogs that society should protect, defend and gently soothe the hardness out of.

The Wolfenden Report does no such thing. Over and over again it cruelly attacks the prostitute for "parading her wares" openly and being offensive to the "ordinary citizen." A few quotations will illustrate the ruthless language of the strong against the weak, of the rulers against the oppressed. "... we feel that the possible consequences of clearing the streets are less harmful than the constant parading of the prostitute's wares." (p. 96, My emphasis throughout), "It is right that the law should guard against the congregation in any one place of undesirables of any type . . ." meaning "the streets, where their very presence would offend." (p. 113). "A common prostitute . . . may be deemed an 'idle and disorderly person,'" and as such liable to conviction. On subsequent conviction, she "may be deemed a 'rogue and vagabond,'" and as such liable to a heavier sentence, and on still further conviction "may be deemed to be an 'incorrigible rogue.'" (p. 83). (These are the designations of the present law.) There are a multitude of other such offensive remarks.

### Abolition? No!

The Report states explicitly that it does not wish to abolish prostitution as such, but merely punish the prostitute. "It will be apparent, from the recommendations we have made, that we are not attempting to abolish prostitution or to make prostitution in itself illegal." (p. 95). "As long as society tolerates the prostitute, it must permit her to carry on her business somewhere." (p. 104). (How this contrasts with the sympathetic, humanitarian attitude taken by the Bolsheviks after the October Revolution and until the 'thirties. There the attitude was "Against prostitution but not the prostitute," and prostitutes were defended, given medical attention, and taught useful trades).

The Report recommends an abolition of the requirement to establish "annoyance," thus putting the man under no obligation whatsoever. "If it were the law's intention to punish prostitution *per se*, on the ground that it is immoral conduct, then it would be right that it should provide for the punishment of the man as well as the woman. But that is not the function of the law. It should confine itself to those activities which offend against public order and decency or expose the ordinary citizen to what is offensive or injurious; and the simple fact is that prostitutes do parade themselves more habitually and openly than their prospective customers, and do by their continual presence affront the sense of decency of the ordinary citizen. In doing so they create a nuisance which, in our view, the law is entitled to recognise and deal with." (p. 87). It is hard to believe these remarks refer to human beings!

The man is thus out of the picture. The prostitute, on the other hand, is to be punished much more severely.

Again, because only the "offence to public order and decency" is punishable, not prostitution as such, the rich are once more given a free hand as against the poor who suffer from housing difficulties. The rich can and do keep luxurious flats for their prostitutes.

As I said at the beginning of this article, the gulf between a prostitute-ridden society and a clean and healthy one is too wide to cross in little steps. It is only when every man and woman is aware of his or her beauty and dignity and walks with pride, not shame, that the essential degradation that prostitution means will disappear and, with the cause, the disease. When education serves a different purpose than the mere preparation of ruling class, middle class and working class, which is what it does today; when labour is a creative joy, not a boring drudge; when sexual relationships are free and joyous, not bound by prejudices and conventions and stolen on the sly, then, in a phrase of Trotsky's, "will the average human type rise to the heights of an Aristotle, a Goethe, or a Marx," and the blights on human dignity be abolished for ever. Only a fundamental change, a thoroughgoing smashing of present class society, will establish the pre-requisites for this.

## H. Bomb — contd.

Every comedy, it is said, has its more serious aspect, and this pamphlet is no exception. Throughout the reader is lulled into thinking of only one bomb: even this would be grim enough, but what enemy is going to drop only one bomb? Of course, the real fact is that this tightly packed little island would be saturated with radioactive fall-out within a very short time of nuclear war breaking out.

### Victims already claimed

I have given just a brief outline of what can be expected if war should come, but what of the tests being carried out by the three powers at present producing these vile weapons? On November 2nd, the *Manchester Guardian* reported what it called "a startling analysis" by four members of the staff of the Harwell research station. The startling information is that the bones of two children (a year and six months old respectively) who died in the summer of this year were found to contain nearly a quarter of the concentration of strontium above the level which the Medical Research Council has said would require "immediate consideration." Add this to all the other previous evidence and it becomes obvious that there is real danger from the continuation of the tests alone.

### Our job is clear

Are we, then, just to resign ourselves to our fate? The answer to this question for Socialists must be to wage a political campaign of opposition. For only by such a campaign can Britain be defended against nuclear warfare.

The first and minimum demand must be for the immediate halting of the testing and manufacture of nuclear weapons by Britain. Secondly we must advance a positive Socialist foreign policy which involves a complete break with the so-called "Western Camp" of NATO, SEATO, etc. This would help to negate the polarization of the world about which Bevan seemed so worried at Brighton. Free from such entanglements, Britain could then rally all the progressive forces in the world for a political struggle against the rival imperialisms of Washington and Moscow and their H-bombs.

It will be a long and tough struggle with no place for the faint hearts and political dilettantes, but there is no other road that can lead to a full life and a lasting peace.

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## PARLIAMENT

### INFLATION, ARBITRATION and DESPERATION

AFTER THE LONG dry season of the recess, the house has been largely concerned with debating the economic situation.

Apparently there is a crisis in the country's economy caused—so it is said—by some mysterious gentlemen in Frankfurt, Paris and Brussels and various other centres of economic rectitude, who are losing confidence in Britain because they have come to the conclusion that the British working classes are a gang of idle layabouts.

The Conservatives, who are always keen to be well thought of in Frankfurt, decided that this called for immediate action and the Chancellor rallied the country with these deathless words:

If wage increases in the scale on which they have been given in the past—and were still being demanded—were granted, it would be a disaster to the country, to the firms who gave them, and to the men who got them.

The trouble is that whatever the circumstances the Conservatives have only two alternative policies: (a) if the Unions and the working class are weak they reduce wages—as in 1931; (b) if the working class is strong they try to prevent wage increases. This is the policy they have been trying these past few years.

So far as the dangers of wage increases are concerned the Conservatives have been professional wolf-criers for so long that it is surprising that their own people have not noticed that the shouts of "Au loup!" are always treated with the traditional apathy that is appropriate. (The Beaverbrook press is the only exception to this and intermittently calls for higher wages for higher prosperity.)

For the Labour Party, Mr. Wilson in a typically witty speech (he complimented the Chancellor on his intervention at Gloucester on behalf of the Liberal candidate) suggested some bold remedies:

The Government should propose now an economic conference between Britain, the United States, Canada, Germany, and France, if France had a Government at the time, to examine the problem of liquidity and the key position of sterling, the dollar, and the mark, and investigate internal policy in the creditor countries. The Government should take the initiative in calling urgent international talks on the commodity problem. The United States might now be more willing to agree to international commodity agreements.

Workers of the world unite and examine the liquidity ratios: you have nothing to lose but your sterling balances!

The truth of the matter is that from the point of view of the working class these economic crises not only appear meaningless with the strange jargon in which they are clothed but are meaningless. After all, if a working class movement has any success it means that its members get more of the products of labour and the capitalists get less. Naturally enough this makes the international bands of financiers and their tame experts cry out with horror and say that the National Union of Railwayman is wrecking Christian civilisation. It would be a tragedy if the workers began to believe in this sort of thing. Fortunately they (as a whole) prefer to regard Capitalism as they find it on the factory floor and in the rent demands and are content, for the time being, to confine their more theoretical studies to an analysis of the future prospects of Preston North End.

Michael Millett again on

Mr. Darling (Sheffield, Hillsborough, Lab.) said that the categorical statement that responsible arbitrations should not allow wages to go up would mean a breakdown in collective bargaining. It was no longer free bargaining if a Government intervened to that extent. It was no longer free bargaining if the arbitrator was under instruction not to allow any wage increase to be given.

THERE IS a certain amount of distress, of which Mr. Darling's remarks are typical, in the Labour Party at the 'threat' to arbitration caused by the Government's refusal to honour the three percent award of the Health Services Tribunal and by its attitude to arbitration tribunals in general. Those of us on the Left can of course say, "We told you so!" with cheerful complacency. Whenever was an independent tribunal on wages possible under any system?

The trouble with the Conservatives is that they are so incompetent that they scatter cards all over the floor every time they try to stack the pack. Under smoother operators there never would have been a Health Service award to turn down in the first place and the "independent" arbitrators would have refused wage increases without being instructed in Parliament to do so.

DURING A DEBATE on housing there was an interesting example of Tory mentality.

A Labour MP Mr. Arthur Lewis cited the case of an old lady of 99 who received notice to quit on her hundredth birthday.

The Housing Minister, Mr Brooke, said that the house was in her son's name and that as soon as the landlord got to know of the old lady, he immediately cancelled the notice.

While the Conservatives were

## IRA -- contd.

The evil against which Sean McCaughey fought, and in fighting which he laid down his young life had, of course, its origin in the shameful "treaty" which dismembered Ireland the terms of which Dublin governments of both parties seem determined to carry out regardless of the well-nigh irreparable injury it has inflicted upon the country. There is one way, and one way only, to bring peace to Ireland. That way is indicated in Point XII of "The Socialist Review" Platform: "The withdrawal of all British troops from overseas." And may I emphasize that Ireland is "overseas."

Without the backing of the British armed forces there could be no partition of Ireland.

W. P. LAVIN.

Comrade Lavin should read what he criticises before doing so. Comrade Skeffington's article was not called "Ireland vs. the IRA" but "Socialist Policy vs. the IRA"; Skeffington did not hold Hitler responsible for World War II but explicitly stated that "British and French policy after 1918 did much to produce Nazism." It is true that these are minor matters, but if Comrade Lavin cannot see the trees, can we be sure that he has seen the wood? If, as he suggests, the IRA's way is, and should be, Ireland's way, why do they not, why does he not, show us where that way is leading? Why violence if it leads nowhere? if, indeed, it hinders us from getting anywhere? This is the crux of Comrade Skeffington's article. This is what Comrade Lavin has failed to answer and by so doing, he has blunted what would otherwise have been some telling points.—Editor.

warmly applauding this reply they apparently overlooked the fact that in the normal course of events the son of a hundred year old lady would be around seventy years old himself.

But then, seventy is just the right age to strike out for a vigorous new life in the workhouse, for example.

## WHAT WE STAND FOR

The Socialist Review stands for international Socialist democracy. Only the mass mobilisation of the working class in the industrial and political arena can lead to the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism.

The Socialist Review believes that a really consistent Labour Government must be brought to power on the basis of the following programme:

- [1] The complete nationalisation of heavy industry, the banks, insurance and the land, with compensation payments based on a means test. Renationalisation of all denationalised industries without compensation. The nationalised industries to form an integral part of an overall economic plan and not to be used in the interests of private profit.
- [2] Workers' control in all nationalised industries, i.e., a majority of workers' representatives on all national and area boards, subject to frequent election, immediate recall and receiving the average skilled wage ruling in the industry.
- [3] The inclusion of workers' representatives on the boards of all private firms employing more than 20 people. These representatives to have free access to all documents.
- [4] The establishment of workers' committees in all concerns to control hiring, firing and working conditions.
- [5] The establishment of the principle of work or full maintenance.
- [6] 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 the National Health Service and the development of an industrial health service.
- [7] The expansion of the housing programme by granting interest free loans to local authorities and the right to requisition privately held land.
- [8] Free State education up to 18. Abolition of fee paying schools. For comprehensive schools and adequate maintenance grants—without a means test—for all university students.
- [9] Opposition to all forms of racial discrimination. Equal rights and trade union protection to all workers whatever their country of origin. Freedom of migration for all workers to and from Britain.
- [10] Freedom from political and economic oppression to all colonies. The offer of technical and economic assistance to the people of the underdeveloped countries.
- [11] The reunification of an independent Ireland.
- [12] The abolition of conscription and the withdrawal of all British troops from overseas. The abolition of all weapons of mass destruction.
- [13] A Socialist foreign policy independent of both Washington and Moscow.