

SOCIALIST REVIEW

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW, BUT INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

8th YEAR No 14

MID-JULY, 1958

SIXPENCE

FORTNIGHTLY
for the
Industrial Militant —
for
International
Socialism

WHAT NEXT, LABOUR?

DURING the past few years the Labour Party has steadily slipped to the right. The gap between the Macmillans and the Gaitskells has narrowed to the size of a pin-head. Re-thinking has given rise to double-talking.

Once the Party stood for the abolition of capitalism; now it stands for the shareholder-state. At one time the Party was determined "to secure for the producers by hand and brain the full fruits of their industry" on the "basis of the common ownership of the means of production." Now **Industry and Society**, the policy statement on nationalization, offers a new road to workers' control of industry. The Government will acquire control over certain unspecified firms by gambling on the Stock Exchange. The capitalist class is to be thrown off their seat of power by a series of transactions in the City.

The policy statement on pensions assumes the existence of capitalism sixty years hence. It's concern over the plight of the pensioners is certainly no match for the Labour MP's zeal over his own wage packet.

Listening to the debates on the Tories' plan for Cyprus it is difficult to believe that Barbara Castle said, at Brighton last year, and with the approval of the platform:

"The Labour Government are not like the Tories, talking of a vague future when they speak of self-determination in Cyprus . . . The next Labour Government will complete the freedom of Cyprus during their period of office and they do not include partition in their definition of democratic self-determination. We have no intention of keeping Cyprus a divided island—we have had enough of that."

Finally, the most recent gem from the crown of the Party—the statement on education. **Learning to Live** teaches us to live with capitalism. It assumes the existence of class society, of the division between "thinkers" and "workers" and then proceeds to outline a policy with which even the most faint-hearted liberal would not disagree.

LEBANON

by Dev Murarka

For the last two months barricades have gone up in tiny Lebanon. The opposition parties, united for once, refuse to yield either to force or persuasion till President Chamoun resigns. Ostensibly, the crisis is due to the obstinacy and ambition of this Bourbon of the Middle East. The causes, however, are deeper and the making of the present crisis can be traced back to the time of Suez.

The prosperity of the Lebanon depends on the oil-rich hinterland of the Middle East. Geo-

graphically she is part of the Arab world. Politically, however, she has always been somewhat aloof from the main-stream of Arab politics. This is due to the composition of her population which is almost evenly divided into Muslims and Christians. Political power is in the hands of rich merchants of Beirut who are predominantly Christians. They have tended to be unnecessarily pro-Western.

In the absence of any cohesive political movement or party, the country was, until recently,

But this is not all. Right-wing Labour's policy is accompanied by witch-hunting within the Party. The expulsion of John Lawrence for pursuing policies embarrassing to the leadership is no doubt intended to serve as a warning to all militant workers in the Party. Similarly, the situation in East Islington, where people wishing to join the Party have been refused because they belong to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Four of them had not previously belonged to a political party. Two others had been in the Hampstead Party and two in North Kensington. There, they were welcomed; but not so in Islington.

Such signs as these should indeed be taken as warnings, but not the way Morgan Phillips' boys intend. It should serve to warn every militant that **opposition to the right-wing must be mobilized in the factories and constituencies around a consistent policy designed to overthrow capitalist society not only by reforms, but by the action of the working class.**

But, although the face of the Shadow Cabinet has turned a distinct yellow, the left-wing is slow in gathering its forces. Victory For Socialism is no victory at all. Though somewhat to the left of Gaitskell and the boys of the Nuclear Brigade, the policy of Victory For Socialism offers no solutions to the problems of our time beyond a few reforms a little more radical than the official line.

Victory For Socialism cannot even be called an organization. It retreated rapidly before the NEC's attack, cancelling all plans to organize constituency branches. Furthermore, it does not actively support strikes or seek to further the activities of rank and file committees. It is now no more than a publishing house.

As for the other 'left-wing' leaders of the Party, if Barbara Castle's comment in the **Sunday Pictorial** of June 6th is any indication of their industrial policy the industrial militant will know exactly what to do with them. Barbara told us that "a series of stupid strikes has been putting up the cost of living . . ."

What, then, is needed? It is more than ever necessary for the working class to hammer out a consistent and militant policy around which it can mobilize in both factories and constituencies for the defeat of the witch-hunt and the right-wing leadership of the Labour Party.

peaceful by Middle Eastern standards, its politics corrupt and unprincipled, and its government a stooge of Western imperialism. In the rigged elections of 1957, President Chamoun ensured that Parliament was packed by his yesmen. The press was controlled, and the regime more responsible to Washington than to the Lebanese.

Opposition to Chamoun really started in the dark days of the Suez crisis. At the height of the crisis, when the progressive forces of nationalism in the Middle East were engaged in a tremendous struggle against the combined strength of the British and

French imperialists and expansionist Israel, President Chamoun's government was busy stabbing them in the back.

Immediately the hostilities in Suez were over, President Chamoun rushed to sign the infamous Eisenhower doctrine even before it had been approved by the US Congress and Senate. Since then Chamoun and his henchmen have behaved like all the other spoiled stooges of Washington in Asia. Confident of American support, armed support if required, he let it be known that he will use his yesmen in Parliament to amend the constitution so that he may

(continued back page)

EDUCATION

pages 6 and 7

BUSMEN

page 2

TU COMMENTARY

• **BUSMEN'S STRUGGLE**

THIS COLUMN is going to press just after Sir Wilfred Neden, the Ministry of Labour's chief industrial commissioner was unfortunately asked to intervene once again in the London bus dispute and just before he endorses the LTE's last spiteful jab at the victorious busmen.

Let's get the record straight: after seven weeks' heroic fight, the longest in their history, **the busmen defeated the Tories' wage freeze, won railwaymen's wage battle for them, opened a breach for all other sections, and defeated London Transport's attempt to split their own ranks** by offering two-thirds of their number a wage increase and the rest—mainly the country service staffs—nothing.

They did this with the active discouragement of the TUC and the leadership of the railway unions. They did it single-handed and won. To deal only with their own section, they forced the LTE to undertake a review of the country service men's position which, in the words of the 'peace formula,' would not

leave the wages of such staff in an unfavourable position compared with other staffs inside LTE Road Services or comparable grades elsewhere.

The men knew that 'other staffs inside LTE Road Services' could mean one thing and one thing only—Central London bus crews who were offered 8s 6d. They were worried about the words 'comparable grades elsewhere.'

Busmen reassured

Quite rightly, they refused to return until the last few words were explained clearly, unambiguously. Cousins was sent back to Sir John Elliott, head of LTE, to find out. He came back, held up two fingers close together with hardly a chink of light between them and said they would get 8s 6d as near as that.

The men went back. They had won. But there was one small cloud in the sky. What did the **Financial Times** have to say on the decision to return?

A large majority of the garages have voted to go back, apparently in the belief that the country busmen have been promised some specific increase. The LTE has denied making such a promise. Nevertheless, **the ambiguity has served its purpose, and the garages have rescinded their decision to stay out.**

The sequel is well-known. The country men were tricked shamefully. They received a 'generous offer' of 5s. which is 60 per cent of the 8s 6d won by the central men (which itself is 81 per cent of their claim). The men's representatives—without Cousins—argued with the LTE. They were shown the door. Cousins who had now come back from Belgium took a handful of permanent officials to plead with the LTE. They were shown the door.

The can was now firmly in the hands of the negotiating committee. But what a difference in atmosphere. There were no rank-and-file strikers outside their door to encourage them, they did not have report back immediately to an eager and militant body of men waiting impatiently for the next step forward. Their general secretary was away with a sprained back. 'Negotiate' became their slogan. **As always happens when the rank-and-file are remote from the scene, the representatives' blood ran thinner and they concluded that the word is mightier than the fist.**

Busmen tricked

The result? When one member proposed that the issue be put, once again, to the men, there was no seconder amongst the twelve-man negotiating committee. As, strangely enough, the capitalist press had predicted the same morning, they voted in the afternoon to ask Sir Wilfred Neden to intervene and . . . give a hand to slippery Sir John.

What an outcome. The LTE has been faithfully playing the Government's game. The busmen knew from the very beginning that they were fighting against both. They had beaten both, and yet, at the last moment, the negotiating committee appeals to that Government to arbitrate once

again. Couldn't they see that the umpire—as always—was wearing knuckledusters?

This is not the end. The men will force the issue down to the garages. A delegate conference might have taken place by the time these lines are read. But it would need a stupendous act of heroism to renew the strike, to make the few weeks' work after seven weeks out seem like an intermission, when the vast majority of strikers will get sweet blow-all out of it, and when any action taken would have to be unofficial.

Finally, who tricked the men back to work? To the men it appeared that a definite promise for 'near enough 8s 6d' was given. It is true the LTE was careful to issue a denial only **after** the gar-

ages had voted to return, but was Cousins so raw as to be really bluffed by Sir John Elliot?

Again, every trade-unionist can understand the difficulty in deciding whether to recommend a resumption of the strike, **but what on earth were the negotiating committee thinking of when they asked the Government to adjudicate between their yes-men on the LTE and the busmen? Does the Government still look like an objective umpire, even after the seven-week strike?.**

It is not only the busmen that will want to know. There are one-and-a-quarter million members of the Transport and General Workers' Union who are vitally interested, and beyond them, nine million organized workers.

• **ENGINEERS & RAILMEN**

SHIPYARD WORKERS have put in for a 12 per cent increase. As Ted Hill, General Secretary of the Boilermakers' Society said, when presenting the claim: "Do you know why we mention 12 per cent? Because if dividends can rise by 12 per cent, as they did in the first five months of this year, so should wages."

This is an encouraging sign from the top of the trade-union structure. Especially encouraging as the shipyard workers' claim follows on the submission of one for a miserable 6 per cent by Carron, for the three million engineering workers.

What is the leadership of the AEU and the other unions in the Confederation about? Since May, last year, when a pay rise was won through a solid national strike, and then half-lost by a leadership that called it off too soon and accepted 'strings' and conditions, including a wage stand-still for twelve months, the cost-of-living index has gone up by six per cent. **By the time the present claim is conceded—even if it is conceded in full, which is most unlikely—engineering workers will find themselves trailing even further behind prices.**

Workers' share

But that is not the major criticism of the 6 per cent. The principle of just keeping up with the cost-of-living is wrong, hopelessly wrong. Engineering wages have gone up as much as the cost of living since before the war. Living standards have gone up even more—and working wives and overtime-seeking husbands can explain the reason easily. But productivity has left both miles behind. Workers are producing three or four times as much per hour as they did in 1938.

Are we then to accept the principle that wages must keep abreast of prices only? Or are we to demand a greater and greater part of what we produce? **The think the answers should be 'yes' and 'no' in that order. Rank-and-filers know better.**

Redundancy threat

THERE is another principle that the Tory Government is trying to ram down our throats—

one which the leaders of the railway unions accepted to their eternal shame when they plumped for the 3 per cent increase. This is that 'any increase in wages must be coupled with 'economies' within the industry giving this increase.' In other words, the wage bill must remain constant and, if the bosses are forced to give a rise to some workers, others are going to be sacked in order to pay for it.

Delegates to the NUR annual conference have already shown their opposition to this principle in the clearest of terms. Opposition is sure to grow more as the BTC's economy plans unfold. Even the leadership of the NUR is beginning to fear the results of their too-easy acquiescence. This is what their organ, the **Railway Review**, wrote editorially at the end of last month.

It is becoming clear that the massive economy measures now being swiftly taken by the British Transport Commission were planned long before the pay crisis; that the pay settlement was a device used at what the Government thought was the right psychological moment, and that the greatest problems for railwaymen and the British public are to save the employment future of the former and preserve the nationalised transport for the latter.

One of the main economies planned is the speedy replacement of steam locos by diesels. Railwaymen have already had occasion to fight for conditions on the new diesels, on the issue of whether they would be single- or double-manned. A complicated compromise agreement was reached at the turn of last year (see Sid Bidwell's "Rail Unions Retreat" in SR, Mid-January, 1958) which registered a set-back for the workers. Now we can expect the BTC to hammer even more on this front.

This is a subject which involves not only footplatemen who have to suffer the strain which single manning involves, but everyone who ever travels by train. The Economist, the big business organ which has attacked double-manning on British Railways diesels ever since the subject became an issue, tells us why. Describing the German railway system, they write:

It is for the sake of safety, not of labour relations, that two men man the electric or diesel locomotive hauling a passenger train (June 28).

DAVID BREEN

SOCIALIST REVIEW BULK ORDER

(Six or more copies post free)

Please send me.....copies of the next.....

issue(s) of SOCIALIST REVIEW, for which you will bill me.

Name.....

Address.....

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.

INDUSTRIAL

BACK TO THE 30's ?

by E N Wiggins

READERS over thirty will remember without much difficulty the grim 'twenties. They will recall (as if it were yesterday) the various trappings of capitalism in distress—queues outside Labour exchanges (and pawn shops); boarded-up shops in even the most prosperous streets; miners' choirs singing from town to town.

One of the things that expressed most vividly the spirit of the times was the experience of youngsters leaving school and being unable to find work for—in some cases—five years and more (Gwyn Thomas refers to this terrible state of affairs in one of his novels). One of my best friends failed to find employment for nine months after leaving school—and that in one of the most prosperous parts of the country.

Happy days ?

Well, happy days are here again, as they say. At its last meeting, the Executive Committee of the Midland Federation of Trades Councils considered a motion from Kidderminster Trades Council which viewed with alarm the addition to the labour markets of several thousand more school leavers this autumn than last. It further asked the Federation to investigate the prospects for their employment, and the possibility of unemployment.

When the Federation met "... the Secretary made a statement concerning the information he had collected from Trades Councils, and suggested he should prepare a fuller report later when all Trades Councils had replied, and we had the full effect of the school leavers at the end of the summer term. It was agreed to accept this suggestion" (I quote from the minutes).

Further disquiet was expressed in the debate on another motion

• 'A GIANT'S STRENGTH' by JFC

The recent pamphlet issued by the Inns of Court Tory Society, *A Giant's Strength* seeks to restrict the right of unions to strike and prohibits entirely unofficial strikes. These proposals are more savage than the 1927 Trade Disputes Act, and are reminiscent of the Combination Acts.

Only unions registered with the Registrar of Friendly Societies could call a strike. But they would not be able to register until they incorporated into their constitution a certain set of rules which would be dictated by the bosses. If unregistered unions called a strike they would be acting illegally and could lose their funds in a court case. Remember Taff Vale?

Even if the unions were registered, striking would still be difficult. All strikes would be illegal until an 'independent tribunal' had published their views on the dispute. Having had some experience of independent arbitration awards, independent courts of enquiries and independent television authorities we know how 'independent' this

later the same day. Coventry Trades Council asked the Federation to agree: "That in view of the great increase in school leavers that is taking and will take place, and the difficulties and problems involved for Trade Unionists, parents and young people, we call upon all affiliated Councils to consider the implications of the Carr Reports to which TUC representatives are signatories. Further we request the Midlands Federation of Trades Councils to consider the possibility of calling a conference on this question." Again I quote from the minutes: "Bro. Higgs in moving this resolution, gave the position in Coventry and a few details from the Carr Report. He also pointed out the position of apprentices and women. The position was more difficult than four years ago. The resolution was formally seconded and carried without discussion."

Determined action

The Midlands are generally looked upon as being the most thriving industrial part of this country, and while it is true that the position in Birmingham is still reasonably healthy, nevertheless it is also true that in many parts of this region, there is considerable disquiet over the prospects of a return to the bad old days of the 1930's. Only determined trade union action can prevent our sons and grandsons being turned into the dead-end kids of the 1960's.

tribunal would be.

After the tribunal's report had been published 14 days would have to elapse until a legal strike could begin. The waiting period is to allow public opinion to be heard! If they mean the opinions of the public as heard in the *Daily Sketch*, *Express* and *Mirror* we can understand why they want enough time for their insidious and libellous propaganda to do its dirty work.

The tragedy is that these reactionary proposals will probably appeal to our right-wing bureaucratic trade union leaders. The idea of outlawing unofficial strikes which threaten their prestige and chance of a knighthood is right up their cul-de-sac. However the rank and file will see through these vicious measures. Despite the fact that the Inns of Court Tory group boast three Cabinet Ministers as vice-presidents we don't think these measures will see the statute book. The British worker will never surrender one of his fundamental rights. The right to withdraw his labour.

WAY FORWARD

by James D Young

What is the Labour bureaucracy but the highly-paid officials of the trade unions, the Labour Party and the Co-operative movement?

The peculiar thing about these people is that although of working class origin, they are in their way of life middle class people, and some may even become capitalists (the late J H Thomas for example).

So, while they are paid to look after working class interests, their own real interests are often tied up with the capitalist system.

Their main functions therefore are (a) to prevent the workers from becoming a really independent force in politics, and (b) to prevent the workers from discovering their class strength. Conversely, the main function of Socialists is to see to it that "at long last the working class shall enter upon the scene of history, no longer as a servile following, but as an independent force."

That is why a Socialist Party has to avoid becoming "an appendage of the official bourgeois democracy" and work for "the establishment of an independent organization of the workers . . . and make every municipality a centre and a nucleus of workers' societies in which the position and interests of the workers should be discussed independent of bourgeois influences."

Marxist way

The capitalists instinctively fear the growth of a really independent workers' movement; for they always know what is **dangerous to capitalist political power**. They do not mind a Labour Government very much; they can always keep it in "leading strings." But they do mind a mass working class movement, especially when such a movement rises above sectional interests and the old constitutional boundaries between "political" and "industrial" action. The response of the capitalist class to the bus strike for example has been to call for legislation to curb the power of the trade unions. Thus they want to draw the teeth of our militant (and even potentially militant) trade unions and so render them "safe." At least a section of the capitalist class is thor-

oughly fed up with "industrial peace" and "class collaboration." This is, of course, the inevitable response of capitalism whenever the workers take action on a class scale. Capitalism in its heyday could buy off the workers' movement by reforms; in its death agony it often prefers to use the bludgeon. **Unless in our educational work we place struggles like the bus strike against its class background, we shall not be treating the political and industrial situation in a Marxist way.**

Accept challenge

What of the lesson it teaches? In our educational work we cannot neglect that either. The answer is that for each new stage of the workers' struggle we need new methods of struggle; we need to take up the challenge which the capitalists have thrown down by extending the class front and by extending the struggle beyond the traditional constitutional boundaries. This must be done in the localities from the bottom, from the rank and file; and thereby show the Labour "leaders" that they must either take up the bosses' challenge, or make way for better men. There must be no question of "striking a bargain" with the boss class: as many at the top who disapprove of general strikes and workers' struggles just as much as Macmillan and the boys who preach "industrial peace," are anxious to do, and to which some Tories are still willing to agree.

But it is not enough to make speeches in and out of Parliament, and then wait for the general election in 1960. It must be a question of answering capitalism's challenge by organizing working class action on a scale we have not witnessed for years, of which the British ruling class has shown itself so much afraid (e.g. by reviving the Trade Councils and transforming them into active organs of working class struggle). To do any less in the present critical political situation would be to abandon the struggle for the defence of our class, and still more to abandon the struggle for the abolition of the wage and profit system.

SOCIALIST REVIEW SUBSCRIPTION FORM

I enclose ^{16s.} _{8s.} _{4s.} subscription for ^{1 year's} _{6 months'} _{3 months'} issue of

SOCIALIST REVIEW.

Name

Address

Send to M Maddison
21 Aubert Park, London, N5

IT'S OUR AFFAIR TOO !

THE PRESS has carried brief statements about the NEC's actions against John Lawrence, the former leader of the Labour Group on the St. Pancras Borough Council and certain members of the North and South St Pancras Constituency parties. What was it all about and what are the issues at stake?

First, Lawrence was suspended without warning, before any charges were brought against him and before he was given any chance to defend himself. As a suspended member, he was constitutionally debarred from holding any public position representing the Labour Party.

The majority of the Labour Group decided that they must abide by the constitution and appoint another, temporary leader until he was restored to full membership. A minority—some 15 councillors—took the view that Lawrence should continue as leader in spite of the NEC's suspension and formed an independent 'Socialist Labour Group.' Whether the majority or the minority's decision was right, the serious result—and the blame for it must rest on the NEC—was the splitting of the movement locally, which could only benefit one group of people, the Tory minority on the council. The members of the Socialist Labour Group were subsequently expelled from the party for refusing to accept the official Labour whip on the council.

Lawrence's suspension was

soon followed by his expulsion. **Whatever the grounds put forward by the NEC for his expulsion, it is pretty obvious that the real reason was that he was identified as leader with left-wing policies on the council, such as opposition to civil defence, keeping the rents of council flats as low as possible and celebrating May Day by flying the red flag and giving a holiday to the council employees.**

His Record

Because of this record he had won a considerable reputation among the rank and file of the party and no doubt the NEC decided that the time had come to get rid of him. Left-wingers become intolerable when they come to be widely known. **If the NEC wanted to be consistent, they should have gone after all the Members of the Labour Group who supported the policies with which Lawrence had become associated. But it is always safer to divide and conquer.**

One of the charges against

Lawrence was of organizing a faction inside his constituency Labour Party—South St Pancras—which in some unspecified way forced through decisions against the wishes of the majority of members. This has been made the pretext for a "re-organization" of the party by the NEC.

Excluded

The party was put in a state of suspension and all former members were required to re-apply for membership. Some, not all, were required not only to undertake to abide by the rules and constitution of the party but to state that they agreed with the re-organization. Those who refused to approve the NEC's action were excluded from membership. **The weakening of the local party in a marginal constituency obviously matters less to the NEC than lopping off the left wing.** Incidentally, since Lawrence was accused of actions detrimental to the interests of the party, it is worth recording that at the LCC elections earlier this year, Labour won three seats from the Tories in South St Pancras. Quite a large section of the electorate must have felt pretty satisfied with Labour's record in the borough.

Lawrence and the other expel-

led and excluded members of the St Pancras parties will be appealing to Annual Conference for reinstatement and the final decision on their case will be made then.

The Facts

It is therefore important that the facts in the case should be as widely known as possible in labour parties and affiliated organizations so that delegates to conference can be mandated to vote for their readmission to the party.

They Suffer

As everyone knows, this is not an isolated case. **There are far too many examples of high-handed action by the NEC against the democratic rights of party members. In very few cases is any disciplinary action taken against members who hold extreme right-wing views. It is the left-wing of the party that suffers. It is time to put a stop to the rot. If the NEC were forced to reverse their decision on this occasion, they would not be quite so ready to move against the Left in future.**

P MANSELL

LP COMMENTARY

WHAT HAS HAPPENED to NEC's H-bomb campaign?

For it seems to have petered out, unless of course it has already achieved its purpose, that of discouraging rank-and-file participation in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Alan Taylor, writing in the *New Statesman*, seemed to think that the NEC had been successful in preventing any large-scale participation by the working class in the campaign. Certainly, where members of the Labour Party are participating, by and large they are representative of the professional classes, and **there can be little doubt that control of the organization has passed into hands that do not recognize that the struggle against the bomb is the struggle for socialism.**

Careerism is rampant at the moment in all these organizations and one sees the same old smoothies popping up everywhere prepared to build a career out of trade with Russia, nuclear disarmament, and genteel ultra-leftism. These people stick together like excrement to a blanket and practice a rigid freemasonry so that any working class socialist who strays into their preserves soon gets pretty short shift. But because of their non-working class leadership, these organizations do not attract working class members and are therefore sterile. In this way the NEC's H-bomb

campaign may be said to have been successful for without organization there is no chance of changing the leadership of these pressure groups, and the Labour Party for all its faults remains the only organized force of working people, together of course with the trade unions.

• CYPRUS

THE LATEST PLAN for Cyprus seems to have embarrassed the Party leadership. For after the very emphatic resolution on the topic at Brighton it is very hard for the Party to accept the present plan, which is clearly designed more to keep NATO together, than to enable Cypriots to consummate their national desires.

Close the Base

Not, mind you, that I have ever felt any sympathy for the Lit'ry Left's devotion to the cause of Enosis. If I were a Cypriot, the last old gang of cut throats I would want to be associated with would be the Greek Church and State. However, our job is to close the base and withdraw all our troops as soon as possible. What the Cypriots want to do is their business.

• NYE

QUITE A NUMBER of news stories have appeared lately suggesting that Bevan plans to return to the fold after he becomes Foreign Minister. It is obvious that he is uncomfortable in the role of Statesman. It is even more obvious that his present behaviour springs more from the desire to do nothing that might be said to be splitting the Party and thus contributing to losing the next election.

I think that these news stories are wishful thinking. Even if he wanted to, once the Party is in power, his influence will be less than it is now. For he has few sincere friends on the right; he could hardly resign again without risking complete disaster. And judging from his record in the Labour Government from '45 to '51, few revolutionary ideas may be expected from him. **Remember the wage freeze, continuity of foreign policy, the crash rearmament programme, all decisions taken when he was in the cabinet; indeed his speech on rearmament a few months before he resigned on the same issue was hailed as a masterpiece and was published by Transport House as a pamphlet to win over the Party.**

Bevan is typical of a good many people, some of them well-meaning. They look for short cuts to socialism, great dramatic gestures that will accomplish in a flash a century of progress. There is, however, only one sure way. That is via the education, organization and leadership of the masses. All these manoeuvres, and intrigues within the Party hierarchy, meetings at the Summit and the like achieve only the permanence of the impact they make upon the people.

We need to develop, in the Party, a strategy for winning power for the workers over everything. Such a strategy should be known to every member, who should regard himself as a class cadre using every opportunity during business and leisure to win adherents for the cause.

With his magnetic personality, Bevan would have been very successful in providing some of the inspiration in that kind of strategy building. And had he helped to build a politically conscious, well trained core of activists within the Party, then at the end of his days he may well have looked back upon a life purposefully spent. As it is, he has betrayed everything the suburban Left thought he stood for, by playing ducks and drakes with the bomb issue.

APPRENTICES' WAGES

by Roger Cox
Shoreditch | YS

On July 2, a meeting called by the London District of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, was held at the TUC headquarters, London, to discuss the wages of apprentices and other junior workers.

Apprentices and junior workers have had a very rough deal from the employers. For many years now young workers have been fighting for decent wages and conditions. Indeed the present dispute originally began some 21 years ago.

Before 1937 trade unions had no agreement with employers covering apprentices' wages. The young workers earned only 2d for every 1/- earned by adult workers. In 1937 things came to a head, the apprentices struck and by a magnificent display of solidarity forced the employers to come to an agreement with the union. The young workers won a basic increase and a wage scale.

The wage scale is very important and is well worth looking at. It is based on a rising percentage of the adult wage according to the age of the apprentice. For example, a boy at 15 years earns £2 6s 10½d, that is, 26½ percent of the present adult wage. It then rises gradually to 62½ percent of the adult range.

This wage scale was in force for no less than 15 years. It is true that the wage scale was changed in 1943, but it was not until 1952 that a wage increase was conceded to young workers. And what a miserable increase it was! They got rises ranging from 4/6 to 11/-, and naturally everybody concerned was disappointed.

The Confederation has met the employers several times, but has so far failed to secure a new agreement. The Confederation demanded a completely new agreement but the employers would not budge. That is why the Confederation felt it necessary to meet young workers from all over the country to discuss with them and to win their support for its tug-of-war with the employers.

Meeting

About 150 young workers attended the meeting on July 2. It was addressed by Bro Baker (Boilermakers), and Bro Foster (AEU). Bro Baker spoke of the history of the young workers' struggles (as outlined above). Bro Foster spoke about the negotiations with the employers that have taken place over the past eight years.

The employers have an extremely poor case. The young workers, they say, do not need

an increase, because most of them work on piece rates, which makes their earnings greater than they would otherwise be. Of course this is nonsense. A boy of 20 receives only about 17/6 above his basic rates and a boy of 15 only 1/8. Greater earnings indeed! Besides, piece-rate working means that apprentices are not trained properly, and, what is just as important, they are overworked.

After questions, J. Farrand (AEU) moved a resolution supporting the Confederation and urging it to seek ways and means to obtain a justified wage increase.

The outcome of this meeting was quite satisfactory. Both sides gained confidence. "It is very bad to go into negotiations without a letter of support, for it gives your officers no confidence," stated Bro Foster.

The future

But the problems of young workers are by no means solved. Why have we young workers failed after 18 years of intermittent negotiations? Mainly, I think, because of the lack of leadership from the leaders of the trade union movement, and also because the unions lack a youth policy. A youth policy would help to forge a vital link between young rank-and-filers and the trade union leaders, as indeed the meeting reported above attempted.

Furthermore, shop stewards in both large and small establishments do not pay sufficient attention to organizing young workers.

Higher wages for young engineers were never more essential than they are today. As Bro Foster said: "It has come to the point where the old man is subsidizing the engineering industry." Unlike the situation in the building industry, where young workers have had a fair wage deal, young engineers' wages are being made up by their parents.

What then, do we need? A policy for youth. Greater efforts among all ranks of the engineering industry to organize and educate young workers. And finally, an effort should be made to win the active support of the Labour movement for the just claims of all apprentices.

Notebook

ABOUT 500 of us turned up at the Sports Day at the end of last month; no doubt the NEC Youth Sub-Committee will profit by comparing this figure with the 5,000 who stood in the rain in Trafalgar Square after the march on London the week before, the speeches were not much worse, the weather was reasonably fine. We heard that they were quite pleased, though rumours are going about that there is a solid body of dissatisfaction that the National Youth Officer has not been arranging enough expulsions of Youth Section activists. So we had better clear our throats for the rousing slogan: **Defend Alan Williams from the NEC!**

IT IS GOOD to report an important development from London. On July 6 a group of young workers, students and others (?) formed a committee to co-ordinate anti-Bomb activity by London youth. What is particularly encouraging is the presence of trade-unionists, Labour Party Section members and technical school students. In the technical schools there is a big potential to be developed, but it will mean

a lot of hard work; at the London School of Printing, for example, a debate on the H-Bomb only drew 18 students—that the majority declared for unilateral nuclear disarmament is no great cause for satisfaction for those of us who are trying to build a vigorous socialist youth movement. We have to work at it.

IN AN EARLIER Notebook we reported that NALSO had elected a strong left-wing executive at their Conference in April, and that the discussion-camp 'Beyond the Welfare State . . .' was the first sign of this new life in the organization. Besides tidying up the loose ends for the camp (the full program will be going out in the next few days), the NALSO executive elected a well known militant as London Organizer, set up committees to look into the problems of technical schools and colleges, and prepare a policy on student grants, and passed important resolutions calling for the expulsion of Mollet from the Socialist International, and protesting at the treatment of John Lawrence.

Bob Flagg

SEX, SYNCOPATION & SINATRA

by M Maddison (Stoke Newington YS)

IF SEX, SYNCOPATION and Sinatra are the Holy Trinity of working class culture—as John Crutchley suggests in his recent article (July 1)—then I'm going to quit politics and (in the words of *Candide*) 'go and work in the garden.' Not only do I refuse to accept the sanctity of the trinity; I challenge its significance as the kingpin of working class or any other culture.

Culture is not as limited as this. It includes such things as the nature of work and the feelings of people towards it; it includes language and the way that language is used; it also includes the attitude towards authority and, trivial though this may seem, the way people hold a knife and fork — or even whether they use a knife and fork. By narrowing the limits of culture down to these three aspects, Comrade Crutchley is in danger of debasing the value of his thesis.

I would go even a step further and question the entire concept of a specifically working class culture. The working class—as a group whose destinies are linked intimately with those of the capitalist power elite—can have no

distinct culture of its own. It is forced to accept, by and large, the mores of the dominant social class. Although the working class is part of a mass society with a mass culture, it is nevertheless, constantly hammering at the gates of the dominant elite. And in the process it is modifying and remoulding the values that it receives. The working class boy, for example, didn't invent the Teddy-boy drain-pipe trousers and drape jacket, nor does he create modern jazz. But he will take a fashion or a form of expression and remould it to suit the needs of his own social group.

It is a startling exaggeration to say that 'love and marriage go together like a horse and car-

(continued next page)

IT IS DIFFICULT to evaluate the Labour Party policy document on education, **LEARNING TO LIVE**, without deciding what one would expect a Socialist document on education to propose.

"Equality of opportunity," certainly. This means that we must be sure that the starting points for all children are equal. The accompanying article by C. Dallas sharply underlines the fact that this is not so under capitalism and that working class children suffer disadvantages from the word go.

bottleneck, the document suggests many inducements to attract teachers, except the one sure guarantee of success—pay them more. The National Union of Teachers is certainly not exorbitant in its demand for a scale in the region of £600 to £1200. Without offering this the Government will NOT get its teachers, and reduction of classes and other improvements will be postponed again, as it has been in the past.

This question ties up intimately with the question of what share of the national cake is to be devoted to education. At present it is a totally inadequate 3 percent (compare this with 9 percent for "defence"). The document reiterates what its precursor, **Challenge to Britain**, said: "We must see that the money is found, even if this means going without other things." Bravely spoken! But it does not follow up with a suggestion to increase the percentage. And unless Labour really does do so, practically all the proposed reforms will fall by the wayside. It is up to us to push hard in this direction and extract unequivocal figures from the planners.

EDUCATION

LEARNING TO LIVE?

by E G Bridie

Education today clearly serves the needs of capitalist society, and, starting from unequal beginnings, aggravates inequalities in order to give each class what it requires in adult life: for the rulers a wide knowledge gained in a manner which encourages individual initiative in continuing the class traditions of Britain and her Empire; for the middle east sufficient knowledge gained largely through spoonfeeding and cramming to undertake fairly complicated but mostly predetermined tasks, and a feeling that these are superior to manual jobs; for the working class sufficient knowledge of the 3 R's to enable school leavers to undertake the tasks required in industry, knowledge gained in a manner which encourages submission to authority all along the line. Clearly, then, till society changes and becomes classless, "equality of opportunity" will be impossible of achievement.

Having made these general remarks, let us look at the document on the plane to which it confines itself, that of reforms.

It starts with the welcome proposal to reduce the size of classes. At present 32 percent of primary and 62 percent of secondary school children are in classes over the statutory minimum (40 and 30 respectively), and suffer great educational harm. To achieve a reduction to the declared aim of 30 per class in primary and secondary schools, the document proposes to overcome the shortage of teachers, which is the main bottleneck, by providing more places in training colleges and also inducing as many suitable candidates outside schools as possible to take up teaching. It also intends to get rid of slum schools and all-age schools, cater better for handicapped children, and proposes to keep children at school till the end of the school year in which they turn 15 (not the end of the term as now), thus giving a full four years to all children, with the aim of increasing it to 5 later.

No streaming

In its organizational proposals, the document very properly places emphasis on the need for comprehensive schools as opposed to the present tripartite system, and the consequent dropping of the pernicious 11-plus examination. In January, 1958, there were only 49 comprehensive schools in the country, 21 of these in London. Wherever there are comprehensive schools, there is generally nothing but praise for them by all sections of the community that have dealings with them, and this despite the quite widespread sabotage on the part of grammar schools which were planned to be incorporated in the comprehensive system but were allowed to contract out.

However, comprehensive education means more than just large schools. Comprehensive schools must give comprehensive education, which means that streaming into higher and lower intelligence quotients as at present shall play no part in the school, and that all children shall be expected to reach a specified level tested by a public examination.

Reforms only

The worst feature of the document is its proposal to do nothing at all about the private and "public" schools that pamper 4 or so percent of children who later fill a vastly greater proportion of top jobs. So long as Labour is in power the rich may go on bequeathing their riches and prestige to their children and denying this to the rest of the population. This is a disgraceful submission to the STATUS QUO and must be fought tooth and nail.

In higher education the document proposes little change, beyond improving grants somewhat, expanding numbers consistent with the crying needs of industry today, and rationalizing some anomalies such as conditions of entry to universities. There seems little hope of any change in the class nature of the universities, particularly Oxford and Cambridge.

To sum up, the document proposes some reforms which, if carried out, will bolster up the present capitalist system and with difficulty help Britain keep its place in the technological race of the capitalist countries. Even then, the vague phraseology of the document warns us to be vigilant in ensuring the implementation of the proposals. The whole capitalist structure, however, is to be kept intact, with public schools and privileged universities, even though this is so obviously an impediment to getting the best results from the reforms. This must be condemned outright.

Immediate programme

Bearing this basic question in mind, we then require of our policy document an immediate program of reforms containing, as **Learning to Live** says, "measures diminishing educational inequalities and improving the quality as well as the scales of educational provision."

Such demands by themselves, however, not coupled with a clear struggle for a classless society, simply serve to oil the wheels of our present capitalist system, and could be put forward by any political group interested in competing with Russia and America in producing the technicians industry needs.

Unfortunately the Labour Party document does just this and no more.

Guarantees needed

These intentions are admirable and deserve commendation. I would have felt happier, however, if there had been some sure guarantee in the document of their being achieved. The note of doubt is induced by experience of the non-implementation of many of the most important features of the 1944 Education Act, of which the present proposals are largely a reiteration despite the six years of Labour Government since that date.

It thus seems justifiable to ask for guarantees that the present reforms will be carried out. For instance, to overcome the teacher-supply

YOUNG SOCIALIST (cont)

riage: the equation pregnancy and marriage is equally inaccurate. I don't know where Crutchley got his information about the 'pattern of working class courtship,' but he is to be congratulated on establishing himself as the proles' Kinsey.

As a whole, Comrade Crutchley's very interesting contribution seems a weird sociological hybrid of personal experience—confined to cinemas, dances and Sinatra long-playing records—and textbook indigestion: like the proverbial curate's egg it is good in parts. However, sociology isn't

just a survey of jazz, or erotic idylls or tennis clubs: it has wider horizons than these. Compared with the strides in political economy, sociology lags far behind. The time has come for the labour movement to understand itself and the world in which it lives; it can't go on whistling in the dark for ever. Sociological analyses can help, but they must be accurate.

Nevertheless, an honest and daring attempt has been made by Comrade Crutchley to deal with a sadly-neglected subject; such attempts are to be welcomed.

BUILD THE SOCIALIST REVIEW

Please send a free trial copy of **SOCIALIST REVIEW** to the following:

Name.....

Address.....

Name.....

Address.....

Send to **SOCIALIST REVIEW**

M Maddison

21 Aubert Park, N5

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CLASS

by C Dallas

The 1944 Education Act purported to give "equal educational opportunity" to all Britain's children. Before that time there was a direct connexion in nearly all cases between parents' income and the acquirement of higher education. Now selection for higher education purports to be made according to native "ability" and this is supposed to cut across class differences and in this way open the door to all who would profit by higher education. The other side of the coin of selection, namely, rejections, is similarly supposed to give proportional weight to each class. Is this in fact, what happens? Let us trace the children's course through their educational career to see whether or not it does. This article deals only with State schools, public schools having been adequately dealt with in the *Socialist Review* previously.

Ability

It is by now well established among educationalists that the ability to learn to read is far less closely connected with the mechanical mastering of sounds than with the general cultural background from which a child comes. Brian Simon, who wrote a damning criticism of intelligence testing in *Intelligence Testing and the Comprehensive School*, correctly says: "If a child comes from a home where the parents often tell him stories, where they read to him and take trouble to buy him suitable books, where they encourage him to paint, to draw, to write, and generally to express himself, then it is almost certain that by the age of six he will be talking fluently, reading well, and be generally interested in new activities." By contrast, a child who is denied these advantages by reason perhaps of the tired and harassed condition of his parents, because money is short, living conditions crowded, and because the parents never had the opportunity of much education themselves and so might not realise its value—such children may certainly develop initiative, independence and some skills the middle class child will not acquire, but these will not be in the field of learning to read and mastering the other academic skills that follow from it.

Streaming

Infant teachers are well aware of the discrepancy in academic achievement between children from what are commonly misnomered "good" and "bad" homes.

The differences found between children at the age of five tend to widen throughout their school career for two reasons: (1) The disadvantages suffered by the working class child as compared with the middle class child by the rate at which he is able to learn academic skills, and (2) the bias of schools towards pushing forward the "bright" children, i.e., those who learn easily, largely for the reasons mentioned; at the expense of those who have found it more difficult. This is brought about largely by the vicious, "junior leaving" examination (the II-plus), to which most junior schools gear their whole curriculum. (They do this because the prestige of any junior school is generally measured by its success in getting children selected for grammar schools and for the public schools which grant a few free places to children who do particularly well). The organization of the school for this purpose is generally done through "streaming" the children into A, B, C, etc., streams which diverge from the start, with the result that the longer a child is in a backward stream, the more difficult it is for him to catch up to a higher one.

11 Plus

The 11-plus examination itself, supposedly a pure test of ability to profit by different types of education (academic, technical or secondary modern where the emphasis is on manual and craft work) is far from being "above class" in any respect. It is impossible for it to be so. The test has had to be constructed, validated and standardized in the first place, using the teachers' approximate grading of performance, which, as we have seen, is so largely conditioned by the children's environment and also the middle class background and academic bias of the teacher himself. The test therefore tends to measure the skills readily acquired by middle class children in the academic field to the exclusion of any the average working class child may have acquired.

The working class child is therefore discriminated against in education right from the start. This unhappy picture has been well borne out in surveys of the class structure of grammar schools. Jean Floud's excellent survey of schooling in South West Hertfordshire and Middlesex, called *Social Class and Educational Opportunity*, shows that in 1952, 51 percent of candidates from middle-class homes were awarded grammar school places in South-West Hertfordshire, as against only 27 percent of lower middle-class candidates and 15 percent of working-class candidates. In Middlesbrough the percentage of candidates

awarded grammar school places was: middle class 68; lower middle-class 27; and working class 12. In both areas, children of skilled workers were more successful than children of unskilled workers, the children of clerical workers did better than the children of other members of the lower middle-class. When we consider that manual workers form over 70 percent of the adult male occupied population, we can see how overwhelming is the weight of environment compared with any other criterion of ability to learn (such as an Intelligence Quotient).

Secondary Stage

At the secondary stage the gulf continues to widen rapidly. The grammar schools are geared to the requirements of selection to the universities, the normal development of young adolescents in many spheres being overlooked for this purpose. Again the working class child is at a great advantage. Crowded home conditions where homework is difficult to do, the desire that the child should supplement the family income as soon as possible or at least not be too much of a drain on it, consequent lack of encouragement on the part of parents who because of their own early lack of opportunity perhaps see no particular point in further education, social isolation by critical friends and neighbours, cause great numbers of working class children to get to grammar school to leave early.

According to the Ministry of Education Central Advisory Council's report *Early Leaving* (1954), "of those who entered the grammar schools in 1946, 24 percent left at the age of fifteen, and only 17 percent availed themselves of their opportunity . . . to stay at school until they were eighteen." "Children from professional and managerial families account for 15 percent of the population, but for 25 percent of the grammar school population and 43.7 percent of the sixth form population." The report concluded: ". . . we have found that from the children of parents in professional or managerial occupations at one extreme to the children of unskilled workers at the other there is a steady and marked decline in performance at the grammar school, in the length of school life, and in academic promise at the time of leaving."

Secondary Modern

Children in secondary modern schools are left very much to the mercy of the head teacher. With the children's future seen to be in the main one of semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, the schools adapt themselves at worst to the minimum academic needs of such workers, neglecting everything else. At best, and against great odds a head teacher will attempt to give some wider cultural background. Some schools, in conjunction with their Local Educational Authorities, prepare some children for the General Certificate of Education. In the main, however, the children have reason to feel very deeply the fact that they have failed, and have been rejected by their education authorities—a feeling many teachers who have a middle class outlook have no sympathy with or do not even understand. Their revolt against those who have deprived them of their human dignity, gives rise to the numerous "blackboard jungle" incidents one hears of. In essence this is possibly the first healthy rebellion of working class youth against oppressive authority.

Upper middle class children who fail the 11-plus examination are nearly always sent to private schools, no matter how hard this may be for the parents, considering the exorbitant prices charged for private education. The reason is largely snobbery, which gives added proof of the sharp division of the different types of schools on class lines.

Inequality

No wonder that at the University level children of semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers are almost entirely unrepresented and that upper and middle-class children hold a near monopoly of attendance there. According to an inquiry into *Applications for Admission to Universities* by R K Kelsall, "of all university admissions in 1955-56 with addresses in England, 74 percent came from the professional, managerial and clerical classes. 21.7 percent were the children of skilled manual workers, 3.4 percent of semi-skilled manual workers and 0.9 percent of unskilled manual workers. The picture at Oxford and Cambridge is even more sharply outlined. Only 9 percent of entrants to Cambridge came from manual workers' homes, only 13 percent at Oxford. (These figures, incidentally, are similar to those prevailing in the 1930's).

It is thus clear that there is not equal educational opportunity in the state schools for all children in Britain.

The only way the inequality can be eliminated is by the total elimination of economic inequality which is the root cause and which begins to manifest itself educationally even before the child goes to school. The struggle for this is part of our struggle for Socialism.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

quarterly for marxist theory
published by Socialist Review

first issue out August 1 includes

Industrial Struggle in Britain. Kidron
Khrushchev's Russia. Cliff
French Socialist Party. Giacometti
Workers' Control. Libertini, Panzieri
Lenin, Luxemburg and the Revolutionary Party. Turov

50/60 pages. price 2/- 2/6 by post 10/- one year
from M Maddison 21 Aubert Park, London N5

The success of this journal depends on you

Lebanon — ctd

become President for another term of six years.

This had the electrifying effect of uniting almost all the Opposition. The Muslims were already incensed at his anti-Nasser policies. But a section of Christians were also outraged at this attempt to bully the Opposition. All the Opposition parties in Lebanon, which were split into small groups centred around personalities rather than principles, sensed the danger of Chamoun becoming President for another long term. Chamoun refused to declare that he would not stand for a second term. Meanwhile, rioting broke out in Beirut after the murder of the editor of a left-wing paper. Quickly, the Opposition leaders took control of the rioters and in a few days the riots were transformed into a somewhat disorganized armed rebellion.

From the very beginning Chamoun cried for armed help from the West. He used two arguments. One was that the United Arab Republic was smuggling arms across the border. The second was that unless he was helped, the other Western stooges in the Middle East

would find their position more and more uncomfortable.

Now strange things began to happen. Instead of rushing to help their trusted friend, the Western powers began to hedge. They shed tears for Chamoun publicly but in private advised him to go to the Security Council. The Security Council sent the dispute back to the Arab League. The Arab League did nothing beyond passing a polite resolution of goodwill. So, Chamoun went back to the Security Council.

This time the Security Council decided to send observers to the borders of Syria. The observers have reported that there is no evidence of infiltration from the United Arab Republic to Lebanon. This report has invited angry comments from Lebanon and Britain because there can be no excuse now to legalize an intervention if it takes place. This is a setback to Chamoun's hopes and the British desire to stage another Suez if possible.

Having led Chamoun up the garden path and after using him as their pawn in the Middle East, the Western Powers are now embarrassed by his friendship. Having backed the wrong horse, they will take care to disassociate themselves with him as rapidly as they can. Chamoun will dis-

appear from the Middle East stage as others have disappeared before him. The fact which is plain to everybody, except Chamoun himself, is that all the public outcry in the West is a cover under which he is being quietly abandoned.

The real issue in Lebanon is that she find her place in Arab politics as an Arab country. A corrupt oligarchy tried to turn from this natural course and is now on the run. It is but another step in the fight against imperialism which is going on ceaselessly all over Asia. The crisis in Lebanon is an object lesson in the liberating power of nationalism which is sweeping over the world. It is a warning on the wall for Western stooges everywhere, if they can read it. Their days are numbered. It is a warning to the Western ruling class that in the long run, stooges cannot protect their interests.

One encouraging feature of this crisis is that after Suez, the West is afraid of doing another one. Instead of rushing headlong to intervene, so far they have been content to make a show rather than do it. The ostentatious exercises of the US Sixth Fleet and the massive landing of British troops in Cyprus are examples of the inherent weakness and bankruptcy of Western policy.

PARLIAMENT

by MICHAEL MILLETT

QUIETLY, as if they were ashamed of their defeat, the Tories have surrendered a major part of the Rent Act.

Mr. Brooke, the Minister of Housing and Local Government, moved an amendment the essence of which is that a tenant can only be evicted if the landlord could show that the tenant had refused a new agreement "which he could reasonably have been expected to accept."

This raises questions that will have to be settled by the courts. For example, by how much does rent have to be increased before the 'offer' is unreasonable?

Will the courts interpret this as meaning that they can, in effect, arbitrate on rents? There is, presumably, nothing to stop a judge saying

"This incense of (say) twenty-five percent is unreasonable but if the landlord were to offer a new tenancy agreement in which the net increase was ten percent I would think differently of it."

In fact, there is now a great confusion about the Rent Act (s) and your correspondent, who is about as fond of the law, and has as much understanding of it, as Mr. Khrushchev has of Workers' Councils had better not hazard any more legal guesses.

SOCIALIST REVIEW is published twice a month by Socialist Review Publishing Co. Ltd. Subscriptions, post paid: 1 year: 16s. 6 months: 8s. 3 months: 4s. Opinions and policies expressed in signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the views of **Socialist Review** which are given in editorial statement.

All communications to be addressed to the publisher, M. Maddison, 21 Aubert Park, London, N5

Printed by H. Palmer (Harlow) Ltd. TU, Potter Street, Harlow, Essex.

But, to make a political analysis it does seem, or at least, the suspicion is not unfair, that this fog has not been generated entirely by accident. In other words, what Mr Brooke's landlords have lost on the legal swings may, he hopes, be regained on the practical roundabouts. If the law is confused and open to various interpretations, a fast talking landlord's agent may be able to persuade or frighten the tenant into agreements that could not be supported in law. Some hire purchase sharks work on this principle.

One example of Mr Brooke's ingenious misunderstanding was shown in an answer to Mrs. Lena Jeger who said:

There were many solicitors still advising their clients that there was nothing improper in the demanding of back rent by landlords . . .

Mr Brooke: I have repeatedly said that tenants and landlords before they had entered into agreements should take professional advice and if they had signed agreements which were unreasonable in some respect or other, not having taken the precaution of taking expert advice then I am sorry for them, but it has happened through their disregarding the dictates of common sense.

As Mr Brooke knows very well, no advice more expert is available than that of the ordinary solicitor—save to the fantastically rich who can afford specialized lawyers. If the law is misinterpreted by solicitors it must be an impenetrable tangle to the layman. Except, of course, to landlords who will always be ready to come forward with printed forms, "simplifications" and "candid advice."

Mr. Brooke's false naivete is shown by a further exchange:

Mr Robert Jenkins said that most of those who needed relief were the poorest members of the community and they would hesitate to defend a case in court if they knew that the costs were going to be given against them.

Mr Brooke said that an occupier need not incur serious costs, or any costs at all if he was not legally represented, and the arguments which he had to put to the court related not to points of law but wholly to matters within his own personal knowledge and experience. Legal representation was not essential.

Mr Weitzman—Does the minister mean that a man must not employ counsel or solicitors in the vital matter of saving his home for a period? Why not put a provision in the Bill that there be no legal representation on either side?

Mr Brooke said he was not saying that neither side should be legally represented. What he was saying was that an occupier who wished to conduct his own case should be able to do so because he was not required to argue any point of law. The Lord Chancellor . . . would normally limit the costs payable to one party or the other to amounts ranging from £4 to £7 or £8. The occupier therefore could go to court and state his case, or be legally represented without running the risk of having to pay inordinate costs.

This is quite incredible. Can Mr Brooke really imagine most ordinary people trying to argue against counsel? What does he think we are? Peter Manuels? To know that if we lose we shall only have to pay £8 of our interrogator's fees will be small comfort. Even at the cheapest, the cost of such an action, with fares, loss of work, etc., will scarcely be less than about £20.

To sum up: This withdrawal by the Tories does not mean that the political struggle is over; in fact, it makes the possibility of winning clarifications and further concessions all the greater.

And on the personal level we should encourage anyone we know threatened with a rent increase or eviction to see solicitors, a citizens' advice bureau or their local Labour Party.

There is a saying, "Justice is like the Savoy Hotel, open to everybody" but at least there is nothing to stop any of us going in there for a cup of tea.

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:

- 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.

- 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.

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

- The establishment of workers' committees in all concerns to control hiring, firing and working conditions.

- The establishment of the principle of work or full maintenance.

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

- The expansion of the housing programme by granting interest free loans to local authorities and the right to requisition privately held land.

- Free State education up to 18. Abolition of fee paying schools. For comprehensive schools and adequate maintenance grants—without a means test—for all university students.

- Opposition to all forms of racial discrimination. Equal rights and trade union protection to all workers whatever their country of origin. Freedom of migration for all workers to and from Britain.

- Freedom from political and economic oppression to all colonies. The offer of technical and economic assistance to the people of the underdeveloped countries.

- The unification of an independent Ireland.

- The abolition of conscription and the withdrawal of all British troops from overseas. The abolition of all weapons of mass destruction.

- A Socialist foreign policy independent of both Washington and Moscow.