



SOCIALIST APPEAL

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NATIONALISED RAILWAYS—WHAT NEXT?

QUESTIONNAIRE REVEALS WHAT RAILWORKERS ARE THINKING

By J. HASTON

THE "Railway Review," weekly publication associated with the National Union of Railwaymen, has carried out an investigation into how the railway workers feel about nationalisation and its effects on their conditions of work.

A six point questionnaire was published in its columns and readers asked to reply giving their views on the questions asked.

The "Railway Review" has carried out a consistent criticism of the existing set-up in the industry and advocated a more positive approach to the question of workers' control. The editors so organised the investigation that about 200 additional replies were received from non-readers of the paper who were drawn from various grades of workers from all the principal areas covered by the railways. By this means they avoided weighting the evidence on the side of those who might have been influenced by the policy of the paper.

The results of this investigation are of considerable value and make a contribution to the present widespread discussions: "What next in the nationalised industries?"

The editor of the "Railway Review" and Mr. James Jary, a prominent contributor who summarised and analysed the replies to the questionnaire, are to be congratulated on their initiative and it is hoped that their effort will lead the way for similar efforts on the part of trade union journals.

What Questionnaire Revealed

Jary prefaces his analysis of the replies by explaining that of 296 readers who replied to the item in the "Review," 32 were under 35 years and 264 were over. Of the 189 non-readers to whom the questions were put, 48 were under 35 years and 141 were over.

His analysis of the areas from which replies were received showed that the least interest was aroused among London Transport Workers, and that provincial workers who work under different conditions from their London brethren, were much more deeply interested. He also shows that few younger workers were sufficiently interested to reply. No less than two-thirds of those who replied were workers with from 21 to 40 years service with the railways.

For the purpose of simplification, Jary denotes readers of the

"Railway Review" in the table of analysis as "A" and non-readers as "B."

Solid Support for Nationalisation

To the first question: "Did you support the nationalisation of the railways?" the replies were overwhelmingly "yes." The full figures were as follows:

| | "A" % | "B" % | Total % |
|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| Yes | 91.4 | 84.6 | 88.7 |
| No | 4.0 | 9.0 | 5.9 |
| Doubtful | 2.3 | 3.2 | 2.7 |
| No reply | 2.3 | 3.2 | 2.7 |

These figures are ample proof that in taking over the railways the Labour Government had the backing of the workers employed in the industry and therefore had a magnificent foundation of good-will as well as a reservoir of enthusiasm to make the act a success.

Encouraged or Frustrated?

The second question was: "After a year of national ownership, did you find your job:

- (a) Encouraging: More, Less, About the same?
- (b) Frustrating: More, Less, About the same?

According to Mr. Jary many of those who replied misunderstood the classification into (a) (continued on page 4)

TORY CIRCUS



Failed to Swing the Vote (See Editorial, page 3)

MARKOS PURGED?

GENERAL MARKOS, the leader of the Greek Stalinists, has been replaced. His fate and whereabouts are unknown but there are rumours that he is under arrest in a Moscow prison.

The reason is no doubt the quasi-independent stand he has attempted to take in the Greek struggle.

Stalin has attempted to insure himself against Mao in China by placing Li Li San (formerly discredited, broken, and an old rival of Mao for leadership of the Chinese C.P.) back into favour and control in Manchuria, the richest part of China. He has also established important bases in Sinkiang, another Chinese province.

"Those Who Have Fought"

The reasons for these developments were discussed by Alex Bebler, Yugoslavia's

Deputy Foreign Minister, with the correspondent of "Time," American Magazine, reported in its issue of February 14.

"Last autumn Yugoslavia's noisy Deputy Foreign Minister, Alex Bebler, said to "Time" correspondent Robert Low: 'There's a difference between those of us who have fought for power and those who have had it handed to them on a platter by the Red Army. If you have fought you have different ideas and feelings about your rights. I think the Soviet will have to face this same problem with Mao Tse Tung in China, and perhaps with Markos in Greece.'



PROFITS RISE

HOW have profits fared since the Government issued its White Paper—"Statement on Personal Incomes, Costs and Prices"—early in 1948?

The answer is, according to company reports published since, very well indeed.

While 93 per cent. of capitalist enterprises have, according to figures given by Sir Stafford Cripps, "pegged" divi-

dends—i.e., distributed profits—on the level of 1947, this by no means presents a true picture of the upward rush of profits.

In the third quarter of 1948, that is, since the declaration in the White Paper, that "there is no justification at the present time for any rise in incomes from profits, rents and other like sources," 326 companies reported total profits had risen from £117.2 millions to £155.2 millions, an increase of 32 per cent. Net profits increased by 27 per cent.

The "Economist," analysing the profits of the 326 firms by industrial groups shows that the main increases took place in the consumer industries—a reflection of how high prices have directly benefitted capitalist enterprise.

Some Figures

Clothing and footwear undertakings total profits rose from £1,154,000 in 1948 as against £820,000 in the same comparative quarter of 1947. Food and confectionery concerns—from £34,386,000 to £45,829,000, over the same period. Breweries—£15,470,000 to £19,704,000; Tobacco groups—from £139,000 to £355,000. Shops and stores included in the analysis increased their total profits from £1,749,000 to £2,255,000.

Increased productivity of the workers was reflected in favourable profit reports of the capital industries. Taking the same comparative quarters of 1947-48, engineering undertakings reported total profits had risen from £4,293,000 to £6,533,000. Iron and steel, an industry in which record outputs by the workers have been achieved in the past year, report total profits of £17,778,000 as against £13,345,000 for the same quarter of 1947. Building and shipbuilding companies—total profits rose from £3,290,000 to £4,885,000 and £97,000 to £197,000 respectively.

F.B.I. Attitude

The Federation of British Industries and kindred organisations of capitalist commercial

(continued on page 4)

THE FATE OF A FELLOW TRAVELLER "NOTORIOUS SPY"

The news that Anna Louise Strong was to be deported from the Soviet Union as an "imperialist spy" must have shocked the goodly company of apologists for Stalinism, of which she has been an ardent member for many years.

This writer, now denounced and spurned by the Stalinists, was foremost in adulation of Stalin and in the ranks of those who slandered Trotskyism in the past. In her book "I Change Worlds," we find these gems of flattery among others.

"Here was a man to whom you could say anything; he knew almost before you spoke... Suddenly the will that was dead within me was alive, flaming and free... One must not make a God of Stalin; he was too valuable for that." (pp. 337 and 348). The world is now informed

that the author who supported the Moscow Trials, in which fantastic accusations were made against old Bolshevik leaders that they plotted with the imperialists; who covered up the crimes of Stalinism in the past—Anna Louise Strong—is herself nothing less than a capitalist stooge.

The U.S. "Daily Worker," which had been serialising Miss Strong's last book, "Tomorrow's China," and recommending her for the Pulitzer Prize, lamely reported the arrest without comment on Moscow's claim that she is a "notorious spy." "Masses and Mainstream," a Stalinist magazine was still on the news-stands advertising on the back cover "Tomorrow's China" for its "brilliant searchlight" on the Chinese C.P.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN AMERICA

A NATIONWIDE survey conducted by the "New York Times" (Jan. 23) shows a swift rise in unemployment throughout America. Applications for unemployment insurance have risen since mid-October in key areas from 10 to 100 per cent.

In New York State, unemployment insurance and veteran's readjustment rolls dropped 6,600 in the week ended January 7, leaving a total of 461,280, a rise of 67 per cent. since October 8. This slight dip in unemployment, however, was countered by the removal of 10,000 workers from the rolls even though they had found no jobs. The Times explained that the 10,000 had exhausted their benefits.

In the past three months, according to union officials interviewed by the Times, about 750,000 workers have lost their jobs. They estimate that unemployed ranks may swell to 3,500,000 by spring.

The Times reported that explanations for the layoffs among employers ranged from "uncertainty" over Truman's fiscal policies and "lack of orders" to "buyer resistance to high prices."

Counting on New War

Although the Times gave its survey front-page prominence, it did not take what it calls an "alarmist view" over the rise in unemployment. This authoritative voice of Wall Street

counts on the preparations for World War III to avoid a major depression.

"The beneficial effects of the rearmament programme on unemployment... are just beginning to be felt... and officials are confident that defence orders and the European Recovery Programme will create tens of thousands of new jobs by spring."

How tens of thousands of new jobs can take care of the expected three to four million unemployed, the Times did not explain.

In view of these warning signals the American Trotskyist Party—the S.W.P.—has demanded that the trade unions should at once begin considering ways and means of combating unemployment. They suggest organisation committees in every local to see that unemployed members get maximum aid. The question of fighting for a sliding scale of hours to spread the work with no loss in weekly pay should be taken up. They demand that the labour movement should begin to campaign for the 30-hour week with no reduction in take-home pay.

GERMAN OCCUPATION COSTS

According to a report of the Finance Secretary of North Rhine - Westphalia, under the heading of "occupation costs," his Ministry had to pay for

- 1,000 toy railroads
- 20,000 ladies' underwear
- 37,000 ladies' clothes
- 15,000 ladies' blouses
- 73,770 ladies' pullovers
- 12,000 coats for children
- 20,240 boys' pullovers
- 10,000 pairs of stockings
- 110,500 napkins

KARL MARX

AND THE

PARIS COMMUNE

By V. CHARLES

IN March of this year, the international working class movement commemorates two outstanding events—the death of Karl Marx on March 14, 1883, and the Paris Commune of 1871.

The death of Marx robbed the revolutionary movement of its greatest figure, its guide and inspirer. As his friend and collaborator, Frederick Engels wrote at the time:

“Humanity has grown shorter by a head, the most gifted head it has had at its disposal.”

Marx left behind him the richest legacy of theory based on a lifetime of experience in the day to day life of the international Socialist movement.

He rallied to the support of the Paris Commune, that first example of the workers in power. After the fall of the Commune he subjected the experience of the Paris working class to an exhaustive analysis in his “Civil War in France” so that future generations of workers could learn the lessons of that heroic episode and profit from the achievements as well as the mistakes of the Communards.

Equality and Democracy

It was to the Paris Commune of 1871 that Lenin and the Bolsheviks looked for guidance when the Russian workers seized State power in November 1917. Marx laid emphasis on those measures of the Commune which sought to do away with money privileges in the case of officials and subjected them to the control of the working class.

Of particular significance was the rule that the remuneration of all servants of the State should not exceed working men's wages. “Here,” wrote Lenin, “is shown more clearly than anywhere else, the break from a bourgeois democracy to a proletarian democracy of the oppressors, to the democracy of the oppressed classes...”

This principle, in operation during the early years of the Russian revolution, has now been violated by the present rulers of Russia who give lip service to Marx and his teachings. They jeer at the principle of proletarian egalitarianism as a “petty bourgeois deviation,” in order to justify the enormous economic gap dividing the bureaucrats from the mass of the workers.

Marx saw workers' democracy as indispensable to the transition to Socialism. Without this, the state which gains a certain independence of society, threatens to strangle it under the weight of bureaucracy. In Russia today, far from the existence of a proletarian democracy which would give greater freedom to the masses than in a capitalist State, the bureaucracy rules over the masses by methods of terror and secret police and concentration camps.

In the history of the international working class, the epic of the Commune of 1871 will forever remain an inspiration and an example. On the firm foundations of the teachings of Marx the world will build the Socialist society of tomorrow. The evils of capitalism and of Stalinism will be wiped out and the World Commune will open up an epoch of freedom and plenty for all mankind.

BRIGADE TO INDONESIA

ACCORDING to a dispatch from the “Times of Ceylon,” the Lanka Sama Samaj Party, the section of dissident Trotskyists, have “decided to recruit volunteers for the purpose of raising a Sama Samaja Brigade to participate in active combat against the Dutch. Mr. M. S. Abu Bakr, the Colombo Municipal Councillor, who is an ex-serviceman, has been commissioned to be in charge of the recruiting campaign.”

“The Party has also decided to request those active in the Trade Union field to summon a conference of Trade Union organisations in the Indian Ocean region (to be held in Colombo) for the purpose of chalking out a line of action for all workers, particularly sailors, dockers and airfield personnel.”

This is a reflection of the support that has been manifested in aid of the struggle of the Indonesian toilers. Trade Unionists in India, Ceylon and Burma have been zealous in their resolve not to touch a single arms

ship bound for Indonesia.

In Indonesia itself the resistance is growing every day, led by such tested fighters as Tan Malaka. The Republican forces have cleared several areas of the Dutch who are now more or less penned into the cities like Jogjakarta, Madiun, Bataira and Surabaya.

The action of the Dutch is dictated by their desire to hold on to the riches of the Indies as well as to act as a policeman in the interests of American and British investors.

MINERS CLAIM REJECTED

WOULD COST £9,000,000 A YEAR

CUT COMPENSATION!

By G. NOSEDA

THE miners' claim for an increase in their cost-of-living allowance has been rejected by the National Coal Board. Under the War Wage Addition Agreement of 1940 the miners receive a cost-of-living allowance of 2s. 8d. Their present claim is that this sum should be at least one shilling higher in view of the increase in cost of living since that date.

To meet this claim, the Coal Board argues, would cost the industry at least £9,000,000 extra a year. The Coal Board, however, has recently announced that the former coal-owners are to receive a global compensation of £164,000,000 for the now nationalised coal assets. The award to the South Wales coalfield ex-owners of £14,231,000, is regarded, says the “Daily Telegraph” City Editor, as “...especially satisfactory, exceeding recent City estimates by about £3,000,000...”

As is well-known, the former coal bosses have received, in the first year of nationalisation, an interim compensation income of £12,400,000. A sum which was roughly equal to their profits for the years 1944 and 1945, and over double their 1935 profit of £5,200,000. The accrual, to the ex-owners, of this interim payment of almost £12½ million, accounted for the great part of the £23 million deficit recorded by the Coal Board in the first year of the nationalised industry. This fact did not, however, deter the capitalist interests from attacking the “incompetence” of nationalisation, and pointing to the £23 million deficit as “proof” of its failure.

A Comparison

The former owners, who bled the industry and neglected its development as “unprofitable,” left the industry with a great shortage of manpower. The labour force had sunk at the time of nationalisation to 692,000—the lowest level in this century. To-day, according to the Statistical Digest of the Ministry of Fuel and Power (Nov., 1948), there are 724,400 workers in the industry, and the figures showing recruitment and wastage by age groups indicates that in the two and a half years covered, average age group between 16 and 41 increased in number, and every age group over 41 declined.

However, during 1947, there were still 12,000 underground workers over 65, and another 8,000 at the surface.

The Tories have attacked absenteeism in the mines. However, since 1946 “voluntary” absenteeism has declined. It averaged 8.4 per cent. in 1946, 4.4 per cent. in 1947 and 5.37 per cent. in the latter half of 1948.

Output per manshift has increased since nationalisation. The figures in tons are: 1.00 in

1945, 1.03 in 1946, 1.07 in 1947, and 1.10 for the first half of 1948.

Ancillary Assets

The necessity to attract labour to the mines has resulted in an improvement in the general conditions of the miners. However, not only do the former coal-owners continue to reap surplus value in the form of compensation and interest payments from the nationalised industry, from the sweat of the miners, but they also have a considerable stake in ancillary assets (outside of the coal assets taken over by the Coal Board) such as wagons, houses, coke ovens and brick works. These are “almost as important,” says the City Editor of the Daily Telegraph, “as the coal assets themselves. These ancillary assets, along with stocks and stores, have been estimated to amount to something like £200 million.” (3/2/49).

Needless to say, the colliery owners concerned look upon these ancillary assets as a further source of inflated compensation payments in due course.

Extend Nationalisation to Coal Distribution

The distributive side of the industry has been almost entirely left in the hands of private enterprise. The Coal Board has stated that, “coal has been mainly sold through the same channels as it was before nationalisation, with prices and margins controlled by Government Orders.”

The Coal Board, while itself a distributor through its acquisition of colliery companies which distributed their own coal, and which serves more than 411,000 retail customers, only covers a small part of the distributing side at present. In

consequence, the distribution subsidiaries operated by the private owners, such as Stephenson Clarke, are reaping a rich harvest of profits.

While “South Wales remains the financial blackspot of the nationalised industry,” says the Stock Exchange Gazette (6.8.48), “... that does not mean that coal distributors are not doing well.” Five large distributors alone (Wm. Cory, Stephenson Clarke, Charrington Hall & Co., and Rickett Cockerell) made a consolidated profit of almost £4,500,000.

The extension of nationalisation in the coal industry to the distributive side is an essential step if the industry as a whole is to be planned along efficient lines.

Cut Compensation—Welfare of Miners, Consumers, and Industry Must Come First

The compensation payments are a heavy burden upon the coal industry (as in the other nationalised industries). They constitute a parasitic drain upon its resources, at the expense of the miners, and constitute a primary charge upon the industry.

While, formerly, under private ownership the profits of the industry were subsidised by the Exchequer through the Coal Charges Account, to the extent of £27,500,000 between mid-1942 and 1946—an average of £6 million a year—under nationalisation there is no subsidy. But in practice it means that the miners now have to produce twice as much profit for the ex-owners as they did in the years 1944-45 to meet the interim interest charges alone.

The present course of the Government in the coal industry must be changed. The welfare and interests of the miners and of the industry must take priority before compensation payments are even considered.

INDIAN-AFRICAN LEADERS WALK OUT OF DURBAN ‘INQUIRY’

AT the Inquiry set up into the riots in Durban, Dr. G. S. Lowen, representing both the South African Indian Congress and the African National Congress, alleged that the riots were caused by European incitement. Other causes, he said, were slum conditions, speeches of Dr. Malan's Ministers, racial antagonism, hostility and hatred provoked by the present and previous Governments.

That there is truth in these allegations can be seen by the conduct of the so-called impartial Inquiry. When Dr. Lowen declared that his case would be proved in the cross-examination of witnesses, the Chairman of the Inquiry refused his application to cross-examine witnesses.

The Indian and African leaders took the only course open to them to express their protest at the farcical nature of

the Inquiry. They walked out and have since boycotted the proceedings.

According to “Blitz,” the Indian weekly, the Government of India has in its possession leaflets widely distributed by the “South African Protection League,” calling on the Zulus to wipe out the Indians and take possession of their homes.

A report of R. T. Chari, the representative of the Indian

Government in South Africa, declares that one of the typical slogans used in the rioting was: “The European does not want the Indian, nor do we. Let us throw him into the sea, and grab his home and wealth.”

Mr. Chari has also pointed out that the authorities were deliberately indifferent to the rioting in the early stages, and several Europeans participated in the destruction. Even in the later stages, no facilities were given to Indian and African leaders to pacify the Zulu rioters.

Clearly, the Malan Government fears a real inquiry into the riots which would expose their role in stirring up racial hatred and bitterness among the population of South Africa.

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HAMMERSMITH and THE FUTURE

THE victory of the Labour candidate at South Hammersmith was a severe blow to the Tories. The Tories began their campaign aggressively, filled with confidence in their ability to pull off a triumph.

Despite its record of reforms there is much criticism of the Government arising from the shortage of houses, the restrictions of rationing, and many other grievances on which the Tories hoped to capitalise.

The more backward sections of the workers have tended to turn back to the Tories. Their vote has increased as a general rule at by-elections, while Labour's vote has tended to decline, with some exceptions.

South Hammersmith was a traditional Tory seat, captured by Labour with a narrow majority of three and a half thousand in 1945. But even with the full exploitation of their largest single asset—Churchill, before whom Labour propagandists tend to weaken at the knees and wax apologetic—even Churchill's intervention failed to swing the vote.

The defeat pricked the bubble of new-born Tory confidence and spread gloom among its upper ranks. On this showing the Tories see themselves out of office for some time to come. While stable or relatively stable conditions remain and the living conditions of the masses slowly improves there is little hope of a Tory come-back. Their hopes are based upon an economic crisis which will undermine the support of the Labour Party, split its leadership and create the most favourable conditions for a Tory re-emergence.

But such conditions would rapidly shatter parliamentary political stability in this country. If the Government failed to adopt drastic measures to prevent it, the workers would see in such a crisis the need for more radical measures to expropriate the capitalist class. Tory ranks would undergo an evolution similar to Gaullism in France or the rise of a neo-fascism.

The Tories attempted to use Stalinism as a red bogey but their campaign was a miserable failure. The local Tory machine had the active backing of a number of London fascists, and relations between these latter and the young Tories was of the most fraternal character. This relationship is symptomatic of the future, and the working class organisations must watch its evolution carefully.

The Labour leaders retain support because of the reforms they have introduced. It is certain that even with Marshall Aid, the Tories would have increased the untaxed profits of the capitalists and cracked down harder on the wages and working conditions of the working class. Nevertheless, there are grave dangers in the present situation and labour workers must face up to them.

The mood of the politically active workers could be ascertained by the questions and discussions at the election meetings. It was that Labour had begun the job; they are doing all right; give them time and they will better the conditions of the workers and introduce socialism by peaceful and parliamentary means.

These Labour workers are due for a few shocks when the crisis really begins. There is a solid core of truth in the argument of the Tories that we live in a fool's paradise and that when Marshall dollars end and the world market begins to dry up, the difficulties of the Government will really commence. Britain is still a capitalist country. The nationalisations of the Labour Government, important as they are in undermining the power of particular groups of capitalists, nevertheless leaves the economy still fundamentally in the hands of the capitalist class, and subject to the laws of boom and crisis. Whatever Government is in power in Britain, when the world market collapses, it would be affected by the inevitable crisis, even if much greater sections of the economy had been taken over by the State.

In preparation for this period, to prevent its impact being thrown with full force on to the backs of the working classes, the remaining private sectors of all large and medium capitalist enterprises must be taken over before the world slump begins. The gigantic burden of compensation at present borne by the toilers, must be ended.

Until and unless this is done, a major crisis will bring about a new and more radical re-alignment on the part of the socialistic and trade unionist mass of the working class.

WHY DID STALIN HAND COMMUNISTS TO HITLER?

Evidence of Margerita Neumann

NEW evidence at the Kravchenko trial confirms Trotsky's criticisms of Stalin's policy in Germany which led to the victory of Hitler. It also confirms the existence of the concentration camps in Russia which are filled with political prisoners, many being Communists from all parts of Russia and the world.

Whatever might be alleged of the other witnesses by the Stalinists, it is not possible for them to discredit the testimony of Margerita Bubber-Neumann. She was the wife of Heinz Neumann, who together with Remmele and Thaelmann, led the German Communist Party in the years before Hitler.

Heinz Neumann was a member of the Political Bureau of the German C.P. and of the Presidium of the Comintern.

For years there has been a conspiracy of silence about his fate and that of thousands of the cream of the foreign worker Communists, including some who fought for the Spanish Republic, and have found their way into Stalin's concentration camps. The Kravchenko trial throws some light on the tragic fate of Heinz Neumann. In her evidence his wife, Margerita Neumann, said:

"...he had preached that the German Communists should use force to prevent the Nazis coming to power."

Stalin's Advice

But, at a time when Trotsky was demanding a united front with the Social Democratic workers to prevent the coming to power of Hitler, Stalin, in pursuit of the narrow interests of the preservation of the Russian bureaucracy, gave the following advice:

"In 1931 we were told to oppose the Nazis with spiritual (propaganda) means only. Neumann, who was opposed to this, was ordered to Moscow where he saw Stalin in December 1931. Stalin said to him: 'Don't you think, Comrade Neumann, that if the Nazis came to power in Germany they would be so engaged on the West to the exclusion of all else that then we could build Socialism in the U.S.S.R.'"

"Unreliable"

Neumann was dismissed from the German Political Bureau and summoned by the Comintern to Moscow. He was sent to edit a Communist paper in Spain. Then, in view of his "unreliability," he was again summoned to Moscow and sent to Switzerland. He and his wife arrived back in Moscow in 1935 in disgrace as "deviationists."

After a party in Moscow, he was called by the secret police

and asked if he had not said: "It is not Hitler who will decide our fate but the purge."

What now happened to Neumann and his wife happened to a large proportion of the foreign revolutionaries who sought asylum in Russia.

Confession Demanded

The N.K.V.D. (now M.V.D.) demanded that he make a declaration admitting "his errors" of 1931-32. He refused, was arrested in April 1937 and imprisoned in Moscow. In December 1939 like thousands of others who refused to confess, Neumann disappeared.

His wife was arrested after unsuccessfully trying to escape in June 1938.

In order to teach her the error of her ways, she was sentenced to five years in a labour "education" camp. She was charged with being a socially dangerous individual whose ideological deviations in 1931-35 amounted to counter-revolutionary activity dangerous to the Soviet state. The fact that she was neither a citizen, nor even a resident in Russia in those years was only a trifle.

This settlement, she claimed, was twice as big as Denmark, and contained half a million imprisoned people. They had to do the hardest field work from dawn to sunset. "Stalin can say that rendering the Khazakstan steppes fertile was a great victory for Socialism, but it was work carried out by slaves."

Communists Handed Over To S.S.

In 1940 without explanation, Margerita Neumann and 20

CYPRUS ARRESTS

OUR comrades are actively participating in the Cyprus peoples' struggle for emancipation from the domination of British Imperialism.

Among 14 militants arrested, and condemned to five months' imprisonment for the "illegal" demonstration which took place on December 2, 1948, in the town of Varossi, was the militant Trotskyist Photis Tophalis, a building worker.

other German and Austrian women prisoners were summoned back to Moscow. They were given good and plentiful food, new clothes, and even taken to the hairdresser. Without explanation, each day some of the women disappeared, and new ones arrived. After about a fortnight, she and two others were taken to a railway station, put into a prison carriage and informed that their sentence had been commuted to immediate expulsion from Soviet territory.

Two other women, 28 Germans and Austrians and one Hungarian Jew, were locked up in a prison wagon. They were taken to Brest Litovsk, under strong N.K.V.D. guard, then to River Bug. On the other side was the German S.S. *The Hungarian Jew and the young German workman, who had killed a Nazi, were forcibly dragged over the bridge, where the S.S. immediately set about the Jew who had been the editor of a Communist paper in the Ruhr. For them it was certain death. They were handed over to the Gestapo and were imprisoned in Lublin.*

All this was in pursuance of the treaty of friendship between Stalin and Hitler. To make certain of the fate of the prisoners the Russians handed over to the S.S. all the papers and records of the prisoners.

These unfortunate Communist militants, far from being counter-revolutionaries, were of course sent straight from Stalin's concentration camps to Hitler's. Margerita Neumann was imprisoned in the notorious Ravensbruck concentration camp.

The last that was heard of Heinz Neumann, according to the witness, was from one of the Austrian Communists who had been handed over to Hitler. Despite all efforts to break him, Neumann had declared that he would never sign the declaration that the secret police demanded of him. His failure to confess is the evident reason for the Stalinists never bringing him to trial.

The Stalinist bureaucracy has and will sacrifice countless numbers of Russian and foreign workers in order to preserve their status and power. The German workers were sacrificed to Hitler because Stalin did not want his plans for Russia interrupted. So it was with the Spanish, the French working class, so it will be in the future. Had the Stalinists been genuine internationalists, had they assisted the German workers to take the road of struggle against fascism the whole of world history would have taken a different course.

MINDSZENTY

By A. PRIES

THE bureaucratic police mind, routinized and unimaginative, sticks to a pattern. Thus, the Stalinist trial of Cardinal Mindszenty could not fail to evoke in all minds the past staged trials with their inevitable "confessions" that have become a trademark of the Kremlin and its agents.

There is no institution more authoritarian and reactionary than the Roman Catholic hierarchy. But the methods of Stalinism are so repugnant as to give weapons to reaction. In the Mindszenty case, the Stalinists have given the Catholic priest-caste an opportunity to arouse, in the name of "democracy," a hysteria against anyone the Church labels "Communist."

We must be careful, however, not to let our complete rejection of Stalinist methods in this case as in everything else lead us into support of the campaign of the Catholic hierarchy which represents itself as a defence of "democracy" and "free institutions." Their indignation is not directed at Stalinist methods. It was not Stalinism but Catholicism that invented the system of "heresy" and

"inquisition."

We cannot say whether Mindszenty is guilty of the specific acts to which he confessed. But what could he confess that could be any worse than the facts long known about him and the role of the Vatican in Hungary? It is a matter of historical record that the Hungarian hierarchy has been the chief supporter of monarchism. It was Mindszenty himself who negotiated the Vatican's concordat with Regent Horthy, the bloody dictator of Hungary, in return for state support of the Catholic Church. Mindszenty from the beginning has been the bitterest opponent of the redistribution of Hungarian land, since the Vatican was the largest land-owner in Hungary, exploiting tens of thousands of virtual serfs on its 1,500,000 acres.

Those who are now so loud in their "moral indignation" about the imprisonment of Mindszenty, this Prince of the Church, never uttered a peep about the outrages of Horthy, supported by Mindszenty and the Vatican, who murdered thousands of workers and peasants opposed to his regime. They have never said, nor do they say today, one word in "moral indignation" against the continued daily executions of anti-fascist workers and peasants in the "Catholic Kingdom" of Dictator Franco to whom Pope Pius XII a few weeks ago again sent his "blessings." Yes, and where were their outcries, their demands for U.S. intervention, when Stalin was carrying through his Moscow Frame-up Trials? It makes a difference to these "democrats" and "moralists" whether Stalin persecutes Bolsheviks or a Prince of the Roman Catholic Church. Supporters of the crimes of Horthy, Franco and Mussolini are utterly disqualified to pass judgment on the crimes of Stalinism.

LIVING STANDARDS GO DOWN IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

THE anniversary of the Czech coup shows a steady tendency to develop on lines made familiar by the regime in Moscow. While the repressive machinery has become tighter and tighter, the rights of the workers have been curtailed. Concentration camps and forced labour loom in the background for the refractory.

At the same time with the introduction of the Czech Five-Year Plan similar developments in economy are taking place as were introduced in Russia during the course of the first Five-Year Plan and subsequently.

In an article in the "Tribune" of February 25, Stephen

Pollak gives some figures of the increase in the cost of living and the fall in the real wages of the Czech workers. With average earnings of £3 10s. for unskilled workers and £4 10s. to £5 for skilled workers, prices have gone up considerably. Some are given below.

PRICES RISE

| | Old Price | New Price |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | £ s. d. | £ s. d. |
| Man's winter overcoat ... | 7 2 0 | 12 2 0 |
| Cloth for man's suit, per metre | 1 12 0 | 2 8 0 |
| Poplin Shirt ... | 2 10 0 | 3 8 0 |
| Linen Bedsheet ... | 1 19 0 | 2 15 0 |
| Cotton Cloth, per metre ... | 3 5 | 4 4 |
| Woollen Blanket ... | 3 13 0 | 5 1 0 |
| Men's shoes ... | 2 16 0 | 3 15 0 |
| Ladies' shoes ... | 1 6 0 | 2 1 0 |

In addition to this, which includes a 15% to 20% increase in the price of rationed textile goods and of footwear, there has been the introduction of a "free market" for about a

third of the goods produced, at fabulously increased prices well beyond the reach of the ordinary workers. Some prices in the "free market" are:

"FREE" MARKET PRICES

| | £ s. d. |
|---|---------|
| Man's Winter Overcoat ... | 38 10 0 |
| Cloth for man's suit, per metre... | 20 10 0 |
| Poplin Shirt ... | 13 5 0 |
| Pair of Socks ... | 11 0 0 |
| Linen Bedsheet ... | 16 10 0 |
| Cotton Cloth, per metre ... | 1 10 0 |
| Woollen Blanket ... | 25 0 0 |
| Men's Shoes ... | 17 10 0 |
| Ladies' Shoes ... | 8 13 0 |
| Handkerchief ... | 1 0 0 |
| Cake of Toilet Soap ... | 1 10 0 |
| Ready-made Man's Suit ... | 27 10 0 |
| Ready-made Man's Suit, export quality | 72 0 0 |
| Lady's Winter Overcoat ... | 25 0 0 |
| Lady's Winter Overcoat, fur-trimmed ... | 35 0 0 |

The so-called "free market" approximates to the black market in Western Europe, except that it is officially run by the State in Czechoslovakia, and of course, Russia. It is clear that only the most privileged layers of the population would be able to deal in this market. Certain layers of the population such as shopkeepers, artisans, doctors, lawyers, engineers, members of the clergy, domestic servants, etc., are not allowed to buy rationed goods and textiles at the ordinary prices. Only those workers working a minimum of 40 hours per week are entitled to do so.

Dangerous "Egalitarianism"

In order to create a privileged layer among the workers who will be a reliable social support for the developing bureaucracy, a campaign for Czech Stakhanovites has been launched with prospects of intensified speed-up of piece-work while the pace-makers (that is what Stakhanovites are in the last resort) will be paid far beyond their actual production and will thus be able to purchase goods in the "free market."

Feeling the hostility of the workers, Stephen Pollak writes: "a nation-wide campaign has been launched against what is called 'dangerous egalitarianism.' The rapidly progressing differentiation in wages and salaries, reminiscent of the same process in Soviet Russia in the 'thirties, tends to make the free market, with its prices beyond the reach of the ordinary worker, an alluring target for prospective Czech 'Stakhanovites.'"

The fact that prices of rationed goods have gone up with-

out a corresponding increase of wages has not been publicised in the Czech press. On the contrary, false comparisons, which have been faithfully repeated in the Stalinist press abroad, are made with the conditions of the workers in the West.

Subsidies Withdrawn

And while the British Communist Party has been campaigning for the retention and extension of subsidies in Britain in order to ensure a fairer distribution of goods in all sections of the population, in Czechoslovakia the increase in prices—described cynically by Mr. Zapotocky as "small price corrections"—was caused, as he expressed it "by the withdrawal of subsidies." This meant that the poorest section of the population has suffered most.

Stalinist Myth

Czechoslovakia as an industrially advanced country, different in this regard (in proportion of course) to the other countries of Eastern Europe and Russia, destroys the myth of the Stalinist apologists in the Labour movement, who try and justify the crimes of Stalinism by references to the backwardness of the economy.

As industry advances in all the Stalinised countries so the bureaucracy endeavours to raise its standards above the workers and establish an iron totalitarianism. The regimes in Eastern Europe do not bear the remotest resemblance to the transitional state as envisaged by Marx and Lenin. The uneasiness of the Czech workers

at the travesty of Socialism which is being introduced, is an indication that the bureaucracy will be faced with strong opposition to the reactionary course they are pursuing. The workers will begin to see the necessity for genuine workers democracy and control as the only road towards genuine Socialist development.

PROFITS RISE

(continued from page 1)

and industrial interests have declared to Sir Stafford Cripps, that they are prepared to observe, "in general" for a further year, the "limitation" on profits distributed as dividends. This attitude is however, conditional, they say, on the Government implementing measures in the coming Budget that would mean, in practice, drastic cuts in the social services and food subsidies, while taxation on corporation profits of big business would be reduced extensively. Such a policy would mean added burdens upon the working class and increase the profits of the capitalist enterprises.

This situation must be reversed. It can be reversed if the Government implemented a policy which would make real and drastic inroads into profits by a capital tax and heavy taxation upon the profits of capitalist industry as a whole. A Budget framed along such lines would place the financial and economic burdens upon those able to bear it most—the capitalist profiteers and coupon-clippers.

RAILWAY QUESTIONNAIRE

(continued from page 1)

and (b), but nevertheless they clearly grasped the intention. He summarises their replies as follows:

| | "A" | "B" | Total |
|------------------|------|------|-------|
| | % | % | % |
| More encouraging | 5.7 | 15.9 | 9.7 |
| About the same | 42.3 | 50.8 | 45.5 |
| More frustrating | 52.0 | 33.3 | 44.8 |
| | 100 | 100 | 100 |

It is crystal clear from these figures that only a small percentage of railwaymen feel that their conditions of work have improved through nationalisation.

A considerable body of workers who support the policy of nationalisation feel more frustrated than before, while a good proportion feel that the situation has not changed.

James Jary comments that these figures are "evidence that mere change of ownership has not created a change in the human relations within the industry. As a body, railwaymen are a patient lot, seldom hasty in their decisions, but the picture here revealed provides food for thought for those who bear the burden of organisation and administration."

No Share in Running Industry

To the third question: "Do you feel you have a share in running the railways?" the replies were even more significant. Here too, only a small percentage of the workers answered that they did.

| | "A" | "B" | Total |
|----------|------|------|-------|
| | % | % | % |
| Yes | 9.2 | 22.7 | 14.4 |
| No | 82.0 | 64.5 | 75.3 |
| Doubtful | 8.8 | 12.8 | 10.3 |
| | 100 | 100 | 100 |

The railway unions claim to have the best negotiating machinery of any industry. They claim that this machinery gives far more direct representation to the views of their members than similar Whitley Council machinery elsewhere. Nevertheless, three-quarters of the railway workers asked, gave a decisive "no" to the question

whether they have a share in running the industry.

Majority Dissatisfied

Asked in the fourth question: "Are you satisfied with the way your L.D.C. handles questions about working methods?" the workers replied:

| | "A" | "B" | Total |
|----------|------|------|-------|
| | % | % | % |
| Yes | 33.1 | 47.6 | 38.8 |
| No | 58.1 | 45.5 | 53.2 |
| No reply | 8.8 | 6.9 | 8.0 |
| | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Jary draws the conclusions that the answers to the three last questions show the "unaltered position regarding the human factor in the industry; the atmosphere of 'lack of interest' in the job, and the inability of the existing machinery to shake the workers and the management from their inertia." But he goes on to say the workers are not content to allow things to drift. This is definitely established by the replies to question 5:

Want to be Consumed

"Do you think you ought to be consulted before changed methods are introduced of working?"

| | "A" | "B" | Total |
|----------|------|------|-------|
| | % | % | % |
| Yes | 97.7 | 95.8 | 96.9 |
| No | 1.7 | 3.2 | 2.3 |
| No reply | .6 | 1.0 | .8 |
| | 100 | 100 | 100 |

The fact that the desire of the workers to be consulted, before the changing of working methods, was even more decisive than their support for nationalisation, is abundant proof that "given proper facilities the man on the job is anxious and willing to pool his knowledge and experience."

For All-grade Committees

To the final question: "How do you think an all-grade station or depot committee would compare with the present L.D.C.'s?" the replies were:

| | "A" | "B" | Total |
|----------------|------|------|-------|
| Better | 67.6 | 58.2 | 63.9 |
| Worse | 9.5 | 14.3 | 11.3 |
| About the same | 19.9 | 24.4 | 21.7 |
| No reply | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.1 |
| | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Workers Disappointment

Summing up, Jary concludes: "The fundamental conclusion from this small survey is that railwaymen at the moment are in poor heart. They feel very disappointed that they have not been called on to exercise more influence in the shaping of a national transport service. They are not so much concerned about such material things as wages and hours as they might have been. But they do want to feel that they are a living part of this great enterprise. They know that they are intelligent and educated. They have a wealth of practical experience without which the theoreticians are inarticulate. All they ask is that they be given just a small opportunity consciously to participate in the management and direction of the service. There is everything to gain in having complete confidence between every individual engaged in the industry. It can be achieved. The rank and file are waiting."

Campaign Can Degenerate

On the background of the mood and aspirations of the railwaymen as revealed by the aforementioned material, the speeches of the General Secretary of the N.U.R., J. Figgins, at the last Labour Party Conference and at the T.U.C. can be readily understood. Figgins stated that the present set-up was alien to the needs of the industry and the workers in it. He demanded that the Unions be given the right to fully participate from top to bottom in the management and running of the industry. At the present moment only one of the members of the leading Board can be said to be drawn from the workers' side of the industry, although even his connection with the Union is now broken.

The danger of the present campaign is that unless it is

clearly formulated in the form of a programme, to be fought for on the part of the workers, it can readily degenerate into a movement to place one or other ambitious or retiring union leader into a secure position on a nationalised board.

T.U.s Must Prepare Programme

In pressing their demands for increased representation, the railway unions are at a disadvantage. Instead of presenting either a complete or even a partial plan for the development and integration of the industry, they have limited themselves largely to preserving the day to day interests of their members, just as they did when the industry was privately owned. The necessity to preserve and extend the day to day rights of their members goes without saying. But if their demands for full participation are to have full effect, it is essential that nationally and in various divisions, they must develop a programme, not only for the technical development of the industry, but for its social reconstruction. For this purpose, special conferences should be called throughout the country where the rank and file of railway workers of all grades and in the various unions—all the workers, including technicians associated with the industry—would get down to examining all the problems of reorganisation. They would discuss what is necessary and what is possible and draw up a plan around which they would campaign.

With a clear programme in their hands, explaining just how the railways should be developed and how they should be run—what the relations the Unions should have at all stages in the function of management while guaranteeing that they do not lose their connection with and loyalty to, the rank and file—the railway workers and their Unions would play their full part in running the industry.

Outmoded Bodies

The Sectional Councils, Local Departmental Committees and

other consultative bodies which were set up during the Whitley Council period, are completely outmoded. These bodies must be reconstructed from top to bottom. The editors of the "Railway Review" have consistently campaigned for such a reconstruction. They have exposed the fragmentary and limited character of the existing Whitley Council machinery, which involves only a few selected union officials in its functioning. They have demanded that it be replaced by industrial organisation based upon each large unit such as the King's Cross railway goods and passenger terminal, through the meetings of all the workers in the unit and its dependent sub-units. Each of the huge terminal units in the London area, sending delegates to a council covering the areas as a whole, and so on for the rest of the country.

Railworkers Must Control

Representative industrial organs of this type, with the legal right of access to all plans, documents and other data affecting operating and working conditions, and as the workers almost unanimously demand, with the legal right to be consulted before any changes in working conditions—this would ensure that the workers not only have the right to participate in controlling the industry, but also that organs exist to exercise such control.

All talk of a "school of management" and "promotion to positions of management from within the industry" which does not start from this premise, is dodging the issue. The measures which we have outlined above can create confidence among the most advanced workers that will give the best results. They would reveal a hitherto deep and untapped well of knowledge and resourcefulness, without which the forward drive to Socialism is not possible.

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