

# THE NEWSLETTER

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## Anger Mounts on Dock Scheme Proposals

# MASS MEETINGS TO BE HELD IN ALL PORTS

## Strings to pension proposals

By BOB PENNINGTON

**THE ambitions of the London Chamber of Commerce to introduce unregistered labour on the docks, have been brought closer to realization with the return of another Tory government.**

Before the election, Ian Macleod former Tory Minister of Labour was considering the possibility of making such amendments. With their increased majority, the Tories will now feel free to press ahead.

To date, none of the docks' unions has made any real preparations to resist these strike-breaking amendments. Not one leaflet has been produced warning dockers of the employers' aims, nor has any of the unions held a single dock gate meeting.

The National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers—blue union, has circularized its own members with the amendments to the Dock Labour Scheme and also the employers' proposals but has not yet suggested any line of action. Last week, the London Clerks' branch of the NASD passed a resolution calling for dock gate meetings. Other blue union branches are also pressing for a campaign.

In Liverpool, Hull and now in London, the rank and file are beginning to move. A rank-and-file committee has been set up in Liverpool's north docks. This Sunday, the Hull liaison Committee—a body of NASD and Transport and General Workers' Union men—is holding a mass meeting of all Hull dockers to consider how to fight the amendments.

### London portworkers hold meeting

Last Tuesday, hundreds of dockers at London's Royal Albert Dock heard Peter Kerrigan, a Liverpool blue union member, speak on the amendments.

~~Every dock worker will be against this amendment that permits the Dock Labour Boards to disqualify a man from receiving benefit for 28 days' said Kerrigan.~~

~~It means that you report for work and if there is none, then you don't get any attendance money,' he added.~~

~~Harry Watson, a member of the Communist Party and an executive member of the Lightermen's union intervened in the meeting. Watson carefully ignored the strike-breaking propositions and claimed that the amendment delegating powers from Local Boards to sub-committees or National Board Officers would not apply in every port. He also made the incredible assertion that the Liverpool men appeared to prefer their offences to be tried by such bodies or individuals. One suspects that Watson draws his conclusions about the attitude of the Liverpool portworkers from his encounters with Right-wing officials, not from discussion with ordinary dockers.~~

~~A member of Watson's union, informed him and the meeting that the Lightermen were officially on record against any delegation of powers by the Local Boards.~~

~~Many dockers consider the proposed Pension Scheme to be part of a deal by the employers to get amendments accepted to the Scheme.~~

(Continued overleaf)

## Speak up Mr Briginshaw! Did NATSOPA Handle 'Black' Ink?

By G. Healy

'The Economist' in its issue of October 10 says that:

'... During this year's printing strike, there was a period when the stoppage of printing ink workers threatened to stop the daily newspapers' presses too. But after discussions with Natsopa, to quote the deputy editor of one newspaper:

'the national dailies were able to go on appearing in limited size because ink was being imported from abroad. It was agreed with the union that this solution of a temporary difficulty would be acceptable and the arrangement should be given no publicity in case mischief-making elements tried to interfere with the handling of the ink.'

To avoid difficulties and embarrassments, no word was published about the ink imports at the time and letters to editors from knowing outsiders were refused or not even acknowledged.'

If this is correct, was Mr Briginshaw, the General Secretary of Natsopa, party to an agreement for what The Economist claims to be strike-breaking by importing ink which was 'black'?

It will be recalled that at the time Mr Briginshaw, hiding behind the legal position of his union, launched a scurrilous and lying attack against members of the Socialist Labour League who were exposing this type of activity. In doing this, Mr Briginshaw was, in our opinion, helping to weaken the struggle of the printworkers.

Will Mr Briginshaw now tell his members whether or not The Economist is right? If not then surely Mr Briginshaw should have recourse to the courts since Natsopa is mentioned.

The members of the Ink and Roller section of Natsopa, who are at the moment engaged in a stubborn defence of their working conditions will be particularly interested to know what he has to say.

We ask you, Mr Briginshaw, did you or did you not join with the employers in Fleet Street to assist in importing 'black' ink as The Economist claims? Was this the real reason why you resorted to an attack on the Socialist Labour League?

The time has come for you to speak up. Your members are waiting for an answer. (See also The Real Conspiracy p. 292)

**Forward to the  
National Assembly of Labour!**

**LIVERPOOL MEETING:**  
STORK HOTEL Sunday, October 18, 7.30 p.m.  
Speakers: Peter Kerrigan (Liverpool dockers)  
Gerry Healy (Gen. Sec. Socialist Labour League)

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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1959

**WITCH-HUNTERS EXPOSED**

**O**N the day before the general election London evening newspapers engaged in a scurrilous witch-hunt against the Socialist Labour League.

Mr Tim O'Leary, national docks secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, in a circular to his union branches claimed that there was a 'red plot' to close down all ports throughout the country.

The Star came out with a headline 'Plot to stop all docks'. The Times, on election day, declared 'Plan to start docks strike'. The News Chronicle on the same day had an editorial 'Beware Agitators'. The Evening Standard declared 'Union warns "wreckers"'.

What was the reason for this frenzy? The Economist in its issue of October 10 describes what happened as follows:

**'The immediate cause of the present agitation has been the "revelation" in the League's Newsletter that several amendments are proposed to the Dock Labour Scheme. In the main, these amendments follow the recommendations made by the ubiquitous Mr Justice Devlin when he headed a committee of inquiry into the docks just over three years ago; most of them are relatively unimportant. But one, which would allow employers to bring "black" labour to handle perishable cargoes during a strike, certainly is controversial; it was in fact the very issue that lay behind much of the long dock strike in 1958.'**

For publishing this news The Newsletter and the Socialist Labour League were denounced.

Yet a few days earlier, in the British Oxygen strike, the same gutter Press declared that the TGWU must share the responsibility with the strikers for not having provided them with information regarding negotiations with the management.

Mr O'Leary's letter does anything but provide information. It simply starts a witch-hunt and avoids publishing a single line as to the type of amendments to the Dock Labour Scheme being proposed by the employers.

However the same Press that denounced Mr Kealey, the official of the TGWU in charge of the British Oxygen negotiations, now sees nothing wrong in his colleague, Mr O'Leary, scrupulously avoiding presenting the facts to the dockers. If the amendments to the Scheme are minor as Mr O'Leary claims, the best way to convince the dockers is to publish them.

Here, once again, we have another example of Fleet Street morals. The Tory and Liberal Press were not concerned with facts, they were simply concerned with denouncing portworkers and using a witch-hunt to whip up an election scare to assist the Tories.

**THE REAL CONSPIRACY**

**T**HE Newsletter would be the last to deny that plots and conspiracies have no place in the British Labour movement. Indeed that well-informed magazine, the Economist, reveals an incident where conspiracy and plotting took place in the recent British Oxygen strike.

The interesting thing about this state of affairs is that it had nothing to do with Mr Green or those who were

on strike. Listen to the Economist:

'There was a quiet and unpublicized agreement between some employers and union officials to allow oxygen to be imported by air from abroad in order to break the strike.'

The Economist couples this little incident with the recent print dispute (see page 291) and it concludes:

'For union officials to have agreed to this type of strike-breaking twice in a year is highly significant.'

Well spoken sirs! May we look forward to an enlarged New Year's Honours List which will propose a special honour for full-time trade union officials and employers who come together to scab their fellow-men?

Speak up, Roy Nash of the News Chronicle! After your red plots why not a blue plot? Surely you cannot remain silent.

**MASS MEETINGS (Continued from front page)**

The minutes of the TGWU National Docks Delegate Conference for August 6 reveal an aspect of the employers' proposals that the union leaders have not made clear to their members.

Outlining the Pension Scheme to the docks' delegates, national docks' secretary, Tim O'Leary said: 'It was pointed out that with the introduction of the Pension Scheme, the employers would expect a more peaceful industry, and it had been suggested by them that a committee be set up to look at the question of mechanization.'

In The Newsletter of June 6 we exposed the plans of the shipping employers for increased mechanization, showing how they wanted to slash the ship-side gangs from their present strength of 12, to three men and a stacker truck.

O'Leary went on to say: 'We have had a surplus of labour in this industry for some time, but we have always said to the employers, the registers must be maintained unless and until the men who retire get something extra to go out with.'

Apparently the TGWU docks' secretary considers the measly grant of £100 and ten shillings per week pension a fair price for the removal of thousands of old dockers from the register.

The sacking of the old men, the tightening up of the disciplinary clauses, the demands by the bosses for increased mechanization and the right to bring in scab labour, are the most serious threats made against the conditions of dockworkers since the end of the war. Only a powerfully organized rank-and-file movement can defeat these attacks of the employers and their Tory government.

**4000 LIVERPOOL PORTWORKERS  
STRIKE AGAINST DIRTY CARGO**

By Bill Hunter

**N**OT one hand went up for a return to work at a meeting last Wednesday morning of over 1,000 striking dockers from No. 3 control, Liverpool. The strikers had stopped work in sympathy with 130 men who had walked off a ship last Monday when they were refused extra pay for working on obnoxious cargo.

The men were unloading Decalite—a chemical extract in paper bags. They stopped work after a joint inspection committee of a representative of the employers and a trade union official decided that the job did not warrant extra pay.

Striking dockers declare that the bags are marked 'Harmful if Inhaled', but allege that an official declared: 'That's only for the American dockers'.

On Wednesday morning the Transport and General Workers' Union full-time control delegate, urging a return to work, was shouted down when he called one of his questioners 'a troublemaker'.

'You get your money too easy, Joe,' shouted one docker. Striking dockers express the opinion that behind the strike is discontent at the whole system of making awards for abnormal

cargoes. They declare awards are always inadequate and they have no redress through the machinery.

At dock gate meetings during Wednesday, controls number one and two decided to support the strike bringing the total now on strike to 4000.

## USA

### STEEL STRIKE NEARS SHOWDOWN

By George Lavan

New York

October 8

EISENHOWER'S use of a Taft-Hartley injunction now in preparation against the steelworkers would constitute unadulterated strikebreaking. This supposedly impartial 'president of all the people' has helped the steel barons throughout the strike

He did not invoke the T-H injunction at the beginning because Big Steel's strategy for over a year was to provoke a strike and attempt to cut down the union.

### US union leaders avoid a struggle against T-H act

Labour should defy and smash Taft-Hartley. But David J. McDonald, President of the United Steelworkers union, is not a John L. Lewis, who defied and whipped government strikebreaking even during wartime. McDonald has promised in advance that he will honour the 80-day slave-labour order for half a million steelworkers.

The steelworkers' officials and the AFL-CIO leadership apparently will confine themselves to deploring Eisenhower's dirty work for the corporations and to going through the motions of a legal argument against the injunction.

When the Taft-Hartley Act was passed, the injunction was explained as providing a 'cooling off period' which might avert strikes. But in this case there is no question of averting a strike—it has been on for 13 weeks.

Nor will it 'cool off' the steelworkers. On the contrary, it will burn them up considerably to be forced to scab on themselves. All the injunction accomplishes is what the steel barons want accomplished—replenishment of dwindling inventories.

In applying to the courts for the injunction Eisenhower has to claim that the strike jeopardizes the nation's health and welfare. For all the good it will do, union attorneys will contest this manifest lie by pointing out that 13 per cent. of the nation's steel producers are not struck, that steel is being imported and that therefore there is no danger of hospital construction, public health projects, scientific or even so-called essential defence work being held up.

The delay of the injunction for several days—until Eisenhower's return to Washington from Palm Springs, California—blatantly illustrates through his personal relations his stance in the battle between the men who make steel and the men who make the profits from it.

### Eisenhower plays golf with top steel boss

The President is again on vacation, the guest of a golfing crony, George E. Allen. Eisenhower's advisors thought it would be too raw to apply for the injunction from Allen's estate since he is a director of Republic Steel, one of the giant corporations shut down by the strike.

Inasmuch as interrupting Eisenhower's vacation was out of the question, it was decided to hold off the declaration of a 'national emergency' until he was back in Washington.

Though the steelworkers will be forced back into the mills under Taft-Hartley, it may turn out that the quality and quantity of steel they produce under compulsion will reflect their psychological inability to put forth their best efforts.

One thing that the labour-hating big-business newspapers and even the businessmen's magazines admit is that the steel-

workers are sticking tough against the companies' main demand—surrender of established working conditions.

This is the principal issue of the strike, wages are purely secondary. It was the companies' decision to take away from the workers much of the on-the-job protection they had won in the past 20 years that caused the national line-up of class forces on one side or another of the steelworkers' picket line.

### Union contracts in other industries hang fire

The renewal of union contracts in other industries is dragging, pending the outcome in steel. Illustrating this situation, Business Week (Oct. 3), quotes 'a key negotiator for a large company' as saying: 'My hands are tied. I've got my big negotiations coming up. If I offer more than steel is willing to settle for, then I'll be cussed out as a traitor to my class; if I offer less I'll have a strike on my hands.'

The companies are demanding abolition of the escalator clause (which in the three years of the old contract brought 17 cents an hour cost-of-living increases) and an 'eight point' plan of changes in the working rules to end 'loafing and feather-bedding' and give management more 'flexibility and control' in running the plants.

These changes would affect hard-won gains of past years in seniority, size of work crews, speed of work, vacations, lunch time, job classification, punishment of employees, etc., etc. Steel union officials declare this would cut the guts out of the contract and re-establish industrial dictatorship. And on this the rank and file agree with their leaders.

### BUILDERS' NEWS

Lambeth and Borough branch, AUBTW, have decided to hear a speaker from the Socialist Labour League on the Assembly of Labour at their 'star night meeting' in November.

The current issue of the Builders' Voice contains an article by Gerry Healy on the effects that city scandals can have on the lives of building trade workers, an outspoken comment by a worker employed on direct labour, reports from Scotland, Coventry and London on job struggles. Order now from 10 Woodquest Avenue, London S.E.24.

*Towards the National Assembly of Labour!*

### Socialist Labour League Meetings

LEEDS MUSEUM. Sunday, October 18 at 7.30 p.m.  
Speaker: Brian Behan

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE, All Saints, Manchester. Sunday, October 18 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Harry Finch

## EDUCATION

### WHAT IS MARXIST THEORY FOR?

#### II: Class and History

By Alasdair McIntyre

ONE of the things that bewilders workers who have no theory to guide them is the difficulty of finding some order in the variety of forces which seem to operate in society. What Marx did was to show how one could only make sense of these if one looked at the way in which a particular society produces its livelihood at a particular time.

As the mode of production changes, different classes become dominant in the community. So at one time it is the land-owning class which governs, at another time the factory-owning class. What survives through all these changes is the basic division between those who own and control the means of production and those who perform the labour of human society. For these last create the wealth which is taken away from them and which provides the basis for the leisure, the

luxury and the culture of the owning classes.

There are, therefore, two senses in which all previous history is the history of class struggle. In the first sense there is the history of the struggle between different ruling classes. The rising capitalist class, based on trade and manufacture, gradually build up their power inside the existing social framework and finally take over the institutions of government.

In the second sense the landowners and capitalists struggle in turn against the working class, trying to extract the maximum possible wealth from their labour. Both these reach their historic climax at the point at which the working class can for the first time take the initiative and move to achieve power and to end exploitation. But we may see this and still fall victims to misunderstanding.

### Working class must abolish the old form of society

For those who look at the rise and fall of the ruling classes of the past and present may be tempted to see the rise of the working class to power as just the rise to power of one more class within the framework of the existing order. But the working class cannot enjoy power within that framework; they can rule only by abolishing the old form of society.

It is not required to take over the institutions of class-divided society; it is required to replace them by institutions which are not designed for purposes of exploitation.

This fact, that the working class have only the alternative of continuing capitalism or of ending class society for good, is one that marks off the struggle of the working class from all previous class struggle.

A second difference concerns the greatness of what is at stake. On the one hand industrial capitalism has revolutionized the means of production and created such vast wealth that an end to exploitation is possible. On the other hand it is capitalism whose social forms maintain exploitation, competition and conflict and their outcome in poverty, unemployment and war.

All human values hang on the victory of the working class over the forces that keep these forms in being. Survival itself hangs on this.

### Working class must be conscious of its task

Thirdly, and crucially, the working class can only hope to triumph if they are conscious of their task. Earlier classes came to power through the operation of forces which they could not understand. The working class can only come to power if it has become conscious of its own existence as a class. It is important that the upholders of the existing order spend so much effort in trying to obliterate class consciousness, in trying to make workers think of themselves as anything but members of a class.

Thus one central use of Marxist theory is in helping us to understand the need for theory to create a working class conscious both of its past history and its future possibilities.

## ALGERIA

### THE FLN: ON THE ROAD TO COMPROMISE

By Tom Kemp

WHY has the Algerian Provisional Government, composed of leaders of the National Liberation Front (FLN), not turned down flat the de Gaulle plan offering so-called 'self-determination' to Algeria in four year's time?

Why did ten days have to elapse before any agreed answer was forthcoming?

As suggested in this journal some weeks ago, a turning point is being reached in Algeria.

That is why the statement, when it was made by Ferhat Abbas in Tunis, was accorded very special attention, including

the presence of the same TV cameraman who had filmed de Gaulle's Press conference in Paris.

### The softs have won

Ferhat Abbas, despite the declamatory tone of his statement, came out for peace talks with the French, leaving the way open for compromise on the basis of FLN participation in elections. He thus indicated that in the eighteen-month-long discussion between the 'softs'—those ready for compromise—and the 'hards', those most aware of the feeling of the fighting units—the former had won.

Still they do not dare to articulate too precisely how far they are prepared to play ball with de Gaulle, and Ferhat Abbas worded his statement with deliberate ambiguity.

The reason for the new line stems not only from the impending discussions of the Algerian question at the United Nations; it is the result of the fading of the belief in military victory and of the pressures and influences playing upon the Provisional Government. These range from the Sultan of Morocco through to Texan and other oil companies with their eyes on Saharan petrol. They include Nasser. But the really potent force for compromise is Bourguiba of Tunisia.

Since these influences diverge, they produce divided counsels. But the social composition of the members of the Provisional Government is decisive. Drawn from Algeria's small, untypical bourgeoisie, it needs but fears the predominantly rural masses from which its strength is derived. Whatever its programmes may say about land reform, it cannot lead a social revolution—which would dispossess the big European land owners and capitalists.

### FLN manoeuvres diplomatically

Therefore, there seems no real reason why the Algerian leaders should not reach an understanding with the French which would give them political rank in a state still associated with France in line with the de Gaulle declaration.

The FLN leaders are thus using the war as a pressure point, throwing in blackmail talk such as using 'volunteers' from other Arab countries (or even Eastern Europe), getting aid from China or cutting the oil pipe-lines when they come into operation.

But their main emphasis is now on diplomatic manoeuvre, finding the right form of words. They are now using all the 'moderation', the 'statesmanship', the willingness for compromise which is the stock-in-trade of every national bourgeoisie which scents the fruits of office—and the joy of every left-wing political commentator—especially those as politically impotent as the French.

### Peaceful coexistence

The last two issues of the 'new left' 'France-Observateur' have been a study. The last had a front-page composite picture of de Gaulle and Ferhat Abbas and the caption: 'This meeting must take place'. Peaceful co-existence is doing its work. The 'left' is now thinking of pushing de Gaulle gently into compromise and negotiation until soon there will be little difference between what it says and what he does: and this despite columns of sarcasm at the expense of the 'left Gaullists' in the past. Not a word about imperialist exploitation or about the Algerian peasants and workers. There is only thought for the diplomatic smoothness of the Algerian leaders, so much like themselves, after all . . . .

And yet—the moderation of the FLN can co-exist with terrorism, including the political gansterism which has done the national movement irreparable harm both in Algeria and in France.<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that the FLN leaders are quite willing to

<sup>1</sup> The French police have now been able to form special anti-FLN detachments from Algerian mercenaries to operate in France. Its ability to do so, as well as the recruitment of 'harkis' (Algerian bands in French service), owes not a little to the methods of the FLN.

trade social revolution, or even national independence, against political concessions to themselves and their class. That is the meaning of recent developments. But this may be an unreal hope. The possibilities of a negotiated settlement are probably less than the 'left' Press hopes. The imperialist interests entrenched in Algeria will not willingly give up any

position, nor will the army chiefs.

In the last analysis social forces decide. That the present situation has arisen is attributable primarily to the failure of the French working class to intervene—and the main responsibility for that lies with the Communist Party. Its record will be examined in a later article.

## Constant Reader | How to Fight Rent Increases

THIS column recalled, in the issue of April 5, 1958, how the Rent Restriction Act was won in 1915 by industrial action. Current developments make it appropriate to bring this topic forward again.

In the early months of the first world war landlords everywhere took advantage of the situation to force up rents. Then, as again now, there was no serious legal safeguard against their doing what they pleased and could get away with. In Glasgow, however, they found themselves up against a strong rank-and-file organization based on the shop stewards in the engineering factories—the Clyde Workers' Committee. And that committee was guided politically by John Maclean, the schoolteacher who was perhaps the greatest propagandist for Marxism this country has yet seen.

When 18 engineering workers were summoned for failing to pay increased rents, in November 1915, the reaction was instantaneous. Several shipyards struck work, including Harland and Wolff's, and the workers, with their wives, marched on the court. About 10,000 people assembled to support the defendants, and were addressed by Maclean—who had just been dismissed from his job.

In court the sheriff was obliged to listen to 'evidence' like this: 'We have left our work and are determined not to go back unless you give a decision in favour of the tenants,' and: 'You hear the voice of the people out in the street. That is the workers of the upper reaches of the Clyde. These men will only resume work in the event of your deciding against the factor [landlord]; if you do not, it means that the workers on the lower reaches will stop work tomorrow and join them. And a representative from Dalmuir read the following resolution: 'That we, the organized workers of Beardmore's Naval Construction Works, Dalmuir . . . are determined to do all in our power, even to the extent of downing tools, to prevent the landlords using the present extraordinary demand for houses to raise rents.'

All the cases were dropped and the government hurriedly passed the Rent Restriction Act.

An account of this instructive episode, in its context, will be found in Tom Bell's 'John Maclean' (1944).

### A revolutionary novel

A correspondent gives me the good news that Corgi Books have brought out a paper-back edition at 2s. 6d. of Ignazio Silone's famous novel 'Fontamara'.

This gripping story of a South Italian village under fascism, with its picture, shot through with bitter, satirical humour, of the life of the peasants and their struggles with all sorts of exploiters and oppressors, made a sensation when it first appeared in English in 1934. Penguins brought it out as a paper-back so long ago as 1938.

Trotsky read 'Fontamara' in 1933, while travelling from his first place of exile, in Turkey, to his second in France, and at once wrote a brief but enthusiastic review for the New York 'Militant', datelined from his ship.

'Fontamara itself,' he wrote, is 'merely a poverty-stricken village in one of the most forsaken corners of Southern Italy. In the course of some 200 pages of the book this name becomes the symbol of agricultural Italy, of all its villages and their poverty, their despair and their rebellions.'

Silone himself has since moved far from the political position he held when he wrote 'Fontamara'. But the novel

and its message remain. Renegades cannot undo the good work they did before they were renegades.

That applies equally to André Malraux, whose novel about the workers' rising in Shanghai in 1927, 'La Condition humaine', still helps many to understand the criminal folly of Stalinist policy in colonial countries. It came out in English in 1934 as 'Storm over Shanghai' and was reissued in 1948 as 'Man's Estate'.

### Irish Labour's record

Colleague Brian Behan is gathering material for a study of the working-class movement in Ireland since the Treaty. He would be grateful to have any publications relating to this subject which readers can give or lend him sent to this address—books, pamphlets, issues of journals, circulars and so on.

Much of the basic material is hard to come by in this country. For instance, at the British Museum Newspaper Library at Colindale only three copies (nos. 15, 16 and 17) of The Workers' Republic, the Irish Communist weekly of 1921-1922, survived wartime bombing.

## LETTERS

### PAT ARROWSMITH REPLIES

PETER CADOGAN, commenting about the Polebrook rally says: 'We keep on saying that we must mobilize the working class for peace. Alright then! Let's do that.' But this is easier said than done. He advocates encouraging token strikes in key industries 'instead of asking a few building workers to down tools for half-an-hour'.

Perhaps he is not aware of the efforts made by the Direct Action Committee, prior to the rally, to persuade trade unions in the East Midlands to come out in token strikes against the missile sites being built in the region.

We spoke at about twenty trade union branch meetings and Trades Councils during the summer. For the first month of the campaign we urged them to follow the example of the Stevenage builders, who came out in a token strike against nuclear armaments last Easter—but in vain.

Perhaps this was not surprising. The Northants area is a boot and shoe area; and there has not been a strike in the industry since 1895.

As it became plain to us that the unions in this region were unlikely to take militant action, we decided the best plan would be to devise some other sort of protest which they would be willing to join. Hence the Polebrook Rally.

Peter Cadogan is surely right to stress the importance of Trade Union action; but experience suggests that a great deal more canvassing, arguing and discussing, is needed before we can expect any industrial revolt against the bomb.

And I must part company with him when he says: 'There should have been a hell of a row. Saintliness cuts no ice with the working classes.' If violence is used I am convinced that an immense amount of support would be lost. I would point to the two N. Pickenham demonstrations.

The first one although non-violent, did involve the 'hell of a row', and was less well received by the general public than the second, more peaceful demonstration.

In Stevenage, where we made a similar request to the rocket

factory workers to quit their jobs, the response was a token strike by the builders in the town.

If this campaign is to succeed there will have to be a mass protest throughout society. People in every walk of life will have to take individual responsibility for their actions. Unless this happens I doubt whether we have much hope of succeeding.

He is mistaken in thinking that we went to Polebrook to point accusing fingers at the workers. We went there, and to other rocket bases in the area, because we were sure the workers had, not only personal responsibility for the job they were doing, but also a great deal of power.

Missile sites cannot be built unless the skilled men consent to do the job. But if the workers have power, they also have direct responsibility for the policies they are helping to implement. If it is wrong to have rocket bases, then it is wrong to build them.

London, N.4.

Pat Arrowsmith

(Field Organizer, Direct Action  
Committee Against Nuclear War)

### AND CADOGAN ANSWERS

MOST of my remarks about the Polebrook rally were addressed not to the Direct Action Committee but to the industrial militants who read The Newsletter.

The statement 'we must mobilize the working class for peace' is intended to mean that we, existing and aspiring leaders of working-class opinion at rank-and-file level must accept full responsibility for the job ourselves.

The Direct Action Committee has gone so far, but can go no further on its own. CND has just about squeezed every drop out of its established methods of work. Industrial militants must now take up this peace or war business with real 'two-fisted' determination. Moral protest was enough to start the movement but is not enough to carry it through to success.

It becomes clearer every day that nuclear disarmament involves the whole problem of the class struggle and the conquest of state power. Only the working class can lead this particular struggle, for it is nothing less than the road to socialism itself.

We cannot pass the buck to the Right-wing Labour leaders, and merely complain when they fail. We know in advance that they are incapable. History has landed the job in the lap of the working class itself. If we—or someone else—don't do it, what then? It's quite simple. We shall be destroyed.

I urged a 'hell of a row' rather than saintly silence in demonstrations against the bomb. I did **not** urge violence. This is a difficult thing to attempt to explain in a few words.

CND and the Direct Action Committee are both led by the very best type of middle-class people. They are as sincere as they are intelligent, but just because they are middle-class they see protest as essentially an individual matter. The Quaker tradition of individual protest and suffering is strong among them. They are moved by silence, the struggle within the soul, and against any tyranny from without. They have the tradition of three hundred years behind them, and some of them are breaking out of their own mould. Of necessity the working class has a different outlook. Its values are those of mass organization and the need to free society from the isolation between individuals.

The saintly type, whether he be in CND or the Salvation Army, is regarded as a slightly embarrassing crackpot to be humoured, tolerated, respected—and avoided. The 'silence rule' only helps to register the movement as something alien.

If Pat Arrowsmith and the Direct Action Committee are to continue to set the pace in the anti-H-bomb fight, they must understand the impossibility of appealing to the working class by middle-class methods. All members of this committee can take the opportunity of attending the National Assembly of Labour on November 15, where people from all sections of the Labour movement will freely discuss the place of the anti-war fight in their struggle against the capitalist system.

Peter Cadogan

### NO 'THAW' FOR SOCIALISTS

LAST week's article by Dan Roberts on the Khrushchev visit to the USA seemed to me to be somewhat wide of the mark. His main concern was the 'thaw' in public opinion brought about by the trip, and the consequent creation of an atmosphere in which socialists will be more able to spread their ideas.

It is true that the decline of virulent anti-communism will make it easier to talk socialism, and that will do good. But if the 'thaw' means a strengthening of the illusion that the heads of states can solve the question of war or peace, then both Khrushchev and Eisenhower will be very pleased.

What they both fear, each for his own reasons, is the force of the international working class. We are entering a period of increasing cut-throat competition in the world market, necessitating an attack on the labour movement in all the capitalist countries; this, following the great colonial people's upsurge of the past few years, is the first political consideration of America's rulers.

For this reason they temporarily prefer a relationship with the Russian ruling clique which helps to disarm the working class politically. K's speeches in the USA, and the line taken by Communist Party and 'progressive' commentators, helps them in this.

These writers follow K in describing the road to socialism, not as a bitter struggle between enemy classes, but as a prolonged 'peaceful competition' between the two systems.

K also sits on a volcano. Hungary was no nine-days-wonder, but represented an elemental class revolt against the bureaucratic rule of the Stalinists. No wonder spokesmen on both sides of the old 'Iron Curtain' have suggested that with agreement between the two great powers there are no disturbances in any part of the world which cannot be settled.

Therefore I think Dan Roberts is wrong to stress the ideas which socialists will be able to put across in an atmosphere of 'relaxation of tension'. It is a question rather of consolidating the strength and consciousness of the working class in action, on the industrial and political arenas, to build an international movement capable of toppling both the American imperialists and the Soviet bureaucracy, who come together at the Summit as part of their strategy against the working people.

Leeds

Cliff Slaughter

### BEHIND THE SUMMIT TALKS

Dan Roberts' article in the last issue of The Newsletter misses the essential significance of Khrushchev's visit to the United States; to maintain the division of the world between the imperialists and the Stalinists against the encroachments of a militant working class and the colonial people.

Roberts states that the American people's 'hopes of attaining peace are now being aroused by the exchange of visits.' While this is probably true, he fails to point out that this is precisely what Khrushchev and Eisenhower want. They have to mask the real purpose of their secret negotiations. They are forced into each others' arms by pressure from a common enemy: the international working class.

Eisenhower is the representative of the most powerful imperialist nation on earth, a sworn enemy of the working class. Khrushchev's open contempt for the American workers is shown by his visit to the only scab shop in Pittsburgh, centre of the strike-bound US steel industry, and his sickening praises of Eisenhower, the leader of the Republicans, the party of the big steel employers.

The whole purpose of these visits and summit talks is to create the illusion that it is the statesmen, and not the working class, who can avert war. Roberts fails to expose this.

Khrushchev continues the policies of Stalin. The carve-ups at Yalta and Potsdam should not be forgotten. The job of the Marxist movement is to expose Stalinist horse-trading and not merely to comment on it.

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