

Socialist Outlook

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Searchlight on Tory Finance

By H. L. AUSTIN, M.P.

THE contrast in the essentials of character and policy of the Labour and Conservative Parties is reflected in large measure by the nature of the basic support each enjoys from different sections of the community. The Labour Party makes no secret of its dependence on the Trade Union Movement and the Co-operatives, and has often paid generous tribute to these bodies for their unremitting and unswerving loyalty, as well as their practical financial backing.

The Conservatives on the other hand are supported by Big Business, which is much more narrow and sectional in the interests it represents. *The Tory difficulty is to successfully obscure this vital truth from the view of the public at large.* This then accounts for the prominence they give to an occasional Trade Union stooge at their annual conferences. It accounts also for the creation of bodies like the Housewives' League.

But the indiscretions of individuals on occasion readily give the game away. For instance, **Mr. Hely Hutchinson**, writing when he was the sitting **Conservative Member for Hastings**, in his book *Capitalism*:

"It is not the fault of politicians that their trade is what it is. Let us consider the nature of that trade. The politician comes to the market representing an INTEREST—a group of people who have an end—or several ends—to serve; and consider him to be the man to appear as their broker—advocate to negotiate with other groups on their behalf."

There in essence is the Tory mentality and the Tory creed. For an even more significant example, let us take the views of **Sir Thomas Moore, Conservative M.P. for Ayr Burghs**. In the *Daily Mail* of April 25th, 1934, a signed article appeared following on the Fascist rally at the Albert Hall. Only a short extract is necessary.

"There was little if any of the policy which could not be accepted by the loyal followers of our present Conservative leaders—surely there cannot be any fundamental difference of outlook between the Blackshirts and their parents the Conservatives—the most casual examination of its members satisfies one that it is largely derived from the Conservative Party."

Where, therefore, is the gap between them? Why should there not be concord and agreement between the old historic party and this new and virile offshoot."

SIR THOMAS MOORE IS STILL CONSERVATIVE M.P. FOR AYR BURGHS! Who Are Responsible for Woolton's Millions?

Big Business is still backing the Conservative Party! Members of the pre-war *Anglo-German Fellowship* and the *Link* are still a considerable force behind the scenes. Who knows, too, what part is being played by members of **Capt. Ramsay's** notorious *Right Club*, whose identity is still a secret, still shielded from the gaze of a public that has every right to know who these potential quislings were.

Remember it was the big industrialists of Germany who put Hitler into power aided by the right wing Governments of Von Schleicher and Von Papen. **The Krupps, Thyssens, and Hugenbergs of Nazi Germany have their counterparts here to-day.** Small wonder that Lord Woolton's appeal for a million pounds at the 1947 Tory Conference was subscribed within three months of the campaign being launched! Much more has been collected since, how much we don't know, but what we do know is that millions have already been expended by the gigantic machine Lord Woolton has created.

It is easy to understand Lord Woolton's reticence. A full and published subscription list would identify too many members of the Federation of British Industries and the National Union of Manufacturers, if not many others even more sinister.

Tory Methods Exposed

Colonel Wigg, Labour M.P. for Dudley, on the 18th July, 1949, referred in the course of a debate to a Conservative Party publication circulated amongst manufacturers in the Midlands. He said:

"A book is sent round to manufacturers and all sub-contractors are invited to place their names in the book alongside an adequate subscription. If they do not do so, a peremptory note is sent them drawing attention to the fact. I have got photostatic copies of a subscription list to the Conservative Party in the West Midlands which has been extorted—that is the right word—from business people irrespective of their political views. They have got to pay, even though many of them being intelligent men, are members of the Labour Party. They have got to pay! Otherwise they know that their business must suffer."

Sir Patrick Hannon, Tory M.P. for Moseley, Birmingham, and Chairman of the National Union of Manufacturers, in one of his frequent interruptions of Colonel Wigg's speech, fully admitted the point by saying:

"Surely the collection of funds for party purposes is the right of every political party in the country and if they do so there is nothing particularly wrong with it."

Fair enough: if there is nothing particularly wrong with it, then why be so coy, Lord Woolton? The public whose votes you are so anxiously soliciting have every right to know, and until you are more forthcoming can you wonder that they neither trust you nor the Party of privilege on which you pontificate so much.

Editorial

Labour Must Win

THAT the General Election will take place within the next few months now seems very probable: that it will be bitterly contested is absolutely certain. The Tory Party, representative of big business, is dead serious about removing the Labour Government as a prelude to a wholesale attack on the living standards of the working class. The workers must be equally serious about defeating these plans. *Socialist Outlook*, therefore, urges all its readers and supporters to spare no effort in the fight to secure an overwhelming majority for Labour in 1950.

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Editorial—continued

Background of the Election

The developing world economic crisis will pose all questions point-blank. Either the workers will succeed in reconstructing society on planned Socialist lines or . . . *the capitalists will perpetuate their system on the broken backs of the working class.* There is no middle way—either for us or for the Tories.

The days when super-profits from the colonies could be employed to soften the class struggle are gone—and gone forever. The Colonial Empire can no longer cushion the shocks of the economic crisis; armed force is required to compel the Malaysians and Nigerians to sweat for the profit of the City of London; overseas investments are almost gone; industry at home is backward and cannot be modernised except by a Socialist reorganisation; the division of the world into two antagonistic blocs compels the maintenance of a crushing burden of armaments; and, always present, is the threat of a merciless competition from the war-like "benefactor" across the Atlantic.

Under these conditions, to compete in the world market means forcing down the costs of production at the expense of the workers' wages and living conditions. That is the capitalist "way out" and that is, in fact, the Tory programme.

The Real Battle of Britain

Standing in the way of the realisation of this programme, however, is the powerful Trade Union movement, now embracing 9,300,000 workers—40 per cent. of the entire working population! The Tories are therefore compelled to engage in battle this magnificent organisation of the working class. The removal of the Labour Government is their first objective. *That is why the election will be bitterly contested.*

The capitalists are, of course, thankful that this Government has shown such an incredible leniency towards them. They are secretly thankful for its stubborn refusal to nationalise the basic industries and operate them in accordance with a socialist plan; for its generous compensation to the owners of those industries which have become State property; for its imposition of a wage freeze on the working class at a time when profits are soaring; and for its recent retreat on the important question of the nationalisation of insurance.

These undoubted concessions to Tory pressure, whilst they confuse, bewilder, and

disappoint the working class, do not satisfy the capitalists. For them it is all or nothing. They will repay leniency with class hatred.

They want a government which is directly under their own control—instead of one which, in the final analysis, is answerable to the organised workers. The Tories want power unadulterated. *Power to extend the working week without overtime pay; power to abolish the food subsidies; to slash the social services achieved under the Labour Government; to reduce taxation of the rich; and to regiment the population in readiness for the war which they and their American counterparts are preparing.*

The Duty of the Left

The working class could easily defeat these plans of the Tory Party if Labour would come before the electorate with a clearly defined socialist programme. As it is, however, the Government's repeated capitulations to Tory pressure is sapping and undermining the enthusiasm of working people. Furthermore, it is probably too late to change the present policy *before the election takes place.* But this fact, unpleasant though it is, must on no account deter the socialist wing, which at all times is the most devoted and hard working section of the movement, from throwing itself wholeheartedly into the battle. Indeed, the responsibility for re-generating the enthusiasm of the working class rests primarily with this socialist rank

and file. It is this section of the movement which is most interested in securing a decisive Labour victory.

If Labour is returned to office, then the valuable experience of the last four years will be continued. The fallacy of trying to make capitalism work will become more and more apparent to the organised workers. The demand for a more socialist policy will be irresistible. The possibility will open up for the transformation of the Party into a powerful instrument of social change—the ideal of those who pioneered the movement.

For this possibility to become fact it is necessary to rout the Tories at the general election. That is our first and most urgent task.

The Real Issues

If the Tories win it will be a defeat for the international working class. Reaction throughout the world will be encouraged. Our own movement will be forced into a rearguard action to defend itself from the capitalist attacks which will inevitably follow.

If Labour wins, and provided that the socialists in the Party remember the experiences of these last four years and maintain their determination to struggle for the operation of socialist principles, then victory in 1950 will be the prelude to a real forward movement of the working class.

Ourselves and Finance

(AND WE DON'T NEED A SEARCHLIGHT !)

WITH this issue the "Socialist Outlook" enters on its second year of publication. The paper is at last beginning to do the job for which it was founded—to exert a real SOCIALIST influence on our great Trade Union and Labour movement.

We want to record our sincere thanks to those comrades throughout the country who, by their magnificent practical and financial help have made the paper the success it is.

But we need still more help. We need MORE MONEY if the good work is to develop further. Our finances are derived ENTIRELY FROM SALES OF THE PAPER, DONATIONS, and the SHARE CAPITAL OF THE LABOUR PUBLISHING SOCIETY which produces the paper.

Some of our new readers may want to know more about the L.P.S. It is a co-operative society, registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts. Jack Stanley is the Chairman and Tom Braddock, M.P., is the Treasurer. Membership is open to all members of the Labour Party, and affiliated members who are eligible for individual membership. The price of a share is £1—and we need all the share capital we can get.

May we remind our regular subscribers that yearly subscriptions are now beginning to run out. We shall send you a reminder when your renewal becomes due. Give us a good Xmas box. Renew your 3s. annual subscription and take out a share in the Society.

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"SPEAKING MY MIND"

Let us Face the Future

By TOM BRADDOCK, M.P.

IT is all settled. As I said when Sir Stafford announced devaluation, the P.B.W. is expected to work harder and, as the Archbishop of Canterbury told us on Armistice Sunday, for less reward. That is all, that is how it is to be done, work harder and eat less. That's what we get for four years of ceaseless effort after six years of war time sacrifices. During this period the workers of this country have increased production, increased exports to a degree never before achieved. Now they are to get less.

What of the Boss Class?

You may well ask. They, of course, are to be encouraged; bigger profits, greater assistance from the State, no suggestion of any greater cut in their standard of living like that of the £5 a week worker. *All men are equal*, therefore we have equal cuts! It's so simple and so useless.

The Tory Party in the House voted against the Bill to increase by 5 per cent. the tax on distributed profits and in doing so gave notice to the Government that the people of this country can expect no co-operation or assistance from the industrialists in meeting the difficulties we are facing.

What preparations are the Government making to meet the situation? We are, I suggest, entitled to know.

Can We Co-operate with Capitalism?

The answer is NO, it won't work. Our association with the greatest capitalist country in the world, the U.S.A., is leading us right into war. Already war preparation is our biggest industry, the so-called cut in the defence services is, like the tax on the rich, a token only. War costs are mounting up day by day. It is impossible to maintain and improve living standards and at the same time throw labour and material into the bottomless bucket of war preparation.

Its Effect

The knowledge that we are heading for war is having its effect on our national life. How can you expect a continued and sustained effort for good and desirable ends if it is known that in the not very distant future all our efforts are going to be swallowed up in the maelstrom of war, a war that will destroy everything.

Can It Be Stopped?

Time is short. American military experts are over here telling us how many divisions we must have to hold the Russians while they, the Americans, get ready. They are telling us that we are worrying too much about the health and happiness of our children and not enough about saving American capitalism from Russian communism. That, in fact, is what we are being called upon to

do. We have got to think very carefully about this situation, we have got to realise that, even if we don't like communism, war is no way to end it. The example of the better working of Social Democracy is the only reply to an advancing communism. The preparations for war stop the development of socialism. The boss class of America and this country know this only too well, that is why they are such enthusiastic supporters of our present foreign policy and our present defence (attack) plans.

Are we to stand by and see our hard-won civilisation stagger to its doom? I think not, comrades. We took direct action to stop Churchill making war on the U.S.S.R. after the first world war, we must prepare to take direct action, if necessary, to save *ourselves*, and in saving ourselves we shall save Europe from becoming a shambles, from being blasted into submission by U.S.A. atomic bombs rained indiscriminately on all the races of Europe, whether victors or vanquished, in the next war we are now preparing ourselves to fight.

Tribune's "New Unionism"

NOT content with justifying devaluation, increased profits, and the recent economy cuts, the *Tribune* has now come out with a set of new tasks for the Trade Unions.

"... the trade union movement must rid itself of the idea that profits, per se, are necessarily bad." (Tribune, 18.11.49.)

It seems that the Editors of *Tribune* view profits like the little girl in the nursery rhyme... "when they are good they are very very good, but when they are bad they are horrid."

It has completely escaped their notice that profits—high or low, *per se* or otherwise—are derived from the labours of the working class. They are unearned income or, better still, they are **UNPAID LABOUR**. In a word, profit-making proceeds by means of the **EXPLOITATION** of the workers.

From the point of view of the capitalist, this exploitation of the workers is "necessarily good." From the point of view of the workers it is "necessarily bad" (and how!) But to those who derive their incomes from scribbling and speech-making the whole thing is no doubt a vast mystery. Sometimes it is good, sometimes it is bad! But what is really bad is that such people should dare to set up an advice bureau (the *Tribune*) for the purpose of imparting their mystification (latin tags and all!) to the exploited working people.



Lancs. and Cheshire T.U'ists in Radical Mood

By FRANK ALLAUN

THE 250 delegates were in radical mood when the Lancashire and Cheshire Federation of Trades Councils met recently. The Federation (representing 700,000 trade unionists) was holding a special conference in Manchester on ways of overcoming the economic crisis.

The delegates decided to press for the early nationalisation of the Lancashire cotton mills and the textile engineering industry (which is an almost complete monopoly on the spinning side). They noted with alarm "the continued slow tempo of re-equipment in the cotton industry."

Two resolutions—both successful—were moved by the executive. One sought an examination of the engineering industry to determine which sections should be taken over by the State and in which development councils should be set up. The other asked for a ten-year plan for industry and the establishment of a national planning commission.

The principal speaker was **Ellis Smith, M.P.**, President of the Federation. For some reason the *Daily Worker* published that morning was very critical of the resolutions to be debated and particularly of Ellis Smith, who, they inferred, had inspired them. Now not even King Street could accuse Ellis of "Right Wing tendencies." And in view of his forthright appeals for more trade with Soviet Russia and the Left nature of the agenda this attack was a little difficult to understand.

Certainly, the invitation to the conference asked for "resolutions which do not conflict with T.U.C. and general trade union policy." But that allowed plenty of latitude, as the actual resolutions and speakers proved. Surely the *Daily Worker* doesn't want the Federation to commit suicide gratuitously and "get in wrong" with the T.U.C. unnecessarily?

Ellis pointed out that the industrial workers, who kept the rest of the population, were being asked to produce more and consume less.

"Some people have the colossal impertinence," he said, "to ask these workers for a lengthening of the working week."

"The first thing should be to ask all to work a 45-hour week."

Britain was in a state of siege, he said. We could not afford the Dorchester-Savoy type of existence—nor the gamblers in the Stock Exchange and the gutters nearby. *"It is wrong to talk of restraint by the working class and not by others,"* he continued.

He hoped that the next Budget would contain radical proposals for a capital levy and a tax on capital gains. Our dollar gap would never be breached by our present policy and methods, said the speaker. The country could not afford the colossal expenditure of £2,000,000 a day on the armed forces. This must be cut.

Ellis stated he did not believe there was an immediate danger of war. But it might come through an "incident" abroad. He was cheered when he said that British soldiers should therefore be brought home from Hong Kong and other parts rather than risk such an "incident."

Railway Commentary

Sacrifices & Leadership

By BOB SHAW

THE railwaymen's cause is no longer front-page news in the national press. The fight for decent living wages has been temporarily defeated. The leaders have failed to lead, and their prestige has gone down with a rush amongst rank and file railwaymen.

The disillusionment is such that men of 20 and 30 years' experience, even in higher grades, are leaving for better paid jobs whilst the younger hands are leaving the nationalised railways in their thousands. Many yards, locos., stations and permanent-way gangs are understaffed, so that in these places 12-hour shifts are the order of the day. *The usual complement of unproductive bowler hats, of course, remains at full strength.*

Why beat about the bush? There are some good soft jobs both in the trade union and Labour Party worlds. The people who fill these jobs do not always remember that they were put there and paid in order that they could fight for our interests. But what do we get? Because the capitalist crisis becomes worse and the economic situation gets difficult, then all our leaders can do is look glum and tell us that "now is not the time," or they speak about the "immorality of high wages." Meanwhile, they often draw many times the worker's average money, and never as little as the workers themselves.

Our leaders are very forward in saying how much the workers must give: but oh, how they lack courage when it comes to speaking to the capitalists.

We are told now that the crisis is not after all merely a temporary setback on the road to economic recovery and plenty for all. No, it now stretches ahead into unseen years. All right, then, there was still time, and there is now, to say, since the crisis is so serious *then obviously we cannot be so soft with capitalism as we thought, and a more vigorous and socialist policy is the remedy.*

We will suspend payment of all interest on nationalisation compensation sums and on the National debt. *Everybody* must do a *useful* job of work, which does not include gambling on the stock exchange or running racehorses to amuse the rich. Yes, and decent wage levels for all workers with adequate pensions on retirement. Also since the workers are the only ones who can pull us out of this crisis, and since we cannot altogether trust the rich, then give the workers powers of supervision over the managers of industry. These are some of the steps that could have been taken. This is the road we should have followed, towards the socialist solution of the crisis.

But no, from the sidewalk the leaders are urging the workers along the road to defeat. More work, harder work, longer hours, less pay, speed up, and more sacrifices for capitalist vultures, and that is all. Even the timid suggestion of a £5 minimum wage (was it real?) was hurriedly withdrawn.

If real socialist measures were put forward courageously by the Labour Government, they would receive enthusiastic support from the workers, which is all that matters. Why should a Labour Government bother too much about placating the rich? Why hang on to the decaying system of royalty and the House of Lords? If the capitalists started to sabotage production and the Lords and princes did cut up rough, then confiscate their property and put them to a useful job of work, with the alternative of the dole. The workers would then run the factories, railways and mines themselves.

It is high time too that our leaders stopped dishing out this tripe about the rich being taxed up to the limit. Only fools and rogues really believe this. *How many capitalists and idle rich would willingly exchange their life of idle luxury for that of a railway worker?*



Very often our leaders live so close to the rich themselves that they either forget the conditions of the workers they represent or themselves become part of the racket to exploit the poor working man. Workers' control of our leaders is one of the most urgent present-day tasks.

To many it seems that the trade unions have become merely another apparatus of the state to coerce the workers to accept sacrifices. In fact, the trade unions have become far too tied up to all sorts of committees and bodies whose function is to collaborate with capitalism, to the detriment of the workers and the undoubted benefit of the capitalist. Both nationally and locally the workers' representatives sit on them in the mistaken illusion that we can thus better our conditions. Arbitrations, conciliation, Order 1305, joint consultative committees, rules and regulations. It is so bad now that before we can start to fight for better wages our leaders must consult eminent lawyers and a K.C.!

Stop monkeying about with lawyers and let's have a little less friendliness with Big Business and their representatives, please. Never mind whether our case is *legal*, let it be sufficient that every worker knows that it is *just*.

GOVERNMENT exhortations stress the urgent need for reducing costs, yet major factors in price inflation are the waste, extravagance and tax evasion now prevalent in the "business community."

In the first place, the salaries drawn by directors and high executives represent an unwarrantable drain upon the resources of the country. *The services rendered by these persons, both in time and in quality, are to a large extent socially unnecessary.* Yet, humourously enough, their inflated incomes are regarded as "earned"!

Secondly, there is the multiplicity of merchants, who buy and sell vitally needed commodities often without seeing the goods. With three or four firms taking their cut, it is not surprising that prices are high. Thousands of these parasitic concerns exist, levying a heavy toll upon the productive efforts of the workers.

Thirdly, directors are allowed expenses which, in many cases, are enough for them to live on. Although the Finance Act, 1948, attempted to check the existing expense rackets, they still go on. *Entertaining, meals, "travelling," use of the firm's cars, all incurred ostensibly for business purposes, enable the employers to offset appreciably the present high level of taxation.*

In addition to these advantages over the workers, the employers, because they control the businesses, can resort to tax evasion methods. It is not difficult to arrange suitable methods of helping each other along, and the practice of charging up personal expenditure in company's accounts is not unknown.

In the November issue of the *Socialist Outlook* John Lawrence referred to the audited Accounts submitted annually by private enterprise to the Inland Revenue, and he quite correctly demanded some form

Open the Books

This discussion opened in our last issue correspondence. Here are the views of engineering firms.

of workers' inspection of the books. Obviously, firms intend to pay as little tax as possible and to reveal the minimum of information in these accounts. Auditors are theoretically employed by the shareholders, but in practice the directors have a great power in determining their appointment. In any case Accountants must study their clients' interests first. In the case of many medium and small firms this means that a "reasonable" attitude towards dubious practices is expected.

However, the important point is that Auditors should be *public officials* with the power to ensure that private enterprise operates the law and acts in accordance with Government policy. They should report periodically to the Government and *appropriate committees of employees* upon the activities of the private enterprises so that, in the national interest, abuses and mismanagement could be corrected.

It is most likely that workers' inspection of companies' books would lead to an exposure of waste, possibly sabotage, and certainly parasitism, which would provoke demands for drastic remedial action.

But to ensure the most efficient use of the country's resources and to secure the wholehearted active support of working people in the drive to overcome the crisis, adequate Governmental and working-class supervision over private enterprise is one of the first essential steps.

Arms and the Cuts

By STEPHEN SWINGLER, M.P. for Stafford

FIRST we were told that there would be no cut in defence. It was argued that a cut in defence meant reducing commitments, and it was impossible to reduce commitments. But when the Prime Minister announced the economies, the list included £30 millions off defence. But what is this cut? Not a penny off the £760 millions in the 1949 Budget. Not a farthing off the projected £1,000 millions (is it?) in the 1950 Budget. It's what an economist might call a "notional" cut. It's a cut off some supplementary bill which has not yet been presented to the nation.

Obviously devaluation of the £ has raised the cost of defence, like everything else. The Forces are great consumers of food and petrol and other dollar items too. And so—although we don't yet know—everybody has already got used to saying that we are actually spending £800 millions, rather than £760 millions, on arms in 1949-50. It may be more. But the cut is in that "more," whatever it is, and not in the original budget.

Everybody should get this straight. Since 1945 Britain has received a gross sum of £1,500 millions in dollars in foreign aid—American and Canadian loans and Marshall aid. During the same period Britain has

spent a gross sum of £1,013 millions sterling abroad—on UNRRA, Germany, and military commitments. In the whole of 1938 Britain spent exactly £16 millions on overseas forces. In the first half of 1949 this country, whose "National Debt" rose from £8,000 millions to £25,000 millions in the War, spent £112 millions on overseas military forces. Need one say more about the causes of "the crisis?" Yes: one must say this again and again. British arms expenditure to-day is roughly 8 per cent. of the National Income; that of the U.S.A. is 5 per cent. and our Brussels Pact ally Belgium's is 2 per cent. Don't be misled by any *per capita* figures worked out by the Ministry of Defence. Monetarily the per head income in the States is much higher than in Britain; so the sum spent on arms per head is higher. But the real comparison is between proportions of national wealth spent on arms and in that comparison Britain tops the list.

It is a terrible price to pay. The workers have responded to the call for more production and production is higher than ever before. Productivity is said to have risen on average in the last twelve months by 5 to 7 per cent. £115 millions of "unrequited exports" (for

which nothing comes in return) have gone to countries like India and Egypt in the first half of this year. But the result is—devaluation, disinflation, social service cuts, a rising cost of living. And in the most inflationary and inflated item of spending—a notional cut of £30 millions.

The Labour Government has home commitments first—to the British workers. There is a commitment to provide a decent National Minimum, to expand the Social Services, to put the burdens of taxes and cuts on the richest and those best able to pay. In the fulfilment of this commitment lies the best defence of the British worker in the struggle against poverty and want. There is no "must" about overseas policies and forces, because nobody, least of all the Russians, is fooled by alleged military strength supported by obvious economic weakness. Nor will the Chinese Communists be in the least impressed by all the money spent on Hong-Kong. Just look at the map and see.

How long are we going on paying for the lion's share of past and future wars?

The Case of the Spider-men

[Extracts from *What the Steel Erector Means to Britain*, an excellent pamphlet published by the Constructional Engineering Union in justification of the Steel Erectors' Wage Claim.]

"... With the boom in steel erection the casualties soared. Between 1920 and 1929 the number of Constructional Engineering Union men killed or injured was never fewer than seventeen in every thousand. In 1923 the figure was as high as twenty-seven.

From 1930 onwards the accident and death rate increased considerably. The years 1937, 1938 and 1939 were black indeed, the numbers of casualties in those periods being 133, 117 and 204 respectively

. . . . During the war years, and the immediate post-war period, between 500 to 600 men—out of a Union numbering not much more than 12,000—were injured or killed on the job annually. In 1948 no fewer than 23 members were killed and there were 765 other accidents, an average of over 1 to 500 killed.

. . . . For a 44-hour week the steel erector in the provinces takes home £5 17s. 4d. In London, his income is £6 1s. 0d.

The increases (3d. an hour has been asked for) have again been refused, doubtless because of the Government's policy of freezing wages. Wages are frozen, yes. But has the cost of living been pegged? Are the engineering employers' profits frozen? Not on your life! *Profits in this industry have actually increased*

. . . . The 3d. per hour for 11,000 members would cost in ONE year £314,000. Redpath Brown and Co. increased their profit in 1948 over 1947 by £287,448. So out of one firm's INCREASED profits for ONE YEAR the claim could almost be met They (the Constructional Engineering Union) have finally decided, in the interest of the members' safety, that the regulations governing the trade shall be rigidly adhered to

O T.U. Inspection!

On this slogan has caused considerable news of an ACCOUNTANT and an SHOP STEWARD

OPEN the Books to Trade Union Inspection has a special appeal to active trade unionists. Each day in the factories we see how this should operate and what a big step forward it would be in aiding shop stewards in their task of protecting the interests of the workmen. "That's a managerial function," or, "Those are the facts, but we can't give you the details." Such replies from the management continually block our endeavours to prove a trade union case. It is not Government inspection of the books which alone is required—but the trade unions, right down to the factory level, must have the right to see the inner workings of industry. For the benefit of "Manchester Reader," who is "not impressed" with this demand, let me give an illustration.

In the past few days I have had occasion to take up with the management the question of shortage of tools. This shortage is holding up men working on a bonus system and hence they are losing money. The management's reply was, first, that there were enough tools and, then, that they are looking into it.

Yet I know that these tools have been ordered up by the department, but the orders have been returned without the tools. I know this, but I can't prove it because all the facts—when the tools were ordered, and

when, if ever, they reached the shop—are kept in the department order book. This book is naturally closed to shop stewards. It is a "managerial function." But it is hard to argue a case when all the facts and figures are in the hands of one side alone!

As with things like tools, so with the canteen. Queries are continually arising as to the price of this or the quality of that. The steward can only accept whatever reply the management care to give, as we have no means of checking those replies. Only when we have the right to see all the books can we effectively challenge the statements of the management. If the books showed that the firm could afford it, we would be in a powerful position to demand that the price of canteen dinners be dropped a penny. As for the tools, we could very easily prove who was incompetent in this matter.

That is what "open the books" means to trade unionists—and it is a very real meaning indeed. Without this elementary industrial democracy it is, to say the least, a bit one-sided to ask us to work longer hours and harder. When shop stewards have achieved this right to see the books, it is more than likely that we shall find that much of the extra effort that is continually being asked of us is due to the incompetence and inefficiency of the management. That much of this overtime which so many are now shouting about could be done away with altogether.

As a shop steward, I say to the *Socialist Outlook*—good luck to you in this campaign for opening the books. It is the voice of sanity amid all the shouting for more work and longer hours.

Bonus Issues

By RONALD CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.

THE financial pundits who largely guide the hand, and the heart, of the Tories, and who are expert at finding ways around any barriers the Treasury puts up to check money-grabbing, will try and explain most elaborately why the issue of bonus shares is not only a legitimate process but is, indeed, a healthy and proper adjustment which it is incumbent on directors and shareholders to make. The Tory Member for the New Forest and Christchurch, Col. Crosthwaite-Eyre, recently put it thus: "It is only right that from time to time the money invested in that company by way of ploughed profits and increased machinery should be represented in the balance sheet of the company by bringing the nominal and the actual capital into balance." (Hansard, 9th May, 1949).

There is the perfect Tory reasoning to justify placing additional and inflationary purchasing power in the hands of shareholders—at a time of "restraint and moderation"; not only so, but it should be noted that these "ploughed profits," as Col. Crosthwaite-Eyre calls them, have borne profits tax at only 10 per cent., instead of the 25 per cent. (now to be 30 per cent.) they would have borne had they been distributed directly, instead of in this roundabout way.

No, no, the useful smoke-screens of the City of London, thrown up by their disciples in Parliament and elsewhere, are being penetrated. Bonus Issues were prohibited altogether in the war years; in 1947 Hugh Dalton agreed to their reintroduction, subject to the scrutiny of the Capital Issues Committee and a 10 per cent. duty—though he referred to them as "sheer money for jam," and as frequently being "nothing more than a watering of capital, and so misleading customers, employees, and the general public, and heading off demands for lower prices or better conditions of employment."

That was indeed a realistic picture, and it was surprising that in this year's Budget the present Chancellor should have withdrawn the 10 per cent. duty. Doubly surprising in view of the serious economic situation, and of the fact that he gave not one word of explanation as to why it was withdrawn—and has not to this day. Trebly surprising,

Worth thinking about!

The INCREASE between 1945 and 1948 in the profits *actually left in the hands of the employers after all deductions for tax, overheads, expenses, etc.*, was £240,000,000.

If the Chancellor took the WHOLE of this sum it would still leave the capitalists with the 1945 net profit which was £1,860,000,000. Furthermore, this huge increase in unearned income (£240 million) is almost equal to the sum total of the economy cuts in health, housing, etc.

Why was the profits tax not therefore increased to "mop up" this £240,000,000 instead of the Health, Housing, and Education cuts?

in that a few weeks ago he suddenly instructed the Capital Issues Committee to sanction no more of them! But as I pointed out in the House of Commons, the stable door was being closed "with most of the valuable horses gone and lost to us."

Vickers had got away with a £6 million bonus issue, Woolworth's and the Distillers Company with £7½ million each, Ruston and Hornsby with £2 million, Murex with £1 million, and scores of lesser companies with hundreds of thousands.

In answer to a question in the House, Sir Stafford informed me (25th October) that since the Budget a few months earlier, 331 companies had applied for permission in respect of £126 million, and 317 of them had been sanctioned, with a nominal value of £124 million! Real value probably at least £200 million—not far short of the expected out-turn of the Profits Tax for the current year!

These manœuvres and financial devices are clearly the twilight of Big Business and Capitalist exploitation. The day is dawning in which the workers, who really produce the goods and services of the country will shake these parasites off their backs.

Our Old People

When I say "our" I mean old salaried and working men and their wives. Their plight, with costs of living continuing to rise, is indeed a desperate one. They are most certainly in the same position as that class of earners whose wages are so low that they must be exempted from all suggestions of a wage freeze.

Are we going to stand by and see these people of our own class reduced to a state of slow starvation? I hope not! If the strike weapon can be used to safeguard the conditions of people who are working, then equally it should be used, if necessary, to protect our old people.

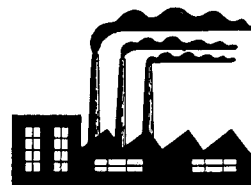
It is nonsense to say "we can't afford." We can and must. If highly paid directors, etc., can be given £100,000 apiece to stop work, surely another 10s. a week for old people who have not had too good a time in the past is not asking too much. It is not really asking enough. Let us see to it!

T.B.

Does Your T.U. Branch take Socialist Outlook?

Workshop Notes

By JACK JOHNSTON (A.E.U. Newcastle)



A SHIPYARD worker who has written to me after reading "Workshop Notes," wants to know what we think of his industry. Well

The ship-building and ship-repairing industry has reached the stage that many wish housing had. *There is now nearly enough to go round.* The hundreds of vessels which were destroyed one way or another during the World War II along with the jerry-built Liberty ships have now been almost replaced. The men who have done the job in such a short time for five pounds a week and less are worrying about the future. 20,000 to 30,000 are faced with idleness.

To socialists it should be a good thing that many men will no longer be needed to do this work. Under socialism plans would be made to transfer their energy and skill into other channels. There is plenty to do. Housing for export, too, if we have to. Electricity plant, again the surplus could be exported, *the former colonies could keep the wheels turning for years*, and so on.

The Tories have a plan to remedy this position too, but we have sampled that up here on the Tyne. We want no more of it. The National Shipbuilding Securities, with their policy of planned destitution must not "solve" the problem again. You agree?

Yes, brother, but it is not enough to say this when a thousand men get their cards, as has happened here twice recently. The Labour Party has to DO something. After all we are in power, we should use it. The official excuse up to now has been the shipyard men are mostly unskilled or semi-skilled, and cannot turn to other trades. Let's have a go. Direct a job needing male labour into this area and see what happens. If the men can get a living wage (one-third of an M.P.'s salary, or a sixteenth of a board chairman's) the job will be flooded with suitable labour. This always was Labour's policy out of office, direct the job, not the man, make it positive now.

This, of course, is all right, but really only fiddling with the whole affair. The situation is crying out for a national plan for industry. Export drives, dollar gaps, are so much hot air when an owner of a factory can, if he wishes, make any thing he feels will bring in a good return. Twenty or thirty owners can do the same. The less profitable, but necessary, things can wait.

One word to close. I can't get this "Welfare State" business right. Isn't it time the State stopped looking after the welfare of the Ranks, and gave a thought to the rank and file.



The Socialist Voice

I have just had the pleasure of reading the November issue of the *Socialist Outlook*. Most of the views given in the various articles I find extremely stimulating. It is good to hear the socialist voice.

SALFORD. Edward Woolley.

* * *

Production and the Workers

Their howls are getting louder—the “work-harder-for-less-pay” chorus—and much more regular, and they are now being joined by people we thought we could rely on to establish the workers’ point of view. No doubt they hope that if they can keep it up long enough the workers will “see the necessity.” I don’t think so. Too many still have memories of the early 1930’s.

One cannot fail to notice that all the sacrifices are asked of the people who are already pulling their weight, for in spite of the mud-slingers, the workers of this country are doing their share of producing the wealth needed for survival. A discreet silence is maintained on all aspects of production except the shop floor: I wonder why? Every intelligent person—even those without technical experience—realises that the manual worker at his bench or machine is at the tail-end of the production cycle.

Through the various forms of incentive, and the negative incentive fear of losing the job (it is still there!), employers see to it that the worker keeps at it. The reason more is not produced for the same effort is because of a reluctance to provide the best equipment—most employers still look on the human being as the cheapest type of machinery.

Then there is the question of production planning. The general trend of the day is to produce a pre-determined profit and if that can be done with less outlay, why bother? If 10 articles will ensure a return of a certain figure, why go out of our way to sell 20 at half the profit? That is not good business. Our industrialist would then have less time to spare for his race meetings or holidays abroad.

This sort of thing has the advantage of being a double-edged sword, too; it is more profitable on a short-term basis and will, if taken far enough, wreck the economy of the country and bring down this Labour Government. That the country will be brought to bankruptcy doesn’t matter very much to the big boys, they are international, and the not-so-big-boys are now busy establishing factories in other countries. They don’t intend to be left on their backsides when the crash comes.

The cost of the article doesn’t matter a great deal, either; there is still a sellers’ market after six years of destruction. That is why the parasites can so easily dig themselves into good positions and surround themselves with whole departments of fungus growth to give the impression of indispensability. This accounts for the rapid rise in the proportion of indirect workers to direct workers; the figures for some industries show

★ Correspondence should be as brief as possible and addressed to The Editor, 3 Trafalgar Avenue, London, S.E.15.

an increase of more than 100 per cent. in administrative and clerical staff for only a slight increase in the number of operatives. **I actually have figures for one industry which show a reduction in the number of operatives, as compared with pre-war, and an increase of over 20 per cent. in the non-producers.**

To the Government I say: *Don't live in the clouds, face facts. You can't court the capitalists, their kiss is the kiss of death; so take steps to curb their activities and push on at all speed with legislation to get rid of them altogether.*

F. Hulme,
Convenor, Fairey Aviation Co., Stockport

* * *

Yugoslavia and the “Peace Council”

Your journal has often referred recently to events in and around my country. I am sure, therefore, that your readers will be interested to learn about the latest manifestation of the Cominform campaign against Yugoslavia.

In common with other foreign journalists in Great Britain I applied for and received credentials to report the recent British Peace Congress organised in London by the British Peace Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. J. G. Crowther. The Yugoslav people, who lost 1,700,000 dead in the recent war, are naturally interested to learn of any manifestation of the desire for peace throughout the world.

However, on arrival at the hall, I was told by the Conference Secretary that my news agency was prohibited because it was a “representative of the Yugoslav Government.” I strongly denied this, but I was not allowed to report the conference.

Quite apart from the question of etiquette in press relations, an important point arises here. Is the “Peace Movement” in Britain a broad movement in which all points of view can unite, or is it merely an organisation which must follow the dictates of the Cominform without question?

LONDON. Milan Hofman,
London Correspondent of the Telegraphic Agency of New Yugoslavia.

* * *

Yugoslavia and Internationalism

I believe it is hypocritical to pretend to stand for democratic rights this side of the “iron curtain” and then to remain silent on the bureaucratic and undemocratic methods used to the east of the same curtain. That is why I was glad to read the article on Yugoslavia by David Finch which appeared in last month’s *Socialist Outlook*. As a trade unionist and active Labour Party member, I believe it is the duty of all militants to oppose bureaucratic domination wherever it is to be found.

Irrespective of the disagreements we may have with the Tito regime, it is clear that Yugoslavia has right on its side in the struggle for the self-determination of nations. In

spite of the dastardly economic blockade imposed by Russia, Tito has not yet been forced into the camp of the Imperialists. But that is an ever-present danger until Yugoslavia finds support from the international working class in her struggle to remain independent of both Wall Street and Moscow.

That is why I hope the *Socialist Outlook* will continue to fight for the right of Yugoslavia to be heard in the British Labour Movement.

SALFORD. Harry Ratner.

* * *

New Anglo-Yugoslav Society

As a result of Communist activities in the British-Yugoslav Association, a Resolution was adopted at the Annual General Meeting on 17th November, which has in fact turned the Association into an instrument of the Cominform in the latter’s campaign against Yugoslavia. The B.Y.A. is therefore no longer an organisation friendly to Yugoslavia.

The majority of the sponsors of the B.Y.A. and of the outgoing Executive Committee deplore this diversion of the Association from the aims for which it was formed of furthering friendship, mutual understanding and co-operation between the British and Yugoslav people.

They have therefore founded a new organisation, the ANGLO-YUGOSLAV FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY, open to members of all parties or of no party, provided they accept the aims of the Society. They hope that all those anxious to further friendship with Yugoslavia, not only individuals but also Trades Unions, Co-operatives and other progressive organisations will join the new Society. It intends, by providing speakers for meetings, lectures, film shows and concerts, and by the production of periodicals and pamphlets to give information on all aspects of life in Yugoslavia to-day, including its political, economic, social and cultural achievements and plans.

The new Society takes its stand on the principles, purposes and obligations of the United Nations Charter, as the rule that should govern the relations of all States, be they large or small.

Anyone wishing to apply for membership of the Society, or to obtain further information, should write to Margaret Shufeldt, 2a Baydon Court, Lowndes Square, London, S.W.1.

Margaret Shufeldt.

Socialist Outlook Fighting Fund

We gratefully acknowledge the following:

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	£5	7	0

Labour League of Youth Page

Why we want Democracy for the L.L.O.Y.

By NORMAN GOODCHILD (*Hackney L.O.Y.*)

THERE is a growing movement inside the Labour League of Youth for autonomy and a truly democratic structure. The question which now arises, as Comrade Rose pointed out in the November *Socialist Outlook*, is . . . "Why do we want this democracy—and what will we do when we get it?"

The fight for democracy is not a thing in itself. It is not some abstract ideal to be enthused over for its own sake. No, comrades, democracy is an absolute necessity if we are ever to transform the League of Youth into an organisation having a real base among working-class youth.

As the League is at present constituted, we can discuss and discuss as much as we like—but we can decide nothing. At our Regional and National Committees we are not allowed to pose resolutions on political questions. We are, in reality, not a movement for Youth but an important appendage of the adult Party—useful for doing the hack work, but with no political character of our own.

Conscription

Unless the L.O.Y. adopts a clear attitude on those great questions which are concerning the Youth to-day it cannot expect to attract the young people to its ranks. Take first the question of Conscription. The great majority of Youth correctly object to being dragged into the Armed Forces to defend Imperialist rule in Malaya or to be trained in readiness for the war that is being prepared against the Soviet Union. Comrades, it is

we, the Youth, who will have to fight the next bloody war—then surely the Youth organised in the L.O.Y. should have the right as an organisation to state its views on war, conscription, and Imperialism. Until it does it cannot claim to represent the interests of the Youth of this country.

The Vote at 18

And what of the voting rights of youth. The same "patriotic" gentlemen who herd us into the army are the ones who inform us that we are not old enough, intelligent enough, nor mature enough to vote at 18. They are afraid of the Youth vote because they know that we wouldn't vote for their rotten imperialist wars in which the working class is always the loser. The L.O.Y. must have a clear demand for the vote at 18. It must be able to come before the Youth of the country and state that it is ready to fight for their right to decide whether or not they will fight the wars of capitalism, for the right of Youth to decide its own destiny.

These are some of the reasons why we need democracy in the League. We need the freedom to work out a programme which serves the interests of Youth. Therefore, we need our own conferences to decide that programme, and our own delegates to the Party's Annual Conferences so that we can influence the adult section to support the demands of Youth. In brief, we need a SOCIALIST League of Youth that will be capable of mobilising the broad mass of Youth for the ending of this capitalist system.

A Socialist Youth Rally

By L. STRICKSON (*Nottingham L.O.Y.*)

AT Filey we were told to write all our views to the *Advance* because it was the League paper and would print all League material. But *Advance* has not printed the letter I wrote them, so I am writing to the *Socialist Outlook*.

In my letter to the *Advance* I said I was looking forward to another Rally next year—but a rally in which we should have more political discussions, study classes, and a Youth Conference. I think most Leaguers would agree with that. And we want less speeches by M.P.s and Party Executives with their cheer-leaders to keep the meetings applauding although, in my opinion, there was precious little to applaud in these speeches.

In my letter I also expressed the hope that the same food would be given to everyone at the next Rally. This year there were special meals for M.P.s, Executive members, and the *Herald* staff—as other Leaguers who ate in the same dining-room as myself will verify.

And if we are to have mock elections, let the candidates be L.O.Y. members with M.P.s to support them. One of the M.P.s who took part in the Filey election agreed with me on this point.

In fact, my letter to *Advance* expressed the hope that we should have a real SOCIALIST Youth Rally next year. My own League agrees with this. As I said to *Advance*, what do other Leaguers think?

Want d—A Youth Programme

By JACK HAMILTON (*Secretary, Cities of London and Westminster L.O.Y.*)

COMRADE ROSE has raised, in the November issue of the *Socialist Outlook* a question which must be discussed in every League of Youth branch. "It is necessary," he wrote, "that the League should have a programme with which to approach less politically-minded youth."

Those who have studied *Labour Believes in Britain* will be struck by the complete absence of any demands or pledges which apply particularly to Youth. On what basis then are we expected to recruit our "100,000?" Those who drafted our Election Programme can have had absolutely no conception of the problems of Youth to-day.

What Does Youth Require?

In Education, Labour has ensured an extra year of schooling for young people and has improved the whole education system, but not without opposition from those who would rather have young persons leave school at 14 and enter dead-end jobs as cheap labour. Yet there is still much to do. Eton and Harrow still exist for the "young gentlemen" of wealthy spivs, and the Universities still cater very largely for those who can afford to pay their way.

Surely we must demand that all Universities are open to all young people on a limiting competitive basis.

In industry, few employers recognise their agreements with the Unions regarding the training of young workers. Nor do they maintain decent standards of hours and working conditions. Apprenticeship agreements are as reactionary as they were 50 years ago. Young workers are forced to accept cut-price "incentive" bonus schemes because they cannot otherwise earn a living wage.

Only when Equal Pay and the Rate for the Job is strictly implemented will young workers be able to concentrate on learning a trade.

Programme and Organisation

Here then are some of the questions which vitally affect the Youth. The League must work out a programme to meet these problems, and the adult Party must back them, if the L.O.Y. is ever to become a real mass organisation of working-class Youth.

When this is understood, we can appreciate the need and the urgency for the implementation of the "Five Points" which were outlined by Bert Penfold in the November issue.

Let us expose the critics who accuse us of "splitting the movement." In demanding the right to make and implement Youth policy now, before it is too late, the National Status Campaign is acting in the best interests of the Youth and the Labour Movement.

Socialist Fellowship and the League

By JACK DIPPLE
(*Secretary, Middlesex Federation L.O.Y.*)

MANY League conferences and discussions have taken place in the last few months. It has become abundantly clear to the politically active Leaguers that there is a difficult problem involved in the construction of a mass League of Youth.

The greatest difficulty lies in finding the right approach to young workers. Indeed, many of the problems facing Youth are only vaguely realised by the existing League membership. This arises partly from the virtual cessation of political education for Youth by the Labour Party throughout the war years.

All available forces in the Party must be brought to bear on the political advancement of Leaguers and new recruits. To this end, the *Socialist Fellowship* can perform a great service for the League. It can include in its programme a section on Youth.

Not only would the Fellowship benefit from the influx of League members; these members themselves would gain, through the Fellowship, an insight into the genuine Socialist methods of mobilising working-class youth behind the Labour Party.