

THE NEWSLETTER

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a service to socialists

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THE NEW 'CLEAN' BOMB IS EXPENSIVE BOLONEY

By Our Science Correspondent, J. H. Bradley

THE only danger from the Americans' recent 95 per cent 'clean' H-bomb does not come from strontium or genetic effects, but from the many tons of pure high-pressure boloney distributed all over the world by US public relations officials. This bomb is the most expensive piece of pure propaganda since Christmas Island.

The indecent haste shown by the Americans to blow up the percentage of the fall-out eliminated should make us highly suspicious: scientific deductions confirm our suspicions.

In America I should be arraigned before Congress for writing this article, as happened to Dr. Ralph Lapp when he published some deductions the Government had not foreseen.

In the usual fission-fusion-fission bomb, of some one to ten megatons energy, nearly all the energy is derived from the last (fission) stage, which forms an outer coat round the remainder.

The great majority of the uranium present undergoes one of three processes—fission into lighter elements, conversion

CLIO IN CHAINS AT KING STREET

MANY people gave King Street credit for unexpected broadmindedness when the Communist Party's Historians' Group brought out last April the selection of documents entitled 'Labour-Communist Relations, 1920-39'.

It is now learned, however, that this publication in fact appeared in defiance of a direct ban by the Political Committee of the Communist Party.

It further appears that the communist historians have been warned against allowing such distinguished ex-party Marxists as John Saville and Christopher Hill to continue to attend their meetings.

They have also received a plain hint of King Street's intention virtually to liquidate their group, together with other 'cultural and professional' groups of party members which have proved to be centres of criticism and opposition during the past year.

The place of such groups is to be taken, it seems, by small committees, hand-picked by the party Centre, with strictly defined 'advisory' functions.

YCL NATIONAL COMMITTEE MAN GOES

Four resignations from the Wigan branch of the Young Communist League include Ron Thompson, a member of the YCL National Committee and Lancashire and Cheshire District Committee, and Arnold Thompson, secretary of Wigan YCL.

Three of the four have applied for membership of the Labour Party.

THREE EX-SECURITY MEN INDICTED

According to Polish Facts and Figures (July 6) the indictments of three former security officials have been handed over to the City of Warsaw court.

They are Roman Romkowski, former Vice-Minister of Public Security, Jozef Rozanski, former Director of the Investigation Department at the Ministry of Public Security, and Anatol Fejgin, former Director of Department 10 of that Ministry.

The latter two were accused at the Ninth Plenum of the Polish United Workers' Party last autumn of having ripped out prisoners' finger-nails.

PRESS

WHAT THE EXPERTS FORETOLD

'It is impossible not to conclude that the days of Khrushchev's overweening ascendancy are at an end. The collective idea of government has been reaffirmed. But other voices are heard, and, among them, clearly, the voice of Malenkov.—Edward Crankshaw, The Observer, December 30, 1956.

'Without putting himself forward, without raising his voice, Malenkov now appears as the person who, three years ago, in the transition from Stalin to Khrushchev, was right. It might

(Continued overleaf, col. 2)

A CALL TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

The General Council of Tottenham Labour Party has passed the following resolution for submission to the Labour Party's annual conference:

'This conference realizes that the manufacture and testing of H-bombs constitute a threat to the health and safety of present and future generations.

'It calls upon the National Council of Labour to mobilize the working class in a campaign of nationwide demonstrations to stop the manufacture and testing of nuclear weapons.

'Furthermore the National Council of Labour should call upon the working-class and socialist movements to take similar action.'

The resolution was passed unanimously, and in a ballot for resolutions to be forwarded for inclusion in the conference agenda it headed the poll.

into uranium 237, or neutron capture to form plutonium and other heavier elements.

In the new bomb, on the other hand, only 50 to 500 kilotons energy can be derived from fission. Yet the least possible mass of uranium to explode is about five kilograms, which by modern methods may be reduced perhaps ten per cent.

This means that very little of the uranium undergoes fission—that is to say the bomb is very inefficient, just as was predicted.

Being inefficient, it is also very expensive—probably some hundred times the cost of a fission-fusion-fission bomb of the same power.

This 'tactical H-bomb', we are told, 'no longer destroys whole cities'. This seems to exaggerate its inefficiency, for no megaton bomb can do less damage than a 'nominal' 1945 20 kiloton bomb.

It is of course true that one may build an H-bomb as small as one pleases, yet it is hard to believe that even the brass-hats will want an H-bomb which can do the job of a plain atomic bomb at many times the cost.

The testing of the 'clean' bomb may have yielded a certain amount of scientific information which could have been obtained more easily by other means. Such a bomb will never go into large-scale manufacture, let alone use.

COMMENTARY

THE GOOD NAME OF SOCIALISM

THE full implications of the recent events in Russia seem to have escaped some observers. Khrushchev has made no secret of his Stalinism, in theory and in practice. The special correspondent of *The Times* in Moscow wrote on January 3:

At the Kremlin party, where wine and words flowed freely, Mr. Khrushchev said Stalin had done so much good that one must overlook his mistakes. . . . Imperialists call us Stalinists. When it comes to fighting imperialists we are all Stalinists.

So much for theory. The practice is seen in Hungary and in the 'Great-Russian chauvinism' towards the Jews of which J. B. Salsberg accuses Khrushchev. According to Khrushchev Jews do not clean their streets and 'wherever a Jew settles down, he immediately builds a synagogue'.

That this is the level of Marxism of last week's victor is confirmed by the character of the public campaign now being waged against the losers. According to the Moscow correspondent of the Yugoslav newspaper *Politika*, Mrs. Furtseva told Leningrad factory workers that Molotov, Kaganovich and Malenkov had tried 'to seize power by means of factional intrigue'. This, said the correspondent, was more serious than previous allegations, for it implied 'a plot which they were preparing'. The Leningrad *Pravda* suddenly discovers that eight years ago Malenkov threatened I. M. Turko and tried to make him sign a false document. Turko now calls Malenkov a 'rude and crude person without honour or conscience'. The liner Molotov is being renamed the Baltika. There is talk of the city of Molotov being called Perm once again. Kaganovich is accused by the Ukrainian Premier of having made 'grave and unfounded' accusations against Ukrainian intellectuals when he was party secretary in the Ukraine after the war. Most ominous of all, Khrushchev has described Malenkov as 'one of the chief organizers of the Leningrad case' (in which Voznessensky and Kuznetsov were killed, and which has hitherto been blamed on Beria and Abakumov).

These considerations seem to suggest that what has happened in the Kremlin is not a defeat for Stalinism, but rather the victory of one Stalinist faction over others. To clinch his victory, Khrushchev seems to be relying on the mass feeling against the diehards. For the first time in the struggle within the bureaucracy, a limited appeal has been made to the workers: Khrushchev talks approvingly of the possibility of Malenkov's being spurned by the Leningrad workers if he had gone there; the expression of public opinion has been to some extent 'legalized'—a step fraught with dangers for the whole of the privileged caste that rules Russia.

THESE are momentous events. No socialist can blind himself to the degeneration they reveal in the political life of the Soviet Union. Whoever thinks that there is any healthy force in Russia other than the working class which can rescue the good name of socialism from this muck of intrigue and vendetta and internecine strife (and whoever thinks *THE NEWSLETTER* should not say so) has not begun to learn the lessons of the past three decades.

EXPERTS (Continued from front page)

be possible that, for the first time in the history of modern Russia, public opinion will be strong enough to acclaim the man of the moment and not, once more, have him imposed from without.—Alexandre Metaxas, *The Sunday Times*, January 6, 1957.

'SHIFT OF POWER IN RUSSIA. Mr. Malenkov climbing back into the saddle?'—Manchester Guardian, January 7, 1957.

'Mr. Khrushchev, might well step into this post [the premiership], and in turn be succeeded by Mr. Malenkov as First Secretary. Possibly Mr. Malenkov will be moved up a step in the Government.'—The Times diplomatic correspondent, January 25, 1957.

'The party secretaryship, even under the system of "collective leadership", is still the most important post in the country, and Mr. Malenkov can hardly expect to occupy it just yet.'—Manchester Guardian, February 2, 1957.

'Speculation is now focused on the role Mr. Georgi Malenkov . . . may be destined to play. This Georgian [sic] politician enjoys some measure of general popularity . . . Rumours that he may soon find his way back to the top level of the leadership were given weight by the fact that he accompanied Mr. Khrushchev on his secret visit to Budapest. . . . Among the many possibilities is that Mr. Khrushchev . . . would step into the [preiership] and Mr. Malenkov would take over the highest party post; alternatively Malenkov could move up the Government ladder.'—Nicholas Carroll, *The Sunday Times*, February 3, 1957.

'MALENKOV ON THE WAY BACK. . . . We are about to witness the eventual return of Malenkov. . . . Gromyko is going to carry out the Kremlin's orders, but those orders will no doubt be inspired by Malenkov, rather than Khrushchev.'—Alexandre Metaxas, *The Sunday Times*, February 17, 1957.

MOLOTOV OPPOSED DECENTRALIZATION

BEHIND the imposing bureaucratic façade of Stalin's centralized planning system there grew up a jungle of unofficial and actually illegal trading and 'fiddling' between branches of industry and individual concerns.

These wasteful and anarchic practices—which gave much scope for corruption and blackmail—provided the only means whereby economic life could be carried on.

Wide circles connected with Soviet industry are hopeful that the recent decentralization measures may lead to a rationalization of planning methods such as will cause at least a substantial amount of this under-the-counter activity to 'wither away'.

Hence the impassioned outburst of a factory manager during the discussion in the Moscow organization of the Soviet Communist Party (reported in *Pravda* of July 4) about the doings of Molotov and Co.:

'The anti-party group opposed and tried to subvert such a highly important measure as the reorganization of the management of industry and building work and the setting up of Regional Economic Councils.

'A man must be completely remote from real life not to see that the forms of industrial management which formerly prevailed had become outworn and failed to facilitate the development of technique and the growth of the productivity of labour.

'Who among us doesn't know that it was next to impossible to get the production of any new machine started in the factories controlled by certain Ministries? Were there not many instances of factories having to get together to manufacture something behind the backs of their Ministries?'

During the discussion it was mentioned that Molotov had used his position as Minister of State Control not to forward the policy of decentralization but to 'write letters directed against this policy'.

Kaganovich's incompetence and ignorance in the sphere of work entrusted to his charge, it was said, had become the subject of a number of anecdotes—but it had brought serious harm to the country's industry.

Evidently the picture given in Dudintsev's 'Not by Bread Alone' was not so exaggerated as some have suggested.

The Artist and Communism

Paul Hogarth was born in 1917 and was trained at Manchester School of Art and the St Martin's School, London. He held one-man exhibitions in 1952 and 1954 and, most recently, at the Leicester Galleries in 1955.

He visited China in 1954 and South Africa in 1956, and is at present with fellow-artists Ruskin Spear and Derrick Graves in the Soviet Union, where they have taken the *Looking at People* exhibition, seen by nearly a quarter of a million people throughout Britain.

In the thirties, during the war and immediately afterwards, the Communist Party provided most of the opportunities for those artists and writers interested in a working-class audience.

In those years, organizations like the Artists' International Association, publishers like Key Books, Fore Publications and the Left Book Club and the periodicals *Left Review*, *Our Time*, *Seven* and *Arena*, established communist intellectuals as an influential and dynamic force in Britain's cultural life.

We had (and still have) plenty of ideas and initiative and did not have to be put in our place by officials.

AUDIENCE AND STIMULUS. Why artists became communists is therefore not so complicated. Like the writers, we wanted an audience and a stimulus denied by existing society—a society which compelled me to work in a variety of ways because I couldn't earn a livelihood in the profession I had been trained to practise.

It was a shock to find artists of the same age as I was in those years, starving in Poland.

I have resigned from the party not because I feel any differently from when I was an art student painting banners for the National Unemployed Workers' Movement and Aid Spain Committees, but because the present leadership have made it clear over a period of years that they really have no desire to provide 'the intellectuals' with an audience.

Fundamentally, they distrust us whatever our social origin. They have treated us with the same suspicion whether we were the high-born rebels of the thirties or the miners' sons educated on army grants.

Acting in this way, they are not only making a mockery of the word communist, they are whittling the party down to an impotent sect; for most imaginative political minds will readily concede that intellectuals can play a vital role (and have done so) in helping to realize their political objectives.

BIZARRE AND INCREDIBLE. One could cite innumerable instances of the most bizarre and incredible nature in which party cultural activities were either de-

liberately thwarted or just mishandled by the inadequacies of officialdom.

It was a different matter altogether if we could be useful in soliciting the support of prominent public figures for campaigns of one kind or another.

I have never really considered myself as an intellectual but rather as a practising artist orientated toward average people.

The relationship I sought and partially achieved should be the rule in a human society if socialism is really successful (in China it is beginning to be).

I seldom had any encouragement from King Street in pursuing this objective. It came fortuitously and generously from the party rank and file who always rose to the occasion whenever I had an exhibition, whenever I had plans to visit the 'hell-spots' in order to make drawings of people fighting for a better life.

DEFENCE OF THE INDEFENSIBLE. Were I an Italian or a Frenchman I would probably remain a communist. But I am an Englishman, and in circumstances where the party is incapable of revitalizing itself; where a controlling minority has intrigued and allowed the best element of the membership to leave rather than loosen the grip of an essentially sectarian approach; where they have been content to sacrifice the entire cultural and intellectual life of the party in their defence of the indefensible—it has to me, become a discredited and impotent force.

I may not ever join a political party again; but I have come to realize that the Labour Party is a far more realistic means of achieving a socialist Britain than I had previously given it credit for.

In the meantime, the cultural tradition of the Left has become for the first time an independent force: it has had to be so, to preserve its integrity and honesty of outlook.

Paul Hogarth

The Week at a Glance

AT HOME

THURSDAY: Delegates to the conference of the National Union of Railwaymen instructed their Executive to open negotiations for a forty-hour week and an extra week's winter leave for all railway workers.

A proposal to pay MPs £1,750 a year, instead of the present £1,000 plus about £280 sessional allowance, was announced in the Commons. It is also proposed to give Ministers and the Leader of the Opposition more money, and to give peers three guineas a day for each day of attendance.

Pay increases averaging about five per cent for 600,000 non-industrial Civil Servants were agreed between the Treasury and the Civil Service unions.

FRIDAY: The Chancellor of the Exchequer banned the import of foreign currency securities into Britain from other parts of the sterling area.

SUNDAY: The Television Writers' Council said it proposed to launch a campaign to seek public support for its case on questions of payment and copyright. Negotiations have been abandoned after two and a half years.

MONDAY: The Government is to carry out a major reform of the laws on mental illness and deficiency, it was announced in the Commons.

TUESDAY: The Transport and General Workers' Union opposed wage restraint and the Government's plan for an 'impartial' body to review economic questions, said Frank Cousins at the TGWU biennial conference.

ABROAD

PERSIA: One of the leaders of the outlawed Tudeh Party, Khosrow Ruzbeh, was captured in Teheran after a gun fight.

EGYPT: In the voting for the new 350-seat National Assembly only about a hundred candidates were returned with the necessary absolute majority.

TURKEY: The Istanbul Journalists' Union was temporarily closed because it protested against rough treatment of journalists by police.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND: Sixty-three Sinn Fein members and leaders, including its president, vice-president and sec-

retary, were arrested in police raids and sixty of them were interned without trial.

FRANCE: President Coty declared that Algeria would not be given independence and that the French struggle in Algeria was just and patriotic.

SOUTH AFRICA: The National Union of South African Students at its annual congress urged the Government to withdraw the Separate University Education Bill, warned that many staff members and students would disregard it.

RUMANIA: Iosif Chisinevski was dismissed from the secretariat and presidium of the Rumanian Workers' Party and Miron Constantinescu was dismissed from the presidium. A Central Committee resolution said they had helped to glorify Ana Pauker and build a personality cult about her.

EDUCATION

PARENTS OF THE 'BULGE', UNITE

By Betty Russell

THIS year's eleven-plus sort-out has been more of a scrimmage than ever. Next year's will be worse. And why? Because of the bulge, as every mother knows.

Sometimes I think we're devils for taking punishment. Through no fault of our own we were born in the First World War. So we went through World War II and rushed back in good time to propagate the species.

Did we think about the bulge? Of course not. We were only making up for lost time. Surely the authorities could make some adjustment.

Now the bulge children are just ten or eleven. Their big brothers and sisters were evacuees. These are the bulge: one problem after another.

Most of these children can read. They have at least had a variety of instruction, and I can report from close experience that the existing staff in primary schools includes teachers of all ages and all nationalities, with all kinds of methods.

A trained teacher or one with a degree is most welcome, be she seventy or seven months pregnant. I met one retired woman teacher who walked to and from the school because she couldn't afford the fourpenny fare.

A trial 'on supply'

Almost anyone up to matriculation standard, even unqualified, who is prepared to stand up—or sit down—in front of forty-four children, is given a trial 'on supply'.

Even though the process of education is not exactly streamlined at present, the children are thoroughly streamed.

From the age of seven they are placed in a group labelled A, B, C, or D. A building called the Annexe has been thrown up in the playground of many large schools, and into the Annexe, where they can make more noise, go the cast-outs, the C's and D's.

We hope it is true that 'children like change'. A couple of years in the Infants, four years in the Juniors, and then everything goes in the melting pot—the fourth year is ruined with the eleven-plus sort-out.

Five months after sitting and after elaborate forms have been completed by the school, you are invited to make a choice of two schools for your child.

Some weeks later you are told where your child is to go, and the school he actually enters may be one quite different and miles away from your choice.

After that, it's £10 or so for the uniform, and you're all set, barring transfers, for another five years.

Believe it or not, six normal girls living in my road and nearby will this autumn be attending five different secondary schools, spread over South London from Tulse Hill to Putney. What a neighbourly arrangement! And how profitable for London Transport.

Everyone tries very hard, but the fact is there are not enough schools. Great comprehensive schools holding 2,000 children are packed to capacity within a year or two of opening.

The real problem is lack of cash, and men teachers particularly are really hard to come by—the pay is too low for a father.

We ought not to leave this problem to the next Labour Government, to the wife or to pot luck. Working mothers unfortunately don't get to many trade union or Labour Party meetings.

Fathers and brothers could raise the question in the branch and workshop meetings, get speakers and take a real interest in the local schools and training offered, and in particular what fraction of the arms budget is required to give our children a chance to learn something and prepare to help govern the country.

YUGOSLAVIA

YUGOSLAV WORKERS' COUNCILS CONFER

By Tony Guthrie

SOME 1,700 delegates—and twenty observers from other countries—attended the first Congress of Workers' Councils in Belgrade.

In his opening speech Tito pointed out that 600,000 workers had received experience in a gigantic school of socialism—the workers' councils.

It could be said with pride that the working class had made the greatest contribution to Yugoslav recovery.

'The apologists of dogmatism,' he said, 'dispute the value of our system of workers' management, describing it as anarchic. We do not need to justify theoretically its correctness and efficiency, for it has proved itself in practice.'

Again and again Tito lashed out at the Soviet dogmatists. The Yugoslavs would not force their system on anyone, but 'if these critics were also to recognize some of our positive results, then it would be hard for them to pronounce our road to socialism as revisionism.'

All this takes on added significance in view of the latest shuffle in the Soviet bureaucracy. Whatever the methods used in the latest dismissals in the Soviet Communist Party there can be no doubt that the news of the sacking of 'Stonebottom' Molotov has been received with joy by millions in Yugoslavia. (He was co-signatory with Stalin of the hectoring letters from the CPSU to the Yugoslav communists which preceded the break in 1948.)

The tone of Tito's speech seems to suggest that he had at least a hint of what was on the way.

Yugoslavia is the only socialist country where the workers really have reached the level of local organizers of self-government, transport and so on.

It is to the credit of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav League of Communists that they are encouraging the councils, which soon display independence and dignity, and which exercise a great deal of power in some districts.

There are cases of factory directors whose methods have been reversed by the councils.

In the discussion delegate after delegate urged greater independence in the factories and an extension of their power. Many speakers demanded the right to engage and discharge personnel. Josip Cazi, a member of the Central Trade Union Council, said where this had happened fewer mistakes had been made.

High sense of responsibility

Slavko Lukovic, a member of the Rakovic car factory workers' council, said that workers' councils generally had a high sense of responsibility where productivity and the utilization of finances were concerned.

What conclusions can we draw? The councils have stood the test of seven years' experience, five of them the dark years of Russian hostility.

They are no window dressing to disguise the weaknesses—and there are plenty—of the party machinery.

They have many things to learn. Prices are still high as a result of low production. More often than not factory-made goods are badly finished. These shortcomings were frankly criticized at the congress.

USSR**WHAT IS HAPPENING AMONG SOVIET HISTORIANS?**

BEFORE last week's changes in the Soviet leadership, one of the clearest signs of an approaching crisis was the delay in the publication of the March issue of the journal *Voprosy Istorii* [Problems of History].

Readers will recall our report (May 31, p. 29) of the death of its editor-in-chief, A. M. Pankratova.

The March issue of the journal, which is a monthly, did not appear until June. It had not been passed for printing until May 21.

It revealed that only four members of the old editorial board had been retained, one of whom was its late editor-in-chief.

Seven of the old board had been dismissed, and an editorial, clearly not from Pankratova's hand, but following closely the line of a recent article in the party periodical *Kommunist*

(see *The Newsletter*, May 17, p. 13), was devoted to denouncing them.

The old board was said to have abandoned 'the party spirit in science' through misinterpreting the decisions of the Twentieth Congress.

Particular exception was taken to an article about Stalin in 1917, by Burdzalov, one of the dismissed editors.

It seems likely however that the last straw was the publication in the February issue of an article about the Hungarian Revolution of 1848-49, with special reference to the Russian intervention against it.

In this article the activity of one Captain Gusev, a Russian officer who sided with the rebels, was dwelt upon, and it was also mentioned that the Tsar's main reason for intervention was his fear that a successful revolution in Hungary would have repercussions inside Russia.

LETTERS | Did We Plug or Did We Pin-point?**HASTY CONDEMNATIONS DO NOT HELP**

SURELY the purpose of *The Newsletter* is not to put across a 'line' but to provide facts and information that would otherwise be suppressed.

In providing such information it has done an invaluable job (for example the Salsberg articles) but recently it has tended to plug a political 'line'.

Khrushchev's offer to withdraw the Red Army from Eastern Europe was dismissed as a bluff.

The *Newsletter* intervened in the inter-union dispute on the docks and attacked what it called 'would-be monopoly unionism', sounding rather like the *Daily Express*.

True to form, King Street rushed in to support the official CPSU statement on the sackings. This sort of blind subservience is the reason why many have left the Communist Party, but it would now be silly to just as blindly condemn everything the Russians do.

The *Newsletter* asks how the *Daily Worker* knows 'who is right and who is wrong' and then proceeds itself to label Molotov as 'Right' and Malenkov as 'Left'.

King Street says that the CPSU can solve any problem. The *Newsletter* says that it (the bureaucracy) can solve none.

The job of *The Newsletter* was surely to seek and publish opinions other than those of King Street and the capitalist Press. For instance we would have liked to read comment from, say, ex-CPers like Thompson and Renyon, a Left Labour man, a militant trade unionist, a leading Trotskyist, etc.

An understanding of Russia since the Twentieth Congress needs careful study by us all. Hasty endorsements by King Street, or condemnations by *The Newsletter* will not help us. Little Hulton (Lancs).

Dick Nettleton

WHAT KIND OF A 'LEFT' IS SHEPILOV?

I was mystified by your reference to Malenkov and Shepilov as men of the 'Left'. I wonder what grounds you have for classifying either of them in this way?

Shepilov, as party supervisor of the Soviet intelligentsia, had recently been lecturing the writers, artists and composers in a highly 'Right-wing' manner.

Is it that, since the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy is seen as a form of 'Centrism', you are under an obligation to show it as striking blows to both Right and Left? London, N.12.

A. North

[*Literaturnaya Gazeta* has just written that there was a 'certain link' between the activities of the deposed leaders and 'the revisionism and nihilism which for some time past has gripped certain writers'.

Shepilov in particular is blamed for keeping silent, 'despite a fondness for making long speeches', at a meeting of the board of the Soviet Writers' Union, instead of putting the writers on the line.—Editor]

THE NEWSLETTER BEAT THEM ALL

MAY I as a Left-wing member of the Labour Party congratulate *The Newsletter* on being the only political weekly last week to include a report on the important developments in the USSR?

I write on this question as I feel in your report of these events you succeeded in pin-pointing the significance of this new crisis of the Soviet leadership.

I believe that the developments in Stalinism all over the world over the last few months must be studied and understood—not only by past and present members of the Communist Party but by all active members of the Labour movement, since the complete exposure of the non-Marxist policies of the British Communist Party leadership will be a great step towards building socialism in this country.

Therefore I want to put forward a few points on the shake-up in Russia.

The only way we can understand what is happening there is by studying the books written on the period known as the Stalin era, including those written by 'premature anti-Stalinists'.

From these we shall be able to draw conclusions which will not only help us to understand Soviet problems but also problems dealing with the Right-wing bureaucracies in this country.

By getting rid of confusion through study, we shall be able all the better to help the Soviet people achieve real socialist democracy, while at the same time fighting for more democracy and a real socialist policy in the British Labour movement.

London, S.W.16.

Janet Sutton

A MARXIST LEAGUE IS MY ANSWER

THE quite shameful kowtowing and superstitious reverencing before the reformist Labour Party by ex-members of the Communist Party who only a little while ago were calling themselves 'Marxists' and 'revolutionary socialists' is not a pleasant spectacle.

The Labour Party, Alison Macleod tells us, did not pull out people's fingernails. Quite true! 'All' they did was to help shower the Korean civilian population—men, women and children—with jellied petrol bombs and to engage in a spot of head-hunting in Malaya.

The betrayals and crimes of the Labour leaders have not been one whit less than those of the 'communist' leaders.

Is it necessary for instance to remind some people of three crucial dates in British working-class history—1914, 1926 and 1931—the dates of three great betrayals (among many others) by the Labour leaders?

If Alison Macleod, Beatrix Tudor-Hart and others think that further betrayals are not inevitable in the future, then

all they have done is leave the Stalinist dream-world for another dream-world—and the outcome for them will be shocks as severe as those suffered during the past eighteen months.

Comrade Macleod talks about campaigning more effectively on various issues or 'immediate interests' in the Labour Party. Amazingly, she forgets to mention working-class power and socialism.

Revolutionary socialists are not concerned primarily with 'immediate interests' per se (important as these may be) but with the relationship of these to the transformation of the capitalist system into socialist society.

Perhaps Comrade Macleod could tell us how she envisages working-class power and socialism via the Labour Party?

It is just not good enough to point to a difference between the leaders and rank and file of the Labour Party. This gets us precisely nowhere.

The whole point is that an analysis of the structure and role of the Labour Party in the system of British capitalist society reveals that it has become an essential prop of that system and can itself exist only within that system.

To talk about going into the Labour Party in order not to be in the wilderness, in order to be 'with the masses', is superficial nonsense.

Being with the masses means being in those centres, or potential centres, of organized power which will decide the destiny of the people as a whole.

In the Russia of 1917 this meant the large factories, the soviets and the army barracks. In the Britain of 1957 it means the factories, the shop stewards' organizations and trades councils (both of which are embryonic organs of workers' power) and the trade unions.

Most members of the Labour Party, affiliated through their trade unions (in Britain it was the unions that formed the Labour Party, unlike the continental countries, where very largely the labour parties formed the unions) do not even know that they are members of the party.

The Constituency Labour Parties themselves are primarily electoral machines which are defunct in between elections.

The experience of those Marxists who have worked in the Labour Party for ten years and more (there are such!) is not an inspiring one. They have had to hide their light very much behind a bushel in order to be able to exist and 'fight another day'.

In that way, to give but two examples, Socialist Fellowship and Socialist Outlook went the way of all flesh after Transport House gave them the rap.

Those who give the advice to CPers 'stay in and fight' (why not 'go back and fight' to those already out?) are equally wrong. Fight for what? To 'transform' the party? Who now believes in this?

Transforming the Communist Party means not merely a radical overhaul of the policy, leadership and apparatus of the party but a complete, frank and unequivocal repudiation of its entire political past before the British public. Nothing else will do.

Such a regenerated party would in fact be a new party. It would not choose to burden itself with the incubus of the positions of Stalinism but would emphasize the fact that it was a new party which would wage implacable war against both Stalinism and social-democratic reformism.

The most important general task for the next few years is the regroupment of the Left around revolutionary Marxism, in preparation for the eventual formation of a Marxist party in this country.

Such a party cannot be created by a mere proclamation. Nevertheless militant socialists should orient themselves now towards its formation, say by forming a Marxist League.

One must not make the elementary mistake of confusing the organizations which have sprung from the working class (Labour Party, Communist Party) with the class, in spite of the inevitable outcries about 'sectarianism' from those who want to shelter under the umbrella of the official organizations (all of which are heading towards acute crises).

The minimum fundamentals for the Marxist League and the future Marxist party ought to be:

1) Recognition of the class struggle, which is to be carried through to its logical conclusion of the revolutionary over-

throw of capitalism, the transitional form of State power, being one based on workers' councils similar to the councils of action of 1926;

2) Support of the Soviet Union with its nationalized property relations against imperialist attack, and at the same time unconditional support of the revolutionary Soviet workers and intellectuals who are fighting for the overthrow of the thoroughly degenerated bureaucracy and for the restoration of genuine, proletarian, socialist democracy.

London, N.

Harold Reynolds

BOOKS

A CAREFULLY TRUNCATED QUOTATION

By a Correspondent

THE English version of the official Soviet textbook of Political Economy, which was published this week*, contains an interesting section on the economy of the USSR.

Here quotations from the classics of Marxism-Leninism are marshalled in support of the current practice of the Soviet authorities.

As is well known, it is important when quoting to know when to stop. An instance of a carefully truncated quotation occurs on page 721, in the chapter on 'Socialist Reproduction'.

The object of the exercise is to enlist Lenin's backing for the doctrine that priority growth of the production of means of production (as compared with production of consumer goods) is a necessary feature of the 'economic law of socialism'.

Accordingly, the following passage is quoted:

"To expand production (to 'accumulate' in the categorical meaning of the term) it is first of all necessary to produce means of production, and for this it is consequently necessary to enlarge that department of social production which manufactures means of production." (Lenin, *A Characterization of Economic Romanticism*, Moscow, 1951, English edition, p. 44.)

Now, in fact, there is no full stop after the last word in this quotation, but a comma—this has escaped the vigilance of editors Clemens Dutt and Andrew Rothstein—and it goes on like this:

... it is necessary to draw into it workers who then create a demand for articles of consumption. Hence, "consumption" develops after "accumulation", or after production; strange though it may seem, it cannot be otherwise in capitalist society. Hence, proportion is not essential in the development of these two departments of capitalist production; on the contrary, disproportion is inevitable.

To complete the quotation would thus have revealed that Lenin was dealing with capitalist economy, not socialist.

This trick of claiming simultaneously that Soviet industry is socialist and yet must be governed by the law of capitalist reproduction was exposed twenty-seven years ago by Trotsky in an article entitled 'Stalin as Theoretician', in which he discussed a number of questions of Stalinist economic theory and practice.

The article is included in a useful selection of Trotsky's writings (*Ecrits, 1928-1940*, tome I) now available from the Paris publishers Marcel Riviere.

'RED CSEPEL' WORKERS VISIT POLAND

A delegation from the metal products factory in Csepel (Budapest) has visited the Polish town of Bydgoszcz, says Polish Facts and Figures (July 6).

'The two factories have been maintaining lively contacts for the last two years,' the report adds.

INTOURISM

'What you learn about a country during a short visit depends a lot upon who takes you around.'—Coun. Solly Kaye in World News, July 6. (Note: This refers to a visit to Israel.)

*Lawrence and Wishart, 21s.