

THE NEWSLETTER

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a service to socialists

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LEN WINCOTT IS FREE, WORKING IN MOSCOW

It is reliably reported that Len Wincott, fifty-year-old veteran of the Invergordon Mutiny, has been freed from a Russian corrective labour camp after more than ten years as a prisoner and is now working in the Moscow State Publishing House.

He can be written to at the following address:

c/o Charles Coutts,
Kropotkina, 37,
Moscow,
USSR.

Wincott's release and rehabilitation are the direct result of pressure from Britain—including, it must be said, pressure by John Gollan, general secretary of the Communist Party.

Gollan, it is understood, took up Wincott's case with Khrushchev when he led a delegation from the Communist Party to meet CPSU leaders last summer.

He told Khrushchev that there was strong feeling in Britain about Wincott's disappearance: if Wincott was guilty there was nothing more to be said; if he was innocent, was he going to be released?

His innocence established

After an investigation, the British delegates were informed that Wincott's innocence had been established, and that he was being freed.

But they were asked not to make any public statement on the matter, because the rehabilitation of foreign communists was being done without publicity, except for such outstanding cases as that of Bela Kun.

At least one local branch of the party in London had already begun sending deputations to the Soviet Embassy on the matter.

Wincott is said to be well, and to hold no grudge against the Soviet Union for his captivity, which he regards as part of something that was inevitable.

During his imprisonment he was allowed to send one letter a year to his wife in Moscow.

Wincott was one of twenty-four alleged ringleaders of the 1931 Invergordon Mutiny who were dismissed from the service by the Admiralty.

He became an organizer for the National Unemployed Workers' Movement, joined the Communist Party, and went to work in the Leningrad Seamen's Institute in 1934.

Parents not notified

The exact length of time Wincott spent in an Arctic labour camp is unclear. So is the precise nature of the charge against him—though several people who came out of the USSR and told of meeting him in the camp said it was 'agitation against the Soviet Union'.

Neither Wincott's parents and friends nor the British Government were notified about the trial, the charges or the sentence.

The commendable, if somewhat tardy, intervention in this matter by the leaders of the British Communist Party prompts the reflection that they might also intervene to establish the whereabouts of another British communist who has been missing in the Soviet Union for about twenty years.

This is Rose Cohen, the wife of Petrovsky (A. J. Bennett), Communist International representative with the Communist Party of Great Britain in the late twenties.

(Continued on back page)

Strike Supplement

This week The Newsletter offers the hospitality of its columns to the provincial busmen and the Covent Garden porters to state their case.

It was felt that the best way to help the strikers was to produce a special supplement, an extra print of which could be done for sale at a small sum.

The strikers have had full liberty to use the space accorded to them as they wished. The views expressed in the supplement are their own.

WASN'T THIS WHERE WE CAME IN?

AMONG the speeches greeting Mr. Khrushchev on his return to Moscow from Prague was one by the writer F. I. Panferov (author of *Bruski*), 'representing the intelligentsia'.

'The Soviet people are gloriously aware,' he said, 'that to the measures worked out by the Central Committee, which are truly wise decisions of State, Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev, as a man possessing a profound knowledge of agriculture, made no small contribution from his wisdom—the wisdom of a statesman and party leader.' (Applause)

'Such are the thoughts of the people. And the thoughts and feelings of the people are always as sincere and pure as the songs of birds.' (Applause)

Mr. Panferov's panegyric was reported in Pravda of July 17.

'BLUES' v. BOSSES IN TEST CASE

HULL members of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers are to take the port employers to court in an effort to get access through their appointed representatives to statements of their working conditions and pay.

The case will be heard in September or October.

Mr. P. Rubenstein, the local solicitor who will represent the 'Blue' union, says this is an important test case, which is likely to be strongly contested by the employers.

If the NASD won it would greatly strengthen their case for being recognized by the employers as a negotiating body. The Transport and General Workers' Union still retains exclusive negotiating rights in Hull.

A NEW 'TREASON' TRIAL IN E. GERMANY

Four communists alleged to have co-operated with Professor Wolfgang Harich, who is serving a sentence of ten years' hard labour for anti-Stalinism, were put on trial for 'counter-revolutionary activities' before the East German Supreme Court this week.

They are Walter Janka, former director of a publishing house, Heinz Zoeger, ex-editor of the Culture League's weekly Sonntag, his deputy editor Gustav Just, and Richard Wolf, a radio commentator.

COMMENTARY

INTERVENTION IN OMAN

THE Arab world is vast and varied; in political development it ranges from the relatively advanced conditions of republican, bourgeois Lebanon to the backward, patriarchal way of life of the Peninsula. But the revolt of the Arabs against imperialism and for national unity is now spreading to the remotest confines of this great territory—partly as a result of the stirring up of the backwaters by the activities of the 'oil-men'. Nowadays, too, more than ever, an injury to one Arab people is felt and resisted by Arabs everywhere as an injury to all—and they have important links now with other Asian peoples, including Commonwealth members.

The Sultan of Muscat is an old client of British imperialism. Even though he flies a plain red flag (which caused a sensation in Mayfair when it was flown over the Dorchester Hotel during his stay there shortly before the war) he has shown himself a reliable friend to the economic and strategic interests of the City. Times are changing fast, though, and disconcertingly for those who still rely on T. E. Lawrence's formula of rule through stooge kinglets: but Macmillan is reacting to the changes in Southern Arabia in the same destructively futile way as Eden reacted to the changes in Egypt. Are we, on top of the 'little war' with the Imam of the Yemen, now to start a 'little war' with the Imam of Oman? If not stopped in good time, intervention in Oman could rapidly develop into a clash with Saudi Arabia that would range the Afro-Asian world once more unitedly against Britain, and this time with even more serious consequences than last November.



JOHN WILLSON VICKERS

IF John Willson Vickers had slowly poisoned a woman to obtain money under her will, or had deliberately murdered by strangling or stabbing, he would now be alive. While stealing he struck a 72-year-old woman with his hands; a pathologist described the blows as 'moderate to light'. In the opinion of the court he did not intend to kill. If there had been no Homicide Act and no Death Penalty (Abolition) Bill, Vickers would almost certainly have been reprieved on the grounds of his youth, his lack of criminal record and the unpremeditated nature of his crime. His hanging reflects no credit on the Home Secretary and the Attorney-General, nor on the anomalous state of our laws.

Vickers was 22. He was four when the Second World War began, and he spent six of his most impressionable years in an atmosphere where violence was legalized, was fostered and praised each day in the newspapers, on the radio and from the pulpit. He was ten when hundreds of thousands were slaughtered at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The society which made him a thief and a murderer cannot escape its responsibility by putting a noose round the neck of the misfit it moulded. The death penalty, all the more gruesome and barbaric after two years' respite, reminds us that a society based on exploitation, greed and coercion is not yet a human society.

FORUMS

SCOTTISH COMMITTEE GETS BUSY

By Jim Campbell

(Secretary of the Scottish Forums' Co-ordinating Committee)

THE Scottish Co-ordinating Committee has held its first meeting, and is aiming to start new forums very soon in Dundee, Aberdeen, Perth and the Central Lowlands.

There was a discussion on the forums, and general agreement was reached on the following points:

1) Irrespective of what new groupings emerge, the exchanges of all shades of Left-wing opinion should continue.

2) We should not as forums be committed to particular party politics, new or old.

Some of us, of course, will want to speak for, and perhaps organize for, particular policies.

But as we see it the forums cannot campaign for anything except in the most general terms. This is the attitude we shall recommend to local forums.

LABOUR

AGENDA SHOWS MEMBERS' MILITANCY

By George Cunvin

THE preliminary agenda for the Annual Conference of the Labour Party clearly shows that the rank and file of the political wing of the movement reflect the militant mood of the industrial wing and not the cowardly retreat from socialism which is the hallmark of the most recent policy statements to emanate from Transport House.

The National Executive, in its policy statement 'Industry and Society', timidly proposed that when Labour is returned to power it would subject the operations of major capitalist enterprises to 'scrutiny' and, 'if necessary', buy shares on the Stock Exchange in some of these companies.

But thirty-nine constituency parties and two big trade unions (building workers and chemical workers) have sent in resolutions insisting that Labour sticks to its traditional policies on nationalization.

Several resolutions are also critical of the complacency shown in the NEC's other policy statement, 'Public Enterprise' and bring to the forefront the all-important issue of workers' control.

This is the issue which will probably provoke the fiercest discussion at Brighton. In their present mood, and faced with a determined challenge from the employers, the rank and file of the Labour movement are not prepared to haul down the Red Flag to make a stockbrokers' holiday.

A quarter on the H-bomb

If the number of resolutions is any criterion, nuclear weapons would appear to be the issue about which the movement feels most strongly.

Out of the 443 resolutions submitted, no fewer than 127 (more than twenty-five per cent) deal with nuclear weapons and disarmament.

These call for a far more drastic attitude than the current policy of the party leadership.

On the Tory Rent Act, the movement appears to be unanimous. It wants this iniquitous measure removed from the Statute Book as soon as Labour is returned to power.

Birmingham Small Heath calls for action now, including industrial action, to prevent the landlords implementing this reactionary Act.

There is critical support for the Labour Party's superannuation plan and recognition that the old folk cannot afford to wait till the turn of the century for a living income or, indeed, till after the next General Election.

A number of local parties are concerned with the future of

the Daily Herald and there will, no doubt, be support for the demand from Wandsworth and Putney that the Labour Party, the Trades Union Congress and the Co-operative Movement should establish their own daily newspaper.

The struggle of the people of Cyprus for the right of self-determination and other expressions of solidarity with the workers in the colonial countries are well to the fore.

HULL SOCIALISTS RESIST NEC PRESSURE

HULL City Labour Party has joined Leeds in resisting National Executive proposals to curtail the power and usefulness of City Parties.

At the June meeting of Hull City Labour Party the Executive gained delegates' support in opposing the proposals—though the secretary made it quite clear that these were not recommendations from the NEC but directives.

At this month's meeting national agent Len Williams brought new pressure to bear. He failed to get the plan adopted, but succeeded in getting it re-examined by the Executive.

Delegates pointed out that if there were more socialist policy from the top instead of directives the organizations and electoral efficiency would improve themselves.

To those who complained about the burden of meetings the answer was to attract more people into the party and share the burden.

'NATIONALIZE US', SAY SOLICITORS

By Our Legal Correspondent

SOCIALIST lawyers want the 'nationalization' of solicitors—in the sense that from the first interview to the conclusion of the action the State should be responsible for paying the lawyer, instead of the client.

This was agreed at a joint meeting of the Society of Labour Lawyers and the Central London Fabian Society which heard Aubrey Diamond, lecturer at the Law Society's School of Law, speak on 'Law in a Socialist State'.

'Nationalization' of this kind is in fact within sight. If the advice sections of the Legal Aid and Advice Act (1949) were put into operation and the income barriers at present governing legal aid removed, this position could be reached straight away.

Mr. Diamond said that criminal law in a socialist country should emphasize treatment and sympathetic study of the offender, but there must always remain an element of deterrent.

BRITAIN'S BLACK RECORD IN CYPRUS

According to a bulletin issued by the Movement for Colonial Freedom, the following is the balance sheet of the last two years of British repression in Cyprus:

	Killed	Wounded
BRITISH—Forces	78	294
Police	9	8
Civilians	16	38
GREEKS—Police	12	26
Civilians	109	85
Accidents	13	74
Intercommunal incidents ...	2	28
TURKS —Police	9	51
Civilians	4	15
Accidents and incidents ...	3	45
OTHERS —Minorities	5	20
	Total 260	Total 684

Since the Emergency Regulations came into force, twenty-three Cypriots have been sentenced to death. Nine have hanged, three been reprieved, and now eleven await the Governor's decision.

There are still 1,176 people held in prisons and detention camps without charge or trial.

KENT DISTRICT COMMITTEE MAN REMOVED

Gordon St-Clere Smithe was removed from the Kent District Committee of the Communist Party last Sunday for allegedly writing an article for The Newsletter.

The Week at a Glance

AT HOME: TRIBUNALS AND TRIBULATIONS

Increase from 2½d to 3d, in the basic inland letter rate and higher charges for postcards, printed papers, parcels and certain telephone calls and rentals were announced by the Postmaster-General.

The Franks Committee recommended detailed changes in the operation of administrative tribunals and inquiries.

The engineering employers promised to consider the unions' request for a forty-hour week, though 'contrary to the spirit and intentions' of the 11s.-with-strings agreement.

ABROAD: FREEDOM AT BAY

SOUTH AFRICA: Over 300 hours of speech in 735 reels have been recorded in the Johannesburg 'treason' inquiry.

EGYPT: It was announced that a conspiracy by former army officers and former politicians had been foiled last spring.

HUNGARY: Ferenc Horvath and György Spamberger were sentenced to death for 'attempts to murder Soviet soldiers'.

USA: Arthur Miller was fined 500 dollars (£180) and given a suspended prison sentence of one month for refusing to testify to the Un-American Activities Committee about people with whom he had attended communist meetings.

FRANCE: By 280 votes to 183 the National Assembly granted Bourges-Maunoury special powers enabling the Government to 'assign a residence' to persons convicted of certain offences, and allowing the police to search premises at night and to detain suspects for three weeks instead of the usual five days.

ECONOMICS

GOVT WOOS UNIONS AS STOCKS SLUMP

By Our Economic Correspondent

PRESS and Government have been indulging in some scare talk about inflation. It was the same around this time last year, you remember.

Macmillan said a 'further round of wage increases would be a disaster' (The Times, May 26, 1956).

Well, another general round of wage increases has in fact taken place. Even the Treasury's own wage slaves, the Civil Servants, have been given a five per cent increase.

The working class refused to panic and to solve the Government's problems by accepting a reduced standard of living.

This time the trade union leaders are being wooed into accepting the Government's case for a cut in real wages.

There is no attempt to stampede them. And the employers are not encouraged to refuse to negotiate.

A conference has been called for the eve of the Trades Union Congress, to which the Government has invited the trade union leaders and employers.

To influence the TUC

The purpose is to influence the Congress discussions on economic policy (at the same time as Thorneycroft advocates the setting-up of wage courts).

The wisest attitude for the rank and file would seem to be to let the leadership know:

1) That they are well aware that there is inflation; and

2) That they have no intention of allowing the Tories to solve the problem at the expense of the workers' standard of living.

Here is a measure of the inflation. The Financial Times index of Government securities is at an all-time low level.

When the index was compiled on October 15, 1926, the prices of Government stocks at that date was taken as 100.

As additional securities were issued they were taken into the index at their issued price.

The index reached its highest point on January 9, 1935, when it stood at 127.4. Its previous lowest point was during the Suez crisis, but recently it has been falling almost day by day. Here is the record:

1956: November 29	...	...	...	...	...	82.38
1957: July 3	...	...	...	...	...	82.09
July 4	...	...	...	...	...	81.88
July 5	...	...	...	...	...	81.77
July 8	...	...	...	...	...	81.60
July 11	...	...	...	...	...	81.11
July 12	...	...	...	...	...	81.08
July 15	...	...	...	...	...	80.67
July 16	...	...	...	...	...	80.43

Not even during the war or the Suez crisis was the Government's credit so low—and it has not yet reached rock bottom.

HUNGARY

THE RESISTANCE TO KADAR CONTINUES

By a Correspondent lately in Hungary

SOME measure of the resistance now being carried on in Hungary to the Government of János Kádár can be obtained from a press conference held on July 10 by Dr. Ferenc Nezvál, Minister of Justice, and reported in the 'communist' daily *Népszabadság*.

Dr. Nezvál said that one very important task of the courts today is 'to ensure the checking and suppression of anti-State elements and attempts, and the severe punishment of counter-revolutionary crimes'.

He referred to the newly-formed 'People's Councils of the Supreme Court' and their 'guiding activity', which had played a great part in 'overcoming uncertainty and mistaken views' in the judiciary.

It will be remembered that it was one of these 'People's Councils of the Supreme Court' which on June 20 sentenced to death the two writers Obersovszky and Gali, who had originally been sentenced to prison terms of three years and one year respectively for publishing an illegal news-sheet; the death sentences were suspended only after an international movement of protest had arisen.

'Judges are now crushing without hesitation every counter-revolutionary and anti-State crime,' said Dr. Nezvál. But today 'economic crimes have come into the foreground. The opposition has to a great extent been thrust out of political life, and now is instead continually attempting to carry out harmful activities in our economic life'.

Deprived of political rights

The resolution passed by the Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party at the beginning of this month said: 'In order to strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat, the more effective suppression of disturbing counter-revolutionary attempts makes it necessary to deprive anti-popular elements of the exercise of certain political rights'.

In the vocabulary of the Kádár government 'counter-revolutionary', 'anti-State' and 'anti-popular' are terms applied to anyone who shows sympathy with the October revolution or disagreement with the present régime.

It is obvious therefore that Dr. Nezvál knows he has to deal not with an ordinary crime wave, but with concerted political protest.

Those who saw the same thing happen under the Rákosi régime recognize that the pattern is being repeated. Before last October there was a remarkable amount of theft and other 'economic crimes'; even more remarkable was their cessation during the time of the rising, when valuable goods were left exposed in broken shop windows and remained untouched.

Complaining to the Press conference about the spread of thefts of public property and about speculation, Dr. Nezvál said that these practices were carried on 'almost openly'. Only a few cases are reported to the authorities.

In the first half of this year judges in the Budapest districts passed sentences on altogether twenty-six persons accused of

speculation—a number clearly far short of the number of offences committed. It is obvious that the population are not co-operating with the authorities.

Cases in the civil courts which are worrying the authorities are those relating to the property of collective farms which dissolved during the revolution, those dealing with production contracts and leases, and with work relations in the factories.

These civil cases, most of which arise from the throwing off of restrictions and compulsions by the people in the October days, are proving difficult for the courts to settle in the absence of co-operation from the public.

It is not surprising, in face of the widespread resistance, that Kádár has gone back on his promise to hold elections. In his report to the National Assembly on May 9 he said:

'The National Assembly's mandate expires this year, and under normal conditions it should be dissolved and new elections proclaimed.

'The counter-revolutionary attack last October, however, profoundly disrupted public order and damaged the country's economy. The working population is now devoting itself to repairing the harm and healing the wounds.

'For this reason the Government considers that, in the present situation, it would not be right for us to spend our efforts on Parliamentary elections.

'We therefore move that, in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the Constitution, the mandate of the Na-

The Hungarian trade union newspaper *Nepakarat* last week reported 'unrest' among the workers of many Hungarian steel foundries.

This was due, it said, to the lowering of hourly wages, the danger of unemployment, and the fact that the workers were forced to work on Sundays.

tional Assembly be extended and general elections postponed.

'There can be no doubt that if the party, the government and the People's Patriotic Front were to lay aside other tasks of foremost importance to appeal to the country, the voters would, after a few months' campaign, elect, by an overwhelming majority, all candidates supported by the People's Patriotic Front.'

Everyone knows, of course, what this statement really means.

The army has been 'reorganized', but an essential part of this reorganization has consisted of taking away most of its arms, and all its heavy arms and allowing them only to the Soviet troops.

This has called forth one of the jokes current now in Budapest. It is related that a batch of recruits were finishing their first period of training. Their instructor said: 'Now we are going to let you go home on leave, but if there is any trouble in the country you will be recalled.'

One recruit stood up and said: 'Comrade Instructor, we have one question. If we are called back do we get our arms here or shall we bring them with us from home?'

DOCUMENT

ACCORDING to a Hungarian News and Information Service bulletin of July 15 (Special Service No. 1267) the Press attaché of the Hungarian Legation in London on July 10 sent the following letter to the editor of the *Daily Telegraph*:

Your issue of June 29 carried a report from Mr. Gordon Shepherd about an alleged wave of suicide among Hungarian intellectuals.

As your correspondent's account does not correspond with reality, and serves only to give an erroneous and misleading picture about the situation of intellectuals in my country, I wish to inform you about the real state of affairs.

1) Your report states that the Soós couple committed suicide 'under pressure from the police'.

In reality, Imre Soós was one of the most popular, extremely talented young artists in my country. Of peasant extraction, he rose to the front rank of Hungarian actors.

The official Hungarian cultural organizations gave him every help in his artistic endeavours.

During last year's counter-revolutionary events he was subject to severe personal attacks—actually from within the circle of the counter-revolutionaries. Imre Soós was in no way involved with the Hungarian police.

The opinion of his friends and acquaintances is that the suicide of Imre Soós and his wife was probably due to alcoholism (they were known addicts)—or more precisely domestic disagreements arising from it.

2) József Mátrai, former manager of the Village Theatre, 'believed to have committed suicide by jumping out of the window', had been suffering for years from a brain tumour.

He died from a brain haemorrhage on June 24 before an operation could be performed. Hungarian theatre life has suffered a great loss by his death.

3) Iván Darvas, who according to Mr. Gordon Shepherd is said to have died in prison hospital recently as a result of police interrogations, is in fact at present in custody and enjoys good health.

4) Viktor Fülöp, member of the State ballet corps, did not commit suicide as you report, though he did attempt it.

The reason was temporary disturbance of the balance of his

mind due to exhaustion from overwork.

Fortunately, his condition is not serious; he is making good progress and will go for convalescence when he is well enough.

I am surprised, dear Sir, that your newspaper, which is internationally known for its objectivity, should publish in its columns news so completely devoid of any real basis. I trust that you will publish this rebuttal.

Yours faithfully,
István Varga,
Press Attaché.

On July 11 the Managing Editor of the Daily Telegraph replied:

Dear Sir,

I have your letter of July 10 from which I observe that there is a conflict of evidence about the fate of the people you mention.

I am not disposed to allow Mr. Gordon Shepherd's account to be contradicted without giving him an opportunity to ascertain the facts for himself on the spot.

If, therefore, your Government would give him a visa for Hungary, I would be happy for him to go there and check on his story.

Yours faithfully,
Colin R. Coote,
Managing Editor.

'... YET EVERYWHERE HE IS IN CHAINS'

SIR L. PLUMMER asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies in which Colonial Territories the use of leg irons for the transportation or detention of prisoners is still permitted.

MR. PROFUMO: The use of leg irons is still permitted in twenty-three Colonial Territories but they have been used in recent years in Bahamas, Fiji, Kenya, the Federation of Nigeria, St. Vincent, Tanganyika and Uganda only. They are in no cases used as a punishment, but to prevent escape during transfer or to ensure that a prisoner does not injure himself or others.
(Hansard, July 9, 1957)

USSR

WHAT MADE BABUROV AFRAID

THE well-known writer Konstantin Simonov depicts in his story 'Panteleyev', published in No. 4 of the new magazine *Moskva*, an army officer who is shot for cowardice during the war.

Simonov shows that the roots of his cowardice lie in his experiences during Stalin's terror against the Soviet army leaders, when Tukhachevsky and others were murdered.

'Baburov was not a physical coward. During the Civil War he had taken part in battles and had even been awarded a sword of honour.

'But in 1937, as Military Commissar for the town of Kerch, he had suddenly been arrested. This was one of that wave of arrests that occurred in 1937—arrests which now, during the war, willy-nilly were recalled to mind by many. . . .

'When Baburov was arrested and they demanded that he confess to participating in some monstrous conspiracy about which he had not the faintest notion, he there and then took flight for the rest of his life. . . .

'And when after two years he was released from prison . . . he came out as a man sick with the most frightful of all human illnesses—he was afraid of his own actions.'

LT-COL. MAKRIDIN IS ASTONISHED

A RECENT issue of *Krasnaya Zvezda* [Red Star] features a letter, one of many received from its Army officer readers, protesting against the publication in the literary magazine *Moskva* of a story ('Flat No. 13', by A. Valtseva) in which the villain is a retired officer.

He is the object of his neighbours' envy in the block of flats where he lives because he and his family have three rooms to themselves, as well as a summer cottage.

His arrogance, not without a dash of anti-Semitism, is characterized by one of his neighbours as 'self-assertion through debasing others'.

The writer of the letter, Lt-Col. Makridin, is particularly offended by an episode in which the return of a rehabilitated prisoner, after seventeen years in a labour camp, causes embarrassment to the officer, who had apparently been connected with the original frame-up.

'The story's characters dream all the time of seeing the officer down on his hands and knees. . . . It is astonishing that the editors . . . should have published this false work.'

WHAT THEY READ IN THE SUBURBS

'NOT so long ago,' wrote N. A. Mikhailov in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* on July 13, 'a Soviet delegation was in Britain. On the outskirts of London we found ourselves in a workers' settlement.

'In one of the flats the head of the family showed us a shelf he had made himself, half-filled with the works of Soviet writers.

"These are my teachers," he said with pride and reverence. "Every day I consult them, to learn how to live, so as to be an honourable man."

'That is the attitude people have to Soviet literature and art the world over.'

Contrast the attitude of the public in the Soviet Union itself, as revealed in a recent article in *Kommunist*.

The writer complains of the huge editions printed of popular Western authors like Dumas and Conan Doyle—'an excessive predilection for the large-scale publication of best-selling translations, with a simultaneous limitation of editions of new works of Soviet literature'.

NEW JOURNAL ON CPSU HISTORY

Harry Pollitt (just elected honorary member of the Pioneer Troop, School No. 195, Leningrad) writes on 'The October Revolution and the British Working-Class Movement' in the new Soviet journal *Problems of CPSU History*.

HANGOVER FROM THE PAST?

By J. B. Salsberg

(This is the eighth in the series of articles 'Talks with Soviet Leaders on the Jewish Question')

THE socialist solution of the national question naturally occupied a very prominent place in the theoretical, organizational and propaganda work of Russian Marxists even before the revolution of 1917.

One of the first laws adopted by the workers' and peasants' government was a 'declaration on the rights of the peoples of Russia'.

When Stalin and several other leaders in 1922 showed, by their heavy-fisted methods used against the Georgians, that they were exhibiting Great-Russian chauvinist tendencies, Lenin, although seriously ill and confined to bed, felt it necessary to address a sharply critical letter on this subject to the Central Committee.

In this letter he demanded the punishment of those responsible and their public censure.

With the consolidation of the Stalin régime there began, in addition to all other manifestations of lawlessness, an assault on the rights of the various peoples inhabiting the USSR.

Under the cloak of combatting 'bourgeois nationalism' there were cruelly liquidated the most devoted revolutionary leaders of the Ukraine, Georgia and other nationalities. This was also the case with some of the earliest leaders in Birobidjan and with some of the Jewish leaders in Soviet Russia proper.

What I learned during my last trip to the USSR only complements and rounds out that section of Khrushchev's report in which are catalogued the heinous crimes committed against a whole number of Soviet peoples.

Khrushchev's terrible indictment chills the blood of every person with the slightest sensitivity.

Complete extinction of culture

And those who try to minimize the terrible consequences of the distorted Stalin policy on the national question do not deserve to remain as leaders and must not be entrusted with the fate of peoples.

If the violations of socialist principles disrupted the cultures of many smaller republics, in the case of Jewish culture the result was complete extinction.

Whereas those peoples possessing complete national characteristics—those living in compact masses on their own national territory—were able, even in the darkest days, to continue to express themselves in their own language and other national forms, even though constricted, Soviet Jewish culture was completely cut down.

Every tie between Yiddish cultural workers and those Jewish people who wholly or in part derived comfort and satisfaction from their creative endeavours was brutally torn apart. Every form of Jewish cultural expression was silenced at a single blow.

Even Jewish books disappeared from the libraries and book stores. The only thing that survived is a dimly flickering cultural candle for the several tens of thousands of Jews in Birobidjan.

The Twentieth Congress touched on the question. The resolution adopted declared:

'In its national policy, the Party has always proceeded from the Leninist principle that socialism, far from removing national distinctions and specific features, ensures the all-round development and efflorescence of the economies and cultures of all nations and nationalities. In future, too, the Party must attentively heed these specific features in all its practical activities.'

However, we can deny that the party always proceeded from 'the Leninist principle'. Theoretically, yes. But what Stalin did with this principle Khrushchev himself exposed.

But—and this is very important—I am convinced that the Soviet leaders and the party have still not returned to the path of principle on the national question.

Consistency of principle would require that if there can exist Russian schools in Kiev there should also be room for Ukrainian schools in Moscow.

Otherwise it smacks of Great-Russian chauvinism. What socialist principle could possibly lead to a leading Soviet spokesman appearing astounded at the idea that there should be Ukrainian, Georgian or Yiddish newspapers in Moscow, if there are sufficient people who desire to read and support such publications?

Even under the system of bourgeois democracy we have a multi-language press in Toronto, Winnipeg, New York, Chicago, Paris, London, etc. So why cannot a similar situation prevail in a socialist state?

Canada is a two-nation state. The French-Canadian nation resides mainly in the Province of Quebec. But there are also French-Canadian minorities in New Brunswick, in a number of districts in Ontario, in Manitoba, and in several other parts of the country.

Every socialist and every true democrat would fight against any attempt to prevent the French-Canadian people in these regions from publishing their own newspapers, from operating their own radio stations, etc.

We consider these rights neither as a favour or a concession but as a democratic right.

'Too many Jews', said Furtseva

So why does a Soviet leader today say that if a Ukrainian or a Georgian in Moscow wishes to read a paper in his own language, he can subscribe to it from Kiev or Tiflis?

Or take the matter of 'too many Jews' in certain 'government departments' (according to Madame Furtseva); or the dismissal of Jews from posts in certain republics because these latter have now developed their 'own intelligentsia' who can do the job; or the case of too many Jewish music students on a Soviet delegation. These are cases of injustice from every point of view.

And even in Poland recently certain people, even top leaders of the party, were advocating the Furtseva approach and agreed with Khrushchev's advice on the Abramovitch's and the Kowalskis.

These Polish leaders publicly agitated for a 'regulation of cadres', i.e., that there should not be too high a proportion of Jews in certain jobs.

Fortunately these so-called Marxists have been replaced in the leadership of the party and the government. The Polish party under Gomulka's leadership at its historic Eighth Plenum adopted the following resolution:

'The party condemns those views and methods that introduce into the ranks of the party artificial divisions based on national origin or discriminatory practices because of nationality, that lead to the awakening of anti-Semitic prejudices and other forms of nationalist tendencies, alien to the party's ideology and tending to demoralize the ranks of the party's cadre.

'The party's cadre policy must be based on well defined principles such as political or professional qualifications of the comrades concerned, their outlook, ideological maturity and moral behaviour, their connections with the masses and their self-sacrificing devotion to the cause of the working class and the interests of the working population.'

How Poland tackles the problem

And this resolution, you must remember, has been adopted in Poland, where anti-Semitism has deep roots and still exists among the backward sections of the population! And this only ten years after the beginning of socialist construction and not 40 years, as is the case in the Soviet Union!

The Polish party is tackling the problem the way Lenin did. Unfortunately the present leaders of the USSR are not pursuing such a policy at the present time.

Certainly the approach to the national question has been much improved since Stalin's death. Handing back to the Soviet republics certain administrative responsibilities which were previously centralized in Moscow, is the most important illustration of this trend.

But there are still many things that have to be done in order to correct the fatal errors on the national question. And the hitherto official approach to the Jews and to Jewish cultural problems is the most striking example of those hangovers from the past which still persist and which illustrate the continued wrong attitude to the national problem.

(To be concluded)

USA

ONE WORKER IN FIVE LOSES JOB

From Our Los Angeles Correspondent

THE Southern California aircraft industry has been jolted by the announcement that 10,000 North American aviation workers are to be laid off because of the Air Force cancellation of its Navaho guided missile contract.

North American employs 51,000 people in this state, so the layoffs will slice one-fifth off its working force. This represents over a million dollar loss in the weekly payroll of the Los Angeles area.

Behind the cancellation and layoffs is a massive change in the pattern of arms production. Without reducing its 7,000 million dollar yearly budget in this field, the Pentagon is shifting from aeroplanes to guided missiles at an accelerated pace.

At the same time the Air Force is scrapping its older missile designs to make way for new intercontinental ballistic missiles. The Navaho, which reportedly cost 500 million dollars to

develop, was one of the first postwar models of an atomic warhead carrier.

These cutbacks and changes are shaking up the whole aircraft industry, which is the nation's foremost employer of manufacturing workers. About 900,000 people are now on aircraft payrolls, almost ten per cent more than are working in the American motor-car industry.

By 1961 the Air Force, which buys seventy per cent of the aircraft and missile output, plans to cut its current expenditures for planes and engines by one half.

By contrast, spending for missiles, which has been rising fast, will soar. By 1961 projected missile purchases are to increase sixfold, from about 500 millions in 1956 to an annual level of 3,000 million dollars.

These shifts in spending from aircraft to missiles and from airframes and parts to electronic equipment involve a tremendous shrinkage in aircraft facilities.

Still greater shutdowns are in store for the big aircraft plants, which will bring unemployment to many more thousands. The layoffs are expected to hit their peak next spring.

It is estimated that from 100,000 to 400,000 persons will be out of jobs when the shakedown is completed.

LETTERS | New party — or old sect writ large?

THAT GOES FOR ME TOO, HAROLD

THE letter by Harold Reynolds expressed my own views entirely. The need is for serious work to lay now the basis for a new Marxist party in Britain.

Comrade Reynolds raises the question of the need for a Marxist League. That is the view of the Socialist Workers' Federation, of which I am national secretary.

A revolutionary party is required not because some comrade may think it a good idea, but because it is an absolute necessity if we are ever to achieve a socialist Britain.

To succumb to reformism, as many appear to be doing, is objectively to help the continuation of the capitalist system.

Neither the Labour Party nor the Communist Party can guide the workers in their struggle for socialism. Therefore as Marxists we must begin anew.

To enter the Labour Party is in fact to look for a short cut, assuming that those who are entering still retain their Marxist beliefs.

Let us remember the position in the Liverpool Exchange constituency, when the members did not want Bessie Bradock as the candidate because she supported German rearmament. The Labour Party National Executive threatened those who opposed her with expulsion, and some members were expelled.

Let us build a party that will be guided by the interests of the British workers, in association with their comrades in other countries.

Liverpool, 15.

Eric S. Heffer

LET'S STAY WHERE THE WORKERS ARE

I THINK Harold Reynolds is wrong on two counts. There is no evidence of 'shameful kotowing' or 'superstitious reverencing' before the reformist Labour Party on the part of former Communist Party members who have joined the Labour Party.

They have not forgotten 1914, 1926, 1931, and are as aware of the nature and policies of the leadership as are non-party socialists or Communist Party members.

Betrayals will continue in the Labour Party as long as the organized working class remains as politically ignorant (or apathetic) as it is at present.

So long as it remains so it is worse than useless to set up any new party, however 'truly Marxist' it may be. It will remain a sect and thereby canalize into a backwater those who would be militant socialists.

Our only hope is to have all our militant socialists inside

the party which represents the workers, to work to overthrow the reformist leadership and instal a real socialist one.

It may take a long time, but it is the only way, because only in the unions and Labour Party do we have the mass of the organized workers.

It is at least arguable that had British Marxists followed a different line from the early twenties onwards the Labour Party might have evolved differently. Might not indeed the General Strike possibly have been successful?

London, N.2.

Beatrix Tudor-Hart

AN EXCELLENT PRINCIPLE—UNAPPLIED

Reviewing Mao Tse-tung's 'Contradictions' speech in the Communist Party's London District Bulletin, Kay Beauchamp makes some criticisms and writes:

'I mention these two points because I think that however much we admire the source from which ideas come, we should examine them critically and make up our own minds about them.'

Alas, there is no sign that the party's Executive Committee applied this excellent principle to Khrushchev's statement about the Moscow changes. They seem to have swallowed that hook, line and sinker!

London, N.

A. Jenkins

LESSONS OF STALINIST ANTI-SEMITISM

J. B. SALSBERG'S articles shed much light on the attitude of Khrushchev and Co. to the Jewish problem that exists in the USSR.

But there exists a real danger of Jewish communists like Salsberg reacting in a narrow fashion to the unforgivable crimes of Stalin and his henchmen against the Jewish people.

First of all, it must be recognized—and this Salsberg is himself anxious to point out—that the early days of the Soviet regime were characterized by the 'boundless confidence and understanding Lenin had for the Jewish masses'.

Secondly, the sharp break in the confidence that existed between the Jewish masses and the Soviet leaders took place exactly at the point that the Soviet leadership ceased to be the true expression of the interests of Soviet society.

In the struggle conducted by Stalin against the Left Opposition he openly appealed to the backward anti-Semitic traits of sections of the Soviet population.

The extermination of the 'Jewish' Old Bolsheviks carried out during the Moscow Trials was welcomed by the Nazis as well as the Soviet bureaucrats, who saw the Old Bolsheviks as the inheritors of the great liberating ideas of the October Revolution.

(Continued overleaf)

LETTERS (Continued from previous page)

The other side of this 'Soviet' anti-Semitism is equally important. The growth of Stalinist anti-Semitism induced in certain layers of the Jewish sections of the Soviet bureaucracy strong nationalist trends.

Illusions about Israel, about Zionism, about separate Jewish problems emerged as a reaction to Stalinist anti-Semitism. This was particularly true in Eastern Europe.

Unfortunately the physical liquidation of the Left Opposition, which in the early days of the Stalinist ascendancy (1923-36) was able to effect an easy transition for the Left-wing Poale Zion workers and intellectuals towards internationalism, removed the sheet-anchor which might well have held many Soviet Jews from Utopian Zionist and quasi-Zionist solutions to the problems of Stalinist anti-Semitism.

The truth about the crimes against Soviet Jewry should spur Jewish communists to rediscover and restudy Lenin's attitude to the problem of nationalities and the Jewish people.

Anti-Semitism and Jewish national exclusiveness are two sides of the same coin. These are the realistic and socialist conclusions to be drawn, I feel, from Salsberg's articles.

London, N.W.8.

E. Bergman

JOURNAL

First of the Forums

One new magazine, and two exceptionally interesting issues of not-quite-so-new ones, make a fine packet of holiday reading.

The new one first. Its name is Forum, it is edited by Roy Harrison and Michael Segal, and it has an elegant shop-window in the shape of an eye-catching cover design by Gloria Cigman.

An editorial makes it clear that Forum seeks, not to supplant any of the existing Left reviews, but to keep the local forums in touch with each other and to publish their findings.

Focus on fertilization

Other aims are to draw readers' attention to important articles in other socialist magazines—though this is not done in the first issue—and to provide discussion material for the forums 'and act as a focal point for the cross-fertilization of ideas within the British Labour movement'.

This first, experimental issue (if it is successful regular monthly publication will begin in September) includes a discussion between Ian Ramsay and Harold Reynolds (both names are known to Newsletter readers) on 'Is Marxism Impaired?', a piece on 'The Engineering Dispute' by John Hughes and a report by Pauline Harrison on the Wortley conference of Forums last April.

Forum costs a shilling, and can be obtained from 38, Warrington Crescent, London, W.9.

Sign of the times

Labour Review No. 4 breaks new ground. When before has a magazine in which Trotskyists are co-operating opened its pages to a long and detailed attack on Trotsky and Trotskyism?

Don't rub your eyes—buy Labour Review and read it. The author, R. W. Davies, has almost five pages to make his case, and there is a reply by Leonard Hussey (who did that incisive article in The New Reasoner on Rothstein's latest book).

Here, surely, is a sign of the new atmosphere in which the discussion is going forward. Davies' readiness to debate inspires far more respect than the proscriptive terms and 'don't-talk-to-those-fascist-hyenas' tone of the recent King Street political letter.

Labour Review also has a most thought-provoking piece by Joseph Redman, the author of the first Reasoner pamphlet, in which he discusses the General Strike period from a new and stimulating angle. I hear that Redman is now working on yet another contribution to British communist history, entitled 'From "Social-Fascism" to People's Front (1933-36)'.

Labour Review costs two shillings, and can be obtained from New Park Publications Ltd., 266, Lavender Hill, London, S.W.11.

Rich and readable

Last but not least, Universities and Left Review has made its second bow—with format, paper and general appearance infinitely improved, and contents just as rich and varied as ever.

There is a discussion on 'Socialism and the Intellectuals', to which E. P. Thompson replies; another on Richard Hoggart's book 'The Uses of Literacy', well-informed and eminently readable articles on art criticism (by John Berger), films, science, and 'Can Capitalism Survive?' and two quite sumptuous photographic supplements.

Universities and Left Review costs 3s. 6d., and can be obtained from the Business Manager, Magdalen College, Oxford.

Which of these three to buy? You'll miss a great deal if you don't buy all three; they're complementary—and just right for that nodal point in a holiday when you want to regain contact with the outside world.

Discussion in the autumn

'Where is that Communist Party "discussion journal"?' asked last week's Newsletter. Last week's World News carried the answer: it's coming out in October.

Who is to edit this long-awaited successor to Modern Quarterly and Marxist Quarterly?

The announcement has not yet been made. But one of our friends at King Street says John Gollan is to be editor and James Klugmann assistant editor.

Now here is another question. When are volumes three and four of Harry Pollitt's Selected Articles and Speeches going to appear?

One word alone

When volume one came out in 1953, it was announced that the series would be completed within a year. Four years later, it's still stuck fast on the eve of the Second World War—just about the time when Harry wrote his 'How to Win the War'.

Incidentally, volume one of this series contains a pretty remarkable example of editing. Pollitt told the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International in 1935 that British communists rejected the idea that socialism could be won 'through Parliament'.

In the Selected Articles and Speeches this is changed to 'through Parliament alone'. One word—but what a difference.

The name of the editor? Emile Burns.

Adventure in Leningrad

John Peck, the Communist Party's district organizer in the East Midlands, has just come back from Russia with a story of how he and a friend were arrested in Leningrad.

They offended public modesty, it seems, by 'wearing shorts in the open street'. Who do you suppose got them out of clink? The British vice-consul.

On the picture postcards Peck sent his friends he wrote—to show how democratic they are in Russia—that even in football, after a match, official objections to a referee's decision can be made.

Apparently the result of the match is not official until the appeals committee has finally decided the result.

So fierce is the democratic debate on this subject, says Peck, that the result of the championship match of 1951 is still under consideration! What a pity for Molotov and Malenkov that they couldn't appeal to this committee.

WINCOTT (Continued from front page)

Rose Cohen went to Moscow with her husband in the thirties and disappeared. Hugo Rathbone, then assistant editor of the Labour Monthly, who is Rose Cohen's brother-in-law, withdrew from political activity in protest, it is understood. One prominent party leader—the wife of a political committee member—commented: 'I expect she opened her big mouth too wide.'

It is to be hoped that this is not the attitude of Gollan, and that he is engaged in finding out what happened to Rose Cohen.

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