

# KEEP LEFT



ORGAN OF THE WEMPLY LABOUR LEAGUES OF YOUTH.

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## EDITORIAL.

Ninety Fifty-Three saw the old society take several convulsive steps along the path to disintegration. In the West, the coming economic crisis cast its shadow before it and Capitalism once more began to demonstrate its complete bankruptcy.

In Eastern Europe, Stalin's death followed by the struggle between his heirs which culminated in Beria's execution revealed the instability of Stalinism. Above all, the revolt of the downtrodden peoples grew even more intense, spreading over the whole African Continent.

But the break-up of the Old World does not automatically bring forth the means to build the new. Although in both Germany and France, heroic working-class action hinted at the only way forward, the lead needed to bring about the new social system is still lacking.

It is the British Labour Movement which must provide this lead. As the year opens, a series of battles on the industrial front is beginning. Now is the time for our Trade Union and Political leaders to drop their present half-hearted apologetic attitude; a bold Socialist policy now, could start a tremendous movement against the Tory Government. A real attack on British Capital in the coming year would rally the people of the world against both Capitalist exploitation and Kremlinite totalitarianism. Only such a movement can avert a Third World War and set mankind on the road to prosperity.

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### "WHAT IS SOCIALISM?"

"Keep Left's" pamphlet "What is Socialism?" will be published early in the new year. In 14 pages of questions and answers, the authors have tried to set out their opinions on the principles of our movement as briefly and as readably as they could. We hope that it will help some readers to sort out their ideas. Order your copy from the Editor, price 3d.

## WILL BRITISH RAILWAYS EVER PAY ?

The militant rejection by the National Union of Railwaymen of the 4/- pay award to rail workers marks the beginning of a new period of labour and capital relations in industry. It is almost certain the "honeymoon" that has lasted since the war has now ended. With easy markets and high profits most employers readily met wage claims, now the climate has changed and the false "similarity of interest" that has been preached by some union leaders will rapidly disappear.

Public opinion supported the railwaymen's claim and the national Press reflected this attitude, with the dishonourable exception of "The People". Not that public opinion would have prevented the strike or the newspapers' realisation that railway workers had genuine grievances after a strike threat had been made has passed unnoticed. There is no need here for a detailed examination of wage levels in the railway industry, suffice to say that they are considerably lower than the average for comparable industries and the work often entails heavy responsibilities, continual shift work, poor welfare amenities and complete absence of sick pay and pensions.

The higher cost of living, inevitably following Butler's "clever" Budgets, forced the NUR and the other two rail unions to seek wage increases for their members. As with all other rail pay claims, it was at first rejected, not because it was unjustified but because of the financial condition of the industry. If we take a closer look at the British Transport Commission's finances some interesting facts come to light. In 1947, the last year before nationalisation, the railways made a loss of £60 mills. Since then, as directed in the Nationalisation Act, annual working expenses have been less than revenue but after paying compensation to former share-holders (£36 mills in 1952), a loss has resulted. Depending upon the final settlement it is expected that £16 mills will be added to the railway paybill. The economies already resulting from nationalisation are estimated at £16 mills a year and if integration of road and rail facilities was seriously undertaken much larger savings would be made.

The Tory Government's complete disregard of the nation's transport problem is shown by their decision to de-nationalise road haulage. The £7 mill. profit made by the Road Haulage Executive last year would have helped to balance transport finances as a whole, as the Transport Act intended. Instead the position will be worsened - the most profitable traffic will be carried by private road hauliers and the unremunerative loads will be left to the railways. This, of course, is the crux of the transport problem and the Labour Party has not yet faced the issue. Uneconomic lines have to be kept open for strategic purposes, antiquated equipment and methods have to be retained because of the shortage of capital, millions of tons of coal are wastefully burnt in steam engines. It is not coincidence that Britain has the world's second highest railway mileage per sq. mile and also the world's highest number of vehicles per mile of road. Until a Labour Government applies a policy co-ordinating the complementary advantages of road and rail then railwaymen's wages and high passenger fares will still be expected to provide the subsidy for a bankrupt British Railways.

R. Tranch.

IS THE WORLD OVER-POPULATED? - NO.

The world can only be considered overpopulated if the living-space is insufficient and the prospects of extracting enough food from that living space is not possible. Let us firstly then, see how much land the 2,200,000,000 people have between them. We know that three-quarters of the earth's surface is covered with water. This leaves about 56 million sq. miles of land which amounts to 16 acres per person. This is not a real picture of living space for much of this land is forest, desert, torrid and polar regions - most of it uninhabitable. But according to specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture, there are still 25 million sq. miles which can be agriculturally exploited by present methods of soil utilisation. Therefore there appears to be about 7 acres of land per person which can be cultivated.

Living space, then, does not seem to be the problem. In Britain, we produce over 50% of our food on about 0.6 acre per person. World Hunger is a world problem. There is good reason to believe that it can be relieved by increasing the land under cultivation, to the limit; improved methods of cultivation and preservation of soil by replenishment and more positive measures to prevent soil erosion.

How much more land can be cultivated. We already know that Europe could increase its agricultural land by 40%, Asia by 10%, North America by 15%, Africa by 10% and Oceania by 6%. In addition large tracts of land in China, India and other parts of Asia could be modernised. Much of this land is farmed by methods entirely out of proportion to the peoples needs. In India, for instances, one third of its available land is not exploited. Science is opening up tracts of land hitherto thought un-usable for agricultural purposes; even in the Arctic regions food production is making progress and we haven't yet looked at the prospects of increased food production from the high seas. Sir John Boyd Orr believes that there is no physical difficulty in more than doubling the world food supply; the only practical limitations are the amount of capital and labour human society is willing to devote to it.

With regard to thickley populated areas like India and China, there seems to be some evidence that the birth rate would decrease if these people had more to eat - especially proteins. For example, the daily protein intake of a Formosan is 4.7G., per day but he has a birth rate of 45.6. per th. On the other hand, at the extreme end of the scale, Sweden had a daily intake of proteins 62.6G with a birth rate of only 15. Many other examples can be quoted in between these extremes. Italy - Protein 15.2G. B.R.23.4. It has been estimated that 100 millions of Chinese starved to death in the 19th Century. It seems as though 'Hunger and Starvation' are taboo for we hear far too little about it. Perhaps one of the great obstacles to further production is inadequate knowledge.

EVANS MEREDITH  
Councillor, Fryent Ward.

This Article will be concluded by Mr. Meredith in next month's edition of  
**KEEP LEFT!**

LET'S GET RID OF THIS "COMMUNIST" COUNCIL.

The Wembley Borough Council is again surpassing itself in stupidity and intolerance. Its latest exploits include a resolution to the Middlesex County Council asking that local councils be given the power to prevent any organisations of which they do not approve hiring school premises. The Tory majority on the Wembley Council ensured that such a motion would be passed, although there were strong protests from the Labour Councillors. This change in the school letting regulations is aimed solely at the Communists - although one Tory Councillor did concede a point to include Fascists in the category of undesirable organisations. Such comments during the debate as: "We should not allow that type of people to use our schools" (my emphasis) and "This anti-God party.....we must protect the future of our children" show how our Tory Councillors really feel about Democracy.

In the first remark, the worthy councillor referred to "our" schools but part of the income used for the upkeep of schools comes from rates paid by Wembley residents - some of whom are Communists! At the present time some ratepayers are denied the use of the Town Hall (which is also maintained from the rates) Are they now to be completely barred from any local accommodation?

The title of this article on the Council debate is not incorrect at all, for these tactics are the tactics of the Communist Party. Free speech has been lauded as one of the basic democratic rights, together with freedom of thought and freedom of religion. Its loss means the enslavement of the people to the extent that they can have one view only - the view of their "masters."

If this state of affairs continues we will soon have Borough Council elections with one candidate only standing in each ward - you vote for him or you do not vote at all! We as believers in every freedom, especially political freedom, should fight against such restrictions, for the way in which the proposed change is worded means that local governments will have the right to preclude any organisations they do not like. This could include our own Youth Parliament in Wembley.

Without allying ourselves politically with the Communist Party, let us demand that the council throw out this recommendation. Remember, we may be the next.

BERTHA NEWBERY  
Wembley North L.o.Y.

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The Editorial Board would like to wish all our readers (even you) a Happy New Year. This is the time for making good resolutions and there is none better than to start with the return of the two Labour candidates in the County Council Bye-Elections that are to be held in both Wembley constituencies. Polling Day for both seats is January and the campaign has now started. Jim Reynolds is contesting the Keston/Preston division and Roger Melville the Alperton/Tokington division. Everybody is urged to help in the canvassing, addressing and other election work and if you ring either COL 4140 or WEM 6988 you will be told what to do.

THE SUDAN ELECTIONS

The decisive victory of the pro-Egyptian National Unionist Party in the Sudan Elections came as a shock to those who fondly imagined that the press in this country is capable of objective and unbiassed reporting. We were led to believe that the pro-British Umma Party would sweep the polls, and that the National Unionists with their openly pro-Egyptian affiliations would be effectively routed. We took it for granted that Sudan was one of those "backward" colonies where the "backward" peoples were being slowly but surely guided by our Colonial Office to a position where they could run the affairs of their own country as they pleased.

Quite naturally, the British public was astonished to read that the supporters of Egypt had won the election. The question immediately arises, how did this rejection of Colonial Office "independence" come about? The facts show that, in the first place, the economic future of the Sudan is bound up with Egypt since the river Nile is common to both countries, and cotton production is dependant upon it. Secondly the Northern part of Sudan is geographically, racially and linguistically an integral part of Southern Egypt, and thirdly, the Southern part of Sudan has been hermetically sealed off from the Northern part by the Colonial Office.

In these circumstances and with these facts as a background, the election results should not have come as any surprise to Socialists in Britain. On the contrary it should have been all too clear to Socialists that, whatever the shortcomings of the Neguib regime, the Sudanese people were right in supporting by overwhelming majorities, the Parties advocating closer economic and political union with Egypt. The Sudan elections were a blow against imperialism, a blow against the Sudanese feudal classes (led by the Umma Party) and a blow against any future Egyptian "sub-imperialism".

The "Daily Telegraph" mournfully described the election results as a blow to Britain (that is Tory Britain) as severe as that inflicted at Abadan, and here they were quite correct. The Tory government in this country has not tumbled to the facts of mid-twentieth century economic realities. They act (at least some of them do) as if British Imperialism was a going concern; as if gunboats could settle the "difficulties" that occasionally crop up in dealings with subject peoples.

How right Aneurin Bevan is on this issue is shown in his article now published in 'Tribune' on "Empire and the Tories". He writes, "Sir Winston Churchill once remarked that he had not been appointed Her Majesty's First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire. This characteristic piece of bombast is now beginning to haunt its author." In the same article he advocates the withdrawal of British troops from Egyptian Territory. There can be no doubt that this must be done for we must ensure that our policy for colonial freedom coincides at all points with the movement for national independence in Egypt and the Sudan, and eventually for a Socialist Federation of the Countries of the Middle East.

ELLIS HILLMAN

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FROM OUR AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT.

One of the weirdest witnesses to testify recently before the witch hunting "investigation" committee of Senator Joe McCarthy was a girl with doctorate in philosophy from Columbia University. Miss Nancy Lenkeith smoked lots of cigarets in a long holder as she told McCarthy's Committee that the Voice of America radio station had sacked her merely because she favourably reviewed Whittaker Chambers' anti-communist book, "Witness".

She had even more to tell. She said an executive in the Voice of America organization had asked her to join a "collectivist" group in which children would be raised communally. "I said I had no children", she told the investigators. "He said that could be arranged. So I said I had no husband. He said that didn't matter that could be worked out."

That such stuff can be taken seriously by many people in America explains why the witch hunt thrives here. As for Republican Senator McCarthy, it is important to remember that many Democrats also are almost as reactionary. Neither major party offers much opposition to the witch hunt. However, these liberals do not fight the cause of the witch hunt-cold war hysteria.

American democratic socialists oppose the cold war itself. They point out that if workers in nations like Britain build real socialism with workers' control of industry, they will inspire Americans and Russians to end war-like capitalism and war-like Stalinism so Americans and Russians can both establish real socialism too. With capitalism and Stalinism ended, the cold war also will end. Thus, American democratic socialists, the hardest fighters against the witch hunt, support the Third Camp of world labour against Stalinism and capitalism and their hysteria.

To aid in promoting hysteria and the witch hunt, American capitalist congressmen want student stoolpigeons. They want college and university student informers or "rats" to tell about professors and other students who allegedly are "Communists." It was Professor A. Glasser of Rutgers University law school in New Jersey who first revealed that the house of representatives' Un-American Activities Committee is using not only its own investigators but also students to get information about political activity on the American campus. And the Congress committee wants even more student informers than it now has, Glasser said. Glasser, a witness before the Committee, refused to answer questions about Communist Party membership because he already had denied C.P. Membership before the Civil Service Commission while a Justice Department and price regulation official in the 1940's. He said the Congress Committee was placing him in double jeopardy by again asking him about the Communist charges.

His case, like that of other witch hunt victims, shows that the American capitalist government will continue to use the witch hunt to crush all opposition, in view of the American democratic socialists.

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