

THE NEWSLETTER

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Louder and louder the workers are calling for

INDUSTRIAL ACTION AGAINST THE H-BOMB

MORE and more workers are demanding that the leaders of their trade unions place an immediate embargo on all work connected with the hydrogen-bomb and the construction of rocket bases. The response to the poll launched by The Newsletter on this question in a number of key factories shows what a tremendous response the Trades Union Congress and the executives of the unions concerned would get if they took this step.

Already the demand for blacking the rocket bases or blacking the H-bomb, or both, has been taken up by branches or district committees of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, Electrical Trades Union, National Union of Railwaymen, National Union of Vehicle Builders, Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, National Union of Sheet Metal Workers and Braziers—and many more. Leeds city Labour Party has pledged its support to trade unionists who black work on rocket sites.

And four out of five of the questionnaire forms returned to The Newsletter from rank-and-file trade unionists in factories and pits and on building sites support industrial action.

A Calverton (Notts) collier, voting to black the bases and the bomb, adds: 'It wants stopping.' A Nottinghamshire steelworker says the campaign should be conducted 'by outing the Tories, by force if necessary'.

An Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers member, employed by Bootle Corporation, writes: 'I am in favour of industrial action. To build rocket bases in Britain is to commit suicide.' And his mate says: 'Put the people's opinion straight to the Government, that we don't want the H-bomb or any part of its destruction'.

An Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers branch president and Labour Party divisional delegate, working at the Garston gas-works, Liverpool, says:

'There should be factory gate meetings, wherever workers are gathered, to convince them that the only way to stop the manufacture, use and testing of these weapons is by them refusing to carry out work on such projects, and forming links internationally with other workers with the same views on this question.'

An AEU member at the General Electric Company, Birmingham, secretary of a ward Labour Party, says: 'The trade unions have got to black work on nuclear weapons and bases or be answerable to the membership. If they will not black such work it is up to the members of the trade unions to take matters into their own hands and use strike action to enforce their demands'.

Another AEU member, at Turner Bros, Birmingham, suggests a one-hour sit-down strike each week and the distribution of leaflets by shop stewards.

From the Bucklersbury House site in the City of London, an ETU shop steward suggests 'a series of demonstrations, lobbyings and posters, with short-term token strikes throughout industry'.

Another ETU member there, who signs himself 'no. 1 on redundancy list', calls for the Labour Party to change completely its policies on nearly every aspect of the class struggle—'It should foster international action against armaments of all kinds. Unilateral industrial action should be called for at an internationally convened Labour meeting.'

And a third ETU member on the same site, who has filled every scrap of space available on the form with his comments, believes that 'the workers won't think of working on these things if they are given a definite lead by the trade unions'.

TRADE UNIONISTS MUST ASK: 'SHOULD WE WORK ON BASES AND H-BOMBS?'

'MEMBERS of trade unions must consider whether or not they should work on rocket bases and H-bombs.'

This was said by Mr Bryan, of South Suburban Co-operative Party, and a member of Mitcham Labour Party, at the Co-operative Party conference last weekend.

His suggestion that a telegram of greetings be sent to the Aldermaston marchers was turned down by the executive. When an emergency resolution for such a telegram was moved by 30 parties (20 were needed under standing orders) the standing orders committee refused to accept it.

The chairman declared the reference back of the standing orders report lost on a very close show of hands.

Among the 30 parties supporting the move were South Suburban, Royal Arsenal, London Political Committee, Birmingham and Oxford—the largest and most powerful delegations at the conference.

Over 200 delegates signed a telegram of greetings to the Aldermaston marchers.

Two executives are defeated

Here are the most important decisions of other Easter conferences:

CLERICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE WORKERS' UNION. Clerks displaced through introduction of automation should be kept on payroll till they get another job. Executive amendment asking for compensation turned down by 23,810 to 23,110.

Resolution rejecting 'Industry and Society' and calling on next Labour government to proceed resolutely with rapid extension of nationalization lost by only 10 votes.

UNION OF SHOP, DISTRIBUTIVE AND ALLIED WORKERS. Demand for next Labour Government 'to proceed resolutely with the rapid extension of nationalization of the major industries and the implementation of workers' control' carried against executive advice by 76,515 to 66,285.

Labour Party-TUC declaration on nuclear weapons endorsed, but speeches supporting unilateral action well received.

Delegates stressed need to press ahead with wage claims. Hints by general secretary Alan Birch that return to wage-freeze under next Labour government may be agreed to by TUC were received in silence.

LESSONS OF ALDERMASTON

SIX months ago the leaders of the Labour Party could feel the tide turning in their favour. They were viewing with satisfaction the prospect of walking into office within two years. Today their complacency is shattered and their boat becalmed, as they feel the undertow of public opinion running strongly, beyond their control. They react by issuing a statement that pretends to be against the H-bomb but in fact supports British manufacture, by holding conferences to 'educate' their heckling members, by issuing posters, running meetings, writing pamphlets, revising pamphlets, publishing pamphlets, visiting American generals like vegetarians visiting a butcher to complain about the length of his knife. And all the while the real movement surges beyond them, placing on the agenda the need for working-class action against the strontium peril, against the preparations for thermo-nuclear suicide. Aldermaston shows that the leaders of the Labour Party, who spent their Easter hob-nobbing with Norstad, are impudent frauds, charlatans who fight the bomb with their mouths while in practice supporting its manufacture.

The success of Aldermaston can be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively. The organizers expected a hard core of 50. There were never fewer than 600, even on a Saturday of sleet and slush and bitter cold. The final rally mustered thousands. But more important than the numbers taking part were the spirit of the affair, the way it broke through Fleet Street's barrier of insolence and lies, the way it captured public imagination. It is true that many of the leaders of the march cherished illusions about its 'non-political', 'non-violent' character, and that these illusions were shared by a majority of those who marched. One sight of Aldermaston, however, one taste of fascist hooliganism, and both the political character of the march and the inevitability of violence in the fight against the bomb became quite clear! Yet the fact that these illusions were held emphasizes the demonstration's main shortcoming: the absence, except for short stretches, of participation by the organized working class. Aldermaston shows the need to wage this campaign, not in an abstract, humanitarian, above-class way, but as a frankly socialist campaign, with the industrial workers in the lead.

Had it not been for the intervention of the Marxists who marched, under militant slogans, as part of the procession for the full four days, the demonstrators would have been left without any idea of what to do next. THE NEWSLETTER, in our leaflet distributed on Easter Monday, brought to the attention of our fellow-marchers the example of the west German workers, who are demanding strike action against nuclear weapons. This shows what can and must be done here. The platform at Trafalgar Square this Sunday must be left in no doubt about the feelings of the rank and file. We want a real movement against the bomb. We want active resistance to it on the industrial arena. We shall not rest until by blacking the bomb and the rocket bases we have destroyed these foul things and swept away any government that insists on making them—and any Labour leadership that fails to fight against the poisoning of our air and the jeopardizing of our health and our future.

BIRMINGHAM REBUFFS GAITSKELL ON BOMB

From a Correspondent in Birmingham

ON the train to Birmingham, where he was to open the joint Labour Party and Trades Union Congress peace campaign, Hugh Gaitskell told a reporter that he intended to devote most of his speech to replying to the 'unilateralists'.

After the 350 delegates from trade unions and constituency Labour Parties had listened patiently to him and R. Willis outlining the new policy, they decided that it was only fear of working-class action that had stirred these leaders out of the sanctuary of Transport House.

Gaitskell wound up his speech against a growing chorus of heckling, which began when he tried to justify a Labour government's start on the manufacture of the bomb.

Coun. H. Finch demanded a vote on a resolution submitted by Birmingham borough Labour Party, calling for a discussion and for participation in the conference by the delegates.

'We have come here to educate the movement,' retorted Gaitskell.

Only one of the questioners supported his policy, and every answer was interrupted by shouts of 'Rubbish!' 'Give us a lead!' and 'What about working-class action?'

There were several questions like that of Mr Pratt from Moseley and Kings Heath Labour Party:

'The German workers are calling for a general strike against the possession of hydrogen weapons. Wouldn't the correct lead that you could give us be to link with them and call for the British workers to do the same, instead of cutting the ground from under the feet of our German colleagues?'

Several speakers urged Willis, as a member of the TUC General Council, to call on his members to declare all work on rocket bases black.

'My members wouldn't like it or agree with it if I did,' declared Willis.

'Scab!' 'Try them' and 'Lead!' the delegates shouted back.

'As Prime Minister would you sanction the use of H-weapons?' asked a delegate.

'I don't know,' stammered Gaitskell, adding that it looked as though there was a bit of division at the conference.

Delegates left the conference wondering who it is who needs educating.

GERMAN DOCKERS READY TO STRIKE AGAINST THE H-BOMB

From a Correspondent recently in West Germany

IN the past eight weeks what started as a gesture by a group of German professors has turned into a national movement against Germany's possession of nuclear weapons in any form.

This feeling is not confined to a small group of idealists. It is not the monopoly of people with an axe to grind. It is shared by different classes and creeds.

'In September I voted for the Christian Democratic Union,' a man in Wilhelmshaven told me the other week. 'Now if I were given the opportunity I would take my vote back.'

Last September the most important aspect of German politics was reunification. Today this has receded into the background, and demonstrations and calls for strikes to prevent Germany having the bomb are multiplying.

The dockers have called for industrial action. 'We don't want the bomb at all,' is their attitude.

A poster that is very popular shows a skeleton-like Adenauer with a head-dress of feathers like an American Indian's. Mingled with the feathers are two bombs, marked with an H and an A respectively.

Ollenhauer's appeal to the trade unions to call a general strike shows how powerful is the rank-and-file pressure.

Up-to-the-minute H-News from Science

Correspondent J. H. Bradley

YOUR DOMESTIC GAS MAY BE RADIO-ACTIVE

A REPORT in Nucleonics for March 1958 draws attention to a new radio-active danger—though Nucleonics is trying to foster, not hinder, its use.

Surplus tritium (a type of hydrogen) from U.S. efforts to make an unworkable type of H-bomb (Eniwetok, November 1952) is being used to measure the movement of gas, oil and water in oilfields and natural underground gas reservoirs.

Now this natural gas is sold instead of coal gas in North America, and both it and other oil products are added to coal gas in some British towns. It is no danger where fumes are blown straight into the outside air, as in the best (but not in most) gas fires. Anybody working over a gas-stove every day could get a dangerous dose.

No scientist would dream of letting loose in his own laboratory the tritium from a thousand cubic feet of adulterated natural gas (one millicurie at the highest rates in use).

The water formed from this would give one person a tenth

HUMANITY WILL PAY, FOR GENERATIONS

THIS week I have the rare opportunity of telling readers of THE NEWSLETTER that American propaganda about the Soviet suspension of H-tests contains elements of truth.

The Soviets have just contaminated the atmosphere to an extent never approached before, and humanity will pay an enormous price for many generations.

All the explosions appear to have been of the 'cheap', dirty type, in which nearly all the bomb is uranium.

Some of the tests were of H-bombs smaller than ever tested before, presumably intended for use in anti-aircraft and anti-missile weapons.

The USSR can well afford to suspend tests, because it now has bombs for all purposes. This superiority (as it is called in the upside-down language of politics) is admitted by the USA, which has a long way to go in making anti-missiles with H-warheads.

Perhaps this is where all the scientists went from the cuts in Soviet nuclear power development (see The Newsletter, August 24, 1957, p. 107).

At any rate one must condemn most strongly the USSR's

UNDETECTABLE TESTS? SHOW ME, MAC

THE ghost of undetectable nuclear tests has again been trotted out of the bogy cupboard.

There are three methods of detecting nuclear tests.

First, fall-out and samples of radio-active dust and air collected by high-flying aeroplanes show up even the smallest tests several thousand miles away. This method gives the time to within a few hours and is believed infallible for all except underground explosions.

At any rate, no U.S. test in Nevada has been missed in Britain.

Secondly, Japanese scientists have shown how to detect a pressure wave in the atmosphere from all the Soviet, British, and American H-tests. No mistakes have been made and no test of anything approaching H-bomb size has been overlooked.

Fifty Hiroshima size bombs are needed to make as much fall-out as the very smallest of H-bombs.

Thirdly, explosions on or near the ground are detected in the same way as earthquakes. They cannot be confused with earthquakes, which are always centred several miles down in the earth.

of the permitted maximum weekly dose for professional workers, or more than the average for all British atomic energy workers.

If similar methods were adopted in the Middle East, Europe would be threatened yet more seriously. It is time for Parliament to enact absolute prohibitions on the use of tritium, carbon-14, or any other radio-active substance in oil and gas sold in Britain.

Instead of squandering tritium to the public danger in the interests of capitalism, with nearly all the cost borne by the U.S. taxpayer, it should be saved for future H-power stations.

That part which inevitably decays into the very rare helium-3 should be given to low temperature laboratories, where it is in acutely short supply.

Within fifty years the practical benefits of low temperature studies will probably exceed the wildest dreams of the oil industry—though not by burning up more and more needlessly for capitalist profit an irreplaceable natural resource.

reserving the power to restart tests, because it would seem that this could serve no military, strategic, defensive or political purpose.

Yet in the mad world of the H-bomb nobody can speak of reason or purpose. The British Government still tries to compete with the great powers, and even though our scientists seem to be getting their answers many times cheaper than the USA, this competition can only lead to economic bankruptcy even if by some remote chance it does not lead to obliteration.

As for the stunt of inviting observers to see the U.S. reduction in fall-out, the whole idea, as has been said many times, is to explode the bomb very high in the air. Then nearly all the debris goes up into the stratosphere and all over the world.

Humanity would be a great deal better off if it fell straight into the Pacific Ocean, despite the terrible harm that causes to the Japanese fishing industry and food supply.

FOOTNOTE: There were reports this week that radio-active fall-out over Britain has increased ten times in the past few days as a result of the nine nuclear explosions carried out by the USSR before Russian tests were suspended.

Every Western embassy and consulate in the USSR can send back daily samples of fall-out. Delicate seismographs and sensitive pressure recorders can be hidden in every basement. Dulles already has—and who can doubt he is today using?—all the monitoring stations he could want.

It is plainly up to Macmillan to give some details of these supposed undetectable tests, and to explain what danger is caused to anybody by a fall-out nobody can discover.

Perhaps he will tell us who has made such tests, when, where, and how he found out about them—and also why he could not conceal British tests from the Japanese.

DEPARTMENT OF PIPING HOT NEWS

'Communist Party Expels Hyman Levy' (The Newsletter, April 5).

'Communists Expel Critic. Prof. H. Levy' (Daily Telegraph, April 7).

'The British Communist Party is reported to have expelled Professor Hyman Levy' (Manchester Guardian, April 9).

'Professor Levy Is Expelled' (Daily Worker, April 9).

WE MARCHED AGAINST BRITAIN'S DEATH FACTORY

By MARTIN GRAINGER

THE first day of the great march to Aldermaston was in many ways the least representative of all. Between Friday and Monday the column gradually acquired a different composition and a very different temper.

It departed, garbed in many colours, under a pale spring sun. There was music and much affable good cheer. At this stage hecklers would probably not have received the treatment given them three days later at Aldermaston.

The music and good humour persisted. But as the days went by seriousness and purpose increased in giant strides. The attitude of the millionaire Press must have come to many young marchers as their first lesson in political what's what.

The London crowds showed us a mixture of amusement and friendliness. There was little open encouragement but no hostility. They seemed impressed by our numbers.

The column was at this stage still taking stock of itself, appreciating its various ingredients, reading with curiosity the inscriptions on its own banners—all with a certain tolerant satisfaction.

It held all kinds of people, united in their abhorrence of nuclear war and in their determination to 'do something' about it.

'Nuclear disarmament' was the sole wording on many of the posters. But how? The proposed solutions varied widely.

'Ban the bomb,' said some inscriptions, appealing to some unspecified Pope or Caesar. 'Talks not tests,' demanded others. 'Love your enemies,' proclaimed yet another.

Road to effective action

Readers of The Newsletter and of Socialist Review marched under banners saying: 'Black the bomb. Black the bases.' This was the road to effective action.

Pacifists and religious people seemed the biggest organized groups. But the largest element of all seemed to be unorganized, non-religious, non-pacifist and non-political—in the sense of being highly suspicious of all political parties' attitudes on the crucial issues.

The efficiency with which the march had been organized was evident from the outset. It depended on an intense solidarity among the marchers, and this developed as the march went on.

Luggage was entrusted to total strangers, food was shared and lifts were thumbed as easily as if transport had been a socialized service in a socialist society.

The self-organizing ability of ordinary people with a genuine unity of purpose was very obvious.

Up to the Albert Memorial we were a procession. By the time we had reached Turnham Green the marchers had learned they had a mobile canteen, their own film unit . . . and a Marxist contingent.

One of the best meetings of the march was held on the very first night in the open air, in a Hounslow side street. The use of the Town Hall had been refused by the Tory-dominated council.

Reference was made from the platform to the possibility of industrial action. Mention of the actions of the German trade unions drew the greatest applause heard at any meeting of the march.



EASTER SATURDAY saw the column reduced to its hardest and most determined core. Snow, rain and sleet fell continuously from Hounslow to Slough.

Banners were few. They had to be protected. The demonstrators could get soaked: what they stood for had to be preserved intact.

Soon after London Airport the march took to winding

country lanes, the dripping hedges sole witnesses, for several miles, of its ordeal.

We reached Slough, wet and footsore. Tea in the Methodist chapel was much appreciated. Fenner Brockway took the pulpit. Many took off their shoes.

Then the rain stopped for an hour or two. We walked out of Slough in great spirits, heavily escorted by a police cordon on either side.

The Slough district committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union had joined the march, with an enormous banner. An Electrical Trades Union banner had appeared. The Newsletter contingent, its posters held high, marched right behind these detachments.

The pavements were packed with late shoppers and sightseers. We marched past them, shouting 'No work on H-bombs—no work on rocket bases!' Our slogans were taken up by other marchers near us. Many pamphlets were sold.

When the trade union banner-bearers left the procession, on the outskirts of Slough, we gave them a lusty cheer. Between Slough and Maidenhead it began to rain again. The police escort melted away.



THE high light on Sunday was the entry into Reading. Ian Mikardo and a group of Labour councillors were waiting for us under the railway bridge at the city boundary.

Our contingent greeted them with a full blast: 'Black the bomb—black the bases!'

The column went on through the working-class districts of the town. It was good to see emblems of the march prominently displayed in many windows overlooking our route. Sales of the Newsletter pamphlet were particularly brisk along this stretch.

The column came to a halt in the crowded market place, bending round on itself in the shape of a letter U.

As our group, towards the tail of the column, passed the front half we were cheered and applauded. The whole square heard the slogans of the Newsletter comrades ringing out.

Reading Labour Party held a meeting that evening in the Town Hall. It was packed. We obtained permission to sell our literature from the official stall, and brisk sales took place outside, too.

Ian Mikardo outlined the differences of opinion within the Labour Party on the question of unilateral nuclear disarmament.

Michael Scott spoke of the need for civil disobedience when institutions ceased to fulfil the aspirations of the majority of the people. He was loudly clapped. There were shouts demanding industrial action.



MONDAY, the final day, saw our numbers increase severalfold. We were gaining a new sense of strength. Sections of the Reading Labour movement had joined us.

The column now stretched, through country lanes, far out of sight. It took over an hour to pass by. At the midday break we distributed our leaflet. Everyone accepted it and read it.

After a further tiring stretch we reached our objective at last. The final mile was walked in complete silence, along the very edge of the heavily wired perimeter of the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment.

Many must have been surprised by the immensity of the enclosed area and struck by the brutal contrast between the dark, dense forest of rich pine through which we had just

marched and the planned waste land of man-made structures with which we were suddenly confronted.

It all had a nightmarish quality. Here was the ultimate reality we had marched against.

Here it was in all its silent horror: those turf-covered mounds of too-geometrical proportions, those metal and concrete pill-boxes of weird but doubtless eminently functional design, those chimneys projecting from ground level, that cerie artificial lake, with its 'No Bathing' signboard and its solitary swan, those unnaturally scattered buildings of utterly incongruous form and size.

Here it lay behind two strong wire trellises, behind a necklace of 'Danger' signs, behind boards soberly stating that police dogs patrolled the perimeter.

Its purpose was the death of men, women and children—and nothing else. It had no redeeming features. It was evil incarnate. It was the final refuge of their class rule, the iron fist inside their velvet glove.

Here it lay, inaccessible, miles from anywhere, mysterious, malevolent, murderous. Here was the sinister factory of death built for the ruling class by their Labour lackeys, built in the last resort for waging war on what was left of the first workers' State in history . . .



THE final meeting took place in a large hedged-in field, to which access could be gained only through an opening just wide enough to admit three or four cows walking side by side.

You'll be nude, Mr Rebel, the Right wing said
If you leave your H-bomb in the attic
And the Tories will certainly call you a Red
On that we are all most emphatic.

In my youth, said the Rebel, I cared not a damn
For what Tories and Right-wingers muttered
But now that I'm mellow and meek as a lamb
I must eat nearly all that I uttered.

In the conference chambers, as everyone knew
A nudist would cause a sensation:
John Bull always appears garbed in red, white and blue
With a gun (to assist conversation).

I will wear, said the Rebel, (protest if you like!)
A loin-cloth of uttermost beauty
It's a hydrogen war-head, a present from Ike
Yes, by Gad Sir, I now know my duty!

Not so fast, said the people, our blood and our sweat
To aims of our own we'll devote
And although we admire a well-turned pirouette
We're reluctant to cut our own throat.

We remember our millions of wounded and killed
And we'd much rather LIVE—with our neighbour.
Neither bases nor hydrogen-bombs will YOU build
When WE choose to withhold our labour! G.A.

INDUSTRY

LONDON BUSMEN ALL SET FOR MAY 5

By London Bus Driver George Farenden

WITH garage meetings just about completed, support for the London bus strike is practically unanimous.

Many workers insist that 10s. 6d. is still not enough to cope with rent increases and the loss of pay that will follow the 4 per cent. bus cuts and the consequent stopping of overtime.

Rank-and-filers are firmly of the opinion that the union leaders have done far too little to put the busmen's case before the public.

They are also critical of the Tory Government for taking the subsidy from the bus industry and not removing the heavy fuel tax.

This business about being 'in the red' is quite a laugh among conductors, who day after day are handing in twice the money through working double headways. Moreover money is saved in wages because of the staff shortage.

Recent statements by Sir John Elliot, the £7,000-a-year

Into this peaceful meadow there streamed several hundred cars of all shapes and sizes, covered with posters and slogans, and several thousand tired, proud and determined marchers, the vast majority of them young and still in fighting spirit.

They were loudly cheered by the crowd of spectators massed on either side of the gate.

And then it happened. What neither fatigue, nor the rigours of the weather, nor the gibes of the capitalist Press could achieve was accomplished by the leaders of the demonstration themselves.

Of all the speeches delivered in those four days, the ones at the last meeting were the most inept, and the most out of touch with the feelings of the marchers.

This militant and magnificent march ended in a veritable orgy of stale platitudes from the platform. Having refused access to the microphone to a rank-and-file viewpoint from among the marchers themselves, the 'leaders' allowed the demonstration to break up without outlining any effective or coherent course of action.

People just drifted away in hundreds. They even had to be appealed to, from the platform, not to disperse before the 'final resolution' had been put.

The appeal was not very successful. People persisted in drifting away. They had heard it all so many times before.

The final resolution was put, in an almost indecent hurry, to a thinning core of listeners numbering perhaps a quarter of those who had earlier thronged the field. The others had departed. But the last word will be theirs.

chairman of the London Transport Executive, that he would like to see London busmen well paid have drawn comments such as:

'He ought to have said that at the Tribunal. If he wants us to "cool down" let him concede our claim.'

Busmen work hard. Theirs is a responsible job, an exacting job, and an ill-paid job. Neither LTE 'compliments' nor LTE insults are going to stop our rightful struggle.

PLEDGE TO BUSMEN: 'WE'RE BEHIND YOU'

Crossgates (Leeds) ward Labour Party has passed unanimously a resolution pledging support 'to all sections of the working class who in the next period will be struggling against a lowering of their standard of living'.

The resolution adds: 'In particular we support the railwaymen, busmen and miners, who are in the forefront of this struggle.'

East Leeds constituency Labour Party approved this resolution without a single vote against, and it was agreed to circulate it to every trade union branch in Leeds.

With it will go a letter saying how important it is for union delegates to attend Labour Party meetings, and telling branches not affiliated how to do so.

DISLEY LIVES!—BUT BUILDING WORKERS KNOW THE BOSS IS NOT YET BEATEN

From Jim Rand

DISLEY is not dead! That's what some of the lads on the Garston Gas-works job are shouting today, much to the annoyance of those few men who scabbed it for the boss, and of those managerial representatives who promised to quit the job should this twice victimized steward get back on the site.

When Disley and Christie, both Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers stewards, were sacked some six weeks ago all the members came out on strike. The efforts of the local full-time official, who arrived soon after, helped to break this unanimity.

Half the men were for staying on strike. The other half were for taking the case to the disputes machinery.

Now the disputes machinery is notorious for upholding sackings and carving up job organization. It was introduced into the building industry in 1927, after the defeat of the General Strike.

Under the slogan of 'peace in industry' the employing class determined never again to meet the workers head-on and proceeded to hammer them piece by piece.

This agreement was the infamous 'Green Book Procedure'. The agreement under which the men at Garston work is a variant of this with a separate group of employers, the Refractory Users' Federation; but in essence it is the same.

When employers were uppermost

These agreements were forced on the movement when the employers were uppermost; the trade union leadership allows them to remain long after the position has changed in favour of the workers.

This machinery is not only a hindrance to the workers at a time when they should be going on to the offensive—it does not even provide adequate defence.

Yet the two stewards at Garston were not reinstated by the independent class action of the men on the site, but by this machine; the new procedure governing the stewards on the job bears the marks of this.

In the decision of the disputes panel was a recommendation that the union should meet the firm at job level 'in order to arrange the procedure covering the stewards on this contract in relation to handling of complaints to the management'.

The meeting took place and resulted in an eleven-point 'arrangement'. The first point tells us of the reinstatement and then we get down to business.

The third point says 'that no steward shall act on behalf of any other union than his own'. This is an attack upon the conception of Federation stewards (conveners) who represent the works committee and job as a whole.

'Matters in breach of agreement,' says point 4, 'would be permitted to be discussed during working hours, but only with the management's permission.' Heads I win, tails you lose. To discuss means that the boss agrees he has broken the rule.

Must tell the management

The fifth commandment requires 'any internal matters of the union to be conducted outside working hours'. Who is to judge?

Point ten demands that when stewards seek permission to leave their place of work, they must tell the management the nature of their business.

All this helps to tie down job organization and increase the interference of the employer in trade union matters. Whether they will be able to tie the men down or not, however, is not decided by points on bits of paper.

The labourers on the same contract have already won the reinstatement of a sacked brother. By what means? A four-hour strike.

Has all this any general significance? I believe that it follows

a pattern of events which got under way in 1957 with the victimization of Johnnie McLoughlin.

The employers are probing, encouraged by an official leadership which cannot or will not see the danger and hit them back hard.

The employers want to smash workshop and job organization, which has won so much for the men since the war. They fear the shop stewards because of their closeness to the men on the job.

They are trying to choke building workers today with the help of union officials. Tomorrow they will tell the officials to 'get off my property'.

We will not be choked. Least of all by our own hands.

ECONOMICS

TUESDAY'S BUDGET WILL HIT YOUR WAGES

By Our Economic Correspondent, Tom Mercer

THE eighth Tory budget since the war—ignoring that of October 1955—will have one thing in common with the preceding seven: it will be a class budget.

Butler, Macmillan, Thorneycroft and Heathcoat Amory may differ on how best to preserve the interests of their class, but they are completely united on the need to preserve these interests.

If one merely looked at the economic state of the world—depression in the USA, falling purchasing power in the primary producing countries, unemployment growing in country after country—one might think that Heathcoat Amory would bring in a Budget to stimulate the economy.

Such a budget would increase the people's purchasing power and take all the necessary steps to counteract the deflationary symptoms generated by the dear money policy coinciding with overproduction of both primary commodities and manufactured goods.

But Heathcoat Amory is not concerned with stopping the slide into crisis, any more than Eisenhower is. His prime concern, like that of the Cohen Council, is to reduce the level of real wages.

He intends to reduce costs, i.e., wage costs, so that British capitalism can compete more favourably in a shrinking world market.

And he will frame his budget for one purpose: to help the Tory offensive against wages.

LAWRENCE DALY STANDS FOR FIFE COUNCIL

Fife Socialist League—an association of recent ex-members of the Communist Party—is contesting the Fife County Council seat in the mining village of Ballingry on May 13.

Its candidate will be Lawrence Daly, secretary of the League and National Union of Mineworkers delegate at the local Glenraig colliery.

LABOUR

SO WE DREW UP AN IMMIGRANTS' CHARTER

By Ursula Verity

ONE of our most popular ward members is a Jamaican who, for some reason, is called Jobo. His full name is in the electoral register, but no one ever uses it.

Normally Jobo is smiling and cheerful, but throughout our last meeting he was quiet. He works on the buses and is often late because of shift work—but whatever time he arrives we are always glad to see him.

At the end of the agenda, in 'Any Other Business', Jobo spoke.

'I want to raise a question,' he said seriously. 'The position

of coloured workers in this country. Today on my bus a man said to me:

"Why don't you black men go home and leave the jobs to the white men? No wonder we have more unemployment with you coloured people pinching our jobs and our houses."

We murmured sympathetically, and Jobo continued:

'I have been in England since the war. I am a British subject and I fought in the war. If I am to be spoken to like this, what about the ones from my home who have only recently arrived? What is the attitude of the Labour Party to us?'

Wrong to stop emigration

'They should make the West Indies fit to live in,' said John Briggs, who is a building worker.

'No, that isn't enough,' said his neighbour. 'People emigrate, even when conditions are reasonable, if they fancy another country, and it would be wrong to stop them. Look how many of our people have gone to Canada.'

'Emigration is a good thing if it is done for the worker's good, under protected conditions,' said John Briggs.

'You know, I had some sympathy with the miners who didn't want masses of Italian workers brought over here. They suspected that the employers wanted the Italians as cheap labour, to compete with us and break full employment.'

'Bosses are bosses—why else would they bring in foreign workers? Did you believe that this Government really cared about the Hungarian workers?'

'There is something in that,' said a railwayman. 'When the foreigners and West Indians first come they are a bit of a menace, you know. They'll break safety rules, work all the hours that God sends, and for less than union rates if we don't stop them, because it all seems so wonderful compared to their conditions at home.'

'But when they settle down and get a house, if they're lucky—or pay some landlord anyway—and buy a telly and a washing machine on the "never", their problems are the same as ours and they want the same wages and conditions as us.'

See they join union

'It's up to us to see that they join the union. That's the only way to avoid being used as scabs.'

'There's the housing question too,' Mrs Jobo put in. 'We have a council house, and people are used to us, and our children go to school with yours.'

'But there aren't enough houses to go round. What are the new arrivals to do? White people—some of them—say that black people are dirty because they live in single rooms in falling-down old houses, yet the rents are very often terribly high.'

We had a long and frank discussion on the question of imported labour of any colour and race, and in the end we produced a charter for immigrant workers. Here it is:

1) No immigrant worker should be employed at a cheaper wage rate than a British-born worker doing the same job.

—2) All immigrant workers shall be encouraged to join their appropriate trade union.

3) Immigrant workers shall be on the housing list with British-born workers, on the same system of allocation. Rents of rooms, flats, hostels etc. shall be strictly controlled by a Labour government, with public ownership of these premises an early target. No 'ghettos' for foreign workers to be formed.

Prevent their exploitation

4) A future Labour government should look into the problems of imported labour, in co-operation with the latter's own representatives, for the express purpose of preventing the exploitation of this labour against its own interests and those of the British-born workers.

We agreed that only a strong socialist government can be

expected to do anything material towards our demands. A government that talks about 'being fair to both sides' always favours the employers, who have the system on their side anyway.

Black or white, Polish, Hungarian, Italian or British, workers must stand together and act together. Their problems and desires are the same and only in unity can they win.

'ROUSE JAPAN AGAINST THE BOMB'

Japan's Social-Democratic Party has urged the creation of an atom-free zone in Asia.

A programme adopted by the party last week calls for the mobilization of the Japanese people against bringing nuclear weapons into the country, against the arming of foreign troops in Japan with atomic weapons, and against the equipping of the Japanese 'self-defence forces' with nuclear weapons and guided missiles.

It also calls for immediate and unconditional suspension of tests of atomic and nuclear weapons as a step towards world disarmament.

LETTERS

HOW LABOUR CAN HELP THE BUSMEN

WHAT is the executive of the Transport and General Workers' Union doing to see that the workers are properly prepared for the bus strike? There are two obvious ways in which the movement can prepare.

First among the busmen themselves, by mass meetings at the garages, where the strike can be discussed and plans laid to see that it is a hundred per cent. effective.

Second by calling on the other transport workers in London for solidarity action. The London district of the National Union of Railwaymen has already said it will strike in support of the busmen.

But what about the men who drive the oil tankers and the dockers? Many of these workers are members of the TGWU. If they stop work, the London Transport Executive's threat to the busmen that there is plenty of transport without them, will be shown to be worthless.

There is something we can do in the local Labour Parties, too. We can give our support by financial help and by offering the use of Labour Party rooms and equipment to the strike committees. We can offer our help in the distribution of propaganda in the localities.

If we take these steps now we can show the employers that just as they are determined to take the workers on, section by section, we are determined that the busmen's fight is our fight.

London, S.E.27.

Vivienne Mendelson

ALDERMASTON MARCH WAS A LANDMARK

The spirit of the Aldermaston marchers in the face of the most appalling weather has filled all who would have liked to join in, but were for various reasons unable to do so, with intense pride and a determination that next time we'll all be there.

In spite of ruling-class sneers, in spite of the way the BBC played down the march, the example of all who took part will rank as a landmark in the history of the crusade for sanity.

There are different views within the anti-H-bomb movement. But all are united around this common banner—an end to the fear of nuclear destruction and radio-active fall-out.

Upton (Dorset)

Alan R. Bennett

Constant Reader | Then They Will Understand

'THE most important thing about this demonstration,' said the lady who gave me a lift to Aldermaston station, 'is the way it has drawn in the young people.'

'Yes,' I agreed, 'and we were told they weren't interested in public affairs.'

'It's politics they don't care about,' was the reply, 'and that's because there's so little to choose between the parties. This demonstration wasn't political.'

Later, when we were discussing how different people had heard about the Aldermaston march (she had read of it in the *New Statesman*) my friend remarked what a pity it was that the BBC didn't give advance publicity to such things—'but then, I suppose they couldn't, that would be political . . .'

There for the taking

When politics is seen to be a battle of right against wrong, as the Aldermaston march was seen—that is, when the Labour Party puts itself fairly and squarely at the head of campaigns on fundamental issues like the unilateral scrapping of the H-bomb—there will be an end to this 'indifference of the younger generation to politics'.

Then they will understand, in terms that will make sense to them, why the Labour Party is their party.

Aldermaston has shown that the support of Britain's youth is there for the taking. If Gaitskell and Bevan had been beside Allaun and Swingler instead of with Norstad, what tremendous consequences for good that would have had.

Solid and useful

NUMBER four of the *New Reasoner* contains a wide range of good things. Malcolm MacEwen discusses 'The Two Camps', showing how the Soviet intervention in Hungary played into the hands of Western reaction and how important it is for us all that the Soviet Union become a socialist democracy.

'And this evolution,' he writes, 'can only proceed by means of an intense internal struggle to overcome the resistance of the ruling bureaucracy in party and State, which wields immense power, even if it no longer resorts to terrorist methods.'

A poignant short story by Tibor Dery, now in one of Kadar's jails, tells of a communist released from one of Rakosi's after a seven-year stretch, during the 'thaw' period that raised so many false hopes.

Some anonymous 'Impressions of Boris Pasternak', whose novel 'Dr Zhivago' is to appear here in June, are brief but illuminating—but why is that awful play 'Unforgettable 1919' fathered upon Vsevolod Ivanov, when it was committed by Vsevolod Vishnevsky?

Alan Pickard, in 'What Is A Democratic Trade Union?' writes on some of the problems spotlighted by the recent troubles of the Electrical Trades Union.

Christopher Hill reviews the all-too-short selection of Gramsci's writing that was published last year by Lawrence and Wishart after a prolonged battle by the translator, Dr Louis Marks, with the King Street pundits, and recommends them to 'those Marxists who have fallen back on liberal standards for their critique of the crudities of Stalinism'.

Gordon Cruickshank contributes a survey of the present set-up in 'Gomulka's Poland'.

It seems doubly regrettable that a journal containing such solid and useful matter should be marred by a stupid gibe about Trotskyists.

Wages and the bomb

THE March-April number of *Labour Review* carries an editorial linking the wages struggle with the fight against the H-bomb and another ('An Unreasonable Reasoner') taking up sharply the treatment of Trotskyism in the *New Reasoner*.

Other features include an article by Michael Banda on the Algerian revolution, with an analysis of the clash between the FLN and the MNA; two letters by the late Pat Dooley which played an important part in the 1956-57 struggle in the British Communist Party; and 'Joseph Redman' on King Street's reactions to the Moscow Trials of 1936-38.

The last-mentioned is the fifth of the studies in the history of the communist movement which I have contributed to *Labour Review* under the name of 'Joseph Redman', and it appears just about a year after the Reasoner pamphlet 'The Communist Party and the Labour Left, 1925-29', for which the pseudonym was first coined.

Produced as an aid to pre-Congress discussion in the Communist Party, that pamphlet embodied material which had been refused by *World News*, and I understand that it has sold over 800 copies and is still selling.

It has helped, I hope, to ensure a more critical reception than might otherwise have awaited Klugmann's *Official History*—if and when that sees the light.

Liberal or Labour?

THE Labour candidate for Finchley raises, in his letter in *Tribune* of April 4, a thought-provoking question when he notes the failure of any of the party's front-benchers to take part in the Torrington by-election campaign.

If one is trying to sound like a Liberal, or as near as mayn't seem any different to a Liberal voter, then it is obviously worse than useless to speak for Labour in a constituency where the Liberal tradition and organization are as strong as in Torrington. The result would only be to swell the Liberal vote.

The Liberal 'revival' makes it more necessary, not less, for Labour's leaders to emphasize what separates Labour from Liberalism—indeed, it can be argued that the Liberal 'revival' is in part due to their failure to make this emphasis in recent years.

Walter Holmes, in the *Daily Worker* of April 5, tells of his father's good advice to him that the Liberals 'were no more friends of the working people than were the Tories. And so the only advantage a working man could get out of an election was to vote socialist when he had the chance.'

He adds: 'As a rough working rule I have found his advice sound.'

There have been exceptions, of course, to this 'rough working rule': in the Aylesbury by-election in 1938, for instance, the communists called on electors to vote Liberal against Labour, in accordance with their 'Peace Alliance' strategy of that period.

Who knows whether The Line may not veer that way again?

Twenty years after

'This book will live for centuries.'

—Khrushchev on John Reed's 'Ten Days That Shook the World', in his interview with the *Times* representative, reported in *Pravda*, February 16, 1958.

'Inaccuracies and legends cannot have value at this stage.'

—J. R. Campbell, *Daily Worker*, April 11, 1938, defending the Communist Party's refusal of permission for publication of 'Ten Days'.

'It is a little naïve, I think, to ask communists to poularize an inaccurate account of the internal affairs in Bolshevik leadership in 1917.'

—Pat Sloan, on the same matter, in *Controversy*, March 1938.

BRIAN PEARCE