

THE NEWSLETTER

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a service to socialists

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NO STOPGAP PREMIER CAN SOLVE FRANCE'S CRISIS

From our Paris Correspondent

BY THE TIME this dispatch appears some patched-up solution may have been found to one of the most intricate political crises France has known. But whatever the solution it can only be a temporary stop-gap.

About a fortnight before the Mollet Government fell Pierre Mendès-France told the Radical Party Congress: 'There is no political issue which is not at present dependent on the central issue: the only political problem now facing France—Algeria'.

This statement—and the fact that it remained only a statement—sums up the present state of affairs in France, and the inability of her bourgeois politicians to cope with it.

Mendès-France is one of the cleverest of them. He can be a man of decision and action, as he proved when he brought the Indo-China war to an end.

But on Algeria he has never taken a firm stand, has never stopped wavering.

Why? Because the Algerian War is more than a colonial war. It is more and more becoming a national problem to which no solution can be found which does not in one way or another endanger the stability of power in France.

France has been losing her empire piece by piece. But to renounce Algeria would be more than another loss. It would be a terrible blow to easy profits.

What is more, the existence of about a million French settlers in Algeria; the presence of 300,000 Algerian workers in France; the fact that in six months a million young Frenchmen will have passed through Algeria as soldiers; the cost of the war (four times as much each day as the Indo-China war!); all these mean that any solution to the Algerian question will plunge France into deeper crisis than ever.

The workers will enter the struggle

And the fear of all politicians and all parties is that the workers will come into the struggle with their own claims and their own strength.

For the most conservative sections of the bourgeoisie Mollet was for sixteen months 'the right man in the right place'. He pursued the war as energetically as any Right-wing statesman, and as leader of the Socialist Party he put a brake on popular opposition to the war.

But the Right wing of the Assembly got rid of him, partly because they objected to the taxes he proposed—taxes, ironically enough, which the practice of their own policies had made unavoidable!

There are however deeper reasons for the conservatives' betrayal of Mollet. Pinay, Paul Reynaud and their friends have taken to heart Dulles' warning that if there is no change in France by September the USA may not give France full support at the United Nations.

(Continued on back page)

THE NEWSLETTER: CHANGE OF ADDRESS

In order to speed the handling of copy the address of The Newsletter is from today onwards that of its printers: 180, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

All correspondence, subscriptions and inquiries should be sent to the Editor, The Newsletter, at this address.

BRIAN BEHAN AND JIM ROCHE RESIGN

Two former members of the Communist Party's Executive Committee, Brian Behan and Jim Roche, have resigned from the party.

Brian Behan was on the Executive until the recent 25th Congress, when because of his consistent criticisms his name did not appear on the panel of those recommended for election to the new Executive. But he received 188 votes.

Behan, who is a building worker, announced his resignation in a letter to the secretary of his party branch in Norwood.

Jim Roche is one of the best-known leaders of the Yorkshire clothing workers, was prominent in the Burton strikes before the war, and has been a member of the Communist Party for 27 years.

He was a member of the Yorkshire district committee from 1930 to 1956, and of its secretariat for many years; was an EC member from 1938 to 1941; and served as Leeds city secretary and Yorkshire district organizer and on the party's National Clothing Advisory Committee.

He resigned from all his party offices last November in protest at the leaders' attitude to the Hungarian Revolution.

A statement by Jim Roche giving his reasons for resignation will appear exclusively in next week's issue of The Newsletter.

M.L.S SNOOPERS PESTER SCIENTISTS

SCIENTISTS at Reading University's Physics Department are being pestered by 'security' men: Reading M.P. Ian Mikardo and Lord Chorley have been asked to raise the matter in Parliament.

On May 31 staff member Dr. Hodgson delivered the first of three lectures on 'thermonuclear reactions'.

Before the lecture was given Dr. Hodgson's professor was telephoned by a Government security officer, who asked what the lecturer was going to say.

In fact Dr. Hodgson has never had access to classified information, and all his statements were drawn from published sources—some of which appeared as far back as 1937.

From the titles announced it was clear that only the last of the three lectures would refer to bombs or power stations. The first was a general account and the second was on stellar sources of energy.

Members of the staff interpreted the telephone call as a threat to interfere if Dr. Hodgson's subject-matter did not have official approval.

Recently there have been attempts by security officers to recruit agents among the staff—men who would be willing to supply information about the political views of their students.

One lecturer who was approached not only refused, but informed his students of the request that had been made to him.

ETU STANDS BY THE HUNGARIAN WORKERS

By our Industrial Correspondent

FAILURE of the Electrical Trades Union leaders to protest at the arrest of the young Hungarian electrical worker Sandor Racs helped bring about this week's demonstration of solidarity with the Hungarian people.

Communist Party members were among those who voted against Foulkes and Haxell, and so gave the union's Stalinist

leadership its first body-blow for years.

For the debate on Hungary to be taken in private session was both unexpected and unprecedented. Asked 'Do you condemn the Russian interventions?' and 'Do you demand the immediate withdrawal of Russian troops?' the platform gave equivocal replies.

By 174 votes to 154 the conference defeated an amendment which would have deleted from a Luton motion the words:

'Conference therefore welcomes the financial assistance and solidarity shown by the Executive Council towards our Cypriot brothers but is disturbed by the Executive Council's attitude towards the shooting down of the workers at Poznan and its belated protests against the attempt by Russian troops to suppress the workers' revolution in Hungary.'

By a large majority the delegates then passed a resolution condemning 'the brutal attack of the Soviet armed forces on the Hungarian people' and adding:

'We demand that all Russian forces be withdrawn from Hungary unless their presence there is agreed to by a government freely elected by the Hungarians. We pledge our support to the Hungarian people in their efforts to obtain a government of their own choice, free from outside intervention.'

'We also demand those imprisoned or deported for their part in the fight for Hungarian independence be released and returned to their homes.'

'Copies of this motion to be sent to the USSR and Hungarian Embassies in London and to the British Foreign Secretary.'

Before the vote Foulkes asked his opponents: 'You recognize you will be voting against the EC?' There were cries of 'We know we are.'

The editorial in Wednesday's Daily Worker claiming that the view that the Hungarian rising was a workers' revolution was merely 'a proposition that has been frequently advanced by Hungarian refugees' has cut no ice among conference delegates.

MERSEY TUGMEN JOIN NEW UNION

Following the decision of the Merseyside bargemen to leave the Transport and General Workers' Union and form their own association, the local tug-boat men applied for membership. Their application was accepted by an overwhelming majority at a mass meeting.

NEW FORUMS

A socialist forum has been set up in Ashton-under-Lyne, at a meeting called by Mr. G. Crompton, a Manchester organizer of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers.

An inaugural meeting of the Canterbury socialist forum was attended by miners from the Kent coalfield.

CHALLENGE MAY CEASE PUBLICATION

ACCORDING to the fortnightly 'News Letter' issued by the national committee of the Young Communist League, Challenge is in a serious position.

'During the first five months of this year,' the circular says, 'Challenge has made a trading loss of £200. Were it not for nearly 1,000 extra copies taken of the June issue for special mining sales (500 by Yorkshire) our order would be the lowest ever.'

'We are in danger of having no paper at all unless there is an immediate and substantial increase in regular sales and the Fund income of the paper.'

COMMENTARY

IN his television interview before the American cameras Mr. Khrushchev was on reasonably safe ground when he offered the West a 'test' on the popularity or otherwise of the Kádár régime.

Why (he asked) don't you withdraw your troops from Germany and France, and we will withdraw ours from Germany, Poland and Hungary, and you will see that the Kádár régime, which is the people's régime in Hungary, will flourish for ages to come.

There is of course little likelihood of the imperialists' accepting of their own volition the 'test' so cynically proposed. And from the point of view of the Russian people, who suffered incredible hardships at the hands of foreign troops in the Second World War, the argument that while American soldiers are in Bavaria, 7,000 miles from American soil, Russian soldiers had on the whole better remain in Hungary, 300 miles from Soviet soil, is at first glance a not unreasonable one. (Indeed, this is a more honest argument than the effusive pronouncements about defending Hungarian socialism against a 'fascist *putsch*'.)

But can Russia really be defended from another occupation by her own continued occupation of Hungary and her brutal suppression of the Hungarian people's aspirations for socialist democracy and national dignity? Is what is happening in Hungary today in the real interests of the Russians?

Recent reports from Hungary must cause pain and anxiety to every socialist. According to a circumstantial report in The Times Attila Szigethy, who was vice-chairman of the national committee in Győr during the revolution, had been in the hands of Kádár's police for three weeks when he broke his glasses, cut an artery

with a piece of broken lens, and then leapt to his death from the window of a prison hospital. All who met Szigethy in Győr last October will mourn an honest and upright man, no 'fascist' or 'counter-revolutionary' but an MP for the National Peasant Party and a supporter of Imre Nagy. There have been treason trials and death sentences at Miskolc, Dunapentele, Győr, Sopron, Magyarovar and elsewhere. The Times has been carrying accounts of the state of affairs in Kádár's internment camps, where, according to reliable estimates, over 50,000 political prisoners, many of them workers' council delegates, are being held in atrocious conditions:

Inhuman overcrowding seems to be the worst part of it. Rooms intended for 80 persons are now occupied by 200. Sanitary conditions are said to be indescribable, it being impossible for the prisoners to keep themselves clean. They sleep crowded together on straw palliasses spread on racks or shelves. . . . Judging by the battered and sometimes mutilated condition of some of the people who have since been released from these places, the treatment there seems certainly to be no better than in the bad old days of Mr. Rákosi.



HOW can the British Labour movement help the Hungarian people in their ordeal? The stand taken by the ETU conference in defiance of their Stalinist leaders is one immediate practical way. Another is by redoubling our efforts for the withdrawal of British and American troops from Germany and France. The fight against Stalinism and its crimes cannot be separated from the fight against imperialism and its crimes. To end the American occupation of France and Western Germany would remove any shred of justification, real or supposed, for the continued Russian occupation of Hungary, Poland and Eastern Germany. It would strengthen the hand of those who, in Russia as in America and Britain, urge that 'the boys be brought home'. It would call Khrushchev's bluff.

USA

US SOCIALISTS DEFY WITCH-HUNTERS

From our New York Correspondent

LEADERS of the newly-formed American Forum—for Socialist Education are hitting back bravely at the Eastland Security Subcommittee's attempted witch-hunt.

Forum chairman the Rev. A. J. Muste, the well-known pacifist, has told Mississippi Senator Eastland:

'I must on grounds of conscience, and in line with my conception of my duty as a citizen in a democratic society, decline to answer the questions in your letter.

'Should I be subpoenaed to appear before the Internal Security Subcommittee, it would be impossible for me to do more than appear and state my reasons for declining to answer questions of the nature set forth in your letter.'

Eastland had put five questions about the origin of the Forum and about the meetings of its 40-member National Committee.

When Dr. Albert Blumberg, one of the two communists on the National Committee, was summoned before Senator John M. Butler, he refused to answer the questions put to him, declaring that they violated his political rights.

Eastland is also currently attacking the trade union movement. He has just subpoenaed several officers of the United Automobile Workers' Ford Local 600 to appear before his committee.

THEY MARCHED FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

From our New York Correspondent

CONVERGING on the nation's capital by planes, buses, motorcades and freedom trains, 27,000 Negroes and whites from coast to coast marched on Washington on May 17 in the country's greatest demonstration for equal rights.

It was a monumental event, this vanguard army that expanded to a national scale the mass action pattern of the Montgomery and Tallahassee bus boycotts against segregation.

The thousands did not come to lobby, nor did they come merely to hear speeches or to pray. They came, as one New York department store worker said, 'because I feel this is the greatest thing that ever happened in America. This brings us closer together. In unity there is strength, and we are marching together; alone you can't do anything, together we can win.'

The assemblage hailed each note of militancy from the speakers, and by their very presence—at great sacrifice to themselves—expressed their determination that discrimination, wherever it rears its head, must be smashed now.

'Increasing hypocrisy and basic dishonesty'

Adam Clayton Powell, a Negro Congressman, received an enthusiastic response when he charged both the Republican and Democratic parties with 'increasing hypocrisy and basic dishonesty' and called for the use of passive resistance 'both locally and nationally' including 'work stoppages, economic boycotts, sitdown strikes, slowdowns, picket lines and above all, political unity'.

Martin Luther King, leader of the historic Montgomery bus boycott, told his audience that both big parties had betrayed the cause of justice.

'The Democrats have betrayed it by capitulating to the prejudices and undemocratic practices of the Southern Dixiecrats. The Republicans have betrayed it by capitulating to the blatant hypocrisy of Right-wing, reactionary Northerners.'

The 'Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom', as the march was officially called, was planned by 75 Negro spokesmen from fifteen states, under the chairmanship of the Rev. Martin Luther King. Roy Wilkins, executive secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, and A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, to 'protest the terrible intimidation and terror

under which coloured people are living' and 'to arouse the conscience of the nation'.

Although the turn-out fell short of the 50,000 goal, the march pointed to the future: the vast throng glimpsed its own strength when united in action. That they had been able to accomplish a national mobilization in Washington gave a tremendous lift to the morale of those who were there.

They came in spite of a leadership that was afraid to mobilize mass action; despite the silence of the Press; despite the rally being held on a work-day from noon to three; despite a Labour leadership that by and large gave mere lip service to the project.

A Spanish-speaking trade unionist summed it up when he said: 'I believe in brotherhood against discrimination. We are demonstrating that we are united and ready to fight for one another. I had to fight for the Government in World War II—this time we're fighting for ourselves.'

USSR

WRITERS WHO SET A 'BAD EXAMPLE'

THE novel 'Not by Bread Alone' is no longer the principal object of attack for the reactionary forces in the Soviet literary world.

It has been replaced by a symposium of stories, poems and essays from various hands, entitled *Literaturnaya Moskva* (Literary Moscow), which came out under the editorship of V. Kaverin, the Jewish writer whose 'Open Book' and 'Two Captains' have been published here in recent years.

Typical of the criticism this symposium has evoked is an article by the Tajik poet Mirza Tursun-zade.

'These are harmful works,' he wrote on May 19, 'which do not assist but impede our cause, the Soviet people's effort for the triumph of communism.'

'We know that bad examples are catching. Among us in Tajikistan there has appeared a poetess, Fofanova by name, who has written a cycle of harmful verses. In one poem she speaks of "not being taught to tell the truth, from the school bench onward".'

'I find her poetry identical with that of Rozhdestvensky, who published in *Literaturnaya Moskva* a piece of verse saying that until now it had been dense black night and only now did he feel the approach of dawn. Is this not a lampoon upon our reality, a departure from the method of socialist realism?'

L.H.

MOSCOW TALKS, 1955

by J. B. Salsberg

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

In July 1955 I finally received an affirmative reply to my request to go to the Soviet Union. The sole purpose of my visit was to discuss with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union what had happened to Jewish life in that country since 1948.

Upon my return I once again refrained from writing or speaking publicly about the results of my visit. The only exception was an interview granted to the *Naie Presse* in Paris. This interview was reprinted in the *Morning Freiheit* and in other progressive newspapers and a short interview was published in the *Vochebnice*.

In other words, for me it once again became a question of keeping silent publicly and fighting inside the party. Here is why.

In my first conversations with responsible although second-rank representatives of the party in Moscow an effort was made to convince me that there really existed no Jewish problem in the USSR. When I insisted on an official discussion, the party's Central Committee appointed a special commission to meet with me.

The commission gave me in substance the following answers to my questions.

The Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee was dissolved because it had ceased to fulfil the function for which it had been es-

established. It had been created during the war for specific war needs and after the victory over fascism it became superfluous.

Bourgeois nationalist influences had penetrated the Anti-Fascist Committee. A Jewish member of the commission added that, shortly after Golda Meir arrived in Moscow as the first ambassador from Israel, a large crowd of Jews staged a demonstration for her in front of the Moscow synagogue. He also said that he knows that secret Zionist groups exist.

Jewish writers had been arrested. This was the work of Beria and 'regrettably, innocent people died as his victims'. Writers of numerous nationalities—not only Jews—also suffered.

The Soviet Government was reviewing all cases involving Beria's arrests. All those falsely arrested were being freed and rehabilitated.

A number of the Jewish writers had already returned home. I was urged to be patient and assured that those still remain-

SALSBERG LEAVES THE PARTY

Together with three other prominent Canadian communists, J. B. Salsberg has resigned from the Labour-Progressive Party.

The others are Sam Lipshitz, for eighteen years secretary of the party's National Jewish Committee; Stewart Smith, leader of the party in Ontario, and Quebec organizer and former national treasurer Harry Binder.

In their resignation statement the four said: 'Under its present leadership and with its present policies the LPP is unwilling to make a break with its deeply-rooted sectarianism and Stalinist methods of work and thinking.

'The continued uncritical acceptance by the LPP of all policies and pronouncements of the CPSU as the last, final and undisputable law of Marxism... the refusal of the LPP leadership to raise its voice in protest against the unjust, anti-socialist actions of the Soviet leadership towards Jewish culture... demonstrate the LPP leadership's lack of independent thinking, without which any socialist working-class party dooms itself to ideological sterility, political ineffectiveness and decline.'

ing in prison would shortly be released.

When I asked when and where, assuming the Anti-Fascist Committee was infected, the question of bourgeois nationalism was discussed with the committee. I received no answer.

I then wanted to know why, this committee having outlived its usefulness, as they said, a new social-cultural committee along the lines existing in Poland was not organized. They replied that there was no need for such a committee.

I received no clear-cut answer to my question regarding the fate of such prominent writers as Bergelson, Feffer, Markish, Kvitko, Hofshstein, Der Nister.

One member of the commission repeated, however, that he knew that 'innocent people had been done away with'. (I believe that the members of the commission really didn't know the details.)

The representatives of the Central Committee were exceedingly hospitable. They arranged a number of personal meetings for me with important individuals. I had a long talk with Rabbi Shlifer and some of his congregational leaders.

I also met Saul Lubimov, a singer who had just returned from 'Beria's exile'. I attended the first of his three concerts in Moscow—the first completely Yiddish concert for many years. Although the weather was very hot, tickets were sold out well in advance.

I had a long talk with the manager of the central concert bureau. They outlined for me their plans for a series of Jewish concerts in some ten cities. They were confident that these concerts would all be sold out.

I also spoke to many Jewish people in the streets, in restaurants, in stores, although not all were prepared to talk to a foreigner.

From all these conversations, discussions and meetings it

became clear to me that the sudden closing of the Jewish institutions was—as I had suspected all along—a brutal act of violence.

The explanation that 'integration' (Russification) was responsible for the cessation of all Jewish social and cultural activity was thoroughly false despite the fact that the process of assimilation had undoubtedly been going on.

As to the leading Yiddish writers, it appeared that a great tragedy had occurred. Although no one admitted that they were dead, no one was prepared to assure me that they were alive.

It was evident that things were obviously improving and one could expect them to improve still further.

Nevertheless, even though the first signs of cultural revival were appearing, the official party approach to the question of Jewish cultural-communal activity is in my opinion both negative and inconsistent.

When I returned in August 1955 I made a full report to the National Executive of my party. My conclusion was that, to my great regret, my previous position on this question was more than confirmed, that the official position was erroneous and that the party should review its position and publicly admit its mistake.

Furthermore, although I was a member of the National Committee, and although my inquiries in the USSR had received the approval of the National Executive of my party, they were nevertheless of a personal character. I therefore suggested that the LPP as a whole should place the matter before the top leadership of the CPSU.

Unfortunately the Executive of the Canadian party could not bring itself to agree with these conclusions. They simply could not understand that such things could have happened in the Soviet Union.

After many delays it was agreed that, since a very important leader of the party would soon be in the Soviet Union, he would again take up the whole question with the CPSU on the basis of my report.

It became clear as day

Upon his return the discussions would be resumed in the LPP's National Executive. Under these circumstances, and in the continued belief that the best way to influence the situation was through party channels, I agreed to wait.

This resulted in another period of silence on my part—of pursuing the matter 'inside'.

Thus the situation dragged on until the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in February 1956. It was there that Khrushchev made his historic speech about the crimes that were committed under Stalin's leadership.

Now it became clear as day, especially after the famous article in the Warsaw *Folks-Shtimme*, what had actually happened to Jewish culture and its creators in the Soviet Union.

The party then adopted the resolution acknowledging its error and re-elected me to its National Executive. It was further agreed that I should leave immediately for the Soviet Union to take up anew this whole question with the Soviet leadership.

LETTERS

DONALD VEALL REPLIES TO S.J.

THE Anglo-Soviet Journal's book reviewing policy is nothing but crude Moscow propaganda.

Prof. E. H. Carr's book 'The Interregnum' (1954) was never reviewed. It dealt with Lenin's testament and the struggle for power after Lenin's death.

Never reviewed were Isaac Deutscher's books 'Russia after Stalin' (1953), 'Heretics and Renegades' (1955) and 'The Prophet Armed' (1955) (a biography of Trotsky!)

Any good public library contains several readable books on the ferment of ideas in the USSR since Stalin's death. Not one has been reviewed. The ASJ is scared of de-Stalinization.

Book reviewers are handpicked. All political books, such as the *Works* of Stalin, are reviewed only by those 'on the party

line'. Legal books are reviewed by those who consider the USSR to have 'greater rights of defence than any other country in the world', never by those members of the Society for Cultural Relations who consider that the Soviet legal system, so far as concerns civil liberties, is substantially feudal.

There has always been a minority of members of the SCR who knew the essential facts contained in Khrushchev's secret speech before he made it—yet these members have never been allowed to express their views in the ASJ.

The ASJ prefers to publish an excessive number of translations of the official view instead of surveys, as this is a subtle way of plugging the Moscow line. No survey has contained any serious criticisms.

King Street instructed the editor of the ASJ that surveys were dangerous because 'subjective judgments' might come into play which differed from Moscow.

The SCR's sectional bulletins, by contrast, are much more lively and interesting, and show differences of opinion in the USSR.

Donald Veall,
Esher (Surrey).

NOTES FOR A JOURNAL

S.J., assistant editor of the Anglo-Soviet Journal, writes:

We received a review copy of 'Notes For A Journal' from André Deutsch on July 11, 1955. It was given out for review and thus inadvertently omitted from the 'Publications Received'. Unfortunately, as sometimes happens (other suffering editorial staffs will bear me out), the reviewer protractedly failed to produce copy.

By the time the assistant editor's forbearance had finally run out—that is after three issues of the ASJ—the book had been published for eighteen months. Trying another reviewer would have meant a time-lag of probably almost two years.

This I felt would be overdoing things, even for a dilatory semi-learned quarterly; and the book's general subject was anyhow rather a borderline case in the ASJ terms of reference. So I let it go.

I gather from reading reviews elsewhere by well-known critics of the USSR that the work is in any case commonly accepted as not being genuinely from Litvinov's pen.

May I mention in passing that for almost two years now the office staff of the ASJ has consisted of about one-third of a less than half-time worker?

Where Should Ex-Communists Go?

'LABOUR PARTY OUR GENERAL STAFF?'

BEFORE going too far, ex-Communists and those still in the Communist Party need to discover where they are now.

For many years we have imagined ourselves struggling in increasingly bitter class war and tottering on the brink of a catastrophic capitalist crisis which got deeper with every year that it was delayed.

Is this really where we live today? Or have not some of the sluice-gates of the capitalist dam been forced open, relieving rather than exacerbating the height and pressure of the class struggle?

Both sides are strong, but the British capitalists seem to prefer to yield a little here and there rather than allow pressure to be built up for a final showdown. Consequently there is not the faintest breath of a revolutionary situation. If the workers can't be dragged from their TV sets to attend meetings, they certainly won't leave them to man the barricades.

The British workers have tended to accept the Labour Party's analysis of the situation. May it not be that that analysis has been more scientifically correct, even in the Marxist sense, than that of the Communist Party? And may not the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress be more appropriate forms of working class organization in this situation than the Communist Party? Their general staff is at least as well organized and already has the mass of workers behind it.

Fortunately the idea of socialism still lives among the workers. Our job now is to discover our real situation in Britain and the world, and so to cleanse and sweeten the name of socialism in the ears of the workers and their leaders, that as real opportunities are presented the workers will be able to insist that the road chosen will be a socialist one.

Dick Goss,
London, S.E.9.

A MAN-HUNT IN DEVON

The Mid-Devon Hunt at Chanford was called upon by the police to assist in the search for an escaped prisoner. The stag-hounds and the master spent two hours in pursuit of a man.

This disgusting incident shows clearly the close connection between the country gentry and the local forces of order.

The denial of dignity to a man, even an escaped prisoner, seems to show that some of the attitudes of Dickens' day are still with us. When you hunt a man with a pack of hounds you are not upholding the authority of the law—you are hunting a man with a pack of hounds.

Antony Steel,
London, N.W.11.

'YOU HAVEN'T CONVINCED ME YET!'

MANY Communist Party members who have recently resigned now seem to regard the Labour Party as the salvation of socialism.

While, like many of your contributors, I have misgivings about the Communist Party and some of its leaders I fail to see in what way the Labour Party is more honest. Do its journals report the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

Surely if the leadership of any party has lost its ideals it is the Labour Party leadership. We all know its records of bans and proscriptions, on foreign policy, etc. (and that of socialist governments in other countries).

We know the Parliamentary Labour Party is not governed by the policy of the rank-and-file membership.

Therefore I am puzzled at the sudden whole-hearted support. Why should Marxists dissatisfied with the Communist Party now join the Labour Party (which they probably left years ago anyway) where they will be just as, or even more, frustrated? Is this party now going to be transformed by ex-Communist Party members?

I would like more convincing arguments than I have heard so far from my friends to convert me to this idea. Perhaps those who have been putting this forward will have the opportunity of replying in future issues of The Newsletter.

Mary Vernon,
Southampton.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER...

I must add my congratulations to the others you have no doubt received.

The Newsletter improves with each issue, and one can really believe that before very long we will have a socialist news service with world-wide correspondents giving us truthful information week by week without the propagandist ballyhoo fed to us for so many years.

That the need is there is obvious and if your energy can call forth the response to meet that need you will have made a great contribution to the awakening socialist movement in Britain.

Joe Young,
London, S.E.3.

...IT'S GREATLY APPRECIATED

I find the issues I have seen very attractive. It is very wise to avoid the trap of concentrating solely on anti-King Street polemics. I like the broad nature of the views expressed; differences of opinion should not lead to excommunication.

Your science correspondent's contribution is greatly appreciated also.

P.S., Ruislip.

SOCIALISM AND THE H-BOMB

MOST OF humanity is appalled, not only by the threat of H-bomb warfare, but by the great risks that the very testing of these weapons brings to us all.

So that governments can flourish these weapons, millions must live in fear, and possibly bear physically the backlash of the tests.

Socialists must have a clear and unequivocal answer on this—and any State that claims to be socialist must, too. H-bombs are not weapons of defence, but of retaliatory mass destruction and terror. I do not believe that in any circumstances a socialist State can use or test these weapons.

A socialist State should not rely on the threat of destruction to millions of innocent people for its security.

To abandon these weapons would not alter one whit the ability of the Soviet Union to defend herself, but, on the contrary, as a genuine act of internationalism, it would strengthen her in the hearts of millions of people.

And that is where the true defence of socialism lies.

Ken Tarbuck,
Birmingham.

FRANCE (Continued from front page)

A long-delayed settlement is looming, and the men of the Right prefer to face it with a Government that is not merely pliable, but under their control. Having squeezed what they want from the Socialist Party they throw away the rind.

What next? Can the Right wing settle itself firmly in power? The answer to this depends on the Parliamentary game, now more complicated than ever before.

Some want Mollet back, but with a fair number of Right-wing ministers. Others would prefer a Centre Government (with some Radicals and the Christian Democrats). The Socialists are not keen to take power again. The Christian Democrats will take part in a Government only if the socialists do. And so on.

Gallons of ink and reams of paper are used up discussing it. But it is much ado about very little. For nothing will be changed when the Parliamentary jigsaw has been rearranged. The new Cabinet will face a social crisis, and from a long-term point of view the fall of Mollet is hardly more than a step towards an ultimate explosion.

The workers, their parties, their trade unions; those who suffer from the Algerian war; the common people of France: how is their strength going to express itself? Does the working class have a solution? And can it impose it? I shall try to answer these questions in my next dispatch.

HOW TO DEFEND THE SOVIET UNION

As a supplement to a recent issue of L'Étincelle (The Spark), the vigorous clandestine discussion journal of the anti-Stalinists in the French Communist Party, there has appeared 'A Study of Stalinism'.

This is an interesting attempt at a theoretical analysis of such questions as 'The Stalinist Conception of Internationalism' and 'Stalinist Compromises'.

The author makes the interesting point that Stalinism is characterized not by its recognition of the need to defend the USSR against imperialism—'this remains the duty of the working-class movement'—but by its methods of doing this:

'The circumstances which could justify holding back the revolutionary élan of the French working class in the name of the security of the Soviet Union have entirely disappeared. The cause of socialism demands on the contrary that the party should actively play its rôle of revolutionary vanguard.'

PLYAKU'S FAMILY JAILED, SAY REPORTS

Reports reaching Yugoslavia from Albania say the wife and three children of Panajot Plyaku, a Minister in the Albanian Government and Communist Party central committee member, who fled to Yugoslavia on May 16, have been put in a concentration camp.

JOURNAL

A welcome arrival

One's first impression of The New Reasoner, A Quarterly Journal of Socialist Humanism, is its sheer compass. How could Saville and Thompson manage to produce 144 pages packed with interesting matter (there's even a bit of music!) for a mere four bob?

The fact remains, they have done so, and any reader of The Newsletter who has not yet sent for his copy to Holly Bank, Whitegate, Halifax (Yorks) is missing a rich collection that worthily continues the Reasoner tradition.

Levy on Soviet socialism; Worsley on Kenya; Hobbsbawm on the Victorian critics of Karl Marx; Thompson on socialist humanism; Hussey on Rothstein: this is what the Marxist Quarterly could have been and should have been.

Filling the gap

But that was not King Street's intention, so it was killed—and it is left to The New Reasoner and Labour Review and the forthcoming magazine Forum that Michael Segal and Royden Harrison are going to edit to fill the gap.

All in all this burgeoning of new magazines is a healthy sign. Each has its part to play in the ferment, and there is growing evidence of a willingness to give room to other people's ideas, side by side with hard-hitting and fruitful polemics.

In the July-August number of Labour Review, for instance, Dr. R. W. Davies will be writing on 'The Inadequacies of Russian Trotskyism'.

Another interesting feature of Labour Review's next issue will be an article by Joseph Redman, author of Reasoner Pamphlet No. 1 ('The Communist Party and the Labour Left, 1925-29'), discussing Communist policy during the General Strike period.

Battersea carries on

While on the subject of new publications, I think the socialists down at Battersea bus garage deserve a special word of praise for their Bulletin.

This used to be published by the Communist Party group in the garage. Now there is no such group—but the Bulletin goes proudly on as a Marxist monthly, with articles on the engineers' strike, Hungary and 'Conductor Bloggs and the H-bomb' that are worthy of something much less modest than this little duplicated paper.

I liked the story in its gossip column about the Kensington lady who gave a bus-driver a sweet and said: 'Thanks for waiting for me.'

'Which just goes to show,' said the driver afterwards. 'If they get on the driver's a good bloke. If they don't get on the conductor's a b----.'

A generation ago

'A "doubting comrade" is one who does not accept Pollitt's estimate of the present state and needs of the Party. Anybody who takes part in the discussion must either endorse his view, or stand branded (by Comrade Pollitt) as deliberately sabotaging the Party's progress....'

'There is, he says, nothing to stop any member from sending complaints and criticism to the Executive. A notable concession! But is the limit of human desire reached by the extension of permission to write to the EC about it?....'

'Our job is only to carry out instructions at the double, and stand to attention till the next order comes. This is quite definitely the sort of Party that seems to be adumbrated in Pollitt's strictures.... It is quite definitely the sort of Party that seems to be desired by many who have had a hand in the process of reorganization.'

(Thos. A. Jackson in The Communist Review, vol. IV, no. 12, pp. 537-9, April 1924.)

Saying of the week

Mr. Bill Carron, AEU president, on getting a 20 per cent pay rise without 'strings' and one week's extra holiday (the rank and file only get a fortnight):

'I am very pleased. Naturally we all like to get the lot if we possibly can, but in this life it doesn't always befall us.'