

Socialist Youth

Vol. 1. No. 5

July/August, 1951

Price 1½d.

IS "ADVANCE" A YOUTH PAPER ?

EDITORIAL

THE June issue of "Socialist Advance" was both the best and the worst yet. Technically it was good, with a much more interesting appearance than the old format allowed. This fact, however, merely emphasises the mis-use of resources to produce such nauseating contents. It can only add to the frustration and apathy which is unfortunately growing in the League.

Of course, a new format does not automatically bring a new outlook, but we did at least expect that the feelings expressed at the League Conference would have had some influence on the new production of "Socialist Advance." The Conference is apparently treated with contempt, however, as is shown by the so-called report of it, which does not even bother to mention any decisions which it made.

WHAT IS A YOUTH PAPER ?

The main trouble with "Socialist Advance" is that it is not a youth paper. The League of Youth has no direct voice in its policy. It is merely another publication produced by the "Press and Publicity Department" of Transport House. It is produced not by young people but by full-time officials from the adult party, appointed—not elected—for this job. Even with the best will in the world, these people could not do the job, for they are out of touch with the life of the League, and are not even members.

To inspire enthusiasm in the League it is necessary for it to control its own paper—elect its own Editorial Board and alter it when the need arises. This will train and educate the members to be responsible young democrats and not mouthpieces who await His Master's Voice. Until this is done, "Socialist Advance" has absolutely no grounds for criticising the Young Communist League, because there is no difference in the methods employed. "Challenge" is produced by trusted servants from King Street ;

"Socialist Advance" by the appropriate department at Transport House.

ON POLICY

Great play is made about the line of the Communist Party during the last war, and much of what is said by Len Williams in his article is perfectly true. The Communist Party and the Y.C.L. do not operate policies in line with the requirements of the British people, but of the Foreign Policy of the Kremlin—hence the chopping and changing on such fundamental questions as war.

The article, however, is incomplete. What

Len Williams does not tell us is that the Labour Party N.E.C. and the Communist Party were fellow-travellers on the same war chariot for the greater part of the war; breaking strikes, urging more production at the expense of working-class conditions, and dragooning young people to the slaughter. It is sheer hypocrisy for Williams to denounce the C.P. for pursuing a policy which he himself supported. As National Youth Officer he copies the bureaucratic methods of the Communist Party, just as in the field of policy in world war II their policies coincided.

But what does all this criticism of the C.P. add up to? Quotations from Pollitt are no substitute for Youth Policy. In the hands of Transport House this approach can only be construed as an invitation to witch-hunt by raising the old scare of 'reds under the bed'. The way to defeat the C.P.

(Continued page 2, column 3)

OUR DEMANDS

SUGGESTIONS BY NORMAN GOODCHILD

Hackney South League

There is a strong feeling in the League today on the necessity for a Youth Charter. Every branch should discuss what the Charter should contain. It should not be the work of a few individuals, but the crystallised expression of the opinion of the whole League. Above all, it must reflect the needs of young people today, to provide the means of large-scale recruitment of young people to the Socialist Movement. Here are a few ideas for preliminary discussion.

YOUTH IN THE FACTORIES

The majority of young people over the age of fifteen are engaged in industry. Therefore, industrial demands must play a prominent part in any youth programme.

What should these demands be? First of all, on wages. Most young people in industry receive scandalously low wages in relation to what they produce and in relation to their needs. A lad or girl of fifteen or over eats the same amount of food, requires the same amount of clothes and entertain-

ment as a person a few years older. But they receive in most cases such low wages that their parents have to bear the brunt of their keep. This situation must end. We must raise in our Charter the Socialist demand "For equal work, equal pay—the rate for the job; an end to youth exploitation."

The next question which must be taken up is that of trade training. It is absolutely wrong that young people should have to

(Continued on page 3 col. 2)

ABOLISH THE BOSS

Says **BERT PENFOLD** (Manchester).

IT is not possible to allow the article of Norah Walsh ("Don't Abolish The Boss," May issue) to go unanswered, as so many matters are raised which are fundamental to the Labour Party today. The first and most important is the socialist way of looking at the management—the boss—the capitalist.

As an engineering worker on piece work my attitude to the boss class is completely different from that of Norah Walsh, who obviously is not working in industry and whose boss is not so engaged in profit making and will have, superficially at least, a more 'benevolent' attitude to his employees.

She is quite right in asserting that "the boss class has a necessary place in our industrial society". That sentence alone, however, contains the prime error. It is not OUR society.

It is a capitalist society in Britain today—that is, a system whereby the means of production are owned by a handful of people, who pay workers a wage, just enough to live on, and who collect profits bigger than the wages bill (See Government's Economic Surveys, published annually since 1945, for proof of this). It is a society that Socialists are trying to sweep away, to place in its stead another whereby communal ownership of the means of production, for USE, is in the hands of the workers—as a class. Thus it is a society in which men boss production instead of men bossing men.

It is because the 'leaders' of the Labour Party are not leading us to this end that there is a growing feeling in Britain for a more militant policy. Because the Labour 'leaders' are not trying to smash British capitalism but are trying to strengthen it, the Labour Government continually places bigger orders for arms and at the same time whittles away what slight gains the Labour Movement has made (for example, in the National Health service).

Norah Walsh claims that bosses "rise from the ranks of the workers". "Rise" hardly seems the correct word, and incidentally most of the present generation inherited their wealth, but in any case their origin is not the important point. The net result is that the vast majority of the population are exploited for the benefit of the remaining minority.

The "class hatred" referred to by Norah Walsh is not something due to the agitation of Socialists. It is the instinctive feeling in workers born from many years of continuous oppression by profit-makers, in whom it is also instinctive, as the capitalist class goes in fear of the organised might of the workers whom they are afraid will one day take action to remove their deadly enemies,

the capitalist class.

CAPITALISTS ATTACK US

To go on about the question of class, is it the Socialists in the Labour Party who continually raise the prices of food and clothing, and other essentials, so that the workers are finding it increasingly difficult to get by? No, it is the capitalist class—supported 100% by the Labour Government—trying to obtain bigger profits. The Unilever Combine, for example, made £52 millions in 1950.

Is it the working class who raise the fares in all parts of Britain? No, it is the capitalist operators of transport services. This, of course, includes the nationalised transport, since enormous sums in guaranteed profits (compensation) are paid by the Labour

SOUTHERN REGION ACTIVITIES

IN the mid-March issue, the Editor wrote that the League could not develop without a Socialist Youth Charter, and many Leaguers have supported this view.

The South Region Youth Advisory Committee have taken the matter up in a very practical manner by producing its own Youth Charter and by formulating plans to hold discussions on the Charter in each of the counties in the Region.

This Committee has the distinction of being the first official League body to seriously tackle the task of producing a League programme, and we congratulate its members.

This go-ahead Youth Advisory Committee also intends, Regional Executive Committee permitting, to organise a march and open-air League of Youth Rally next May Day, and to run an educational course for branches under the auspices of the National Council of Labour Colleges and the Workers' Educational Association.

We hear that progress is somewhat limited by lack of a full-time secretary, and it is to be hoped that this disability will soon be remedied.

Since the Youth Advisory Committee really is going ahead with the work of building the League, branches should note what is being done and send in resolutions giving their views on these matters, and should support activities being held.

Government to capitalists who immediately reinvest it (in armaments, no doubt), and then proceed to draw enormous profits from the orders the Labour Government is placing for weapons to maintain the operations of British capitalism in the colonial countries and extend them into China and the Soviet Union.

We have here reached the point where we can see that the boss class and its profits on the one hand, and the Foreign and Domestic Policy of the Labour Government on the other, are supplementing each other to drive down workers' conditions. Yet Norah Walsh and the right wing of the Labour Party attack any Socialist who dares to try even to MAINTAIN present standards of life, and say that we are trying to split the Party!

The article, of course, contained the now inevitable anti-Russian attack, and this is no accident by someone who says that the bosses are "important and necessary". Let us remember that the Capitalist class in Russia was removed over thirty years ago, while we have still to do it here.

Let us leave the anti-Red, anti-Socialist, anti-militant propaganda to the Boss class and its stooges, the Labour 'leaders' who carry out Tory policies.

Let us get on with the job of organising the Labour Movement round a Socialist policy which will ABOLISH THE BOSS.

EDITORIAL

(continued from page 1)

and Y.C.L. is to produce a real socialist policy which will call their left bluff.

That brings us to the question of a Youth Charter. There is not the slightest mention of this in "Socialist Advance", yet surely this is the best answer to the Y.C.L.—and the Young Conservatives. Let us have a youth policy which will make the League the focal point for all Labour Youth. Let the Transport House pot stop calling the King Street kettle black. Youth needs a programme to champion its rights.

THE FUTURE

"Socialist Youth" is completely controlled and edited by members of the League of Youth. If "Socialist Advance" could claim the same distinction, we would gladly stop publication tomorrow. We do not produce it because we like unofficial papers, but because the future of the League is at stake. To represent and attract the mass of the youth, there must be internal democracy and a youth programme.

"Socialist Advance" is a complete failure. The League already recognises this. For this reason we continue to throw open the columns of "Socialist Youth" to the members. Use them and show that we are serious about creating a live League.

LET'S HAVE A CHARTER

Says **RON BALCH** (South Hackney)

THE future of the League of Youth depends now on whether or not we get a young people's charter to put before the country. There is a great danger that many good young comrades, because of lack of interest, will leave the League of Youth in order to devote themselves to work in the Adult Party. We are being held down because of our 'youthful instability' with the result that there is nothing that can be done in the League of Youth that could not be done better, and with more effect, in the Adult Party.

The powers that be realise the advantages of a League of Youth, but they would like us to confine ourselves to discussions, talks and socials, and to practice our politics only in the Party. It has been proved that either socials or politics must gain the upper hand in Youth Groups such as our own. The Young Conservatives overdo the social side and we have seen that their members are of very little use politically. Practical political discussions must be the predominant feature of League of Youth activities. It is pitifully true that many Leagues are no more than social clubs, their only purpose being to keep the members happy in between elections.

The Youth Charter would be a constructive goal at which to aim. Better that we should have young people striving for the points of a Charter, than agitating in such organisation as the National Status Movement.

This Charter should be a socialist one, covering the political and industrial fields, and it should become a part of Labour Party policy. No one set of people has the right to draft a Charter. Every point must come from the Leagues of Youth and must be collated at a National Conference, the whole thing forming our banner for the future.

No doubt the Party Executive will be afraid to give the League of Youth such freedom of expression, because most Leaguers are imbued with the same Socialist ideals the Party leaders themselves once had. They should realise that suppression of the League in this way will lead to its dissolution.

ADVERTISING RATES

Small Ads.—1d. a word, minimum 1/6d.—remittance with order.

Displayed Advertising Rates on application

* * *

Encouragement will harness to the Labour Party machine the great enthusiasm of its young people. We are capable of drawing up a Charter, the talent, ideas, and need are there, and so is the desire.

How do we go about getting our Charter? No one can like the idea of breakaway groups, agitating for something that could be granted peacefully. The recent Easter Conference showed that the Adult Party Executive do not want us to discuss anything other than organisation. The small amount of publicity given in the *Daily Herald* proved the insignificance of the Conference. Furthermore, labels of various 'isms' are stuck on anyone who speaks against the Party line. The 'rebels' sincerity and the reasoning in their arguments are not answered with reasoning but with mud-slinging and defamation. Certainly there have been many indiscretions committed by some Leaguers in the past two years. Are we to write these off as growing pains, or to regard them as unforgivable sins.

Only the League should decide on whether or not we want a Charter and, surely, there can be no real objection to it. It does not matter whom the idea originates from, the important thing is that we achieve it. Every League must discuss thoroughly the whole subject and pass resolutions on their decisions.

More League members are necessary, but we must have something to attract them. The League's National Youth Charter is a wonderful idea, and the League should make it more than a dream.

OUR DEMANDS

(Continued from page 1)

give up their hard-earned leisure time in order to attend evening classes. Technical training should take place in the employer's time and at his expense. We must demand one day a week with full pay at a Technical College for all young workers. The bosses benefit from the workers' labour—let them foot the training bill.

Adequate rest and leisure time are essential, and the present working hours are too long. Our Charter must fight for a maximum of an eight-hour day and five-day week, with one month's holiday with pay.

Some of these measures have been and are being negotiated by the Trade Unions. Trade training agreements have been signed for example, by the Engineering Employer's Federation and the A.E.U. But these agreements are not obligatory. It is left to the employer to implement them. Thus thousands of young engineering workers are

without these facilities.

That is why unity between the League of Youth and Youth Trade Union Committees is essential. Our Charter must show the way forward to the young workers. We should have the same relations to the young workers as the Labour Party itself has to the adult workers.

EDUCATION

The Government's Education Act was a great step forward. However, it remains a disgraceful fact that money can and does buy University Education, and lack of money prevents working class youth from reaching University. We must campaign for all University places to be awarded on merit, and adequate grants for students.

It is also very necessary that we oppose any attempts to restrict our educational gains by "economising" in the school building programme. The choice is between the building of schools or barracks. We should make our preference very clear.

FOR SOCIALISM—AGAINST WAR

There is no doubt that if young people were consulted today on whether they are prepared to go to war again to defend capitalism, the answer would be an unambiguous "No". But we are not consulted. We are conscripted, but have no opportunity to say whether or not we want to be. Therefore, the demand for the vote at eighteen is very important.

We have no desire to shed our blood to ensure a cheap field of investments for Big Business. Our Charter should be very firm in its opposition to capitalist conscription. It should condemn in no uncertain terms the threatening full scale war against the rightful aspirations of the colonial people. We are wholeheartedly behind the masses in the colonies in their bitter struggle to free themselves from Imperialism. Withdrawal of the troops is an essential part of the struggle against war and should be included in our programme.

Further, we must asset our unqualified opposition to the insane rearmament drive. We can't eat bullets, and we want homes not air-raid shelters. Rearmament means a decrease in our living standards, and we should not delude ourselves that these arms are being produced merely to occupy storage space. They are the preparations for plunging into war.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

The need for international action becomes clearer every day. We have the nucleus of a Youth International in the I.U.S.Y. It is essential that the League of Youth should participate in its activities and help to transform it into an International really representing world working class youth.

All Leaguers should read

Socialist Outlook - 2d. monthly

Obtainable from: The Editor 177 Bermondsey St. London S.E.1

Lamorbey L.O.Y. Discusses The Draft Programme

Reported by

LAMORBEY L.O.Y. Secretary.

LAMORBEY LEAGUE (Kent) have discussed the Draft Programme which appeared in our mid-March issue, and have sent us notes of the results of their discussion. We now publish this Draft Programme once again, with the comments of Lamorbey League on each point. We congratulate Lamorbey on the serious way they are treating this subject, and should welcome similar news from other Leagues.

1. INDUSTRY

- (a) Rate for the job.
After much discussion, the following resolution was carried: "That any person, on any set standard of work, regardless of age, should get the basic minimum."
- (b) Adequate trade training facilities—technical training in employer's time.
This was agreed unanimously, with the following addendum: "should be installed, where there were previously not any".
- (c) Shorter working hours—One month's holiday with pay.
Lamorbey League considers that working hours for all people should be a maximum of 38 hours per week, and that there should be a universal minimum of two weeks' paid holiday.
- (d) Organisation link-up between Trade Union Youth Committees and the League of Youth.
Regarding this it was carried that "Trade Unions should be allowed delegates to the Regional Youth Advisory Committee and the National Consultative Committee."

Editorial Policy

The Editorial Board does not necessarily agree with the policy contained in signed articles. It is our intention to publish as far as possible all articles likely to assist in the clarification of Socialist ideas and in the stimulation of discussion generally. We welcome all articles submitted on that basis and will endeavour to publish as space permits.

All correspondence and articles should be sent to:—

Miss Audrey Brown, 67, St. Alphege Road, Edmonton, N.9.

2. EDUCATION

- (a) Free University Education for all who desire it.
It was carried unanimously that: "All seats should be open for competitive entry."
- (b) Adequate grants to students.
This was agreed as it stands.
- (c) Extension of school building programme.
The following resolution was moved but was not carried: "That it be extended at the expense of rearmament." It was then decided that this point should be deleted from the programme.

3. FOR SOCIALISM—AGAINST WAR.

- (a) Full franchise and legal rights at 18.
After a great deal of discussion, it was decided that the majority are not mature enough at 18 to carry the responsibility of voting, and therefore this point should be deleted.
- (b) Against conscription for capitalist wars.
Lamorbey wishes this to be deleted.
- (c) Withdrawal of troops—Freedom for Colonies.
Lamorbey League is against this.
- (d) Against capitalist rearmament—For an increased standard of life.
Lamorbey League unanimously wishes this to be deleted.
- (e) Break alliance with American capitalism—End secret diplomacy.
The first part was agreed. The second was not voted on due to our not knowing sufficient about the subject.
- (f) Against war preparations.
Carried unanimously.
- (g) Nationalisation of the armaments industry without compensation and under workers' control.
This was lost because in the opinion of this League, nationalisation without compensation is Communism.

4. INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY.

- (a) Transform the International Union of Socialist Youth into a real Socialist Youth International.
It was pointed out that this question was discussed at the National Conference at Easter, where similar sentiments were approved.

* * *

BUILDING THE LEAGUE

We intend to devote some of our space to League news, and shall welcome reports of the activities of your League.

Send them to:—

Miss. A. Brown

67 St. Alphege Road, London, N.9.

CHINA SHAKES THE WORLD

Reviewed by
BETTY MILLS

(Stoke Newington, L.O.Y.)

For a coherent eye-witness account of events that have been taking place in China over the past ten years or so, there is no better book than "China Shakes the World" by Jack Beldon, an American journalist.

In it, Beldon tells of the struggles of the Chinese people to throw off the feudal yoke that bound many to an almost barren soil, with murderous reaction, Japanese oppression, and former British and American oppression.

Starved and ill treated almost beyond endurance, the history of this courageous people unfolded house by house, village by village, town by town, until whole areas were united in their struggles for freedom from their task masters and oppressors.

Of Mao-Tse-Tung, that heroic figure of the Chinese Revolutionary movement, Beldon tells of the unquestionable faith that many millions of Chinese people have for him as a leader, because of the good already done. It was he with his comparatively small army who really defeated the Japanese invader in China.

Beldon is not afraid to portray the note played by British and American capitalist backers of the rotten and corrupt Chiang Kai Shek regime.

As a Liberal Democrat, Beldon often comes into conflict with what he has been taught to believe and what he has seen and knows to be true.

This book is a must for all socialist thinking Youth; a book packed with historical facts presented in an attractive fashion, making reading a pleasure, that will blend with feelings of hatred for all that is cruel and oppressive, and sympathy for all that the Chinese people are striving for: freedom and the right to live and be happy.

ORDER FORM

Orders of 12 or more copies supplied at 1d. per copy. Subscription rate for 12 issues, post free, 2/6.

Enclosed please find P.O. for £ s. d.
Please send me.....copies per month/of..... issue (delete inapplicable section).

I enclose P.O. for 2/6, subscription for 12 issues beginning with.....

Name.....

Address.....

Date.....

Miss A. Brown, 67, St. Alphege Road, London, N.9