

THE

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SEDITION and the STRIKE-BREAKERS

In the March-April number of the Red Flag we pointed to the gradual spread of Fascism over Europe and urged that the British Labour movement was far from ready to meet similar attacks in this country. Since this was written the National Government has brought forward its Disaffection Bill with its threat to the workers' movement, the question of the Lords Reform is again being discussed, and Conservative publicists begin to call attention to the need for preparing for measures against the workers to be used in the not very distant future.

Our readers will be familiar with the main outline of the Disaffection Bill. But there is a danger that the agitation will be concentrated upon the clauses of the bill giving the authorities power to search homes, and to imprison people for the mere possession of anti war or Socialist documents. Actually they have often done this in the past: during the General Strike, for example, many workers were put into prison for possessing copies of duplicated strike bulletins. The Bill is of wider significance than its individual clauses: it is part of the preparations of the ruling class for the struggle they know is coming. Mr. Churchill, at the Conservative Central Council, made open reference to the "desperate struggle" that they and their forces would be engaged in "within the next two years" and named the opponent in this struggle as "the Socialist menace". House of Lords Reform, although Lord Salisbury's scheme will probably be opposed by the Government, is still likely. That the Disaffection Bill comes forward at this time gives it an unmistakable importance as an indication of what is ahead.

In moving the first reading of the Bill the Government spokesman justified it by references to Communist Party agitation among the armed forces. But all his examples were taken from the period that followed the Invergordien strike, when the C.P.G.B. was most active. Since that time Communist agitation has declined. Why was not the Bill brought forward then? During the debate on the Bill the supporters of the measure, under criticism, fell back upon the fact that the purpose of the Bill was to deal with those who sought to seduce the soldiers from their "allegiance to the king". It comes only a short while after Sir Stafford Cripps notorious statement that, in the event of a Labour Government, there would be opposition from "Buckingham Palace". It is following upon this, and the discussion that followed, that this Bill and House of Lords reform have entered the realm of legislation.

True, Stafford Cripps withdrew his statement. But the Conservatives are not afraid of Stafford Cripps or of George Lansbury. But they are afraid of those who will put George Lansbury and the others into power, afraid of the consequences of mass pressure upon the next Labour Government. In the General Strike the then Conservative Government forced a conflict, not because they feared the cowardly General Council, who crawled round to call off the strike, but because they feared the workers behind the General Council and wanted an occasion to strike at them and at their organisations. The movement would do well to ponder over these events, over the experiences of the past and to make efforts to rouse the whole working class to a realisation of that which lies ahead.

The menace is real enough: is the movement prepared to meet it? George Lansbury has revealed the attitude of those at the head of the movement only too clearly. In the Clarion for May the 5th, he wrote upon "strikes". The essence of his argument was, that under Socialism strikes would be harmful - this much at any rate can be conceded although it reveals a very remarkable conception of "Socialism". But Lansbury's examples are not taken from circumstances likely in some abstract state of society labelled "Socialism". He is dealing, in reality, with a capitalist society under a Labour Government and also with strikes against those local authorities controlled by the Labour Party. We heard, often enough, from such as Lansbury, during the last Labour Government that the Labour Party, being in a minority could not possibly bring forward Socialist measures: it could seek only to ameliorate conditions under capitalism. Yet now Lansbury reveals that a Labour Government was prepared to break strikes as readily, and with as much enthusiasm, as a Conservative Government. The plea that the Labour Party governs for the nation and not for a class or a section won't bear a moment's examination. Taking Lansbury's own example, a dispute threatens in the mining industry. The Labour Government, "governing for the nation not for a section", prepares to break the strike of the miners! in other words it intervenes, not for the "nation" but for the coal-owners.

In a thoroughly sickening manner Lansbury goes on to justify his attitude by references to "any Government" being "bound to protect public services". How long, in any case, have the mines been "public" property? Or transport? Or any section of industry? The Labour Party gets into office by the wholehearted support of the workers, including the miners, who have for years been the spear head of the political and industrial workers movement. It promises the miners a reduction of hours and then pleads that it is impossible. The miners then threaten to secure the hours reduction by strike action. Does the Labour Party intervene on behalf of the miners? No, governing for the "nation" it prepares to intervene on behalf of the owners. By references to Socialism and how it will abolish the need for strikes, Lansbury seeks to justify such treachery and such a blow at the strength, the solidarity, and the power of the movement. For, if the workers are to get Socialism, if the next Labour Government is to beat down the forces of reaction, then it will depend, not upon the "nation", but upon that section of the nation which has placed it in power, and more particularly upon the organised workers who form its main battalions. And Lansbury's policy, which is the policy of the majority of Labour Party leaders, breaking as it will the industrial movement, and destroying the enthusiasm of the workers, can lead, not to Socialism, but to the triumph of reaction and the destruction of our movement. Such an article, must call forth the protest of every trade unionist and Labour Party worker.

Much more than the criticising of Lansbury is needed, however, if the British workers are to avoid the fate of their Austrian, German and Italian comrades. Within the ranks of the movement must be built the groups of active workers whose job it will be to strengthen, extend and educate the workers in readiness for effective and decisive action. While helping the movement forward we must also maintain continual opposition to the fatal present-day-policies of such as Lansbury, and group around our own banner the most clear-thinking and far-sighted members of the working class organisations. There is no other alternative.

Those who think it exists in the I.L.P. or in the Communist Party must have received a shock on May the First, for the May Day demonstration of this year was easily the worst since the latter years of the great war. Organised as it was by the Communist Party and supported by the I.L.P. it served as a good test of the combined influence of these two parties.

It is impossible to avoid consternation at such a demonstration, and it drives home the very real and urgent need for the assembling of all left wing and revolutionaries behind the banner of the Communist League, as a step towards the establishment in this country of a new fighting party of the British workers. It is a difficult job, but there is no other road: time is an important factor. We urge all our readers and supporters to aid us in this work.

Leon Trotsky: A Labour Government And Force

"If it be further conceded that the House of Commons, whether the present usurping one or another more democratic, decided to set aside the royal authority and the House of Lords - of which there is no hope whatever - that would still not at all signify that the reactionary classes, being in a minority in Parliament, would unconditionally submit to such a decision. We saw quite recently how the Ulster reactionaries took the way of open civil war under Lord Carson, when they differed from the British Parliament on the question of the State organisation of Ireland; and the British Conservatives openly supported the Ulster insurgents. But, we shall be told, such a case is one of open insurrection on the part of the privileged classes against a democratic Parliament, and of course such an insurrection must be put down with the assistance of the State forces. We note this confession, but demand immediately that certain practical conclusions should be drawn from it.

Let us assume for a moment that a Labour majority in Parliament results from the next elections, and the latter decided in the most legal fashion by way of a beginning that the land of the landlords shall be transferred without compensation to the farmers and the chronically unemployed, to introduce a heavy tax on capital, and to abolish the royal authority, the House of Lords and certain other anomalous institutions. There can be not the least doubt that the possessing classes will not submit without a struggle, the more so as all the police, judiciary, and military apparatus is entirely in their hands. There has already been one case of civil war in the history of Britain, when the king found support in a minority of the House of Commons and a majority in the House of Lords against a majority of the Commons and a minority of the Lords. That was in the forties of the seventeenth century. Only an idiot, we repeat, only a miserable idiot can seriously conceive that a repetition of such a civil war (on new class basis) is impossible in the twentieth century as the result of the Christian outlook on life, humanitarian feelings, democratic tendencies, and all the other excellent things. That same example of Ulster shows that the possessing classes do not jest when Parliament, their own Parliament, is compelled even partially to cramp their privileged position. Therefore, when preparing to seize power it is necessary to prepare for all the consequences resulting from the inevitable opposition of the possessing classes. It is necessary to understand clearly that if a real Labour Government came to power in Britain even in the most ultra-democratic manner, a civil war would be revealed as inevitable. The Labour Government would be compelled to suppress the opposition of the privileged classes. It would be impossible to do this by means of the old State apparatus, the old police, the old courts of justice, the old military force. A Labour Government brought into being in parliamentary fashion would be compelled to create for itself new revolutionary organs, based on the trade unions and on the workers' organisations generally. That would lead to an extraordinary growth of activity and self-realisation among the working masses. On the ground of

the immediate struggle with the exploiting classes the trade unions would actively draw together, not only in their leading circles, but in the rank and file, and would come to the necessity of creating local delegates meetings, in other words, councils of workers' deputies. In actuality a Labour Government, that is a Government utterly devoted to the interests of the proletariat, would in this way be compelled to break the old State apparatus, as an instrument of the possessing classes, and raise in opposition to it the apparatus of workers' councils. That means that the democratic origin of the Labour Government - if it were even found to be a possibility - would lead to the indispensability of raising a revolutionary class force in contradiction to the reactionary opposition. . . .

DEMOCRACY AND THE WORKERS.

In deciding the question of revolutionary force, the parliamentary democratic principle is not in the least accepted as the highest example by us. Not humanity for democracy, but democracy as one of the auxiliary instruments on the road of humanity's development. Where bourgeois democracy is converted into an obstacle it must be pulled down. The transfer from Capitalism to Socialism will result not at all from formal democratic principles, exalted above society, but from the material conditions of development of society itself; from the growth of productive forces, from the impasses of capitalist inconsistencies, internal and international, from the intensification of the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. A scientific analysis of the whole historical process and the personal political experience of our generation, which includes the imperialist war identically show that without a transfer to Socialism all our culture is threatened with decay and decomposition. Only the proletariat directed by its revolutionary advance-guard, and drawing after itself all the working and oppressed masses both of the metropolises and of the colonies can complete the transfer to Socialism. Our highest criterions in all our activity, in all our political decisions, are the interests of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for the seizure of power and the reconstruction of society. We consider it reactionary pedantry to judge the movement from the point of view of the abstract principles and the juridical paragraphs of democracy. We consider it the only true course to judge democracy from the point of view of the historic interests of the proletariat. It is not a matter of the nutshell but of the kernel. The discussions of the Fabians on the question of the impermissibility of a "narrow class" point of view sound the purest drivel. They desire to subject the fundamental tasks of social development being realised by the proletariat to the scholastic pointers of pedants. Under the title of the solidarity of all humanity they have in mind the eclectic petty bourgeois, which corresponds to the narrow class horizon of the petty bourgeoisie. Between its own property and the revolutionary proletariat the bourgeoisie raises the screen of democracy. The socialistic pedants say to the workers: it is necessary to take over the means of

production, but as a preliminary it is necessary to make indispensable roads and channels through this screen by means of legislation. But cannot we throw down the screen? Not under any circumstances. Why not? Because if we saved society by that means, we should break up this complicated system of State force and fraud, which the bourgeoisie have taught us to regard as sacred democracy.

Dislodged from their first two positions the opponents of force can occupy a third line of trenches. They can agree to cast away Christian mysticism and democratic metaphysics, and endeavour to defend the reformist-democratic, pacific, parliamentary way by considerations of naked political expediency. Certain of them may say, approximately, the following: of course the teaching of Christ does not preconsider how to emerge from the inconsistencies of British capitalism, equally democracy is not a sacred institution, but only a temporary and auxiliary product of historical development; but why should not the working class avail themselves of the democratic Parliament, its methods, customs, and legislative apparatus for the actual taking over of power and for the reconstruction of society? Surely this is quite a natural, and on all grounds a more economical, way of consummating the social revolution.

We Communists are not under any circumstances disposed to counsel the British proletariat to turn their backs on Parliament. On the contrary, when individual British Communists manifested such a tendency they met with resistance from our side at international congresses. Thus, the question is not whether it is necessary to make use of the parliamentary method in general, but what place parliament occupies in the development of society; whether the class forces are in Parliament or outside Parliament; in what form and on what ground these forces will conflict; and whether it is possible from a Parliament created by capitalism in the interests of its own development and defence to weld a lever for the overthrow of capitalism? . . .

REACTION'S POLICY.

But as the Conservatives are made of more serious stuff than the flamboyant Socialists, when they are left in a minority they will immediately show their claws and teeth. There can be no doubt therefore that if the Conservatives did not succeed by this or that parliamentary or extra-parliamentary method in hindering the Labour Party from forming an independent Government, then, in what would thus appear to be the most favourable case from the point of view of peaceful development, the Conservatives in their minority would do all that lay in their power in order with the aid of the bureaucracy, the judiciary, the military, the House of Lords, and the Court to sabotage all the undertakings of the Labour Government. For the Conservatives, as for the remnant of the Liberals, it would be a question of discrediting the first Independent Government of the working class at any cost. For them it would be a question of life or death. This is not in the least the same as the old struggle between Liberals and Conservatives, when the differences did not get outside

Extracts from "Where is Britain going". Although written in 1925 the opinions expressed have especial point for Labour Party supporters today. The name of the Labour Party's present leader (or leaders) needs to be substituted, for that of MacDonald

the "family" of the possessing classes. Any serious reforms undertaken by the Labour Government in the spheres of taxation, nationalisation, and a real democratisation of the administration would quicken a mighty flood of enthusiasm in the working masses, and, since appetite comes with eating, these successful moderate reforms would inevitably set in train more and more radical reforms. In other words, every new day would separate the Conservatives still further from the possibility of returning to power. The Conservatives could not but take a quite clear account of the fact that the question was not of an alternating change of Government, but of the beginning of the social revolution by parliamentary means. The resources of State obstruction, and legislative and administrative sabotage in the hands of the possessing classes, are immense, since, no matter what their parliamentary majority, all the State apparatus from top to bottom is inseparably linked with the bourgeoisie. To it all belongs: all the Press, the most important organs of local self-government, the universities, schools, the church, innumerable clubs, and voluntary societies generally. In their hands are the banks and the whole system of social credit, and, finally, the apparatus of transport and trade, so that the daily food of London, including that of the Labour Government, would depend on the great capitalist combines. It is absolutely obvious that all these gigantic means will be brought into action with frantic violence in order to dam the activity of the Labour Government, to paralyse its exertions, to frighten it to effect cleavages in its parliamentary majority, and, finally, to cause a financial panic, provision difficulties, lock outs, to terrorise the upper ranks of the worker's organisations, and to sap the strength of the proletariat. Only an utter fool may not comprehend that the bourgeoisie will bring into action heaven, earth and the infernal regions in the event of the actual coming to power of a Labour Government.

BRITISH FASCISM

The present-day so-called British Fascism so far has interested more as a curiosity, but this curiosity is none the less a symptom. The Conservatives still sit too firmly in the saddle to-day to have need of the help of Fascists. But the sharpening of inter-party relationships, the growth of persistence and aggressiveness in the workers, and the prospect of the success of the Labour Party, will inevitably cause the development of Fascist tendencies in the right wing of the Conservatives. In a country which has grown poorer during the last few years, where the situation of the petty and great bourgeoisie has greatly worsened, and which has chronic unemployment, there will not be a shortage of elements for formation of Fascist Corps. There can therefore be no doubt that, by the time the Labour Party is successful in the elections, the Conservatives will have at their back not only the official State apparatus, but also unofficial bands of Fascists. They will begin their provocative and bloody work even before Parliament succeeds in getting to the first reading of the bill for the nationalisation of the coal mines. What will be left for the Labour Government to do? Either ignominiously to

capitulate, or to put up an opposition. That latter decision, however, will prove to be not by any means so simple. The experience of Ireland bears witness to the fact that for the suppression of opposition of that kind a serious material force and a strong State apparatus are indispensable. Neither the one nor the other will be on the side of the Labour Government. The police, judiciary, army, and militia will be on the side of the disorganisers, saboteurs and Fascists. The bureaucratic apparatus must be destroyed, replacing the reactionaries by members of the Labour Party. There will be no other way than this. But it is absolutely obvious that such thoroughgoing, although fully "legal" State measures will extraordinarily sharpen the legal and illegal opposition of the united bourgeois reaction. In other words: this also is the way of civil war.

But perhaps the Labour party, having come to power, will proceed to business so cautiously, so tactfully, so intelligently, that the bourgeoisie (how is one to put it?) will not feel the need for active opposition? Such an hypothesis is of course facetious by its very nature. None the less it has to be recognised that that is indeed the very rock-bottom hope of MacDonald and company. When the present s'washbuckling leader of the I.L.P.'ers says that the Labour Party will carry through those reforms the realisability of which is "scientifically" demonstrated (we are already acquainted with MacDonald's "science"), he wishes to say that the Labour Government will look interrogatively into the eyes of the bourgeoisie before each of its reformist steps. Of course, if everything depended on the goodwill of MacDonald and his "scientifically" founded reforms, the matter would never come to civil war - in the absence of any reason for this on the part of the bourgeoisie. If the second MacDonald Government were like the first, there would be no point in raising the very question of the realisability of socialism by parliamentary means, for the budget of the City has nothing in common with the budget of Socialism. None the less, the policy of the Labour Government, even if that Government retains its former composition, will have to undergo certain changes. It is absurd to think that the mighty Labour wave which is to raise MacDonald to power will immediately afterwards deferentially recede. No, the demands of the working class will grow extraordinarily. Here there will no longer be any room for the excuse of dependence on Liberal votes. The opposition of the Conservatives, the House of Lords, the bureaucracy, and the monarchy will double the energy, impatience, and agitation of the worker. The lies and calumnies of the capitalist Press will lash them forward. If under these circumstances their own Government were to display even the most unfeigned energy, it would none the less seem too indolent to the working masses. But one may wish as much reason expect revolutionary energy from MacDonald, Clynes, and Snowden, as one may expect a sweet scent from a rotten beetroot. Between the revolutionary pressure of proletariat and the frantic opposition of the bourgeoisie the MacDonald Government will sway from side to side, irritating the one, not satisfying the other, provoking the bourgeoisie by its dilatoriness, intensify

ing the revolutionary impatience of the workers, kindling a civil war, and endeavouring at the same time to deprive it of the necessary direction from the proletariat side. This period will inevitably strengthen the revolutionary wing, and will raise to the top the most far-seeing, determined, and revolutionary elements of the working class. Along this road the MacDonald Government will sooner or later, in accordance with the inter-relationships of power in Parliament, have to yield their places either to a conservative Government, with Fascist and not compromising tendencies or to a revolutionary Government, actually capable of carrying the business through to its end. And in this or that case an outbreak of civil war, of sharp conflict between classes a long the whole line, is inevitable. In the event of the victory of the conservatives, there will be a ruthless breaking up of labour organisations; in the event of the victory of the proletariat there will ensue the shattering of the opposition of the exploiters by measures of revolutionary dictatorship. You are not pleased with this my lords? We cannot help it.

The basic springs of the movement depend on us as little as on you. We "decide" nothing. We only analyse.

LEFT WING NOTES

Among the "left" wing, half supporters half opponents of MacDonald, who stand with him on the democratic position, there will be found some who will say: it goes without saying that if the bourgeois classes endeavour to put up an opposition to the democratically elected Labour Government the latter will not hesitate before methods of the most rigorous compulsion, but that will not be a class dictatorship but a Government of a democratic state, which... and so on, and so forth. It is almost useless to raise a discussion on this plane. To think in very deed that the destiny of society may be determined by the question of whether there are 307 Labour representatives elected to Parliament, i.e. a minority, or 308 i.e. a majority and not by the inter-relationships of forces at the moment of a sharp conflict of classes on fundamental questions of their existence, to think that would signify a complete enslavement to the fetishism of parliamentary arithmetic. And what will happen, we ask, if the conservatives, in face of a growing revolutionary flood and the danger of a Labour Government, not only refuse to democratise the electoral system, but on the contrary introduce new limitations into it? Impossible! object certain troubles, not comprehending that where it is a question of the life or death of classes ALL is possible. Yes, and even now in Britain among the upper circles a great preparative bustle is going on around the reorganisation and strengthening of the House of Lords....

... Having curtailed the rights of the House of Commons, that is, having accomplished a legal State revolution, the Conservatives, despite all the difficulties of the undertaking, will be left none the less in a more advantageous situation than if they had to organise opposition to a Labour Government that had succeeded in establishing itself. But in such a case it goes with

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LABOUR GOVERNMENT AND FORCE cont:

out saying, exclaimed certain "left" orators, that we shall arouse the masses to opposition. In other words, to revolutionary violence? So it now transpires that revolutionary force is not only allowable, but in deed indispensable in the event of the Conservatives accomplishing by the most legal Parliamentary means a preventative State revolution? Is it not simpler in that case to say that revolutionary force is expedient where and when it strengthens the position of the proletariat, weakens or repulses the enemy, and hastens the socialistic development of society?

However, the heroic promises of lightning-dealing opposition in the event of the Conservatives "daring," and so on, are not worth a brass farthing. One cannot sing lullabies to the masses day after day, full of gabble about a pacific, painless, law-abiding, parliamentary, democratic transfer to Socialism, and then' at the first serious blow received on the nose, to arouse the masses to armed resistance. That is the surest way of assisting in reaction's break-up of the proletariat. In order to prove themselves capable of revolutionary resistance the masses must be ideologically, organisationally, and materially prepared for it. They must understand the inevitableness of intensification of the class struggle, and its transformation at a certain stage into civil war. The education of the working class and the selection of personnel for leadership must be adapted to this perspective. It is necessary from day to day to struggle against compromising illusions, in other words, to declare a life and death fight with MacDonaldism. Thus and only thus does the matter stand at the moment.

ONE YEAR OF THE 'RED FLAG'

This May number marks our anniversary: for one year now the Red Flag has been maintained. Without exaggerating the achievement it can justly be said that its steady publication, and its circulation in all parts of the country has meant much, and will in the future mean much more, to the more advanced Socialist and Communist workers.

Any group or party with money can publish a paper: ours has been by the self sacrifice and the collective effort of our small membership. We have circulated it in most of the chief industrial areas in this country. We have done this in the teeth of virulent abuse and boycott. The paper that 'wouldn't last', the group that would 'fall to pieces in a month or two', has borne high the flag of revolutionary Marxism at a time when most sections of the movement, at least the left wing and communist sections, have experienced decline and loss.

The effect of our work is beginning to be seen. When we first began, the Communist Party studiously ignored us. Now it is compelled to publish pamphlets, to devote columns in its daily papers, and to subsidise special campaigns against "Trotskyism". Among its own members the discontent and criticism grows: the rank and file which a year ago believed the worst about the "Trotskyists" now begins to use our arguments, to repeat our criticisms and to struggle against the bureaucrats who have ruined the C.P.G.B.

In the I.L.P. there exists a steadily, although slowly growing body of opinion in favour of our principles. That we could, in the face of the 'Daily Worker's' steady and unscrupulous daily tirade against us, and in spite of the stream of lies poured out by the Communist Party's supporters in the I.L.P., secured the support of twenty branches at the Easter Conference, and good minority votes in a number of other branches is again proof that our efforts have yielded results.

All this on the credit side; none can be satisfied with this. Our organisation is small, the sale of our paper is small, our financial position is precarious, our ideas have as yet only reached the fringes of the movement. Now that we have turned our attention to the organised labour movement, already with some success, it is vital that our organ be published regularly and in sufficient quantities to reach ten times the number of workers it reaches at the present time.

This reduced issue is proof of our difficulties: we have been compelled to print it on our own small press, which has meant a reduction in size and in quantity. Our readers and supporters must realise that a paper of this kind cannot, for some time, be self-supporting. It must have help in the form of regular contributions. No left wing paper to day runs without loss and we, with our smaller resources, are much harder put to it than most. So - understand comrade reader, that it depends on you and your help. We need money, we need it quickly, and we need it often. THE EDITOR.

Crazier Month in I.L.P.

The Independent Labour Party presents to-day a sorry spectacle. Within its ranks both right and left wings make open preparations for a split, whilst to the outside world the I.L.P. leadership, making frantic efforts to out-revolutionise the revolutionaries, appears to be indulging in a desperate competition with the C.P.G.B. to see which can get the farthest away from the organised workers. The I.L.P. has no programme - we do not mean immediate demands but a basic standpoint - and consequently sways from one position to another bewildering its own members and destroying what little influence it still has.

At the Bermondsey "Conference of Action" it protested against naming the T.U.C. and the Labour Party as responsible for the lack of unity in this country. Within two months it is engaged on desperate electoral contests in which its justification is this very point. There is a curious inability on the part of the I.L.P. leadership to think in any terms save abstract conceptions. It seems to have the idea that if it publishes the record of any particular Labour M.P. it will win a bye-election. Upton is an example of this. On May the 11th., having published and distributed "Gardners Black Record" the New Leader said: "The one evident thing about the Upton election is that Ben Gardner is beaten. His own record in the House of Commons has killed his chances ... This is one of the explanations of the swing to Brockway and the I.L.P. this week ... The proportion of promises to vote for Brockway

... goes UP and UP. By next Monday the swing will have become a sweep ... It's a race between Brockway and Macnamara." But we have no doubt that by the time this is printed the result will show the hollowness of these claims and the correctness of our policy.

In Hammersmith, where the Communist candidate received the support of the I.L.P. and lost some eighty votes, the tactics of the I.L.P. were little short of sharp practice. With disarming impartiality a questionnaire was presented to both Communist and Labour candidate. But the questionnaire was so worded that only the Communist candidate could possibly answer the questions in such a way as to secure I.L.P. support. One of them set out a view that resembled the Marxist conception of the State and asked the Labour candidate if he acceded to it! This is playing at politics and we urge the I.L.P. members to stop this before the remnants of the I.L.P. follow the C.P.G.B. into complete impotence.

Our Alleged "Liquidation"

New Leader there recently appeared a statement to the effect that the Communist League had been "liquidated". Our correction of this misreport was not published by the New Leader in spite of repeated requests. We therefore make the following statement for the information of our readers.

During the latter part of last year our

International Secretariat initiated a discussion on the tactics to be employed towards the I.L.P. by our organisation. They were of the opinion that the most effective way of winning the I.L.P. for the 4th. International would be the disbanding -officially- of the present Communist League and the entry of its members into the I.L.P. After a two months discussion this proposition was rejected by the majority of our members.

Our International Secretariat then suggested that the minority who favoured their tactic, should be allowed to enter the I.L.P. to try out the proposed tactic. This they did not think likely to be effective unless there ceased to be, officially, a section of the International Communist League. If such a section existed the approach of the minority comrades to the I.L.P. on the lines of a willingness to disband in order to work within the I.L.P. would be impossible. In view of this the International Secretariat decided that, for the time being the Communist League should be regarded as a "sympathetic" organisation, not as the official section. This measure was part of the effort to win the I.L.P. Our Communist League members do not agree with this approach and the statements of the minority and the work of the minority should not therefore be regarded as in any way the responsibility of the Communist League. The statement that we are "liquidated" in the sense of ceased to exist as an organisation or as meaning that we are no longer connected with the International Communist League is therefore false. The whole question is to be reconsidered at an International Plenum in the near future.