

# THE NEWSLETTER

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a service to socialists

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## 'STRIKES? NO - RESPONSIBILITY', SAY TUC LEADERS

By Our Industrial Correspondent

**T**HE 89th Trades Union Congress took place in a year which has seen the biggest and most bitter class battles since 1926. The employing class is preparing to press home its attack on the workers' standards. The echoes of the busmen's, marketmen's and dockers' struggles have hardly died away.

But no one listening to the first two days' talks at the Blackpool Opera House would have thought so. The workers' struggles seem remote in the lounge of the Imperial Hotel, where General Council members and national officials lunch à la carte and expensively.

The tone for the TUC was set by Sir Tom Williamson in his opening address. Instead of preparing the trade union movement for the inevitable battles to come, he launched into an attack on unofficial strikes and the use of industrial action for political ends.

'As a movement,' he said, 'we renounce any challenge to the sovereignty of Parliament. However we dislike a government—and I am certain we have no affection for this one—we renounce the temptation to dislodge it by industrial action.'

So as far as Sir Tom is concerned the Tories can go ahead, and he will make pious speeches—and do his best to prevent any opposition with teeth in it.

Sir Tom had 'no time whatever' for unofficial strikers. Even official disputes would be unnecessary if the employers realized their responsibilities. Employers and trade unionists should seek to build on what they had so far achieved, and promote their common interest in industrial success.

'It is still an unrecognized marvel of our day that while working together so many get on so well for so long,' he added. (Covent Garden workers, please note.)

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In a session on inter-union disputes W. Hagerly (National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers), speaking on the General Council's report on the dispute between his union and the Transport and General Workers' Union, said the NASD was doing its best to comply with the TUC's ruling.

The NASD was in difficulties because of the loss of the court case, but it was doing all it could to put its house in order. He hoped that meetings with the TUC and TGWU would soon be held to solve the problem.

He pleaded for the right of the 'blue' union to be represented on negotiating bodies in the northern ports, and for a united effort by the two unions to overcome the serious problem of non-unionism.

T. O'Leary (TGWU) rejected this appeal. 'If there is non-unionism in the ports it is the fault of the "blue" union, who came in to wreck the set-up which was working very well.'

Frank Cousins (TGWU), supporting the motion for an immediate increase in old age pensions, failed to answer the main question: what happens if the government refuses to give justice to the old folk?

A delegate of the Scottish painters suggested one answer: 'Let the movement use its industrial strength.'

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Seconding the National Union of Railwaymen's trade union reorganization motion Bryn Roberts (National Union of Public Employees) spoke of the need for a better type of trade union official with an attractive salary.

Brian Behan (Amalgamated Union of Building Trade  
(Continued overleaf, col. 2)

## 1917-1957

On November 7 The Newsletter will publish a special, enlarged issue devoted to the fortieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

This commemoration issue will be a symposium on many aspects of Soviet life and progress, shortcomings and achievements, in the past forty years.

The articles are being written by authorities in the various fields; and there is no doubt that subscribers will find the special issue a valuable and authoritative document of permanent value.

## HUNGARY

### STRANGEST WHITE TERROR IN HISTORY

THE Kádár Government has issued the third volume of its 'White Book' on last autumn's 'counter-revolution'. It gives a list of communists who were killed by freedom fighters.

There are 201 names on this list—and it turns out that 166 of them were members of the AVH, the hated security police. Of the remainder, 26 were party officials or in the service of the AVH.

The Kádár regime has been claiming that 'White terror' was raging in Hungary on the eve of the second Soviet intervention (November 4, 1956) and that thousands of communists were lynched by mobs.

Of the 2,829 persons who were imprisoned by revolutionaries between October 23 and November 4, over 2,000, it turns out, were members of the AVH.

The number of communists and socialists executed by the Kádár Government since the revolution was repressed is reliably reported to exceed 201—and the number held in jail far exceeds 2,829.

## SCIENCE

### MISSILE MAKES 'DEFENCE' OBSOLETE PUNCTURES 'DETERRENT' SHAM

By J. H. Bradley

THE NEW Soviet claim to have tested an inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM) is technically plausible, but it is not possible to answer the most interesting questions about it.

Hundreds of contradictory statements are made in America about missile development, depending on whether the purpose

(Continued on back page, col. 2)

## COMMENTARY

### Nationalization

**T**HE Gaitskell policy of buying shares in the open market as an alternative to nationalization has met with a hostile reception from many Constituency Labour Parties and from several trade unions. Their feelings are expressed in an amendment which appears on the final agenda for the forthcoming Labour Party conference in the name of the National Union of Railwaymen.

The NUR asks that the policy statement *Industry and Society* be referred back to the National Executive Committee 'in order that a clear, unambiguous policy document can be prepared and issued indicating the industries to be brought under public ownership by the next Labour government'. There is no doubt that if the vote on this question at Brighton truly expresses the temper of the rank and file, then *Industry and Society* will be rejected.

The attitude of some representatives of the Left wing in the party, however, is hardly calculated to achieve this. Ian Mikardo, for instance, says that *Industry and Society* could give us more nationalization in the next few years than we have ever had; it is all a question of who carries it out; if the statement is rejected it will not be because it is wrong, but 'because the statements of our leaders have convinced the rank and file that those leaders will make only a milk-and-water effort in implementing it'.

If a policy statement is capable of several interpretations then by that alone it stands condemned. — But *Industry and Society* is quite clear. It is a programme to leave power in the hands of the capitalist class. Its share-buying proposals are no substitute for the socialist policies demanded by the rank and file.

How can Left-wing leaders oppose the Right wing without opposing their policies and educating the rank and file by telling them the truth about these policies? Socialist leadership is more than struggles in closed committees. It means leading a fight in which the whole movement participates.

The next Labour government will need to arouse enthusiasm among the workers. No programme of vague 'assurances to consider . . .', 'under certain circumstances we will . . .' can inspire anyone. The movement needs some fire in its belly, not milk and water.



**B**IG BUSINESS is waging an offensive against the workers. It is probing the strength of working-class organization. The test of every leader is how he helps to prepare the movement, not only for defence but for a counter-offensive. Either the Labour movement curbs the employers—or they and their government will chop piecemeal at our standards and conditions.

A serious fight for real nationalization—with the workers helping to run the industries in which they work—is important from the point of view of 'old-fashioned' socialist principles. It is equally important as part of the practical defence of the workers against the employers' offensive.

TUC (Continued from front page)

Workers) retorted: 'I am not concerned with the problems of officials' salaries and conditions. That is a matter for debate.'

'I am concerned with strengthening trade union organization to meet the employers' attacks.'

\* \* \*

The section of the General Council report dealing with Hungary provoked a debate in which three points of view were expressed.

**Leo McGree** (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers) went to the rostrum to defend the King Street view hook, line and sinker.

He said the General Council report ignored the facts—the thousands of counter-revolutionary agents pouring over the border, the Horthyite officers, Radio Free Europe and so on.

The Stalinist story grows with every telling: Mr. McGree tried to make delegates' flesh creep with the story of the hanging of Jews.

**Bob Edwards** (Chemical Workers' Union) and a violently anti-communist Clerical and Administrative Workers' Union delegate defended the General Council report.

**Brian Behan** said every socialist must agree that the main responsibility lay with the failure of the Hungarian Communist Party to remain true to Marxism and to the people.

'It is true there were White elements,' he said. 'But that was not the main trend. We must condemn the Rakosi-Gero and Kádár régimes. But the British trade unions must show that their solidarity with the Hungarian workers has nothing in common with the capitalist gangsters.'

'The socialist gains made in Hungary—the socialization of the factories, the division of the land—must be defended, while we condemn the Stalinist régime.'

The Hungarian workers wanted to build a democratic structure on the social basis already achieved, Mr. Behan added.

It was noticeable that while Mr. McGree received no applause, not even from Communist Party delegates, many communists in the hall clapped Mr. Behan's speech. Both spoke in their personal capacities.

## The Week at a Glance

**CYPRUS:** Two Greek Cypriots, aged 25 and 19, were sentenced to death for carrying arms and ammunition.

**CZECHOSLOVAKIA:** Expressing concern at the aging of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, Rude Pravo wrote that in one district 26 per cent of members are over 60 and only 2.9 per cent younger than 26.

**SOUTH AFRICA:** Mr. Patrick Duncan, son of a former governor-general of South Africa, who is national organizer of the South African Liberal Party, was informed that his passport will not be renewed.

**AFGHANISTAN:** The Afghanistan government revealed that it has spent nearly £9 million on buying arms from the Soviet Union because it could not find 'favourable conditions' in the U.S. or elsewhere.

**JORDAN:** The military governor-general approved sentences of fifteen years' imprisonment with hard labour passed by a military court on four men for belonging to the illegal Communist Party and spreading communist propaganda.

**INDIA:** The Kerala State Legislative Assembly passed without a division the bill, sponsored by the communist government, empowering the government to take over government-aided private schools on the ground of mismanagement. The measure must receive the state governor's assent before it becomes law.

### SAYING OF THE WEEK

'We were sincere when we wept as we stood beside Stalin's bier.'—N. S. Khrushchev, in *Kommunist*, no. 12.

## PRESS

### THE PRESS ON THE PRINCE

HAVING BEEN appealed to by the joint headmaster of Cheam School to leave the boys 'severely alone' after Monday's open day to reporters and photographers, most newspapers had one last fling on Tuesday.

The Mirror ('It's No Feather Bed for Charles'), the Sketch ('No-Bounce Bed for Prince Charles') and the Mail ('A Bed Fit for a Prince') found the hard-bed angle most newsworthy. But there were disagreements.

What, for instance, are the beds and mattresses made of in the dormitory where the Duke of Cornwall will sleep? The beds are made of 'iron' (Telegraph, Express)—or 'solid white wood' (Mail). The mattresses are 'horse-hair' (Mail)—or 'flock' (Guardian).

How old are the beds? '200-year-old' (Sketch)—anyway, 'more than 100 years old' (Mirror).

And the colour of the dormitory walls? 'Greenish yellow' (Telegraph)—or perhaps 'kicked-about green paintwork' (Sketch).

What time will Charles go to bed? According to the Sketch, Mirror and Telegraph, '6.30 p.m.' The Times, Guardian and Express indulgently give him a quarter of an hour's grace: '6.45'.

The decorations on the walls of the dining room? 'Several sets of antlers and a fox's mask' (Telegraph); 'three stags' heads, a fox's mask and a dubious Venetian oil painting' (Guardian).

Refractory pupils get what is called 'P.D.' These initials stand for 'punishment drill' (Guardian, Times)—or 'prep. detention' (Mirror).

More severe punishment? 'A caning for the bad lads . . . that's life at Cheam' (Herald)—on the other hand 'the stick "in the customary place" . . . is not often necessary' (Times).

Pocket money (25s. a term) is 'carefully doled out' (Mirror)—yet 'the boys receive credits and handle no money' (Times).

It was left to the Sketch (as if you hadn't guessed) to find a romantic angle. A blonde one, at that.

'Blonde Mary Beck—seven-year-old daughter of Mr. F. P. Beck, one of the school's two heads—whispered: 'I hope to get a chance to play with him. We might play "kick-the-peg". That's a special Cheam game of hide-and-seek in the shrubberies.'

## ECONOMICS

### ONE WISE MAN'S DREAM—OR NIGHTMARE?

By an Economic Correspondent

THE 'three wise men'—the 'independent and impartial committee' that is to review prices, profits, productivity and wages—has held its first meeting.

One of its members, Sir Dennis Robertson, gave the Stamp Memorial Lecture in November 1954, and it is very revealing to observe some of the 'impartial' things he had to say on wages.

The lecture took the form of a dream in which Sir Dennis was called on to sit on a court of inquiry on wages. A militant trade unionist would call it more of a nightmare, for Sir Dennis warned his audience that he would approach the subject in the 'most academic and aggravating way'.

In an inflationary spiral, he said, even if we think that from a long-run point of view the money wage-level is too low, we should not wish to see it rise, for fear that such a rise should simply add fuel to the inflationary flames without causing any appreciable rise in wage-rates. He missed the point that during this period inflation is ravaging the workers' living standards!

On the question of a wage in one trade being below the general wage level, Sir Dennis believes the gap could be maintained if the work in the trade is safe and does not demand high skills.

Thus in the interests of the equilibrium of the industry the gap should remain and we should frown, he says, 'on any

attempt to obliterate it as being dictated by a bogus and damaging pseudo-egalitarianism'.

He goes on to say that 'more often than not you will find me arguing on the side of giving a wage-gap a fair chance to perform its economic function instead of ironing it out prematurely in the name of distributive justice'.

Sir Dennis's views are dangerously akin to the latest warnings of company directors that a showdown with labour must come soon.

In his advice to the then imaginary court of inquiry he warned that his analysis and statistics 'will disclose less agreeable possibilities, namely a number of cases in which we ought, either certainly or possibly, to reply to an application for an increase in hosiery wages by recommending a decrease'.

Sir Dennis also made the proposal recently that we should have some unemployment as a solution to inflation.

## SYRIA

### 'RED PLOT?' THESE ARE THE FACTS

By Abu Ali

THE popular Press has been doing its best to convince the British public that Syria has become a Russian satellite.

In fact the existing regime is the first comparatively democratic one that Syria has ever had. It came to power at a general election in 1954, after the overthrow of the Sheishekly dictatorship.

The present coalition government was formed last year. It mainly consists of Right-wing elements: the conservative National Party and the Parliamentary Democratic Front, composed of professional politicians, business men and land-owners.

Two posts only in the government are held by the Left-wing Arab Baath Socialist Party. This is a social-democratic party whose slogans are Arab unity, positive neutrality and economic and social reforms: it has branches (all of them illegal) in other Arab countries.

### Pressure of the people

This coalition has a majority in Parliament. Only the pressure of the people has forced it to follow a policy of Arab unity and independence.

The Syrian Communist Party contested twenty-two seats in the last election and won only one (Parliament has 142 seats).

The Syrian army is controlled by a group of officers who do not belong to any political organization. It is recognized, however, that they are in close relationship with the Baath Socialist Party.

This group has continuously resisted American pressure and bribery. In 1954 Aduan Almaliki, assistant Chief of Staff, leader of the army group and a close sympathizer of the Baath—was assassinated by a member of the fascist Syrian National Social Party.

When the government seized this party's offices in Damascus they discovered documents linking it with the American Embassy.

At the time of the Suez invasion another attempt to overthrow the régime was made. This time it was directed by the British and French, with the participation of both the Iraqi and Lebanese Governments.

### Money and arms smuggled in

Money and arms were smuggled into Syria to Druse and Bedouin tribes. Ex-officers and members of the Right-wing People's Party were also involved.

The latest attempt at a coup d'état took place last August. The Syrian Government has accused the American Military Attaché and the Syrian Government has accused the American 'expert' Mr. Stone—who is said to have directed the successful overturn of Mossadig in Persia—together with Sheishekly, the ex-dictator, of being involved in this adventure.

After the failure of the August coup d'état the U.S. State Department begun its campaign alleging a 'Red Plot' in Syria.

(Continued overleaf)



**SYRIA (Continued from previous page)**

Nothing is further from the truth, as both the present army and political set-up clearly show.

In the past the Syrian Government has approached the West for economic help. Such help was offered only on conditions which would have meant a direct interference in Syrian affairs.

Last year the World Bank was asked by the Syrian Government for a loan to build a dam at Yousef Pasha. Such a dam would mean the irrigation of a large area of now semi-desert land.

The Bank demanded the right to direct the investment of the loan and supervise the whole scheme. It demanded that the Syrian Government make its contracts for the scheme only with companies recommended by the Bank.

In addition to a high rate of interest, it made the loan conditional upon political conditions in line with American policies for the Middle East. Syria was required to cooperate with UNRRA in the resettlement of Palestinian refugees in Syria.

The Syrian Government refused the loan on these conditions. (It must be added that it opposes the last condition because it is against the forcible resettlement of refugees who want to return to their homes in Palestine).

America's aim in Syria is the overthrow of the present régime and the establishment of a reactionary dictatorship which will secure oil interests and enter the Baghdad Pact.

**SOUTH AFRICA****WESTERN VALUES, SOUTH AFRICAN STYLE**

LEADING member of the Natal provincial council, Mr. Lester Hall, outlining the 'terrifying inroads into the civil liberties of the people of South Africa by Nationalist legislation' this week summarized as follows the repressive legislation of the past few years:

Under the **Suppression of Communism Act**, as amended, the Minister of Justice can deprive citizens of their legal rights and status without trial.

Under the **Group Areas Act** the government is permitted to remove groups of the population, black or white, from residential or trading sites on the basis of racial discrimination.

The **Passport Regulations Act** grants vicious powers to the Minister to make people prisoners in their own land without disclosing the reasons.

The **Native Urban Areas Amendment Act** gives officials of any local authority the right to banish any African from the area without giving reasons.

The **Prohibition of Interdicts Act** denies a banished person access to the courts until he or she has complied with the banishment order.

The **Criminal Procedure Act** gives the police the right to enter and search any premises at any time of the day or night without a search warrant.

Under the **Criminal Laws Amendment Act** anyone who protests against any of these laws is liable on first conviction to a fine of £300, or three years' imprisonment, or a flogging of ten strokes, or any two of these penalties.

**Month in a labour camp**

Mr. Hall gave some examples of how these powers were being used:

1) An African municipal employee in Johannesburg, wearing official overalls and a badge, could not produce his registration book on demand.

He was arrested, given no chance to get his book from his home or tell his family what had happened, and taken away to a labour camp in another part of the country.

He was found there a month later after extensive inquiries had been made with the help of a European lawyer.

2) While an African lorry owner was delivering goods in Johannesburg his 15-years-old nephew who was with him disappeared.

The boy was eventually traced to a place outside the city, where he had been taken as a farm labourer after being arrested without warrant and taken away without trial.

3) An American citizen, Mrs. Mary Louise Hooper, was arrested and put into prison at five o'clock one morning. The Minister said he was having her deported, but refused to state any reasons.

Mrs. Hooper began a legal action for unlawful arrest, and the Minister settled the case by paying her £1,400.

**POLAND****CHANGING VIEWS ON WORKERS' COUNCILS**

By Tony Guthrie

This is the first in a series of articles giving the background to the forthcoming visit to Yugoslavia by a Polish party and government delegation, which is expected to include Mr. Gomulka and Mr. Cyrankiewicz, the Prime Minister.

LAST October the Poles challenged bureaucracy and orthodox Stalinism. In his Eighth Plenum speech (October 1956) Gomulka declared workers' councils to be one of the future lines of socialist development in Poland.

Then came the brutal suppression of the Hungarian revolution and with it the destruction of the Hungarian workers' councils. At the same time came a change for the worse in Soviet policy towards Yugoslavia.

For reasons of geography and expediency the Polish United Workers' Party leadership began to cry off. Their ardour towards workers' councils became tempered with caution.

**Friendly, but cautious**

Statements about Yugoslavia, while remaining friendly, became cautious. Leaders emphasized differences between the Yugoslav and Polish roads to socialism.

By the Ninth Plenum (May 1957) Gomulka had mapped out a harmless role for the workers' councils; he made it clear that in the view of his central committee they should have no real power, but should act mainly in an advisory capacity. This was a marked retreat from the Eighth Plenum.

However the Poles were in a dilemma. They still are. In spite of the Polish Trades Union Congress declaring in favour of trade unions independent of government domination, and its strong support of workers' councils, the former deplorable record of the trade unions has been neither forgotten nor forgiven.

Many workers bypass or ignore the trade unions altogether. At the same time they distrust the factory managements.

With the fall of Molotov there has been a further change. Relations with Yugoslavia are now becoming openly enthusiastic.

**Increase in confidence**

The most decisive effect of this has been an increase in the confidence of the workers' councils. Many Polish leaders are now stressing co-operation and the need to learn from the Yugoslav experience.

In recent weeks the split between the extreme Left and the semi-orthodox (who cling to old formulas and long to re-establish party control of the trade unions) has grown. The result has been a wobble, and confusion, in policy.

This vacillation reached its climax with the Lodz strike.

Gomulka dealt with this strike in a speech made in Cracow. The things he said about a section of the hostile foreign Press seeking to foment revolt against people's power are true.

It is also true that there are really hostile elements who will incite workers, professional people or anyone they can deceive.

What is more serious, it is a fact that the Poles are living in a financial nightmare.

Yet Gomulka's claim that the strike was led by trouble-

makes who misled a further ten per cent does not bear examination.

If the strike was 'wild', 'irresponsible' and led by trouble makers why did Gomulka say almost in the same breath that 'the management of the Lodz tramways, which misled the workers with various promises impossible of fulfilment, is to a large degree responsible for this strike'?

Clearly those most flagrantly 'irresponsible' were the management of the Lodz tramways. In such a case no socialist has the right to hurl invective primarily at the strikers.

The deplorable results of such vacillation and confusion are now known. The PUWP has been very honest about the economic situation; it has gone far in justifying the claims of the strikers; it has told the cruel truth that it can afford no further increases in Lodz or elsewhere.

## Child Care in E. Germany: Beatrix Tudor-Hart

I RECENTLY attended a conference on 'child physical and mental hygiene' which was held in East Berlin.

Speakers came from the USSR (five out of 50), Poland, Czechoslovakia, the German Federal Republic, Greece, Austria and Britain.

Besides myself, the speakers from London were Mr. James Robertson of the Tavistock Clinic, who showed his two excellent films 'A Two-Year-Old Goes to Hospital' and 'A Mother and Child Go to Hospital'; Dr. Luise Gellner, a psychiatrist who specializes in mental defect; and Dr. P. Sylvester of the Fountain Hospital, London's chief hospital for mentally defective children.

### Children in nurseries

The conference was held under the auspices of the German Democratic Republic's Institute of Social Hygiene (part of Humboldt University), several members of which have for some years been carrying out experiments on child development in the nurseries and kindergartens.

As East German mothers have been asked to do full-time work, provision is made not only for day nurseries but for weekly and permanent ones for young children who have both parents and a normal home; for many years there has been a campaign to encourage mothers to place young babies in these institutions.

In a GDR medical journal in 1955 one of the Institute's investigators wrote that at that time there were 40,000 babies aged up to three years in the nursery homes (and presumably many more aged three to seven in the kindergartens).

Every year this number increased by several thousands as new homes were opened.

The investigation showed—as we discovered earlier through our Curtis Report on residential institutions in England—that the babies in weekly and permanent homes were retarded in their development in every way as compared with similar babies living either completely at home or attending a day nursery.

### Need personal relationships

The report stressed the need of young children for something resembling home life and the personal relationships which this affords, and the impossibility of weekly or permanent nurseries providing this.

It was noticeable that both Mr. Robertson and myself (I was asked on the strength of my book 'Toys, Play and Discipline in Childhood') received the most enthusiastic applause—not for ourselves (the audience knew nothing about us) but for the papers we presented.

We had the longest list of members of the audience who wished to have copies of our papers.

As far as we could tell, on the first day we were the only speakers who referred to human feelings and emotions and the need for adequate and warm personal relationships in early life.

I visited many institutions and found that, in spite of its poverty and difficulties, the GDR is making enormous sacrifices to provide young children with the best that is available.

Yet it has made it clear that it fears the direct power of the workers and will negotiate only through the trade unions, which are still regarded by many as a government authority.

The refusal to meet strike leaders had its logical and grim result—tear gas and intimidation.

The significance of Lodz is the absence of any mention of a workers' council and the continued existence of bureaucracy in sections of the administration.

Workers' councils are not a 'new' Polish idea. They existed all over Poland in 1945 and were suppressed two years later.

Contrary to conclusions reached by Andrew Rothstein in Labour Monthly, workers' councils are rarely or never 'counter-revolutionary', for they arise in response to economic and organizational needs, whether in Hungary, Poland or elsewhere.

Children's hospitals are the last word in every modern convenience; children's homes are magnificently built and very generously furnished and equipped, much finer than most of our own.

This is in great contrast to the devastation that still exists in Berlin, which was almost destroyed during the war.

Yet the methods of child care, while unimpeachable from the medical and hygienic points of view, are still very much behind many of our similar institutions from the point of view of understanding small children's emotional and intellectual needs.

It was therefore very significant that such persons as we were asked to attend the conference and speak to it. The East Germans are recognizing their shortcomings in this direction at least and are determined to improve what requires improvement.

There are still plenty of doctors, nurses, matrons and teachers in this country who could learn a lesson from our German friends.

## USSR

### TOWNSMEN HAD TO HARVEST POTATOES

THE speeches by Khrushchev delivered in May and July of this year, which have recently been published in *Kommunist*, no. 12, including the reference to Malenkov as 'Beria's shadow', contained a number of other interesting passages which have attracted less attention.

Explaining how Soviet agriculture sank into the critical condition it was in at the time of Stalin's death, Khrushchev describes the dictator's indifference to what was happening in the countryside.

The peasants were cutting down their orchards because the tax on these was so heavy, and it was necessary to send squads of workers out to harvest the potatoes.

This was because the prices paid to the peasants for potatoes were so low that it cost more to bring a load to the procurement stations than the load was worth to the grower.

When Khrushchev mentioned these things to Stalin he was told that he was a Narodnik and had lost his proletarian class sense. Khrushchev now holds out prospects of a tremendous advance in agriculture as a result of the policy changes introduced since 1953.

As regards industry, he promises a reduction of the working day to seven hours (as in 1927-40) in the near future, with a further reduction to six hours to follow, as a result of automation and technical progress generally.

In a passage on developments in the non-Russian republics of the USSR, in which he mentions his visits in recent years to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan, Kirgizia and the Baltic countries ('I have been to Georgia, too, but that was a long time ago'), he emphasizes that a big stratum of 'qualified cadres'

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**USSR (Continued from previous page)**

has arisen from among the non-Russian peoples.

He urges writers to pay more attention to these persons in their works.

The contribution of the Russians has been very great, but all the peoples of the Union are contributing to the construction of communism, and the strength of the USSR lies in the friendship among all its peoples.

Giving further advice to writers, Khrushchev rebukes Dudintsev and similar 'distorters', and singles out Margarita Aliger for special blame on account of her defence of the publication *Literary Moscow* against criticism.

He finds the attitude of the non-party writer Sobolev closer to his own than that of the communist Aliger, he says.

Of course, it must be understood that the party condemns, no less than slanderous books like 'Not by Bread Alone', such 'saccharine, insipid' works as the films 'Unforgettable 1919' and 'Kuban Cossacks'.

Nor does it want any repetition of the sort of practice Kaganovich had indulged in, calling the Ukrainian poet Maxim Rylsky a 'bourgeois nationalist' because a patriotic poem of his had somehow omitted even to mention Stalin's name ('it must be said that this could have led to grave consequences, and not only for literature').

**NO TEXT YET OF MOLOTOV PARLEY**

After the events of last October in Poland the Polish United Workers' Party issued a full report of the proceedings at the historic Eighth Plenum, including the contributions by the Natolin group of die-hard Stalinists.

Two months have passed since the plenum of the central committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union at which Molotov, Malenkov, etc. were defeated.

Yet nothing that can be called a report of this plenum has appeared, and it is still necessary to search the Soviet Press for such hints regarding the arguments used by the contending factions as Khrushchev chooses to let out.

But perhaps a report of the plenum has been supplied to the King Street headquarters of the British Communist Party, and it was on this basis that they endorsed its decisions?

**LETTER****STALIN WANTED BRITISH TROOPS**

The newly-published Stalin-Churchill correspondence reveals (*Daily Worker*, September 4) that in the desperate first few months after the Nazi invasion of Russia Stalin asked for 25-30 divisions of British troops to be landed at Archangel or sent to the south of the USSR via Persia.

It may be recalled that when proposals to this effect appeared in the British Press at the time (e.g., from the pen of the Mosleyite General Fuller) the Communist Party denounced them as evidence of an imperialist plot by certain circles to seize Soviet territory—and no doubt it was quite right, too.

What is now revealed is that Stalin, in his panic at the results of his diplomacy, Army 'purges', etc., was ready to meet the plotters half-way!

Witney (Oxon)

D. Desmond

**A CURIOUS OMISSION**

Last Saturday's British newspapers, including the *Daily Worker*, carried a report from an Egyptian source of the arrest in Egypt of eighteen persons accused of belonging to the Communist Party of Egypt.

This news did not appear in *Pravda* either on Saturday or Sunday, although other Middle East events were reported (including a message from Cairo about Oman).

**SCIENCE (Continued from front page)**

is to get more money for some military faction, to set up as an advocate of economy, or to reassure the public. No reliance can be placed on any such propaganda assertion.

It has been claimed, quite plausibly, that the Soviet 1,500-mile intermediate range missile was observed by radar from outside the USSR. The same thing could be done for larger missiles, as they travel at heights up to 100 miles.

This time the facts have not been published, because the American Government is afraid to let the public or the Russians know what it really knows.

None of the statements denigrating the Soviet report has had any technical basis: they are pure wishful thinking. On the other hand, the claims so hastily made for American development are, (if not pure propaganda) evidence that the stage claimed by the Soviets has been reached.

**It is clear that at present only a few months of development separate the two countries.**

A ballistic missile is governed by quite different technical considerations from a guided missile; like the German V2 it is powered only for a few seconds at launching, and coasts to its destination like a shell. A guided missile needs power for the whole of its flight.

Consequently a ballistic missile cannot take evasive action. This hardly matters, since it is faster than any interceptor missile now available. By the time better interceptors are made, faster missiles will be, too. This is the first lesson of no defence.

Also a ballistic missile must be steered very accurately during launching, which requires large amounts of radar equipment.

Part of this difficulty can be avoided in the Soviet missile, which is multi-stage, i.e., has several motors which are used in turn and fall out when exhausted. Only for the last stage is the very highest accuracy essential.

**Wings for steering?**

It is unlikely that anybody has yet tested an inter-continental ballistic missile with wings for steering when it returns to the atmosphere, though many reports of the development of inertial guidance show that the necessary control systems are being made.

The problem of a warhead was solved in the USSR, probably in 1955, when Mr. Khrushchev made a speech in India claiming to have the clean H-bomb.

This is the only form of H-bomb yet light enough for an ICBM of the present size, and was first tested by the Americans in 1957.

Mr. Duncan Sandys, Minister of Defence, claimed in the House of Commons on July 24, 1957, that Britain could also make ICBM warheads, but this is contradicted by his admission that the British bomb is dirty.

Genuine information about the accuracy of the ICBM is not available, but it is generally agreed that about five miles would be desirable at 5,000 miles range.

This is quantum jump number four—A-bomb, H-bomb, dirty bomb, ICBM.

The Firestreak and the Bloodhound are as obsolete as the Spitfire and the dodo. The 750 million dollars Distant Early Warning Line across the north of Canada is pure waste. There was never any defence (Duncan Sandys, August 20, 1957) and there is no longer even any warning.

The ring of bomber bases round the USSR might as well be abandoned, for they can no more be protected than can anything else. Their sole and only conceivable purpose was aggression, for never since 1945 has there been any defence, and the sham of deterrence is now as valuable as a punctured barrage balloon.

The ICBM will be kept in a little hole in the ground, with a warhead which will last for centuries, and fuel which will last at least for months. No detection is possible, no preparations will be visible (though it was never explained what was the use of an Open Skies plan to tell two days too late who had launched an H-bomb from where in a bomber).

Once these weapons are stock piled, all talk of controlled disarmament is deflated.

We have to learn one lesson—disarmament has one year to go before it loses all point.