

Socialist Outlook

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EDITORIAL

DEVALUATION

Labour at the Cross-roads

OUT of the dust raised by the devaluation. crisis one fact emerges in clear outline—the American dollar, symbol and embodiment of the vast productive powers of the United States, now rules the entire capitalist world. Spurred on by the approaching world economic crisis, America has compelled the surrender of her last remaining capitalist rival, Great Britain, whose defences have been completely demolished by the Washington Agreement to allow the free flow of American capital investment into the territories once reserved for the City of London. The financial armies of Wall Street can now penetrate and exploit even the closely guarded markets of the once haughty British Empire.

So desperate is the plight of British capitalism that it has been compelled to allow the American capitalist investor to buy British and colonial means of production—including the nerves and the muscles of the British and colonial workers—at cut rates! That is the real meaning of the decision to devalue the pound. By investing in Britain and her colonies the billions of dollars made out of the skill and energy of the American workers, Wall Street is now able to buy one pound's worth of the productive energy possessed by the British and colonial workers for . . . rather less than 14s. In the same way and at the same rates, the American monopolists can acquire a controlling share in British industrial assets.

The *Socialist Outlook* will shed no tears over the decline and fall of the British Empire, age-long exploiter of millions of colonial people. Even in its death agony or, more precisely, because of its death agony, British capitalism is capable of dealing vicious blows against those whom it exploits, the British workers and the oppressed masses of the colonial empire.

Devaluation, for example, while it certainly makes absolute the domination of the United States in the capitalist world, is at the same time a callous attempt by British

capitalism to place the burden of its crisis on to the backs of the workers and the poverty stricken masses of the colonies.

Quite openly and shamelessly, Sir Stafford Cripps has stated that devaluation is meant to provide an "incentive" (bigger profits) to the capitalists engaged in the export drive. As *Tribune* smugly puts it, "we believe an increased rate of profit on the sales to the dollar areas was inevitable to make British private enterprise do its duty." (A statement which surely completes the evolution of this erstwhile Left wing journal into the camp of the defenders of the profit motive.)

Devaluation, What it Means

Devaluation, it is hoped, by lowering the value of the pound, will enable the dollar prices of British goods to be cut (although

~~~~~ "HARD-EARNED THRIFT"

No wonder the insurance companies are preparing to fight on the beaches, in the streets and so on according to the prophetic war slogan. Latest figures of share values, which I have from a very reliable source, show a veritable golden harvest for Prudential shareholders and make valuable ammunition for public education and also for consumption by the ardent company-supporting insurance agent.

£1 Prudential "A" Shares are quoted, according to my informant, as being worth £33 on October 14th, 1947.

Income Tax free dividends in 1938 were 98.5 per cent., and in 1947, 74.5 per cent.

"B" Shares, again free of income tax, received in 1941 50 per cent., and in 1946 43.75 per cent.

A director's qualification shares consist of 100 "A" shares, value in 1947 £3,300, and 250 "B" shares. I have no information as to the value of the "B" shares, but if assessed at say £10 would make another £2,500.

What is it I heard a famous ex-Cabinet Minister say on the news reel the other day, something about the people's "hard-earned thrift."

(Reprinted from the journal of the National Amalgamated Union of Life Assurance Workers.)
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not to the full 30 per cent.), thus increasing the sales—and the profits—of the manufacturers of goods destined for the dollar market. However, since the pound now commands less dollars, there will have to be an increase in exports by 44 per cent. even to maintain, let alone increase, the flow of dollars to Britain. Furthermore, there will be an increase in the sterling prices of all those goods which, either through sheer economic necessity or because of the terms of the Marshall Plan itself, Britain must still import from the dollar area. This rise in prices will greatly increase British costs of production and largely cancel out the gains made from devaluation. It will also mean a sharp rise in the present cost of living. The 1d. increase on the loaf is only a foretaste of what is to come.

Should the workers attempt to secure wage increases to keep pace with this rise in the cost of living it will completely upset the already precarious plans of the devaluation theorists. And for two reasons; first, a rise in wages will still further increase the costs of production and, since profits are inviolate under capitalism, that will make it extremely difficult to keep down the prices of exports. Second, a rise in wages will cut into profits and thus nullify the incentive of higher profits to the exporter.

In this dilemma Sir Stafford Cripps, the national capitalist press, and Michael Foot's *Tribune*, have all aligned themselves on the side of the capitalists against the workers.

Wages must not rise, the workers must accept a fall in their purchasing power; otherwise, they all declare, we shall be faced with the problem of mass unemployment.

#### The Trade War and Unemployment

It is blithely assumed by those who expect devaluation to maintain full employment that the world market is unlimited and capable of absorbing everything that can be produced. (We are not here speaking of the market in terms of the needs of the people, but of the effective, capitalist market.) In reality, of course, it is the absolute shrinking of the world market, combined with the enormous productive powers of the United States, which is the basic cause of the crisis.

The temporary advantage secured for the British capitalists by the device of devaluation does nothing to enlarge the world market. On the contrary, it will inevitably spur the capitalists of the rest of the world to still fiercer competition. The devaluations in 1,

# Trade Union Congress, 1949

Some comments by  
**JACK STANLEY**

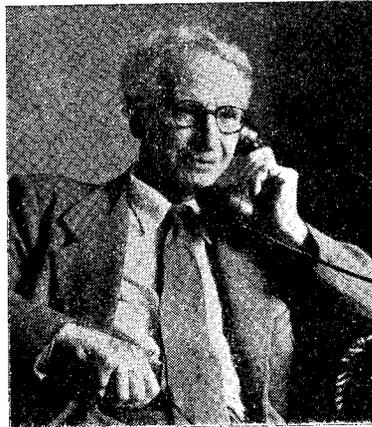
*General Secretary, Constructional Engineering Union*

TEN momentous years had passed since I last visited Bridlington on a similar errand, but with different feelings. Then it was to face a possible dark and gloomy future, brought about as a result of trying to "hold a candle to the devil." This time it was to consider the past, but wondering still whether the future was to be dark and gloomy as a result of neglecting to carry out many things we had intended, forgetting principles we had long adhered to; and pretending we could bolster up a system that all our political lives we had been aiming to smash.

My fears have not been lessened, but as I am not a gloomy sort, I can see many rays of hope for the future.

You cannot convince anyone by bulling them; reason and argument are the only methods that can be successful in this direction and from my point of view both were singularly absent.

One further white paper pamphlet on Trade Union Policy and the Economic Situation caused about the quickest reversal



of mind within my knowledge since 1914. The most burning question of the day, "Wages, Prices and Profits," was damped out by unions who were critical of previous policy and finally stamped out by the "Jack Boots" of the Block Vote.

In the light of what has since transpired, namely the £1 per week application on behalf of three million engineering and shipbuilding workers, in addition to the railwaymen's wage claim, and others which are pending, the whole attitude of those voting for the White Paper policy was farcical.

My challenge to these leaders, to take a secret postal ballot of their members, the result of which would give them a shock, was criticised, as impracticable, and if it was operated would support the T.U.C. policy. I still dispute that it is impracticable to take such a ballot, and I venture to suggest, if taken the result would be entirely different to the statements made by the supporters of restraint.

The voting reminded us of elementary physical jerks, "hands up," "hands down," then, when the platform had "taken the count," a card vote was demanded! This card vote became such a parrot cry from certain people on the platform, that on one occasion, when almost to a man his delegation voted in favour of a motion contrary to the wishes of the platform, he demanded a card vote! But he withdrew the demand on protests from the delegates.

It is obvious that the only seeming qualification for the high honour of chairmanship on this showing is seniority. "The quality of mercy is not strained" so I will reserve any further comments in this direction.

The brightest "star" in this firmament was "Dave Beck" of the *American Federation of Labour*, and I wonder if his speech was edited before he came over. I wonder! Jimmy Griffiths was another who did not fail, so for once, to my mind, fraternal delegates improved the proceedings.

What is likely to be the result of this Congress? Will it unite the World's workers or widen the gap?

It appears that Britain in order to narrow the Economic Trade Gap between us and the U.S.A. must widen the gap between us and the U.S.S.R., and assist in keeping the World's Workers divided. Free Trade Unions! Where are they free? U.S.A. where they get shot for picketing, and the colour bar operates; South Africa with its racial and colour discrimination; our own colonies, where the deciding factor as to whether a Trade Union shall function or not is the Government of the colony.

Will some supporter of the "Divide and conquer" policy, define what they mean by "Free Trades Unions" and where they are to be found?

However, possibly the Congress has served one useful purpose, the dividing of the sheep from the goats, and time will prove who were the asses.

## CONSTRUCTIONAL ENGINEERING UNION

submits facts on the

### PERSONAL INCOMES, COSTS, AND PRICES

OF A

# STEEL ERECTOR

Personal Income for 44-hour week: London £6 1 0, Provinces £5 17 4

Price Paid: In 1948, out of 11,000 members on Constructional Erecting Contracts—23 KILLED. One to each 500.

"THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH" WHAT SIN HAS THE STEEL ERECTOR COMMITTED?

Costs: The following sums were recovered in Lump Sum Settlements during the first half of 1949 in cases of alleged negligence, in addition to many smaller:

|        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| £4,236 | £2,200 | £3,000 | £1,500 | £2,600 | £1,000 | £2,000 | £2,150 |
| £3,000 | £2,400 | £1,250 | £1,875 | £3,000 | £692   | £4,000 | £2,500 |

Who Profits? (Previous year's profits in brackets.)

Sir Wm. Arrol & Co. Profits £347,151 (£237,388). Dividend. 25% usual over past years.  
Banister, Walton & Co. (Manchester). Con. Trading Profit £143,538 (£94,263) Net Profit £47,485 (£11,519). To Reserve £25,000 (Nil). Capital Bonus of 100% recommended.

John Booth & Sons (Bolton). 25% dividend paid.

Cozens & Sutcliffe (Holdings). 35% dividend paid (25%)

Redpath Brown & Co. Profits £584,407 (£296,959). Net or approximate Dividend 69%. Undivided 26%.

Compare the wages of the workers in the most hazardous occupation with the profits of the industry, and then judge if the WAGES FREEZE is preventing justice being done.

Application for wage increase rejected by Employers on the grounds of Government Policy—also rejected by National Arbitration Tribunal, without doubt on similar grounds.

### WHAT ACTION IS LEFT FOR THE MEMBERS TO TAKE:

Work of vital importance being carried out by our members:—Erection of POWER STATIONS, GAS WORKS, FACTORIES, BLOCKS OF FLATS

See Electricity Undertakings' Advertisements in most National newspapers to appreciate the value of the **STEEL ERECTOR**

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

7th—10th OCTOBER, 1949

CIVIC THEATRE, POPLAR, LONDON

### THE COLONIES AND WAR

Called by the International Committee of the Congress of the Peoples Against Imperialism

Hundreds of sponsors include  
24 Labour M.P.s

Invitations sent to Labour Parties, Trade Unions, etc.

### YOU CAN COME

Either as a delegate, observer or visitor

Details from Mike Turner, Swaraj House, 32 Percy Street, W.I.

**"SPEAKING MY MIND"****What's Cooking?**By **TOM BRADDOCK, M.P.**

WE are still in a state of crisis but, as football pools are going strong and most businesses are making 15 per cent. to 40 per cent. or more profit and turning in some hefty sums to reserve, who cares. Cripps and Bevin have had a rest cure, their officials are at Washington, they are following and they will get their orders when they arrive. As a sort of preview, Paul Robeson's concert has been smashed up by a gang of whiteskins, and six British seamen have been grilled for drinking out of a tap marked "White."

These diversions did not take place in the U.S.S.R. If they had, Cripps and Bevin would have gone into a retreat and the Grand Fleet would have been all at sea.

**The Poor Bloody Worker**

What about him? Well, as is usual at critical times, all eyes are on him. Is he once again going to show his sterling qualities and make still another super-human effort to keep the Constitution, the British Navy, the Household Cavalry, and the Brigade of Guards afloat and lit up. He can do all this by making goods so cheap and so tastefully packed that the American governing class will buy British, close the gap, and put some more of their wage slaves on the scrap heap.

Is all this going to happen? No, brother, it isn't—and for two reasons:—

(1) **The British worker is not going to work any harder. Why should he?**

(2) **The American worker is not going to stand for more unemployment. Why should he?**

Oh, but surely you can't mean that, I mean to say! Be a sport! You can't let the side down, old man! etc., etc. Sorry, brother, that is the position, so you had better re-read the August issue of the *Socialist Outlook* for an alternative way out.

**What a Dreadful Smell**

You wait till Cripps and Bevin get to Washington. Those goddam' Britishers are going to be told a few home truths. If they want to work with a really up-to-date enlightened people they must learn to appreciate the blessings of unemployment, they must learn not to be so outrageously healthy, they must learn that private enterprise won't work unless it is allowed unlimited profits and lives tax free, they must learn that the U.S.A. stands for free enterprise, and they had better do the

same—otherwise there will be no atomic bombs dropped on the Russians when they start fighting them.

Do you like this meal that is being cooked up for you dear comrade?

**The Council of Europe**

What a jolly affair. The British Government allows its enemies to attend. **Hugh Dalton** gets up and accuses these same enemies of putting a fast one across—in fact, that they committed a "breach of privilege." *Will you walk into my parlour,*" said the spider to the fly. "Thank you, sir," said the fly, "but if you eat me it is a breach of privilege." Too true, but he is eaten just the same!

**Just a Reminder**

Last month I pointed out that we could not afford the rich. Here is another item we can't afford.

On July 1st this year there were in the Armed Forces **769,900**, on the civilian staff attached to them **238,700**, and in addition, about **450,000** others engaged in production for the forces—a total of **1,458,600**.

Add to this lot all those engaged in housing, clothing, and feeding this million and a half, and I think you will agree with me that **WE CAN'T AFFORD THE ARMED FORCES**.

Don't try and tell me they are to defend us. You know as well as I do that when the war starts their job will be to attack and kill Russians of all sorts, men, women, and children—and the Russians will attack and kill YOUR men women, and children.

There is no defence in modern warfare. Surely the last war taught you that. We have just been told that the last atom bomb dropped on Japan killed 240,000 people—and we have developed since then. Look out, comrade!

**Congress of Peoples Against Imperialism****Support the Colonial People!**By **BETTY HAMILTON** (Joint Secretary, London Centre)

IN the past it has been possible for the capitalists to allow a number of concessions to the British working class, and hence maintain a certain standard of life, *thanks only to the enormous profits wrung from the exploitation of the colonial peoples*. But the Second World War has resulted in the dislocation of the great colonial empires, including Britain, and has aroused the national consciousness of the colonial peoples who, in their hundreds of thousands, served as soldiers in distant lands, were wounded, lost their lives, had their countries devastated and their homes destroyed.

In an attempt to restore some kind of economic equilibrium, after being forced to grant concessions in India, Pakistan, and Ceylon, the Imperialist Governments are directing against the colonial peoples wars and repressions without precedent. Wars in **Indonesia, Viet-Nam, and Malaya**; repressions in **North and West Africa, and Uganda**; savage racial laws in **South Africa**; the massacre of 100,000 of the **Madagascar** population and the condemning of every one of its parliamentary representatives to death or life imprisonment—these are some of the worst examples. The French Government imposes compulsory military service on the young manhood of the colonies, while the British Government is establishing armed strongholds at strategic points in the African colonies (having already established these in

Ceylon as the condition of granting that country political independence) and at the same time raising forces to maintain internal order.

The Labour Movement cannot ignore or remain indifferent to these events. We have a common aim with the colonial people. National independence for them will have its profound effect on our own struggle for socialism here in Britain—just as our victory against capitalism in Britain will affect the national independence movements in the colonies.

**In publishing articles on the colonial question and taking its stand with the colonial peoples, the Socialist Outlook has demonstrated that at least one militant section of the Labour Movement understands the interdependence of the struggle for colonial freedom and the fight for socialism in the metropolitan centres.**

In the *Congress of Peoples against Imperialism*, the main national liberation movements of the French, Dutch, and British colonies have united together with the Socialist movements of India, Pakistan and Ceylon and sections of the Socialist movement in France, Holland and Britain on agreed fundamental aims, based on the three principles:

(1) **The right of the colonial peoples to independence.**

(2) **Independence of the two Powers Blocs.**

(3) **Neutrality in war preparations by, and in war between, the two Blocs.**

The Congress is calling an International Conference on **October 8th and 9th in London**, where the main discussion will be on a text submitted by the International Committee on "*The Colonial Peoples and War*."

Among the sponsors of this conference are **Tom Braddock, Leah Manning, Elizabeth Braddock, Ronald Chamberlain**. Among the delegates from overseas are: **Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe** (President National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons), **Wallace Johnson** (General Secretary West African Civil Liberties and National Defence League), **J. K. Musazi** (President African Farmers' Union, Uganda), **Kwame N'Krumah** (Secretary Gold Coast Convention), **Dr. Prasad Varma** (Indian Socialist Party), **Prof. N. G. Ranga** (All India Kisan Congress), **Sarat Chandra Bose** (Republican Socialist Party).

All Divisional Labour Parties and T.U.s have been invited to send delegates to this Conference, and it is hoped that more of them will affiliate to the Congress for a greater understanding of the colonial problem in our struggle towards socialism.

# Railwaymen must Take off the Gloves!

By BOB SHAW (N.U.R.)

**T**HE farce was played out to the end. The Government-sponsored enquiry, after a decent interval solemnly declared that British Transport could not afford to give railwaymen a decent living wage. Every member of the Labour movement must protest against this callous decision. Anger and distrust is the feeling of every rank and file railwayman. Hot anger against the rottenness of a system run for the benefit of spivs, bosses, royalty and the like. Deep disgust that this should have been done to them by THEIR Labour Government.

The published decision was carefully timed to come after the report of the Transport Commission, with its £4 million "loss," and whilst the T.U.C. was in session at Bridlington. The first event was used dishonestly to try and show the railway workers how hopeless it was to expect any increase. If that wasn't enough, the T.U.C. made it quite clear that the workers could expect little help from them.

## A Conspiracy of Silence

Not many workers will wade through the official commission report, so the Transport Commission has obligingly issued, free of charge, to its employees, an abridged version in the form of a special news sheet, *Transport News*. As in the popular press, the compensation sums paid out of transport revenue to ex-shareholders of the old railway companies were not mentioned at all—nothing at all is said about the £47 millions interest on loans, i.e., 3 per cent. to the ex-shareholders!

Even the *Railway Review*, the N.U.R. journal, enters into this conspiracy of silence about the reason why the railwaymen cannot have an increase in wages. In an article reviewing the Transport Commission report, it completely ignored the question of the compensation payments. Not even the General Secretary of the N.U.R. mentioned these figures when referring to the union's wages claim. *Small wonder then, that railwaymen are sometimes taken aback when they learn that such large sums are being paid out of the Nationalised Transport revenue.*

The silence about the compensation sums serves the capitalists well. By hiding the real facts it is hoped that the workers will think that there is nothing they can do but work harder and continue tamely to submit to exploitation for the benefit of the ex-shareholders, the biggest majority of whom are bankers, insurance companies, financiers and the like, with large sums invested in transport stock. Why don't the T.U. leaders tell the men the real facts about where the revenue goes? Are they and the Labour Government afraid that the workers will get to think that this nationalisation is not socialisation as it should be, with all that that means in terms of improved benefits and social conditions for railwaymen

and all society? Are they afraid that the workers will begin to realise the truth that the nationalisation of transport is simply capitalist exploitation backed up by the Labour Government and with the workers being exploited as before?

## Let the Facts Speak

Revenue from British Railways in 1948, in round figures, was £26 million. This, say the newspapers' financial editors, was a loss of £6 million—because the railways were scheduled to provide for the ex-shareholders £32 million! In actual fact, the railways made a surplus of £26 million, largely, it must be admitted, because the railway workers were paid such low wages.

The money was handed over to the people to whom the Transport Commission and the Labour Government are under an obligation, i.e., in the great majority, to the capitalists. Apparently the Labour Government is under no obligation to the railway workers at all!

Why doesn't the Transport Commission publish a list of those people drawing interest from British Transport stock? If they will not undertake this task, then let the N.U.R. and the *Railway Review* do the job instead. *Let us know who is drawing our money.*

## N.U.R. Policy

Capitalist compensation payments must be maintained, say the Labour Government and the T.U.C. And on the question of wage increases they are equally adamant. These shall remain low in order that British capitalism can keep on its feet. *The N.U.R. Executive has repeatedly endorsed this policy in spite of its disastrous effect on railwaymen's wages.*

When the "wage freeze" policy first appeared, at this year's Labour Party Conference and again at the T.U.C., the N.U.R. representatives gave full support. To be sure, this has not prevented the N.U.R. from applying for increases in wages for its members, but it has prevented it from conducting a real struggle against the Railway Executive, while support for this policy has assisted the stubborn stand of the Railway Management against the raising of wages.

**It is quite clear that the Government's "wage freeze" policy has been the principle on which this stand was made and was the basis for the rejection by the Railway Executive, the Arbitration Board, and the "Enquiry" Commission, of all the wage raise applications.**

The first condition for a step forward on behalf of railwaymen is a repudiation by the N.U.R. of the Government's wages policy. Secondly, there should be a sterner stand made against compulsory arbitration, unlike the "fight" made at Bridlington which ended in a fruitless capitulation to the platform. The N.U.R. must return to the only method of conducting a struggle against capitalist exploitation and capitalist manage-



ment, that is, by means of the co-ordinated, independent action of the rank and file.

A strike or a "go slow" is illegal, say all the pundits. These are lawyers' problems. The fight for a decent living wage is far too serious to be allowed to bog down in such a discussion. All resistance to capitalist exploitation by the workers conducted by means of independent rank and file action is "illegal" and "anti-social," in the eyes of the capitalist press, lawyers, archbishops, and Ministers of the Crown. But, does anyone question the RIGHT of the railwaymen to a decent living wage.

A real fight around a real policy which would benefit the railway workers at the expense of the profit-making spivs. What is wrong with that? Let us get down to this right away. Let every railwayman raise this in his T.U. Branch. Stop the payment of interest to ex-shareholders of railway stock, except to needy cases. Give the railwaymen a decent living wage, a pension on retirement, and sick pay, the cost to be met out of the £47 million now spent on compensation interest. Publish a list of all holders of railway stock.

It is high time we took off the gloves and dealt with the question in a serious manner. Must railwaymen forever suffer so that spivvory, parasitism, and exploitation may prevail. To that we must say NO, and back our reply with ACTION.

## JUSTICE ?

**SHUNTER** takes seven-pennyworth of sugar from railway sidings—**IS SACKED**

**SHAREHOLDERS** take £26 millions from the railways—**THIS IS LEGAL !**

## Labour You Responsibility

**T**WO thousand young Labour supporters have demonstrated for a democratic Labour League of Youth. Speaker after speaker at the Filey Youth Conference took the rostrum to insist that if Labour is to have a virile Youth movement for the coming General Election struggle it must allow the L.O.Y. to hold its own conference, elect its own Executive and its own Editorial Board for the League's paper.

The Chairman's opening statement proposed that the report of the National Consultative Committee should be discussed point by point. Leaguer Hallas from Manchester objected to this. He said that the report was completely inadequate and he moved its reference back. The Chairman ruled this out of order which caused Leaguer Morris, also from Manchester, to promptly move the Chairman out of the chair. The roar of approval which followed his statement, and the five minutes chanting of "vote," "vote," clearly demonstrated the wishes of the Youth in this matter. But Transport House stuck grimly to its guns. The vote was not taken. The whole display was a sign of great weakness on the part both of the National Consultative Committee and of the Labour Party National Executive.

## "We have a Solemn Task"

By HAROLD DAVIES, M.P.

WHEN nations are in distress and there are wars and rumours of wars, then you find the people running to the soothsayers to comfort them. Superstition dies slowly. It has taken quite a time for the people to see that the orthodox economic approach to our problems has nothing in common with reality. The American Press now joins hands with our unpatriotic Tories and vilify us for living "extravagantly" on Loans and Aids. Mr. Boothby, M.P., in a debate says that we are "spongers." Strange, isn't it! One minute we are spongers living extravagantly, then the next, Cripps is a prophet of gloom who imposes austerity upon us for its own sake.

Our Movement must prepare for the shocks that are still to come to our system. *It is going to be harder for Labour to build a Socialist Britain in the midst of Capitalist crises.* The formula, in fact, must yet be found. The old methods of solving a crisis by increasing the misery and cutting productive power, or expanding into new markets by conquest; these are gone.

**The truth that the 1929 crisis was never solved is again being demonstrated. Rearmament and a Second World War hid the facts. Capitalism can only provide full employment in war. Only in war dare that system release to the full its productive capacity.**

### The Economic Reality

Day by day the contradictions increase in society. We see the old evils raising their

heads again in Germany even during their elections. All the industrial countries of the world are formulating vast export programmes as a way to solve their problems. There is no longer a great United States to absorb the poor and under-privileged from Europe. Industrialisation has spread from pole to pole. We are asked to expand our exports to more than 75 per cent. of what they were in 1938. Yet between 1913 and 1938 the manufactures of the world doubled, *but world trade in manufactures fell*—although we retained about 20 per cent. of this world trade. To double our export effort means that we must get 40 per cent. of the world trade in export of manufactures. This is an unreasonable target. We must not foster the pathetic belief that a Western Europe can exist as an appendage of American aid. *The whole of Europe must co-operate or perish.* It is the duty of British Labour to give a Socialist lead.

The American people are generous but they are bewildered by their responsibilities in world affairs. They see Europe finished so far as Capitalism is concerned unless dollars are pumped into the countries here. This cannot go on forever. It is not a positive approach. Labour must work for understanding with the East and the Soviets. We are about to face merciless competition from Germany and Japan and the old social framework of Britain will collapse under that strain, unless *we courageously cut our huge arms expenditure and work for understanding with all progressive nations of the world.* The Law of Diminishing Returns works with a vengeance in modern war. As R. W. G. Mackay, M.P. said :

*"The 1929 crisis had not been successfully liquidated and the peoples of the world and their governments entered the Second World War with their social basis far more insecure than at the outbreak of the First World War."*

**Thus Britain's share of world production which was about 32 per cent. in 1870 was less than 10 per cent. in 1938.**

### The Burden of War Debts

So we find the past strewn with loans to repay loans. War debts on top of war debts. This perpetuity of debt must cease. By it the tomb controls the living. The quick are dominated by the dead. Sir George Paish one-time co-editor of the *Statist* recognised the folly of these war debts. He wrote: *"No one will deny that these debts have been incurred in the defence of the entire world from conquest, and in all justice and reason should be converted into World obligations, for which every country should be in some degree responsible. By converting these debts into world debts their burden would become one that could be carried and redeemed by the entire world without difficulty."* Sir George went further than this and recognised that the responsibility for lend-lease borrowings of all countries including Russia should be dealt with in the same way. Would Boothby call this "sponging"?

Our job is more difficult as suspicion between us and Russia increases. We must do our best to get co-operation between the three Great Powers, Russia, U.S.A. and Britain. There is plenty of common sense in the States too, *and the ordinary people there do*

*not want war either.* We must try and get through to them in their working class organisations.

More educational work is needed in our own Trade Union Branches. To achieve industrial democracy our workers must have a greater say in industrial matters. Sound industry is the basis of a democratic socialist society. **Comrades—we have a solemn task—to win Britain for Socialism and the World for Peace.**

## Towards Workers' Control

By WILLIE EVANS

(National Society of Painters, and member of Edmonton Labour Party).

SO much is spoken about Workers' Control but so little is done. The Labour Movement has always placed as its goal the control of Parliament—but *without planning in advance the transition to Socialism.* We have believed that this kind of control would solve our problems—but the fact is that he who controls the means of production is the real master. **The Boss class have checked us on the industrial front and the T.U.C. devoid of all plans—is demoralised and in a funk.** While WE control the political machine, the Bosses (not all of whom are represented by TORIES) still control the means whereby we live. **We are still WAGE SLAVES instead of being masters in our own house.**

By failing to institute Workers' Control, the Labour Government has almost defeated our cause. Workers are feeling frustrated because they have no assurance that we are making the transition to Socialism.

We are told that we cannot have Workers' Control because there are other classes to consider, that is, the consumers. But what worker is not also a consumer? And are not the workers in a majority, and should not the will of the majority prevail?

**It is obvious that we shall not obtain our desired goal without fighting for it. The big bosses of the T.U.C. cannot help us. Many of them are no longer members of our class and many others are in the queue for well paid jobs. We shall have to rely on our own strength in the Trade Union Branches.**

The fight for Workers' Control is a specialised job. We should form shadow committees on every job whose duty it will be to expose the inefficiency and wangles of the bosses, and we should invite the office workers to help us in this task. In this way we shall prove that our ability and efficiency is superior to the present form of management.

It is no longer sufficient to rest content with the fight for higher wages, we must fight for the complete control of industry. Thus assuring an end to Wage Slavery and the birth of Industrial Emancipation. Political effort will secure this once we have proved our case.

### ATTLEE AT LLANDUDNO

Wage increases "would do nothing to increase the sum total of wealth . . . It would only alter its distribution." Well, **what's wrong with that!**

## Demands

by An Adult Visitor to Filey

Transport House used the old bogey about the National Press utilising critical discussions to discredit Labour. But, as one young delegate correctly pointed out, if there is no discussion at all the Press headlines will be **baa, baa, blacksheep!** Likewise with the argument that the Youth opposition was led by a "bunch of career-seeking reds." The most likely place for careerists was . . . **on the platform!**

A member of the Richmond League of Youth brought the house down with his indictment of the official League papers. The *Young Socialist* of 1947, he said, contained **90 per cent. material from L.O.Y. members**—whereas to-day the percentage has dropped to **17 per cent.** This was not due at all he said to a lack of enthusiasm among the members, because he himself had received a letter which stated that there was **"more than an abundance"** of material.

There is no doubt that the Labour League is the most virile Youth body in Britain—loyal to socialist principles and the cause of Labour. It has a host of capable propagandists who can rout anything the Tories may put into the field at the General Election. The great danger, however, is that all this talent will be lost unless the N.E.C. behaves towards Youth in a much more democratic manner than it has done up to now.

# American Witch-hunting

A LETTER FROM AN AMERICAN SEAMAN

THE last time I was in England I came across a copy of the *Socialist Outlook* and I liked it a lot—especially its international approach to questions—so I'm writing this letter in the hopes of giving our British brother a better understanding of America, that is, of that part of America that counts . . . the American working class.

Here, as elsewhere, the rank and file workers are forced to fight a bitter struggle against the bureaucrats who, at this stage, still control the labour movement. But in the States, because we have not as yet formed a Labour Party to oppose capitalism, our struggle against the chicken-hearted, pro-capitalist, "leaders" for decent wages and conditions takes place within the unions.

We are under the fire of a terrific red-baiting attack that is aimed to silence all progressive union opinion whatever—and especially to prevent any criticism of the union-busting, war-making plans of Wall Street. Under the guise of combating "Communism" and "subversive groups," the American people are being deprived of our most elementary democratic rights. An indication that the American workers are beginning to revolt against this is evidenced by recent events in the **National Maritime Union**, to which the crew of this ship belongs.

The leadership of the N.M.U. sponsored a referendum vote within the union on the proposal to amend the Constitution so as to purge all "members, sympathisers, adherents" or what have you, of the Communist Party and all other "subversive groups"—and so on and so forth. *Although thousands of votes were illegally tampered with and stolen from the membership, this union-splitting referendum was decisively rejected.* The ranks demonstrated by their vote that the hysterical screaming of "red-commie-red" from all the anti-labour sources 24 hours a day is bad enough—but it stinks worse when we get it from our own union officials. **These leaders(?) are mistaken if they think that by driving out militant union fighters the ship-owners can be appeased. Our enemies understand that this is just one more step in weakening the solid front of the union so it can be crushed at a more opportune moment.**

An interesting feature of the N.M.U. developments is that at last year's general elections the Communist Party machine, which had completely discredited itself and almost wrecked the union while they were in control for ten years, was overwhelmingly defeated. In those ten years, the Stalinists violated all trade union principles and dragged the N.M.U. through all the twists and turns of the C.P. line, in which the interests of the seamen became secondary to the temporary needs of Stalin's foreign policy while he sought deals with this or that imperialist or fascist gang. The N.M.U. seaman is now showing that he wants **NO DICTATORS** riding on his back, be they stooges for the Kremlin or for Wall Street. A new Left Wing leadership is required, made up of militant fighters from the ranks who have learned that the unions can survive only by **INDEPENDENT UNITED LABOUR ACTION ON THE POLITICAL AS WELL AS THE ECONOMIC LEVEL.**

At the N.M.U. convention in September the leadership will again attempt to outlaw all opposition. But I'm sure the great majority of rank and file delegates will understand

clearly that union officials who are so meek to the shipowners and aggressive towards the union rank and file, must not be given the power to expel opponents and smear all criticism as "Communist" just because they can't answer it. *All hope of holding and improving our conditions is futile if a seaman can't open his mouth in his own union.* With complete freedom for the rank and file to participate, I'm confident the N.M.U. will chart a course that will steer the American Labour movement clear of the rocks of retreat and compromise with our enemies who have as their final aim union-busting and the subjugation of all working people.

**Steve Murphy—book number 50680, National Maritime Union of America, Ship's delegate, S.S. American Producer.**

## A CHANCE TO SPEAK OUT

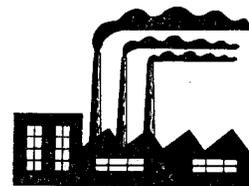
Delegate Conferences called by the *Socialist Outlook* to discuss a Programme to meet the Crisis, are being organised in

**BIRMINGHAM  
SHEFFIELD  
LIVERPOOL  
CORBY  
CARDIFF  
LONDON**

Watch out in your Labour Party and Trade Union Branch for circular giving details of time, place and speakers.

## Workshop Notes

By JACK JOHNSTON (A.E.U. Newcastle,



IN the August issue of the *Socialist Outlook* if you remember, I asked readers to forward on to me anything from the branch or the factory which they felt would be of interest to other readers. That invitation still stands. Material should be sent to me at **80 Buckingham Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 4.**

Here is part of a letter received from **Bro. Don Ellis of the Manchester District Committee of the A.E.U.**

*"... Attending a trade union branch meeting in this area a few weeks ago, a member, after hearing the reports of the Assistant District Organiser and the D.C. delegate, expressed his great concern about the present Provisions for Avoiding Disputes. 'What is needed,' he said, 'is a new negotiating machinery, one that will give the Shop Stewards on the job the final say in what is going to be decided.' There is no doubt that this expresses the members' dissatisfaction with the present policy of our Union and the lack of leadership at the top willing to face up to the changing conditions in the industry instead of appeasing the employers in the hope of getting a job on a Nationalised Board. It is time our leaders got down to the job we PAY them to do. I suggest that rank and file policy on the question of Provisions for Avoiding Disputes should be:—*

1. No dismissals of any description shall take place without the sanction of the Shop Stewards Committee.
2. No alteration in any working conditions without the sanction of the Shop Stewards Committee.
3. While any matter that the Shop Stewards have refused to sanction is in dispute, the Status Quo shall operate.
4. The Shop Stewards directly involved shall be present at all levels of negotiation.

Well what do you think about it? Write in and let me know.

The bit I like best is where Bro. Ellis asks our Trade Union leaders to do what they are

**PAID FOR.** In other words, protect the workers or get out. The continuous cry for more productivity should have some effect here. We, as paying members of working class organisations, want more productivity from our leaders. Less talking and more positive action in protecting our standard of living.

It's hard to believe just how long negotiations can drag on. You all know that when a Shop Steward is sacked, or there is a dispute over prices, you call on the official machinery—but how many members live long enough to see the termination of negotiations. A case on the Tyne, involving an A.E.U. claim for the benefits of the 44 hour week agreement for our members employed by the Gateshead Corporation, has been going on now for **TWO YEARS.** Brother, that's a long time whichever way you look at it—and there is still one further negotiating step to go!

The funny thing about the whole business is that everyone seems to agree that the York Memo. is obsolete. Just look at the Election Addresses of Union candidates, or glance through the correspondence in the *Union Journal.* Certain newspapers even feel these long delays are a major cause of "unofficial" strikes! In view of this widespread feeling why hasn't the A.E.U. made more progress in this matter during the last 15 years? Is it because the present set-up enables delegations, representatives, etc., unlimited possibilities for free travel? It is like the game that is played annually in Chester-le-Street, County Durham. The town divides into two sides and then a ball is kicked around all day until it is usually lost. That is what happens to many of our problems—they are kicked around until they are lost!

Well, we are making a start. **Bro. Ellis** has shown he is interested. Are you? Let us stop this business of endless words and no deeds. **Out with the York Memo**



### Labour and the Socialist Ideal

For a long time I have thought seriously about our Party. *I have been a member since its formation and have over 50 years in the T.U. Movement.* It was to bring Socialism into being that our Party was formed, and the call inspired all of us in those early days.

Perfectly true, we have shown how to govern—but in the most orthodox way. Oh, how many are there who have made the movement a career, to improve only their own lot and left the many still confronted with poverty and all that it brings. The spirit of Tolpuddle seems to have vanished with the rise to power of our Party. Oh, what the Bank balances could disclose of many who are leading our Party to-day!

The call for Socialist Fellowship is long overdue and should prove a rallying cry for the coming election. Our Editor has certainly drafted some very fine reading on the Crisis and the Way Out in the August issue of the *Socialist Outlook*. With such a lead we have nothing to fear, for the wage-earning class (and they are the only class that matters) will certainly rally for the fight.

PUTNEY.

G. Wyver.

### World Government

The Editor in his comments on Mr. Mirams' letter falls into the trap which is going to lose the initiative for the Socialists in the inevitable World Government of the future—unless we can avoid it.

If we want, as I do also, to see the world governed on progressive social-democratic lines, it is essential that Socialists take the lead now in the effort to build the Authority which we desire. But to argue that the failure of the League of Nations and of U.N.O. thereby demonstrates the impotence of supranational government is to display a pathetic ignorance of the essential nature of a government. In fact, of course, the League failed, and U.N.O. is now failing, precisely because *neither were governments*. Both were leagues of sovereign states. Therefore, they could not govern either on Socialist or on any other lines. They were impotent to deal with the dynamic changing social conditions which the modern technological age of plenty has created. Leagues, by their nature, are adequate only to maintain a status quo. But since the status quo cannot and should not be maintained, therefore leagues will always fail. Governments on the other hand, combining the essential instruments of the executive, the legislature and the judiciary, can and do deal effectively with the dynamic changing problems of our time.

It is entirely untrue, and most misleading, to say that capitalism per se is the cause of war. It is not. It is only one of the many reasons for the social and economic injustices which make men demand change. But the final arbitrament of war is resorted to in order to get these necessary changes only when no constitutional framework exists within which the common people can exercise their will for change peacefully and democratically.

★ Correspondence should be as brief as possible and addressed to The Editor, 3 Trafalgar Avenue, London, S.E.15.

Socialists who do not understand that national sovereignty is humanity's Public Enemy No. 1 cannot expect to win the confidence of the common people because in the end events will prove them wrong.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Henry Osborne, M.P.

### Economics and the T.U.C.

The eighty-first Annual Congress of the T.U.C. is now a memory. *Eighty-one!* This is the age in humans when senile decay becomes a factor. And "senile decay" is just about a true summing up of the events at Bridlington. The whole of the week's Congress, not excluding Mr. Attlee's visit, was divided up into two issues—attacking Communism and justifying modern economics. Of the former, we have had so much of it that our eyes, ears, and bellies ache from it. Of the latter, I wonder if comrades Deakin and Lawther would have the guts to tell their members just what it really means?

Freezing wages at the 1948 level and allowing the cost of living to rise (the Cripps Budget) means forcing a wage reduction on ALL wage earners, but it hits hardest those whose wages are so low that they are forced to accept longer hours as the only way in which they can balance their weekly budgets.

Would our comrades, who are the chief ornaments of the T.U.C. rostrum, explain to a labourer earning £4 10s. a week why Cabinet Ministers with £100 a week say that such labourers must not expect better wages and conditions?

We are told that our troubles will be over in years to come. That will be splendid—if we *only live long enough to see it!* But I very much doubt if we can survive that long on the present Tory-minded Labour economics.

FLIXTON.

W. D. Burgess,  
Secretary, Manchester Branch  
C.E.U.

### Socialist Fellowship and Zilliacus

Your correspondent, Peter Grimshaw, is mistaken, I believe, in opposing a campaign for the re-instatement of the expelled M.P.s into the Labour Party. Whilst I am in complete agreement with him that the main task of the Socialist Fellowship is to wage a vigorous fight for a socialist policy and to ensure Labour victory in 1950, I maintain that we need the assistance of outstanding socialists like Zilliacus to bring this about.

The action of the N.E.C. in the case of Lester Hutchinson is a warning to those like Comrade Grimshaw who would let "sleeping dogs lie" in the case of the expelled Left-wingers.

In short, I believe most passionately that our Fellowship must work all out for Labour victory on a SOCIALIST policy in 1950—but we must also ensure that sincere minority views are respected in the Labour Party and that a place be found for good socialists like Zilli and his "fellow sufferers."

Anyway, why should our Party present the Tories with working class seats on a split vote?

WALLASEY.

Frank Turner.

### Tightening the Screw

I SOMETIMES wonder if the Minister of Fuel and Power understands what is taking place within the Mining Industry. Recently, in one of the Divisions of the Coal Board, yet another new system was introduced—a system of checking the number of shifts each miner is having off work. Ample paper is provided for the purpose—even though each individual record sheet covers a period of five years!

An examination of this system shows:

1. The miner is to be allowed one shift off work every three months.
2. Should he have more than one shift off within three months, a warning notice is sent to him and a copy is sent to his Lodge Secretary.
3. Should he fail to observe this warning, he is requested to report to the manager's office, where he may be fined up to fifty shillings, or be given notice to terminate his employment.

Rather laconic is the text of the warning notice which is sent "in accordance with agreed procedure." If the leaders of the N.U.M. have in principle agreed to this system then they cannot be worthy of, nor justify, the men whom they represent.

A Colliery Clerk.

N.C.B.

### SOCIALIST FELLOWSHIP Holds Successful Meeting in Liverpool

Over 150 people packed the **Stork Hotel, Liverpool**, on September 4th to hear **Ellis Smith** outline his reasons for initiating the **Socialist Fellowship**.

His speech opened with a claim that the struggle for the Fellowship was a continuation of past struggles. He appealed to the T.U.C. delegates, then meeting at Bridlington, to act in the interests of the rank and file.

After reviewing the present situation, he outlined a programme for the *General Election*—

**Abolition of the House of Lords.**

**Planning Commission to plan the way forward.**

**Nationalisation of Land, Chemicals, and Unilevers.**

**Industrial Democracy.**

**An International Socialist approach to Foreign Policy.**

In Liverpool there is obviously a potentially powerful base for the Socialist Fellowship. The efficient way in which the local committee organised the meeting shows that inside its ranks there are very many keen and capable comrades. All Labour Party members who live in Liverpool and who are anxious to ensure a real socialist policy for the Party should rally round this local branch of the Socialist Fellowship.

## Book Review

### Zilliacus Explains

A short review of "Why I was Expelled"

By G. HEALY

EVERY member of the Labour Party should read this little booklet.\* For two reasons, (1) it demonstrates the alarming growth of bureaucracy inside the Party and (2) it provides an excellent insight into the politics of Mr. Zilliacus.

The implications of the N.E.C.'s "charge sheet" was that Zilliacus was expelled for advocating the foreign policy of the Communist Party. This book, however, proves conclusively that Zilliacus was in fact expelled because he maintained the general line of Labour's foreign policy as laid down in *Let Us Face the Future* and since abandoned by the Government. That is a fact which no amount of threats can alter.

There is, it is true, a connection between the expulsion of Zilliacus and the preparation for World War 3. In this respect, Zilli is a victim of the witch-hunt. But, in my opinion it would be very wrong indeed to draw from that fact the conclusion that he therefore represents a policy which is a socialist alternative to war. His little book reveals, in fact, that Zilliacus on foreign policy is not a socialist at all—he is essentially a Liberal pacifist! His whole argument assumes that war can be prevented without disturbing the economic base of capitalist society. All that is required, he argues, is a "strong" U.N.O. and some good alliances—with Russia in his case, of course. He nowhere shows the slightest understanding of the fact that the struggle for peace is absolutely meaningless unless it is considered as an essential part of the struggle for the overthrow of the present capitalist economic system. To talk of peace while capitalism and all its institutions (including U.N.O.) continue to exist, is the cruelest deception of the working class.

\*"Why I was Expelled," by K. Zilliacus. Colletts. 1/6 (2d. post).

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## DEVALUATION CRISIS

(Editorial continued from Page 1)

other countries which followed the lead of the pound is proof of this. France, for example, could not allow Britain to undersell her in the dollar market. **A trade war has now commenced in earnest.**

And it is ridiculous to imagine that American capitalists will stand idly by and watch their own commodities driven off the market by lower-priced goods from Europe. Faced with such competition, they will either reduce prices, raise tariffs, or both. In fact, American car producers have already started to cut prices, and the American Chamber of Commerce is demanding tariff protection against certain types of British goods. Such reflex action on the part of the American producers was inevitable and will force Britain to cut her costs of production still further in order to keep prices at "competitive levels." The total reorganisation of British industry being out of the question, the drive to cut costs of production means "rationalisation," speed-up of labour, cuts in capital investment in new construction, cuts in "unessentials" like houses, hospitals, roads, and the social services, and, above all, attempts to reduce the wages of the working class.

**It all adds up to unemployment and a drastically reduced standard of life for the workers. And the strongest subjective desires of Labour Ministers will not prevent this result if they continue to rely on a capitalist trade war to "solve" the crisis of capitalism.**

### The Political Effects

The offer to invest American capital in Britain and the colonies is also accompanied by the demand that "a suitable environment" for capitalist investment be maintained in these areas. In plain language, this means that private property and profit making must be maintained and closely guarded against the socialist aspirations of the British workers and the colonial masses.

In Britain it is a demand for a huge cut in the social services, which the American investor is certainly not prepared to pay for; the lowering of taxation of profits to provide a "reasonable" incentive; and the ending of any attempt by the British workers to put a finish to the profit motive altogether.

In the Colonies it means that all attempts by the colonial peoples to achieve national independence must be suppressed, and the present low standard of life prevailing there must be maintained, all in order that Britain and her new and more powerful partner in colonial exploitation can be guaranteed a high rate of profit on invested capital.

Fortunately, however, the plans of Imperialism for the subjugation and impoverishment of the common people of the world do not depend for their success on the agreement of a few rather frightened Labour Ministers. The last word will be said, not by them, but by the British working class and its ally, the oppressed people of the colonial empire.

### The Socialist Way Out

The break-up of the British Empire will undoubtedly unleash social struggles on a scale never before seen in Britain. The wage freeze policy was already undergoing severe strain even before devaluation. Unless we are to assume that the British working class, accepting the advice of Sir Stafford Cripps

and Michael Foot, will docilely allow the whole burden of capitalism's crisis to be placed on its back, it is certain that tremendous wage struggles are impending.

Such wage struggles, successful or not, will certainly upset the carefully-laid plans to "capture" the American market at the expense of the working people. Yet we can no more prevent them than we can forbid an active volcano erupting. Or is it perhaps imagined that a huge Empire can be persuaded to die peacefully—without convulsions. The task of socialists is not to "deplore" the disorder which capitalism introduces into society. We must recognise the facts and, with bold leadership, ensure that the inevitable struggles of the workers lead to the reconstruction of society on more sane, planned, socialist basis.

The Labour Movement needs a programme which takes as its starting point the impossibility of patching-up this dying capitalist system. In the August issue of *Socialist Outlook* we offered our readers such a programme. Its main points were:

**Nationalisation of all the basic resources of the country—and without the luxury of compensation.**

**A strict accounting of the national wealth.**

**A plan of production based on the needs of the people and not on the needs of the capitalist market.**

**An end to the wasteful expenditure of money and energy on armaments.**

**Immediate freedom to the Colonies and assistance to them to develop their own natural resources.**

**The unification of Europe on a planned socialist basis.**

An international crisis demands the international solidarity of the working class. To those who have donned a patriotic cloak and now preach hatred of all things American, we wish to state quite clearly that the American worker is our ally. He does not profit from the financial triumphs of Wall Street. On the contrary, these successes are gained at his expense. *Even as we write, the figures for unemployment in the United States are near the five million mark, while the American miners and steel workers are preparing to do battle with the employers against the ever-rising cost of living.*

Finally, in answer to all those who are beginning to preach that now is the time to unite ALL classes to meet the "common crisis" we say—however poor the "nation" the capitalists will always maintain their privileges and luxuries at the expense of the common people. A visit to France or Italy, both much poorer countries than Britain, would graphically illustrate this truth. The *Socialist Outlook* is completely convinced that only the independent action of the workers of the world can lead us out of this present economic crisis. Should the workers fail then no power on earth will prevent capitalism "solving" the crisis by means of a Third World War.

It is this knowledge which, we are sure, will impel the rank and file of the great Labour and Trade Union movement to reject the policy of Sir Stafford Cripps and intensify the fight inside the Party for a bold socialist alternative.