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LIST OF CONTENTS

THE NINE-DAY TRANSPORT STRIKE IN VICTORIA	J. D. Blake	355
ABOLISH WAGE-PEGGING, CONTROL PRICES	R. Dixon	358
AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND WORLD REACTION	William Z. Foster	361
THE GERMAN PROBLEM	Pierre Courtade	365
SOME ASPECTS OF REFORMISM	E. F. Hill	368
THE VALUES OF MR. GOLLANCZ	J. R. Campbell	370
SOME ASPECTS OF THE HOUSING PROBLEM	N. V. Vecsenyi	374
DIMITROY'S TRIUMPH OVER GOERING	W. S. Crayton	375
NEW WAYS OF KILLING	Dyson Carter	376
THE PRESS AND EDUCATION	H. Ross, B.A.	379
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	L. Harry Gould	381
BOOK REVIEW	L. Harry Gould	382
LIGHT AND SOUND	Prof. J. B. S. Haldane, F.R.S.	383

ORGAN OF THEORY AND PRACTICE OF THE AUSTRALIAN
COMMUNIST PARTY

Editor L. L. Sharkey

THE NINE-DAY TRANSPORT STRIKE IN VICTORIA

J. D. BLAKE

THE Victorian transport strike in October brought to a head a campaign for higher wages, shorter hours and improved working conditions, which had been carried on amongst the Victorian workers for many months.

The Federal election in September delayed somewhat the climax of this great movement, but it was clear that nothing short of the granting of the workers' demands could prevent the onset of open battle. Polling day on September 28th was not long passed when the real mood of the workers was made known. On Monday, October 7th, the railway workers carried out a twenty-four hours stop work action in support of their demands. The tramwaymen of Melbourne joined the railwaymen in solidarity, and advanced their own wages and hours demands.

Tramwaymen then planned to organise another twenty-four hour stoppage for October 14th, and the railway unions announced their intention of supporting the tramworkers by a simultaneous stoppage. This stoppage did not take place because the Tramways Board offered to negotiate on the following Thursday.

On October 15th Prime Minister Chifley rejected the A.C.T.U. proposals on wages and hours. Two days later the Melbourne Tramways Board rejected the demands of the tramway workers. The workers were stirred to anger by Chifley's rejection of their demands, and the assistance his action gave to the employers.

The tram workers meeting on October 20th decided to cease work on the following day. The railway workers decided to join the action and conduct the struggle jointly, and in common cause. On Monday, October 21st, Victoria's railway and tramway transport system came to a complete stop.

In the period leading up to this great strike the drive for increased wages was reaching its culminating point in two main directions, first among the transport workers and second in the metal trade among the foundry workers. The strike action of the foundry workers commenced four days after the launching of the transport strike.

This splendid struggle of the Victorian workers was the climax of a series of great struggles conducted by the Australian workers in the immediate post-war period, which commenced with the great steel strike in N.S.W. at the end of 1945, and continued with the meat strike in Queensland earlier this year.

The big struggles in N.S.W., Queensland and Victoria must be seen as one continuous movement. Although both the N.S.W. steel strike and the Queensland meat strike began as defensive actions, the fact remains that the underlying motive of both

sides in these struggles was the inevitable battle over wages, hours and working conditions.

In both of those first two big strike actions the capitalist class, aided and abetted by the treacherous right wing in the Labor Movement, aimed to shatter the powerful militant trade unions and to break the influence of the Communist Party.

The bosses wanted to weaken, and if possible to paralyse, the will and ability of the militant Labor Movement to fight for better wages and conditions. The Communist Party and the fighting Unions were out to repulse and smash these blows of the employers, and to preserve their fighting positions and organisations for the big offensive battles yet to be fought. In the fight for these objectives they were successful.

Put in another way, it is an undoubted fact that if the Australian workers had suffered defeat in the N.S.W. and Queensland struggles the great offensive struggle in Victoria could not have taken place so soon, nor could it have resulted in such a decisive and speedy victory for the workers.

The N.S.W. and Queensland workers having won the struggles which prepared the way for the general offensive on wages and hours, it was fitting and proper that the Victorian workers should shoulder the responsibility for the first great offensive battle; this they did with the highest honour.

In the nine days transport strike the Victorian workers gave a display of magnificent offensive fighting spirit which was an inspiration for all who have the cause of the working class at heart. On the other hand it spread panic amongst the capitalists and it had a paralysing effect on the right wing agents of the capitalists within the Labor Movement.

The right wing reformist elements among Labor Party and Trade Union leaders were still preening themselves complacently about the significance of the Federal election vote, in the misguided belief that the workers would placidly wait for the gradual evolution of Chifley's golden age, when the transport strike hit them like a thunderbolt. Labor Party leaders had badly miscalculated.

Before two days of the strike had elapsed it was revealed that not only the transport workers, but vast numbers of workers throughout the State, and in other States as well, accepted the slogans of action of the Communist Party, and showed moreover an enthusiastic willingness to fight for the very demands which were the features of Communist election policy.

The Victorian transport workers had no great tradition of strike struggle. It was for this reason that the fine militant fighting spirit and the splendid solidarity displayed by these workers in the strike came as a rude shock to the right wing elements

Theoretical Literature

Many readers are unaware that small quantities of former Anvil stocks of important titles are still available. Among these are the reports to the 18th Congress of the C.P.S.U. given by the leading members of the C.C. Each one of these booklets contains contributions which cannot be obtained from other sources, yet are a vital addition to Marxist theory, e.g., Stalin's statements on the questions of the withering away of the state and on the intelligentsia, and Zhdanov's witty contributions on many questions connected with Party membership. The following titles in this series are still available and may be purchased at our bookshops or wholesale from Current Book Distributors:—

Stalin—Report on the work of the C.C.	6d.
Molotov—Report on the Third Five Year Plan	6d.
Zhdanov—Amendments to the rules of the C.P.S.U.	6d.
Manuilsky—Report of the Delegation of the C.P.S.U. in the Executive Committee of the C.I.	2d.
Resolutions of the 18th Congress of the C.P.S.U.	6d.

headed by Stout and Clarey, and to the leaders of the Federal and State Labor Governments.

On the eve of the strike the State Labor Premier refused to do anything about the workers' demands, and condemned the policy of strike action, but after two days he found it necessary to use the mildest of terms when speaking of the strike.

J. V. Stout and other right wing leaders of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council early planned to bring forward a resolution sharply condemning the strikers and striking unions, but the mass enthusiasm was so widespread and at such a high level that they felt constrained to give up this idea. They limited themselves to a decision on the Melbourne Trades Hall Council that the dispute be placed under the control of the T.H.C. Disputes Committee. Even this was only done half-way through the strike after four days in which these right wing elements had stared with silent apprehension at this startling display of the fighting enthusiasm of the workers.

Having carried their resolution to control the strike, the Disputes Committee gave the impression of juggling a hot potato without any firm idea about what to do with it.

One of the outstanding things about this strike was the way it spread panic among the ruling class, and the paralysing effect it had upon the right wing reformists in the Labor Movement.

Throughout the strike the daily press and reactionary elements within the Labor Movement found it extremely difficult to develop the kind of violent anti-Communist hate campaign which was such a feature of the steel strike in N.S.W. and the meat strike in Queensland.

In spite of the inconvenience caused by lack of transport there was plenty of evidence of widespread public sympathy with the strikers. The popularity of the wages and hours demands, combined with the splendid spirit of solidarity and the fact that the leading officers of the Tramways Union were reformists, all tended to hamper the propaganda of the employers and their agents.

In a flash, as it were, the strike revealed to the workers where everyone stood on the issues involved; with the result that genuine unity of workers of all shades of opinion in the strike brought into clear relief the true meaning of the policy of the Stouts, Clareys, Cains and Chifleys.

The consequences of this were shown when the State Premier's own Labor Party branch at Northcote carried by an overwhelming majority a resolution expressing support for the strike and condemning the actions of both the State Premier and the Prime Minister in relation to the transport strike. One Labor Party worker, supporting this resolution, said he never thought he would live to see the day when he would support a move condemning a Labor Party Premier and Prime Minister in one breath, but the facts compelled him to do precisely that.

A resolution of censure was adopted by the Bendigo Trades Hall Council against a State Min-

ister—Calvin—who represents the Bendigo electorate in the State Parliament.

From all areas reports flowed in of well known Labor Party workers openly welcoming the co-operation of local Communist Party branches in strike activity. There were many cases where local Communists expressed surprise, very agreeable surprise, when well known local Labor Party identifiers, who were considered to be anti-Communist in outlook, publicly welcomed the assistance of local Communists in the collection of relief and other strike activity.

The unity of Labor Party, Communist Party, and non-party workers was one of the fine features of this big strike struggle; unity which was carried through to the top leadership of the strike on the combined unions strike committee, where Communist and reformist trade union leaders, an ex-minister here being Broadby, worked in the closest co-operation and unity from the beginning to the end of the strike.

Attempts were made to use for splitting purposes the situation which developed in Ballarat as a result of the strike-breaking efforts of a small group working under the direction of clerical reaction. These efforts failed in the first place because Ballarat was a small island in an ocean of solidarity. Secondly, as the strike progressed the persistent fight of the militants and honest workers of Ballarat began to repulse and overcome the disruptive efforts of this small group of strike-breakers. These splitters miscalculated rather badly and as a consequence found themselves sitting out on a limb. All their stock arguments about arbitration, about strike action getting nowhere, etc., were shattered by the progress and the results of the strike. Their temporary ascendancy culminated in their isolation from the workers.

The key issues in the transport strike were, of course, the immediate aims of all Australian workers; namely, to break through the wage-pegging regulations, increase the basic wage and speed the introduction of the 40 hour week.

In addition each of the Unions concerned advanced a programme of demands, which had specific application to the particular industry. It is unnecessary to recount these in detail here, but one outstanding feature of these demands is worthy of special mention. For the first time in such a large-scale strike action, the interests of young workers and women were brought to the forefront and featured. The A.R.U. put forward a demand for a twenty per cent. increase in all juvenile rates, 100 per cent. male rates for all females in male positions, and a minimum 75 per cent. of the male basic rate for all females. The Railways Union issued a special leaflet to all railway juniors. The Wonthaggi miners, who joined the strike after three days, also demanded special proportionate wage increases for youths. Much of the credit for this Union consciousness must go to the Eureka Youth League and its long campaign on this matter.

The result of all this was that many young workers were active in every kind of strike activity.

In a secret ballot on the eve of the strike the railwaymen decided in support of direct action by 7,000 to 3,000 votes. Similar feeling was evident among the tramwaymen.

That this willingness to fight was no mere flash in the pan was quickly revealed by the high level of activity which developed in the first days of the strike. Organised propaganda and publicity and the collection of strike relief funds were being conducted on a mass scale by the second day of the strike.

During the nine days of the strike 172,000 leaflets were issued by the Unions involved. A 4-page printed broadsheet of strike news was published in 25,000 copies. A total of 150 factory meetings were organised and carried out.

In every part of the Metropolitan area of Melbourne, and in all the main country centres, broadly representative relief committees were being organised and were collecting strike relief in money and foodstuffs for the relief of strikers from the second day of the strike onwards. All of these relief committees received assistance from local tradespeople and shopkeepers.

Picketing was only slightly behind these other activities in the first two days, but very soon this aspect of strike activity had also been stepped up to a high level of efficiency. So much so that already by the fourth day of the strike the emergency transport organised by the State Labor Government had been effectively driven off the special routes and confined to its normal working zones. The striking pickets showed fine initiative in effectively combining moral persuasion upon the majority of bus drivers, who were merely confused about the role they were playing, with more direct methods with the few who appeared to need something more than moral persuasion.

The road transport workers, whose union covers mainly trucks and lorry drivers, showed sympathy for the strike from the outset; and in spite of the efforts of the right wing secretary of their union they made it clear at their mass meeting on the day the strike terminated that they fully supported the demands of the strikers and desired to be directly involved in any future action.

This great strike enjoyed the support of workers throughout Australia. A direct expression of this was contained in the decision of the Albury railway workers refusing to handle goods moved over the Victorian border by scab transport. The Brisbane and Adelaide Trades and Labor Councils declared their support for the strike.

The Victorian transport strike concluded with a resounding victory for the workers; a victory not only for the strikers, but for workers throughout Australia. In addition to very important industry and transport gains for the tramwaymen, railwaymen, and Wonthaggi miners, the settlement included undertakings

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As was to be expected, after the termination of the transport strike Chifley, Clarey and Cain tried to wriggle out of the undertakings about the basic wage and 40 hour week, or at best to do some face saving. This brought to the forefront the significance of the strike action of the foundry workers which continued on and on in the metal industry at the moment when the transport strike terminated. Thus the ruling class had barely time to sigh with relief at the easing of pressure in the vital transport industry when they found themselves confronted with continued pressure in the metal industry, supplemented by threats of strike action at the Yallourn electricity supply centre and from the gas workers.

The Victorian transport strike of October was a turning point in post-war development which will lead to profound repercussions in the labor movement throughout Australia.

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Favorable conditions for big progressive advances have been created in a number of unions directly and indirectly associated with the strike.

There is a healthy feeling among the workers that the struggles which lie ahead will be much more difficult than the one through which they have just fought their way so successfully.

Nevertheless, as at all moments when a great victory is celebrated, it is wise to utter warning counsel against the danger of becoming giddy with success. The more vigilantly we guard against complacent self-satisfaction now, the more certain will we be of consolidating our present victory and multiplying our newly acquired strength for the more severe tests which still lie before us.

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ABOLISH WAGE-PEGGING, CONTROL PRICES

R. DIXON

(Report to C. C. Plenum held 1st-3rd November, 1946)

THE outstanding feature of the present situation is the continuation of the strike movement. New sections of the workers are being involved in the struggle against capitalism. The big strikes since the end of the war embraced ironworkers, seamen, coalminers, meat workers, waterside workers and some others. Now we find the railwaymen, tramwaymen and other sections of the workers coming into action. Thus, the strike movement is broadening out and this has very important political implications inasmuch as the drawing in of what may be called the more backward sections of the workers, those who, in the past, have shown less inclination to struggle than the miners, ironworkers, waterside workers and seamen, means that the general political level of the working class movement is on the rise.

You will recall that at the last Central Committee meeting when we were discussing the Queensland Meat Strike, as after the big steel, coal and shipping strike at the end of last year, we were concerned with the fact that those struggles had been waged against victimisation, they were struggles that had really been forced upon the workers by the employers, provoked by them, and we considered then that it was necessary to avoid, as far as possible, such struggles and promote the struggle around wages, hours and basic conditions. We can say now that this change has been brought about. The transport struggle in Victoria and the struggles developing in the metal industry are struggles around wages and hours. This has placed the workers in an immensely stronger position, not only to deal with the Arbitration Court but with the reformists and bourgeoisie also.

We saw how difficult it was in the struggles around victimisation to line up the unions, broadly, behind the workers involved in those struggles. In the Victorian transport strike, however, it was not a question of what sections of workers might be drawn into the struggle, of lining them up, but what sections of the workers ought to be held back from the struggle; it was a question of the extent to which the spread of the strike should be limited so as not to throw large numbers of the workers on the Unions' funds, that is, workers who, by stopping work, would contribute little to the final outcome of the struggle.

What happened was that different sections of the workers not only gave moral support but wanted to down tools and come into the struggle too. You can see how much stronger is the position of the trade unions once the struggle develops around issues which effect all sections of the working class such as wages and hours. The union position in

the struggle was immensely stronger and the attractive power of the struggle was ever so much greater than in the earlier disputes against victimisation.

These facts illustrate the importance of the struggle around wages and hours, and of the decisions of the last Central Committee meeting to try and avert struggles on victimisation and smaller issues and to bring forward the issues of wages and hours. This seems to me to be decisive for the further development of the strike struggles, the strengthening of the trade union movement, consolidation of the Left in the trade union movement and the building of the Communist Party.

Because of the way the transport struggle developed and the issues it developed around, it was not only much more difficult for the reformists to play their strike-breaking role, as they did in the big New South Wales and Queensland strikes, it was also much more difficult for the bourgeois press to wage a campaign against the workers that were involved in the dispute. The issues, wages and hours, attracted not only the workers but also the middle class. As I understand it, in Victoria, when the Party got on to the job and began to develop agitation and propaganda in the localities, the middle-class people also demonstrated their support.

The attractive power of struggles around wages and hours is immensely greater, broader than, say, struggles against victimisation and this hinders in every way, weakens in every way, the struggle of the opposition—bourgeoisie, reformists, Labor Party, arbitration judges—when they strive to defeat such struggles. So we must, therefore, pay more attention to these issues in the future.

As Comrade Sharkey pointed out, the victory in the transport struggle is very significant. I think it is one of the most outstanding wins the trade union movement has had in this country in decades, and the success itself has placed the working class in a very powerful position to force home their victory.

Consider the immediate successes of the transport strike. They won time-and-a-half for Saturdays for rail and tram workers, and double time for Sunday for the tramway workers. Time-and-a-half for Saturday establishes an important precedent. Although many workers do not work on Saturdays there are a vast number of workers who do and at ordinary rates. The Victorian decision establishes the principle that Saturday should be regarded as a Sunday or a holiday with additional rates for working. Thus, additional rates for Saturday work is a demand that should be taken up throughout industry in Australia.

Now that the principle of the 40-hour week is established we should say: If it is good enough in principle it ought to be good enough in practice. That should be the approach of the working class. In other words, just as the sheasters in Queensland began to put the 40-hour week into practice before it was established in principle, the trade unions should work out for all industries the practical application of the 40-hour week without waiting for any further decisions on the part of the Court.

Thus we accept the principle, but as we believe that all abstract principles should lead to concrete, practical things, the immediate problem is the concrete application of the 40-hour week in industry.

In some industries it won't be possible to do this. If you take the rail workers on the basic wage, they have to get in one day's overtime a fortnight in order to meet their commitments. It would probably be wrong to propose to them that from now on they work only the 40-hour week.

All State Governments have opposed the application of the 40-hour week in State enterprises on the grounds that the Federal Arbitration Court must decide the issue. Now that the court has decided in principle, all workers in State enterprises should insist that the State Governments, and especially Labor Governments, proceed to its immediate application. I think our Victorian comrades are in a particularly strong strategic position to take up and enforce this demand.

Wage-pegging in general still persists. Chifley agreed that insofar as the basic wage is concerned there would be some relaxation, but, in general, wage-pegging continues. We must see that all possible pressure is kept up to break through the wage-pegging regulations as applied by the Chifley Government. In this connection, the successful conclusion of the transport workers' strike has not ended the movement for wage increases. Struggles are continuing in the metal industries. Foundry workers are on strike in Victoria, the A.E.U. is waging a struggle for £1 increase, gas workers in Victoria look like becoming involved, and no doubt other sections of workers.

There must be no weakening, but an intensification of the movement to secure relaxation of the wage-pegging regulations. It is an important military principle that once the enemy starts to retreat the attacking army should rapidly follow up its success and pursue him so as to completely defeat and rout him and win its objectives. The transport strike and other struggles have forced the employers, Government and court to admit the principle of the 40-hour week, have forced Chifley to relax wage-pegging on the basic wage. The task now is to move the whole trade union movement forward to achieve the

immediate objectives of the workers, the 40-hour week and a substantial wage increase.

Wage-pegging is one of the corner-stones of Chifley's economic policy. The essence of this policy is to find the capitalist way out of all the problems of reconstruction confronting the bourgeoisie of this country. Wage-pegging, we are told, is essential to the system of price control and to avert, it is said, inflation.

Wages are pegged and prices are controlled. The different terms are significant because while wages are rigidly pegged at present levels, prices are merely controlled, and very flexibly controlled at that.

The result is well-known. Prices have materially outstripped wages. We are told the rise in the cost of living is about 24% but these figures are based on the rise in the cost of those items that go to make up the basic wage. There has been about a 24% increase in those prices and an increase in the basic wage by 24% or 25% since the war began.

The real position, however, is that all those commodities outside of those on the basic wage index have gone up ever so much more than those included in the basic wage. For instance, potatoes have been pegged for 5lb. for 6d., as green vegetables and fruit are four or five times as high as they were before the war.

From various estimates I have seen, economists claim that the rise in the cost of living, actually, is somewhere between 60 and 80%. If we take the figure of 60% as being closest to the mark, the position is that even if the workers obtained a £1 increase in the basic wage it still would not bring the purchasing power of their wages up to the levels of 1939.

Thus wage-pegging and price control, as applied in this country, has led to a lower standard of living for the working class and the Chifley Government's wage-pegging, in fact, means the pegging of wages at this lower standard of living, and it will be the capitalist class of this country that will benefit from this. During the war there was a considerable expansion of the productive capacity of Australian industry and the employers are beginning to wonder where the new markets will come from to dispose of the increased production. They speak of overseas markets and say that if we are to win these markets we must be able to compete with other countries, and they claim it is difficult to do this on the living standards of 1938-39.

Chifley informs us that if he were to relax wage-pegging the whole price structure would be seriously undermined and inflation would result. Some economists recently have been writing long articles supporting Chifley's view and even suggesting that

if there were a 11 increase in the basic wage, that in a short time there would be an increase in prices of 30/- and they draw the conclusion that the workers are foolish to demand wage increases.

Is this true, is there anything in this argument?

Marx has shown us that prices fluctuate around the value of commodities and the determining factor in the fluctuation is the relationship of the supply of goods to the demand. At the present time goods are in short supply, the demand is in excess of the supply of goods, and the tendency of prices, therefore, is in an upward direction.

To increase wages means to increase the purchasing power of the workers and, therefore, the demand for goods. An increase in the demand for goods will tend to cause an increase in prices quite apart from the fact that the capitalist class will seek to pass the increased costs on to the consumer.

The capitalists want price controls to go or to be made even more flexible than at present. Discussions have already taken place on the abolition of price controls. The Government claims they will have to consider the whole question of prices if there is any relaxation in wage-pegging, but this does not prevent them from increasing prices now. The price of meat is about to rise.

An increase in wages will increase the demand of the workers for goods and increase the pressure of the capitalist class to pass the increased costs on to the consumer. There are serious dangers here.

We have seen what happened in the U.S.A. There the working class at the beginning of this year forced considerable increases in wages. The American monopolists then conspired to do away with price control in America and were able, with the help of their stooges in the American Congress, to sweep away control, with the result there has been a tremendous increase in prices. The small war savings of the middle classes and workers in America have been more or less swept away.

The decline in the purchasing power of the American workers and middle class is the chief factor influencing the recent crash on the New York Stock Exchange and the present difficult position of the American capitalists. The workers and middle class of America are buying less and goods are piling up which ordinarily would have been disposed of, and in some industries all the features of the crisis of overproduction have appeared.

The decline in demand for goods will cause prices of some commodities to fall, and on the other hand will cause a diversion of capital from the less profitable to the more profitable industries. This is the basis for the crash on the New York Stock Exchange

and the precarious position of American capital which is showing all the signs of a developing economic crisis.

The problem for us here in Australia is to take into account the movement of prices. It is quite clear that if wages go up the capitalists' will exert clear or terrific pressure for price control to be abolished or made more flexible to permit them to pass on the increased costs and then the prices of goods will increase rapidly. For this reason price control assumes much more significance for us and for the working-class movement than in the past.

We must point to the fact that profits in this country are soaring, while taxes are being reduced (which in present conditions means more profit) and both these changes are such that there is no need for increased prices. Prices must remain at their present level, or be reduced, so that wages can be brought to a level that will at least restore to the working class of this country the purchasing power they had in 1939. It is essential also to insist upon abolition of taxation on workers' wages and all small incomes.

In other words, side by side with the movement for increased wages we must develop a real mass struggle for the strict control of prices and to fight every attempt to increase prices. This campaign must be developed on a national basis.

Already we have started in N.S.W. The people everywhere are talking prices because they are hitting them hard. The lower income people, especially the women, are very discontented about high prices. We are charged with the task of organising a real mass struggle around prices, to organise the women to go to the shopping centres and discuss prices and to the markets—as our Sydney women did—and to see that this question is taken up through the unions. I think we should get a series of protests from the Unions against the increased price for meat, in addition to those from women's organisations.

Taking into account the whole economic situation our aim should be to bring the utmost pressure to see that all price controls are maintained and not only that but to have price-pegging so that as the wages are increased the workers will secure a real increase in wages, not just a monetary increase.

So our task then, it appears to me, is to develop the campaign to enforce the 40-hour week in industry now, to continue the fight everywhere for wage increases and to break through the present wage-pegging policy of the Chifley Government, and on the other hand to develop the mass struggle for control of prices and to insist that the Chifley Government will not relax price controls under pressure from the bourgeoisie.

AMERICAN IMPERIALISM, LEADER OF WORLD REACTION

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

WORLD WAR I, from 1914 to 1918, was a struggle between two groups of imperialist powers for control of the world. After four years of the most terrible slaughter humanity had ever before experienced, a sigh of relief went up all over the world. Never again, hundreds of millions were convinced, would mankind be guilty of a similar suicidal folly. Surely an end would be put to imperialism and war. The League of Nations, formed shortly afterward, was hailed as the organisation that would maintain world peace. But hardly were the guns of World War I silenced than capitalist forces and trends began to operate which, only 21 years later, were to produce an even more terrible and devastating human butchery.

Now that World War II has barely concluded—indeed the peace treaties are not yet written and the United States has not even officially declared that the war is at an end—the world is once more alarmed by rumours of war. War-mongering is in full cry again. Particularly in the United States, millions of people have already decided that a World War III is a certainty, and many are conditioning their lives into accepting the death of at least one-third of our total population in the near future.

The world situation is indeed threatening. Reactionary forces are at work, making for economic chaos, fascism, rampant imperialism and war, similar to those that operated in the interim between the two great wars and which finally culminated in the catastrophe of World War II. We should not be astonished at the similarity of these developments, however. Lenin has taught us that we are living in the period of the decay of imperialist capitalism, in the era of wars and revolutions. Naturally, therefore, capitalism throughout its decline displays certain well-marked signs of increasing reaction and crisis.

But we must not make mechanical analogies between the period following World War I and the present one opening up after World War II, for that would lead to a fatalistic acceptance of a World War III. There are profound differences between the two periods. It does not follow that this post-war period, like the last one, must also end in fascism and war. We must view the whole picture dialectically, measuring the shifting relations between the forces of reaction and progress. If we do this, we shall see that the situation following World War II can have a totally different outcome from that which developed after World War I. Before analysing the present post-war situation, let us briefly review the period that followed World War I.

World War I was itself the manifestation of the ushering in of the general crisis of world capitalism. One of its most significant consequences was a broad revolutionary upheaval in Europe by the outraged working class. This produced the Russian revolution, as well as big revolutionary movements in Germany, Hungary and other countries. Had it not been for the betrayal of the revolution in Germany by the opportunist Social-Democrats, all Europe would undoubtedly have gone Socialist, the capitalist system would have received a stab in its heart, and there never would have been a World War II.

Desperately alarmed by this profound revolutionary upheaval after World War I, the capitalists of the world, in line with their reactionary trend, mobilised their strength for a general offensive against the forces of Socialism and democracy everywhere. The employers, with the help of Social Democracy, centred their attack upon the Soviet Union, but they also assaulted every other phase of the peoples' political advance. The general result of this employers' offensive was not only to confine Socialism to the U.S.S.R., but to weaken the forces of democracy on a world scale. Even in the United States, which was far removed from the political storm centre, the employers' attack was so heavy that the trade union movement lost half its numerical strength in a series of desperately fought, unsuccessful post-war strikes.

The capitalist counter-revolutionary offensive after World War I did not halt, however, upon checking the spread of Socialism and democracy; it rolled on, with varying intensities and tempos, to new objectives. With the rise of fascism in Italy, followed eventually by its development in Germany and a number of other countries of Eastern and Central Europe, the employers' offensive everywhere took on a new quality. It began to aim at the complete destruction of democracy and the establishment of a tyrannical capitalist control such as the world had never before known. This fascist trend was enormously stimulated by the great world economic crisis of the early 1930's, beginning with the unprecedented October, 1929, crash in the United States.

Fascism was not confined simply to those countries that adopted outright fascist regimes. Capitalism all over the world was saturated with it, its mainspring being in the ranks of finance, capital its mainspring being in the ranks of finance, capital—among the big bankers, industrialists and landlords. These decisive capitalist forces—in Great Britain and France, and also to a large extent in the United States—began definitely to cultivate ("open and peace") the fascist regimes in Germany, Italy and elsewhere, as the tragic stories of China, Ethiopia,

Spain and Czechoslovakia made quite clear. Undoubtedly the big capitalists of the world were quite generally looking to fascism as their saviour, and as the means by which they could destroy the hated and feared Soviet Union and put an end, once and for all, to trade unionism, democratic government, civil liberties, and the Socialist aspirations of the working class. For the most part they had come virtually to accept the perspective of a fascist world.

But, in the midst of this general, big capitalist drive towards fascism, another factor was at work that was destined to wreck the "fascist world" ambitions of the capitalists of all the big countries. This was the imperialist rivalries among the capitalist great powers themselves.

In the early post-World War I days, the world situation was dominated by the imperialist victors in the war — Great Britain, France, the United States, and to a lesser extent, Japan. These powers, particularly the first two, ran the League of Nations as an instrument to further their respective imperialist ambitions. They especially infused it with an anti-Soviet spirit. With the growth of fascism in Germany, Italy, Japan and their satellites, however, and particularly in view of the appeasement policy followed by the reactionaries in Great Britain, France and the United States, the militant leadership of the post-World War I capitalist offensive passed more and more into the hands of the fascist countries, which eventually formed themselves into the so-called Anti-Comintern Axis and quit the League of Nations.

The big capitalists in Great Britain, France and the United States also undoubtedly contemplated the establishment of a fascist world, one in which they would continue to play the dominant role. But evidently it did not suit the powerful German capitalists and their man (Hitler) to fulfil the role of smashing the U.S.S.R. (if they could) and then turn the fruits of victory over to the capitalists of London, Paris and New York. They had different plans. They and their Japanese allies wanted to run the world to suit themselves and to relegate the capitalists of the Western democracies to a secondary position.

It was this quarrel between the capitalist great powers as to which should dominate the contemplated fascist world that prevented the hoped-for, all-out capitalist attack, led by the Axis powers, against the U.S.S.R. And it was the realisation by the peoples of the world that a victory by the fascist Axis powers would subject them to an unheard-of slavery that made them fight so desperately for national freedom and a democratic life.

The reactionary capitalist offensive after World War I had, with its complex of economic chaos, fascism and imperialism, finally reached its climax in 1939, in World War II—although it was a very different type of war from that for which the capitalists had planned.

World War II, like World War I, constituted a deep intensification and climax of the general

crisis of world capitalism. Not surprisingly, therefore, the capitalist system is now producing a reactionary offensive directed against everything progressive and democratic in the world. Moreover, this offensive, a master sign of capitalist decay, is manifesting itself much as it did in the interval between the two great wars, by an intensification of imperialism, by a gathering economic chaos, by a development of fascism, and by the growth of a militant war spirit. The differences, however, are more that these reactionary manifestations were immediately nounced after this war than they were immediately following World War I, and that they are taking place in a very changed world setting. Among the major phases of the present reactionary capitalist offensive are the following:

(a) **The drive of imperialism:** During the recent war the soothsayers of capitalism, among them Earl Browder, were busy telling us that imperialist capitalism had come to an end and that at the close of the war the world would enter into a new period of spontaneous friendly collaboration among the nations, great and small, capitalist and Socialist. The naive supposition of particularly the that the finance capitalists, and the folly of war and the Americans, had finally learned that the only way and, in the main, had concluded that the only way they could preserve their social system, not to mention garnering profits from it, was to maintain world peace and democratic relations among all the peoples of the world.

Post-war experience, however, has already shown the futility of this utopian conception of capitalism. Imperialism, far from being dead, is manifesting itself with a new virulence. This time it is the United States that is playing the decisive imperialist role. It has embarked upon a vigorous expansionist programme designed to bring the whole world under its sway. With its tremendous navy, air force and army; with its control of the atomic bomb; with its vast industrial system and great financial reserves, and also in view of the war-shattered state of affairs of other great powers, the United States Government, driven on by the big monopolists who control it, is pursuing an unprecedented imperialist course.

The heart of American imperialist policy is the gigantic finance-capital set-up, whose major political instruments are the G.O.P.-controlled Republican Party and the poll-tax and Northern ultra-reactionary bloc in the Democratic Party. Since the ending of the war, the Truman Administration has more and more identified itself with the Hoover-Vandenberg camp, and shaped its policies, foreign and domestic, along militant imperialist lines.

The major objectives of American imperialism are to reduce the British Empire to a subordinate position; to cow or smash the U.S.S.R.; to subordinate China to the status of a satellite country; to reduce Latin America to a semi-colonial system of the United States; to take charge of the internal economies of Germany, Japan and various other

countries; to dominate the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans with its big navy and air force — in short, to establish American imperialist hegemony over the other peoples and areas of the world. This drive of American imperialism, which is developing at a much faster tempo than British, French, German and Japanese imperialisms did after World War I, is the centre and rallying force of the present world offensive of reactionary capital.

(b) **Sowing the seeds of economic crisis:** One of the major aspects of the reactionary offensive after World War I, which culminated in fascism and World War II, was the devastating economic crisis of the 1930's. This crisis wrought havoc with the living standards of the toiling masses all over the capitalist world, and weakened capitalism everywhere. Now, especially in the United States, economic policies are being applied which threaten to produce an economic breakdown that will arrive more quickly and have far more disastrous consequences than that did the one that followed the First World War. The reactionaries who dominate the United States, with a "boom and bust" outlook, are heading this country into inflation. They have rejected all legislation calculated to keep American industry in effective operation after the war boom has passed. Their foreign loan policy is also cut from a similar reactionary pattern. The loans or projected loans to Great Britain, France, China, Poland, the U.S.S.R., etc., are all based on political rather than economic considerations, and, with the domestic economic factors, they are tending to provoke an eventual collapse in this country, a cyclical crisis of unparalleled magnitude. American big capital's present domestic and foreign economic policies are leading straight to an economic crash within a few years, one that will not only ruin American mass living standards but will also shake the economic foundations of the capitalist world. But the nationalist capitalists, seeing the reactionary use Hitler made of German mass unemployment, believe they can also turn the coming crisis to reactionary ends.

(c) **Cultivating a regrowth of fascism:** In the current offensive of reactionary capitalism, spearheaded by American imperialism, strong tendencies for a renaissance of fascism are in evidence. In the United States there is the ultra-reactionary combination of Republicans and Southern poll-tax Democrats; the K.K.K. is rearing its ugly head once more, and there is a wide overcropping of fascist-like, anti-Negro, anti-Semitic, and anti-labor tendencies. In the field of foreign policy also, American imperialism is providing aid to hard-pressed reactionary forces. Our State Department is definitely protecting Franco Spain and ultra-reactionary Turkey; it is shielding fascist businessmen in Germany, Japan and other former fascist states; it is the mainstay of fascist-minded reactionaries in Latin America and China and of the pro-fascist opposition in the new peoples' democracies in the Balkans; it is collaborating everywhere with the dangerous clerical fascism of the Vatican. In fact,

reactionaries and fascists all over the world are looking to the United States and its British ally for aid, and they are getting it. This cultivation of fascism represents a major world danger.

(d) **Preparing for another war:** Although the Allied powers after World War I attacked the new Soviet Republic militarily, shortly following its birth, the real war drive of the imperialists which culminated in World War II did not get well under way until Hitler seized power in Germany in 1933. Thus, after the great shock of World War I, it took the war-mongers almost 15 years until they had the world definitely on the way to another world slaughter. This time, however, World War II is hardly over when the world reactionaries, led by American monopoly capital, are already beating the drums for a new war. Indeed, even while the anti-Hitler war was still going on, strategic plans were being laid by these reactionaries for another conflict.

The new world war threat, which is menacing all peoples, is aimed directly at the U.S.S.R. The anti-Soviet orientation of the imperialists after World War I, which wrecked the old League of Nations, which built up Hitler-Germany, and which led to World War II, is in evidence again, but now more virulently than ever. The great monopolists who control the United States see in the U.S.S.R. the major obstacle in the way of their grandiose imperialist plans of world rule and they are determined to overcome or destroy it. Only in the sense of war preparations against the U.S.S.R. can one understand the present huge imperialist peace-time military programme of the United States, the violent anti-Soviet campaign now raging in the American press and on the radio, and the State Department's officially stated policy of getting tough with Russia. The danger of war is rendered all the more acute because of the need of haste that the reactionaries feel to make use of the atomic bomb before the Soviet Union can devise for itself this lethal weapon.

The basic reason for this militant war drive against the U.S.S.R. by the American imperialists is that these reactionaries understand quite well that the Soviet Union forms the backbone of world democracy. They realise that a blow against the Soviet Government is at the same time a blow against the world labor movement, against the new democracies now springing up in Europe, against the far-reaching national liberation movements in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, and against the rising demand for Socialism throughout the capitalist world. They know too that a military defeat of the U.S.S.R. would open the way to a fascist world, with American imperialism in the saddle. In the war-mongering against the U.S.S.R., the post-war reactionary capitalist offensive takes on its most acute and dangerous aspects.

World reaction, led by the American monopolists, has already, even in this early stage of the post-war period, created a highly dangerous international situation by its reckless economic policies, its cultivation of fascism, its rampant imperialism and its

pro-war orientation. In these respects the tempo of the offensive of world reaction is now swifter than after World War I. At the same time, however, this offensive faces resistance and obstacles far more formidable than those which confronted the reactionary forces following World War I. The counter forces may well defeat all the scheming and plotting of reaction.

First, there is the weakened economic condition of the capitalist system itself. This is much more marked than in the period after World War I. The industries of nearly all of the important capitalist countries are war-ravaged. The people are impoverished and their purchasing power has been catastrophically reduced. The international gold standard is gone and trade is now being carried on almost exclusively on barter or quota systems. Many countries, including our own, also are suffering from galloping inflation. The United States, it is true, fattened on the war and experienced a spectacular industrial growth. But it is idle to expect, as capitalist economists are trying to convince us, that this country can or will re-energize the capitalist system of the world. Its monopolistic, imperialistic policies are choking, not developing, the capitalist world economy. This crippled condition of world capitalism definitely puts a damper on the plans of those American imperialists who would try to solve all their problems and make themselves masters of the world by overthrowing the Soviet Government.

Second, there is a definite dearth of potential allies for the war aims of the American imperialists. Germany, Japan, Italy, France, and many other capitalist states are war-ravaged and could not, even if they wanted to, at present render material assistance to this country in an imperialist war against the U.S.S.R. Great Britain, it is true, is an ally of the United States and is following a virulently anti-Soviet line. But the people of Britain ardently desire world peace and co-operation with the U.S.S.R. Despite the failure, at the Labor Party Convention, to repudiate the Labor Government's imperialist policy, Britain may easily prove a most shaky ally in the general anti-Soviet enterprise of world reaction. The Labor Government, taking its lead from British big capital, is out to strengthen the British Empire wherever it can. And British imperialism accepts with very poor grace its "Number Two" position in the Anglo-American bloc and will lose no occasion to play its own individual game. The possibility of the United States being compelled to fight almost alone frightens the anti-Soviet war-mongers, even though they do control the atomic bomb.

Third, the Soviet Union is now incomparably stronger than it was during the period between the two great world wars. The Red Army, which met and defeated the Wehrmacht, could hold its own against any capitalist force that might be sent against it. With this in mind, General Eisenhower has seen fit to warn sharply of the futility of the U.S.A. trying to defeat the U.S.S.R. All this con-

stitutes a very painful reality for the Anglo-American imperialists, and it may well be the decisive fact in maintaining world peace. Fear of defeat may accomplish what common sense cannot.

Fourth, the reactionaries who would again plunge the world into fascism and war also have to face a whole series of popular mass movements, which constitute a much greater menace to the imperialists' plans than existed in the period after World War I. These movements are alert to the dangers of economic chaos, fascism and war. Among them may be listed the new World Federation of Trade Unions, with its 66,000,000 members. There are also new and powerful national and international movements of veterans, youth and women. Then there is the rapid growth of the Communist Parties in many parts of the world, and also their tendency to combine or co-operate with a number of rejuvenated Socialist parties. This time there no longer exists the powerful and almost uniformly reactionary Social-Democracy that smoothed the way for the imperialists after World War I. Besides the popular movements enumerated above, there are the new peoples' democratic governments in Europe and Asia as well as the great national liberation movements now developing in India, China, and other colonial and semi-colonial countries. All these movements are formidable barriers to the American imperialist designs for world domination.

Fifth, there is the widespread war-weariness and anti-capitalist spirit prevailing among the peoples of the world. Mankind is appalled at the thought of another war, especially one that would be fought with atomic and other super-dreadful weapons. The masses are also determined to resist a regrowth of fascism and to prevent the economic system from being plunged into an even worse chaos than it is now in. Therefore, even the Anglo-American imperialists, for all their vicious anti-Sovietism, will think twice before defying the powerful anti-fascist, anti-war sentiments of the peoples. Even the big financial moguls in Wall Street have seen that one-sixth of the world went Socialist after World War I, and that the indications are that, in the long run, even a larger section of humanity will turn to Socialism after World War II. Hence, they are haunted by the fear that a World War III that did not accomplish their fascist, imperialist objectives, might just about wipe out capitalism altogether.

From the foregoing it is clear, first, that world reaction, organized and led by American imperialism, is now conducting a militant offensive which is in many respects sharper than that which followed World War I and which is leading the world in the direction of economic smash-up, fascism, and a new world war; and, second, that this world drive of reaction has to deal with popular mass resistance forces on a far more extensive scale than anti-fascist, anti-war War I. These great democratic anti-fascist, anti-war masses are potentially very much stronger than the imperialist forces that are

making for fascism and war. But whether or not the world will escape a new bloodbath at the hands of reckless imperialists will depend upon how well the democratic forces can mobilize and unite themselves to resist the new crop of world enslavers. No greater error could the peoples commit than to conform to Browder's criminally wrong notion that the fate of the world can be left to the "intelligent" monopolists to decide.

Naturally, the most urgent task of the democratic forces of the world is to stop the reactionary capitalist offensive, by insisting that Big Three unity be re-established; that the Moscow, Yalta, Tehran and Potsdam agreements be loyally carried out; that the fascist war criminals be vigorously punished; that the defeated fascist powers be thoroughly demilitarized; that the colonial peoples be completely liberated; that sane domestic and foreign economic policies be adopted; and that every defence be thrown around democracy and for the prevention of another war.

But such preventative measures are not enough. The progressive forces must go over on to the offensive themselves. The axe must be applied to the root of the evil. The power of finance capital, the breeder of economic chaos, fascism and war, must be systematically weakened and eventually broken. In this respect the new people's democracies of Eastern and Central Europe are blazing the trail by the seizure and division of large landed estates, by the confiscation of the industries of collaborators with the Nazis, by the nationalisation of the basic industries generally, and by the strengthening of

the workers' representatives in the governments. But finance capital can be eliminated as a power for evil only when capitalism is abolished and Socialism established. It is to this goal that the workers all over Europe, despite many betrayals by Social-Democratic leaders, are steadily marching.

In no country have the workers and other democratic forces so great a responsibility in the present world crisis as here in the United States. The great trusts and monopolies of this country, with their political concentrations, are the centre of world reaction. It is they who are furnishing the main motive force for the present international capitalist offensive against democracy and peace. They are a menace to our country and the world. They must be curbed by the workers drastically strengthening their trade unions and vastly improving their political activities. They must be finally eliminated and a Socialist regime established.

Finance capital, in the United States and abroad, has been responsible for two devastating world wars, an unprecedented economic crisis, the growth of fascism, and the development of a world famine now involving at least a billion people—all in one generation. These great tragedies, not to mention the daily exploitation of the workers, would seem to be about enough damage to submit to from the obsolete capitalist system. Surely the democratic forces of the world will not allow the parasitic big landlords, industrialists and bankers to thrust upon humanity another round of economic crises, mass unemployment, wholesale pauperisation, fascist tyranny, and imperialist war.

THE GERMAN PROBLEM

PIERRE COURTADE

(From "Cahiers du Communisme," July, 1946)

THE German problem is constantly obscured in the eyes of many French people by various considerations and hypotheses concerning, in fact, the future, or if you like, the destiny of Germany alone.

In order to see clearly into this question, the first thing to do is to envisage it at first from France's point of view. That does not mean in any way that the problem of French security can be isolated from that of Germany and of Europe in general. IT SIMPLY SIGNIFIES THAT THERE EXISTS AN ORDER OF URGENCY, AND THAT AT THIS MOMENT THE PROBLEMS MUST BE SOLVED PRIMARILY FROM THE FRENCH NATIONAL POINT OF VIEW.

Envisaging the German problem as certain Socialists are doing, by placing first the demands of "internationalism" or of "Socialism," means not only putting the cart before the horse, but supplying as well an excellent opportunity to Anglo-American imperialists and German nationalists to affirm their very "realist" positions against the "idealism" of others.

Saying that the German problem must be solved primarily from the point of view of French security means above all adopting a definite method. This method is not merely in conformity with the interests of France as a nation, it is equally in conformity with the interests of all the peoples, and of the German people itself to the extent that it exposes the Anglo-American imperialists' policy, which is in fact linked in the western regions of Germany to the old German exploiters.

In other words, France in the present situation is the strongest bastion of democracy in the West. Therefore considering primarily the point of view of France, desiring that the German problem be tackled first on the ground of the requirements of French security, means not only acting as becomes a French citizen; it means also strengthening the stand of democracy in Europe generally and in Germany itself.

France is the most progressive nation in the West. In France there is a great Communist Party, the strongest in Europe after the C.P. of the Soviet Union. The resources that she can put at the dis-

posal of democracy are still relatively immense. From this aspect her national interests coincide completely with those of European democracy. This fact must not be lost from sight when certain "idealists" begin to say that the Communists, i.e., the obstinate defenders of the priority of the French point of view, are chauvinists.

Once it is admitted that the French point of view must always be considered first, it is evident that the defence of the French bastion entails security above all. Remember that France has been invaded by Germany thrice in less than a hundred years, and that the problem of French security is essentially a question of Germany.

This is obvious and yet some are tempted to forget it. The basic idea of the promoters of the Western Bloc is that since the military crushing of Hitlerism, Germany has ceased to be enemy No. 1. The whole policy of these people corresponds in fact to a change of front. The enemy being now, for them, the Soviet Union, they consider France's security in that light; the frontiers of France for them are no longer on the Rhine, but absolutely on the Elbe. As for us, we still think that the possible enemy continues to be Germany. That does not signify that we consider the situation as destined, or that we have become supporters of the "hereditary enemy" thesis. In no way. Still, as Marxists we do not consider Hitlerism an "inevitable" accident in the history of Germany. On the contrary we consider that the political phenomena of the growth and triumph of National Socialism were closely linked to the particular economic situation of Germany; that National Socialism continued under other forms Bismarckian expansionism and Pan-Germanism; and consequently so long as the economic structure and the class relations remain unchanged in Germany, the danger of a recrudescence of German imperialism, under some form not yet perhaps predictable, exists; and that it must be guarded against, whatever hypotheses may be formulated with regard to the future of Germany.

Disarming Germany is the only way to ensure security to France. The experience of the years 1919-1939 has, however, tragically demonstrated the ridiculous inefficiency of all "control" procedures. Fundamentally Germany's strength lies in the immense concentration of mines and industries in the Ruhr. As Edgar Morin has clearly shown in his book *The Zero Year of Germany*, the Ruhr is not only the territory of which the extraordinary industrial wealth enabled Germany to rearm, but also the heart of German capitalism and the permanent source of the imperialist conflicts which periodically ravage Europe.

The quickest and surest way to break the power of German imperialism is to deprive it of the Ruhr. The effect of this operation would be double. On the one hand it would under all conditions effectively prevent any eventual rearmament of Germany; on the other hand, by breaking big German

capitalism, it would enable the German democratic forces to develop. Here again the interests of French security, which demand that the Ruhr arsenal be taken from Germany, coincide with the interests of a future German democracy.

We must now consider how the Ruhr can be taken from Germany. The official French stand, which is also that of the French Communists, is for the internationalisation of these territories and their political separation from the rest of Germany. In our opinion, if international control of the Ruhr is to be efficacious, its political separation is automatically implied. We demand total internationalisation and not, like General de Gaulle, a condominium of France, Belgium and Luxembourg.

If it is true that all the countries upon whom the responsibility of maintaining peace devolves, must be concerned with breaking German power, it naturally follows that they must all conjointly hold the arsenal of that power. In other words, the Ruhr, if it is to be a danger to none, must serve all. All this is so evident that those who oppose the French stand have abandoned the frontal attack upon internationalism; but in order to weaken its scope, they have asserted that internationalism does not in any way imply political separation.

Then what would international control over a Zone, which would continue to depend administratively and politically on Berlin, amount to? Leon Blum, himself, though a bitter opponent of political separation, has perfectly understood what the above would mean. In his *Populaire*, July 23, 1946, he writes:

"If the Ruhr continues in any degree to belong to the Reich, the German Government, whatever it may be, will be free, they say, to interfere at its will with economic management. Through local officials who would continue to be dependent, through local unions or parties which would remain attached to their respective national organisations, it would raise innumerable difficulties for the inter-allied direction."

When it is so clearly seen that internationalisation without political separation would be inoperative, how in the world can one demand one without the other? The fact is that at bottom the opponents of political separation are, despite their denials, opponents of internationalisation itself, or indirect partisans of a limited internationalisation, of a Western condominium over the Ruhr. What they do not like about complete and consistent internationalisation is that it would associate all nations in the exploitation, government and administration of the Ruhr. That means that it would very definitely imply the participation of the Soviet Union in the control of the Ruhr. The most specious pleas and subtle analyses are used, only to cover the determination to exclude Russia from what General de Gaulle calls "Western Europe."

But, they reply, the Soviet Union itself, is it not opposed to political separation? How can you label as an anti-Soviet manoeuvre an attitude which

is that of the Soviet Union itself? In fact it is true that the Soviet Union has declared against political separation and on this point the French attitude and that of the Soviet Union are divergent.

They thought to embarrass the French Communists with this opposition. The French Communists have already replied that they are in no way responsible for the position taken in the international plane by the Soviet Government. Advocate, since the beginning of political separation for the Ruhr, which they consider to be in conformity with French interests in the actual circumstances, they remained faithful to their thesis, even when Molotov seemed to be opposed to it. Their enemies who expected a sensational reversal of policy on this occasion are in secret bitterly disappointed that our Party has held its stand. Unable to denounce what they call the "recantations" of the Communist Party, they have, in order to mix the cards, tried to become defenders of the Soviet thesis in opposition to the Communists!

In fact, the coincidence of the Anglo-Saxon thesis and that of the Soviet Union is only seeming.

The U.S.S.R. in the zone that she occupies has, after profound economic and social reforms, implacably demanded all the reparations to which she was entitled, dismantled war industries, and carried out a pitiless purification. Thus the U.S.S.R. established herself in the eyes of the German masses as the champion of democratisation.

Under the circumstances, the stand that she has taken in favor of German unity signifies from her point of view in practice the democratisation of the whole of Germany.

On the contrary, the policy of the Western Allies in their zone has been a sequence of encouragements to all masked or open forms of reaction; economic collaboration, especially in the British Zone, with the still intact big German trusts, maintenance of notorious Nazis in responsible positions under the pretext of their technical capacity, support of "moderate" parties such as the Christian Socialists, which has rallied all the shameful Nazis, obstacles in the way of unity of the proletarian parties, and support for leaders of anti-Communist social democracy like Severing.

Unity of that sort of Germany against the Soviet Union is what the Anglo-Saxons want. In these conditions, the Soviet Union would have difficulty in disappointing the hopes of the German Communist Party which from a strictly national attitude has declared for the unification of Germany.

France, which on account of Anglo-Saxon opposition has not obtained in her West the guarantees that the Soviet Union has ensured in her East in all political, territorial and economic domains, could not and must not envisage the problem from the same angle.

She could not do so without playing into the hands of a policy of conserving the Ruhr arsenal to a Germany of a "Western" type, and she must not do it because, whatever may happen and what-

ever may be the ultimate development of Germany, the security of France demands that she take immediate precautions which will fit every possible case.

In addition the Soviet Union perfectly understands our national point of view and Moscow is not astonished by the attitude that we have taken.

In reality the French and Soviet attitudes, at the moment divergent, are in the end complementary. We have the same OBJECT as the Soviet Union but we demand more, and we demand more because our geographical position, the relative insufficiency of our military and industrial potential, the conflict of interests which divides the Western Allies, and by which only the Germans stand to profit in the end, place upon us the responsibility of meeting these particular difficulties and menaces by a particular means.

Our campaign for internationalisation and political separation will be found to be correct in any event. If the democratisation of all Germany is carried out at the same tempo, and in the same manner as in the Eastern Zone, nevertheless internationalisation and political separation of the Ruhr will continue to be the means by which we will be sure of receiving Ruhr coal, which is so necessary to our recovery. If, on the contrary, reaction wins in Western Germany, then more than ever political separation will guarantee our security.

It must also be noted that if reaction wins, German unity will be seriously compromised and that the Anglo-Saxons will probably go on, as they are already doing, towards certain forms of federalism which will enable them, while paying tribute to the principle of unity, to integrate their zones with a system, call it what you like, which amounts in reality to a new form of Western Bloc with German participation.

In that case, for far greater reasons, political separation and internationalisation of the Ruhr will function as a guarantee that not only Germany, but Europe and the world itself will not be cut in two, as those men secretly wish who have operated, as we have said above, a change of front since the military overwhelming of Fascism.

Whatever may come of the particular question of French security which is an essential question which must be solved in the first place independently of every other consideration, it is certain that the occupying powers and amongst them France must define their attitude to Germany and the German people.

The powers will not arrive at this definition by vague considerations of the German soul and by "historical" divagations of the kind that make the Socialist Charles Duménil of the *Populaire* regret that Koenigsberg is now part of Kant! The only way is to remain faithful to the decisions of Potsdam, which lay down that German militarism and Nazism must be exterminated.

By the scrupulous application of the Potsdam decisions just reparations will be obtained from

Germany for the devastated countries and at the same time German democracy will be strengthened. You can't have one without the other, for the rigorous exaction of reparations will mean that German heavy industry and in consequence big business will be strictly controlled and finally reduced to impotence, which is the essential condition for installation of democracy in Germany.

An implacable policy in this direction will hit the privileged far more than the German masses and in general strike the German bourgeoisie, who made a complete compromise with Nazism.

By applying the Potsdam decisions in her Zone, the Soviet Union has succeeded simultaneously in obtaining the reparations to which she was entitled and in meriting the confidence of the German people.

The Western Allies, on the contrary, by their soft policy are depriving themselves (or certain amongst them) of the benefit of reparations without gaining in return the sympathy of the German people, who are observing that the principal care of the occupiers is to save the bourgeoisie, the aristocracy and German big business.

Unfortunately France is not in possession of sufficiently important industrial zones to be able

to remedy this criminal policy single-handed. Nevertheless in the Saar and elsewhere she could distinguish herself by her methods from the policy conducted by the English and Americans in their zones.

Unfortunately it seems indeed that up to now the French zone is administered almost without exception by reactionaries who are preoccupied with gaining the good graces of the bourgeoisie, the church and the German industrialists.

A great effort must be made in this direction and a double purification must be achieved of the French Vichyites and the German Nazis, whose collusion, if it is consolidated, will threaten both the external and internal security of France. It is clear that the problem of administration of the French Zone is closely tied to the internal problems of France.

And that is true of the whole German question, whose solution, on the bases which are those of our Party, viz. security, reparations, extirpation of Nazism, democratisation, demands that in France itself democracy, whose interests once again coincide with the national interest in the widest sense, be strengthened.

SOME ASPECTS OF REFORMISM

E. F. HILL

[N urging the vigorous pursuit of the tactics of the united front Dimitroff stressed the need for "an irreconcilable struggle against Social Democracy as the ideology and practice of compromise with the bourgeoisie and consequently also against any penetration of this ideology into our own ranks." The position of the Labor Party leadership throughout the Federal elections warrants a special analysis in this regard.

All of Mr. Chifley's propositions were based upon an acceptance of the permanence of capitalism. At no time did he raise the A.L.P. plank of socialism — he threw to the wolves the much less radical policy of nationalisation. Just how far this acceptance of permanence for capitalism extends can be seen from this extract from Labor's pledges:

"To implement Labor's policy of Full Employment. The plans for this are laid down and ready. They are not mere blue prints or abstract theories. Under Labor Government there will be **NO UNEMPLOYMENT** in Australia."

"To keep prices and rents under control so that there shall be no exploitation of the average man and woman."

With a policy of full employment we have no quarrel. On the contrary, we stand squarely for full employment. But it is ridiculous to say that under a Labor Government there will be no unemployment in Australia. That is precisely where the policy of the Labor Government is leading because of its stubborn refusal to base itself upon the

trade unions, to curb the monopolies, to carry out a vigorous policy of nationalisation, to implement a socialist policy. Certainly we will demand that the Labor Government give effect to all these and certainly we will struggle with all our might to see that there is full employment. But that will be done on the basis of the struggle of the people against capitalism, and not on any calm acceptance that capitalism, under a benign Labor Government, is working for our salvation. Again, keeping prices and rents down is indeed an objective that all workers have. But obviously it is not the key to exploitation — exploitation of the average man and woman will never be prevented until the system of wage labor is ended.

Mr. Chifley distinguished himself by speaking of the "golden age" in which we are living and are about to live. And yet the hard reality of the situation is clear to anyone who frankly faces the facts. The crisis of capitalism has been accentuated. The destruction of the fascist centres of world reaction has been a blow to the capitalist system itself, the colonial upsurge threatens the lifestream of capitalism, the new European democracies constitute a further challenge to it, and the living demonstration of the power and success of Socialism in Soviet Russia constitute a challenge and comparison from which there is no escape. The glaring contradictions of capitalism remain undevolved, indeed, have been deepened. Who can deny that in the period of the war, the productive

process has become more socialised whilst the appropriation of the commodities so socially produced has fallen into fewer and fewer private hands? Or again, who can deny that the period of the war has called forth a further gigantic step in the development of productive forces — productive forces which have to exist within production relations which have long since been strained to breaking point. Those gigantic productive forces can quickly bridge the present gap between supply and demand (upon which the present uneasy equilibrium largely depends). The jockeying for position in the imperialist world is clear for all to see.

Mr. Chifley partly derives his view of the "golden age" from his anticipation of the export of British and American capital to Australia, by virtue of which he sees large numbers of Australians employed, Australia competing on the world markets and various other rosy illusions. But Australia cannot be considered apart from the rest of the world. Imperialism is a world system. The markets of the world were seized long ago and bitter competition is already going on for them, even within the ranks of America's rapacious imperialists let alone as between Britain and America and other countries. Small hope for Australia!

In short, it is perfectly clear that the general crisis of capitalism has in no way been overcome and that within that general crisis, capitalism must inevitably enter a new acute crisis of over-production. Indicative of this general position was E. W. Campbell's article in the September issue of the "Review" which revealed the enormous and increased degree to which Australia is in pawn to the bondholders.

Further light is cast upon this problem by an extraordinary Labor Party advertisement which was extensively used during the election campaign. It read: "The most conservative and influential newspaper in the world gives the lie to R. G. Menzies" and then it quoted the London "Financial Times" which commented favourably upon the price and wage fixing policy, rationing, etc., of the Labor Government. The "Financial Times" (27th July, 1946) then went on: "In the light of past achievements, however, it might not be over-optimistic to expect the Australian Government to be more successful than the U.K. and still more the American Government in securing orderly transition from war to peace economy and warding off the threat of inflation. More and more British and American capital is likely to be impressed with the long term advantages of a stake in Australia. Such investment offers a share in the Commonwealth's development and expansion, and a means of acquiring suitable bases for a growing and prosperous trade with the Far East. Here is the beginning of movement which may swell to large proportions and bring great benefit both to Australia and investors of new capital." ("Melbourne Argus," Sept. 25, 1946.) It is indeed peculiar that a Labor Government should seek to impress its supporters with material from

such a journal as the "Financial Times." Particularly is this so in view of that journal's blatant support of exploitation of Australia and Australians at the tender hands of British and American imperialism. In a period of imperialism (the last stage of which, as Lenin pointed out, was the export of capital) economic bases for exploitation of the Far East necessarily lead to war bases. Australian Labor leaders frankly conceive Australia as the "arsenal of the Pacific." To attempt to foist such a policy on the working class represents the high-water mark of opportunism—the adaptation of the working class to capitalism.

Mr. Chifley might be asked—does the golden age apply to the starving millions of India, the struggle for Indonesian independence, the struggle of the Greek people against the terrorism of British imperialism or to our own aborigines and natives of New Guinea. And if Mr. Chifley believes so earnestly in the golden age, why does he not abolish taxation on the lower incomes, why does he not raise the basic wage, why does he not introduce the forty hour week?

Like all petty bourgeois Labor leaders, Mr. Chifley is suffering from illusions based upon a fairly short-time and strictly limited upward trend of the capitalist cycle. But assuredly, as night follows day, so will the capitalist boom be followed by the capitalist slump.

But the most dangerous aspect of this sort of thing is the carrying into the labor movement of capitalist beliefs. If we accept the view of a golden age, then by that very fact we give up all notion of struggle. Obviously if it is a golden age then the workers need only assist in reaping the benefit of the golden age; the Trade Unions can go out of business and the Communist Party may be liquidated. Such statements are calculated to disarm the working class at the very time when all its fighting strength is needed. The only effect this can have is to hand over the workers bound hand and foot to the B.H.P. and the other great monopolies.

Mr. Chifley is the logical successor to those people who claimed that Ford had refuted Marx. His position is that working class struggle is unnecessary; that under capitalism there is enough for all. Mr. Chifley's colleagues are to be found in the reformist trade union leaders who attempt to dam back the struggle of the workers for a 40 hour week while an Arbitration Court with 5 judges each receiving £2000-£3000 a year and working 17 hours a week does "justice" to the claim of about a million workers who work upwards of 44 hours a week and receive about £5 each a week. Reformism is established in important positions in Australia. These positions provide a powerful base from which to launch the dangerous and treacherous ideas of the reformism — the ideology of the bourgeoisie in the labor movement, as Lenin so patiently, persistently and vehemently pointed out.

In conditions of the temporary and, for that matter, highly unstable ascending phase of the capitalist cycle, it cannot be denied that the ground is fertile for these reformist illusions. That their ascendancy is temporary and insecure is demonstrated by the willingness to struggle as, for example, the struggle around wages. The important thing is the shattering of these illusions and showing the correct way forward. This demands an intensified campaign of political education not only amongst Communists (for these illusions influence our party members) but amongst the workers as a whole. The experiences of the last economic crisis have left a vivid impression: the spectacle of a society which can only solve the problem of unemployment in conditions of war and its aftermath, is not lost on the people. It is clear, therefore, that we need a tremendous intensification of the campaign to take Marxist theory to the masses.

In the presentation of demands for the 40 hour week, £1 wage increase, etc., it is necessary also that we should keep firmly in mind the difference between our approach and that of the reformists. We do not see these campaigns as ends in themselves but as part of the general struggle against capitalism. The perspective for us is the preparation of the struggle for the establishment of socialism. In that, the struggle to improve the conditions of the workers under capitalism is of vast importance. In the actual experience of struggle, coupled with drawing of the correct lessons, the working class will quickly shed the illusions sedulously fostered by the Labor Party leadership and will seek

THE VALUES OF MR. GOLLANZ

J. R. CAMPBELL

THE new book *Our Threatened Values*, by Mr. Gollanz, advances the proposition that the hard won values of our Western civilisation are in deadly peril. The peril does not come from any single source. It may arise from the stupidity and selfishness of the people of Great Britain, from the "national Socialist" approach of the British Labor Party to current problems, from the excessive nationalism of the liberated countries. Nevertheless, the main source of peril is to be found, according to Mr. Gollanz, in the policy of the Soviet Union and of the Communist Parties throughout the world.

Mr. Gollanz claims no originality for the latter discovery. How could he, when it was the master theme of the last batch of speeches delivered by Doctor Goebbels, of Mr. Churchill's Fulton speech, of the spate of anti-Communist propaganda which rushes out from the Vatican—and indeed is the commonplace of every reactionary party in the world?

Nevertheless Mr. Gollanz makes the claim that his book is written in a spirit of charity for all men—including Communists. True, it will seem to many that the charity is very unequally distributed.

the only way out of capitalism—the revolutionary way. The perspective of economic crisis underlines the urgency of lifting the struggle to higher and higher levels, so that the initiative and offensive lies with the workers and renders it difficult (or impossible) for the burden of crisis to be placed upon the toiling people. With correct socialist propaganda and correct presentation of the issues of struggle, disillusionment with the Labor Party will not flow back into the frustration of "Liberal" leadership or some other "new" party but will flow freely to Communist leadership.

There is no doubt, in these campaigns around the immediate demands of the workers, unity of Communists and A.L.P. rank and file is reaching higher and higher levels. There is no doubt that in the election campaign a higher degree of unity and friendly relations than ever before was achieved. And further, there is no doubt that as the situation develops the Communists, Labor Party workers and non-party workers will be thrown closer and closer together. Side by side with that is the process of quite important Labor Party people moving closer to the Communists and the idea of unity, paralleled by the increasing isolation from the mass struggle and from mass influence of the extreme reaction in the Labor movement. This is a situation for which Communists have striven and worked. But it is also a situation which calls for the attainment by the Communist Party membership of Marxist clarity on fundamental questions and a ferocious criticism and exposure of the false theories of reformism.

It seems, for example, to be too lavishly bestowed on the fascist enemies of the people. "In Streicher himself there was potentiality of a sort" (p. 15). "I am sorry for every man, woman or child who is in pain or distress, including Joyce and Amery before their execution, and the man Kramer of Belsen" (p. 23); the saving of Laval for the execution squad was an "act of detestable cruelty" (p. 25).

Tanner of Finland "acted for genuinely patriotic motives" (p. 47); Mihailovich "collaborated with the Nazis not because he liked them or wanted them to win, but because that seemed to him the best immediate way to save his country from Croat domination and Communism" (p. 48); and as for the Big Shots of Nazism on trial at Nuremberg "these men have committed sins unpeakable; but subject to correction from those who really understand these matters, I would say that many of the offences with which they are charged can be described as crimes only 'by way of the corruption of language' of which the Attorney-General complains" (p. 58). True, the men in the dock at Nuremberg sent "millions upon millions of individ-

uals with who can say what precious potentialities yet unfulfilled—to the gas and flames" (p. 16). Mr. Gollanz has no doubt that this was a sin. He is not quite certain whether it was a war crime.

Mr. Gollanz does not hesitate to draw practical conclusions from all this charity. He "will fight to the death for the right of fascists to express their opinions" (p. 32) and asserts that "to suppress opinion whether anti-Semitic or otherwise is precisely to produce this sort of world in which another six million Jews will be massacred" (p. 33).

Indeed, Mr. Gollanz expands so much charity on the fascists that his supply is somewhat exhausted when he reaches the Communists, the Resistance movements and the liberated peoples. Poles and Czechs, he argues, have behaved vilely and abominably to the Germans.

There is a danger of the normalisation of resistance traits like "violence, sabotage, deceit, and a preference for adventurous excitement to steady work of a less romantic nature" (p. 37). There is not the same danger of those traits persisting in the men of the Allied armies because they "looked upon their jobs as something necessary but unpleasant and exceptional which they would only be too happy to abandon as soon as they could" (p. 38). Evidently the men of the Resistance enjoyed every moment of it and wanted it to last for ever.

Coming to Communism, Mr. Gollanz brushes aside the danger of a resurgent fascism and declares that "Communism and the growing power of the Soviet Union are the strongest positive forces opposed to the stability and development of Western Civilisation" (p. 22).

Now before examining this point of view it is necessary to place on record that Mr. Gollanz has one standard of measurement—an elastic charitable one—which he applies to ex-enemy countries, and another—a cast-iron one—which he applies to the Soviet Union.

On a broadcast by Field Marshal Montgomery, Mr. Gollanz says:—

"What is so horrifying in this document is its personalising of almost meaningless abstractions 'you, Germany,' 'The Germans'—and its consequent depersonalising of actual men and women (p. 13). Abandon the concepts 'Germany' and 'India,' 'Germany' and 'India' simply do not exist" (p. 135).

But throughout the book the Soviet Union is personalised. "She" wants this and wants that. The Soviet Union, it is asserted, probably believes that "a war of atom bombs in, say four or five years' time, would damage her far less than ourselves which would be more or less wiped out, and considerably less than the United States of America" (p. 76). There is not a vestige of a quotation (and Mr. Gollanz can proliferate quotations when it suits his purpose) for this quite monstrous assertion. To personify Germany, according to Mr. Gollanz, is to open the way to every kind of human crime

and folly, but to personify the Soviet Union and to make wild assertions about it is evidently to defend the threatened moral values of the West.

Of course, the charge of immorality and amorality levelled against revolutionary Marxists is not a new one. The Independent Labor Party, in the days when it was a political force, made a speciality of its superior morality to that of the Communists. Ramsay MacDonald and Philip Snowden were the high priests of this ethical Socialism until the period of the second Labor Government drew near. We will readily concede that no Communist could rise to the ethical heights which those gentlemen attained in the autumn of 1931. The recent example of this "ethical" Socialism was Common Wealth. The Labor Movement, according to the founders of this body, was perishing for lack of a decent Socialist morality.

What the movement needed was new moral inspiration which only a new party could give. So the young and idealistic were gathered into the new party and were baptised in the new moral inspiration. They were just beginning to enjoy the new morality with its courageous insistence on "right" when a number of leading members, including Members of Parliament, left the party to become Labor candidates at the General Election. The General Election was hardly over when another group of leaders, failing to persuade the party to dissolve and join the Labor Party, left their followers (to whom they had surely some ethical responsibility) high and dry and joined the Labor Party themselves. Was this conduct "expedient" or was it "right"?

Far be it from the revolutionary Marxist to despise ethics, but sad experience has taught him to exercise vigilance when people appear on the scene beating the big drum of morality in an ostentatious way.

The fundamental value of Western civilisation which, according to Mr. Gollanz, Communists despise, is "respect for personality." The Communist, he alleges, regards other men, not as individuals in their own right, but as tools to be used to serve the purposes of the Communists. In order to serve their purposes the Communists lie, suppress the truth, conceal their real intentions behind facades and reject all the tenets of bourgeois morality. In the process of conducting a struggle to increase their influence the Communists become morally corrupt and as such are unfit to build, or participate in the building of a society that respects the human personality.

Now if these are the tenets of Communism one ought to be able to reveal them from the vast literature of the Communists. To say nothing of the literature issued by the Communist Party in this country, Mr. Gollanz had all the works of Lenin to draw upon. Yet he only produces one tiny quotation consisting of a report of a conversation between George Lukacz and a German Socialist in the year 1921, which is quoted from a book by Franz Bor-

kenau. "The Communists disdain to conceal their aims," Marx and Engels told us. Evidently they know how to conceal their means, since not one direct quotation can be produced from a Communist book, pamphlet or study course incalculating those immoral tenets in the Communist rank and file. Oh, super-clever Communist! It's all done by word of mouth.

May be, however, the immorality of the Communists is to be found in practice. Now let us admit right away that the Communists are prepared to lie to, and deceive the class enemy. The Catholics (and for that matter the Socialists and the Catholics) were prepared to hoodwink and deceive the fascists and the quislings during the course of the resistance struggle, and who will blame them? The Communists are prepared to deceive the capitalist class, not as to their aims (which are well known) but as to their next move in a given tactical struggle; but I do not think Mr. Gollancz is building his case on the fact that Communists have been known to resort to political ruses against the class enemy.

The charge rather is that Communists seek to deceive the people in general or anyone who is prepared to associate with them politically in particular. There ought to be a rich crop of examples to prove this. In fact, aside from a few general assertions, none is offered.

If perfidy is the Communists' middle name, surely one ought to be able to produce examples from the Communist activity in the Resistance movement on the Continent or in the unions in Britain? Did the Communists in any of these spheres of activity conceal the fact that they were Communists, or hide their ultimate aims, or fail to pull their weight in the daily struggle, or betray their associates? The perfidy of the Communists was the theme of many Labor speeches and pamphlets in the recent affiliation campaign. Mr. Laski illustrated it by misquoting a speech delivered by Dimitrov in Bulgaria. There was a strange reluctance to produce examples from the British trade union movement in which members of the Communist Party are active.

The Communists "conceal their real intention behind facades," says Mr. Gollancz. As no examples are given, one is left guessing as to what this means. Perhaps we can interpret it something like this. Communists are out to organise the working class with the aim of conquering power. Yet one constantly finds them in all kinds of Committees and organisations fighting for less than this. You will find them for example active in Tenants' Associations campaigning against an increase in rent, or in a campaign against Franco Spain, yet their real aim is something vastly different from the issues they are raising in those campaigns. If Mr. Gollancz means this he has got himself into a needless muddle. The Communists aim to make the working class the dominant class in society in order that it can change the whole social structure, but as a means to this they encourage the workers to fight for every possible advantage within the framework of capitalism. There

is no inconsistency in having as one's objective the struggle for power and struggling against an increase in rents. For both Communists and non-Communists want lower rents and neither is "using" the other for an ulterior purpose when they co-operate together to obtain this immediate aim.

The Communists will resort to any means to increase their influence. Mr. Gollancz contends,

"If this could be done by the suppression of the true and the suggestion of the false, by taking as their criterion not the facts of any matter but how the matter might 'best' be 'put,' then methods like these are not merely permissible, they are obligatory."

There is much virtue in the little word "if." In point of fact, the Communists know that they can neither increase their influence nor prepare the working class for the great tasks which lie ahead by any such playing with truth. It is a commonplace (which has frequently caused some amusement in non-Communist circles) that Communists like, in long public documents and articles, to analyse the existing situation and explain what they are doing and what they would like the general body of the workers to do in the light of a particular situation.

So far from seeking to move the mass of the people into action for purposes which the Communists conceal from them, there is no party in politics which tries so much to explain the meaning and purpose of every action in which it engages. That is because the Communists reject with scorn the idea that other men should be used as tools. That is why they resort to methods which endeavour to induce the people to become conscious makers of history.

Associated with this is another characteristic of the Communists that is often made the butt of the witticisms of the politically cynical; namely, the Communists' criticisms of their own mistakes. This, we suggest, is a high test of political morality and of a responsible attitude to the political education of the people.

The Labor Party, for example, was set back for a decade when its principal leaders, Macdonald, Snowden and Thomas, stabbed it in the back in 1931. How was this debacle possible? Why should trusted leaders behave in this fashion? The world still awaits a responsible official Labor Party explanation of this terrifying betrayal. So far, however, from the Communists concealing their mistakes they discuss them publicly so that every worker taking an active interest in politics should appreciate why the mistakes occurred. This is the very opposite of treating other men as tools.

One can argue with a Tory but not with a Communist. Mr. Gollancz opines. With a Tory "your basic assumptions are the same, unless of course, he's a downright fascist. Both assume that the object of a discussion is, in theory at least, to discover the truth. Both may disregard the theory, but that is another matter. But in a discussion between a Communist and non-

Communist the Communist does nothing of the kind. You, the non-Communist, are engaged in what you think is a joint investigation. He, very often brilliantly "putting it across" (p. 65).

Perhaps it is because I am a person of low morality that I find this passage exceedingly pharisaical. Does Mr. Gollancz change his point of view every time he is in discussion? Does he never try to get his opponent to accept the point of view that he (Gollancz) has formed before the discussion took place? If this passage means that Communists go into discussions prepared beforehand to concede nothing, to arrive at no *modus vivendi* with non-Communists, it is complete nonsense. All over Europe today Communists and non-Communists are co-operating together on the basis of a common policy arrived at after discussion. It is completely unlikely that this policy is based on the Communists always succeeding in "putting it across" those with whom they are co-operating. There must have been a considerable measure of give and take on both sides. That too is clearly the case in all local organisations—Tenants' Defence Leagues, etc. — in which Communists and non-Communists co-operate. But maybe Mr. Gollancz thinks that the European Socialists would have been better employed searching for truth with open-minded Tories?

Maybe the aim of the Communists is one that takes no account of the human personality.

Well, take some of the great aims of the British Labor Party at the moment. It is just introducing a National Health Service. Surely this proposal was first given flesh and blood in the Socialised Health Services of the Soviet Union. It is discussing the 40-hour week. In 1927, the Soviet Union introduced the 7-hour day. It is demanding an extension of holidays with pay, a policy that was first made universal in the Soviet Union, and so we could go on. Most of the great measures to enrich human personality now being put forward, were first tried out in the Soviet Union.

Now, Mr. Gollancz's essay is in its way a programme of action. He wants Socialists everywhere to treat Communists as the main enemy; to oppose the policy of the Soviet Union, to refuse co-operation with the Communists. All this is being done, he asserts, with the aim of defending Western values. Nevertheless we are justified in asking what kind of a world will result if this highly moral programme is carried out. No one can doubt that when Communists and Social Democrats engaged in a dog fight inside pre-Nazi Germany they did not do so with the object of helping the advance of Hitler — nevertheless that was the practical outcome of their fratricidal struggle. Will the result be any better this time?

For though fascism has sustained a heavy military defeat, the economic roots of fascism have

by no means been liquidated. American monopoly capitalism has come out of the war temporarily rejuvenated. It is using its vast economic and political power to secure the restoration of capitalism everywhere. It brings economic and political pressure on the new Governments in Eastern Europe and tries to strengthen the forces of reaction which are in opposition to them. It seeks to strengthen the reactionary parties everywhere and to split the working class movement. Its general attitude to Communism is such that Mr. Gollancz suggests that an extension of Soviet influence in Europe may well hasten an American-Soviet war.

Now this terrific pressure for the restoration of capitalism in Europe is being exerted at a time when the new Governments are facing extremely difficult economic problems — the aftermath of war's devastation. If on top of these problems there was a dog fight between the Socialist and Communist parties, the way would be opened in many countries for a capitalist and reactionary restoration, and there can be no more dangerous illusion than to suppose that a reactionary restoration in Europe would long remain within a democratic framework. That is the real danger to all human values and to the very existence of the working class movement in Europe—a danger arising from the fact that the power of the monopolists has not been definitely broken and reactionary forces in the world are seeking to restore that power.

Of course, no one is going to rally to the slogan "restore monopoly capitalism." It is necessary for reaction to coin a slogan which will unite the maximum number of people. So the food speculators in America, the U.S. advocates of a preventive war against the Soviet Union, the Vatican which supports "democratic" Catholic parties on one hand and Franco and Salazar on the other, are all seeking to build a common front on the basis of "the defence of Western civilisation," and here is Mr. Gollancz rushing to their aid. Some one is sadly mistaken as to the results of such a crusade, and we suggest that it is more likely to be Mr. Gollancz than Wall Street or the Vatican.

Far be it from us to despise moral feelings as a driving force. But the direction of one's effort can only be arrived at after a close estimate of the actual class forces at any given moment. A morality that leads one to line up with the forces of capitalist restoration, that provides an ethical justification for perpetuating the split in the working class movement, is blind, and can lead only to disasters. Moral feeling must be at the service of reasoned analysis, if the dark forces of monopoly capitalism, the real enemy to all human values, are to be overcome.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE HOUSING PROBLEM

N. V. VECSENYI

THE year 1946, and many years to come, confront the Australian people with an immense housing problem which has to be tackled and solved.

When Engels was confronted with the same problem, more than 70 years ago, he wrote: "The so-called housing shortage, which plays such a great role in the press nowadays, does not consist in the fact that the working class generally lives in bad, overcrowded and unhealthy dwellings. This shortage is not something peculiar to the present; it is not even one of the sufferings peculiar to the modern proletariat in contradiction to all earlier oppressed classes. On the contrary, all oppressed classes in all periods suffered more or less uniformly from it. In order to make an end of this housing shortage there is only one means: to abolish altogether the exploitation and oppression of the working class by the ruling class. What is meant today by housing shortage is the peculiar intensification of the bad housing conditions of the workers as a result of the sudden rush of population to the big towns; a colossal increase in rent, a still further aggravation of overcrowding in the individual houses and, for some, the impossibility of finding a place to live in at all. And this housing shortage gets talked of so much only because it does not limit itself to the working class but has affected the petit-bourgeoisie also."

Whereas the problem and the general approach to it have remained the same in the 70 years that have passed, conditions have changed in the sense that we are much nearer to our final objective, consequently to the objective of solving the housing problem, than 70 years ago. Hence when the matter was taken up in our recent publication *Housing, Slums, Private Enterprise and the Future* we could not only approach the subject from the general political angle, but also put forward both immediate and long-range practical proposals, knowing that in its implementation we will have to play a very important role.

This article merely attempts to throw further light on certain aspects of the housing problem, notably on two: home ownership and the most immediate tasks.

If the worker wants to become the owner of his home, then he has at the same time to fight for his emancipation. In fact, should he be acquiring a home under capitalism and fail to struggle for his economic and political emancipation, he would not only lose his home, but he also would lose his position as a free laborer.

The illusion that I own my home (at least I have a roof over my head) come what may, is a dangerous one. Practically every serf, or slave for that matter, had a roof above his head and it was precisely this roof that chained him, more than anything else to his master.

Experience has shown that whenever a worker has plucked sufficient courage (or rather has fallen into the hands of some "dream-home" building society) to become a home owner, in the majority of cases he has never achieved it. But rather what happened was that, as a result of unemployment, illness, etc., he lost the deposit, paid more in instalments and interest than what the rent would have been, paid for repairs or repaired it himself and eventually was kicked out to make room for the next victim.

In a street in Alexandria, Sydney, out of 18 of such workers' "dream-homes" (shabby weather-board buildings) not one is owned by the original owner and the houses were erected 14 years ago. This state of affairs can be improved by the Government housing scheme as proposed in our publication on housing, but it cannot be eliminated.

Supposing, however, that a worker had acquired his home, consequently he has not got to pay any rent. The question is, has he materially improved his conditions? Is he better off? Not according to Engels: "Expenses for rent no longer enter into the value of his labor power. Every reduction in the cost of production of labor power, that is to say, every permanent price reduction in the workers' necessities of life is equivalent — 'on the basis of the iron laws of political economy' — to a reduction to the value of labor power and will, therefore, finally result in a corresponding fall in wages." This, by the way, partly explains the lower wages in the countryside.

In other words, if the workers do not struggle for higher wages, and get them, they gain nothing by acquiring a home, in the way of a higher standard of living — at best this remains static.

It does not even remain static, but rather deteriorates, if all the consequences of the worker owning his home under capitalism are allowed to be driven home. The worker is not only hampered in his free movements to sell his labor power to the highest bidder at a given time and place. Since he is chained to his home, when it comes to the question of fighting matters out with the employing class, then, in order not to suffer the possible loss of his home, he may be forced to agree to terms which he would reject if he were in the position to move about freely.

So it becomes quite evident that the real solution of the workers' home ownership lies in their consistent and unified struggle with all progressive forces, for an ever increasing standard of living and greater political freedom. And so that the gains may be consolidated and extended the establishment of socialism is absolutely imperative.

In order to overcome, to some degree, the most appalling features of the present housing shortage, the following can be the approach:

Temporary buildings are to be run up at once with the use of all available cheap material (from army huts, etc.) within reasonable distance to good communications, anywhere at all. In the meantime permanent nature should be immediately begun. And the balancing of these two methods should be carefully maintained. At the same time the immediate division of big homes into small self-

contained flats (and requisition in certain instances) should be implemented.

The solution to the post-war housing problem is on the cross roads. All aspects of it have to be vigorously campaigned for. And to overcome the most urgent needs a very definite and resolute mobilization is required of all the people who are most directly and painfully affected by the housing shortage.

DIMITROV'S TRIUMPH OVER GOERING

W. S. CLAYTON

ON the evening of November 6th, 1933, Herr Reichminister Hermann Goering, jackbooted and blustering in the Leipzig Court, shouted at George Dimitrov: "I'm not afraid of you! You belong to the gallows! Wait till I get you outside this court!"

On October 1st, 1946, in Nuremberg, the International Military Tribunal, after finding him guilty for his part in the most terrible crimes ever committed against society, sentenced Hermann Goering to death by hanging.

Today, George Dimitrov continues his great work, loved the world over by all progressives and fighters for progress, while his one-time torturer, hated and spurned by all that is decent in the world, has chosen the coward's way out to escape the hangman's noose.

These are landmarks in the unfolding of history, but the terrible lessons of the past fifteen years must never be forgotten if, in the days that are ahead, we are to avoid such tragedies as befell the German working class and the working class of the whole world.

There have been and will continue to be apologists for Fascism — weak-kneed and simpering scribes who parrot-like say, "It can't happen here," in this way breaking down the will to struggle of the workers. Then there are those portraying Fascism as the rule of gangster groups who, running away with the State machine, converted it to their own purposes.

At no time will the working class learn from bourgeois writers, spokesmen and politicians that Fascism was the rule of the old capitalist class by new methods, by open terrorist dictatorship; by the abolition of bourgeois democratic rule when this method no longer served the interests of capitalism, and its replacement by brutal force, the torture chamber and the concentration camp.

The same class ruled under the Weimar Republic as under Hitler's Third Reich. The method of rule differed; nothing else. Only the Communists have laid bare these facts of life.

As to the opiate "It can't happen here," how often have we heard rumblings that could herald a coming storm, as when Postmaster-General, Thorby quite shamelessly expressed his sympathy for fascist

methods. Menzies has spoken in praise of Hitler, Cameron, Harrison of New Guard infamy, Fadden the spokesman for the landed monopolists — all are essentially Fascist in their sympathies and in their outlook on life. For these people and their class, democracy is a means of maintaining their positions as the ruling class. When it fails to fulfil this role they will not hesitate to adopt the same measures as did German, Italian and Japanese capitalism, if the opportunity is given them.

This is one lesson the working class, in the interest of its very existence, must never forget.

But it is necessary to go much further than this. The workers expect reaction from reactionaries. The recent elections show their distrust and the hatred felt towards such people not only by the labor movement but by large numbers of middle class people. It remains yet to be understood that Fascism came to Germany not so much through the struggle of the bourgeoisie as through the weakness and spinelessness or outright reactionary character of many of the so-called Labor leaders of that country. They hamstringing the working class, they prevented labor unity, they stifled initiative and struggle against the monstrous force that was being created. It should be recalled also that Mussolini was at one time a member of the Italian Socialist Party and Editor of a Socialist paper.

There can be no doubt that there are such potential betrayers in the ranks of the Australian labor movement. One labor "leader" had in his office a large photograph autographed "To my friend, From Benito." Others are as outspokenly imperialist in their actions as Menzies.

What faith can the workers have in a man claiming to be the voice of Labor who takes full page advertisements in his paper from the millionaire steel monopolists? The ranks of the ALP are riddled with lickspittles of capitalism, police spies and racketeers. These people are an abomination to Labor, and if left alone, as in Germany and elsewhere, will pave the way for the inevitable victory of reaction over the people. Serving their masters well, they are in the forefront of the attack on the militant, class-conscious sections of the workers. They show their illiteracy by speaking parrot-like about "Red Fascism"; being dumb ignorant brutes they would not be able

to understand, let alone solve, the contradictions in this term.

This dross must be swept into the discard; the workers' ranks must be cleansed of such rubbish; so that the way will be cleared for united struggle against the enemies of progress, for victory not only of a military character over Fascism, but of a moral and political character also.

Then there is a third lesson to learn from the experiences of past years. Even with two million Storm Troopers at his back Goering's exclamation to Comrade Dimitrov, "I am not afraid of you" proved his fear. It was the unflinching courage of Dimitrov, his exposure and damning indictment of Nazism hourly and daily throughout a trial that lasted months, that made Goering expose himself in this way.

Dimitrov set a standard for all time of how Communists must conduct themselves in face of the class enemy. In his dignity and challenging indictment of Fascism he appeared as the personification of the incorruptible and inevitably victorious working class.

When his beloved Bulgaria was slandered, Dimitrov appeared as the true patriot defending the national honour of his country. "It is true," he said, "that Bulgarian Fascism is savage and barbarous. But the working class, the peasants and the culture of Bulgaria are neither savage nor barbarous. True that the level of material well-being is not so high in the Balkans as elsewhere in Europe, but it is false to say that the people of Bulgaria are politically or mentally on a lower scale than the peoples of other countries. Our political struggle, our political aspirations are no less lofty than those of other peoples. A people which lived for five hundred years under a foreign yoke without losing its language and its national character, a people of workers and peasants

NEW WAYS OF KILLING

DIYON CARTER

(From "New Masses," September 3, 1946.)

WE have all read emotional predictions of what an atomic war would be like. But it is now admitted by informed scientists that the atom bomb is a "merciful" weapon, of limited killing power, compared to the arms of biological warfare.

These incredibly barbarous weapons have received little attention in the press. However, enough information has been released from censorship to give us a clear if not a complete idea of what biologists and biochemists have already achieved. Stripped of technical disguises the facts show us vividly how we shall die if a World War III comes. We need to examine these facts not in a spirit of horrified curiosity but because they teach us simple and powerful truths about the urgency of the struggle for peace. Here knowledge can be forged into our super weapon. If we can

who have fought and are fighting Bulgarian Fascism—such a people is not savage and barbarous. Only Fascism in Bulgaria is savage and barbarous. But I ask you, Mr. President, in what country does not Fascism bear these qualities? . . . The Bulgarian people has fought obstinately and with all its strength against foreign oppression. Therefore I protest here and now against these attacks on my people. I have no cause to be ashamed of being Bulgarian, in fact I am proud to say that I am a son of the Bulgarian working people."

And in rebuttal of the hysterical slanders about terrorism directed against the Communists, Dimitrov spurned the charge with the words: "Mass work, mass activity, mass opposition and the United Front—no adventurism—these are the elements of Communist tactics."

Dimitrov's last words in his defence ended on a note of courage and hope. "A time will come when these accounts will have to be settled, with interest! The elucidation of the Reichstag fire and the identification of the real incendiaries is a task which will fall to the people's Court of the future proletarian dictatorship. . . . The wheel of history moves slowly on towards the ultimate, inevitable, irrepresible goal of Communism. . . ." (Here the Court forbade Dimitrov to speak further.)

His stand in Court and the inspiration it was to the people all over the world saved Dimitrov from the Fascist trap. He was freed and proceeded to Moscow, where, from the Socialist Fatherland, he continued his inspiring struggle against the dangers of Fascism and war.

Today the Nazi hangman has taken rat poison and George Dimitrov, an outstanding figure in the World Labor Movement, takes his proud place as the leader of the liberated Bulgarian people.

give the people an understanding of biological warfare we shall greatly strengthen our weapons, the armaments of peace.

Any nation could wage biological warfare. The weapons are fundamentally superior to atom bombs, technically and strategically, because they are very cheap, they can be turned out in small factories modestly equipped and manned by few scientists, and they could be prepared in absolute secrecy. Unlike the atom bomb, poison gases and all previous weapons, many biological arms cannot be called off by an armistice, and some will enormously increase their own killing power after they have been set in action, without further effort by the attacker. It is even realistic to conceive of the ultimate in horror: devastating biological destruction breaking out weeks or months after

the warmaking nation had actually started the attack, with the victims remaining for some time in ignorance as to who was the aggressor.

As is well known, disease has played a decisive part in many wars. In fact, up to World War I epidemic diseases usually caused more military casualties than did weapons. As early as 1870, when bacteriology was still groping toward basic knowledge of disease, Bloxam, the English chemist and military adviser, seriously advocated that the British army experiment with artillery shells loaded with small-pox germs. During the first world war the American doctor Davis revealed to the University of Illinois' College of Medicine that some attention was being paid to germ warfare, which he condemned as "repellent to every sense of honor and fair play." He was referring to the long-censored attempt by German agents in 1915 to infect Allied horses and cattle with virulent diseases.

That attempt was a failure. Much earlier, during attacks on Crimean cities in the fourteenth century, the Tartars are reliably said to have hurled upon the defenders parts of corpses dead from plague. And Pizarro's troops deliberately gave Indians clothes from small-pox victims, starting uncontrollable epidemics which caused some 3,000,000 deaths in Mexico and Central America.

Germ warfare was relegated to the realm of science fantasy for two opposite reasons; plagues may attack friend and foe indiscriminately, and the advance of immunisation made disease dissemination increasingly difficult. As late as 1941 eminent American scientists considered biological warfare to be completely impractical. However, that same year the National Academy of Science and the National Research Council presented new confidential facts to the Secretary of War who already had Allied spy reports concerning German and Japanese experiments in biological warfare. The facts were not alarming, and the scientists simply urged that the "debatable question" should be investigated by planned research.

Suddenly in the summer of 1942 a super-secret committee took over that work. This "War Research Service" drew specialists from all over the nation. Their findings were decisive. Within twelve months the Chemical Warfare Service of the Army was called upon to organise large-scale development. The next year mass production laboratories were started at Camp Detrick in Maryland, followed by plants in Mississippi, Utah and Indiana.

Few people — including technicians — have grasped the enormity of this work. Its secrets have been more rigidly and successfully guarded than the atomic bomb. Canada and Britain participated in restricted projects, but some 3,900 scientists and military technicians were mobilised in America alone, backed by very heavy cash expenditures. But the extent of the work is less significant than the results achieved.

We must understand that biological warfare is much broader than germ warfare. It now covers three general types of weapons. First: living disease organisms such as bacteria, fungi, viruses and rickettsias. Second: toxins extracted from such organisms. Third: synthetic chemicals which destroy or distort life in ways quite different from the action of poisons. In general, there are varieties of these weapons which can be used against human beings, animals or plants.

Some publicity has been given to the toxins. The significant fact here is that for the first time biochemists have isolated in pure form the "poisons" by which certain disease organisms produce illness and death in our bodies. These substances are so incredibly potent that newspaper readers have dismissed the popularised reports as fantastic. But recently in "Science" a statement by Lamanna, McElroy and Eklund gave facts regarding a toxin extracted from the botulinus organism. One gamma of this protein substance will kill half a dozen adults. About 30,000,000 gammas make up one ounce. Hence one ounce of the pure toxin would be more than sufficient to kill almost every man, woman and child on this continent.

We know this is cold fact because comparable substances, of opposite effect, have already been used to give immunity against certain diseases. For example a pure vaccine has been extracted from pneumococcus organisms. Injected into human beings this gives protection against more than fifty types of pneumonia. Tens of thousands of people have already been given the vaccine, and these tests show that one ounce will immunise half a million. A more potent vaccine was developed by men from Western Reserve University for use against tetanus. On the other hand, there is also a tetanus toxin, one ounce of which could provide fatal doses for more than 100,000,000 people.

Last May, Rep. Albert Thomas told Congress that the Navy had a weapon "far more deadly than the atomic bomb." He was probably referring to the extraordinary project completed by the most secret of all our scientific bodies, Naval Medical Research Unit No. 1, headed by Capt. Albert Paul Krueger. This dealt with pneumonic plague, the disease caused by the same germs as bubonic plague but spread directly through the air from victim to victim, instead of through fleas. Quite likely NMRU No. 1 has mass-produced both pneumonic plague toxin and the infecting agent, each of deadliness similar to that of the botulinus and tetanus proteins.

Therefore we can foresee a war in which the aggressor would secretly or openly spread fearfully potent toxins or infectious agents within the victim nation. Meanwhile the aggressor's population might be immunised against the disease used.

In this latter notion there is no comfort. For us, biological warfare differs in a real and ghastly way from atomic war. While it is possible that no other nation may have an atomic weapon for some

time, we can be certain that a number of other countries possess biological arms now. We can also be sure that if our imperialists carry us into another war, for every atomic bomb we hurl, our opponents will reply with infinitely worse weapons. The majority of us would perish before our scientists could develop protective measures.

And their efforts would be useless, because the enemy would change his diseases or toxins before immunising means could be found. What has happened can be simply expressed: science has discovered how to develop new types of disease organisms—giving us new plagues and new poisons—in a way not remote from the breeding of new flowers, vegetables and grains. This is an exceedingly complex and largely secret subject, but we have an inkling of what has been achieved in this year's Eli Lilly award to Dr. Maclyn McCarty. At a meeting of bacteriologists, immunologists and pathologists, McCarty told how he used natural enzymes like desoxyribo-nuclease to change disease germs from one type to another. It is reasonable to presume that such experiments were primitive in the WRS and NMRU. Today synthetic chemicals and radiations are employed to create new strains of virulent organisms. The number of possible diseases cannot be estimated.

In everyday language this can be viewed two ways. First, just as the sulfa drugs are enormously more effective against disease and previously known chemicals, so the new "synthetic diseases" kill with awesome power. Secondly, each disease of this kind represents a weapon strategically comparable to the atomic bomb—a secret weapon possessed for the time being by only one nation. Hence, nations warring with biological arms would be on an equal footing. But the weapons would be so destructive that in striving to murder each other all would be committing suicide.

By way of contrasts we should note that this research is of bewildering peacetime value to humanity, for it gives wholly new ways to eliminate serious diseases. At present the military censorship guards these lifesaving secrets behind machine-guns. The only beneficial discoveries so far disclosed are of use to poultry and cattle!

If the direct destruction of human life were not enough, another branch of biological research has concentrated upon methods of mass starvation by means of wiping out basic crops. Included are new kinds of rusts, bacterial rots and virus diseases. The most spectacular results were obtained with synthetic hormones which selectively distort the growth of certain plants. One of these is the weed-killer, 2-4-D. Its military counterparts lay waste to useful plants like the cereals and legumes, while with diabolical selectiveness they allow ragweed and thistles to grow unharmed. The Authorities admit that we were ready to use one such chemical on a mass scale against Japan. Spread early in the rice region with no apparent effect, this "growth

regulator" would have permitted the crop to approach the harvest stage, when vast areas would have withered away suddenly. In a recent issue of "Science" men of the Special Projects Division (Chemical Warfare Service) admitted that the results reported thus far are "only the beginning."

Once again in contrast, biochemists have been allowed to say that many of the hormones are of revolutionary importance to farming. One withers away potato leaves at harvest time, improving the yield and gathering of the tubers. Others enable us to produce fruits without pollination or seeds. George W. Merck summarises the perspective thus: "Every agricultural or horticultural practice which affects growth, development, ripening or storage, can be influenced to economic advantage."

Suppose we go beyond this exciting vision. Science has produced a pure substance, one ounce of which will kill a hundred million people. A handful of another chemical will rid a thousand farms of weeds. Still another will change bacteria when diluted 400,000,000,000 times. What do these facts mean? Research has begun to probe the secrets of life, growth and death. We are approaching the hitherto unknown substances which control the living cell in health and sickness, its reproduction and inheritance factors, the catalyst of life.

We are on the verge of reversing the course of disease, not with "medicines" or even antibiotics like penicillin but by using catalysts which counteract the very catalysts causing the symptoms of illness. What is more, other catalysts show us that we may soon begin to control evolution and heredity, at first in plants and animals, later in respect to man's heritable defects. From explorers our scientists are about to become creators on a scale as majestic as the poetry of Genesis.

But the realities of research harnessed by imperialism are nauseating. Seventeen million people now living in North America will die of cancer if medicine does not advance its knowledge of this disease. Yet we find biological war research seeking the "growth regulators" of cancer with the aim of winning horrifying new substances which would doom whole populations with uncontrollable cancer, as surely and swiftly as methyl cholanthrene produces the diseases in laboratory animals.

To repeat: for us as people the really incisive fact is that other nations have and are developing biological weapons. This is the essence of Lollotistic Workers in February when he said that America's atomic energy secrecy drives other countries to "produce more treacherous and more pagandists must be aware of the menace. But should war? Here we see the pattern of Munich repeated. On the chance that the Soviet Union might be overwhelmed by bombs and toxins they are willing

to stake our cities and towns, our crops and cattle, our lives by the tens of millions.

Over and above all other facts about biological warfare we must understand, regardless of vague assurances in the press, that science positively does not hold out any hope of protecting ourselves against the new weapons. Some of these are self-propagating. Today science is still unable to control outbreaks of long studied diseases such as pneumonic plague, polio, potato blight and rusts. With these, as Dr. Frank Thorne points out, "Their mischief is wrought blindly and spontaneously. They have no aid from a malicious enemy in getting started." Uniquely new plagues, together with radically effective means of spreading them, would cause slaughter appalling even to the eyewitnesses of Hiroshima.

Certainly the Soviet Union is engaged in research of this kind. The Academy of Science's Microbiology Institute ranks among the world's most advanced institutions. Its director, Vitali Rischkov, recently won a Stalin Prize for his basic studies of virus disease. In my files I have just found a clipping which describes Rischkov's work on ribonucleic acid and viruses — three years old. But we would be making a ridiculously naive mistake to pose the problem of biological warfare in terms of American vs. Soviet science. Many other nations, not a few of whom rightly consider themselves grimly shadowed by Truman-Attlee-King diplomacy, are frantically spurring their laboratories in the race for super catalysts of death.

Watson Davis, director of Science Service, early this year described the situation with admirable simplicity: "The only hope is to bring germs and atoms alike into the open so that they may be controlled in the interest of all peoples."

It is a tragedy that many scientists have supported the State Department plan for atomic energy "control" or have subscribed to the utopian scheme of "World Government" put forward to further

American imperialism, to sabotage Big Three unity and the United Nations. These actions reflect on the political level the intolerable tragedies unfolding in the personal lives of our most talented researchers. Would that Shakespeare and Gorky were alive now . . . to dramatise the conflicts of scientists who, having found the secret of banishing polio or the plagues of Asia, must lock that miracle in a War Department vault each night, and then seduce their minds to conceive its opposite: a pestilential de-former of chromosomes, or a key that will unlock cancer in the cells of everybody, or a neurosyphilis toxin with power to send millions to a madhouse death!

Only the people can save our scientists from the maniacal plot which, unless it is halted, will surely destroy them along with world peace. Now the upholders of exploitation are starkly revealed as literally the enemies of life. And upon the people, organising for the defence of peace, rests our only hope of rescuing all the world's intelligence and culture.

IA great many references were consulted. Among these were:

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THE PRESS AND THE EDUCATION OF WORKERS' CHILDREN

H. ROSS, B.A.

ALLEN SHORT agrees that he was guilty of careless formulation in his article in the September Review when he hoped that the daily press would give support to the "New Deal in Education" for the children of the people as they gave some support to the Salaries Campaign of the teachers. He states that the remark gives no indication that anything favourable to this New Deal would only find place in the capitalist press after the most strenuous campaign and that any impression given that the press was genuinely interested in educational progress of the masses except insofar as it made them more useful to their rulers, was quite incorrect. This latter attitude is more understandable, considering the

trouncing he usually gives the capitalist press in his radio sessions!

In the Salaries Campaign conducted by the Teachers' Federation, the press did give more favourable notices than might at first glance have been expected. The truth is that this occurred when the strength of the campaign was well evident and, anyway, they have not been altogether opposed to higher salaries for teachers, for the police and the judiciary. Their hopes to win back the many teachers who had become thoroughly disillusioned by their earlier attacks were not realised — teachers have not such short memories.

The capitalist press did not, and does not, support the demand for an all-round increase in the basic wage or any raising of the living standards and on this other matter of education of the workers' children, it might be interesting and profitable to examine its role.

"Gentlemen," said a prominent New York journalist at the dinner given to him on his retirement, "There is NO Free Press!" thus disconcerting those who hoped to preserve this hypocritical veneer. And what is "Free"? Who owns and thus, who controls the press?

The Sydney Morning Herald was glad to report (on 20/8/1891) "A proposal to establish a State newspaper (expected to yield a profit of £50,000 a year) was rejected by 55 votes to 17." These, and greater, profits were secured by those wealthy people who not only own the press, but who therefore see to it that the press serves their interests. These interests are not served by the distribution of too many of these profits to raise the living standards of the people.

The New Deal for Education is something more basic than the question of the salaries of teachers, and on this issue the attitude of the capitalist press, and of the class that owns it, needs examination.

When in England in 1807 a proposal was made that parish schools should be supported at public expense, it was met by the objection that giving education to the working class would be "found prejudicial to their morals and their happiness; it would teach them to despise their lot in life instead of making them good servants in agriculture and other laborious employments to which their rank has destined them. Instead of teaching them ordination it would render them fractious . . . enable them to read seditious pamphlets and publications against Christianity."

The same source quoted above goes on to say that, in 1833, the Government voted a grant of twenty thousand pounds for primary schools. Six years later, this was increased to thirty thousand for three million children at the same time that seven thousand was voted for stables for the new queen!

With the increasing complexity of the means of production, the ruling class came to see that some education, and more technical education, was necessary for the efficiency of the workers, however horrifying the idea of these workers reading seditious pamphlets must have been.

Here in N.S.W. the Public Instruction Act of 1880 laid down the principle of State responsibility for education. This was opposed, as in England, by those conservative and religious bodies who had their own schools and the conservative press was used to dress up all sorts of "moral" and "social" objections to its free and compulsory primary extension. While parents and teachers realise that increasing Government responsibility is the only way in which education will be maintained and improved so that it will burst out of its narrow

bounds and open up wider vistas of mental and physical growth to the children, the press continues to preach its "moral" objections to such expenditure. "To be valued, it must be paid for." Surely, we say, and by the country that should be concerned to develop its assets—its future citizens! The old argument that it must be paid for means that the wealthy get the best, the useful people don't.

Again, the Herald (surely the most worthy mouthpiece of the capitalist press?) says on 14/8/1906 against free education:

"The Government, we understand, is to submit proposals for free primary education . . . the remission of fees means nothing to parents who are able to pay for their children's education. But particular parents are relieved of the payment of £75,000 for value received."

Later, on 3/9/1931—

"People paid small fees towards the education of their children in primary schools up to 1906, and in secondary schools up to 1911. It was good for them to pay."

And in the same year:—

"The raising of the school age would accomplish nothing of any permanent value."

The press has always been ready to grumble at State Education, not because it is inadequate, not because some schools are old, unhealthy, overcrowded and badly equipped, but because all typists can't spell perfectly, or because pupils don't show a slavish joy at hard and poorly paid manual work. And when the system produces juvenile delinquency, there are not lacking those who find it encouragingly easy to appear in the columns of the press blaming the schools. After all, not all delinquents who win front page fame are products of the State (public school) system of education!

The recent New Education Conference further exposes the capitalist press. First of all, there was the insulting ratio of space given to racing and crime to that allowed education. Emphasis was given to a metaphysical approach to a mysterious thing called vaguely education, praise to "individual" efforts, no lauding, hardly a mention even of the Children's Charter of the New Education Act of 1944 of England, a general belittling of State (public school) education. And these attacks directly, or by implication, on the campaign for a New Deal for Education here, were general in all sections of the capitalist and the sectarian press, though the country press, in places where the campaign has been strong, has given good support.

Compare the attitude of the A.C.P. and of those workers' organisations which are not dominated by right wing or clerical reaction. At once there was the realisation that the New Deal was something they had always wanted for their children. There was no need to fight for a little space in the press of these bodies!

Nor is their support limited to press space. These people will actively join in with the move for a better school and for better opportunities for their children. The Communist Party, in particular, makes of education, not an election issue merely, but a vital part of those things for which it fights,

day by day, in every sphere and place in which are to be found the useful people of this world, until at last the world's wealth is won not by exploitation of man by man, but for his advancement and his enjoyment.



Questions & Answers

conducted by
L.H. GOULD

"WHAT is meant by the expression, 'Freedom is the recognition of necessity'? Is it a purely philosophical conception? How would you relate it to man's freedom in Socialist Russia?"—W.J.W.

The expression comes from the great German philosopher, Hegel. It is another rendering of his thought: "Necessity is blind only in so far as it is not understood." By necessity is meant nature and nature's laws, society and the laws of social development, objective fact, the outer world and its law-governed processes. The problem may be stated as follows:—Can man better the world? Is he free to do it? Have not many thinkers asserted that the world cannot be changed, and that, for example, "there will always be wars," and, "you cannot change human nature"? Further, do the laws of nature and society exist independently of our understanding, or are not these laws something which our minds have given to nature? And finally, isn't there free will? Isn't man free to be good, moral, pious, obedient to his "natural superiors," or free if he chooses to be sinful, disobedient and rebellious?

We are thus dealing with a conception which, most definitely, is not "purely philosophical"; if it had no practical meaning for mankind, it would not be worth discussing. The first thing to note is the difficulty in arriving at an understanding of such socially significant words as freedom, democracy, justice, etc. This is due to the concealment of meaning, or the half-and-half or double meaning, given these words in class-divided society throughout history. The governments of Britain and Australia, for example, are labelled labor; but apart from essentials, their home and foreign policies are capitalist. Dr. Evatt has been blethering about small nations during the past twelve months, but not a word of protest came from him while British imperialism was shooting Greeks, Indonesians, Egyptians, Jews and the peoples of a dozen more colonial and dependent countries. "Freedom is a grand word," said Lenin, "but under the banner of Free Trade the most predatory wars were conducted; under the banner of 'free labor' the toilers were robbed."

Of all the words that have been misused and juggled around to deceive people and weaken their desire for social change, none perhaps has been more useful to the parasites and their publicists than

the word necessity (in the meaning, of course, of the laws of the objective world, both of nature and society). Why strive against the "blind forces of nature"? — argue the exploiters and their apologists. Alternatively, social discontent is attributed to "original sin," or inherent perversity, or ways or characteristics which had "no sanctions or warrant in nature." Philosophers who defend in one way or another the interests of the exploiters deny objective necessity, adopting the viewpoint of the ancient Protagoras that "man is the measure of all things." This is incorrect. The universe and its laws are not the "image" of man. The necessity of nature is primary, and that of human consciousness and volition, secondary. The latter, said Lenin, "must operate in conformity with the former," not vice versa.

The oppressors and their ideologists did more, of course, than argue, and scold and philosophise. Countless millions of humanity's best died in the cause of freedom.

Against this mysticism, ignorance and persecution, Marxism states that man becomes free, not by wishing or waiting, not by ignoring the facts of life (necessity), and not by subjecting himself helplessly and hopelessly to alleged overpowering forces of nature. Nature can be controlled to an ever-increasing extent; man can change his world. The essential is to learn, to know, to master the secrets of the processes of nature and society, and thus change the world to desired ends. Here is Engel's splendid presentation:—

"Freedom does not consist in an imaginary independence of natural laws but in a knowledge of these laws and in the possibility thence derived of applying them intelligently to given ends. This is true both as regards nature and as regards those forces which control the spiritual and physical existence of man himself — two classes of laws which we can distinguish as an abstraction, but cannot separate in reality. Freedom of the will consists in nothing but the ability to come to a decision when one is in possession of the knowledge of the facts. The freer the judgment of a man then in relation to a given subject of discussion, the more necessary is it that he arrive at a positive decision . . . freedom, therefore, consists in a mastery over ourselves and

external nature founded upon the knowledge of the necessities of nature."

The statement, by Engels supplies the answer to the third question, on freedom under Socialism. The Soviet people won their emancipation, not by ignoring the laws of nature and of social development, but by recognising objective fact, by a scientific study of needs and opportunities, and by organised struggle for given aims. Again from Engels, as he envisaged in the 1880's the Socialist society to come:

"The seizure of the means of production by society puts an end to commodity production, and therewith to the domination of the product over the producer. Anarchy in social production is replaced by conscious organisation on a planned basis. The struggle for individual existence comes to an end. And at this point, in a certain sense, man finally cuts himself off from the animal world, leaves the conditions of animal existence behind him and enters conditions which are really human. The conditions of existence forming man's environment, which up to now have dominated man, at this point pass under the dominion and control of man, who now for the first time becomes the real conscious master of Nature, because and in so far as he has become master of his own social organisation. The laws of his own social activity, which have hitherto confronted him as external, dominating laws of Nature, will then be applied by man with complete understanding, and hence will be dominated by man. Men's own social organisation which has hitherto stood in opposition to them as if arbitrarily decreed by Nature and history, will then become the voluntary act of men themselves. The objective, external forces which have hitherto dominated history, will then pass under the control of men themselves. It is only from this point that men, with full consciousness, will fashion their own history; it is only from this point that the social causes set in motion by men will have, predominantly and in constantly

increasing measure, the effects willed by men. It is humanity's leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom."

Of first importance is practice. Lenin observed: "For Engels the whole of human practice is part of the theory of knowledge, thus giving an objective criterion of truth. Until we acquire knowledge of the laws of nature, which exist and act independently of our mind, we are slaves of 'blind necessity.'"

Finally, the problem of necessity confronts the Communists in capitalist lands in theory and practice under the following main heads:—

1. The criminal warring policy of imperialists plotting World War Three. 2. The coming economic crisis. 3. Slums, famines, terrorist suppression of colonial peoples. 4. The still enormously powerful capitalist ideology among the masses. 5. Social-Democracy and its special role of keeping the workers disunited. 6. The objective opportunity for mankind to achieve social change by peaceful democratic methods, an end desired by the Communists, but with the evident intention of the exploiters to resist change by violence. In the Soviet Union, necessity is manifested primarily in the survivals of the past, such as low productive technique, and also in the imperialist threat of attack.

Every one of these conditions constitutes a basic problem, and every one exists objectively, i.e., independently of our consciousness, will or desire. The solution can be only as indicated above, namely, by recognising their objective necessity, mastering their secrets, and applying policy accordingly.

(References: Engels, *Anti-Dühring, Part Three*; Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism, Chap. 3*; Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme, with Appendices by Marx, Engels and Lenin*; Lenin, *The Deception of the People by the Slogans of Equality and Freedom*; R. Dixon and L. Sharkey, *A Free World Without Violence*.)

BOOK REVIEW

PROBLEMS OF LENINISM (STALIN)

L. HARRY GOULD

WHEN the Red Army met, held and then shattered Hitler's Wehrmacht, the capitalist world gaped in wonder and jabbered about "miracles." There are no miracles. Communists and their supporters knew what was happening. The stupefaction of the "experts" was not because they had fallen victims to their own propaganda. Something more was involved.

The simple truth was that a new civilisation had emerged in the world, a civilisation with a philosophy, theoretical sanctions and practices which few among the upholders of the old society really understood. Minds clouded by hatred and fear of

the Socialist challenge are incapable of honest thinking and sober assessment. It was further alleged that Soviet power was the result of carefully-guarded secrets which came to light only after Hitler's attack. There were no secrets (apart of course from the ordinary military secrets common to all States). Years ago, Stalin revealed the source of Soviet defensive might, and significantly he listed the Red Army only fourth (the first three were (1) the economic, political and cultural power of Socialism; (2) the moral and political unity of Soviet society; (3) the mutual friendship of the nations in U.S.S.R.). But anti-Sovietisers couldn't learn, however "sincerely" they tried.

The book under review offers, more than any other, the basic account, the full picture of Soviet power in peace and war. The title is important. Why not "Problems of Marxism"? Is there a difference between Marxism and Leninism? None whatsoever, in all the fundamentals of the revolutionary working class movement. Introducing the subject, Stalin writes: "Expounding the foundations of Leninism does not yet mean expounding the teachings of Lenin's world outlook. . . . Lenin was a Marxist. Marxism is, of course, the basis of his world outlook." In brief, Lenin applied the teachings of Marx and Engels to the solution of the problems which arose in the new epoch of imperialism. Stalin defines the term: "Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and of the proletarian revolution. To be more exact, Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the proletarian dictatorship in particular."

In their day, Marx and Engels had worked out all the basic revolutionary principles, and had given the practical leadership to the workers in the day-to-day struggles. But the period of the death of the founders of Communism witnessed the change from free competitive capitalism to monopoly-capital, to the dominance of the financial oligarchy, or, imperialism. The particular problems which Lenin so brilliantly solved included the analysis of imperialism, the building of a workers' party "of a new type," elucidating the role of the peasantry as allies of the proletariat, the possibility of building Socialism in a single country or a few countries first, the link between the workers' struggle at home and the national liberation movements abroad, and many more issues of world historical importance. Following Lenin's death in 1924, Stalin further developed Marxist-Leninist theory. Under his leadership, Socialism was triumphantly established in Russia. To the toilers all over the world Russia is the beacon light, the bastion of peace, democracy, progress and culture. Stalin is the Lenin of today.

The Problems of Leninism provides the "know-how," but a "know-how" which is a force for humanity's further advance. There is no secret. The lessons, experiences, methods are there for all the toilers to learn. And Bolshevism, the victorious theory and practice of the great Party of Lenin-Stalin, is a "model tactic for all."

LIGHT AND SOUND

PROFESSOR J. B. S. HALDANE, F.R.S.

[F]Londoners learned nothing else between June and September, 1944, they learned that light travels faster than sound. The most striking demonstration of this fact was to stand on Parliament Hill and watch the bombs bursting in London. One saw a double-burst burst in Wandsworth, and heard the burst half a minute later.

The Foundations cover every important aspect of Leninist-Stalinist theory and practice. The style, peculiarly Stalin's own, is terse and brilliant, its compactness enhancing the effectiveness of presentation. Didn't Wendell Wilkie compare every one of Stalin's questions and comments to a "depth-bomb charge"? The student should easily discern the red threads running throughout the volume: every issue subordinated to working class power—"the fundamental question of revolution is the question of power" (Lenin); his demand for inflexible devotion to principle, to Marxism, to defence of revolutionary theory, and to deeds as against bare doctrine; the need for resolute struggle against reformism, and also against Trotskyism, anarchism and all other alien trends ("the fight against opportunism was and remains an essential preliminary condition for a successful fight against capitalism"); the unity of the toilers in the home "civilised" countries with their exploited brothers in the colonial and dependent lands. This "generic quality," as the scientists might term it, is also to be noted, of course, when the volume as a whole is compared with all other basic Marxist writings. Stalin's letter in 1931, *Some Questions concerning the History of Bolshevism*, exhibits the same revolutionary vigilance against the class enemy as Marx's polemics against the Anarchists (and it is worth recalling that the anarchist leader, Bakunin, ended up as a police agent just as did Trotsky whose ideas were being smuggled into Party journals at the time Stalin wrote). Or, Stalin's statement on Comintern questions in 1929 compared with, say, Engels' letter to Kautsky on the colonial struggles. They are "all of a piece," except for the different periods and local conditions and the new developments.

This latest edition follows the Eleventh Edition, some copies of which were obtained in Australia during the war years. The contents also include *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, On the Draft Constitution of the U.S.S.R., and Stalin's Political Reports to the 17th and 18th Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The print, paper and binding are excellent, a handsome addition to one's library shelves; the big improvement is another tangible proof of the rapid restoration of Socialist economy since V-P Day.

(Problems of Leninism, by J. Stalin, 642 pp., New Foreign Languages Publishing House Edition, Moscow, 1945, price 10/6, Pioneer Bookshops.)

Light travels at the enormous speed of nearly 190,000 miles per second. If you had a system of mirrors going round the world, a flash of light would take under a seventh of a second to go round them and return to its starting point. The time taken for light to cross London can be neglected for all practical purposes.

This does not mean that we see a thing as soon as it happens. When the light strikes the back of our eye it breaks down a purple substance called rhodopsin. This starts messages along a number of nerve fibres, and these are switched over to other fibres, finally reaching the area at the back of the brain concerned in vision. This takes about a twentieth of a second.

Sound travels at the moderate speed of 750 miles per hour, or roughly a mile in five seconds. So with a stop-watch one could quite easily estimate the distance of a doodlebug burst within 400 yards.

The doodlebug travels at about half the speed of sound. So its sound precedes it and gives a warning. A howitzer or mortar shell also travels slower than sound. On the other hand, a field-gun shell or bullet from a rifle or machine-gun, let alone an anti-aircraft shell, travels quicker than sound, and gives no warning. A rocket may travel either slower than sound, or faster. V2 goes a good deal faster, and therefore gives no warning. A hooter on a car travelling as fast as sound, or faster, would be useless.

If the sound track of a cinema film were exactly synchronised with the pictures, the sound would always arrive late. Some time is taken in generating it, and some in its travel through the air. So the sound track is put forward, and the sound of a man's voice starts out a fraction of a second before his lips are seen to move. Sound and sight are thus synchronised for people sitting near the back of an ordinary hall. But if you sit in the six-penny seats in front, the voice arrives before the lips move, and if you sit at the far end of a large hall the voice arrives late, unless it is relayed by a loud-speaker at the back.

Sound consists of series of pressure waves moving through the air. The air consists of rapidly moving molecules. They are travelling at many different speeds. Some are moving in the same direction as the sound; others in the opposite direction, sideways, or obliquely. So the speed of sound is a good deal less than the average speed of the molecules; in fact, about 74% of it.

In a gas the molecules are far apart, but in a liquid there is not much space between them. So the sound travels much quicker. Roughly speaking, the time taken is equal to the length of the gaps between the molecules, divided by their average forward speed. In fact, sound travels four and a quarter times as fast in water as in air. This has an important bearing on the hunting of submarines by the "Asdic" method, which depends on sound.

Sound is not much good for locating an aeroplane. The sound from a plane three miles away takes 15 seconds to reach our ears. During this time a plane moving at 300 m.p.h. has gone a mile and a quarter. But a submarine under water moves at about 10 or 15 m.p.h., and sound travels faster in water. So sound location is about 100 times as

efficient against submarines as against aeroplanes. It is in fact very useful, even though a corvette or frigate chasing a submarine aims a small distance behind it.

Except in dealing with distant objects producing a great noise, such as aeroplanes, the lag in transmission of light or sound makes very little difference to our actions. The lag between the action of a sense organ and muscular action is much more serious. (One cannot determine the lag between sensation and action, because there is no way of measuring, within a split second, when a sensation begins.)

Simple reactions to simple stimuli do not take very long. If a man is told to press the button when he sees the light, the reaction time is about a tenth to a fifth of a second. If he is told to press the button when he sees a red light and the pedal when he sees a green one, about two-fifths of a second are needed, and a good deal longer for more complicated reactions, though these times can be reduced by training.

Societies react very slowly to new situations, and religious bodies are even slower than political ones. In particular, States react very slowly to changes in productive forces. In England we still have large vestiges of feudalism, such as the House of Lords and hereditary ownership of land.

Feudalism worked well enough when every manor produced its own food and clothes. It was already out of date when traders could use pack-horses or ox-carts, but it survives into the age of aeroplanes and railways.

Over most of the world capitalism survives. This again was quite efficient in the early stages of the development of trade and manufacture, but was already out of date a century ago. Today it will only work at all if its "normal" working is interfered with by an elaborate system of controls.

Socialists are aware that capitalism is out of date, and most Socialists desire to sweep away many other out-of-date institutions. But they do not always realise the full possibilities of technical progress. For example, prefabricated houses far larger and more durable than the Portal house have been made in small numbers, and should form a part of our housing programme. Our methods of heating houses could be overhauled, with a great saving of coal and gain in cleanliness. Our cleaning methods, both in the house and the scullery, are still in the feudal stage.

A Socialist should make himself aware of the improvements which technical progress has made possible, not only in society as a whole, but in the details of life. If he does not he is in the position of an anti-aircraft gunner who, instead of aiming ahead of a bomber, aims in the direction from which its sound comes.

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