

# THE NEWSLETTER

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## Howard Fast Writes . . .

**T**HE STORY to which Howard Fast refers in this letter to the Editor of The Newsletter is the most startling document since the Khrushchev speech. The author of 'Citizen Tom Paine', 'Freedom Road', 'Clarkton', 'The Proud and the Free' and 'Spartacus' tells how party bosses in the USA tried to make him write to order.

As each of his books appeared they accused him of fresh crimes. 'Jewish bourgeois nationalism.' 'White chauvinism.' 'Brutalism.' 'Sadism.' And when he published 'Spartacus' one functionary said:

*'I think this book must be destroyed. It is a rotten book.'*

Fast tells the story of his dealings with the American Stalinists without bitterness, but with sadness at what they have done to communists and to communism.

By permission of Howard Fast and of the editor of Prospectus, a new American magazine in which Fast's article appears on November 1, substantial extracts from it will be published in next week's issue of The Newsletter.

Dear Peter Fryer:

I have never been in Russia or Eastern Europe. My story is of the party here---a shameful enough tale of what followed on the Khrushchev "secret" speech, and something of what the communist party's relationship to writing and writers consists of.

I admired your own course. The damnable thing is that the record of communist courage---which honors man and mankind---must now be submerged in the filth of bureaucracy and "leadership." Others may forgive these mindless and heartless creatures who lead the communist movement---but I think that former communists should keep the account book everlastingly.

Warmly,



Howard Fast

## . . . in The Newsletter Next Week

### FOUR LEEDS COMMUNISTS DISCIPLINED

FOUR prominent members of the Communist Party in Leeds were disciplined by the party's Yorkshire district committee on Sunday for calling a meeting to hear Brian Behan, former member of the party's executive committee, speak on the Trades Union Congress.

Cliff Slaughter, a member of the Leeds area committee, has been suspended from party membership for three months.

Jo Thomas, secretary of the Hyde Park branch and member of the Leeds area committee and Yorkshire district committee, has been removed from those committees.

Also removed from the Leeds area committee are Beryl Dobbins and Charles Parker.

### LABOUR PARTY BRANCH AT BRIGGS

A LABOUR PARTY factory branch has been started at the Briggs motor plant, Dagenham.

An organizing committee has been formed and shop stewards are helping to build this new type of Labour Party organization.

It is part of a pilot scheme which if successful will be developed all over the country.

At a first successful factory gate lunch hour meeting about 200 workers heard Ron Ledger, Labour MP for Romford, speak in favour of unilateral action by the next Labour government to cease manufacture and testing of the H-bomb. He also argued for more nationalization.

The Briggs workers were advised to approach their shop stewards for membership forms. Further meetings are planned.

### HOGARTH, LEVY, STEVENS ARE AMONG OUR SPECIAL ISSUE CONTRIBUTORS

PAUL HOGARTH, Professor HYMAN LEVY and Professor BERNARD STEVENS are among the contributors to the special issue of THE NEWSLETTER commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the October Revolution.

The special issue will be published on November 7, and will be sent without extra charge to subscribers. To non-subscribers the price will be 2s.

Paul Hogarth is writing on the Soviet fine arts, Hyman Levy on Soviet philosophy and Bernard Stevens on Soviet music.

Joseph Clark, who recently resigned from the New York Daily Worker and the U.S. Communist Party after twenty-eight years' membership, writes on 'An American Journalist in Moscow'.

Jerry Dawson, of Merseyside Unity Theatre, writes on the Soviet cinema. Robert Hunter on 'The Purgers and the Purged'. Beatrix Tudor-Hart on Soviet psychology, John Daniels on Soviet education, Donald Veall on Soviet law, Tom Kemp on Soviet industry and J. H. Bradley on Soviet science.

Other articles include: 'How They Took Power in Petrograd'; 'The Men Who Led the Revolution'; 'The Bolshevik Party'; 'The Soviets—Reality and Caricature'; 'The Bolshevik Resistance to Stalinism (1923-28)'; 'The Communist International and Soviet Foreign Policy';

'The Soviet Union and the People's Democracies'; 'The October Revolution and the Peoples of the East'; 'Soviet Agriculture'; 'Soviet Medicine'; 'Soviet Architecture and Town Planning' and 'How the Revolution was Presented to the Readers of the Yorkshire Post'.

There will be a chronology and a bibliography, and a specially designed two-colour cover.

## COMMENTARY

### A SHAMEFUL REPLY

AMERICAN and Turkish denials of Syria's complaint that an act of aggression is being prepared against her simply do not ring true. A tone of injured innocence will not make the world forget Guatemala and Suez. Did not Truman two months ago demand what the *Manchester Guardian* terms 'strong but unspecified action to deal with Syria'? Was not a 'free' Syrian cabinet set up in Turkey a month ago? Is not the Hatai Mobile Force of Turkish troops and tanks, equipped with American weapons and advised by American officers, massed on the Syrian frontier? And whether or not a U.S. diplomatic bag has found its way into the Russian' hands, *Le Monde*, a most respectable newspaper, has certainly aroused speculation about the visit to Turkey of Eisenhower's special envoy.

In the light of these facts the reply of the Labour Party executive to Khrushchev's letter is utterly shameful. It is short-sighted and it is pompous. Smug talk about 'constitutional issues' and penny lectures on protocol are both irrelevant and irresponsible. Should the working-class movement have stopped to consult Jennings and other manuals of capitalist class etiquette before moving into action on Suez? The job of Gaitskell and Bevan is to fight Tory policy, not to hot-foot it to Downing Street before consulting the national executive of their party, the National Council of Labour or the Parliamentary Labour Party, let alone the rank and file. For the first time in a generation the Soviet leaders have appealed to the working-class movement over the heads of the governments. Instead of seizing on this and using it to try to prod the Russians still further on to the path of socialist principle, the Labour leaders prefer to wallow in their complacency. The rank and file, however, lack their leaders' bovine confidence in Macmillan's foreign policy. They are deeply concerned about the danger of war. They would welcome a summit conference, provided it is not a horse-deal behind closed doors, and provided representatives of Syria and the other Arab peoples take part. But they place their trust, not in statesmen, but in the power of the world working-class movement to prevent war.

### A ROYAL HOOLIGAN

TOO MUCH is heard about the behaviour of working-class adolescents, and too little about the conduct of rich-wasters like the Duke of Kent and his officer friends. The latest escapade of the Queen's cousin was to bombard a train with rotten apples; his brother officers in the train retaliated with thunder-flashes, one of which exploded near Mrs. Edna Mackie, throwing gravel into her right eye and endangering her eyesight. Ordinary lads who acted like this would be called hooligans and sent to a reform school. But there is a different code for officers and gentlemen, whose recreations include pouring champagne out of windows and pelting each other with costly food at 'coming-out' parties, while old age pensioners find it hard to afford one decent meal a day. The existence of royal and titled parasites is an affront to those who work for a living. The Duke of Kent is neither useful nor ornamental. A year or two on a three-foot seam would not do this young man any harm.

## SCIENCE

### WAR FALL-OUT WORSE THAN WINDSCALE

By Our Science Correspondent

THE BASIC nature of the accident at Windscale is clear, though certain details remain uncertain. It is similar to accidents at Chalk River, Canada, and in other piles.

Every fuel element in a nuclear pile of the Windscale or Calder Hall type has to be enclosed in a metal can. During the working time of the reactor, radioactive products of the fission (splitting) of uranium atoms accumulate inside this can.

Considerable pressures are developed, and here led to the can bursting. It seems that the cooling channel became wholly

### IT WAS A MILITARY EXPERIMENT

'The experiment which was in progress when the energy release was undertaken was on nuclear reactions. Since the nuclear reactions which occur during an atom bomb explosion have been much studied, both in the laboratory and in practice, it seems a fair inference that the purpose of the experiment was to obtain an answer to some question which had been suggested by observations made in connexion with the recent thermonuclear test explosion near Christmas Island.'

(The Times, October 21)

or partially blocked by the burst, and the whole element became very hot. Heat accelerated the release of radioactive products into the atmosphere.

Nearly all other piles are protected against this, because the reactor is enclosed in a thick steel vessel, as at Calder Hall and Doureay.

Windscale and the Harwell BEPO pile, are simply cooled by air blown through them and out of a chimney. Consequently radioactive fission products of many kinds were blown over a large area.

It is right to condemn all milk for miles around; but it is also true that a good deal of the activity can be removed by washing in most cases. All house roofs, vegetables, machinery and animals in the area should be thoroughly washed, and all crops stored in the open should be suspect.

But this is only a very small taste of what fall-out in a thermonuclear war would be like; the real ostriches sticking their heads in the sand are those who try to minimize the danger and soothe public opinion.

## ECONOMICS

### ANGLO-U.S. DEFLATION MOVES HIT JOBS

By Our Economic Correspondent

IF THE Tory government stays in office the effects of Tory deflationary policy are likely to be serious. According to the *Board of Trade Journal* the number and area of new factory buildings in the third quarter of 1957 was the lowest for any comparable period since 1953.

This seems to show that the rate of capital investment is already declining rapidly.

The Board of Trade forecasts that the fall in the value of capital investment in the whole of 1957 will be in the region of ten per cent, and that there will probably be a further fall in 1958 of approximately nine per cent.

Shares in almost all the big American industries have been taking a tumble. The official explanation is that American investors are afraid of war breaking out in the Middle East.

Even if this is true, it has nothing to do with the recent selling spree on Wall Street. The USA is also carrying out a deflationary policy. Steel mill activity is down to about 81 per cent of capacity.

Such deflationary measures as the British and U.S. governments are pursuing have created chaos in the past.

World commodity prices are falling, owing to overproduction of most basic commodities. Copper, for instance, is down from a high point of £438 per ton in spring 1956 to £183 on October 11, 1957.

Certainly there has been fluctuation in the commodity markets. But the general trend is downwards. And the measures taken in the USA mean increased unemployment.

Income of primary producers outside the USA has fallen, which will mean they can buy fewer goods from the manufacturing countries.

This is the time Macmillan and Thorneycroft have chosen to increase the Bank Rate to seven per cent! A policy of monetary deflation with the aim of further reducing investment is bound to cause unemployment; it is a declaration of war on the trade unions.

## U.S. ECONOMIC PRESSURE ON CANADA

From Our Ottawa Correspondent

THORNEYCROFT'S proposal for a free trade area was not well received in political circles here because of the potential damage to basic Canadian industries.

Such a proposal could benefit the Canadian consumer considerably, as nearly all industries have high tariffs. In certain cases the government goes through the paper fiction of paying duty on goods for its own use; where pressure is less strong the fiction is omitted.

Prices of textiles, footwear and motor-cars are particularly high—on average about twice as much, and going as high as three times as much, as British prices.

The chemical and engineering industries tend to work inefficiently behind high barriers, and the building industry has not seriously tried to develop methods of working in the winter.

### A major source of friction

Consequently rents average one quarter of Canadian salaries, and modern plumbing and decorating are pretty well prohibitive even to the well-paid.

The problem of Canada's wheat surplus (a major source of friction between Canada and the USA) could be partly solved by free trade.

Diefenbaker's efforts to divert 15 per cent of Canada's trade to Britain led to strong U.S. opposition and movement of exchange rates against Canada. U.S. investment tended to fall off with loss of 'confidence'.

Recent oil discoveries in Alberta will soon make Canada a major oil exporter seeking markets. American economic pressure could be effectively resisted once oil production starts, because the USA is dependent on vital Canadian minerals and wood pulp.

## INDUSTRY

### FRESH BID TO SQUEEZE OUT THE 'BLUES'

By Our Industrial Correspondent

OFFICIALS of the Transport and General Workers' Union still cling to the aim of squeezing the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers—the 'blue union'—out of the northern ports.

For three years now, many thousands of dockers in Hull, Manchester and on Merseyside have remained in the 'blue union' despite difficulties and lack of recognition.

Present attacks on the blue union are centred on the small port of Garston, on the southern outskirts of Liverpool. A good proportion of the whole dock labour force is in the NASD, but only five out of eighty coal trimmers—whose job is regarded as being one of the 'better' ones in this port.

### Dark threats by officials

These five men have now been informed by the Dock Labour Board and their employers, the British Transport Commission, that they 'fall short of requirements' as coal-trimmers. They have been regraded as 'quay men'.

'Blue union' members consider this to be victimization. The sequence of events leading up to it is as follows.

From time to time over the past year there have been dark threats dropped by TGWU officials that their members would refuse to work with NASD members.

But where, in all the northern ports, to find more than a handful of men prepared to take such action? That was the problem for certain union officials who show a militancy against the 'blue union' sadly lacking in their relations with the employers.

### Threat was empty talk

At the end of September the Manchester Guardian reported a section of the clerks, or checkers, on Manchester docks as planning to strike within a few days against the 'blue union'.

The recent strike of crane-drivers after the suspension of an NASD member (reported in The Newsletter on October 12) put paid to that.

The temper of the dockers in general—both 'white' and 'blue'—showed up the threat for what it was: empty talk.

In Garston, the five 'blue union' members were transferred when an old agreement was produced. Signed thirty years ago it provides, according to what these workers have now been told, that coal-trimmers must be members of the TGWU.

The men are appealing against their regrading. Two of them have worked as coal-trimmers for twenty-five years. Dockers in Garston allege that the whole of the agreement has fallen into disuse.

## The Week at a Glance

**GUATEMALA:** The provisional government declared a thirty-day state of siege and troops fired on demonstrators.

**USA:** Stock prices had their biggest fall since Eisenhower's September 1955 heart attack.

**ARGENTINE REPUBLIC:** Troops guarded public buildings during a 48-hour general strike which paralysed heavy industry.

**VIETNAM:** Thirteen Americans and five local citizens were wounded when bombs exploded during the session of the 21-nation Colombo plan conference on aid for Asia.

**RUMANIA:** The Grand National Assembly passed a law making theft of public property a capital offence, following a scandal involving a number of senior government officials.

**USA:** Dr Billy Graham, the evangelist, was examining a flock of sheep when a ram butted him 50 feet down a rock slope in North Carolina, came after him, butted him twice again.

**SOUTH AFRICA:** The government took its first step in applying legislation to enforce apartheid when it notified the clothing industry that specific jobs now done by Coloured and Native workers must be reserved for whites.

**CZECHOSLOVAKIA:** About 140 persons were arrested in Prague, Ostrava and other large cities for creating disturbances. There were reports of unrest at the industrial centre of Moravska Ostrava; Communist Party speakers were said to have been shouted down at discussion meetings on the five year plan.



## FORUMS | The London Conference

OPENING the conference of London socialist forums on Sunday, the chairman, **JOE YOUNG**, said the forums, which came into existence as a result of the international crisis of communism, had become the meeting place of socialists seeking a way forward from the political wilderness into which events had driven them.

Left-wing members of the Labour Party, who were raising the same questions as those leaving the Communist Party, also took part in the forum movement.

The task of the conference was to achieve the maximum unity of these socialists and to define the place of the forums in the Labour movement.

**JOHN ST JOHN**, opening the discussion on 'The British Labour Movement and the Forums', said that what was needed in Britain was a meeting place for socialist thinkers on a national scale, and he did not feel that this could be done through the Labour Party alone.

Though there was no alternative to it as a political and electoral machine, and much could be supported in its programme, its perspective was no larger than that of the next Parliament. Discussion of socialist principle was therefore limited by the thoughts of the marginal voter.

The Labour movement could succeed only when it got away from its tradition of theoretical weakness and emphasis on personalities. It must obtain an understanding of society and its class forces. Here the forums could assist, not as a new political party, but complementary to the Labour Party.

The aim should be a Left-wing version of the Fabian Society. It was necessary, however, to put some teeth into the forums, for continued discussions in a vacuum would only lead to a petering away of the movement.

There was need also for the re-examination of, and further research into, some of the basic tenets of Marxism, and then to apply it as a tool of thought to the present-day world. The forums must be the rallying ground for all the different trends in the militant Left.

**MERCIA EMMERSON** (Islington) describing herself as a typical product of the recent upheavals, saw a need for the forums as centres of Marxist discussion.

The British Labour movement had a great resistance towards theory, yet the deviation of Bevan and the shortcomings of Frank Cousins were no accident and must be explained.

The task before the forums was to redeem Marxism from Stalinism and also to answer the revisionism of the Strachey's by creative Marxist research.

**MICHAEL SEGAL** (Paddington) said it should not be the intention of the forums to remain only a Marxist body. The development of a new Left must include all who wanted socialism.

Marxism had no monopoly of truth or analysis. People like G. D. H. Cole had a contribution to make which must be carefully considered and they must be drawn together into the Left.

**A. PACKTER** (North-West London) felt it was necessary to align the members of the forums with the Stalinists, who were the only group with a realistic programme on such questions as nationalization and the coloured peoples.

**E. HILLMAN** (Hammersmith) said the belief that Marxists were not able to influence events in the Labour Party was false, and the Brighton conference had demonstrated this.

The Labour Party Conference had dealt a terrific blow to the Left wing, and this has been followed by the betrayal

of Tribune, said **M. KIDRON** (St Marylebone). The forums must now turn their attention to this section of the movement and evolve clear policies on current questions.

**L. SEWELL** (Clapham) declared that it did not matter whether they were Marxists or not, as long as they were practical and acted in accordance with reality.

**BEATRIX TUDOR-HART** (Hornsey) urged the need for financial assistance for the forum movement. The main task was to mobilize the Left of the Labour Party and it would only be done if they had a clear policy.

Presenting a 'Draft Statement of Aims' on behalf of the London Liaison Committee, **IAN RAMSEY** said he thought the future role of the forums was determined by two things: the defeat of the Left wing in the Labour Party at Brighton, and the Russian satellite with all it implied.

The Left had been defeated on a number of questions and this was because there had been no policy-making on the Left to equal that done by the Right wing.

The forums' job was policy-making for the Left. To do this they could become a sort of Left-wing Fabian Society; they could write documents, set up study groups and put forward policy proposals for which a majority could be won inside the Labour Party.

They could begin on the question of nationalization and workers' control. These studies would take a long time, but were the only way to justify the continuance of the forums.

It had been said that it was necessary to bring truth into the socialist movement; the yardstick of this was their attitude to the class struggle, declared **GERRY HEALY** (Streatham).

A practical approach to politics today was to work in the Labour Party and trade unions to organize campaigns against the Tory government and for the maintenance of full employment.

A fight for full employment immediately raised the question of the ownership of industry.

You could not challenge the leadership of the Labour Party unless you worked in the Labour Party and with the workers in their day-to-day experiences.

**JOE PAWSEY** (Hornsey) believed that the ground on which the forums would have to work was the Tories' attack on living standards. He did not want to see the forum movement develop into a sect.

**MARTIN GRAINGER** did not agree that the Left had been defeated at Brighton. There was the basis of a real Left wing in those who had voted against the platform and against Bevan, and the place of the forum members was working with them inside the Labour Party.

Michael Segal thought the conference should agree to set up certain study groups to prepare material for circulation. The subjects should be 'What is a Socialist Foreign Policy?', 'What is Marxism?', 'Liberty and Socialism' and 'Workers' Control'. These were all things on which the majority of forum members agreed.

**BRIAN PEARCE** (Hornsey) moved a number of amendments to the Liaison Committee's draft statement of aims. He said their main aim was to prevent the forums' becoming the voice of one trend.

The task of the forums was to improve the knowledge and understanding of their members, to provide somewhere where people could go to discuss with others from all parties and of all trends.

**H. KENDALL** (Wimbledon) said that the purpose of the forums was to discuss in order to do things. People had come to the forums because they wanted to sort out their ideas,

the result of their discussions must be to take their decisions into the wider movement.

ALAN EMMERSON (Islington) said the purpose of the forums should be to strengthen the work of the members inside their own organizations, and not to have a policy on political action to which one must subscribe and on which one must act.

CYRIL SMITH (Harrow and Ruislip) thought that the question was: should the forums be a new political party or forums? There was a need for work by Marxists inside the Labour Party, but this could not be done by organizing the forums as some new party.

JOHN FAIRHEAD (Paddington) believed that there were people present who wanted to bury the forum movement. Those who said they were afraid that one trend would dominate had no confidence in their ideas.

TED GRANT (Islington) said that it was impossible to gather the working-class elements in the organization without giving them concrete activity to do in the localities. Unless the forums had a firm policy, they would disappear.

Replying to the discussion on the amendments, Brian Pearce said there were people who wanted to use the forum movement to expand their own groups. What Hornsey wanted was to see that there was a place for people who sought clarification of their ideas. There would be new people coming to the forums and they wanted to be there to help them.

Replying for the Liaison Committee, John St John said the Hornsey amendments were an extreme form of sectarianism, of the sort that was afraid in case some other trend gained at its expense.

The amendments were carried by a large majority.

## A Young American, a Scientist and a Writer Give Three Views on Sputnik I

WE PUBLISH this week three different viewpoints on the Soviet earth satellite, which—despite Mr Martin Ryle and the Daily Sketch ('The Bleep has "about had it"'—October 9) was still whizzing merrily round the world twenty days after it was sent up.

From the USA comes a description by a young American socialist, SHANE MAGE, of the reaction over there to the Russian scientists' great achievement.

Our science correspondent, J. H. BRADLEY, discusses some of the technical aspects of Sputnik I.

And the critic and translator LEONARD HUSSEY puts a controversial point of view on the use the British Stalinists are making, as it seems to him, of the satellite.

### SPUTNIK IS POPULAR WITH JOHN CITIZEN BUT POLITICIANS' PRAISE IS GRUDGING

From Shane Mage

NEW YORK

'NOW FOR THE first time in my life I feel inferior': this extraordinarily frank response of an ordinary American to a newspaper poll is typical of the national reaction to the success of the USSR in launching the first earth satellite.

Perhaps the most widespread, universally accepted idea in America has been the proposition that the USA enjoys a clear superiority over every other country (and particularly over Russia) economically, technologically, scientifically, and militarily.

The doctrine of American superiority has been able to survive many things in the past: the relatively much faster growth of the Russian economy has meant nothing to a people which enjoys an enormously higher standard of living.

If Russia has been able to develop her own nuclear bombs, she was only following in the footsteps of the U.S.A.—and besides, most Americans had fallen for the atomic-spy hoax according to which the Rosenbergs and others had given the 'secret' of the bomb to Russia.

Finally, sure behind bases all over the world and the world's biggest bomber fleet and supply of nuclear weapons, Americans have had no cause to question their own military supremacy.

The fact that their armies were held to a stalemate in Korea has been waved aside with the assertion that the U.S.A. could not fight an all-out war (in fact, neither could the Chinese and Russians use their A-bombs) and by the myth of Chinese 'human sea' tactics, according to which the enemy made up for U.S. superiority in weapons by the reckless expenditure of 'cheap' Oriental life.

These ideas will die hard, but the advent of Sputnik I has made their speedy demise a certainty. Living disproof of the

legend of American superiority is up there in the sky, for everyone to see.

Whether or not the U.S.A. succeeds in launching a bigger and better satellite than the Russians can (and there is no reason to believe that we shall be able to do this) nothing that happens in the future can alter the fact that it was the Russians who succeeded first.

The feeling of resentment and inferiority because of a lost illusion was not, however, the universal reaction among Americans.

America is the home of 'science-fiction' and many Americans have been quite familiar with space satellites (and many stranger devices) for a long time.

For many, many Americans Sputnik represents a great human scientific achievement, and a first step towards the stars—for these, the fact that it is the Russians who launched it is virtually irrelevant.

**That this friendly and peaceful reaction is very widespread indeed is indicated by the fact that the name Sputnik has become enormously popular. The humanization of the satellite is a sure sign of its acceptance.**

For the rulers of America, however, praise for the Soviet accomplishment has been of the bitterest, most grudging variety. The politicians and generals realize that Sputnik represents an enormous victory for the Russians; a victory whose propaganda aspect is the least important.

### Advantage passing to Russians

The basic strategy of American policy towards the USSR has been the creation of a 'position of strength' on the basis of which the U.S.A. could dictate terms to its opponents.

To secure this military strength, the USA has constructed air bases all around Russia, assuring itself of the capacity for 'instant and massive retaliation' (meaning the capacity for a quick, decisive military victory).

Sputnik means that in this business of 'instant massive retaliation' the advantage is quickly passing into the hands of the Russians.

**SPUTNIK (Continued from previous page)**

Moreover it is now evident that if American bases are close to Russia, then Russia is close to those bases, and has the missiles to destroy them long before their bombers could reach Russia.

The opposition Democratic Party politicians are blaming the Eisenhower administration for not developing missiles fast enough (the total U.S. military budget is around 40 thousand million dollars).

The administration is obviously speeding up its efforts to get its own Sputnik into the sky as soon as possible. But the American moon will not make the Russian one disappear, nor will it prop up the vanishing legend of American superiority.

**THE KIND OF KNOWLEDGE SPUTNIK SENDS**

By J. H. Bradley

THE Soviet artificial satellite makes it clear that Russia's rocket claims are fully justified. The satellite needs far higher speeds and better guidance than any weapon.

A sphere is used because the resistance of the air can be calculated for it, independently of whether it happens to be spinning. Measurements of the slowing down give information about the thinness of the air, and these are of great interest to the designers of both spaceships and long-range rockets.

The sphere weighs at least 400 lb., and is obviously full of instruments; this is confirmed by the need for a protective cone.

What kind of information can a radio transmitter inside the satellite send back to the earth? Information about pressure, temperature, amount of sunlight, light reflected from the earth, cosmic radiation and rays from the sun (both of which are heavily absorbed in the air).

It is almost certain that the sphere stores up information and releases it on a signal from the earth. In this way information can be obtained far from any recording station.

There is a rather uncertain report that pictures of the earth are being transmitted. Alternatively, instruments and cameras could be ejected by explosive charge backwards along the orbit, so that their speed would be low enough to land by parachute.

Sputnik I has drawn a squawk from Stewart Alsop of the New York Herald Tribune. He complains that it may be locating American installations more accurately than was possible before.

In fact, according to International Geophysical Year data, the uncertainties in present mapping are about 300 ft. between continents.

The IGY is planning to reduce the error to about 100 ft. In neither case would the difference matter to an H-bomb.

Alsop claims that 'infra-red devices' can locate geographical features. He does not explain why anybody should use infra-red when ordinary light is more effective.

What is interesting is that this cry comes from the land of the Open Skies Plan!

**THE SPUTNIK, THE BRITISH STALINISTS AND 'NOT BY BREAD ALONE'**

By Leonard Hussey

'THE LIGHT of the Red Moon is shining on our collection,' wrote Barbara Niven in her fund column in the *Daily Worker* of October 12.

Our Stalinists clearly set great hopes on the Soviet earth satellite as a means of covering up and compensating for their embarrassment over the H-bomb vote at Brighton.

The editorial in World News of October 12 dragged the satellite into the discussion around Dudintsev's novel 'Not by Bread Alone':

'Readers . . . may wonder how it comes about, if the picture is as Dudintsev portrays it, that the Soviet Union has ever managed to manufacture even a motor car, let alone an earth satellite . . .'

Charitably, one assumes the writer of those lines has not

read the novel in question. Dudintsev's hero does eventually get his invention accepted, and the opportunity to work further upon it, thanks to the Soviet Ministry of Defence, and in particular to a scientist attached thereto who might have been modelled on Lieutenant-General Academician A. A. Blagonravov . . .

In any case, what caused the uproar over 'Not by Bread Alone' was not so much the picture of empire-building in the industrial and scientific spheres, and its pernicious consequences—that had been done before in other books—as the exposure of social contrasts, privilege and poverty.

The Stalinists protest too much that the satellite 'answers Dudintsev'. It was significant, one is forced to think, that when the *Daily Worker* rebuked the *Daily Telegraph* for the latter's editorial 'Peasants into Spacemen' (October 9) this sentence was not quoted or discussed:

'For a régime that bases its reason for existence on improving the condition of the working class, a space rocket is a spectacular irrelevance.'

That the splendid achievement of Soviet scientists—based on the international development of science during the last half-century, with contributions by German, Russian and other research workers, and on the similar international advance of technology—owes a great deal to the advantages of the Soviet system, even in its distorted Stalinist form, it would be idle to deny.

**Absence of crippling rivalries**

What is perhaps especially important in this connexion is the comparative absence—thanks to the nationalized property relations and economic planning inherited from the October Revolution and the Left Opposition platform—of the kind of crippling rivalries between separate 'interests' that have hindered progress in the same field in the USA.

But to draw simplistic, straight-line conclusions from Soviet scientific leadership in this field about the social and political set-up in the USSR would be as misleading as was the treatment by R. P. Dutt in his 'Fascism and Social Revolution' of the alleged negative prospect of scientific and technical achievement in Nazi Germany.

We learnt the hard way how remote from reality that was, during World War II.

One remembers also the crude deduction made by so many people in 1945 that because the Americans had discovered before the Russians how to utilize atomic energy, therefore monopoly capitalism's superiority had been demonstrated beyond further dispute.

(The Russians rightly dwell upon the pioneer role played in rocket engineering and astronautics by their own Tsiolkovsky, the centenary of whose birth was celebrated not long ago. His research was well advanced before the Revolution, in spite of tsarist oppression.)

**Odd contrast with Montagu**

The World News editorial comment on Dudintsev contrasts oddly with the review of 'Not by Bread Alone' that appeared in the previous (October 5) issue of that journal, from the pen of Ivor Montagu.

He wrote that 'we British readers must be glad to have this novel, which, carefully studied, reveals to us much.' It is a 'good book', we learnt, with characters, settings and relationships that are 'sufficiently convincing to make the author's case.'

Montagu characterized Soviet society as 'a transitional society' (how did that get past the Stalinist censor?) and, far from denying the existence of powerful bureaucrats like Drozdov and Avdiyev, argued that 'cold war' provided them with their ideal climate.

A startling contrast with Montagu's review is offered by Pat Sloan's review in the latest *British-Soviet Newsletter*. The tone here is utterly different.

In Sloan's own words, his is 'a mood of aggravation and disappointment' as he reads 'Not by Bread Alone'. 'Nebulously drawn'; 'not entirely credible'; 'less and less convincing'; 'so it drags on'; 'piling up of improbability on improbability'—such are his typical comments.

Somewhere between Montagu and Sloan the Line has got snarled up.



## FRANCE

### A PINAY GOVERNMENT WITHOUT PINAY?

From Our Paris Correspondent

THE RIGHT-WING leader Antoine Pinay, supporter of the war-time Vichy regime, failed to obtain a majority in his attempt to form France's 24th post-war government.

It was clear from the start, when the Premier-presumptive took the floor in the National Assembly, that he had no illusions about his chances. Nor did the deputies feel he was a serious candidate.

Pinay's diffidence was written on his face as he presented himself before the House on the morning of October 18, the day after the spectacular walk-out from power-stations throughout France which paralysed the country for twenty-four hours, and the like of which had not been seen for the last ten years.

This was enough to scare the daylight out of Pinay, who is happy to leave to his socialist successors the task of tackling the French workers' legitimate wage demands.

Pinay did, however, put across a programme that his successors will almost certainly take over. He would fight fresh taxation. There was to be no soaking the rich.

Yet the war in Algeria was to continue. He was against 'totalitarianism and terrorism'—the aspirations of nine million Algerians for freedom.

Pinay did not forget to pay a glowing tribute to 'the firmness and energy' of the socialist proconsul in Algeria. The embarrassed silence on the socialist benches was clear enough comment. More than one socialist deputy could not quite relish this good-conduct testimonial from the Right.

Yet it is only on Pinay's terms that a socialist government, or a government with socialist participation, can be constituted. Otherwise more than a hundred Moderates would refuse their votes.

What is really in the offing is a Pinay government without Pinay.

The French socialists have been participating in capitalist governments since Jean Jaurès died. A minority in the party would like to be in the opposition. But Guy Mollet rules with an iron hand.

### The Left on the carpet

The Left has been on the carpet lately; half a dozen members of the socialist Parliamentary group have been relieved of all positions of trust and responsibility. Even one of the Ministers in Mollet's first government is under a cloud.

If the French Socialist Party has little in common with socialism, the communists are no better. In the debate last week in the National Assembly, Jacques Duclos, Maurice Thorez's No. 2, offered his co-operation to all other groups in Parliament.

The leader of the communist Parliamentary group was brimming with sweetness and light, not merely towards the socialists but also towards the middle-of-the-road parties, including the Catholic centre party.

The communists forgot to offer a minimum programme or any programme whatever. They proffered unconditional support of any capitalist government 'with goodwill', consisting of 'progressive elements' from all parties.

This was quite consistent with the long-standing policy of the Communist Party in this country, which goes back to 1946, when the communists in the government voted military credits for the war in Indo-China. Not long ago they voted Mollet into power and for a time underwrote his Algerian policy.

The discontent of the communist rank-and-file is evident, and it resulted in the party's calling a one-day protest-strike on October 17 against the Algerian war.

But this protest remained on paper. No effort was made to mobilize the workers in the factories. An appeal for 'action' was published in the communist newspaper and that was the end of it. Next day in Parliament Duclos offered his co-operation to all bourgeois parties.

## BOOKS

### 'THE INSIDERS' HITS AT SHARE-BUYING

By George Cunvin

IN ITS pamphlet *The Insiders* (2s. 6d.) the *Universities and Left Review* has made a useful contribution to the debate that will continue to rage in the Labour movement on public ownership.

With a wealth of detailed statistics and charts, and often using the very same sources, *The Insiders* effectively contests the conclusions drawn by the authors of the Labour Party executive's policy statement 'Industry and Society'.

It examines point by point the contentions of the NEC pamphlet that the fragmentation of shareholdings has led to a separation of ownership and control and the growth of a non-capitalist professional managerial group in control of industry, and that consequently large scale industry is no longer actuated by the profit motive and is 'serving the nation well'.

Quoting the same sources the ULR writers show that in the typical large British or American firm the pattern of concentration (aided by the fragmentation of small shareholdings) is such that a small group of shareholders, roughly twenty of the largest, though controlling a relatively small proportion of shares can effectively control policy.

By tracing in detail the interlocking of directorships, control through nominees and subsidiaries, etc. *The Insiders* effectively shows that the ownership and control of British industry are today concentrated in the hands of a powerful and tightly knit financial oligarchy.

In a special chapter Clive Jenkins critically examines the set-up in the nationalized industries. He attacks excessive compensation and suggests that a most rigorous valuation should be undertaken in future public ownership measures.

But the main portion of his chapter deals with the question of control and workers' participation.

Jenkins goes to some length to discuss the mechanics of workers' participation in management. Among other things he argues for the demarcation of the powers of decision in each particular industry in the interests of the over-all national plan elaborated by a national planning authority.

This of course brings up the 64,000 dollar question—the question of the State.

Workers' control in individual industries cannot be consolidated unless the workers control the national State machine.

The concluding chapter of the pamphlet approaches this question.

'The substitution of the State for "the Boss" accomplishes little . . . It is impossible to achieve a democratic control over the large-scale institutions of our society without breaking into the circle of oligarchy—be it that of a capitalist power élite or a State bureaucracy—from the base.'

Not every one may be satisfied that *The Insiders* gives the full and correct answers. But the authors have made a useful contribution in asking a number of vital questions and providing a wealth of statistical information.

## LETTERS

### CLASS STRUGGLE AND LEFT-WING TASKS

ALTHOUGH in many respects admirable, THE NEWSLETTER'S commentary on the Labour Party conference did not, I think, raise in an urgent enough way the tasks placed before the Left.

In comparing Bevan's final break with the Left with the betrayal of Macdonald, the most significant point was missed.

Certainly they both sold out at a point favourable to their own personal ambitions; their move to the Right also came, however, precisely at a time when great class battles were

(Continued overleaf)

impending and the working people would have the opportunity really to test the colour of their leaders.

When a capitalist economy enjoys a period of relative stability, partial victories for large sections of the working class are possible, and consequently militancy is largely confined to the economic sphere of the class struggle.

At such a time the 'Left' is largely focused in the 'official' realm of Parliamentary and Committee manoeuvres; the workers are ready to accept the old reformist line of 'leaving it to those who know best'.

The Bevanite movement was typical of such a period as this, its reliance being largely placed on the election of its stars to the Labour executive; only when literally prised out of its seats did Bevanism make appeals to the people, and never did it carry out mass campaigns.

Without the building of a rank-and-file movement such a 'Left' could only prove itself a very delicate flower, once the weather changed.

### The weather certainly has changed

Everyone knows, after the Bank Rate announcement, that the weather certainly has changed, and everyone must now be shown the real meaning of the employers' attacks on shop stewards' organizations, from the Rolls Royce strike right through to the McLoughlin victimization, and more recently the open attempt to destroy a centre of London trade unionism in Covent Garden.

The employers recognized that to carry through the lowering of workers' standards that would eventually be necessary, they must first destroy their employees' only weapon, rank-and-file organs capable of mobilizing action.

For the working-class movement the most vital need is the strengthening of such organs, and the political wing of the Labour movement must be made to reflect the struggle with the employers.

(I am not suggesting that only economic issues should be the concern of the movement. On the contrary, I am arguing that those fighting the class struggle should begin to make the Labour Party their weapon in the political sphere.)

It is just because this is the need of the moment that Bevan and Cousins have beaten so hasty a retreat. It is just because the new generation of workers is to be brought face to face with capitalism in its true colours that for the first time since 1918 the aim of socialism is openly abandoned by the leadership.

### Working-class strategy of resistance

If the Labour Party had avowed its socialist principles at a time of developing crisis, and had outlined a working-class strategy of resistance to the employers' attacks, what would have been the future for Gaitskell and the Parliamentarians?

What would have been the future for the trade union bureaucrats, whose whole existence—and a very comfortable one it is—depends on preventing a collision between employers and workers; in the event of total victory for either side their mediating position is destroyed.

For both the political and trade union leaderships mass struggle is the worst possible prospect, for then the workers would become conscious of their own strength and demand a new type of leader, responsible to the rank and file.

Here then is the situation in a nutshell: what the movement most needs in the present period is what the leadership most fears. Relying on the grip of Parliamentary reformist ideas in the Party, Gaitskell and Wilson made the keynote of the conference not the mobilization of mass actions against the Tory attacks, but the framing of an election policy calculated to appeal to the doubtful Tory and Liberal vote.

With Bevan and Cousins in support, all questions of principle were forfeited to this end. At the Trades Union Congress certain verbal concessions had to be made to the Left, but the bureaucracy managed to avoid the preparation of any specific steps to implement the progressive resolutions passed.

Nor was there any sounding of the alarm to the workers on the need for concerted resistance to the employers.

Brighton was only the completion of the process by which, no matter what anyone's intentions in the matter may have been, the working-class has been left unarmed for the impending class battles.

## Gordon Childe

**T**HE TRAGIC DEATH of Professor V. Gordon Childe as a result of a mountaineering accident in Australia is a grave loss to progressive scholarship. His more popular books, such as 'Man Makes Himself' and 'What Happened in History', written from a strictly materialist standpoint, contained amazingly vivid and convincing accounts of the earliest human communities, the origin of food-production, of the class struggle and of city civilization.

These works of Childe are masterly examples of books which bring equal profit to the scholar and the layman. One reason for his brilliant successes was his acceptance of the Marxist method of studying history.

True, his work did not everywhere show a full understanding of Marx's thought, but anyone who doubts that he made a whole-hearted attempt to use Marxism, and to use it creatively (and not as a religious dogma), should read his little book called 'History', vol. 6 in the series Past and Present (1947), an excellent account of the value of Marxism to the historian.



An important feature of his more technical books and articles was the fact that, almost alone of British prehistorians, he kept abreast of the archaeological work carried on in Russia and eastern Europe; in his approach to this work he was far from being un-critical.

His books were translated into many languages, and tens of thousands of people, who learned from them about early Man and the origin of civilization, will be shocked at the news of his death.

He was aged 65, and since his retirement last year from London University, he had been living in Australia, where he was born.

Professor E. A. Thompson (Nottingham University)

Lord Pakenham, in a very revealing article (The Observer, October 6) shows that the Right wing realize very well the significance of this conference. The nationalization vote represents, says our Labour Lord, **the death of an idea.**

Quite explicitly he says that this is not a personal opinion only but is shared by most of those whose opinion he values: as Pakenham was a Labour Minister, we can guess whom he means.

Most important however are his conclusions from the conference; at least, he says, Labour's hands are untied, and the Labour Party can now think for itself.

This then is the magnitude of the victory of the Right: they now feel free to use Labour's name to function as a purely respectable political party. Let us make it perfectly plain to them that we now feel free to proceed without their weight on our backs.

Leeds

James Todd

### NAZIM HIKMET, 'THE UNCONQUERABLE'

The following letter was sent to the Daily Worker on October 19:

After reading the profile of Nazim Hikmet and the short poem by him in today's Daily Worker, many readers will doubtless wish to learn more about him and read more of his work.

The current issue of The New Reasoner carries a synopsis of a remarkable satirical play from his pen, with one complete scene translated, preceded by a biographical note on the author.

London, N.12

Brian Pearce

[The reference is to Hikmet's play 'Did Ivan Ivanovich Exist?', a satire on the Stalinist bureaucracy, which was published in Moscow shortly after the Twentieth Congress and subsequently suppressed. The autumn issue of The New Reasoner prints a scene from this play entitled 'The Swimming Pool'.]