

SOCIALIST REVIEW

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW, BUT INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

8th YEAR No. 1

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SIXPENCE

This Issue includes :

Builders and busmen in the
forefront

Memories of John McLean

The Young Socialist

Workers' control of industry

Parliament

etc., etc.

Our task this year—

STRIKE THE TORIES OUT!

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

And it's a currency hard to come by.

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

wants more profits, but with less wages; more output with less workers.

The older it gets, the more vicious. The young are deprived of education, the old of cheap tobacco, the sick of health. An attack is launched on the weakest and most exposed of organized workers—those in the hospitals. No indirect pressure is forgotten: rents, loans, arbitration awards, State investments, Bank rates—all are manipulated and moulded to one end: humble pie for workers' tables, "strikes rather than settlements."

And strikes they'll get. Last year, the British workers stirred. The engineering strike—the greatest demonstration of strength for thirty years—taught a generation of workers more than could be learned in a generation

of industrial 'peace.' It is a lesson they will not forget, will be unable to forget for as long as British capitalism continues to steal their clothes to cover its decrepit nakedness.

This year, the stirring threatens to become a storm. Millions of workers are standing in the wage-claim queue; millions will be told "strikes rather than settlements"; millions will strike for settlements; and millions will hope

to strike the Tories out.

This year's task for every rank-and-file militant in the trade-unions and the Labour Party is to bring everything to bear on the opening industrial struggle; to defend the standards gained; to defeat the Tories in the workshops; to smash Capital in the factories.

Strike the Tories out!

The Tories Block Grants

By Peter Ibbotson

WHAT IS ALL THIS FUSS about the "block grant"? Briefly, it is about the way in which local authorities shall get the money to pay for all the things they do. All the services now provided by local authorities in England and Wales cost about £1,100 million a year. Of this, about £490m. comes from the rates; the rest from the Exchequer grants.

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

The formula

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

but due to revaluation in 1956 it is now a 1s. 7d. rate whose product is deducted from the grant.

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

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

[turn to back page

To all

Dear Readers,

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

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

Some have learned to condemn the pretenders to socialist leadership; the right-wing Labour and trade-union leaders who hold working-

class democracy by the throat in the colonies and at home; the Communist Party leaders steeped in its blood where they are in power and coming very near where they are not.

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

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

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

Yours fraternally,

Editor.

INDUSTRIAL BUILDING WORKERS! fight now for LESS HOURS — MORE WAGES!

writes ERIC S. HEFFER, President, Huyton ASW; S/S, Liverpool building site

RECENTLY in the *Socialist Review* (November, 1957) I developed a general program for building workers. In this short article, I wish to particularize and concentrate on the immediate claim now being presented by the NFBTO for a 40-hour week and an extra 8d. per hour.

As unemployment grows in the industry, the 40-hour week demand grows in importance. However it will not be granted without an intense struggle, and preparations should be under way now; unfortunately, the signs of such preparations are not too apparent, and the time has come for the rank and file to press for decisive action.

The claim

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

The unions' case is extremely strong, and meets all the arguments of those who talk in terms of wages being related to increased output: the latest statistics available on the number employed in the industry show that since June 1956, the number of operatives employed in the industry has dropped by 32,000, while output in the first half of 1957 was up by 3 per cent over 1956. This can only mean one thing: **output is up per man and the rate of exploitation is being increased.** This is reflected in the upward spiral of profits for the large building and civil engineering employers: **Wimpeys** increased their profits from £3,840,256 in 1955 to £4,447,414 in 1956. **Taylor Woodrow, Mowlem, Richard Costain, Sir Lindsay Parkinson,** all showed the same trend, while the medium-sized firms either showed an increase, or maintained their same level. The present level of profits proves that the employers can well afford to pay, and all talk of the great difficulties the employers have in meeting the workers' demands is so much eyewash; it must be rejected as such by the Trade Union side. Since 1945 the industry has never been more prosperous, and the workers have never really got their just and reasonable claims met.

There will be a fight

The building and civil engineering employers have never been renowned for kindness of heart, and the claim will obviously be resisted. They will hope to take advantage of the rising unemployment (largely due to Government policy) and also knowing that Government support will be forthcoming, they can be expected to prepare the ground for a bitter struggle. Our task as militant workers in the industry is to see that there is no retreat on the part of the Trade Union leaders. We can best do this by developing now a strong, militant campaign around the demand, and by getting the rank and file ready for the fight.

It is true it is early yet, but the claim has already been presented, and very little effort is being made to prepare for battle.

Many times in the past the workers have been disillusioned as the result of wage campaigns, the biggest disil-

lusionment being the time a claim was made for 9d. per hour, and the NFBTO leadership accepted 1½d. plus a 1d. on the sliding scale, without the sign of a fight.

However, despite such feelings, it is necessary more than ever to press forward with the campaign, but this time, heighten it, with a more clearly defined vigilance, and not turn aside in disgust at the half-heartedness and betrayals of 'leaders', but on the contrary, develop more organized forms of contact, based on a policy of militant struggle.

Too often in the past have the men been misled by demagogic speeches with very little serious content; now, the time has come for decisive change. The situation is too serious; it requires determined, serious leadership. If the union leaders fail to give that leadership, the rank and file must throw up their own—dedicated to the workers' movement, recognising the need to carry through the class struggle to its logical conclusion.

The next steps

The rank and file must, without delay, call on the NFBTO leadership to organize a National Campaign around the demands.

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

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

We should tell the employers now, that in the event of a refusal, we shall fight.

The rank and file must tell the leadership: no more trifling amounts of 1½d. per hour, but the claim in full. As a first blow in the struggle, a rigid control of overtime (as laid down by rule) must be enforced. In this way, some of the unemployed can be temporarily employed, and necessary cash put aside (even in small amounts) to help prepare for the day, when the battle fully opens out.

Close liaison

Often in the past, wage campaign committees have sprung up to press forward the workers' demands. At a time when wage-freeze was the accepted policy of the Trade Union leadership, and class-collaboration the main feature of union policy, such committees played a vital and important role. Today, I feel it is necessary to get a closer liaison between the shop stewards on the sites and the NFBTO; branches must convene meetings of stewards as an opening of the campaign. These stewards, who are closest to the rank and file, being part of it, together with the District officers,

should plan out the best forms of immediate activity. Meetings should be organized on every site on the question of the claim, and the demand carried into the offices of every firm at all levels. Let the employers know we mean business. This is the only serious way to fight; so, brothers, let's to it—time is never on our side.

From general struggle to general strike

One last point needs to be made. The demand for the 40-hour week is not confined to the building operatives, but is common to many industries. The engineers have put in the same demand, and the employers have given an emphatic 'no.' The TUC are on record for the 40-hour week, and at Congress this year, a resolution was passed which promised support to any affiliated organization which became involved in a struggle on this issue. **Don't let us fight it out in isolation, but let us co-ordinate our efforts and challenge the employers together. In this way, we can have a decisive influence on the political future of the country. If a General Strike is necessary to enforce our demands, let us not shrink from it, as certain of our 'leaders' will, no doubt, prefer: to fail now would be disastrous, and would result in further disillusionment and increased suffering for the working class.**

From hours to workers' control, BRIAN BEHAN presents PROGRAM FOR BUILDING WORKERS

IN HIS ARTICLE on the crisis facing building workers (*Socialist Review*, November 1957) Comrade Heffer dealt very well with the problems in our industry. Above all else, our industry needs a powerful rank-and-file movement that will have as its aim the defence of our conditions now and the breaking of the capitalists' control in the future.

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

Then there is the Working Rule Agreement shackled on to building workers in 1927, which gives the employer incredible powers, some of which were mentioned by Comrade Heffer. By this Agreement, the employer can sack or transfer at two hours' notice on any Friday any man, including stewards; no mass meeting may be held without his permission; in the event of a strike, the trade-union official is instructed to (a) get a resumption of work no matter what crimes

the employer might have committed, and (b) take the dispute to a Disputes Commission composed of three employers and three trade-union officials.

In practice.....

In practice, the Agreement is operating in London with terrible results. Recently, in four disputes in four weeks on four very large contracts,

in each case stewards were sacked; in each case Federation officials instructed the men to return to work without their sacked brothers; in each case the Disputes Commission came down on the side of the employer and against the workers.

One particular experience is worth relating. One of our former employers sacked 75 per cent of the job. Usually

in the case of a strike, the Commission orders an immediate resumption of work. In this case, however, as we had all been sacked they merely asked that work on the site proceed without interruption, and so gave every encouragement to the scabs already there.

The disillusionment and apathy created by such events can well be imagined.

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

Program

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

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

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

that we organize solidarity actions with each job that comes into dispute; that we demand of full-time officials, particularly so-called 'left-wingers', that they cease to play the employers' game.

Our attitude in electing all officials must become more serious. Before elections, we must know their attitude to such matters as have been raised above, and we must have an answer to

[continued next page]

BUILDING WORKERS!

Prepare for Battle!

Come to the HOLBORN HALL,

Grays Inn Road, London, W.C.1

On Sunday, January 19th, at 11 a.m.

Send delegates and/or messages of support

BILL JONES, recently re-elected to the Central Bus Committee, answers some questions on the LONDON BUSMEN'S PAY BATTLE

I

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

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

"When the claim was first placed before the General Executive Council of the men's union, that body suggested that before such an application was made, a National Conference of all bus workers should be convened at which agreement could be reached on a national wages policy and the thorny question of the wages differential as between London and the Provinces might be settled for the first time. (It should be remembered that just prior to the London men's claim for a wage increase, the union had won an 11/- a week award for the provincial men, based on an application to break down this differential.) This proposal by the GEC of the union was roundly rejected by the men's garage representatives, who went on to demand that the application should be made immediately to the LTE.

Turned down

"As we now know, the LTE turned down the application in the sharpest possible fashion. Following this, the GEC of the union again met and decided to recommend to the men's representatives that the claim should now be taken to arbitration. The

one question: are they prepared to use their position to fight the employer and, if necessary, go back to the tools if the right-wing remove them because of this, and will they then be prepared to carry on the struggle down below?

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

In my opinion we can begin to win the public and the industry for socialist control in a simple way by showing the achievements of Direct Labour (not hiding, at the same time, its shortcomings). It is true to say that, whatever these shortcomings, the building worker has a thousand times more security and comfort on Direct Labour than on private building. The houses produced are at least as cheap, if not cheaper, than those built by private enterprise and are of better quality.

Here is an opportunity for us to campaign immediately for Direct Labour, particularly with large Labour Authorities. Here is also an opportunity to demand within these schemes greater control by the workers.

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

It is our task, through the rank and file movement, to give our class a program and leadership that can smash the employers and their henchmen in the labour movement.

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

men's representative meeting in conference rejected the GEC's new proposal as unanimously as they had its previous one and went on to demand that the talks be re-opened with the LTE and, if their claim met with a second refusal, that GEC grant them plenary powers to take strike action. An amendment at the same conference, which suggested that a ban on overtime and rest-day working should be imposed as and from the 1st January, failing again was also heavily defeated.

Confusion

"The bare recital of the relevant facts shows that the men's representatives were alive to the fact that, in the light of the Government's statement on wages, allied to the LTE's refusal to meet their claim, it was extremely unlikely—to put it no higher—that an arbitration court would meet their claim. At the same time, however, the men's representatives took a decision which really asked the men to believe that the body—their own union executive—that had tried unsuccessfully to foist them off with talks in the first place and an arbitration court in the second place, was ever likely to grant them plenary powers to strike. In these conditions and as a result of this policy I believe the answer to your question is that the busmen will be confused as to the ultimate outcome of their application."

II

What policies are being canvassed among London busmen to secure the wage increase?

"There is solid support and understanding among the men that some kind of pressure has got to be exerted against the LTE and their politically-inspired decision not to increase the wage packet. They are very clear that the turning down of their claim had no motives, no reasons, other than those of the Tory Government.

"Broadly speaking, there are two schools of thought among the men: one is for bringing in the largest guns first and right away—the official strike; the other is to start with the lighter weapon first, banning overtime and rest-day work, then if necessary bringing up the larger guns.

Ban overtime!

"I believe that the second school of thought is the more realistic, first because, as I have already said, I do not believe that the GEC have any intention of giving the men plenary powers to strike at this stage in the wages fight, secondly, because with over 2,000 drivers and conductors short of their service requirements, the LTE could not face a long sustained ban on overtime and rest-day working without their services in many cases ending up in chaos. This weapon has been used before and it had the LTE screaming their heads off within a few days.

"A good deal of re-thinking has, in my view, got to be done by the men's garage representatives, if undue delay

and procrastination is to be avoided, if the men are to be given clear and unfrightened leadership. (One of these garage leaders made the point to me: 'if the GEC refuse to grant plenary powers to strike, they will have exposed themselves to the membership.' When I asked: 'how much further such an exposure would have advanced the men's wage increase?' no reply was to be had.)

"The men support their representatives' refusal to have anything to do with an arbitration court, they are also clear that their job, once the most sought after, is now one of the least sought after, because its wage packet does not compensate men for working shifts, week-ends, 12 hour spreadovers, etc., etc. Their claim is justified up to the very hilt; the recent rent increases, the credit freeze, the National Health contributions increase, have redoubled the justice of their claim to a wage increase of 25/- per week."

III

Given the fact that the Tory Government are quite clearly spoiling for a fight while it would appear that no preparations have been made by the TU leaders or the TUC for a showdown, either educationally or organizationally—would public transport be the best front on which to launch an attack?

"I am convinced that it is precisely this plus the fact that the last increase for Provincial busmen broke down the wage differential between London and the Provinces and a new increase for the former would now widen the differential again, which has determined the intentions and tactics of the GEC of the T and GW Union on this question.

"Their first proposal—to have a National conference of both London and Provincial representatives to thrash the matter out, instead of making a direct and immediate application to the LTE—was their way of saying NO to your question. Their second proposal—to refer the London claim to arbitration—was a second NO.

Common action needed

"Of course one answer to the question could be that this is the opportune time for all those unions with members employed by the British Transport Commission—all of whom have made wage increase applications to the Commission—to meet in order to determine common policy and struggle. This common policy toward the Commission between these unions—some of the most powerful in the country—is long overdue. It reflects neither credit nor commonsense upon the leadership that this has not even been considered. There are some real, concrete and valid reasons why London Busworkers should not be thrown into an exposed position in a wages struggle which faces the entire trade union movement of this country. A labour force which is continually changing and which does not remain static for a even a few weeks at a time, is not the best possible force especially without some preparation. The travel-

E. Sop's AEU Fable

THE OTHER DAY I was told a true and cautionary tale by my friend, Comrade Wise. A year ago the Chairman of a certain AEU District Committee died. He was an old and well-respected war-horse and his collapse was rather sudden and unexpected. In the ensuing melee there were some half-dozen candidates for the post:

Comrade Absolute (a Moral Re-
armament wallah).

Comrade Snake (a Stalinist).

Comrade Wise.

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

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

A. N. Other.

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

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

Says Comrade Snake: "We gave the job to Absolute last year. All the Left-wing candidates ought to get together and nominate a common runner who would easily beat him this year. I don't care who get it, so long as it's not Absolute. So let's have a meeting on October 16th to settle who will go."

My friend gravely agreed, and it later became evident that our Stalinist friend had been to see Comrade Rabbett and Mouse as well.

There was only one snag in the Machiavellian plan. Nominations for the election closed on October 14th! So when the District Committee met on October 20th, three nominations had been received:

Comrade Absolute (a certainty, of course).

Comrade Snake . . .

and here I must break off to describe to you the apoplexy of Comrades Rabbett and Mouse. They were furious at the trick. But the real surprise was my friend's nomination. When Comrade Snake heard it read, he turned on my friend with a look of mixed incredulity and hatred.

It so happened that Comrade Absolute was absent with 'flu that night, so my friend was in the chair (he being vice-chairman). Having read out the nominations, he asked the meeting whether there were any comments. After a good deal of puffing and blowing, Comrade Rabbett grumbled, "I didn't know the nominations were due in so soon."

"Oh," says my friend, quick as light, "did you send in your acceptance then?" "Yes," replied Comrade Rabbett, grateful at this straw to clutch. "There seems to have been some slip-up at the Post Office," said my friend, "I don't think our Brother ought to be penalized because of inefficiency on the part of others. I move that we extend the final date by another fortnight." This was speedily seconded, agreed and resolved.

And the moral of this little tale.

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ling public is fed up to the teeth with fares increases, and not knowing the facts regarding the relationship between fares and wages rates are not as well disposed toward the men's claim as we should like or as they would be were the facts put before them.

"This does not mean however that London's Bus-Workers, given leadership and some preparation for struggle, and with the support of other sections of the organized workers, could not teach a sharp lesson to the Tories both inside and outside the House of Commons who are as firmly convinced as ever they were that the 'FAT' is for THEM while the LEAN is for US."

These pages have been set aside for a socialist review of the industrial struggle.

Help to make them complete by sending in news and comments.

THE MOVEMENT

The revolutionary tradition in Britain owes much to

JOHN McLEAN — SOCIALIST

By Harry McShane

ONE OF THE MOST stirring events I can remember took place on a cold winter's night in December, 1918. Those of us who had supported John McLean in his fight against the first world war were delighted at the great crowd of workers who turned up at Buchanan Street station, Glasgow, to meet the train carrying him from Aberdeen after his release from Peterhead prison.

John was a Labour candidate in Gorbals. His opponent was George N. Barnes. Barnes refused to leave the Cabinet when the Parliamentary Labour Party decided to withdraw from the First Coalition Government. Neither Barnes nor any other candidate in Glasgow could speak without facing interruptions over the continued imprisonment of John McLean. A week before polling-day he had to be released.

The train was late. Old Jimmy Johnstone, a rigger who never wore a collar and tie, spoke to the vast crowd that waited for the train. He was an old friend and comrade of John McLean and was the first Clydeside Socialist to fall foul of the police for his anti-war activities. His earnestness and rough natural eloquence kept the audience interested until the train arrived.

One can never forget that exciting scene. A lorry came from nowhere and John was on top of it. A monster red flag appeared and John grabbed hold of it. The lorry was pulled down through the main streets and John McLean, although weak after a prolonged hunger strike, waved the flag with great vigour. On arrival at Carlton Place speeches were made by the romantic James Maxton, the then fiery Neil McLean, William Gallacher, Harry Hopkins and others.

Classes in class war

I first heard John McLean speak in the early part of 1910. He was acting as chairman for a Henry F. Northcote who was delivering a lantern lecture under the auspices of the Social Democratic Party. John denounced Lloyd's George's famous budget and criticised Macdonald and Snowden for having described it as a "Socialist Budget." John was already well known because of his classes in economics and his propagandist activities.

I met him later the same year on a joint committee of the provisionally-formed British Socialist Party and the Social Democratic Party. I had the temerity to oppose a proposal by John and for the first time, but not the last, got only my own vote.

In 1911, the Social Democratic Party agreed to merge with the British Socialist Party. I was then to see and hear much of John McLean. I attended his classes and received weekly inspiration. There was nothing academic about John McLean. He drew lessons from current events and the class struggle was there all the time.

There was, at that time, a body in Glasgow, known as the Catholic Socialist Society led by John Wheatley, one of the ablest men ever produced by the working class movement. He was the man behind Maxton, Kirkwood and the others who went from Clydeside to Westminster in 1922. The Catholic Socialist Society held indoor meetings on Sunday afternoons.

"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.

HARRY McSHANE, friend and disciple of the great revolutionary, writes in memory of his death just over 34 years ago.

I went to hear John speak to one of these meetings on "The Coming of Socialism."

John enjoyed himself, and so did the audience. He started with the nebular theory and the formation of the earth. When he came to deal with the origin of man Wheatley touched his hand and whispered that he was speaking to a Catholic audience. John told the audience and said that he had delivered the same lecture to Protestants and did not think he was insulting them. He then sat down. The audience demanded that the lecture continue.

Provokes discussion

The highlight came when John dealt with the Socialist movement throughout the world and closed by saying, "This is the only country in the world where you have a Socialist party that is not class-conscious; I refer to the Independent Labour Party." There was a storm. The Catholic Socialist Society was affiliated to the ILP. I have never listened to a better discussion than the one I heard that day. It seemed to cover everything. I came away with a greater admiration for John McLean than ever before.

When the first World war broke out John was on holiday at Tarbert. Following Sir Edward Grey's speech in the House of Commons, he chalked the streets of Tarbert with the words, "Sir Edward Grey is a liar." On his return to Glasgow he spoke at a meeting at Nelson's Monument, Glasgow Green, and declared his opposition to the war. The British Socialist Party, the Independent Labour Party and even the Socialist Labour Party were all split on the war at this stage, but John did not waver.

War and prison

It was in February, 1915, that the first strike in wartime took place. This led to the formation of the **Clyde Workers' Committee**. Its concentration on economic questions to the exclusion of the issue of the war led to some disagreements. **John McLean and others were held at arms' length.**

Later the same year John was given five days' imprisonment for a speech he made in the presence of soldiers. He refused to pay a fine of five pounds. He was released in time to take the chair at a meeting with Sylvia Pankhurst and George Lansbury as speakers. The meeting had to be held in the open air because the magistrates had prevented its being held in the City Hall.

Because of his imprisonment, Govan

School Board decided to dismiss him. This led to interruptions at the meeting of the Board and large demonstrations outside. He was given a month's notice of dismissal. He was serving his notice when a procession of workers from Fairfield Shipyard stopped at the school and took him with them. **That was the day when the Sherriff had to telephone to Westminster and got the promise of rent restriction. It was November, 1915. John never returned to the school.**

He prompted the Glasgow District Committee of the British Socialist Party to issue the **Vanguard** in order to counter the pro-war propaganda conducted in the official organ **Justice**. When **Forward** was suppressed in January, 1916, **Vanguard** was also seized. Shortly after this he was again arrested and sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

Shop stewards were deported and a number of leaders were sent to prison. The Government had decided to wage war on the Clydeside workers. A reception was given to all the leaders released from prison in St. Mungo Halls. One man was missing and that was John McLean. From that night onwards the agitation for his release was intensified. He was ultimately allowed out on ticket-of-leave. His health was obviously affected but he did not rest.

Leninism and workers' power

I recall one night after the Russian Revolution at a meeting in the International Halls when he declared himself a Leninist in reply to Ramsey Macdonald who, at a meeting in Glasgow, had said that he was not a Leninist.

He spoke of the steps the workers would take when seizing power. He then said these were not the steps that would be taken but he had outlined them in order to provoke thinking on the matter. This and other meetings led to him being again arrested. He was given a five year's sentence.

Following his release in December, 1918, he threw himself into the struggle again. He had differences with some of the Clydeside leaders. He fell out with some members of the EC of the British Socialist Party over an attempt to get him to drop all his work and concentrate on the Hands off Russia Committee. He left the BSP and re-issued the **Vanguard**.

The branch of the BSP of which I was secretary, broke from the party about the same time. In 1920, I was

dismissed from my job, John proposed that I work with him on a propaganda campaign. This led to the formation of a team known as **The Tramp Trust Unlimited**. We covered the whole of Scotland. There were clashes with the Communist Party formed later in 1920. John held that Moscow could not dictate to Glasgow.

He agreed with Communist Party policy but was opposed to its make-up so far as leadership was concerned. He later advocated the formation of a **Scottish Community Party**.

Unemployed struggles

In November, 1920, we convened the first meeting of the unemployed. On John's suggestion the unemployed marched to the City Chambers where a deputation met Wheatley, Shinwell, Dollan and others. This began a new struggle. Similar activities led by Wal Hannington, in London, led to the formation of a national unemployed organization.

John McLean was taken away from this, in 1921, when he was arrested for speeches to locked-out miners. He was given three months' imprisonment. He was tried in Airdrie and made a speech in his defence.

Again in 1922 he was arrested for speeches to the unemployed. During his trial the court was cleared because of cheers given to statements he made. He was given a twelve months' sentence. Later, I was arrested. On my release I joined the Communist Party. I last saw John in May, 1923, when he came to protest against my eviction from my house. We both marched crowds to the place and spoke on two different platforms.

A step ahead

I left Glasgow on August of the same year in search of a job. He died in November. Thousands of workers attended his funeral, his coffin being carried by four ILP members of Parliament.

This was the end of a man who sacrificed himself for the movement. He was recognised by Lenin. His classes were known about in Germany during the war. He educated the Socialists of Clydeside and of Scotland.

There are many gaps in this account of my memories of John McLean. Let me say that he had a greater influence on me than any man I have ever known. He was often out of step because he was a step ahead.

THE YOUNG SOCIALIST

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EDITORIAL

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

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

We have to choose whether to be socialists or socialites.
It is a political question, comrades.

YOUTH SECTIONS

London Notebook

THE PAST MONTH has seen a period of heightened activity in the London area; three schools were held, a new Section was formed in South Hendon (which promises to be strong, vigorous and 'political'), and in both Hornsey and Hampstead, the preliminary work is being done which, we hope, will show results in the new year.

School at Norwood. Norwood Section held a day school on November 24th in association with the Movement for Colonial Freedom; the School was held in two sessions—the first, heard a lecture from Cyril Smith on why he is in the Labour Party. The discussion which followed was warm and inconclusive.

The second session was devoted to discussion of **Labour's Colonial Policy**, the three Statements which have been published over the past two years. Anthony Wedgwood Benn MP stated that the implementation of these policy statements would represent a huge stride towards the liberation of the peoples of the British Colonies; where they were a little vague (on the speed of the stride, for example) it must be the job of young socialists to demand that the next Labour Government would commit itself to a timetable, etc. . . . We did: instead of a timetable, comrades demanded a stop-watch; instead of the 1 per cent dole promised the colonial people in the Labour Party statement, comrades demanded the nationalization of the overseas corporations like Booker's, United Africa and BP and their transfer to the workers on the spot; instead of 'safeguarding' white settler interests, comrades demanded the withdrawal of troops. But on some of the more difficult issues the crying need for political education in Sections was made apparent; but, as so often, the discussions could not develop fully in the time available.

School at Shoreditch. The Shoreditch and Finsbury Section invited us, the following week, to hear their MP, Victor Collins lecture on 'Human Rela-

tionships in Industry'; he told us what a firm believer he was in workers' partici . . . er . . . control, but . . . He seemed surprised to hear our equal firmness of belief in **workers' control and power.** It was unfortunate that this week-end should have been chosen by the London Labour Party for a second, overflow, school which was held near Canterbury, to accommodate those unlucky people who couldn't be fitted in at Guildford (reported in **The Young Socialist**, December 1957), as this may have been responsible for the small attendance. But apart from this, the London EC must share some of the blame; they claim to recognize the central importance of political education but they refuse to make the necessary lists of addresses available, so that a Section as enterprising and hospitable as Shoreditch could make the best use of its resources.

However, if Sections like to send announcements of forthcoming 'open' activities, **THE YOUNG SOCIALIST** will be pleased to publish them free.

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

On the next page we print the first article from our new music columnist, TOM HOLLO-WAY, who was 'Disc-rite' for the late **Socialist Advance.**

LETTERS

Dear Comrade,

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

If we are to consider the activity of young people today in Hungary and Poland, is it correct to say that their desire to be set free from their long association with Moscow is necessarily a true indication that they want Socialism (as defined by Michael Kidron in his pamphlet: "Socialism is a type of society in which all the members of the community collectively determine their conditions of life and their way of living")? I am inclined to have doubts about this, and perhaps it would be as well to tell you that I am 31 years old before I continue with this line of thought.

History shows that youth becomes incensed from time to time, when conditions in their own country become oppressive, but there are few examples to show that youth by its revolutionary activity, has fought solely for the liberation of those suffering from oppression in another country. Possibly the events in Hungary, where some young Russian Soldiers gave up their arms to some young Hungarian militant Socialists is an indication that there is international understanding between youth. I do not for one moment think that the youth of an imperialistic state could by themselves bring about the necessary change over to Socialism in one go, and I would contend that youth is, generally speaking, more concerned with adventure, whether it be Capitalism or Fascism, or anything else which to them at the moment is a variation on their own type of Society.

This is what we need:

A YOUTH CHARTER

THE TIME HAS COME for the trade union movement to start an organizing drive among young workers. The sharpening industrial struggle as employers push down workers' standards because of the Tory economic squeeze means that many young workers will be faced, for the first time, with the very real problem of taking an attitude towards trade-unionism. And the way they react will be largely determined by the way the trade union movement looks upon the problems of youth.

So far the signs are not good. Far too many adult trade union leaders adopt the attitude that young people "couldn't care less" because they have high wages, short hours and regular employment. These leaders (living on the memory of union struggles in the 'tween war years) argue that young workers cannot be expected to worry about trade unionism while they are living in the lap of relative luxury.

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

From these attitudes stems the general approach of British trade unionism to youth. With only a few exceptions, individual unions refuse to

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

To me the problem of assessing the direction of thought of young people today is unfortunately, directly associated with TV and the Capitalist Press. Unemployment is, I believe, considered by young people to be a challenge to find the job that everyone else unemployed is also seeking, and I am also of the opinion that too many young people look upon unemployment as something of a novelty or lark. Therefore, I would agree that, whilst educating young people in the principles of Socialism is the only solution, this must be considered as the end; and the beginning would have to be Trade Union activity, to ensure the absence of any large groups of Bureaucrats, so that workers have complete control over their destiny.

L.J.B., Watford

We agree with Comrade L. J. B. in his stressing the importance to us of Trade Union activity and organisation; in the article which we print below, some of the difficulties are pointed, but we do not feel that the process of education in socialism can be so easily divided into 'first steps' and 'second steps.' If as Comrade L. J. B. says, young workers think of unemployment as a lark, and that revolutionary action is not undertaken consciously as part of their struggle to control their own destiny, our job is so much the bigger.

Comrades, we like to get your comments, but we like you much better if you keep them short . . .

organize special youth conferences. Time after time delegates to the Trade Union Congress toss out resolutions asking for a youth conference. Similarly, pleas for the formulation of a special programme for young workers are turned down with the excuse that there are few (and only minor) issues applicable to young workers and these need no special program as they are handled through the "normal machinery" of the trade union movement.

Common Problems

Just how wrong these ideas of the old men of the movement are was demonstrated towards the end of last year when 31 young people (all but two of them trade unionists and most of them active trade unionists) met in Brussels for the World Assembly of Youth. Aided by the International

(continued next page)

FORUM

RON LEWIS sweeps away the Labour Party pamphlet and writes on

WORKERS' CONTROL OF INDUSTRY AND SOCIETY

AT BRIGHTON, last year, the main weight of the argument against socialism, and in particular, nationalization, consisted of the monotonous assertion that the people would not vote for it. That the "moderates" and statesmen of the working class movement have been wrong more often than right about what the working class will vote for, is something that will be generally accepted by readers of *Socialist Review*. Yet it is true to say that widespread hostility towards nationalization exists among large sections of the working class, a hostility that is not entirely the child of capitalist propaganda.

No genuine socialist is particularly dismayed by this hostility, for he is the first to recognize that there was nothing specifically socialist about the nationalization measures introduced between 1945 and 1950; indeed, many capitalist countries had pruned such 'dead wood' out of their 'free' econ-

omies long before, and transferred the responsibility and the debit to the state in much the same way. Furthermore, even in Britain, large sections of the capitalist class were in favour of such measures as the nationalization of fuel and power and the railways, and most of these undertakings were nationalized in accordance with reports drawn up by committees composed largely of capitalists.

Nationalization—first step

The act of nationalization has never been regarded by socialists as anything other than the transfer of title deeds to the state, a first step in the struggle for socialism. And within those limits of course, nationalization has worked. Sorely needed capital has been injected into moribund industries, and a wide measure of reorganisation and rationalization has taken place. These measures have increased efficiency, have provided a base from which an

increased tempo in industrial activity has sprung, but they have not provided the worker (with the possible exception of the miners) with any very apparent benefits. Neither has the consumer been made aware of any startling changes for the better.

The change most easily and therefore most often recognized by both worker and consumer, has been in the size of the new units, the remoteness of the controllers, and a growth of a faceless bureaucracy. True there are consumers' councils and workers' joint consultative committees, but power rests with neither of these bodies. They are at best, policy-sounding boards, and more often than not completely ignored by the oligarchs in all fundamental matters. This growth in size, accompanied by a concentration of power into fewer hands has served to accent the individual's feeling of impotence in his relations with society both as a worker and as a

consumer and as a result, he rejects further nationalization. It is his defence against the total deprivation of his right to have a voice in the community.

Ownership is NOT control

The responsibility for the fact that many workers now reject the concept of a collective economy, can be placed squarely upon the heads of the industrial leaders aided and abetted by genteel do-gooders for persuading the workers that salvation lay in the ownership of the means of production alone, and not in its control. Every attempt to introduce any serious discussion of the problem of control of industry, and in particular, through workers' control is denounced as utopian in trade-union circles, and not the business of the political wing, in the Labour Party. The most important task confronting the Left today in Britain, is to investigate the problems

YOUNG SOCIALIST

CHARTER — continued

Confederation of Free Trade Unions, which apparently does not have the same conservative attitude towards youth as does the British trade union movement, these young people spent more than a week discussing common problems of young people in the four continents from which they came. At the end of their discussions they produced a Young Workers' Charter which, although it has yet to receive any publicity in Britain, could well form the foundation of an all-out drive in win young workers over to active support of trade unionism.

From bench to work-bench

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

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

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

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

Working conditions

A minimum wage, says the Charter, must be guaranteed to all young workers. This wage must match the value of his services and must be high enough to enable him to enjoy a decent standard of living "which is essential to the harmonious development of his personality." The Young Workers' Charter demands also: "The principle of equal pay for work of equal value should be applied without discrimination on grounds of age, colour or sex."

Full social security rights (for adults as well as young people), encouragement for professional training, assistance to young married workers and "the development of an atmosphere at work conducive to the respect of a young worker's human dignity," are other demands voiced in the Charter.

When the Charter turns to hours and holidays it puts forward a whole series of demands which, even taken on their own, could form the focal point round which to recruit young workers to the trade union movement behind an active campaign of industrial demands.

Coming out in favour of a 40-hour week for adult workers, the Charter then puts forward its own demand for a 36-hour week for young workers under the age of eighteen and the abolition of all night-work for workers under 21. Then come demands for improved holidays:

One month's paid holiday for all workers under eighteen years of age. Three weeks' paid holiday for workers aged between eighteen and twenty-one. Extra holiday pay for all workers under twenty-one. And, in addition to ordinary holidays, the opportunity for young workers to "take advantage of cultural facilities without loss of earnings."

Self-determination

Not all the demands put forward in the Young Workers' Charter feature straight-forward industrial issues, some deal with political matters which many adult trade union leaders fight shy of.

"We recognize," says the Charter, "the right of the peoples of all lands to self determination. Economic freedom is as important as political freedom." The Charter then comes out in favour of the right of workers in "dependent territories" to organize trade unions and political parties. This point was underscored by the World Assembly of Youth president, Antoine Lawrence, when he said in his opening address that in "underdeveloped countries" trade unions will have to go beyond the simple lines of associations of wage earners. They must have for their object, he said, "the emancipation of their members," and further, in

order to carry out their program "trade unions are compelled to overstep the bounds of purely industrial or agricultural action," and to take political action.

There are, of course, holes in the Young Workers' Charter—holes to be expected when several dozen young people from as many different lands join together to formulate a program when they are only linked by a broad trade union outlook rather than a clearer defined political agreement. But, nonetheless, the Young Workers' Charter is a starting point. A point from which working class youth of Britain can be attracted towards the trade union movement and from there drawn into the Labour Party itself.

The immediate task is for trade unionists to insist that the trade unions and the TUC begin a campaign of publicity around the demands featured in the Young Workers' Charter. That special youth conferences and meetings be held where the young workers can hear the trade union attitude towards their problems and where they can be enlisted to fight for a solution of these problems. In this way the trade union movement will be doing a very necessary job for young workers. It will also be making sure that when industrial conflicts arise in the future the young workers know, without hesitation, whose side they must take in the fight.

TOM HERBERT

MUSIC

Post-Shearing

THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET

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

Recently we've had the chance to hear them without the aid of a record-player and very good it was too. Connie Kaye is surely the world's most restrained drummer, but then he never has been one of those that take the bit between their teeth in order to bolt through their solos, and it's he that sets the pace (if you can use that expression) for the others, I kept getting the impression that they were only interested in playing to each other, and this was heightened by the size of the Royal Festival Hall audience as well as by the reverence with which they play. Also they had the good fortune to be preceded by a well-known British Group, by comparison with which they could hardly fail to bene-

fit. Unlike so many other groups they don't seem to need the stimulus of an audience, for they never play for mere effect. Each note is a musical necessity to the form that they are playing in and the result is the sort of music that has been called "couth, shevelled and generate," always sensitive and always interesting. A good example of this you can find in *Django and Milano*, Esquire EP106.

Their more recent compositions are even more fascinating. *Fontessa* LTZ 15022 in the Comedia dell'Arte style I rate as one of the best things I've heard since Shearing came to the top, and the music that pianist and leader John Lewis has composed for the French film "One never knows," is again quite brilliant. Milt Jackson, on the vibes, is already well known to us as the hero of *Jacksonville*, London, LTZ-C 15091; Percy Heath (bass) makes up the four.

It rests with posterity whether or not the canon, the chorale variation, and the three part fugue are to become standard forms. I think they will, and I like to think that my old mate Johann Sebastian would approve of it; but one thing is certain, that they have had and will continue to have for many years to come the most tremendous influence on groups of every temperature.

TOM HOLLOWAY

Workers' Control

— continued

of control, draw up a policy for the economic enfranchisement of the workers, and get that policy accepted by the Labour movement.

The need for workers' control goes far beyond the narrow necessity of finding a new dynamic with which to impress upon the workers the virtue of nationalization. Indeed, the arguments in favour of broadening the basis of control of industry are far too numerous to be fully considered in this article. Some of the important ones, however, may be summarised thus:

(a) Mechanization, together with standardization, specialization and simplification, has reduced the worker's function to the performance of one of an infinite number of operations which make up the completed article, and thus he has been robbed of his individual skill and can find little or no fulfillment in his work. **Participation in the control of management would restore dignity to labour.**

(b) The growth of large scale production having in the main removed executive control away from the scene of production has depersonalized management replacing the boss whom the worker could see with an almost anonymous 'they'. This state of affairs is degrading and frustrating.

(c) The ever increasing concentration of power is resulting in the creation of vast units within the community answerable to no-one both in the private and public sectors. This cannot be corrected by an extension of governmental control alone for that would only increase an already top heavy bureaucracy and lead to Stalinism or something like it. **Only control from below can solve this problem of bureaucratic growth.**

(d) Real power is rapidly becoming so remotely exercised that even by existing standards, the structure of command is breaking down and waste, inefficiency, nepotism and corruption are making an appearance. (This is true too, of the Soviet economy). The cultivation of the mass market, the improvements in industrial techniques, the elimination of overlapping, have brought obvious benefits to man; and overall national planning must remain the aim of socialists. Nevertheless, a large degree of devolution in many spheres of the industrial unit are called for on grounds of efficiency alone.

(e) **Neither industry, nor anything else will ever be controlled by a few in the interest of the majority. Until the majority control the economy, it will continue to be run in the interest of the controllers, what ever party is in office.**

II

ARE THE WORKERS sufficiently educated to have a share in management?

There is no more specious argument than the one so much heard between 1945 and 1950 that worker's control is dependant upon the formal education of the workers. This argument neatly avoids the reality of the forms of control exercised in present society and endows the function of management with a mystery which it does not possess. **It ignores the fundamental division of labour which exists between the boards of directors and the technicians, namely that the former make policy while the latter execute it.**

That ordinary workers can exercise the control of directors without even having had a twelve-month stay at Ruskin, is evidenced by the example of the co-operative movement. Then there is the whole field of government, local and national. No education barrier exists to membership of political institutions. **And if decisions concerning the health, the state of the econ-**

omy and whether to blast us all into hell with the H-bomb can be left in the hands of councils and parliaments freely chosen by the people, then it is arrant rubbish to say that lack of education bars the worker from exercising the same right in his factory.

The 'education' argument is not an argument against worker's control; it is an argument against control by the non-specialist.

Are we rich enough

Is the industrial product large enough to permit popular control of production levels, investment etc.?

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

The rock upon which many early attempts to secure an equitable distribution of wealth foundered, was the poverty of the national product. In so far as Stalinism was a reaction to the problems of the Russian economic situation, it had its roots in the necessity to build wealth-producing machinery, that is to accumulate capital. And within the limitations of a Russia isolated by the failure of western revolutionary activity and cut off from developed economies, this capital could only be built up by depressing the living standards of the workers. It is most unlikely that this could have been achieved without the destruction of the nascent worker's economic democracy proclaimed in 1917, (although different political action might have produced changes in the West which would have ended Russia's economic isolation).

The world is rich enough

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

So far as the rest of the world is concerned, the problem of development is infinitely more simple than the growth of all industrial societies hitherto, provided that the developed world is prepared to co-operate. Science is on the threshold of providing cheap, easy to distribute power: automation, when geared to full utilization, is cheap in capital terms. There is now sufficient productive capacity in the world to enable modern societies to be created in the backward countries without their people or ours having to go through the "heroism" of Stalinism to create the necessary capital.

Minority control of investment has fulfilled its historic role; it should now be got rid of, together with its collective expression—the Nation-state.

III

HOW WILL worker's control be organized?

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

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

The base of this control will be the factory where the workers will meet at regular intervals, elect a committee to be responsible for conditions of service, hiring and firing, etc. All decisions of this committee would need the endorsement of the full assembly of the workers. The members of the committee would have to be subjected to easy and immediate recall. In addition to the matters over which the workers would have absolute control, they would receive and discuss reports from their delegates to the higher bodies of control, and all measures concerning the level of their product to be ploughed back would be carefully scrutinised.

Functional organization

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

(a) Departmental Committees. These would be needed only in large scale nation-wide industries, such as fuel and power, transport and certain sections of the national administration. In the main, they would be production committees and concern themselves primarily with efficiency.

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

(c) National Committees. These would be the ruling councils of industry and would function in somewhat the same way that boards of directors do now. Their job would be to lay down broad policy.

(d) Inter-industry committees would also be needed in some cases to co-ordinate the activities of allied industries. These would consist of representatives of the national committees concerned.

(e) A Central Planning Council. Overall, I envisage what, for the want of a better expression, I have called a planning council. This would decide general industrial policy and would, in the early days of industrial democracy, work with the government. Later on however, it might well become a new elective assembly having absolute authority.

Election and recall

The manner of the election of members of the above bodies would vary according to the size of the industry. In the smaller industrial unit, direct election of the national body by the workers would be practicable; the larger unit would have its members elected from and by the regional committees. But whatever the manner, the guiding principle must be to maintain the direct control of the worker and to write into the constitutions of all the above bodies sufficient safeguards to prevent the elevation of the members, by pay or by privilege, or the ability to perpetuate their powers into a new aristocracy. The workers must always retain the right of immediate recall of their elected representatives.

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

FORUM

It is not easy to define the exact forms which consumer representation will take, for they will be far more varied than the control exercised by the worker. For example, consumer influence on the primary producing authorities will be exercised by workers' representatives from the industries using the raw materials; while direct influence upon price, quality, etc., of the finished article will be best exercised through co-operatives. So far as the public utilities are concerned their distributive functions could be separated from the production side and administered by a modified form of local government.

All these measures would involve considerable re-organization of industry. Many functions now administered by one authority would have to be separated. On some bodies, the workers' freedom of action will have to be balanced by consumers' requirements; on others, not. But when this reorganization is complete, the Nation-state itself will have been negated for it is merely the instrument of exploitation.

WHAT WE ARE TOLD!

WE ARE consistently being told that the basic problem of our day is our inability to adapt ourselves to the new world created by the advent of the hydrogen bomb. This malady has been defined at great length by gentlemen who have barely left the University common room. One of the expressions used by one of these aesthetes is that Teddy Boys have come into being because we have third century B.C. patterns of behaviour in the midst of twentieth century technological civilization.

In an effort to help reach a code of behaviour which will enable us not only to live through hydrogen bomb tests, but also the other obscenities that are so conspicuously a part of our civilization, I offer the following:—

1. That the colour bar is justified, for despite everything that has been done for him the negro is incapable of reason. He has shown himself as clearly unable to produce either an atom or hydrogen bomb.

2. That a civilization reaches its highest point when it welcomes national suicide.

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

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

5. That behaving honourably is a symbol of decadence.

6. That the meek shall inherit the earth is communist propaganda, and anyone holding this to be true should be forcibly psycho-analysed.

7. That kindness is a symbol of weakness unbecoming to virile communities and something that they must destroy if they are to continue to exist.

8. That hydrogen bombs be tested repeatedly until it can be clearly shown that excessive radio-activity is harmful to mankind. The first test should be held in the English Channel and the politicians of all the major parties to be invited to observe the test from well within the danger zone. This is probably the only justification for a hydrogen bomb test.

9. That as a practical expression of this new philosophy a Statue of Senator McCarthy be erected in the Kremlin.

WILLY SEGAL

PARLIAMENT

THIS COLUMN has mentioned education before, and makes no (well, very little) apology for doing so again. The Local Government Bill now passing through the House will end the specific Treasury grant to local authorities for education and the grants for some other special services, and replace them with a general 'block' grant. Bearing in mind the reactionary mentality of a good many local authorities, this will doubtless reduce educational standards in various parts of the country.

There is, however, an even more important criticism. It has recently become clear to many people that British education is woefully behind America, and so far behind Russia, that it seems that our main industry in the future will have to be the tourist trade. **Socialist Review** has issued a pamphlet on the dangers of automation; perhaps the writer need not have worried, for at the present rate of progress, it will take us all our time repairing the machines we have got already. That the Government's only thoughts on the matter are to tinker around with educational finance shows that they are the most irresponsible set in power since an eighteenth-century Lord Chancellor was fired for (we think) frying eggs on the Great Seal during a house-party.

MR. MARQUAND (Middlesbrough East, Lab.) said...

"There were two strange coincidences. One was that the increase in the retirement pension which was going to cost £167 million in the next full year, should be exactly met by an increase of £167 million in the contributions. The other... was that the cost of war pensions, £16½ million, was going to be exactly met by the cost of the withdrawal of the tobacco concession."

By such ingenious calculations as those revealed by Mr. Marquand the Tories have "given" a pension increase that will save them money. The "increase," paid for by raising contributions, is used to justify the termination of the cheap tobacco allowance. The whole of this allowance is therefore a profit to the National Insurance fund, for if anything is justifiably a charge on taxation as a whole it is an increase in war pensions.

Taking the reduction in National Assistance into account, the Government has done quite nicely out of its little swindle. The star of a previous financial enquiry, that noted business man Mr. Sidney Stanley, once said that if he were made Prime Minister the Americans would soon be owing us money. By the same token, if a group of politicians that showed such acumen as does the Government in this pension scheme went into one of the more speculative businesses, detergents, say, or secondhand motor cars, where the quickness of the hand has to deceive the eye, they could soon wipe out the National Debt.

Not, let us say in passing, that this would profit the Tories; most of it is owed to them anyway and they solemnly raise taxation to pay the interest on it, which is one of the reasons why super-tax is such a grievous hurt to the governing classes.

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Tories Block Grants—continued

if we are to have all the reforms promised in the 1944 Education Act and, as well, at least one reform (the abolition of the "public" schools) not, regrettably, mentioned in the Act.

The Government's plan is to lump together 12 percentage grants (education is one) into a general grant. At present the amount of grant paid on a percentage basis under these 12 heads is £300m.; and of this sum, 87½ per cent is the percentage grant for education. If the Government's proposals pass into law—and with the assured steamroller majority it has in both Commons and Lords there is no doubt that they will do so—there is no guarantee that local authorities will continue to devote 87½ per cent of their block (or general) grant to education. They may choose to spend less on education than hitherto and more on child care or local health or the fire service.

Tory teachers turn

The Government's Bill to replace percentage grants by a block grant is opposed by all organizations of teachers and education authorities except one—the Conservative Teachers' Association! Bodies outside the educational world have joined in the chorus of condemnation; the TUC for example. Everyone fears that the block grant is an attempt to cut down on educational expenditure and educational standards. In 1922 the Geddes Committee, and in 1931 the May Committee, both committees whose object was to recommend to the Government fields of possible economies in public spending, suggested block grants as means of reducing expenditure; but their suggestions were not acted upon. The present Government says that the block grant does not mean economizing; but it has so far avoided any figures of how big the block grant will be. Without any figures, the Local Government Bill is not even a pig in a poke for local authorities, it is a poke in which there may perhaps be a pig!

If the block grant to be distributed were the same sum as is now distributed in percentage grants, it is possible to work out (according to a formula which the Government has drawn up) what each local authority would get. In some cases, authorities would get more, in some cases less. Those who would get more include backward areas, those who would get less include the progressive areas. And the White Paper which preceded the Bill made it clear that behind the revision of the

TALKING OF TRIBUNALS brings us to the present 'leak' enquiry. It is continuing as we go to press and its conclusions, therefore, are still in doubt. But what a remarkable thing it is that directors of prominent finance houses should also be Directors of the Bank of England! It is rather like having a prominent building contractor as Chairman of your local Housing Committee. (We confidently expect letters from old campaigners citing instances of just this). The Bank of England was the first institution that the Labour Government nationalized, back in 1946. There must have been a grave shortage of workers' representatives then.

THIS COLUMN must quote from a letter it has just received from a friend in New Zealand:

Full employment by English standards would be considered a major slump here, as it would mean about 15,000 out of work. The Labour Party made a big issue of it here, when the numbers rose from, I believe, 35 to 115 recently.

MICHAEL MILLETT

basic of calculating Exchequer grants lies the intention to reduce the proportion of local expenditure paid for by the Exchequer. In other words, rates will have to be increased in order to relieve taxes!

Dr. Alexander is secretary of the Association of Education Authorities which shares with the National Union of Teachers the distinction of being the most non-political organization in the country. Speaking at a meeting of protest organised by the National Union of Teachers on December 2, last year, he summed up the fears of all educationists about the block grant proposals. According to the **Times Educational Supplement** (which, unlike the parent **Times**, has opposed block grants from the start), he said: "The block would mean that the cost of maintaining what was now being done would be borne by the Government and the rates. The whole cost of any new proposals would fall on the rates alone. In five years' time the education service would cost £700m. a year—£150m. more than it did at present. If the block grant were introduced the amount to be found by the local authorities would go up from £200m. to £400m. This would mean an increase of 7/- in the £ in rates. What will local authorities do?"

The Workers' Educational Association has vigorously condemned the proposals. "Local authorities will either have to cut the education service and abandon development, or else put up the rates considerably," says its statement. "Every local authority will then go its own way, and more and more the standards of education available will depend on place of birth. This means a retreat from the principle of equal educational opportunity and the end of education as a national service." (But then, the Tories have never seen education as a national service.) With the WEA's frank and forthright condemnation of the retreat from equality of educational opportu-

nity, we are all, as Socialists, in complete agreement.

Fears as to the orderly development of education are at the bottom of all protests by teachers and education committees against the Bill. Sir Ronald Gould, secretary of the National Union of Teachers, has said the Bill shows contempt for education.

7-point program

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

1. Block grants lead to reduced expenditure.

2. Since 87½ percent of any future block grant will be money hitherto spent on education, educational expenditure will inevitably be reduced.

3. Block grants mean uneven distribution between one local authority and another. Wider difference in standard between authorities will result.

4. The block grant is a lump sum which will be fixed in advance (two or three years in advance!) by the Chancellor's order. Any rises in costs (due to inflation, for example) will have to be paid out of the rates.

5. Block grants will tear up the Education Act of 1944; they are not compatible with the powers of Minister and education authorities under the Act.

6. Education represents essential investment in the future. A country's greatest capital assets is its children. Block grants threaten to be an economy which would be a national disaster as far as education is concerned.

7. Changing the grant formula for education is at one blow destroying all the delicate mechanism which controls the educational partnership between the Ministry and 146 County or Town Halls.

Every voice in education is united against the block grant. Every Socialist voice should be united too; and the policy of the Labour Party must be to revert to the percentage grant as soon as it gets its parliamentary majority.

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.