

Join the  
**LABOUR  
PARTY**  
TODAY

# Socialist Outlook

WEEKLY

No. 140

[Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper]

FRIDAY, JULY 30th, 1954

3d.

Case  
of  
**Dan Brandon**

(page 2)

## OLD AGE PENSIONERS CAN STARVE

### The Tories Have Spoken

#### At It Again

WALL STREET is at it again. No sooner is one war called off than they set out to threaten another. A British passenger plane is accidentally hit by gunfire from Chinese fighter planes. The Peking Government apologises and offers to pay compensation. Such incidents have been settled like this before.

This time, however, as soon as the news reaches the Pentagon two fleets of warships spring to life off the China coast. "Be fast on the trigger" yells Admiral Felix Stump, while from the jungles around Capitol Hill come the ravings of backwoods Congressmen. "We refuse to deal with pirates" they scream. Above the clouds in the China seas two Chinese airmen are shot down.

#### Editorial

All this sabre-rattling adds up to one thing. The bomb-happy rulers of the United States tell the world they live for war and want war. These gentlemen, reflecting the degenerate economic system they represent, learn nothing and understand nothing. The great colonial revolution sweeping Asia has already delivered mighty blows against them, and driven them to desperation.

Unfortunately it is the sons of the working people in America who in the main suffer and die. The Knowlands, Radfords, Johnsons and Dulles' do not speak for them. Deep down in the heart of American Labour there is generating a great hostility to the plans of Wall Street. This was shown on a number of occasions during the bloody campaign in Korea, and when an adventure was threatened in Indo-China. We will see much more of it in the future.

British Labour must speak up against any threats of war on the Chinese people. The Tories must be under no illusions on this score. Any attempt to drag us behind a Pacific adventure must meet with unanimous opposition.

#### Class Justice

A LEGAL case of considerable importance has just been concluded in the Divisional High Court. Lord Chief Justice Goddard, Justices Cassels and Slade sat on the bench.

They considered an appeal from a portworker—Mr. Dan Brandon of Birkenhead—against his dismissal by the Dock Labour Board.

Briefly, the facts are these: Before their tea break began, on a cold morning last November, eight dockers walked off a ship in Birkenhead. They were suspended for the morning. Eight of their mates, including Brandon, felt that the decision was too harsh, and decided to walk off in support.

Brandon endeavoured to persuade the men not to take this action, but walked off with them.

For their action of class solidarity Brandon, who had a good work record on the docks, was deprived of his livelihood. All the other men were reinstated.

There was a considerable feeling among the Birkenhead dockers that Brandon was victimised, and he decided to appeal to the High Court on the grounds that his dismissal was against "all natural justice."

So confident were the men in the justice of his case that they contributed a considerable amount to meet legal expenses. Brandon himself, the father of three young children, together with his wife patiently endured long weary months of unemployment, so that justice could be done.

Now, the judges have spoken, and have upheld the decision of the Dock Labour Board.

Such a decision cannot but foster bad relations in the dock industry. It will be interpreted as the language of the whip. For portworkers as well as the trade union movement as a whole, that is the voice of the past.

All eyes are now on Arthur Deakin, the General Secretary of Brandon's union, who recently was made a Privy Councillor, presumably for fostering good relations in industry. Here is a good case to get started on. Let Brandon be reinstated immediately.

ONE in four old-age pensioners will not receive even the paltry increase which the Tories have promised the old people in the Autumn. They are the pensioners who are forced to supplement their miserable pittance by National Assistance.

Every week, 912,000 old men and women apply for this assistance and are subjected to a "Means Test". The result is, when they receive an increase in pension their assistance money will be cut an equivalent amount. The Tory government will dole out four miserable shillings (4/9d. to a married couple) with one hand and take it back with the other.

Even those who are four shillings better off will find their increase eaten away by the rise in coal and food prices, rents, rates and fares, which are looming up. The Tory Minister of Pensions, however, believes the old folk aren't doing too badly.

Statistics fill no bellies, as the Minister would very well know if

he was forced to live on 32/6 a week.

Working people, who have grown old, whose labour can no longer be exploited, are looked upon as an irksome burden by a Tory Government. Even with the possibility of using the old-age pension increase as election propaganda, the Minister could not hide the real Tory attitude.

#### RELIEVE NATIONAL ASSISTANCE BOARD

"I want to make it clear" he said, "that one of the main purposes in an increase of the insurance pensions and other insurance benefits would be to relieve pressure on the National Assistance Board."

The Tories are not concerned with relieving pressure on the old

folk. Their aim is to force these old people more and more into dependence on working relatives as the cost of living rises, while government assistance is readily granted to their own class—for example, the steel barons.

The number of resolutions on the Labour Party Agenda on old-age pensions show that Labour's rank and file is deeply concerned at the plight of elderly people. The Scarborough conference must give a pledge that the next Labour government will raise pensions to a minimum adequate to serve the needs of pensioners, the pension rising with the cost of living.

#### LABOUR MUST CAMPAIGN ASSISTANCE BOARD

In the meantime these old people need every assistance from the Labour Movement to fight the Tory Government for their demands. They are the most defenceless section of the population. Labour must campaign with them and on their behalf. Let Labour M.P.s who showed such militancy over their own pay rise, now show the same fighting spirit around the plight of the aged.

#### EDEN RETURNS FROM GENEVA

## No Applause From This Quarter

EDEN returned from Geneva to all-round congratulations. In the House of Commons the applause, according to the press, was greatest on the opposition benches. The Labour press—left and right added its plaudits.

REYNOLDS NEWS last Sunday declared, Anthony Eden "deserves the praise of all men and women of good will."

"He has worked tirelessly for peace. With M. Mendès-France, the best Prime Minister France has had for a generation, he has helped to bring about a peace which at one time seemed impossible of attainment against American hostility."

Michael Foot expressed the same opinions in TRIBUNE. "Supreme disaster has been avoided... All those who have helped to push this threat into the background deserve the highest praise. We don't care a fig who gets the credit," he declared, and continued:

"Mr. Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary, worked strenuously and skilfully to keep open the door for negotiation."

#### SUCH IDEAS ARE DANGEROUS

Undoubtedly, Michael Foot was expressing ideas now widespread in the movement, even among the left wing. For all that, these ideas are none the less wrong and downright dangerous. Let us try to explain why a great number of left wingers will refuse to join the chorus of praise to Tory Eden.

First of all, it is absolutely true, as Michael Foot states in the TRIBUNE article, the American Government was on the brink of intervention in Indo-China a few weeks ago.

In a debate in the French Parliament, just before he took office, Mendès-France revealed that at one period the American government was loading atomic weapons for use by July 26. An article on "Ridgway's Biggest Battle... for Troops, not Machines" informs us that during the battle for Dien Bien Phu, Admiral Radford—chairman of the American Joint

Chiefs of Staff—"was all for hitting the attacking Communist forces with tactical A-bombs, and he actually had three aircraft carriers standing by for the job."

Undoubtedly as the American Senator Smathers declared, "America actually took the leap" into the war. Just as undoubtedly, that leap was turned back "in mid air." But neither Eden, nor the negotiations at Geneva stopped that leap.

What stopped the leap? That question was answered in the SOCIALIST OUTLOOK of June 4. Now that Tory Eden is being

By  
**Bill Hunter**

praised as the great peacemaker let us repeat and expand that answer and show that it certainly does matter who gets the credit, and at the same time show just what sort of a "peace" Tory Eden and his counterparts in America seek to bring.

The NEWSWEEK article is a good point to start from. It reveals that Ridgway, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army was opposed to the intervention proposed by Admiral Radford who argued "with air power alone, he could destroy the Reds." Was Ridgway then, a man of peace when he persuaded Eisenhower not to intervene in Indo-China? Not at all. He was at one with Admiral Radford, and Winston Churchill for that matter, in his desire to smash the colonial revolution and push back "Communism."

#### HE NEEDED MEN

He argued on the grounds of military strategy, understanding very well that to intervene in Indo-China and face the bloody war that must ensue not only atomic weapons but men also were needed. And the population of America had expressed what the American press called a "grass roots" opposition to supplying their sons for another Korea.

America could not "go it alone." And it could not drag its Allies with it. Here again, let us state, not because Eden, Chur-

chill were "men of peace," but because they feared the wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time. The wrong place, because they were not strong enough in Europe; they had not yet solved the problem of filling a military vacuum by re-arming Germany.

The wrong time, because of the opposition of the masses of Europe and Asia to a war for French colonialism.

#### TACTIC OF NEGOTIATION

Their inability to intervene at this particular stage in Indo-China resulted in the representatives of the capitalist powers adopting the tactic of negotiation. They sought to reach, and succeeded in reaching, an agreement with the Soviet and Chinese leaders; an attempt to freeze the Indo-Chinese struggle for liberation by an artificial partition. If before long they enter into further secret international talks, then it will be with the aim of drawing a line round the world "containing communism," and with the aim of gaining the aid of the Soviet leaders—through the Communist Parties—to solve the social crises in France, Italy and the colonial countries.

#### OBJECT REMAINS

In military struggle or negotiation, the object of capitalist politicians remains the same—to protect their decaying system against the working people of the metropolitan countries and the colonial peoples' struggle for liberation.

They can only finally maintain imperialism by an all-out war for the reconquest of territories lost since 1917. Only fear of the reaction of the working people has disrupted their war plans so far.

In the light of those elementary truths it is clear the power of the labour movements alone, consciously organised against capitalism and its politicians can stop war in the future.

To create illusions in capitalist politicians as men of peace is to build a snare and a trap. For statesmen with a "peace" halo are the most useful to lead working people into war, to delude them it is a defensive war and a war in their own interests.

## Rail Guards Dispute

THE lodging question is by no means settled on the railways, as is shown by the refusal of the guards at Nottingham to lodge after working a fast freight train from Nottingham to Bristol.

The chief complaint of the guards is regarding the sleeping accommodation at the G.W.R. hostel in Bristol. The guards must sleep in a bedroom with four beds and are constantly woken up by other men moving in and out during the course of their supposed rest. Having worked the train for some 145 miles from Nottingham to Bristol, one guard stated that he had only two hours fitful sleep at the hostel and was then expected to work the return journey.

At a meeting on July 11, the guards agreed to give the management two weeks to make alterations, after which if no improvements were effected, all guards would return from Bristol as passengers.

At the last minute the management sent two of the men's representatives to consult the authorities at Bristol, but no satisfactory agreement was reached about the sleeping accommodation. The men are determined to win for themselves decent conditions under lodging.

The management on the other hand, are provocative and have stopped the pay of two men for the time when travelling as passengers, and refused to allow them to work on the day they should have worked back from Bristol, thus penalising the men by stopping two days' pay.

The guards' representatives are appealing for help to meet the loss of pay by the men and a fund for this purpose is being founded. Any OUTLOOK readers able to make a contribution should forward their donations to R. Shaw, 82 Danethorpe Vale, Sherwood, Nottingham. All monies will be receipted.

# A BIRKENHEAD DOCKER DISMISSED

## DOCK LABOUR BOARD WAS JUDGE, JURY AND PROSECUTION

—Says Q.C.

"I CANNOT see that the Board or the Tribunal have acted improperly in any way."

With these words the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Goddard, dismissed in the Divisional Court on July 21 an action brought by Dan Brandon, a Birkenhead docker and former editor of the PORTWORKERS' CLARION, against the decision of the Appeal Tribunal of the Liverpool Dock Labour Board to suspend him from duty and remove his name from the register of dock employees.

With Mr. Justice Cassels and Mr. Justice Slade, Lord Goddard had heard Miss Rose Heilbron, Q.C., plead Brandon's case for the issue of an Order of Certiorari (nullification) of the decision of the Liverpool Appeals Tribunal to uphold the action of the Liverpool Dock Labour Board to remove his name from the Register.

A further application for an Order of Mandamus, compelling the Board to restore Brandon's name, was also refused.

### ALLEGES PROCEDURE NOT FOLLOWED

Miss Heilbron referred to section two of the National Dock Labour Act of 1953 and to the judgment of Mr. Justice Denning in the case of *Barnard versus the National Dock Labour Board*. She claimed that the procedure laid down by the Act, as further elucidated by Mr. Justice Denning in the case cited, had not been followed in Mr. Brandon's case.

Presenting her argument in two parts, Miss Heilbron questioned the right, under paragraph 8 of section 4 of the National Dock Labour Board Scheme (Dock Workers' Registration of Employment Act, 1946), of the National Dock Labour Board to delegate powers of final determination of a worker's services to a local dock labour board.

It was clear, however, that under section 5 of the Act of 1946 the N.D.L.B. had power to establish in every port a local dock labour board and to delegate to this local board as many of its functions as possible, and to consult with the local boards.

Mr. Justice Cassels contended that a proper interpretation of the phrase "as many of its functions as possible" must include the power of disciplinary deregistration, after Miss Heilbron had stressed at some length to the Lord Chief Justice the essential difference between suspension from duty in the docks (for however lengthy a period) and actual removal from the Register—a step which must quite obviously affect the livelihood of the man concerned, as it had in the case of Mr. Brandon.

### NO DELEGATION OF POWERS

Miss Heilbron further stressed the ruling of Mr. Justice Denning, in the *Barnard* case, that no delegation of their powers by local boards was permissible. In particular, according to this judgment, Appeals Tribunals have no original jurisdiction of their own. They could only hear, and confirm or reject, the decisions of the Board. Above all, neither the

Board nor the Tribunal were empowered to delegate the duty of investigation of matters brought to their notice to any individual.

### HISTORY OF CASE

On November 16, 1953, Brandon was one of a gang of 16 men working for Alfred Holt and Company. Work had started at 8 a.m. and, in contravention of a notice issued by the Liverpool Dock Labour Board in April, 1951, eight of them had gone for a tea break before 8.30 a.m. Brandon had been one of the eight who remained on board the ship on which they were working.

The eight men who left the ship were dismissed for the morning and told to report for duty at 1 p.m.

The others who had remained on board, considering their mates had been harshly handled and not themselves being prepared to work at half-strength for the rest of the morning, said they would not do it and walked up the ladder. Brandon had tried to discourage the men from this action, and had been one of the last two men to leave the ship.

### BRANDON ALONE DISMISSED

On November 18 Mr. Alfred William Marshall, manager of the Liverpool dock labour scheme, sent Brandon and the other 15 men a letter, the only notice of any charge which they had received. In the result, said Miss Heilbron, the other 15 men were only suspended from duty for two or three days; Brandon was dismissed from the dock labour scheme.

Mr. Marshall's letter required the men "to attend the above Area Office at 10.40 a.m. on November 23 in connection with a complaint by Alfred Holt and Co. at 8.30 a.m. on November 16." There was no intimation given in the letter, Miss Heilbron emphasised, of any charge to be brought before the National Dock Labour Board.

At the interview on November 23, Mr. Marshall had heard and taken down in writing what the men had to say—their spokesman

being a man other than Brandon. He had then asked them, in accordance with established procedure, whether they wished to attend at the hearing of the Board at which the matter would be investigated, or whether they were content that he should put their case to the Board on the basis of the statement which had been dictated to him by their spokesman. All chose the latter course: namely, that Marshall should put the case on their behalf.

### MARSHALL REPRESENTED EMPLOYERS—AND MEN

Yet, continued Miss Heilbron, when the local Board of three—Messrs. O'Hare, Mack and Bourke—considered the case on November 30, Mr. Marshall appeared as "representing" the employers, as well as "putting the case" for the men. He further added to his functions on that occasion by acting in addition as clerk to the board at its hearing.

Miss Heilbron held that this was an instance, as in the case of *Barnard v. the N.D.L.B.*, of unlawful delegation of its powers by the Board to a single individual—in this case, Mr. Marshall.

At the hearings by the Appeals Tribunal on December 2 and 9, Mr. Marshall had appeared even more clearly as the employers' representative, as on these occasions the employers were unrepresented (except by Mr. Marshall), whereas the men were represented by their solicitor, Mr. Livermore.

It thus appeared that, through the person of Mr. Marshall, the Board were judge, jury and prosecutor in their own case.

It should further be mentioned, Miss Heilbron said, that the clerk to the Appeals Tribunal was a Mr. Gibson, a subordinate of Mr. Marshall who might by virtue of that fact be presumed to be biased.

The chairman of the Tribunal was Mr. Yates, secretary of No. 2 district branch of the Transport and General Workers' Union and therefore subordinate to the Chairman of the Board, Mr.

Peter James O'Hare, District Secretary of the Portworkers' Section of the T. & G.W.U.

At the hearings, Marshall had permitted Brandon's record to be given in full. The records of the other 15 men were not examined.

Brandon's record showed that in 1951 he had "been in trouble" before and had subsequently given an undertaking to honour his obligations under the scheme. This undertaking, maintained Miss Heilbron, was in any event ultra vires (beyond the power of the Board to demand). Yet much was made of this undertaking—it was, indeed, the crux of the whole decision to dismiss Brandon and remove his name from the list of registered employees.

### CLASH WITH T. & G.W.U. LEADERSHIP

The fact was that Mr. Brandon, in the course of the 1951 events, had clashed with the official leadership of the T. & G.W.U. when pressing them to discharge their duty to the men. Miss Heilbron claimed that this was unquestionably a factor bearing on the attitude of the two officials of the Union concerned in the hearings.

"The real objection in this case," commented Lord Goddard, "seems to be that Mr. Brandon objects to being tried by his own Union representatives."

Mr. Justice Slade, supported by the Lord Chief Justice, contended that the Board rested judicially between the workers and their employers, as Lord Denning had laid down. It was therefore the party directly concerned in the matter—the employers could do nothing once having lodged their complaint with the Board.

### THAT IS THE SCHEME

Miss Heilbron at once protested that it was precisely this judicially central position of the Board which should surely debar it from partisanship either of the employer or the dockworker.

"That is the scheme," rejoined Lord Goddard. "If you don't like it, you had better get the Minister of Labour to alter it."

Mr. Justice Cassels observed that Mr. Brandon's affidavit was full of complaints against the T. & G.W.U. "I appreciate Miss Heilbron's reticence on that point," commented Lord Goddard. "It is not a good point on which to argue."

Giving judgment, Lord Goddard said the facts in the case were never in dispute. A gang of dockworkers had filched time from their employers and the others had taken themselves off, without so much as a by-your-leave, when their associates were

suspended from the morning's work. It was a grave breach of discipline.

Mr. Marshall had throughout acted perfectly properly. It was natural that, having been asked by the Board to look into the matter, he should have given also to the Board the grounds of the employers' complaint. It was entirely in order, also, that he should have directed the attention of the Board to the record of a man who was obviously a trouble-maker.

The whole scheme was based on the equal representation at all levels of employers and employed. Naturally, the men's representatives were their trade-union leaders; if a man became unpopular with his union, then obviously that would be taken into account.

## Voluntary Principle Established

The ban on overtime by members of the Watermen, Lightermen, Tugmen and Bargemen's Union and the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers has been in operation now for six months.

The joint Executives of the unions have issued a statement declaring that the principle that overtime is voluntary and not compulsory has been successfully established in London. Their statement declares: "...in view of the fact that the ban has been in operation for six months, and that no man reported to the London Board has been disciplined for being in breach of the Dock Labour scheme, the principle has been successfully established in London."

## BAZAAR NEWS

THROUGHOUT the country busy groups of knitters, fitters, carpenters and metal-craftsmen are starting in on their gifts for our SOCIALIST OUTLOOK Bargain Bazaar to be held in London on November 27.

Metal-topped tables, model engines made from Cow and Gate containers, lamp stands out of Woolworth's candle-sticks—these are some of the bright ideas London readers are now working on.

Remember—bring us back a holiday gift. If the present trend continues, this is going to be an occasion the London Labour Movement will not easily forget.

All gifts, suggestions and queries to me, Lorna Corbett, at 145B, Ashley Gardens, London, S.W.1.

## AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

There will be no issue of SOCIALIST OUTLOOK on Friday August 6, owing to holidays.

Publication will be resumed as usual on August 13th.

# IT WAS THE POOR THAT HELPED THE POOR

(This is the second article on G. D. H. Cole's pamphlet "Is this Socialism?")

AS we have seen, G. D. H. Cole defines Socialism as a "classless society," a society in which economic and social inequalities have been eliminated. After six years of Labour in power, were we any nearer to this objective, an objective which the socialist pioneers regarded as axiomatic?

The Labour government set out deliberately to pay high salaries to the administrators and managers appointed to the nationalised enterprises. These high incomes were paid, not only to those enticed from capitalist industries but also to appointees drawn from the trade union movement. This, in turn, influenced the trade unions to increase the salaries of their officials. Economically the gap between the workers in the nationalised indus-

and forms a larger proportion than ever before of those who can afford to live at a luxury level and to hob-nob, without much feeling of inferiority, with their American opposite numbers."

The exploitation of labour is the only source of new wealth yet six years of Labour in power did not prevent the capitalist class from adding to their numbers and enriching themselves. And labour's aim, officially is to put an end to capitalism and eliminate the capitalists!

Professor Cole not only criticises, he puts forward concrete proposals which, while they do not correspond with the full tasks which the SOCIALIST OUTLOOK conceives for the Labour Party, nevertheless mark a big advance over the present apology of a programme.

He proposes, among other things, the abolition of large inherited fortunes, and some restrictions on excessive incomes, whether earned or unearned. Only after non-wage incomes are controlled, can Socialists even think of a "national wage policy." Under Socialism the planning of wages will become part of the general economic plan which will relate wages to prices and to the real cost of production.

Under Socialism, there will also be "real participation by the workers in control—not only at the top, but at every level from the work-group upwards." This would include the "transfer to the workers, under trade union supervision, certain of the functions of workshop discipline and organisation that are at present in the hands of foremen and supervisors..."

Even with industry 100 per cent. state-owned, the workers will still need the protection which this sort of proposal will ensure. Otherwise there is grave danger of capitalist exploitation being superseded by bureaucratic exploitation.

The full realisation of Socialism cannot be achieved within the frontiers of a single state. For this is needed the economic resources of the whole world and the friendly co-operation of all its peoples instead of the cut-throat competition which is now the rule.

## Tottenham Follows Coventry Lead

LABOUR-controlled Tottenham Borough Council decided on July 22—"in view of Atomic and Hydrogen Bomb developments, to suspend all expenditure and support for Civil Defence, until such time as the Government provide adequate protection to the inhabitants of this borough."

Moving the resolution the Deputy Mayor, Mr. F. G. Bohringer, made it clear that Tottenham Labour Councillors do not believe that such "adequate protection" can in fact ever be provided. Peace can be defended only by attack against war and the preparations for war, he declared.

Seconding, Councillor E. Smith stressed his view that in a third world war the H-bomb could and would be used.

Councillor Jack Dipple said that in pressing for the suspension of Civil Defence they had the example of Coventry City Council before them. He reminded members of the Council that all Coventry City Councillors who had supported that authority's action on Civil Defence had been returned by the electorate with an increased majority. They had received letters and telegrams from all over the world. Tottenham could expect similar support.

Admitting in a recent House of Commons debate the inadequacy of telephone landlines, one of the Government's technical measures against hydrogen and atomic warfare, the Home Under-Secretary (Sir Hugh Lucas-Tooth) had cynically remarked that at least they would "stimulate interest." This punctured effectively all the Government's phoney morale-raising propaganda.

He was convinced that people up and down the country would give support to what was essentially an anti-war gesture.

The sole speaker against the motion, Alderman J. J. Pagin (the only Conservative on the Council), said that Tottenham had been noted for 20 years for its Civil Defence. Instead of this "wicked and politically-inspired" motion, an attempt should be made to liaise with the County authorities to increase Civil Defence. Peace, he claimed, was Sir Winston Churchill's one ambition in life.

Councillor H. Langer said that our people were alive to the dangers and horrors of a third world war. The Japanese fishermen injured in the recent experiments would be confined to their beds for the next 20 years—and they, being over 100 miles from the explosion, had been only "slightly" hurt. They in Tottenham refused to hoodwink the people that present Civil Defence

methods were adequate for their protection.

Councillor Mrs. Audrey Wise said that Civil Defence was a lie. Mr. R. H. S. Crossman had said in the House of Commons that we were just an aircraft carrier for someone else. Of £1,500 million to be spent on preparations for war, only £29 million—one-fiftieth—had been allotted to "civil defence."

The Government, in its campaign of deception, pursued two lines. One was to belittle the bomb. This was the method of Maxwell-Fyfe, who had declared in Parliament that it was "simply" one thousand times bigger than those which had been used in the attacks on Japan. The second line was expressed in all its cynicism by Sir Hugh Lucas-Tooth in the passage from his speech which Councillor Dipple had already quoted.

Councillor Miss Sheila Berkery said that this was a motion of censure on the Government.

Civil Defence was nothing but a cruel façade. It was of no use simply to declare one's general opposition to war. What was needed was to understand the causes of war, and to work to remove them.

The motion was passed against only two dissentient votes and will operate with effect from August 22.

### Socialist Outlook Editorial Board

M. BANDA, G. HEALY, W. HUNTER, T. MERCER, JACK STANLEY

All correspondence must be addressed to the Editorial Board

177 Bermondsey Street, London, S.E.1

Phone: HOP 3227

# RAILWAYMEN DEMAND A CUT IN COMPENSATION

## Bob Shaw Sums up N.U.R. Conference

THAT the N.U.R. is in the forefront of the Bevanite wing of the industrial movement has been demonstrated by its recently concluded Annual Conference. In addition to its nomination of Bevan for Treasurer of the Labour Party, its opposition to German rearmament and its condemnation of war preparations, it has restated its position in defence of railway nationalisation in a resolution which empowers the leadership to press with all the means in its power for the removal of compensation payments.

The conference further ignored the current warning and appeals of the knights and privy councillors of the T.U.C. and instructed

### SUPPORT FOR BEVAN

At its monthly delegate meeting on July 21, the Leeds City Labour Party voted to nominate Aneurin Bevan for Labour Party Treasurer. Gaitskell is M.P. for South Leeds.

The Borough Party nomination follows those for Bevan from Central Leeds C.L.P. and South-East Leeds C.L.P.—the division represented by anti-Bevanite Denis Healey.

Leeds 10 branch of the A.E.U. has endorsed the action of the Leeds District Committee of the A.E.U. in demanding the recall of the National Committee to discuss the E.C. nomination of Gaitskell. A resolution endorsing the E.C. support for Gaitskell did not receive one vote.

This branch meets in the heart of Gaitskell's constituency and is mainly composed of South Leeds Labour Party members and Labour Party supporters.

Bradford A.E.U. Branch have forwarded the following resolution to the Executive Council of the A.E.U.:

"That this Branch take the strongest exception to the E.C.'s support of Mr. Gaitskell for Treasurer of the Labour Party.

"We are of the opinion that the members have the right to be consulted, before such decisions are taken."

the N.U.R. leadership to go in for a 9 per cent. increase in wages making up the balance of the 15 per cent. claim made last year of which only about 6 per cent. was paid over at Xmas.

This looks like trouble brewing. Whilst Toryism is hell bent on returning transport to the profiteers and finance groups, railwaymen are demanding that they institute a revolution and cut off the shareholders with a shilling—making more available to raise the miserable wage levels of the rank and file.

### COMPENSATION AND WAGES

There is an obvious link up between compensation and wages. To get decent wages and conditions for railway workers the Tory plans must be fought and the basic structure of Nationalised Transport defended with one slight amendment—cut off the spivs who at present draw off the cream. The payment of compensation must be shelved.

Some other important decisions were taken by the N.U.R. in relation particularly to the economy drive now being spearheaded by bureaucratic managements everywhere. The N.E.C. received a rebuff when their action in approving the cutting down of clerical and goods staff by the Transport Commission was successfully appealed against. This question concerned the abolition of invoices for certain types and weights of goods and has threatened many clerical workers with redundancy and other workers in goods depots up and down the country with losses in earnings. The leadership's policy of going along with this typical cutting

operation was rejected by the conference showing clearly the temper of the rank and file in opposition to the economy drive as interpreted by the bureaucrats.

That the railway management are not to have things their own way at all was further indicated by strong opposition to the all-out efficiency drive and the cutting into established rights and practices of railway workers. On this question one resolution rejected co-operation with the Management "on economy and efficiency measures which lead to intensified labour, speed up or worsening of working conditions."

The resolution notes that in the past speed ups have had nothing in them for the staff and the conference called for "reduction of compensation, capital free of interest for modernising purposes, adequate trade union representation on the Nationalised Boards..." A further resolution demanded consultation with the local staff before cuts and speed-up are effected. Something the Managers will view with horror.

### RANK AND FILE SERVE NOTICE

There can be no doubt that these resolutions submitted by local branches express exactly how railwaymen over the whole country feel about the so-called efficiency drive as operated by the Transport Commission. The rank and file have served notice on Toryism that their efforts to revert back to the pre-war days on the railways when the Managers had things all their own way, will be resisted. For railway workers an efficient Transport service means one based on a socialist plan bringing benefit to all working people.

The N.U.R. conference reaffirmed its basic socialist stand. It expressed awareness of the requirements of Labour policy both in foreign affairs and on

the question of home policy too.

### WILL THE LEADERS FIGHT?

The question now is, will the leaders fight? The N.U.R. conference in Scotland voted to give the full-time officials increases in salary all round. An organiser will now receive twice as much as a top grade railwayman whom he represents. The top ranking N.U.R. official will get almost four times as much. Such officials are not subject to re-election but are there until retirement—now extended from 60-65.

There is an important democratic principle here, too often ignored in "modern" trade union circles. The attack of Toryism on Nationalisation and on the railwaymen's working and living standards can only be met by men who will not bend and are closely linked with the rank and file. I took part in a discussion recently amongst a small group of railwaymen on the subject of trade union officials. One engine driver was emphatic in his views about his representatives at high levels. They should, he said, give a report of their activities annually to the membership on what they had done during the year and if it wasn't satisfactory then they should be removed and someone else elected in their place. This would make sure, he pointed out, that trade union leaders really did the job they were put there for.

### PAY THEM THE SAME RATE

Why not make it a rule that any time the trade union leaders played false with their members they should be removed by, say a majority of branches voting against them? Another thing, he said, all elected full-time officials should only be paid the same rate of pay that we receive on the job. This, he pointed out, would guarantee that their point of view remained with their own class.

## American Newsletter

# Economy Stagnates

New York, July 23

THERE is a growing concern of American workers over the government's persistent refusal to take any steps to cope with the increasingly acute unemployment situation. It was reflected in a letter to President Eisenhower on July 9, by C.I.O. President Walter Reuther on behalf of the C.I.O. Executive Board.

Charging that government economists have issued a "shoddy economic analysis" which "misleads the public," Reuther declared that the C.I.O. is "greatly disturbed" over the "stagnation of the American economy."

Pointing out that "our labour force is increasing by approximately 900,000 each year," the C.I.O. leader said, "this means our economy must expand to provide that number of new job opportunities each year."

Previously Reuther had depicted the job situation for school graduates this summer as "tragic," and declared that unemployment conditions are far worse than indicated by doctored government statistics.

A recent report from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the nation's third largest city, illustrates in large measure the situation throughout the country.

### 17 per cent Jobless

Out of a factory labour force in the Philadelphia area of about 700,500, state officials admit there are now 122,500 jobless. That adds up to 17 per cent. of the industrial workers. Among the Negro workers in the area, who in American industry are traditionally the "last hired and the first fired," it is estimated that the

number of unemployed is well over 25 per cent.

Major industries in the area have sharply curtailed their operations. Textile, which is a "sick" industry nationally, has been especially hard hit. Reflecting the condition of the railroad industry generally, workers in an important locomotive works have been hit by extensive layoffs. A large steel plant, still new to the area, is already down to a three and four-day week.

### The Garment Industry

Conditions in the garment industry, which is generally considered an accurate economic barometer, are described as "poor." Some factories have shut down altogether. Still others have fled to various Southern states to exploit the low wages and non-union conditions there.

In the important electrical appliance and radio industry located in Philadelphia, layoffs began more than six months ago. The unions affected anticipate even deeper slashes into the employment rolls in the immediate future.

A huge printing plant, which among other items prints TIME magazine with its enormous circulation, is reported "slower" than it has been in four years. One-sixth of its workers have been laid off and others put on a part time basis.

Up to this point most of the jobless workers in Philadelphia have managed to squeak by on the very meagre state unemployment insurance. But as the layoffs are prolonged, increasing numbers are exhausting the amount of insurance checks allotted them, and are left in extreme economic difficulties. (Throughout the country, during the first five months of the year, some 685,000 unemployed exhausted their insurance rights).

### Shoe Sales: A Significant Pointer

A small item buried in the financial section of the July 23 NEW YORK TIMES gives mute testimony to the present situation of the American workers.

The National Shoe Manufacturers Association reports a sharp drop in the sale of shoes by department stores during the first five months of the year, with the heaviest drop in May. In that month the sale of children's shoes dropped by 12 per cent. The sale of women's shoes went down 6 per cent. and the sale of men's and boy's shoes was off 8 per cent. Little wonder that the American workers are not being comforted by Governmental assurances that "a solid base is being laid for an upturn in the fall."

### PRIVATE OWNERSHIP IS A BARRIER

It is easy to see the difficulty in operating such a policy—the difficulty which arises due to the private ownership of the land. It will be impossible to introduce any type of scheme whereby each farmer pays an economic rent so long as the farmers are tenants of a multitude of different landlords. ● Continued on page 4

# Landlordism: A Barrier to Progress

## Labour Must Take Over The Land

MOST of the memories of the unfettered capitalist anarchy which dominated Britain in the years before the war are usually associated with the big industrial slumps. Mills, mines and factories standing idle; machines rusting and equipment decaying; millions of ill-clad and underfed workers standing in queues at the Labour Exchanges in the grimy industrial towns.

fell from 84s. 7d. to 44s. 7d. in twelve months.

The Wages Committees which the Act had set up were tossed overboard in favour of Conciliation Committees which had no legal standing whatsoever—with the result that in twelve months the farmworkers' wages fell from 46s. to 36s. Eighteen months

### by Bernard Dix

after the repeal of the Act the wages of the farmworkers had fallen to 28s.

So it went on for year after year—with the people of the country suffering all the while. At the end of the war the wages of the farmworkers were still only £3 10s. 0d. for a 48-hour week—1s. 7½d. an hour!

With the advent of the Labour Government in 1945 things began to change—new policies were introduced and the farmworker and the farmer faced brighter prospects and—as any person aware of the facts is bound to acknowledge—there was a vast improvement.

### THE 1947 AGRICULTURAL ACT

Most of the achievements of the Labour Governments in the agricultural field took place as a consequence of the 1947 Agricultural Act—an act which embraced many varied aspects of the industry. By far the most important aspect was that which introduced the system of guaranteed prices and markets to the farmer; these provisions enabled the farmer to produce in the knowledge that he would be able to sell his produce at a price which would ensure him a profit.

In this way much of the uncertainty was taken out of farming.

This, however, failed to please all the farmers; it was claimed that the prices were too low and that as farming costs were rising the rate of profit would fall. Such a claim is not substantiated by facts. The Ministry of Agriculture has recently issued a report on Farm Incomes in England and Wales, a report of a group of some 2,000 farms whose accounts were tabulated for a period of eight crop years.

### PROFITS ROSE FOR LARGE FARMERS

The figures show that for the first four years (1944-47 crop years) the average profits were £621, £737, £665, and £507 respectively. In 1947 the Agricultural Act was introduced and for the following four years (1948-51 crop years) the figures are £1,058, £959, £912, and £1,109. But these are figures of averages and when they are broken down it is revealed that the system of guaranteed prices and markets has been of much greater advantage to the large farmer than the small farmer—and it must be remembered in this connection that 30 per cent. of the farm acreage of England and Wales is in holdings of less than 100 acres.

### AN ENORMOUS RENT

Herein lies the main weakness of the 1947 Act—it fails to differentiate adequately between the farmer on good land—which usually means the large rich farmer—and the farmer on poor land. If guaranteed prices are fixed which enable those farming poor land to receive what they consider a fair profit then those farming the large rich areas will be receiving what might be termed super profits.

On the other hand, if the price

is fixed so that those farming the rich and large areas receive a minimum profit then the small farmer will be driven out of business—thus a position will arise where there are a small number of large monopoly farmers who run British agriculture.

The obvious answer to this is to ensure that every farmer pays an economic rent for his land—a rent which is based upon all the factors which influence the cost of production and the ultimate output. Location, size, climatic conditions, type of soil and all the other factors which have a bearing on the economic life of the farm. With rents graduated in this fashion it will be possible to

establish a realistic pricing and marketing policy for British agriculture as a whole—one which will work in the interest of the community as a whole without giving advantages to certain sections of the farming community.



IN SAN JUAN, PEURTO RICO, the strike of 6,000 dockers for increases in the hourly rate of wages from \$1.23 to \$1.48 entered its 4th week on July 16th.

The dockers, members of the Maritime Workers union (A.F.L.), have been threatened by government intervention.

IN JAPAN, Hisito Ichimandu, governor of the Bank of Japan, Sankuro Ogaswara, Finance Minister and Kachi Aichi, Minister of International Trade have put forward plans for the merging of the strongest trading concerns into the pre-war corporations once again. The Kyodo News Agency reports the three officials as saying that surplus firms must be weeded out and a halt put to unnecessary competition.

THE FRENCH paper "Le Monde" estimating the cost of the Indo-Chinese war gives the following figures: Killed, died of wounds or missing, 19,000 Frenchmen, 43,000 African colonial troops and 30,000 foreign legionnaires.

Wounded are estimated to number 114,000 and prisoners a further 28,000. The French Parliament voted since 1945 some 2,385 milliard francs for the war.

IN SOUTH AFRICA, two former M.P.s for the Cape western province, have been arrested by the Malan Regime under the infamous "suppression of communism" act. Mr. Kahn and Mr. Bunting are charged with violating this act when they attended a party held at Bunting's house.

IN JUAREZ, MEXICO, a threat by the unions of a general strike has resulted in the workers gaining a 24 per cent wage increase. This offsets price increases that followed on the Government's devaluations of the peso some months ago.

IN HONDURAS, a two-month strike of 23,500 United Fruit employees ended on July 9th. The Boston firm was compelled to grant wage increases and 2 weeks paid holiday, increased sick aid, medical care and time and a half for overtime.

IN GUATEMALA, 5,000 "Communist suspects" have now been imprisoned. One thousand of them are in the jails of Guatemala City.

MR. HAROLD STASSEN, U.S. Foreign Aid Director, said on July 26 that the rearming of West Germany would be "one of the fastest jobs of building an army in modern history."

# Does Leeds Support Gaitskell?

**C**OUNCILLOR LANCE LAKE writing from Leeds (S.O. July 23) says:—

"On the Constituency Party front the Right Wing in Leeds are playing on the fact that Gaitskell represents a Leeds Constituency. 'Decency', they allege, demands that Gaitskell should have the support of the Labour Movement in Leeds."

This is a complete distortion of the truth. As one of the so-called "Right Wing" let me say that North Leeds, North-West Leeds, West Leeds and South Leeds constituencies are all supporting Gaitskell for the simple reason that they prefer him to Bevan.

They think that a man who has been Chancellor of the Exchequer and who is held in the highest esteem by the Parliamentary Labour Party should be a member of the National Executive of the Party. They also realise that Mr. Bevan has a safe seat on the National Executive and conclude naturally, that Bevan is interested to keep Gaitskell off the National Executive.

Leeds **W. S. Hill**  
(Now read "Support for Bevan" on page 3)



Correspondence should be as brief as possible and addressed to The Editorial Board, 177, Bermondsey St., London, SE1

denounced. So here again the Beaverbrook press, the Communists, and those who took their general view were arguing policies which were in effect both reactionary and dangerous."

The applause of delegates at this changed to laughter when Mr. Morrison later asserted that Dr. Adenauer was proving himself a good European and had been reluctant to agree to a German National Army.

His contrast of Western Democracy and Soviet aggression had to struggle for a hearing against an almost constant barrage of reminders of "Guiana"—"Guatemala"—"Malaya". Nor did the delegates take kindly to his pseudo-logic: Socialists believe in Internationalism, therefore all good socialists should believe in and support an International Army.

By the close of the conference, Mr. Morrison appeared prophetically aware of the shape of things to come. Annual Conferences must decide, he said, and if those who now oppose the N.E.C. win the day, then they must be prepared to take the responsibility for an alternative policy.

How deeply that was meant is open to speculation, but I don't think the rank and file of the party will be worried by that as a threat, but will go to Scarborough with that in mind as an invitation.

Manchester **H. L. Walker**

## ★ "Peaceful Co-existence"

"Peaceful co-existence" seems to be a very popular phrase these days, with Tories, Right Wing Labour and Bevanites all toing the line, so R. W.'s comment (S.O. 23/7/54) comes at a very opportune time.

Perhaps other readers may have seen that the DAILY WORKER (15/7/54) has at last published what Lenin actually said when he used the phrase; he said that the Soviet government's policy (in 1920) was "peaceful co-existence with the peoples, with the workers and peasants of all nations" (my stress). No wonder references to Lenin's words were so vague when Stalin (and now Malenkov) speaks of the possibility of peaceful co-existence of capitalism and socialism.

I wrote to the WORKER pointing out the difference and explaining simply why "peaceful etc." was impossible. I am sure mine was not the only letter on the subject, but none were published. I was informed that this was due to a very convenient "shortage of space."

Worcester Park **R. C. Coggan**

## ★ Morrison in Manchester

The Lancashire and Cheshire Labour rank and file gave Herbert Morrison a rough passage at Manchester last Saturday (July 24) when he spoke on German rearmament.

The only fragment of his unpopular speech to be received without criticism was when he said: "Hitler seized power and substituted his own dictatorship for democracy."

That is the kind of thing that is likely to happen if you treat a great nation like outcasts and untouchables. Those who wished to do that were pursuing a line calculated to stimulate the very German Nationalism which they

## FIGHTING FUND

We are now in the full flush of the holiday period—and our Fund is feeling the pinch. Comrades, before you lash out on those seaside cinemas (in full flight from the summer rain), put by a little pin money for your paper. And let us have it NOW.

Our thanks to: South-West London, £5 6s. 6d.; West London, £5 4s.; Birmingham readers, £3 14s.; Leeds readers, £5; R. T. Shelley readers, £2 8s. 6d.; Westminster readers, £2 2s. 6d.; Islington readers, £2 11s. 3d.; Norwood readers, £1 1s.; Exeter readers, 10s.; R. J. Johnston, 4s.; Anon., 2s. 6d.; Croydon reader, 2s. 6d.; R. M., 2s.; F. Richardson, 1s.

Total for month, £28 9s. 9d.

says she has to trade her iron ore and steel with Cuba.

What of citrus? The Caribbean islands went into wholesale expansion because Britain told us and encouraged us to do so at the extent of providing money for the expansion of industry. Now we are told Britain will not be able to take our citrus because she can get it cheaper elsewhere. Britain has now placed an order with the U.S.A. Our bananas and sugar are in a similar position.

We are bound hand and foot. We are not allowed to trade with America. Our trade with Canada is still based on the Ottawa Agreement of the 1930's when Britain "spoke for us."

The colonies cannot afford to maintain themselves on slave labour and buy British goods at high prices. And because some of our leaders are talking like men we come right up against the British Iron Curtain. When labour was 1/6d. and 2/6d. a day and our affairs were largely in the hands of our slave masters we had no difficulty with our trade.

The West Indies will not be self-supporting for a long time because we have been misruled for over 300 years. It is a difficult job to make order out of Imperial chaos. We are vastly underdeveloped. Our hope of economic salvation rests in agricultural and industrial development. Each British Government is only willing to throw us a few crumbs while keeping us as beggars. Must we not come to the conclusion that Britain has no use for us other than to exploit us?

The Commonwealth Conferences most of the time result in hardship to the West Indies. All this talk about Commonwealth to the progressive West Indian is rubbish. Only the most reactionary Uncle Toms have any faith in it. Yes, only those who are seeking a pat, some honours and ribbons

from their slave masters and imperial overlords. Mr. Creech-Jones, Mr. James Griffiths and Mr. Oliver Lyttelton are well aware of this.

We appeal to the progressive Left Wing to give the lead for our liberation.

Birmingham **L. A. Lynch**

## ★ German Rearmament

David Gray and I are obviously agreed on essentials (SOCIALIST OUTLOOK, July 23): the Socialist movement must be international and our German comrades must play their full part in settling the uncertain future of their country; where we differ is in emphasis and timing.

Comrade Gray has unbounded faith in the developing strength of the German workers who are "moving more and more towards a rejection of right wing opportunism" but such an affirmation, much as one would like to accept it, needs concrete proof and demonstration (e.g. we should note the significant absence of major industrial disputes in Conservative Germany since the war).

I should be the last to deny Comrade Gray's exact parallel between right wing opportunism in the British L.P. and in the West German S.P.D., but such an argument has no bearing on my main point: the extreme weakness of Socialism in the Western zones and the growing power of neo-Nazism which Dr. John's escape has spot-lighted.

Unless conclusive evidence of a massive Socialist potential in West Germany is forthcoming we should be very wary of schemes for withdrawing troops and so on; the original idea was of an occupation lasting 20 years; in present circumstances we might be well-advised to stick to that idea, unpleasant and unjust as it is.

Carmarthen **David E. Painting**  
(Other readers comments are invited)

# People, Places and Politics

By Cassia

## BRITISH JUSTICE

FOR 21 months there has existed in Kenya what is termed in respectable circles an "Emergency"; during this period the guardians of British imperialism have been dispensing that which they choose to call "justice"—the record of the hangman for these 21 months clearly illustrates the character of this type of "justice."

203 executions for alleged murder.

172 executions for alleged unlawful possession of arms or ammunition.

88 executions for alleged consorting with terrorists.

14 executions for the alleged administration of illegal oaths.

6 executions for alleged actions with the intent to further terrorism.

2 executions for the alleged procuring of supplies for terrorists.

This is the sordid statistical record of imperialism—505 times the hangman tightened the noose around the necks of Africans whose fundamental crime was opposition to colonial oppression.

Those who perform these legalised murders do not render their services free—they demand payment for their activities. It is partly to meet such payment that the British taxpayer—at the hands of Oliver Lyttelton—is to make a grant of £4 millions to the Kenya Government this year and an interest free loan of £1½ millions. Thus the Tory Government uses money derived from the British working class in order to pay the tools of imperialism who are murdering the workers of Kenya.

## THE INTERNATIONALISTS

I SEE that Herbert Morrison, when speaking in Manchester recently, made the claim that the policy of the National Executive Committee on German rearmament was "progressive, en-

lightened and internationalist."

This is a claim which is rapidly becoming the main plank upon which the N.E.C. attempts to rest its feeble case—but it is far from the truth.

The hollowness of the claim that the rearmament of Western Germany will restore that country to an independent nation in place of its present semi-colonial status was, quite unwittingly, exposed by Denis Healey when he recently spoke on behalf of the N.E.C. at a meeting in London. In answer to a questioner he stated quite definitely that, even if the envisaged 12 German Divisions were established, there was no question of withdrawing all British troops from Germany. In fact he stated that it was essential to the system of British defence that troops remain there—and quoted the manning of radar stations as an example.

Thus, in answering what seemed a harmless question, Dennis Healey showed how hollow is the claim of the Right Wing to be internationalists—he proved that their much publicised desire to see Germany restored from its present status as a semi-colony is just so much platform oratory. The real internationalists are those who have placed motions on the agenda for the Scarborough Conference which demand: "the total withdrawal of all occupation troops from both Eastern and Western Germany to enable the German workers to unite their country on a socialist basis."

## THE PRICE OF A BOMBER PILOT

According to the Under-Secretary of State for Air—Mr. G. R. Ward—it costs £25,000 to train a bomber pilot from the time he joins up until the time he is sufficiently trained to join a service squadron. This is a lot of money—sufficient to build twelve good houses for the workers or provide forty workers with motor cars—but I suppose that these are considered luxuries in our present "Welfare State" whereas bomber pilots are apparently given top priority.

## UNITED FRONT?

"The British Peace Committee is the organisation which unites all who want peace, irrespective of their views on other questions. It excludes no one and imposes no bans or proscriptions against Tories, Liberals, Labour Party members or Communists."

George Matthews, Assistant Secretary of the Communist Party, in WORLD NEWS, July 17, 1954.

## THE LAND

● Continued from page 3

It is only by nationalising the land—by making the state the landlord of all the farmers—that it will be possible to institute any rational form of farm rent policy. This is the foundation stone upon which any further progress in agriculture rests.

In the 1945 Labour Party election manifesto, "Let Us Face the Future," it was stated that: "Labour believes in land nationalisation and will work towards it, but as a first step the State and local authorities must have wider and speedier powers to acquire land for public purposes wherever the public interest so requires."

Those first steps were made under various town planning acts and the 1947 Agriculture Act—it is now necessary that the second step be made and that Labour includes in its next election manifesto a definite statement that it will—as part of its agricultural programme—nationalise the land!

# Piece of Tory 'EQUALITY'

THE Housing Repairs and Rents Act is so bad that it is simple to pick it to pieces (and I set out a few of its major faults below), but criticisms are mere electioneering unless we have a definite policy to deal with the very real problems. I therefore also set out a draft policy below.

The main faults of the Act are:—

The County Court judge without seeing the premises and on such evidence as the landlord and tenant can afford to call can overrule the decision by the sanitary inspector who has seen the premises. He can do this in favour of the landlord and cancel a certificate that has been issued but the Act does not give him power to do it in favour of the tenant and issue a certificate that has been refused. This typical piece of Tory "equality" is designed to force down the standards of the sanitary inspectors and ensure that he only issues a certificate of disrepair in the grossest cases.

The act will not get repairs done. To get an increase the landlord must say he has done repairs subject to a small fine if the statement is false; whether he has done them or not is immaterial, and it may well pay a landlord to incur the fine and collect the increase.

It sets a premium on false statement and thus deliberately corrupts public morals.

It perpetuates and increases the present inequalities of rent. The reason put forward for passing the Act was that some of the lowest rents were unfairly low; yet the higher the existing rent is the greater the increase the Act gives. "To him that hath shall be given" is accepted Tory doctrine.

As originally drafted the Act provided that if a landlord in future converted an existing big house into several smaller self-

contained premises, he could apply to a Rent Tribunal to fix a fair rent for each unit, instead of being limited to a proportion of the 1939 rent. This might have meant a substantial increase in the permitted rent in suitable cases. It was justified as an incentive to landlords to spend money on improving their property. As the rent was to be fixed at a fair figure by an impartial tribunal, the clause could not reasonably be

are several alternatives which are in line with Labour principle. Let all tenants (Council or private) and all landlords have a right to apply to a Rent Tribunal to view the premises and fix a fair rent. (Note: the Rent Tribunal do, but the County Court Judge does not, view the premises before judging a case).

Housing like clothing is a social necessity, just as food is animal necessity. Without a minimum standard of food the animal man cannot exist. Without a minimum standard of housing and clothes civilised man cannot exist. Parliament should therefore lay down a minimum standard of housing space per individual (at least 1 average size habitable room per adult) and a maximum inclusive rent for such room (say 10/- per week).

For this minimum every tenant (Council or private) should have absolute restriction on increase of rent and absolute security of tenure, no eviction being permitted without alternative accommodation provided. Above this minimum there is no reason why freedom of contract should not apply. If the better paid worker (or the highly paid executive) wants luxury housing he should pay luxury prices as he does for a television set.

Let all rented houses be nationalised. To effect this painlessly over a period of time, it would be sufficient to give all landlords a right to serve notice requiring compulsory purchase of rented or proposed rented property and to give the tenant a right to recover any rent paid to the private landlord for any period during which such a notice was not in force.

Where part of a house is rented and the rest is owner occupied and is not self-contained, completion of the compulsory purchase could be indefinitely postponed by agreement between the landlord and the State if the Minister was satisfied as to the conditions of the tenancy.

For a longer-term policy there

criticised. That the Tories should favour a "fair" rent caused surprise.

In committee the Minister of Housing "willingly" accepted a Tory back bench amendment which put these houses into the same position as Council houses and allowed the landlord to raise the rent as he liked and evict as he liked. Tories are not always so honest in admitting that they disapprove of a fair deal for tenants.

WHAT LABOUR MUST DO

Help tenants to organise so that every landlord who makes a false statement about repairs is prosecuted.

Make sure that every case of unjustified refusal of a certificate of disrepair is fought by the local Councillors, who must have an opinion as to the state of disrepair from a qualified surveyor, etc. to lay before the sanitary inspector and to produce in Council. If there are no public-spirited surveyors available locally, this will entail raising funds to pay for such opinions; they are essential.

Publicise all the inevitable cases of injustice arising from the Act so as to force a change of Government.

By **T. Whitty**

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.