

KEEP LEFT



ORGAN OF THE WEMBLEY LABOUR LEAGUES OF YOUTH.

VOL. 3 No. 2.

DECEMBER 1953

Price 1½d.

EDITORIAL.

Fifteen per cent.

The struggle over the engineers' wage claim is going to be crucial for British Labour. As the miners in the twenties, so today the engineers represent the advanced guard of the organised workers, and a defeat for them would be the signal for an onslaught on living standards all along the line.

As with all other commodities, the labour market changes from a sellers' to a buyers' market, and British Capital, well understanding the position, gradually increases the speed at which it whittles away the concessions granted since the War. Cautious as first, but emboldened by the weak-kneed attitude of the Labour leadership, the Tories slowly but surely demolish the welfare state. Now is the time to reverse these trends. Whatever we may think of the tactics chosen by the engineers, the whole Labour Movement must show an unbroken front in support of the Confederation's attempt to recover ground lost due to the ever-rising cost of living. Their defeat would spell disaster, but the success of the engineers' fight would start the wave which would sweep Labour back to power.

Recession or Depression?

No one asks whether there will be a falling off of trade next year. The only question now is whether the present recession in some sections of U.S. industry (even before any cut in rearmament) will be restricted to the 1949 level, or will lead to a world slump on the 1929 scale. It is impossible to answer with certainty, but Colin Clark one of the leading Keynesian economists, was not very optimistic in his articles in the Manchester Guardian last month.

As he pointed out, just at the time when Keynesian policy calls for an increase in government expenditure, falling order books lead U.S. Big Business to clamour for less taxation. Thus the profit motive on which Capitalism is based must ultimately prevent the expansion of the market. Without World War, a slump cannot be avoided.

A MESSAGE TO WEMBLEY LEAGUE OF YOUTH

The Wembley League of Youth have asked me to write an article for their lively little monthly "Keep Left". I like the title of this propogander organ of the Youth and feel sure our young people in Wembley will continue to Keep Left and by so doing help prepare the road that will lead to Socialism.

It is good to see so many young people taking an active part in Labour politics - we want youth in our Movement. We usually associate Youth with keenness, enthusiasm, vitality and imagination, I am sure our League of Youth in Wembley have all these attributes.

In the months that lay ahead we shall get to know one another and find out how best we can all serve the cause we so earnestly believe in, the cause of Socialism. We are under no illusion about the difficulties ahead, victory is not going to be easy - for nothing worthwhile is of much value that is not worth fighting for. Remember that in pursuing something the pleasure and excitement is in the hunt and we are hunting out evil things: want, ignorance, intolerance, poverty of mind and body, racial hatred etc, it is well worth making a sacrifice however small to help in the fight to get rid of these evils. We find pleasure in joining with others to establish a happier state of affairs. In the League of Youth there is good Comradeship, young men and women with a common aim and a common purpose with an understanding of some of our most pressing problems and a keenness to help in the Working Class Movement. By becoming a League of Youth member young members learn how to use the tools that will help fashion the new Social Order; with the supplied material and acquired skill our task can become a pleasure when working co-operatively for in fellowship, life can become exciting and full of purpose.

We in the Socialist Movement want to see a happy, healthy and contented people, this can only arise provided we have a sound economic system. In 1945 the Labour Government started the drive for Social Security- a free health service, improved education and full employment in industry. This was indeed a big task to undertake considering the fact that we had only just emerged from the greatest World War in history during which time much of the earth's resources has been used up, a lot of it being blown Sky high. By 1945 not only had Social Security, a free health service and full employment been established but many other benefits were being enjoyed by millions of people throughout the country. Subsidies to farmers helped to maintain food prices within the reach of all, "Fair Shares for All" allowed housewives the opportunity to feed their families during a period of short supply and so maintain a high standard of National nutrition.

The Tory Government by attacking Labour's system of equality has made it much more difficult for wives and mothers to adequately feed their families. We are rapidly returning to a system of rationing by the purse. Prices of essential foods have gone up sharply within the last two years-just look at some of them, compared with what they were in 1951:

Bacon is up by	10½d	per lb.
Butter	"	10d
Cheese	"	1/-
Fats	"	4d
Meat	"	4d
Corned Beef	1/4d	"
Sugar	"	1½d

And when one remembers what Lord Woolton said in 1950, "When you return a Conservative Government you can rely on it that the cost of food will not go up. I promise you, that you will have a greater choice, better variety, but no higher prices". Fine Tory promises used to obtain votes but long since forgotten like the promise not to cut food subsidies which has also gone by the board.

Young people are concerned about their future as they have a right to be, but two years out of young mans life at the age of 18 to serve in the forces interferes not only with his career, but is a waste of time to both himself and the Country. It is about time this whole question was reviewed and the period of National Service cut down, with the present ageing labour force the period of two years service is a crippling burden for the Nation to bear.

We cannot expect consideration on any of these matters by the Tories. They are ready always to make gifts to the Landlords, the bankers and Stockbrokers because they are their own kith and kin.

The Labour Party is the people's party, representing our common interests and the Young people who join our Labour League of Youth are doing a service to both themselves and the common folk everywhere.

ERIC HUTCHINSON

Prospective Parliamentary
Candidate for Wembley South.

PUBLISHED NEXT MONTH

DON'T MISS

WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

A 'KEEP LEFT'
PAMPHLET

Price - 3d.

COMING EVENTS

FRI 11 Dec - YOUTH PARLIAMENT, Preston Manor School, Carlton Ave. East @ 7.45

SAT. 12 Dec. - Wembley South BAZAAR at Labour Hall, Union Rd, Wembley - 2.45
Dance and Social, St. Andrews Hall (next door Labour Hall) at 7.45 . 1/6d.

SUN. 13 Dec. - N.W. Middx. Area Cmttee. Day School on 'India Today' Speaker: Carlo Singham. At 444 Church Lane, Kingsbury N. W. 9 @ 3.0 p.m.

A MARXIST IN MINIATURE.

Dr. Cheddi Jagan mounted the platform fourth in a line of five. Applause broke out all round the hall. He alone inclined his head and smiled. One wonders how he knows the applause was for him alone!

A young barrister-at-law detailed the charges contained in the White Paper, virtually without comment. Jagan pulled a face or two.

The chairman explained that it is not Government policy to send speakers on such occasions. "Dr. Jagan will not make a speech, but will comment on some of the charges contained in the White Paper." He rose to speak.

He seems very young to be a national leader (or even an ex-national leader.) He looks about 30, is very well dressed, slim, athletic. His voice is clear, his delivery fluent, and his style forceful, more so by reason of his waving arm and pointing forefinger. He plunged straight into the official charges.

People's Police? He had been misquoted. In any event, he had no power to create any such body because the control over the police is vested in the (permanent) Chief Secretary, not in any elected minister. Arson? He dismissed this summarily. Even the British Government now alleges that the plot was hatched after the suspension of the Constitution into the country (he pronounced it 'GUY' - ANA) the people had been organised on a sectarian basis - Africans and Indians separately. "The strikers are opposed to the P.P.P., because we organised the workers on a class basis." Encouraging strikes, We are Socialists. +Preaching violence. The bullets now fired on us will be turned on our masters? Yes, he had said something of the kind, but he had spoken in a moment of anger, and words had been taken from their context.

Words first, thought later. A maturer politician would have chosen his words, and his time, more carefully.

Asked directly about his political beliefs, Jagan replied, "I am a Marxist." A few comments showed an appreciation of the political situation in the West Indies.

Question time - and a moment of comic relief as Jagan denied trying to influence the Boy Scout movement in Guiana! A tall figure rose to ask if Jagan would like to visit India and South East Asia. Angadi - in the name of the masses, no doubt! Jagan beamed - he would like to do just that.

All branches of left-wing opinion contributed to the discussion which followed. Jack Gaster of the London District Communist Party; a burly West Indian of the Caribbean +Labour Congress; a member of the Legislative and Executive Councils of St. Vincent; the Society of Socialist Clergy ("Who are we to force Church Schools on people who do not want them") and militant Trade Unionists from the Fire Brigades Union and U.S.D.A.W.

Cont....

("Two hundred years ago, when the missionaries went out, they had the Bible and the negro had the land. Now the white man has the land and the negro has the Bible.")

When he left the platform, Jagan waved and smiled at the applauding delegates, as one who plays to the gallery. And the prevailing impressions he left behind him were of Impetuous Sincerity and Immaturity. In thirty more years, perhaps..... but by that time, no doubt we shall all be wiser and probably sadder people.

ALAN S. KAYE.

East Islington League of Youth.

UTOPIA UNLIMITED.

The Young Liberals of Wembley are a group of very nice young people who are terribly keen on doing good to everyone. Unfortunately, they haven't the foggiest idea how to go about it.

At the November sitting of the Wembley Youth Parliament, they presented the policy of the new Liberal Government. This will be based "on the concept of the fundamental dignity of man", but the real watch-cry of this brave band of political troglodytes is, believe it or not, "free trade"! All monopolies are to be "closely scrutinised". Imperial preference will be abolished. Engineering (recently nationalised by the Labour Government - in Wembley!) will be denationalised. Profit-sharing and co-ownership will be introduced!

Of course, nearly all of this stuff was out of date by 1890. From the time when free trade no longer coincided with the interests of British industrialists, i.e., when British capital lost its complete domination over the world market, the decline of liberalism was inevitable. Apart from the short period at the beginning of the century, when the workers supported them for want of a party of their own, the Liberals, representing no one in particular, ceased to be a serious factor in British politics.

This explains our Government's policy on the Trade Unions. Trying to stand impartially between Labour and Capital, they want to prevent anyone "making it a condition of work that a man be either a member or a non-member of a Trade Union." Also they will revive "contracting in" instead of "contracting out" of the political levy.

To be impartial between a thief and his victim is to help the thief. The 100% Union shop and the contracting out system of supporting Labour Party funds are weapons in the hands of the working-class, forged in the course of a century of struggle against exploitation. Some people may not like them and some may deplore the state of affairs where such nasty things as strikes and lock-outs are a part of life.

cont.....

Cont.....

But our Liberal friends want to maintain capitalism and it is this social system which engenders the battle between workers and employers. The existence of this battle must be recognised by all except those who live in an ideological cave, and to remain neutral is to be on the side of the employers.

It is this desire to have capitalism without its inevitable consequences, which makes twentieth century Liberalism the politics of Cloud-Cuckoo-land. Unfortunately, there are still many Labour Party members who would also like to live in this pleasant dream. Let them study the fate of their Liberal friends and recognise that, while it welcomes the support of some sections of the middle class, our party remains the organisation of the British Working class.

Otherwise, as Lloyd George once put it, they will sit on the fence so long, that the iron enters into their souls.

CYRIL SMITH
Wembley South L.O.Y.

WHO ARE THE TERRORISTS?

British newspapers last month carried reports of the trial in Nairobi of Captain Gerald Selby Griffiths. He was acquitted on a charge of murdering a Mau Mau suspect, "shot while escaping." More important than the verdict was some of the evidence and the light it has thrown on the way in which the campaign in Kenya is being conducted.

We now know about the 'scoreboards' recording the number of 'kills' achieved by each battalion, and the offer in some units of five or ten shillings for each kill. Griffiths was alleged by one witness to have said, "You can shoot anyone you like, as long as he is black."

Many people in this country are horrified by all this. But the responsibility does not lie merely with the officers and men in Kenya, for it is impossible to carry out an operation of this kind in any other way. To keep down a whole people on behalf of a tiny minority must involve the use of terror, the slaughter of innocent people, imprisonment without trial, and so on. Anyone who condones the continued presence of British troops in Kenya must share in the guilt.* * *

BONE BROS. LOCK-OUT

Most readers will know of the lock-out at Bone Bros., Alperton, and the attempt to victimise the shop committee. The dispute is now over a month old and has the full support of the A.E.U. district committee. Wembley Borough and Wembley South Labour Parties have both contributed to the lock-out fund, but further financial assistance is still needed. Send your donations to: M. KING, 50 DAGMA AVE. WEMBLEY, MIDDX.

EDITOR: Miss B. Newbery, 7 Kinross Close, Kenton, Harrow, Middx.
PUBLISHED BY: The Wembley Labour Leagues of Youth