

# International Bulletin

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## CONFERENCE OF MARXISTS TO BE HELD SOON

The comrades who produce and maintain this Bulletin, together with other like-minded people, are organising a conference in Nottingham soon - the most likely date now being the 15th of April (the weekend before Easter).

The conference will consider the general political situation and the tasks of marxists together with proposals for the hardening out of the organisation of their work. Special consideration will be given to the question of Youth work and finding some means of linking the trade union and political struggles. All this discussion will be organised around discussion documents. As there will be a number of comrades from colonial and semi-colonial countries will be present the political problems of these comrades will be related to the general discussion. Serious and feasible propositions will be made on all these questions.

The need for such business-like discussion and working out of ideas is very apparent and is demonstrated by the gap between the possibilities of the present situation and the poor state the workers' movement finds itself in. That is the lesson of the one-day strikes and response from youth when given even a half-hearted lead. Those who blame the backwardness of the workers for all our problems would do well to study the series of strikes which have followed the one-day strikes. But leadership is not a matter of mouthing phrases about being more militant - the essence of leadership is to correctly analyse the situation, drawing out the tasks and the possibilities of the situation, and putting forward a programme of action based upon slogans which will find a response from the workers (and take their consciousness forward at the same time). Factional fury and intrigue, sect politics in general (that is putting the interests of one's own particular sect above that of the movement as a whole), seeing life only through the prism of one's own dogmatic ideas, the refusal to participate in struggle and therefore learn from action, these familiar faults can only obscure and confuse the working out of a correct political line. We hope to break with this tradition through such conferences.

One last word, we are well aware of the limitations and problems caused by having these conferences in Nottingham only. Unfortunately, at present we haven't the facilities elsewhere, but real consideration must be given to this problem at the conference. Having said this we are sure that the comrades attending will be pleased to hear of the progress that our efforts, as humble as they are, have helped to facilitate. The attendance should be wider and more representative than ever before. We urge all readers to attend and if they have any proposals about invites they should write immediately.

## TRADE UNION C.N.D. COMMITTEE FORMED IN NOTTINGHAM

A group of active C.N.D. supporters have formed a provisional T.U. C.N.D. Committee in Nottingham with the aim of organising the fight for unilateral policies in the various unions. So far only exploratory work has been done but the response has been good. The secretary of the Nottingham and District Trades Council has agreed to be president and the area secretary of the Fire Brigades Union will act as secretary. Various help has been promised at all levels in the union organisations. A plan of action has been agreed upon, it includes concentration on the big six unions, plus two others which have a large membership in Nottingham, a panel of speakers to address branches campaigning on the day to day questions (e.g. protests against the imprisonment of the six) and a local conference to be addressed by national T.U. speakers.

## SOUTH NOTTINGHAM CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTY CONDEMNS TESTS BY WEST

At its last meeting, which was also the Annual General meeting, a resolution opposing the resumption of tests by the west, and in opposition to the Gaitskell line of justifying them, was passed. The move originated from the Lenton ward and will now be forwarded to the City Labour Party. The meeting was also noteworthy because a number of left wingers were elected into various positions, including people who occupy leading positions in the anti-nuclear weapons movement. This represents an important step forward because in the past South Nottingham has been a bastion of the right wing. Its previous secretary having held the position longer than anyone else ever had in the whole history of the Labour Party.

Although it is too early to make very precise predictions on the world economic situation, the prospects for the capitalist economy are not the most encouraging. Rees Mogg of the Sunday Times recently went so far as to detect "a world wide surplus of capacity in basic industries, and even in industries like oil and chemicals, with a rapid growth in normal demand." He went on to maintain that a violent upheaval is unlikely because of high arms and state spending, nevertheless "unless it is corrected in time this situation could lead to a contraction in world trade."

Apart from the effects of contraction on the so called advanced countries, a reduction or upheaval in world trade can have particularly serious consequences for the underdeveloped nations. Capitalist spokesmen are not unaware of the problem of capital accumulation for these nations, but are incapable of finding a serious long term solution. Capitalism remains essentially national even in its decay and can hardly begin to solve international trading and investment problems. Thus the report of the American Senate sub-committee on foreign aid in Latin-America has stressed the need for "self help" and openly approved of close association with the various military cliques there. This is actually self contradictory because the military cliques are incapable of self help - only a wholesale social revolution entailing considerable discipline in consumption could achieve effective accumulation of capital. More important than this cynical report, has been Gaitskell's recently expressed concern that Common Market or Atlantic Community tariff barriers might seriously effect the prices of the primary commodities, thus dislocating the economies of the underdeveloped nations.

Industrial countries over the last twenty years have more than doubled the volume of their exports. But commodity producers have increased the volume of sales by little more than half. Prices can fluctuate a great deal also in these primary products - thus Ghana cocoa, Malayan rubber and Pakistan jute which play a vital role in their respective economies could prove very vulnerable in a downturn in the world economy. In 1957-58, Chile suffered a loss of £25 millions through a fall in copper prices - aid given to her was on average £4 millions a year.

According to Sachs (Polish Perspectives May 1961), in 1959 exports from Indonesia calculated per head of the population were actually 44% lower than in 1937, in Argentina 60% lower, in Egypt 34% lower, in Malaya 27% and in Mexico 9% lower. In 1938, these countries producing primary commodities accounted for 37.5% of capitalist world exports, yet in 1959 despite the vast expansion of world trade, these countries still accounted for only 34.1%. In the U.N. Economic Survey of 1958, it was estimated that the primary producing areas lost more as a result of deterioration in the terms of trade than the whole of the foreign aid they received.

Great Britain is one of those nations which has indirectly benefitted a great deal from favourable terms of trade. According to Balogh (New Statesman 12 Dec. 1959) "In Britain, for instance home costs since 1955 have risen at a steady rate of 5%. Price stability since 1957 could be maintained only because import costs declined by eight percent.....The improvement in the standard of life since 1957, some two or three per cent, is entirely due to the violent improvements in the terms at which we are able to purchase food and raw materials - to the discomfort of poor areas. Not less than half of the total gain since 1951 is due to this same cause." In toto between 1953-61 the terms of trade have improved as much as 18% (Labour Research) - import prices have fallen and export prices risen, Ultimately, of course, this leads to a reduction of trade and stagnation of exports for the advanced nations. To crown it all the latest figures would seem to make it clear (Lloyds Bank Review Feb. 1962) that the recovery of output in the U.K. in 1959 and that in the U.S. have made no impact on falling commodity prices.

The facts of the world economy are that a small group of advanced nations, primarily the U.S.A. and Western Europe are exploiting in a variety of ways the rest of the non-communist underdeveloped nations - and isolating nations such as China in desperate need of capital and massive aid. These advanced nations are geared to the fantastic waste of the permanent war economy - the proletariats of these advanced nations<sup>who</sup> indirectly benefit from alterations in the terms of trade, are, in fact, aristocrats in relation to the rest of the world. It is to be hoped that disturbances within the Western economies will awaken these proletariats and lead them further to consider their responsibilities towards the hundreds of millions of exploited workers and peasants all over the world who require tremendous economic aid to relieve their hellish existence and their endless poverty.

## COMRADE PABLO VISITS FIGHTING LINES IN ALGERIA

We reproduce here a report made <sup>by</sup> Comrade Pablo after his visit to the fighting lines on the Algerian-Moroccan border. Although somewhat dated, it was written on the last day of 1961, we think it of great interest and political significance. It should be compulsory reading for those who lecture on the F.L.N. how to fight imperialism, on a typewriter in a London office.

"I have just finished a journey of several days to the frontier region of East Morocco and Algeria, accompanied by the Labour Party M.P., John Baird, and several Algerian civil and military leaders.

"We sometimes went within 500 metres of the famous electrified barbed wire barrier, which the French have erected along hundreds of kilometres of the frontier. We observed quite closely the military posts, the fortifications, the searchlights which <sup>cut</sup> into in the night along the whole zone in which the ALN, the heroic army of the Algerian fighters, is operating.

"We saw the French aircraft, patrolling the region, we heard, during the night, artillery duels, which so often wake up the inhabitants of the small frontier town of Oujda and the neighbouring villages, including the thousands of Algerian refugees who camp in miserable tents, in the intense cold of winter, all along the frontier.

"Every night the A.L.N. launches bold operations of sabotage against the electrified barrier, of diversion, of infiltration into Algeria and, once a week, a general operation on a front of 300 kilometres.

"The A.L.N. sends, through these operations, contingents of up to 140 men, who, once having penetrated into Algeria, break up into groups of 11 to 24, everyone with special missions and in constant communication with the aim of joining the fighting units of the interior. To these units they take armaments, food and money.

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"We visited schools and encampments which supply the intrepid fighters with clothing, food, medical assistance, etc., which function like big installations because nowadays the ALN is a modern organisation. It possesses its own academies and schools for military and political instruction. It possesses its own factories, hospitals and has considerable and varied armaments.

"But the A.L.N. is also a revolutionary army, and its motto, written everywhere is: 'Independence is a stage only, just as the purely military struggle, Revolution is the goal.'

"This revolutionary army, unbreakably welded to the people, to the peasants and workers of Algeria, receives constant clarification on the historical and social sense of its struggle, and its perspectives, by political instructors, who have a decisive judgement, including matters concerning strictly military operations. These political instructors constitute the intellectual and political vanguard of the revolution, who orientate it consciously towards a democratic socialist solution.

"This solution would be greatly facilitated if the French and European workers' movement proves capable of preventing the victory of fascism in France and supplies effective assistance to the Algerian revolution, in order to speed up the attainment of independence and to support technically and financially the immense work of reconstruction after seven years of destructive colonial war.

"The morale of the Algerian fighters is very high, as also is the morale of the workers and peasants of the interior who, particularly in the last year, have found again the ardour of the beginning of the revolution. All are convinced that the hour of victory of the revolution is approaching and that the secret negotiations will succeed.

"So much so that the announcement of the negotiations <sup>itself</sup> is to be understood to signify that a basic agreement had already been reached and a favourable conclusion of the negotiations is assured. For two years, the F.L.N. and A.L.N. have <sup>and</sup> consciously worked for a combined military and diplomatic struggle to obtain independence which avoided using the full, and immense, human and material forces at their disposal. They did this in order to safeguard political control over the revolution and to avoid further enormous destruction and human suffering. But to this stage a time limit has been set, which is drawing to a close. De Gaulle and French imperialism know this."

to be concluded in the next issue.

In a recent article on the 22nd Congress of the C.P.S.U., published in Socialist Review, Tony Cliff candidly admitted "much of what happened was unexpected." Cliff is a considerable scholar, who reads Russian and most European languages fluently, so it is a pity that the events of that Congress stole up on him and took him unawares. If he had read the press of the Fourth International, for instance, the July 1961 issue of La Verite des Travaillleurs, he would in advance have been offered a very clear picture of what about to take place. But essentially Cliff was surprised by events because the theory with which he approaches Soviet reality is a very unhelpful instrument through which to grasp it. The extent to which this theory fails can be understood clearly when we contrast some of Cliff's predictions made in Socialist Review with what has actually happened.

In May 1953, Socialist Review addressed itself to the problem of casting a horoscope for the future of terror as a weapon in the hands of Stalin's heirs:

"A regime of bureaucratic State Capitalism with the terrific social strains it involves, needs the blood of a purge to make its wheels go round. The present set-up at the top is therefore temporary."

The last sentence of this paragraph has been upheld in a manner by no means consistent with first. Not to be intimidated by this, in March, 1955, after the fall of Malenkov, Socialist Review returned to the fore and by now unsavoury grouts of its teacup, to emerge with renewed faith in its forecast. After repeating the gist of its comments of 1953, and adding, under the crosshead "No Liberalisation of the Stalinist Regime" that

"all those who believed in the possible liberalisation of the Stalinist Regime were sure to be disappointed.",

it went on to explain:

"The contradictions in Russian society were such that nothing could hold the system together except for the iron hoops of totalitarian dictatorship."

Further:

"The abyss between the output of heavy industry (above all guns) and light industry is so great that only a ruthless totalitarian dictatorship can keep the system together."

And, to make quite sure:

"The iron hand is a necessity for such an economic and social regime as bureaucratic state capitalism. At the top of the regime must stand a dictator who metes out punishments and rewards, who is omnipotent, omniscient, a demigod."

Now that the 22nd Congress has passed, and Khrushchov has shown himself to be at most a homi-semi-demigod, with hands and heels made rather of clay than iron, the forecasts of Socialist Review must be discretely shelved. Far from 'standing at the top', omnipotent, Khrushchov is obviously jostling at the top with groups and problems which not only force further and further along the dangerous paths of 'liberalisation' and 'destalinisation', but which also pose the question of the ultimate dismantling of the whole bureaucratic machine by those who suffer from its rule. Yet, arbitrary and undemocratic though the bureaucracy is, it is absurd to compare it with the terror of Stalin's time. If the machine 'needs the blood of a purge to make its wheels go round' it must at this moment be near to grinding to a thirsty halt!

All this has not escaped Cliff. In the latest issue of the American New Politics he has discovered a new phenomenon. No longer have we an iron-handed "bureaucratic state capitalism": now is the epoch of: guess? Yes "Welfare state capitalism." Whether or not this drinks blood we are not told. Nor are we told what happened to the old sort of state capitalism, with which we are becoming so familiar. Men have been able to evolve five senses through which they act on and interpret the world: but it seems that Cliff learns only through the restricted use of one of his. He has to wait for events to kick his bottom before he recognises them!

#### IMPORTANT STEP IN ORGANISING REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA

An African Bureau of the Fourth International has been established and is now organising the activity of the International in several countries on the continent of Africa. Very favourable prospects exist in Africa for the growth of Trotskyism. At its last meeting the International Secretariat approved<sup>and</sup> finalised the formation of this Bureau and approved its perspective of work.

## ENGINEERS AGAIN SHOW THEIR FIGHTING SPIRIT

The second of the one-day strikes called by the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions was even more successful than the first. On March 5th practically the whole engineering trade in Britain was brought to a halt. This time the manual workers were joined by some 40,000 draughtsmen. Another new feature this time was the large number of firms which, against the instructions of the Employers' Federation, closed down altogether. This was to avoid a spate of strikes, afterwards, against blacklegs. On the other side the unions concentrated on the few weak links which came to light in February.

Everywhere the meetings and demonstrations came out overwhelmingly for full strike action: Belfast 3,000 unanimous, Glasgow, 1,200 roared aye!, Sheffield all but four out of 1,500 voted for, Leeds 700 overwhelmingly for, Liverpool 3,000 unanimous, Stockport several hundred unanimous, Coventry 3,000 unanimous, Birmingham 1,200 marched, elsewhere marches and demonstrations took place at Huddersfield, Hull, Oldham, Chesterfield, Nottingham, Newport, Swansea, Treorchy, Morthyr, Bristol, New Maldon, Foltham, Canning Town, Greenwich, Enfield, Southwark, Battersea, Alperton, Highbury, Weybridge, Crawley, Bradford, Manchester and many other places. Attendances were not so great this time as in February, no doubt mainly because of the extremely bitter weather but also maybe because a 'repeat performance' is not so stimulating.

Again the one-day strike was followed by a whole series of struggles against blacklegs. At two English Electric factories at Liverpool and Bradford 5,000 and 2,500, respectively <sup>struck</sup> because staff men had done work during the strike. Nearly all the 2,000 workers at Holman Mining Machinery of Camborne (Cornwall) walked out because the management refused to take action against six men who worked on the Monday. There was a 100% walkout at Ferranti's Edinburgh to force non unionist to join the union. Two strikes at Kilmarnock involved 900 and 700 on a similar issue. Nearly 600 Engineers at British Timken at Duston, near Northampton, walked out to enforce action against noners. 6,000 came out at General Electric Company of Walsall and Birmingham. At another G.E.C. works in Shaw, near Oldham, 1,000 came out to force the management to take action against 20 odd men who worked through the strike. Similar actions were reported from: Trafford Park, Darlington, Chrysler of London, Leeds, Everley (Yorks), Yeovil, Cardiff, Blackburn, Bloxwich, Keighley and elsewhere. At the time of writing some of these struggles were still going on.

The fight is now on to decide that the two thirds majority vote for strike action is achieved. The unions left and right have 'bought' more votes to strengthen their hand by affiliating on a higher membership to the Confed. The Transport and General Workers' Union, which is the forefront in supporting strike action, has affiliated on a membership of 175,000 an increase of 45,000. The main union in opposition to the strike the General and Municipal Workers Union has also increased its affiliated membership. A few small unions have decided to cast their vote, without a ballot, for strike action, e.g., the National Society of Painters. A decision for strike action could do much to counter the effects of the weakness shown by the leaderships of the railwaymen and miners.

## PROTEST AGAINST SENTENCES ON COMMITTEE OF 100 BY NOTTINGHAM COOP PARTY

At its last meeting on the 6th of March the Nottingham I.M.S. of the Coop Party passed unanimously a resolution deploring the savage sentences on the six members of the Committee of 100 at the recent Old Bailey trial. The resolution expressed the opinion that the Government is trying to suppress people's political opinions and activities by bringing such prosecutions. The resolution was sent to the Home Office, the North Nottingham Labour M.P. Whitlock, who has signed an order paper protesting against the sentences, and the press.

in At its last meeting the St. Anns ward Labour Party went on record as being support of Whitlock on his stand on this case. During the last few days a number of organisations have condemned the sentences including the Executive of the T.G.W.U. which also registered its opposition to all tests by all countries.

## EAST MIDLANDS COMMITTEE OF 100 ACTIVITY

We have been asked to publish the following information by Nottingham supporters of the Committee of 100:

"The next national demonstration is PARLIAMENT SQUARE at 3.30 on March 24th. A coach will be going down from Nottingham ring Peter Price, 48369 for details.

Prior to this there will be a Committee of 100 supporters meeting at 54, Park Rd., Lenton Nottingham on Tuesday 20th, March at 7.45.

Anyone willing to support the activities of the Committee of 100 should contact:- Chris Arthur, 24, Bute Avenue, Nottingham."

## CEYLON STUDENTS TO HOLD SCHOOL

The Ceylonese Socialist Students' Association is to hold a school, the dates for which are provisionally fixed for the last weekend in April and the first in May. The subjects to be discussed are:

- (1) Agrarian reform and industrialisation in under-developed countries  
Question of Permanent Revolution.
- (2) Stalinism in under-developed countries.
- (3) History of the Fourth International.

More details will be published as they become available.

## PROGRAMME OF MARXIST EDUCATION LAUNCHED IN LONDON

A coordinating committee has been set up in London by representatives of several marxist groups. Amongst the things they have decided is a joint education programme. The meetings are to be held at 374, Grays Inn Rd. (near Kings X) and those fixed so far are:

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Sunday March 18th | The transitional programme and the Labour movement |
| Thursday " 22nd   | The class nature of the Russian State.             |
| Sunday April 1st  | The crisis of world communism.                     |
| Thursday " 5th    | Against the theory of State Capitalism.            |
| Sunday " 15th     | Building the Youth movement.                       |
| Sunday " 29th     | The Peace movement.                                |
| Sunday May 13th   | Socialism and the Trade Unions.                    |
| Sunday " 27th     | The tasks of Labour left.                          |

N.B. we were not informed of the time of these lectures but that should be easily obtained.

## YOUTH FORGE UNITY IN WEST LONDON

The following account was sent in for the Bulletin by a member of the newly formed Paddington and Kensington Youth Committee.

On Saturday 31st of March, the Paddington and Kensington Youth Committee will hold a march protesting against the racialist policies of the Tory Government. This organisation which has recently been formed, consists of members of local Young Socialist, Young Communist League and Y.C.N.D. branches, together with members of the West African Students Union who have their hostel in Paddington.

The committee, which intends to form itself into a Y.M.C.F. branch, has also invited the participation of progressive youth and student organisations from other parts of London and the Home Counties, and a big turn out is expected. The M.C.F. are providing leaflets and posters.

The march starting from Paddington Green in the early afternoon will pass through one of the busiest areas of Paddington and finish up in North Kensington at a time and place which is sure to clash with a Union Movement meeting. A public meeting will be held at this site and it is hoped that Claudia Jones of the "West Indian Gazette" will speak.

Some Labour councillors will be present and invitations have been sent to two local Labour M.P.s. The possibility of the attendance of one of these, Rogers of North Kensington, is as dubious as his past record on racialism.

## NEW EDITION OF REVOLUTION BETRAYED

A new edition of Trotsky's "Revolution Betrayed" has been issued in France. It has an introduction by Pierre Frank which discusses the significance of the book in light of the recent happenings in the Soviet Union. Comrade Frank addressed meetings in Brussels and Paris to introduce the book.

## LATEST ISSUE LA VERITE DES TRAVAILLEURS RECEIVED

This issue contains a full report of Natalia's funeral, including the speech made by Pierre Frank, a resolution analysing the current political situation in France, an assessment of the recently ended Decazeville stay-down strike, a report of the situation in Venezuela from a correspondent there, plus items about Algeria and other questions. Those fortunate enough to read French should obtain a copy.