

# International Bulletin

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## NEW SITUATION IN LABOUR PARTY AFTER BRIGHTON

Elsewhere in this Bulletin there is a comprehensive report of the recent Brighton Conference of the Labour Party and an estimation of the results of that conference. We find ourselves in complete agreement with this report and will not therefore repeat the arguments of that article. We would, however, like to put the Brighton Conference in a wider setting, and draw some longer-term conclusions.

On the positive side, as our reporter points out, the defeat of the "guilt by association" amendment was a tremendous defeat for Brown. It also was a notable victory for the left which in some ways is more important than a victory on policy. The witch hunters will still be active but will work under tremendous difficulties, on the reverse side had the clause gone through the left would have been viciously attacked (the results of which would have varied from area to area, and sector to sector) and the struggle for left policies put back a whole period. Whilst one can fight from inside the party for a reversal of right wing policy victories, from the outside one first of all has to get back in again. The victory achieved on this front must be consolidated and pressure must be maintained for a reversal of previous witch-hunt decisions using to the full the defeat of the 'guilt by association' amendment. We should argue to the full that Conference rejected the spirit of these actions if not the word.

On the negative side, Gaitskell's performance and his success in rallying large sections of the left behind his 'anti-Common Market' stand shows the dangers from the low political level of much of the left in the Labour Party. It would be wrong to underestimate the significance of Gaitskell's change of line, which represents a 'left' turn by a section of the Labour Party bureaucracy, and a turn away from Gaitskell's attempts to transform that Party into a non-working class party (at least for the time being). Such a manoeuvre presents to Marxists both opportunities and dangers. On the one hand, it is generally much easier to work and put forward left policies when the leadership has made a 'left' shift, the party will prove more attractive to radical elements, it will be possible on the basis of such a move to get the party at local level to initiate anti-Tory and anti-capitalist activity. It offers to the marxists the chance of deeper integration and a wider audience. On the other hand, terrible theoretical confusion has been created by the attempts of certain lefts to 'play a clever game', one which they will greatly regret in the future. By hiding behind Gaitskell's skirts, certain of the left have created the conditions whereby Gaitskell has been able to head <sup>off</sup> a firm anti-Common Market stand.

Gaitskell, faithful servant of the bourgeoisie, will never adopt a policy which will seriously affect the interests of the capitalist class. British capitalism needs to enter the Common Market and will not be deterred by the kind of opposition put up by Beaverbrook and Turton. In the final crunch Gaitskell will come out for the Common Market, the most probable variant being that after the Tories have taken us in, and after we have a Labour Government, Gaitskell will find some formula for opposing revocation of the Treaties taking Britain into the Market. The stage is set for this kind of move, especially in view of the N.E.C. resolution and the way certain lefts have trailed behind this resolution. More than ever the intervention on a clear class basis, avoiding the pitfalls of sectarianism, by Marxists is essential and potentially fruitful.

## TROTSKY PAMPHLET ON FASCISM REPRINTED

So many of the pamphlet, "Fascism - What it is, and how to fight it" by Trotsky, have been ordered that a second run-off was been necessary. The biggest order was from Leeds University Socialist Society for 100, other bulk orders have gone to London, Liverpool, South Wales, Glasgow, Newcastle and Nottingham. Orders have also come from Manchester, Pudsey, Hereford, Burton, Slough, Lancaster, Belfast, Kirkby, Burnley, Farnborough, Hemel Hemstead, Halstead and various parts of London. A good number were also sold at the Kessingland camp.

## EDITORIAL NOTES

It has again been necessary to hold over some articles owing to space reasons, but please, please don't let this put anyone off from sending in reports. The article on the trend of world trade, a very important one from a theoretical point of view will be concluded in the next issue of the Bulletin.

The first meeting of a Parity Committee was recently held by representatives of the International Committee and the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International. Following previous decisions taken by both these bodies agreement was reached on two points: (1) to arrange a joint discussion of issues in dispute in the world Trotskyist movement, with the aim of exploring possibilities for future regroupment; (2) to begin organising common actions wherever this appears possible. Both sides agreed that a beginning could be made in campaigning together for full public rehabilitation in the Soviet Union of Leon Trotsky and all other victims of Stalin's terror. Mutual work in defence of colonial revolutions was also considered. Additional areas where united action can be undertaken will be considered at subsequent meetings where progress in discussion will also be taken up.

In addition to organisations adhering to, or sympathetic with, the I.E.C. and the I.C., it was agreed to invite organisations affiliated to the B.L.A. (Posadas tendency) to participate in the projected international discussion and in the work of the Parity Committee.

A welcome development by the editors (Ed. note: of the Militant)

The formation of a Parity Committee constituted of representatives of the I.C. and the I.E.C. of the Fourth International, reported elsewhere on this page, is a welcome development. The Fourth International, the world movement founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938 to carry on the aims of the three previous international revolutionary-socialist organisations of the working class, has been split since 1953. Two main factions were formed at that time, one headed by the I.E.C. the other by the I.C. The Socialist Workers Party (S.W.P.), which helped found the Fourth International, but which had to disaffiliate because of witch-hunt legislation in the U.S., has been identified with the views of the I.C.

By 1956 it appeared to the S.W.P. that the political differences between the two sides were rapidly narrowing. In 1957 the S.W.P. voiced the opinion that the factional formations were no longer justified and that reunification was in order. That was also the opinion of other sectors of the world Trotskyist movement and various efforts were made to heal the split. For reasons we need not touch on here, these proved unsuccessful. Nevertheless, the objective necessity for uniting the ranks of the world Trotskyist movement continued and even increased in acuteness. The de-Stalinisation process brightened the perspective for revival of revolutionary socialism in the Soviet bloc, facilitated the spread of Trotskyist ideas among adherents of the Communist parties, and set off a regroupment process that is still in motion among radicals in important areas. The advancing colonial revolution gave increasing actuality in areas like Africa and Latin America to the program associated with the name of Leon Trotsky. Cuba and Algeria have provided inspiring examples of this. In the imperialist centres, despite years of relative stagnation of the labour movement, prospects have likewise improved. The contradiction between the new opportunities opening up for Trotskyism and the maintenance of divisions lacking sound political justification became more and more glaring.

This was the setting for a fresh attempt to unify the two sides. To facilitate joint discussion and activity, the I.C. some months ago proposed formation of a Parity Committee. The S.W.P. considered this to be a favourable move. The I.E.C. reacted in a similar way and accepted the proposal, declaring that it would participate in the Parity Committee with the aim of early reunification despite any residual differences. Thus it is to be hoped that the Parity Committee, which has now been set up, will prove to be an important first step toward early reunification of the divided movement. We must note, however, that the rise in revolutionary struggles on a world scale, which is the fundamental force tending to reunite and reinspire the Trotskyist movement, has also served to bring fresh differences to the fore. The Latin-American Bureau (B.L.A.), a sector of the I.E.C. headed by J. Posadas, recently carried out a split and is now publicly advocating an ultra-left position, as readers of the Militant are aware from articles we have published in the past few weeks. In addition, differences have appeared between the S.W.P. and the British Trotskyists of the Socialist Labour League on some important questions, primarily issues dealing with the Cuban and Algerian revolutions. How these developments may affect the process of reunification of the Trotskyists remains to be seen.

The main Trotskyist forces on a world scale, however, have recognised it as an imperative duty to bring reunification about as soon as possible. We think this is the correct attitude and the correct course and we will do everything we can in a fraternal way to help it along. It is expected that the international discussion projected by the Parity Committee will be confined largely to internal publications of the interested organisations since many of the issues are of primary concern to only a relatively narrow audience. The common activities, envisaging public campaigns, should prove attractive to wider circles. We will report these...

On the day of the Railwaymen's strike, as previously reported in the Bulletin, a demonstration of solidarity was held in the Old Market Square from 6.30 to 7.30. The press estimated that 500 people attended but the organisers thought that there were several hundred more. The whole affair was organised in only five days and was all the more difficult to get underway because the Labour Party is not geared to this kind of activity. The local press gave the demonstration hardly any pre-publicity so it was necessary for organisers to do a lot of 'donkey work' in this respect. The burden of doing this fell almost entirely upon the left wing and especially the Fire Brigades Union, the University Socialist Society, Young Socialists, and others who are normally very active in the C.N.D. and Left Club. In addition some unknown people chalked slogans in the vicinity of both the railway stations, the Tory Party H.Q., and other public places.

Several thousand leaflets were distributed at the local factories, loud-speakers went round on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, and on the day of the strike <sup>some</sup> 20 people poster-paraded the city centre for an hour before the demonstration. The latter were mainly young people from the University, Young Socialists and Y.C.N.D and they carried slogans reading: "You may be next - Protest against Railway sackings", "Dr. Beeching paid £24,000 per year to sack 20,000 railwaymen", "Sack Beeching, Sack Macmillan - not the railwaymen" and many other similar slogans. All the publicity had some effect because the meeting actually started before time because a crowd had already formed.

Among the speakers at the meeting were: Butler, national organiser of the Tobacco Workers' Union; Baker, Nottingham secretary of the Confed. of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions; Barnett, area organiser of the Public Employees' Union; Dulson, area secretary of the Mineworkers' Union; Harrison, of Derby N.U.R. No. 3 branch (who represented the views of the carriage and wagon workers); and Hall, the N.U.R. district organiser. It cannot be said, in general, that the speeches were inspiring but people went away feeling that <sup>they</sup> had shown solidarity with the railwaymen and had been given an opportunity to show their opposition to the Government. A national campaign with similar demonstrations in every important town around the slogan "Sack the Tories - not the Railwaymen" must be fought for throughout every working class organisation next time the railwaymen strike.

#### RAILWAYMEN'S 100% STRIKE

The Railwaymen's strike last Wednesday was a wonderful example of solidarity, discipline and organisation. Its strength was shown by the fact that not one train ran on the 50,000 miles of track, the daily movement of 3,000,000 passengers was completely stopped and the movement of 750,000 tons of freight was entirely halted. Moreover millions of people stayed at home closing shops and offices in their hundreds, and to quote George Brassington, the N.U.R. assistant general secretary: the fact that so many firms had closed down and so many people had stayed away from their jobs was "the greatest compliment that could have been paid to us and to the effectiveness of the strike."

In Glasgow, there was a rally of 5,000 railwaymen at George Square after a big march that had been joined by railwaymen's wives and relatives. In Perth there was a march of several hundred to the City Chambers to present an anti-closures petition to the Lord Provost. More than 2,000 marched through Brighton in protest against the decision to close the local Lancing carriage works. Derby's demonstration was attended by 2,000 with many engineers from the carriage works participating. Manchester saw a 1,000 march which included E.T.U. members who stopped work in solidarity. 500 Coventry workers attended a demonstration addressed by Jack Lanwarne, N.U.R. district secretary and applause greeted that announcement that shops stewards at the Standards and other firms had agreed to black work received by rail on the day of the strike (this wasn't necessary however as none was received). Swindon, a centre which will be very badly hit, had a 3,000 strong march to an open-air meeting... At all the demonstrations there was a call for stronger action than a one-day strike.

#### COVENTRY N.U.R. CAMPAIGN

The Coventry branch of the N.U.R. has been extremely active in getting the railwaymen's case across to the rest of the labour movement. Factory gate meetings were held the week of the strike: Monday, Standards; Tuesday, Coventry precision Wednesday, Alvis Motor Cars; and Thursday, Standards again. A circular has been sent to all local union branches and orders for the N.U.R. leaflet and speakers for meetings have poured in. The A.E.U. has been collaborating with the N.U.R. and helped to organise a joint meeting of the Bedworth branch of the A.E.U. and the 1. 1. Trades Council. This was excellently attended and a resolution backing the railwaymen was passed and plans drawn up to hold a public meeting in Bedworth.

As forecast by International Bulletin, the Common Market and Inner-Party Democracy were the issues dominating the Brighton Conference of the Labour Party. The anticipated fight on more nationalisation failed to materialise, the sharp resolutions on I.C.I. having <sup>been</sup> neatly shunted into a large and woolly composite; Callaghan and Dai Davies, for the N.E.C., got by with reiterated pledges on steel and road transport and a plea that the Party could not be committed in advance of the economic situation it would face on resuming office. Gaitskell emerged for the first time at this Conference as a skilled tactician. Gone are the days of impulsive right-wing honesty symbolised by the notorious campaign to jettison Clause 4! Instead the N.E.C. succeeded in isolating its critics on the far Right and the far Left, presenting the image of a Party uniting everyone from Jack Cooper to Michael Foot, with Bill Rodgers and the Marxist Left as the dissident but negligible lunatic fringes of Right and Left.

This "unity", however, is unlikely to survive unshattered. The Earl of Longford (Sunday Pictorial, 7.10.62) has already fired the opening volley from the pro-marketeters, who with few exceptions (such as Bob Edwards and Hugh Delargy) are all former Gaitskellite "hards". The speeches of Roy Jenkins and Jeremy Bray and, more significantly, those of Bill Carron and Jack Cooper, indicate that the C.D.S. boys intend to hit back at their former idol. It is now up to left to exploit this division within the Right by seeking to drive the people around the Labour Common Market Committee into their true home: the Liberal Party. The mood of the Party is overwhelmingly against these elements, as Gaitskell was astute enough to sense.

The broad Left, unfortunately, shows every sign of having risen, at least momentarily, to Gaitskell's bait. They have failed to see how cleverly he left the road open for a last-minute retreat ("Our final decision must still depend upon the ultimate terms which the Government has been able to negotiate") and have voted for a document which describes the E.C.M. as "a great and imaginative conception." It would be wrong, however, to imagine that the situation within the Party is entirely as it was before Brighton. The Left must now drive home the fact that the declining British economy, deprived of the lifeline of entry, must be rotten-ripe for bold socialist planning; and seek to commit the Party to this course. The contradictions and illogicalities in the N.E.C. statement must be exposed, and the demand raised for the Socialist United States of Europe.

The rejection of the notorious "guilt by association" clause represents, on the other hand, a clearcut defeat for the Right. It was another humiliating defeat for George Brown, for whom this was a very embarrassing conference indeed! This is not to say that the Organisation Sub-Committee will cease its McCarthyite campaign, or fail to think up some snide backdoor way to achieve its purpose. But it certainly received a sound slap in the face and will need to tread more warily, taking note of widespread alarm and disgust with which its recent activities have been regarded by many people in the Centre of the Party.

To judge by Conference, there is an undoubted pre-election mood of unity in the Party, and any head-on attack by the Left on the N.E.C. will not be well received by the Party during the next few months. These attacks must, of course, still be delivered, and will be made all the more sharply in that, for the next period, it will be only the Marxists who will be manning the guns. The tactical opportunity, however, must not be lost by the Left to deal a stunning blow at the enemy of its enemy -- that is, the pro-Marketeters of the Far Right. Every opportunity must be seized to drive a wedge between the Brown-Cooper and Gaitskell-Jay wings of the bureaucracy, using Gaitskell's anti-Market eloquence as a starting-point for demanding policies of socialist nationalisation, workers' control and socialist internationalism as the Labour Movement's only real alternative to the Common Market.

#### VICTORY FOR SHOP WORKERS IN BIRMINGHAM

by T. (Birmingham)

400 members of U.S.D.A.W. scored a success in enforcing a closed shop at the new £1 million factory of Marsh & Baxters (Food Products) here in Birmingham on Monday October 1st. The factory, only opened three weeks ago, was brought to a complete standstill when the workers clocked in at 7.00 a.m. but refused to start until non-union labour was withdrawn.

After four hours the workers were able to return to work having secured their demand. Later the non-unionists voted to join the union, thus making the strikers' victory complete.

"THEIR MORALS AND OURS" SOON AVAILABLE: We are pleased to announce that this important work by Trotsky will be available soon, after having been unobtainable in this country for some time. It will cost 1/6 plus 4d postage.

At a meeting on the 19th of September the inaugural meeting was held of Lambeth Anti-Fascist Committee. Organisations represented included the Lambeth Trades Council, the Y.C.L., various T.U. branches, the S.L.L., Communist Party branches and others. It was decided to hold regular weekly meetings on Saturdays at 2.00 p.m. at Rushcroft Rd., Brixton. A sub-committee was set up to prepare documented leaflets on the housing problem and unemployment in the area. The text of the resolution adopted reads as follows:

This committee recognises that the effect of the activities and propaganda of the fascists and anti-racial organisations is to split and weaken the working class at a time when the greatest possible unity is essential. It therefore resolves to launch immediately a campaign to prevent this propaganda from being disseminated and to show that the responsibility for the rapidly worsening conditions of the working class lies not with immigrants and racial minorities but with employers and the Tory Government.

To this end it resolves:

(1) That as frequently as possible open air meetings shall be held at which socialist answers to the problems facing the working class shall be put forward

(2) That information about fascist activities shall be reported to the committee and circulated as quickly as possible, so that counter-demonstrations can be arranged.

(3) That a fund shall be set up to meet the costs of the campaign and also to help victims of fascist attacks and the payment of fines.

(4) That the committee shall visit Trade Union Branches and other working class organisations asking for their support in the campaign.

(5) That delegates will urge their organisations to give the fullest cooperation to the campaign.

The address of the committee is Peter Hendrie, Flat 5, 4, Aldrington Road, London S.W. 16.

#### LEICESTER C.N.D. ACTIVITIES

by A. (Leicester)

Since the successful report back meeting of Alan Twiddle, the observer Leicester sent to the Moscow Peace Conference in July, members have continued producing local leaflets, most of which are distributed outside and inside factories. Shop Stewards and union members have enabled us to get inside distribution. Help has been given to Loughborough and Oakham contacts to form branches. An inaugural meeting of the new Loughborough branch will be held on October 8th.

The increasing politicalisation of C.N.D. has upset the religious and pacifist elements who say the politicals have "taken over" and "monopolise the meetings." Actually everyone is free to <sup>do</sup> work, and it has usually been difficult in the past to get volunteers for office work, demonstrations, speaking, and all other jobs. What has been noticeable is the defection of the 'moral force' elements over the last 18 months and the demoralisation of Committee of 100 members. It was the Trade Union contacts and politicals who were the 'heart and soul' of the drive to raise Moscow Conference expenses and the leaflet campaign organisation.

N.B. In a process of reorganisation the Leicester C.N.D. is dividing its membership into groups of 10 - with one member of each group appointed to deliver Sanity and collect subscriptions. A questionnaire has been drawn up to assist in this, and generally reorganising the work. We also understand that Leicester C.N.D. supporters are to the forefront in the campaign protesting against the invitation extended to the son of Mosley to speak to the Leicester University Students' Union. (Ed. Note)

#### YARMOUTH C.N.D. GETS UNDERWAY

by M.S. (Yarmouth)

As reported previously in the Bulletin, a C.N.D. group has been formed recently in Great Yarmouth; among the members are three local councillors, 3 members of the Trades Council, a good number of young people and some church people. A Committee of eight has been elected and a programme of activity drawn up. The latter includes: Mondays, canvassing during the evening; Saturdays, canvassing in Bungay and Beccles (to help to start groups there); a poster parade on October 13th; a trade union meeting to call <sup>for the</sup> ending of the waste of money on bases and instead the providing of alternative industry; a stall on the market selling literature; and the holding of free meetings (we had a struggle on this question and won!) in the public library for educational purposes. A letter has gone to all Trades Council members calling upon them to support our activities. There will be a demonstration in the market place whenever any country resumes tests. We have also challenged the local Civil Defence to a debate to prove to effectiveness of Civil Defence. We are also assisting in the formation of a group in Thetford: a number of local people have been seen including the N.U.R. secretary and a write up in the local press has appeared.

In a capitalist society, the function of a trade union is to struggle within the limits of the capitalist labour market for better wages and better conditions for the section of the workers it represents. Any stepping outside of these limits is a revolutionary step. The great cry "no politics in the unions" is the cry of the craft unionist, trying obediently to hold the struggle within the confines dictated by the capitalist state and to prevent it from generalising into class demands. The consistent failure of the T.U.C. to act as a General Staff of Labour is the measure of their loyalty to capitalist unionism.

The traditional policy of capital - divide and rule - coincides with the trade union policy of "no politics - no union on the class arena. The trade union leaders try hard to keep the workers within the capitalist dictated formula. Hence over the years all those isolated strikes, of one section of workers doing battle against their own employers, the employers in federation, the employers in their Government, the employers in their Press and B.B.C. and I.T.V., the employers in their police and state forces. We see today, everything and everybody directed against the railwaymen, against the N.U.R. Of course, it is official action, and therefore trade union leaders have offered the railwaymen plenty of platitudes, plenty of moral support. But they do not strike alongside the railwaymen. That would not be playing the 'game' that Beeching talks about.

But sometimes life makes fools of us all. Sometimes, painful reality walks through the trade union rule books. The revolutionary step is taken. Sometimes even Sidney Green is brought face to face with Karl Marx. On the face of it the N.U.R. is fighting to preserve the conditions of the railwaymen. It is fighting to prevent "redundancy" - that blessed word for unemployment - from throwing thousands and thousands of railwaymen into the streets. The cynic might say that it is fighting a little late, as all the decisions have already been taken by Doctor Beeching and the Government, and that trade unions doing their job properly would anticipate the decision of capital, instead of kicking against them after they have been taken. Nevertheless, the N.U.R. is fighting now. But not merely against redundancy. The N.U.R. and Sidney Green demand "consultation" before the British Transport Commissions take decisions. They are quite right.

But Sidney Green must recognise - as Dr. Beeching recognises very well - that this is not merely a "trade union demand". This is a revolutionary demand. It brings Sidney Green face to face with Karl Marx. The starting point of capitalism is the separation of the labourer from his means of production, declared Karl Marx. The capitalist mode of production is precisely the conditions under which these two elements are united in the hands of the capitalist. It is<sup>in</sup> the constant interest of the capitalists to keep the labourer ignorant of these conditions, to deceive and bamboozle him about them, to control these conditions themselves and to prevent the workers from having any say in these conditions. A long struggle, for over a century, has enabled the workers to do something about wages. But now they demand "consultation" before the Transport Commission can close down railway workshops, in favour of private enterprise. They are interfering with the conditions of production, which are entirely the concern of capital and Dr. Beeching. Why, they will want to interfere with profits next!

The organisation of the conditions of capitalist production is a function<sup>of</sup> capital. To demand participation in this step is a step towards communism. It is something that Dr. Beeching will fight to the last. From his point of view, he is right. For the thin edge of the wedge can not only drive a crack in capitalism, it can also chip the skulls of working men and let in a little socialist light. "Consultation" can lead to other things. For one thing, it can lead back to the nationalisation which Dr. Beeching is doing his best to break up. And it could lead to a nationalisation with "counselling" that could be far more thorough-going than any nationalisation introduced by the timidities of the Labour Party. It might even raise that terrible word, "socialisation" - that is, nationalisation organised by the railwaymen themselves, and not by Dr. Beeching and his colleagues.

In fact, the whole situation bristles with the possibility of reawakening Karl Marx from his sleep on Highgate Hill. If communism can lie under the innocent word, "consultation", on Sidney Green's smooth-shaven cheeks may sprout the beard of Karl Marx.

#### DISCUSSION ON ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE SOVIET UNION

by an N.U.R correspondent

On Wednesday the 31st of October, 6.30 p.m. at the Orange Tree, Ruston Rd., N.W.1. there will be a debate on the subject of: "What is the Socialist attitude to the Soviet Union?", between Jim Prendergast, Marylebone, a well-known Communist who fought in the Spanish Civil War, passenger guard and L.D.C. secretary; and Stan Mills, Croydon, who was Labour Parliamentary candidate in Dorking, 1959. The latter is also passenger guard and local representative and A.G.N. rep. The chair will be taken by Jock Finney, Deputy Editor of Railway Review. The public is invited.