

SOCIALIST REVIEW

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW, BUT INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

**FORTNIGHTLY
FOR
FACTORY MILITANT
AND
INTERNATIONAL
SOCIALISM**

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MID-JANUARY, 1958

SIXPENCE

TIME TO MOVE, LABOUR!

Now is the time, Labour. The Tories are split, isolated and losing their following. They dare not bait the Movement more—so Thorneycroft is dropped. But they dare not lose the pound—so deflation goes on, hidden by a concession here, a promise there and, everywhere, a well-fed sermon on sacrifices. So narrow is their horizon, so short-lived their hopes, that every change of tack to suit every failing breeze becomes a battle on “principle.” To each “principle” — a disciple; to each tack — a split; to each split—more isolation, more floundering, more unpopularity. They are weak, dead weak.

Now is the time, Labour; time to hound them out. Not merely, as decided by the Parliamentary Party to “press the Government to change the program of Parliamentary business when the House reassembles on January 21 so that the circumstances leading to the ‘unprecedented’ resignation of all three Treasury Ministers can be debated” (Times, January 8); not merely to pace through the intricacies of the Parliamentary gavotte; but to hound them out. Now is the time to campaign with everything we have—mass meetings, mass demonstrations, mass marches.

The people are ready. Already they have gone far beyond official labour policy in defence of peace, and broken Bevan’s Brighton rules on what constitutes strength. What have the Labour leaders done to fight the missile bases? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Why haven’t they endorsed the action of the Aberdeen workers who blacked

all work on missile bases in their area? Why haven’t they spread such action throughout the country? Why haven’t they used our industrial strength to save us from the poison of Tory politics?

The people are ready to defend their jobs. Why hasn’t the leadership made it clear that they would defend a man’s right to a job? that the massive profits made for industry in the past by the industrial workers should be used to provide them with full maintenance where no work is available? that we want to see the bosses’ books before they plead ‘we can’t afford it’? The hurt is there; where is the lead?

The people are ready. What better evidence than the bye-election results? Labour is not getting the support it could. Again, what better evidence than the bye-election results? Now is the time, Labour.

Unemployment and peace—two of the greatest issues—are moving the workers into battle. If the Labour leadership refuse to break from their Parliamentary manoeuvrings and into the streets and picket lines, they will at best be left behind and isolated by their supporters; at worst they will have demoralized the ranks and helped the Tories keep their withered fingers on the reins of Government. Labour must move for peace—boycott the missile bases as the first step in blacking all work on war production. Labour must defend our jobs—work or full maintenance for all; open bosses’ books to redundant workers.

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INDUSTRIAL

1. INTRODUCTION

LAWRENCE DALY who wrote the article reprinted here from FORUM, the short-lived magazine of the Socialist Forum Movement, is a Delegate of the 1,000-strong Glencraig branch of the NUM, and is a former Chairman of the Scottish NUM Youth Committee. We are reprinting his article here not because we agree with it—we don't—but because it represents a genre in labour movement journalism. Seemingly objective, seeming to say "let's face facts, comrades" it by-passes the most crucial issues facing the Scottish mineworkers. It says, in effect, that militant miners are to blame for the constant fire of industrial unrest; that unofficial strikes are bad as such—a result of selfishness—and should be curbed. It does not show that the class struggle in the mines is a result of class rule in the mines; that the unofficial striker is a front-line fighter in the battle for workers' control of the mines; that nationalization as we know it is a prop to the old society, another not-very-different form of exploitation. But we need not go on. We have here two very adequate answers to Lawrence Daly. One is from GRAHAM ACOTT, a Kent miner, a worker on the face; the other is from JAMES D. YOUNG who, while not having had direct experience of mining, has an intimate knowledge of the Scottish Labour movement. Each in turn represents the point of view which every militant socialist must adopt and fight for; in so doing, they represent the standpoint of the SOCIALIST REVIEW. Needless to say, comments, criticism and argument are invited.—Editor.

2. A Miner's Policy for Mines

By Graham Acott, Ramsgate

LAWRENCE DALY'S article poses many questions which I feel he could have answered himself, but he failed to do so. To me, his theme seems to be: we must discipline our members, especially the higher paid contract worker. But is this really what is needed?

Let us first consider why the most active group in the pits is the contract worker. I can assure Lawrence Daly that action by contract workers is not confined to Scotland alone. But why do they act in this way? Under the new wages structure the day workers' wages are negotiated and agreed upon at national level. These agreements cannot be altered at pit level, either in favour of the men by the Union, or to their detriment by the management, but contract workers' wages are negotiated at pit level by the local union branch, and are therefore easier to alter. There are many items which cannot be priced in a contract and payment is made by mutual agreement. This enables the Board, when they wish to 'economise,' to do so at the expense of the contract workers, which is the primary reason why they are that group of miners most often taking 'unconstitutional' action, and not because they are a set of hot-heads who think of nobody but themselves.

It can be argued that the miners have negotiating machinery through which they can take any dispute, but—ask any miner what he thinks of it. Lawrence Daly gives the answer in his article. He shows quite clearly how the machinery is used to delay the men's claims until, eventually, they are dropped, or the men take strike action. If this is a common occurrence, is it not human nature for the men to say: we strike first, to show we mean business?

The Socialist Program

What then is needed to rectify the troubles now experienced in the coalfields, and bring about true nationalization?

- 1 Control by the Miners—in other words, the thing lacking in all nationalized industries, workers' control. The man on the job should not only have a say in how things are run, but should control it through a workers' committee. This would help end the frustration now felt by the miners, and help convince them it is their industry.
- 2 Stop running the pits on a profit basis—it is quite ridiculous to try and run the pits on a limited budget; at the colliery where I am employed, large quantities of coal are lost because of the old, worn-out machinery in use at the face, and for transporting the coal to the surface.
- 3 Stop private industry living on mining—there are too many firms with monopolies of the essential machinery and equipment needed by the pits: these must be nationalized and become part of the mining industry. There are too many firms getting coal at cut prices: there are too many 'investors' living off compensation payments.

I think, therefore, that as Socialists we should be trying to find out why men act as they do, and try to work out a program to overcome their problems, so helping them forward. This would be more useful than condemning certain sections for their actions (we can read that sort of article in any capitalist paper), thereby helping the employers in their efforts to turn one group against the other.

THE SCOTTISH MINERS

By Lawrence Daly

THE RADICAL TRADITION in the Scottish coalfields is a powerful one, stretching from Alexander McDonald, through Keir Hardie and Bob Smillie to Abe Moffat. It has been expressed not only in the character of such leaders but also in the turbulent spirit of the rank and file, often exceeding that of the leaders themselves, though not always wisely. It would be wrong, however, to exaggerate the strength of that tradition today or to rely upon its automatic transmission to the present generation. Its presence is felt in the repeated election of Communists to many official posts, and paradoxically, in outbreaks of unofficial strikes—against the advice of these same Communists! It would be easy to applaud these strikes and "walk-outs" as signs of revolt against Coal Board bureaucrats and trade-union "bosses". But this would be an over simplified picture, ignoring some disquieting features in the situation.

An examination of these features requires certain conclusions to be drawn regarding the relations between the miners and the Coal Board, the Coal Board and the NUM, and the rank and file and the NUM leaders.

The working miner has direct contact with Coal Board under-officials on the production job—where most disputes arise. Beyond colliery level he can only see "big-shots" with "big salaries" in "big cars". The union has its closest contact with the Board at just that level—between full-time officials on both sides, where many of the disputes are resolved, by men who cannot see the actual conditions in which the dispute arose.

No contact

The rank and file has merely an occasional contact with the trade union leadership; a few of them with the local trade union committee at monthly branch meetings; or at the colliery with the union delegate (secretary in England) when there is a personal or group grievance to be taken up with the manager. Elaborate negotiating machinery was established in 1947 to deal with every kind of dispute or claim. But it has been so over-loaded with cases unresolved at colliery level that men often wait months for a settlement. Where money is involved, a few further weeks, or even months, may pass before the retrospective payment is decided. Patience is exhausted and the result is an unofficial strike.

The men are then exhorted to "abide by the machinery", "adhere to the procedure", "carry out union policy". This is known as the "gramophone record" speech and is often cynically received. They know that Coal Board officials resort to "the machinery" as a delaying tactic in the hope that a just

claim may be watered down somewhere "along the pipeline" when the NUM may agree to "compromise for the sake of a speedy settlement" knowing well that more claims are piling up behind. Or a manager may even agree with a claim but "send it up" because he will not take the responsibility for a decision. He does not want to "set a precedent" and "get his fingers rapped".

"Selfish" militants

Virtue is not all one side, however. If we are not frank about this we are simply not facing up to our problem. Men can, and do, make exaggerated and unjustified claims. And all too often resort to a walk-out before the claim has been considered either by the manager or the union delegate. Indeed, they often hear about the strike first and the claim after. The radicalism of the pioneers is always present but not their wisdom. I know that to some ears this will sound like a betrayal of the revolution. But facts are stubborn things.

Recently at one colliery we had surface workers on strike in retaliation against hewers for a previous stoppage. At others, strikes occurred because overtime had been stopped, or banned locally by the Union. At another, hewers claimed 10/- increase per shift and struck without awaiting any negotiations. Such actions are usually taken by the group concerned without even consulting workmates who may be thrown idle by the stoppage. The consequence is disunity among the men, a discrediting of the trade union, unnecessary loss of earnings, and an undermining of genuine claims. Trade union principle is replaced by the law of the jungle. A healthy sense of loyalty to one's workmate is abused.

This selfish "militancy" is almost exclusively confined to a small minority of piece-rate workers, demanding higher rates or allowances. The lower paid can't afford it. And they resent being forced to make unnecessary sacrifices. The higher paid "militant" seldom, if ever, attends a trade union branch meeting. The threat to trade unionism is obvious. Apathy results in small, unrepresentative trade union branch meetings, often dominated by political, religious or personal cliques. Occasional mass meetings, which usually arise from a colliery strike, invariably endorse the industrial policy of the union—unanimously. But ere long the wild-cat group has forgotten this decision and resorted to walk-out tactics. The situation is often aggravated by a mean and arrogant attitude on the part of Coal Board officials. It is against this background that relations between the rank and file and the union leaders has to be seen.

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LETTERS

Dear Comrades,

As one who has recently contributed to your paper and who hopes to do so also in the future I feel I must protest at the recent article on the election of Ernie Roberts to the post of Assistant General Secretary of the AEU (SOCIALIST REVIEW, December).

Such an article does little to raise the prestige of the paper and can only be considered a smear. I am not suggesting for one moment that the opinions expressed in it were those of the Editorial Board but, since it was published without comment, workers buying the paper could easily gain that impression.

I have known Ernie Roberts for a few years now, possibly not as intimately as the writer of the article, but enough to know that at present, anyway, Ernie's views are decidedly towards the Left. If he moves over to the Right-wing, as may well happen, surely the time to criticise will be when he actually moves, or prepares to move. Even then, the carping, rather silly attitude adopted by the writer should be avoided.

Let me be quite frank. The alternatives to Ernie Roberts as the Assistant General Secretary of the AEU were candidates who could certainly make no claim to being of the Left. I know that Ernie's election has been hailed by

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The Scottish leadership is personified in Abe Moffat who is regarded if not with affection, certainly with respect. But he and other full-time officials seem rather remote to working miners, who seldom come into personal contact with them and may only see them once or twice a year at a mass meeting or May Day demonstration. Members feel that "they" take all the decisions at the top and that attendance at monthly branch meetings is, therefore, a waste of time. The relatively well organised Communist Party can decide almost any question, from matters of policy to election of full-time officials. "The Scottish Miner", the union's paper has been a monthly "Daily Worker" since its inception and is regarded as such by the men.

Youth activity has been a special feature in Scotland since 1946 and has shown fruitful results, but it is still considerably restricted by lack of direct contact between youth representatives at branch level.

Proposals

This is a vital question since it is on the younger men we must count for the success of a future Labour Government and a socialist form of nationalisation. A democratic, dynamic, a constructive trade union is essential for the fulfillment of these tasks and to secure the present demands of the miners in the teeth of Tory opposition.

I therefore wish to make some proposals for consideration, some of which may be of general interest:—

1. **Youth.** Scotland's fine work is an example to other areas. But it could be many times better if there were regular monthly meetings of the Branch youth representatives in each district. The Scottish Youth Committee at present consists of two representatives from each of the four districts and it meets monthly to take decisions. The two representatives should report back to the district meeting to get these decisions operated and end the isolation of branch youth representatives.
2. **"The Scottish Miner"**. The paper should genuinely reflect the political and industrial viewpoints among the miners. For instance, the Scottish NUM branches—against the wishes of the leadership—condemned Soviet aggression in Hungary. Yet the only article published on this question so far was one which sought to justify Soviet intervention. A reply to this apologia from myself was rejected for publication. Genuine controversy should be permitted. If not, members and branches will stop purchasing the paper.
3. **Trade Union Democracy.** All elections should be by ballot vote and all nominees placed on the ballot paper. At present E.C. positions are filled by show of hands at small branch meetings. Candidates in excess of two are

eliminated by a similar method from the ballot paper in the elections of full-time officers.

This system easily lends itself to manipulation by organised groups. It should be scrapped. But the existence of the contending groups themselves should be openly accepted. As long as they work "underground" victory is practically assured for the most highly disciplined factions—the Communist Party, and, in some localities, Catholic Action. We could thus avoid the nauseating spectacle of a member having to apologise for violating the constitution, to men who were currently committing the self-same violation!

Surface workers should be represented separately on the union branch committees. Candidates who work on the surface have little chance in the ballot, in which 80 per cent. of the voters may be underground workers. This strengthens the feeling among surface workers that the union is only concerned with underground or piece-rate workers.

Branch Committees must assert their authority as the elected leadership of the men in face of the more irresponsible (and sometimes deplorably unprincipled) "militant". But equally they must collectively campaign for the removal of obstinate or provocative Coal Board officials. Rank and file miners with claims should be brought directly into negotiations as much as possible.

4. **Education.** In the widest sense of the term, trade union education must be streamlined to meet the challenge of the atomic age. Our methods have remained virtually unchanged since the days of Keir Hardie. They will not do for the age of television, radio, the cinema and the modern press. The mobile cinema is one answer. Will Scotland be the area to lead the Union in this field?

For the young NUM member there is no popular pamphlet outlining trade union principles and NUM policy. And with so many other attractions these days, can we really expect him to come along and hear them expounded (along with a mountain of routine business) at a drab branch meeting in a dingy little hall? Surely we must, by more up-to-date methods, instil the necessary understanding before we can expect results?

A great challenge faces the trade union movement. The leaders and the rank and file have a joint responsibility to meet it and ensure a decisive advance towards Socialism. In that advance the Scottish miners will, I feel sure, make a contribution consistent with their great traditions.

militants in the AEU as an advance on some other recent elections (by militants, I do not mean CPers, although they undoubtedly supported him) and I know that they will judge him on results.

Ernie may well go the way of many before him; on the other hand, he may not. Only time will tell. Meanwhile I suggest to comrades that they be thoroughly objective, and learn the lesson of his election, which would be much more fruitful: it is my opinion that the rank and file of the AEU, whilst not yet prepared to accept someone standing on a fully-rounded, revolutionary socialist program, are nevertheless determined to stop the drive of the Right-wing; Ernie's election is but the first step in their new march.

In conclusion may I say that the article made on me a very bad impression indeed. To include Ernie's enemies' views on "professional martyrdom" in the way it did seemed to indicate that the writer himself shared these views. As one who has been victimized by the employers many times and in many ways, I cannot but be angry at such slurs. Yes, Ernie has arrived; surely our job is to help keep him facing Left? M. Jones' article can well have the opposite effect.

Liverpool.

Yours fraternally,

ERIC S. HEFFER.

The Editorial Board agrees with every word of Comrade Heffer's criticisms and apologizes to readers for having let Comrade Jones' "Profile" through without comment.—Editor.

3. Unofficial Strikes — — a blow for workers control

By James D. Young

Although I haven't any first-hand knowledge of the mining industry, I fail to see how Lawrence Daly can "explain away" 699 unofficial strikes in the Scottish coalfields during the first six months of 1957 by referring to "the selfish militancy of a small minority of highly paid piece-workers."⁽¹⁾

Moreover I should not have thought that "selfish, irresponsible miners" would have carried out a four-day sit-down strike as a protest against bad working conditions, as happened in the Alloa-Alva area two or three years ago. Perhaps the reason why the appeals of the Scottish Stalinist union leaders to unofficial strikers often fall on deaf ears is because "there are two few union leaders of the old type, carrying authority, leading men, and commanding respect on both sides of the manager's table."⁽²⁾

Though I am quite prepared to believe that highly paid workers will use "unofficial" strike action to enforce demands for higher pay, just as Lawrence Daly's union leaders put in for percentage wage claims, I have watched too many so-called unofficial strikes to know that their basic cause is not merely the desire for higher wages. Unofficial strikes are often, though not always, a reflexion of workers' disgust over the attempts of the Labour leaders to confine the class struggle to the goings-on of committees of conciliation and arbitration and productivity councils. In fact, unofficial strikers are sometimes trying to lift working class politics out of the shams and shibboleths of capitalistic party politics.

Hence the demands of unofficial strikers for a measure of workers' control over the conditions that govern their working lives. Hence the demands of 900 miners at Barony Colliery, Ayrshire, for local wage negotiations. "We are finding," writes a rank and file miner, "that any approach to the manager at this colliery meets with the usual flat 'No' and 'Take it to the agent's level' attitude." Hence the warning that if "the attitude of the National Coal Board does not alter then they must accept the responsibility of any action by the men employed who are subject to the policy pursued."⁽³⁾

Yet the employers are able to give the workers palliatives during periods of "prosperity" and to keep the Labour bureaucracy going: a bureaucracy which the capitalist class uses to buy off trade union leaders and to increase "careerism" in the Labour movement. However, as a result of the inevitable contradictions of capitalism, the employers cannot freeze social relations in industry. Therein lies the key to an understanding of official and unofficial strikes.

Class consciousness vs. obedience

I am afraid Lawrence Daly thinks that a trade union's strength comes from the rank and file's blind obedience to the controllers of the bureaucratic apparatus. A trade union is, according to the Webbs, "a continuous association of wage earners for the purpose of maintaining or improving the conditions of their working lives." Therefore a trade union derives its real strength and power from the militancy and class consciousness of its members.

That is not to say that every unofficial strike is "good" and every official strike is "bad." Only Scottish calvinists and so-called humanists dare to moralize about "selfish, irresponsible, official and unofficial strikers" without looking at the facts. An official sympathetic strike of dockers or railwaymen against the handling of black goods really strengthens the Labour movement. On the other hand, an unofficial strike against the employment of coloured workers (provided they are employed at trade union rates) weakens the Labour movement and is a thoroughly bad thing.

Speaking generally, unofficial strikes do not occur before trade unionists have explored every official avenue to remedy their grievances. (If the Scottish miners come out on unofficial strike whenever they have got a grievance, as Lawrence Daly implies, the NUM in Scotland is, I am afraid, more bureaucratic than I had suspected.) Furthermore, the majority of trade unionists are, at the best of times, very critical of a top-heavy, bureaucratic trade union apparatus which moves far too slowly in negotiations only to end in deadlock and arbitration. But of course only the selfish militants resort to a more direct method of rectifying their grievances.

This form of direct action, through which workers seek emancipation from the restrictions of wage slavery, is worth more than a hundred Parliamentary debates. The direct action of workers against the capitalist class, as occurs in an unofficial strike, raises the political consciousness of the working class and prepares them for revolutionary action.

(1) When I interviewed Mr John Woods, the Scottish secretary of NUM, I was told that he had "nothing to say about the causes of unofficial strikes in the Scottish coalfields." Moreover, he not only refused to let me go through the files of the *Scottish Miner*, but he also asked if I had come along "to dig up some muck about the union."

As I could not get the *Scottish Miner* in the National Library of Scotland, I cannot help wondering whether there is any muck to dig up.

(2) *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 12, 1957: What causes Strikes?

(3) *The Scottish Miner*, April, 1956: A Report.

INDUSTRIAL

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.

HEALTH WORKERS UNDER FIRE

By Ron Keating

ADMINISTRATIVE AND CLERICAL STAFF in the Health Service are the latest in a long line of 'white collar' workers who are paying the price for neglecting to organize themselves into an effective union organization. The Tory Government, fully aware of the relative weakness of these particular workers, has chosen them as the 'whipping boy' in the wages struggle.

On October 11th, 1957, the Whitley Council for the Administrative and Clerical Staff of the Health Services agreed on a salary increase for those coming within its purview. This would have meant a 3 percent increase for those earning £1,200 a year and under, and a 5 percent increase for those earning more than £1,200. The Minister of Health, in line with Government policy on wages, turned down the proposed 3 percent increase for the lower-paid worker, but approved the increase for the better-paid worker. Is this just one further example of the Tories looking after their supporters?

Biased Government

It is important to realize that from the very inception of Whitley machinery, Governments, both Tory and Labour, have stated that the decisions of the Councils will be effective, and that the Minister's role is a purely constitutional one. In other words—he would not interfere with the normal negotiating procedure. On many occasions, my union has protested at the Government's biased attitude to the Whitley Councils, and warned of the consequences for the future, to little effect. In the past, the Tories' approach has been more subtle, and they have sought to influence the Management side of the Council to resist the claims of the Staff; on this occasion, however, when this course failed, the Minister took the unprecedented action of vetoing the agreement.

It should be noted that the main basis of the increase was not the cost of living, but was an interim adjustment, pending full consideration of the revision of the grading structure and salary scales, in accordance with the recommendation contained in the report of the Minister's own investigator, Sir Noel Hall. Owing to the investigation taking place, the Staff side had long been frustrated in getting wage claims satisfied, and both sides accepted the case for an immediate increase. The Management side, in particular, must have been greatly influenced by the difficulties in obtaining and retaining staff, mainly due to the poor wages of the Service compared with similar work elsewhere, as is shown in the table on this page; when compared with industry, the position is even worse.

These then are the workers in the front line of the Tory war

on wages, hampered by poor organization, riddled with snobbery, (hence the conglomeration of professional 'organizations') and fighting the attack with one hand tied behind their back, because of genuine concern not to bring any harm to the sick with any action they might take. When they slapped this section in the face for a start, the Tories certainly knew what they were doing.

The vast majority of organizations concerned have banned overtime. (The normal working week is 38 hours.) But is this enough in the light of the Government's view that anyone who claims or concedes a wage claim is a traitor to his country? The

1948 salary £	Health Service percent increase	Local Govern- ment percent increase	Civil Service percent increase
385	34	45	56
495	33	46	71
660	31	56	61
760	29	35	59

Government, knowing full well that the staff will do nothing to injure the patients, can presumably hang on for a considerable time. What then should be the answer of the workers? The most obvious, and at the same time, the most difficult thing to do, would be to withdraw from the Whitley machinery, which is obviously a complete farce. But, owing to the lack of militant tradition amongst those concerned, this would be very difficult to bring about. Notwithstanding this, I believe it is the task of militant trade unionists to insist on this course being taken, in order to show how impossible so-called collective bargaining is.

Let the Tories beware! They have once again set the pattern for industrial struggle. In this case, they have the upper hand for the moment, and have said in effect—'Damn the agreements! We are not having them.' But they, and the capitalist class in general, should not be surprised if the workers take a leaf out of their book.

Whilst the immediate prospect of victory in the Health Service does not seem very bright, one important factor to be borne in mind is that another set of workers is experiencing something they long pretended did not exist—the class-struggle. Their baptism of fire cannot fail to strengthen the organized workers.

SID BIDWELL, NUR, shows the new manning agreement to be a

RAIL UNIONS' RETREAT

THE NEW AGREEMENT between the British Transport Commission and the rail trade unions catering for enginemen who man new main-line diesel and electric locomotives is a retreat by the unions and a victory for the BTC. As such, it is a victory for British capitalism and its Tory Government, which determines BTC policy. It is anticipated that the agreement to have only one man at the front of the train will mean a reduction of some 20,000 men over the coming 15-year period of rail modernization.

For many years now, the ASLE & F which enrols the bulk of footplate staffs and the NUR which caters for a minority, have stood steadfast by the principle of keeping two men on the footplate of diesel engines operating on the main-line. I see no reason—technical, safety or any other—to depart from that principle. After talks lasting for the last nineteen months, a very bad compromise from the men's point of view has been reached.

The agreement is complex and will doubtless result in much localized friction and many disputes in interpreting lines of demarcation. No passenger driver, the Agreement says, will be asked to work single-handed for more than a distance of 200 miles a day, or a total of six hours' driving. The decision also fixes a limit of 100 miles or two hours' running time for a driver to operate alone a non-stop passenger train. There are further provisions for working freight trains; while double manning at nights adds to the headaches of local administration and roster arrangements.

The Manchester Guardian's Labour Correspondent reports that both the BTC and the union

leaders are proud of the agreement. He goes on to say that it remains to be seen what will be its influence, if any, on the wage talks now going on. The Government's own emphasis on the relationship between wages and productivity makes it inevitable that the two sets of negotiations be linked together in the minds of the union members.

However, Mr. W. P. Allen, BTC manpower advisor, and an ex-General Secretary of the locomotivemen's union, has another point of view. When pressed strongly by newspapermen to say whether the agreement on manning diesels meant that the greater productivity resulting therefrom would show itself in a wage increase, he edged away and evaded the question. He reminded his interlocutors of the expense involved in paying compensation to displaced enginemen; he hinted that previous wage increases had been made for just this type of concession on the part of the unions. Readers should remember that this is the man that recently put his "no" to the rail unions' wage claim.

The Agreement comes at a time when the BTC spokesmen are faithfully repeating the words of their masters, the Tory

Government, by flatly turning down the rail unions' wage application and the demand for a 40-hour week. Do they care that railwaymen's wages are shored up by extensive overtime and enhanced week-end working to enable them to live? What is more, they have just handed themselves a substantial increase to add to their already fat salaries, as follows:

Sir Brian Robertson, Chairman of the BTC and ex-general—from £8,500 to £10,000 a year (over £27 a week rise);

Sir John Benstead, Vice-Chairman, BTC, and an ex-General Secretary of the NUR—from £5,000 to £8,000 a year (about £57 a week rise);

Part-time members of BTC—from £500 to £1,000 per year.

No doubt the union leaders made this concession to prove that they were not "luddites" and had no wish to halt the tide of progress. Some of them still seem to think that if they play ball with BTC, assist the modernization plan forward and readily accept reductions in staff, they will share in the increased output per man.

History mocks this belief: through the years, the railway labour force has been a dwindling one, and yet no better situation has resulted for it from its reduced numbers. Rail workers' conditions have been won only on the basis of their organized strength; the future of rail workers is assured only on this basis also.

YOUNG SOCIALIST

NOW
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YOUTH Notebook

WHILE THE FLOOD of duplicated advice from Transport House shows no sign of abatement, some valuable work is being done in the London area. An informal meeting of officers from Hackney, Stoke Newington, Shoreditch and St. Pancras sedious was held at the end of last year to establish liaison and plan joint activity for the future. It was agreed to hold day-schools every other month, each section taking turns to play host, and the subjects for discussion to be linked by a single theme. This modest start may provide the basis for a North London District Committee, and this basis will be strengthened if, as is hoped, other sections are represented at the next meeting.

We hear from the Movement for Colonial Freedom that of the day-schools they have organized in conjunction with Labour Parties, by far the most successful are those that were held at Youth Sections—another indication of the increasing volume of interest and activity: it is probably reflected in the fact that a move was to be made* to co-opt Kath

Sheridan of St. Pancras to the Youth sub-committee of the London Labour Party. Of course, **this is no substitute for proper elections**, but it does represent, in the light of the past, a real advance, and one to be welcomed.

Meanwhile, as reported before (*Young Socialist*, Dec., 1957) the London Labour Party are holding week-end schools on the subjects of the 1958 Policy Statements, before they are published; the first of these is to be held on February 8/9 at Beatrice Webb House, and Dr Horace King MP, a co-opted member of the NEC Education sub-committee, and apparently a noted wit, will speak on 'Education—what next?' Comrades attending it must make it quite clear what they want to see in the Policy Statement:

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

Alan Williams, National Youth Officer is also billed to appear.

* as we go to press.

In the December *Young Socialist*, we printed the opening of our new pamphlet, *The Fight for Socialism?* by MICHAEL KIDRON, in which he examined the workings of capitalism, and showed how accumulation occurs at the expense of the workers.

The Fight for Socialism - 2

THAT WAS in 1956. Last year the same process went on, and this year, and next will see it continue. Every year more and more profits are ploughed back into industry; every year the industrial machine becomes bigger and more productive. The more productive it becomes, the greater the quantity of goods that has to be sold in order that the process of accumulation can go on. During the first phase of consumption, say after a war, when a lot of old machinery has to be replaced and consumer goods are scarce, there is no trouble in disposing of the goods. Investments that immediately lead to greater output can find markets; those that take a longer time to start production, like steel mills that need five years or so to build, have no immediate effect on the quantity of goods to be sold. Eventually, however, a market must be found for the increased production, and this is where capitalism breaks down.

A shoe manufacturer, for example, must sell all his shoes before he can cover the outlay (wages, raw materials, etc.) spent on their production and also buy the new machines and raw materials needed for expanding production. By the time he has increased his output he must expand his sales further and so on indefinitely. The same is true of all capitalist firms. The machinery firm will expand production of machinery for the shoe manufacturer, the mining company will extract more iron-ore for the machinery firm and the other capitalists will follow suit (some more, some less) as long as the shoe manufacturer can find a market. When the shoe-manufacturer has grown so big that he can't find a market everything crashes into a slump.

Why can't a capitalist always find a market? In Britain, manual and professional workers receive enough in wages and salaries to buy about two-thirds of the total national product. The capitalists use up about half of the rest on their inflated standard of living (taxes take a share of both these items) and the rest goes in

[continued next page]

FIGHT FOR PEACE !

PEACE is the crucial issue of our time: we have seen in the past few weeks where the Tories stand. Macmillan's self-satisfied ignorance of H-bombs overhead, the bland decision to plant a string of rocket bases along the East of Scotland, the smug refusal to hear the murmur of popular anger and fear, means mortgaging our lives to the Americans at a price that hasn't even been discussed.

The fight for peace can unite every section of the movement, every section of the population in a huge campaign to sweep the Tories out.

But for this, we have to be clear in aim, and uncompromising in presenting it: scrap the bases! No Tory tests! No Bombs for Britain! No NATO arms! Bevan's sallies in Parliament are not enough. Our Party is hamstrung by the decision made at Brighton to reject unilateral disarmament. We must take things into our own hands. Denounce the Tories' suicide pact: pull our leadership from the sidelines of history.

In this the Aberdeen Youth Section points the way. Every Section in the country should follow their initiative; send to them for petition forms—help them in their fight for peace. This is the first step—let us take it. Then to blacking base-building; then to the streets to strike the Tories out and replace them with a government we can force to dismantle the armour dragging us to destruction.

Peace is the crucial issue of our time; this is where we stand. '... within its shade we'll live or die.' The Red Flag or the mushroom cloud. There is no other choice.

ABERDEEN YOUTH SECTION PETITION

TO THE HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.

We, the undersigned electors, wish to present the following petition.

"We are gravely concerned at the Government's intention to set up medium range ballistic weapon ranges in the United Kingdom.

"We are the more concerned because it is assumed that these bases will be in the East of Scotland, but we feel that their presence in any part of the country is not only undesirable but a direct incitement to attack.

"The decision does nothing to ease world tension. Britain should join with the Scandinavian Countries in refusing to allow the setting up of these offensive bases on her territory.

"Britain can yet lead the world by changing the pattern of her investments from weapons of war to allow for the improvement of the standard of living of her own people and the people of the Colonies."

We therefore humbly ask that you reconsider your decision to establish such bases.

Name	Address
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Return to the Aberdeen Labour Party Youth Section, 22, Gallowgate, Aberdeen.

YOUNG SOCIALIST

FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM — continued

investment. But eventually these investments produce still more goods and still the manual and professional workers and the capitalists use up only 85 per cent of the product in current living expenses.

Another 15 per cent has to find some other market. If it can't be sold, it means that the capitalist can't buy more machines—can't accumulate. And if a capitalist can't accumulate, he won't produce. Production stops in one industry, workers are locked out, they buy less and other capitalists, finding their markets dwindling, stop production, throw out their workers and shrink the market for yet other capitalists. This is a rough picture of a slump such as we had during the 'thirties. It shows a world of **unemployment and misery just because capitalism produces too much. The crisis of capitalism is a crisis of overproduction.**

Capitalist "Solutions" to Overproduction

Compelled by competition to keep wages down as much as possible, the capitalists will not raise wages (unless forced to do so by the unions) because that would reduce the funds left for accumulation, and, eventually, would mean that he loses to his competitors.

But the fact remains that wages have been rising and that we don't live in a state of perpetual slump. Why not? Can capitalism solve its problems?

Imperialism: Once, surplus production was unloaded on to the colonies. The 15 percent of Britain's national income was shipped to India, Africa and elsewhere. The same is happening to-day with two crucial differences: now the productive forces of Britain and the other capitalist countries are so much bigger than they were a hundred years ago that they could swamp the colonial and semi-colonial markets and still not get rid of their problem (in 1950 Britain produced roughly 9 times as much as in 1850). Secondly, the backward countries themselves have started to industrialise. Their own capitalists need their markets themselves. In order to progress at all, they find it imperative to cut themselves loose from the better-equipped imperialist powers. For them the struggle for national liberation is a condition of existence; for the capitalists in the imperialist countries it means that outlets for surplus capital are getting smaller and smaller.

Riding the Slump: Another method of getting rid of the surplus stocks so that the process of accumulation can once more get started is to let the slump take its full course. Stop producing here, destroy stocks there and then, once again, the ball of accumulation will start rolling. This too has become dangerous, too dangerous to be tried again. Last century it could be done without much trouble. Workers could be thrown on to the streets to starve without risk for the capitalist class. After all, labour organizations were still in their infancy. To-day, however, things are different. Workers' solidarity is a force to be reckoned with; we have learned the power of collective action. During the depression immediately preceding the first World War, British capitalism (like its European counterpart) had a revolution staring it in the face. The Great War saved the situation by stepping up production. The post-war slump led to the gigantic upheavals of 1919-20 and to that glorious working class rearguard action—the 1926 General Strike. The slump of the 'thirties also rocked the capitalist boat dangerously. Again the capitalists saved their property and their skins by entering the war and creating full employment. Slumps are dangerous for the ruling class—they can mean a Socialist Revolution. Anything, anything but a slump!

Stagnation and Surplus Capacity: What is the capitalist answer to a slump? The most important thing is to maintain full employment and so "keep the workers happy." For some time this can be done by preventing the introduction of labour-saving devices or their use. In Britain to-day we have full employment, but we also have a mass of idle resources. Hundreds of millions of pounds have been invested in the motor industry over the last few years, automation has been introduced, and yet the output of cars has barely risen at all. Of course, the Tories' credit squeeze is to blame in part, but the lack of markets is the major reason for this accumulation of surplus capacity.

War: But stifling economic progress is not a complete answer to a slump. The size of the surplus to be disposed of can be kept down, but it cannot be eliminated altogether, otherwise profits would not be made and accumulation would not go on. There is only one way the capitalists can get rid of their surpluses, accumulate and escape the dangers of unemployment at one and the same time—by running a war economy.

In the financial year 1957-58 about £1,440 million is to be spent directly on the 'defence' budget in Britain; what the indirect expenditure on planes, ships, roads, etc., will be, one cannot tell. Of course we are made to believe that the armaments budget is an unfortunate necessity thrust upon the capitalist producers who would gladly produce less lethal commodities. In a sense they are right. It is a necessity to make profits from organized death when the bottom falls out of the market of the living.

The civilian market can quickly be saturated, the war market is a bottomless pit; a chair can be used time without number, a shell—only once. Bombs must be replaced every fraction of a second in time of war. Even in 'peace-time' the Koreas, Cypruses, Suezes, Kenyas, Malayas, Algerias and army training grounds get rid of quite a lot of them.

To be continued

THE MOVEMENT

ROSA LUXEMBURG : Revolutionary, Humanist

On January 15, 1919, Rosa Luxemburg, the great socialist revolutionary, Marxist thinker and working class leader, was brutally battered to death. Her murderers were Prussian officers encouraged and instructed by the reactionary, right-wing, Social-democratic government of Ebert and Noske.

Ignored almost completely by the socialist press ever since, Rosa Luxemburg is one of the finest figures in the history of the fight for socialism. Armed with an uncompromising, unbending will, she had yet the most sensitive, warm and generous soul; her intellect corroded the class enemy, her culture encouraged, educated and rounded her friends.

Some small intimation of her wealth of spirit can be gained from the following letter, written from Breslau prison—one of the many she knew because of her militant opposition to war—to a friend on March 24, 1918.

Breslau, March 24, 1918.

My dearest Sonichka,

It is such a terribly long time since I last wrote, but you have been often in my mind. One thing after another seems to take away my wish to write . . . If we could only be together, strolling through the countryside and talking of whatever might come into our heads—but, there is no chance of it at present. My petition for release was rejected, to the accompaniment of a detailed description of my incorrigible wickedness; a request for a brief furlough had no better fate. I shall have to stay here, apparently, till we have conquered the whole world!

Sonyusha, when a long time passes without my having any news from you, I always get the impression that in your loneliness—uneasy, miserable and even desperate—you must be as helpless as a leaf driven before the wind. The idea makes me very unhappy. But just think, spring has come again, the days are growing so long and so light; there must already be a great deal to see and to listen to in the country. Go out as much as you can; the sky is now so interesting and so variegated with the clouds restlessly chasing one another, the chalky soil, where none of the crops have yet begun to show, must be lovely in the changing lights. Feast your eyes on it all, so that I can see it through you.

That is the only thing of which one never tires, the only thing which perpetually retains the charm of novelty and remains inviolably faithful. For my sake, too, you positively must go to the Botanical Gardens, so that you can tell me all about them. Something exceedingly strange is happening this spring. The birds have come north four to six weeks earlier than usual. The nightingale arrived here on March 10th; the wryneck, which is not due till the end of April, was heard laughing as early as March 15th; the golden oriole, which is sometimes called "the Whitsun bird," and which is never seen till May; was already uttering its flute-like note in the grey sky before dawn fully a week ago. I can hear them all from a distance when they sing in the grounds of the lunatic asylum. I can't think what the meaning of this premature migration is. I wonder sometimes whether the influence of the lunatic asylum is responsible for the early return of the particular spot. Do go to the Botanical Gardens, Sonichka, towards noon when the sun is shining brightly, and let me know all you can hear. Over and above the issue of the battle of Cambrai, this really seems to me the most important thing in the world.

The pictures you have sent me are lovely. Needless to say a word about the Rembrandt. As for the Titian, I was even more struck by the horse than by the rider; I should not have thought it possible to depict so much power, so much majesty, in a animal. But the most beautiful of all is Bartolommeo Veneziano's 'Portrait of a Lady.' I knew nothing of the work of this artist. What a frenzy of colour, what delicacy of line, what a mysterious charm of expression! In a vague sort of way the 'Lady' reminds me of 'Mona Lisa.' Your pictures have brought a flood of joy and light into my prison cell.

Of course you must keep Hans Dieffenbach's book. It grieves me that all his books should not have come into our hands. I would rather have given them to you than to anyone. Did the Shakespeare reach you in good time? What news from Karl, and when do you expect to see him again? Give him a thousand greetings from me, and a message: "This, too, will pass." Keep your spirits up; enjoy the spring; when the next one comes, we shall all enjoy it together. Best love. Happy Easter!

Love, too, to the children.

Your,
Rosa.

NEXT ISSUE REVOLT IN THE YCL

Is the Labour Movement at present as strong as we suppose? Can it claim any great victories over the past year through its own, independent activities? These are two of the many questions posed in this article by **MARY KLOPPER**, writing from Aberdeen. We invite readers to join the discussion by writing to our **FORUM** pages: or better still, by endorsing the decision and following the example of the members of the Aberdeen Branch of the Plumbers' Union, who have "blackened" all work on rocket launching sites in the area. Their action is the kernel of a real socialist program for peace, which Comrade Klopper finds so sorely lacking.—Editor.

QUESTIONS FOR THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

By **Mary Klopper**

SUEZ, THE H-BOMB and, now, rocket bases were the only issues on which socialists found themselves in a sufficiently large and determined company to enjoy some success or a rational hope of positive results. Now it looks as if one colonial issue—Cyprus—may soon be added to this list and there will certainly be many non-socialists to help in resisting the advance of white supremacy planned for the Central African Federation in 1957.

Some may dispute my contention with regard to nuclear weapons because of the defeat of unilateral disarmament and the clothing of Bevan at Brighton. But the changed tune of politicians and papers of all kinds, the refusal of the Scandinavian countries to accept rocket bases, the plans for a great campaign in 1958 and growing resistance to the siting of rocket bases in Scotland are surely grounds for rational hope of imposing some modification on current Western policy.

Strength with Allies

It is the pattern of events in this field, repeated in others, which has worried me into trying to write this. **It was not the Labour Movement, basing its policy on a clear analysis, which achieved results. On the contrary, they have been achieved when the Labour Movement has happened to fight on the same issues as other elements in our political life.** On Suez a large "liberal" element inside the ruling class saw the dangers of Government action and so we had half the capitalist press and all sorts of people who are normally inactive or actively anti-socialist on our side and, even so, we must recognize that the movement had run out of the weapons which are admitted into the orthodox armoury accepted by the leadership, and might well have failed if it had not been for international factors such as the American attitude. The pacifists, serious christians and the Stalinists were also with us on Suez and are in the vanguard of nuclear weapon campaigns. Indeed, many of them accept the policy of unilateral disarmament which was defeated at Brighton and so go further than Labour's official policy of banning merely the tests.

New Allies

Now on rocket bases a new ally is available—Scottish nationalism. The reported appearance of Labour MPs on a Nationalist platform in Glasgow and the "Scottish" orientation of statements by MPs and the Scottish Labour Party Executive suggest that such an alliance is developing.

Many elements in the ruling class have joined in attacking the Government over Cyprus on the

grounds that it would be a more effective NATO base if it were granted self-determination. And there are many serious opponents of white settler policies for Central Africa who do not accept

the socialist policy of immediate internal democracy followed by self-determination as an alternative, but envisage a long period of control from Britain leading to an undefined peaceful solution.

I am not arguing that we should not make alliances but I am suggesting that we should make them consciously and selectively, that we should have our own distinctive socialist policy and limit common platforms to

SCOTLAND MOVES FOR PEACE

The leaders of the Scottish Labour Party have unanimously called for a nationwide campaign against the rocket-launching sites planned for the north-east coast of Scotland.

In a resolution which they have sent to the Party's national executive, the twenty members of the Scottish Executive Council speak of "out deep perturbation in Scotland."

The resolution says: "We deplore the attempts to allay Scottish opinion by suggesting that some of our pressing economic problems would be solved by building bases in Scotland.

"We call for a national campaign to force the Government to reconsider the position."

This resolution was passed at a specially summoned meeting of the Executive.

Mr. William Marshall, Scottish Secretary of the Labour Party, said at a press conference in Glasgow on December 28th: "More and

more resolutions are arriving by post from trade-unions and Constituency Labour Parties backing our stand."

The Association of Locomotive Men and Engineers in Glasgow protested against the bases coming to Scotland. They also passed a resolution calling for the abolition of H-bombs and atomic weapons.

After a stormy debate in the Falkirk council chamber, the Labour-controlled Burgh Council sent a wire to the Prime Minister calling for an end to nuclear war preparations. The five Tory Members of the Council defended the Government's proposals to build bases for rocket warheads on the North-East coast of Scotland.

Other Labour-controlled Burgh Councils will pass similar resolutions within the next two weeks. Several prominent Labour provosts and councillors have called for a campaign against this nuclear madness.

Edinburgh, January 2.

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FORUM

issues on which the policies of our allies overlap with our own. This would naturally lead to such alliances being limited in duration and purpose.

If we accept the view that a nuclear war will destroy civilization and possibly the human race it will obviously also destroy the material base for socialism and the widest alliances would be justified on such an issue. But surely we should have more to our policy than a common fear of destruction and this raises two vital questions:

Capitalism vs. peace

(1) Do the operations of the capitalist system of themselves lead to war and constitute the cause of war in the modern world? If we adhere to this traditional view it does not mean that we must cease to hope and work for the abandonment of nuclear weapons which threaten capitalism along with our civilization. It does mean that we must assume that the danger of war will remain, and it certainly raises doubts about the Stalinist propaganda line of permanent peaceful co-existence. If co-existence in peace is possible, the nature of capitalism must have changed. I still believe, however, that the leopard remains spotted.

(2) What is our attitude to the USSR's manufacture of H-bombs and rockets and her manifest intention of using them if attacked? Have we thought that we are asking more of Britain—unilateral nuclear disarmament—than we ask of supposedly socialist Russia?

On the colonial questions we must ask ourselves whether self-determination means anything without the withdrawal of foreign military forces and bases and whether white supremacy can be staved off or even slowed down by allowing the continuation of colonial office control which is the creation of imperialism.

We must quickly make up our minds whether there is any special case for resisting rocket bases in Scotland—whether the British Government has any more or less right to site them in Aberdeenshire than in say, Sussex? On this will depend the shape and significance of the campaign on this issue.

Good wishes

When we have answered these questions we may find the common ground on which we can stand with so-called communists, liberals or pacifists narrower but more solid than at present. If our answers are correct and we state them clearly and consistently we shall be able to combine our efforts for immediate aims, great or less great, with the fundamental task of bringing a little nearer a socialist world which I still believe is the only way to eliminate war as distinct from merely a particularly weapon however deadly.

I wish **Socialist Review** a very good year because it is providing an excellent forum for debating the sort of question I have raised: I hope readers will offer some answers.

HOUSING ?

SIX YEARS OF TORY RULE have cost the workers of Britain plenty, and nowhere is this more apparent than on the rent books of workers who live in council houses. Slashed subsidies and sky-high interest rates on loans for municipal housing projects have made Tory policies clearly visible in terms of pounds, shillings and pence.

When the Labour Government left office in 1951, the interest rate on housing loans was 3 per cent, and it takes but a simple arithmetical sum to show what this meant to local councils and their tenants: for a house costing £2,000 the interest over a 60-year period (the normal length of time for loan repayments on municipal housing) was £2,325; in weekly terms it was 14s 11d. on the tenant's rent. Even then, the Labour Government eased the burden by making a subsidy from Exchequer funds to help pay the interest charges on loans. In 1951 this Exchequer subsidy worked out at an average of £990 over the 60-year period during which interest was being paid.

The real effect of this subsidy was to knock 6s. 4d. a week off the loan charges and leave the tenant (or the Council) with 8s. 7d. to find to meet the cost of borrowing the cash to build the house.

During the past six years the position has changed for the worse—as another piece of simple arithmetic shows. To build a £2,000 house now, a local council needs to pay interest at the rate of 6½ per cent for 60 years. This means interest charges of £6,254—or £3,829 more than under the Labour Government. It also means higher rents for tenants. With the present sky-high interest rates the weekly charge on the tenant of a £2,000 house is £1 5s. 2d. more than when Labour was in power. But this is not all; by ending housing subsidies (except in special cases), the Tories have taken away the help once given to councils and their tenants to meet interest charges. The total result is that the cost of a £2,000 house has jumped £2 0s. 1d. a week because of Tory juggling with housing finances.

To be heavily underscored at this point is the fact that neither the local council, ratepayer or council tenant gets a thing extra for this additional £2 a week. In the final analysis, it is the finance capitalists—commonly called moneylenders—who benefit at the expense of the community at large.

What is Labour's answer to this high rent policy of the Tories? The housing plan adopted by the 1956 Labour Party Conference said, among many other things, that the next Labour Government will make money available for housing purposes at 'reasonable rates of interest' and pay housing subsidies 'as may be required.' This policy means Labour is pledged to get back to the 1951 position, but even so, this is not good enough. Instead, the next Labour Government should be pledged to provide interest-free loans for municipal housing purposes. This will remove the load on local councils and their tenants and at the same time weaken the power of the finance capitalists who are at present getting rich at the expense of workers living in council houses.

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PARLIAMENT**... in 1984 ?**

A HAPPY NEW YEAR to you all and please to remember that 1984 is only twenty-seven Christmases away.

By the use of the Tarot pack, Laplace transforms and straightforward chicanery we have been fortunate in obtaining a facsimile transmission of a page of Hansard for that year and various abstracts follow.

* * *

"BOTH HOUSES assembled in the great hall at 0945 E. Atlantic Solar Time and knelt while the Central Band of the Intermediate Missile Force played 'God save the Queen.' The cheeks of Mr M. Kidron (Lab., Motherwell) were observed to be wet with tears.

"During a natural intermission in the debates, the Lord President of the Council demonstrated a new preparation (Solvo, price two shillings and threepence, of all chemists) for the more efficient whitening of the teeth.

"Miss P. Hornsby-Smith, the Home Secretary, opening a debate on the Bill for the provision of a Committee for the Provision of Houses for the Midlands, said that in this the Government had a problem of unparalleled magnitude.

"Since the unfortunate destruction of the City of Birmingham and its environs ten years ago in the course of a forced landing by an aircraft carrying a nuclear weapon, the Government had initiated an almost continuous series of committees to determine the cause of the accident, the persons responsible for the payment of compensation, and the correct order of priorities in rebuilding.

"The record of the opposition in this business had been lamentable. They had taken every conceivable opportunity to delay the work of the various commissions by insisting that their own proposals to rehouse all units of population should be given precedence over the Government's carefully thought-out scheme to re-establish business in the area. The Government was doing as much as it could as quickly as it could. She was pleased to announce a forthcoming payment of the instalments on the compensation to the manufacturers of the district. (Prolonged Government cheers and Opposition interjections of 'What about the Houses?')

"She had just heard the Opposition repeat one of their favourite parrot cries. She knew that in the forthcoming debate they would raise another and accuse the Americans of being responsible for the accident. Nobody regretted the whole affair more than the Americans, but whilst the United States Administration was perhaps beginning to come round to the viewpoint of the British Government, the strong views of Congress could not be altogether discounted and in any case it could not be conclusively shown that the aircraft which caused the accident was American. She appealed to Members not to say anything that might disturb the traditional friendship of the Anglo-Saxon peoples.

"Those Birmingham householders who have proved their claims to compensation were already residing in a holiday camp at South Uist. If some of the Honourable Members opposite were not careful they would be sent to join thme. As the Prime Minister had said recently, 'the ancient liberties of the House of Commons must not be allowed to degenerate into licence.'

"After the traditional protest by the Leader of the Opposition about the large number of uniformed officials in the Noes Lobby the debate concluded."

* * *

Here the transmission ends.

The lessons to be drawn from it are various, but perhaps the most important of them is that if Conservative Governments are to remain in power they can be trusted to take an Elder Brother's care of us all.

MICHAEL MILLETT

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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.