

Join the
**LABOUR
PARTY**
TODAY

Socialist Outlook

WEEKLY

No. 96
[Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper]

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1953

3d.

A Delegate
writes on the
T.U.C.

(See page 2)

These Men Are DANGEROUS!

The 'Sickness' of the P.O.W.'s

By Janet Alexander

"There is to be a counter-espionage quiz for the ex-Korean war prisoners now bound for Britain in the troopship Asturias . . . the War Office believes that about two-fifths of the junior N.C.O.'s and privates in the ship have been affected in varying degrees by Communist propaganda."—*"News Chronicle"*, 11/9/53.

At the time of the first exchange of sick and wounded prisoners in Korea, there was unfavourable comment in the British press on the way American prisoners were received on returning to their own lines.

Only those prepared to give lurid stories of ill-treatment were allowed near the journalists. Others who could not fill this need were marked for a programme of re-indoctrination, which started with lavish helpings of steak and ice-cream, and finished for the more stubborn ones with incarceration in an army "hospital" in the States, where, for all we know, they will remain indefinitely.

The returning British prisoners, at that time, were not subjected to this kind of pressure, though the papers played up any story of ill-treatment they could find. But now there is a truce in Korea and large numbers of P.O.W.'s are on their way home, a change is taking place. Public opinion is being prepared in advance, to be either hostile to those of the troops who speak favourably of their experiences in North Korea, or to treat them as "sick men". There has been a B.B.C. talk on the subject, and the press is following suit.

The War Office has revealed that of the men returning, two-fifths have been influenced by Communist propaganda. It is a new kind of war these men have been

fighting, and this high figure of "disaffected" is a startling illustration of that fact. The sympathy of these soldiers has been sought and won by the "enemy" for their ideology—for their social system.

This never happened in either of the two world wars. Indeed, where both sides in a war support the capitalist system, it cannot happen. Whether it be of the democratic or fascist variety, a capitalist country is unable to gain the allegiance of enemy troops, on the grounds of a superior social system.

The phenomenon of a moral "assault" on an opposing army is only seen where on one side you have represented a decaying obsolete order, and on the other a new and essentially revolutionary system.

It was seen in the war of intervention against the young Soviet power in 1918/20. Appeals in the name of working class solidarity were aimed at the troops sent to crush the revolution, and they had their effect.

And now in Korea, we have seen the shape of things to come. Any future war will be an openly declared war of ideologies, Communism against Capitalism, with the world split into two warring camps. On the side of capitalism will be arrayed all the latest destructive techniques. On the side of Communism, above all else will be the power of the idea.

Here is a weapon the imperialists can never match, which can make armies melt overnight—a germ warfare more deadly than anything they can devise.

Small wonder that they want to "quarantine" these returning soldiers, that they are using all possible means to intimidate and isolate them.

For many of them now know the real purpose of the Korean war—and that makes them dangerous men!

Huddersfield Rent Strike Threatened

Council Tenants Resist Rent Increases

Reported by
G. Gale

THE Liberal Huddersfield (Yorks.) Borough Council has increased the rents of all council houses in Huddersfield. Over 8,000 tenants are affected by increases ranging from 2s. 6d. to 4s. 4d. Some houses are now over 27s. per week rent.

A number of tenants arranged a meeting on Thursday, September 3, at which 150 people were present. A second meeting was

held in Huddersfield Town Hall on Tuesday, September 8, at which over 1,000 tenants turned up.

The tenants have decided not to pay the increased rents.

A Huddersfield Tenants Association has been formed, with an elected chairman, secretary and treasurer, and a volunteer committee. Its task is to organise resistance to the increased rents and to appoint a deputation to see the Council.

Last night (Thursday, September 10) I was able to be present at a

meeting of this committee. A deputation consisting of the chairman, secretary, treasurer (all men) and three women volunteers, was appointed to see the Council, though the secretary reported that he had not yet received a reply to his letter to the Town Clerk asking for an interview.

In the event of an unsatisfactory outcome, another mass meeting will be held. Determined efforts are being made to spread the strike and make it a success.

People are distributing Tenants

Association membership forms (fee 1s. a year) and leaflets urging tenants to join the strike. Particular attention is being paid to estates where the Association has no contacts as yet, though most estates have representatives on the committee. Meetings are to be held in every estate on Sunday, September 13.

There were reports of inevitable weaknesses—people who were going to pay the increase—but, on the other hand, one member reported that in a street of 70 houses only two were going to pay the increase.

In general, tenants appear to be asking each other what they intend to do. In other words, people are waiting for a lead, which the Huddersfield Tenants Association is determined to give.

There are, however, two black spots in this strike.

Firstly, although Labour Councillors opposed the increase and many Labour Party members are affected by it and are actively supporting the strike, the Huddersfield Labour Party has as yet given no official support to the Tenants Association.

Secondly, Mr. J. P. W. Mallalieu, Labour M.P. for Huddersfield East, attended the large meeting in the Town Hall but refused to speak, though repeatedly called upon to do so. Later, however, he gave an interview to the press which appeared in the "Yorkshire Observer" of September 10 under the heading "Don't Refuse to Pay Rents, says M.P." Mr. Mallalieu said he sympathised with the tenants but could not advise "a few brave individuals" to risk eviction by refusing to pay the increase.

This has had a discouraging effect on a number of tenants, which the Tenants Association is fighting hard to overcome. If the association has its way, it will not be a case of "a few individuals" but of a mass strike. Whole estates cannot be evicted—nor even half of one estate! The tenants have only to stick together.

Just as all signs of weakness will be exaggerated by opponents of the strike, so will rumours of "Communist inspiration". The meeting I attended last night was the perfect answer to that charge. Few of the 26 members of the committee had met any of the others before and there were repeated assertions that they wanted nothing to do with Communist propaganda. It was quite clear that the Communist Party has no hold on the Huddersfield Tenants Association.

This is not a case of organised troublemakers making capital out of the people's hardship, but a genuine democratic expression of widespread discontent at an unjust burden.

Terror Unbridled in Kenya

Fighters for African freedom being rounded up by soldiers of the King's African Rifles and the local "Home Guard". The acts of sheer terror which follow these arrests are described in the article on page 2.

How Much Longer Will Labour Stay Silent?



A Square Deal For Workers' Children

THE Tory press, the bishops, the judges and the magistrates tell us that the children of today are suffering from a rampant disease known usually as "juvenile delinquency".

They give various reasons for this outbreak but if you look at them closely they usually boil down to the fact that the Welfare State is rotting the nation. In fact

the children (and their parents) are having too easy a time altogether!

In case any one should be taken in by this propaganda I recommend them to come to Pimlico or, for that matter, any other working class district. If they cannot come let me tell them what happened in our local Juvenile Court the other day.

Two young boys had been brought before the Court. They were accused of having stolen books from the station bookstall at Victoria. Their father was asked by the magistrate, Professor Barbara Wootton, whether he had anything to say. He had. The "West London Press" reported as follows:—

"Our living conditions are very, very bad. Kiddies don't get a chance! Turning to the Professor he said, 'I don't know what kind of an upbringing you had, but I am a working man.'

"We can't take the children into the park to play every day and they have to play in the back streets."

"When Professor Wootton attempted to stem the outburst the father said, 'You asked me whether I had anything to say and now you are trying to hush me up. I am attempting to place my case at the right place today, I want to speak freely.'

"We would prefer a front

By
Andrew Kirkby

door of our own. You don't get a chance to bring your children up properly in these places."

"You don't get a chance. . . . Housing conditions in the Victoria and Pimlico area are as bad as any in London. Working class families share houses which were originally designed for far fewer people. City and County Council flat-building schemes are far from meeting the needs of the waiting lists. Yet within a stone's throw of some of the most overcrowded districts there are luxury flats standing empty waiting for Mr. Moneybags to take up a lease at, perhaps, some hundreds of pounds per year. You can see some of them in Ashley Gardens, behind the Army and Navy Stores.

There are some fine tree-lined, grass-covered squares in the district. They are closed to the children of the neighbouring streets. Eccleston, Warwick, St. Georges and Vincent Squares are protected by high wire fences for the enjoyment of a privileged few whilst the great majority of the local children play on the pavements, on the bombed sites, in the gutters. They dart in and out of the heavy traffic and there is a steady toll. In St. Georges'

Square many requisitioned houses contain council tenants whose children must play in the roadway. Only the children of the "private residents" are allowed into the Square's gardens. Class division at the toddler stage!

For years the local Labour Party has been campaigning to have the Squares thrown open to the public. For years the private interests involved and the 100 per cent. Tory City Council of Westminster have evaded the issue. Legal complications have bogged

down the various "negotiations". Such delay suggests a cynical indifference to the health and safety of working class families, particularly of the children. The Labour movement has not given up the fight, although the Tory Council was elected on a blatantly anti-Labour division of the Ward boundaries.

The demands are clear . . . **Open the private gardens. . . . Take over the empty flats. . . . We must end the days when it can be said that "You don't get a chance".**

Dockers Demand Wage Speed-up

ON Sunday, September 13, 4,000 Dockers attended a meeting called by the unofficial Portworkers Merseyside Committee at the Lord Street blitzed site, Liverpool. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the pending wage award the results of which were expected the following morning.

The general level of the meeting was high and it was clear that the Merseyside portworkers expect a substantial wage award. Speaking at the meeting, Mr. Dan Brandon, Editor of the "Portworkers' Clarion", said: "At the moment the Unions representing the port industry are going forward in negotiations for a wage award, but unless the pace is

greatly speeded up the results will be the same as when we were previously awarded an increase." He went on to say that time wasted in protracted negotiations and the Tory Government's policy of deliberately forcing up the cost of living has offset any benefits we might have gained by a wage increase.

"Since the Tories took power, personal needs and household requirements have taken a sharp rise all round. They are deliberately reducing living standards and the benefits of full employment. The present method of collective bargaining is obsolete."

Bill Johnson, one of the prominent Merseyside Port-

workers unofficial speakers said the same dictatorial attitude which made the T.U.C. General Council ignore last year's mandate to extend social ownership has been adopted towards the Dockers' Charter by the largest Union on the General Council, the T. & G.W.U. The Charter became Union policy in 1945 and still they were struggling for its fulfilment.

It was resolved that until the wage award was forthcoming meetings would be held every week to review the latest position.

[As the employers and the Union failed to agree, the matter has gone to arbitration.]

Labour Parties Rallied to E.N.V. Strikers

ENGINEERING workers at E.N.V. Willesden, who were on strike from November 1951 till February 1952, have now issued a full audited account of the Strike Fund.

Total income from all sources to their fund was £14,712 and as is to be expected, the great bulk of this money came from other factories.

No fewer than 56 Constituency or Borough Labour Parties sent donations, as well as 14 Ward and Local Labour Parties and two Leagues of Youth. These Labour Party donations amounted to nearly £180.

Socialism can't be built with Jerry-builders

IF Socialism is to be built in Britain for the lasting benefit of Britain's people, we must not give the contract to those "Jerry-builders", Messrs. Attlee, Morrison, Gaitskell and Co. (very Ltd.) whose edifice was built upon the shifting sands—as the last General Election so clearly proved!

What utter folly and iniquity to Britain's great majority, to give mining stockholders' inflated values and especially for some mines nearly worked out—or for railways, of which many branch lines were closing down through road competition, decay and out of date rolling stock.

No wonder there was not a murmur from stockholders, any more than from the Bank of England proprietors, who were openly delighted with their own good luck!

Was this kind of one-sided deal equitable to Britain's majority, who, in order to pay the vast

Our Readers Write . . .

Who Should Have Persian Oil?

THE writer of the article ("Sinister War Moves in Persia") either knows very little about Persia and its history or else he is at pains to conceal his knowledge.

As one who likes to hear all points of view, I have read a good deal of this pocket newspaper, "Socialist Outlook", over the week-end, but I have found nothing new in it whatever. The old parrot-cries (which the official Labour Party, to its credit, has jettisoned in recent years) are there in abundance, but verbal pyrotechnics and abuse of political opponents cut no ice with intelligent people. Neither does playing the Soviet game by helping them to spread their propaganda help British working people.

Those who believe in democracy are always anxious to see a strong opposition party. Consequently I am not altogether pleased to see the British Labour Party losing ground as it seems to be, but I fear that it will lose even more unless it takes effective steps to disown its lunatic fringe, which keeps on thumping the same old empty tub. Moreover it will lose its capacity to work for social justice and all that goes with it. There are many reforms which are long overdue even in this country, and much remains to be done before we can claim to have achieved freedom for the individual in a just society. Let us, therefore, unite ourselves so that we may by our unity achieve this before we attempt to unite the human race.

There are 50 million mouths to feed in this Island, and, if Persian oil can help to fill them by way of the City of London, let us do nothing to prevent it. Remember

that, if it had been left to the Persians, that oil would still be below ground, with benefit to nobody. The one-world boys may boast of their 'international outlook', but you should ask yourself whether, in your heart, you wish to see the standard of living of the British working man reduced so that the 'teeming millions' elsewhere may be uplifted. If you don't, you should be glad to support British enterprise, the fruits of which do not stay in financiers' pockets all the time, as you very well know.

Donald Saunby. Grimsby.

A Reply From C. Van Gelderen

This letter is a typical reflection of the Tory mind. The last paragraph especially is coached in the spirit of what the lads in the army used to sum up as: "To hell with you, Jack; I'm alright." What matters if the 'teeming millions' in the backward regions of the world slave away under conditions of indescribable misery, as long as the 50 million mouths in this Island are fed.

Of course, the greater part of the wealth created by the exploitation of the people in the colonies and in countries like Egypt, Iraq and Iran, has gone into the pockets of the wealthy in the shape of fat dividends. Only the crumbs have been given to the working class in this country and then only in return for hard work. The workers of Britain have had to fight, and fight hard, through their Trade Unions and political parties for any improvements in their standard of life, for an increased share of the wealth which British capitalism was sucking from all parts of the globe.

What is happening today is that

the people of Persia, Malaya, Africa and other hitherto backward areas have awakened to the fact that the wealth of their lands is being drained away by foreign financiers. And they have made up their minds to put a stop to this.

This need not mean a lowering of our standard of living—if we reorientate a great deal of our traditional thinking.

Instead of exploiting the colonial people, we must seek to

A CORRECTION

There were two unfortunate errors in the article on "Populism", which appeared in our last issue. The councillor who seconded the resolution was **Charlie Keys**, not **Keen** as stated in the article and the name of **John Scurr** was misspelled **Scuff**. The Editor expresses his regrets for these mistakes.

co-operate with them on a basis of complete equality. This demands, in the first place, that we recognise their right to political independence and full control over their own economies. We need from them raw materials for our industries and food for our people; they need from us capital equipment with which to develop their own resources and—for a long time to come—the manufactured goods we can produce in such abundance.

On this reciprocal basis we will be able to help the people in the backward parts of the world to advance and to raise their own standard of living while at the same time safeguarding the standards which the British workers have won for themselves through the class struggle. But only a Labour Government with a Social-

ist policy can put such a programme into practice.

We are proud of the fact that the "Socialist Outlook" continues to publish what Mr. Saunby likes to call the "old parrot cries" of the Labour Movement. Like most supporters of the present system he would like to see a Labour "opposition" shorn of its Socialist programme and simply a "left" reflection of Toryism. To this we will never agree.

We will fight, within our Labour Movement, for a Socialist policy which alone can safeguard the standard of living of the British workers (about which Mr. Saunby shows such concern) without, at the same time, filling the already bursting coffers of the City millionaires.

Compensation By Taxation?

IN his article "Nationalisation—Land and How" Ernest Jones tells us that "The nationalised railways shell out £32 millions per year in interest alone to ex-shareholders and the National Coal Board . . . £14½ million to members of the same class". He goes on to tell us that this being the case nationalisation is "A profitable game for shareholders".

His cure: "Stop the payment of interest on nationalised property and subject all hardship claims to a Trade Union commission".

I suggest to Mr. Jones that nationalisation is not being carried out correctly. The true method is to place the cost upon the nation and not upon the industry concerned. We should call upon a future Labour Government to do what the Tory Government did in the case of Steel. Through the

press all holders of Coal Stock or Railway Stock should be informed that they were now holders of Government Stock. The Chancellor of the Exchequer thus being responsible for the payment of compensation would result in the widow contributing her mite and the millionaire his whack towards the cost of nationalisation. The miner and the railwayman would pay no more than they were entitled to pay according to their income.

And Mr. Jones' cure is worse than the disease. Non-payment of compensation in the case of the mines and railways alone would mean the sudden withdrawal from the market of £46½ million worth of purchasing power. Imagine the ruin and unemployment that would cause! The servants, shop assistants, and the many others who had been kept in employment by this £46½ million would thank Mr. Jones for nothing. "What every worker wants from life is security . . ." writes Mr. Jones. Are these workers not entitled to security?

Compensation is paid not because of any love for shareholders but to maintain the stability of the money market during the transition period between capitalism and Socialism.

T. W. Douglass. Sunderland.

'Not On Your Life!'

COMPENSATION for the nationalised industries is paid to maintain the stability of the shareholders and moneyed class. This class, which is parasitic, spends the £46½ million from the mines and railways on unproductive things such as fur coats and racehorses, such people do not add 1d. to the wealth and well being of the country as a whole. If compensation interest payments were stopped then £46½ million would be immediately available to sink new pit shafts and modernise old ones, build new engines and coaches and thoroughly modernise the transport system, which is very much overdue. I have no doubt that there would be enough jobs thus created to absorb all those thrown out of work by the impoverishment of the shareholders. Cases of real hardship would be reviewed by appropriate Trade Union Committees.

Pay the shareholders out of taxation says Mr. Douglass. Not on your life! This would only increase the already existing burden on the working people who pay the major part of taxation as it is. Does the capitalist pay tax out of his meagre spending money? Would the rich cut down on fags to pay off the £46½ million? Their solution would be simple, put up the prices of their products, squeeze the workers a bit harder, employ clever lawyers to evade the tax laws. In the end it would be the workers who would have to pay the shareholders. Now they pay through transport costs and the price of coal and through low wages in the case of the workers in the industries concerned. If Mr. Douglass' scheme was adopted the workers would still pay, through higher prices and speed up on the job.

The only Socialist solution is to stop the payment of interest to ex-shareholders and utilise the money made available for improving wages and conditions and modernisation schemes, all very sound investments.

Ernest Jones. Nottingham.

Is the "SOCIALIST OUTLOOK" in your Local Library?

If not—ASK FOR IT!

HAVE YOU READ Michael Pablo's "The Coming World Showdown"? A Marxist analysis of today's complex world situation. Price 2s. New Park Publications, 266 Lavender Hill, S.W.11.

READ

Britain's only T.U. Weekly Newspaper

The Railway Review

FEARLESS, FACTUAL. STIMULATING and packed with information.

Price 3d. Obtainable from any newsagent or bookstall.

The N.E.C.'s Back Room Boy

AT the request of its Regional Office the Surrey Federation of Labour Parties held a well attended conference at Wimbledon, on September 5, 1953, to hear a review of "Challenge to Britain" by a representative of the N.E.C. All sections of the movement were present in force.

Most people thought we would, at long last, hear a member of the N.E.C. on the subject. No such thing. No member could be found, and the meeting was addressed by Mr. David Ginsburg, an official of the Party, i.e., Secretary of the Labour Party Research Department.

There was some protest about this, but the meeting was informed that Mr. Ginsburg was one of the people behind the scenes really responsible for "Challenge to Britain". So on that he started.

Herbert Feilden. Southport.

He first of all explained that he

represented nobody but himself—rather odd in view of the fact that the meeting was called on official instructions. Is it to be understood that the N.E.C. is not prepared to defend the statement it has put forward?

Anyway, he waded in for an hour and twenty minutes, and as he went on confusion became worse confounded. "Challenge to Britain" is bad enough, but back room boy Ginsburg, for himself alone, takes the biscuit. His great message of hope was, believe it or not, "We have won the Ashes".

therefore there was not much chance of getting people seriously interested in political and economic questions!

He began by saying that the document was put out by the N.E.C. in order to command the support of the greatest possible number of electors. He did not seem to realise that this was exactly what was wrong with it! It tries to please everybody and veers round to every wind that blows. The fact that the N.E.C. of the Labour Party is expected to carry out instructions of Annual

What Was Decided By Last Year's Conference

On Home Affairs

"This Conference, recognising the need to place before the electorate a policy covering a set period, resolves that a similar course of action to that adopted in 1945 be followed by drawing up a five-year programme of policy and proposed legislation for submission to the electorate prior to the next election. . . ."

"As our ultimate security depends in the last analysis on our own productivity and raising the efficiency of British industry, there should be greater public control over production. This involves the enlargement of the public sector by further nationalisation and by the extension of Municipal and Co-operative enterprise. Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Committee to draw up a list of the key and major industries to be taken into public ownership during the five-year programme, it being made clear that no further sums of compensation shall be paid in respect of these industries being re-nationalised, and that the basis of compensation for newly nationalised industries and services shall be fair to the consumers and the workers.

"The programme shall elaborate the plans for Britain's next step towards a more Socialist society, with special attention to increasing the share of the national income taken by workers by hand and brain and to a more speedy diminishing of the existing inequality of wealth. . . ."

On Foreign Policy

"This Conference urges the Labour Party to be on its guard against the danger of supporting anti-working class forces in international affairs, the recognition of Franco's regime being a case in point.

"It declares that we can best serve the cause of peace by sticking to our distinctive Socialist principles and refusing to subordinate them to American, Russian or any other pressures. In particular, the Conference urges (a) the promotion and expansion of East-West trade and (b) resistance to the use of our military strength as a means of enforcing territorial changes in Eastern Europe or elsewhere.

"Finally, it deplores the condemnation of the risings of the oppressed peoples as Soviet-inspired plots, and affirms that peace can best be secured by seeing that maximum aid is given to undeveloped areas."

New Readers

Take Out a Special Subscription

9 'Outlooks' For 2/-

Buy a subscription for yourself - and for your friend(s)

Please send "Socialist Outlook" for to the name and address below. I enclose P.O.

NAME

ADDRESS

Normal Subscription Rates : 1 year, 19s. 6d.; 6 months, 9s. 9d., 12 issues, 4s. 6d.

SOCIALIST OUTLOOK.

177 Bermondsey Street, London, S.E.1