

YOUNG GUARD

April 1964

No. 25

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FOR
SOCIALISM
& FREEDOM

MSS 75/4/19/19

ACT TO END HOUSING SCANDAL

says Chris Davison Hackney YS

'Build with the Conservatives', scream the posters. 'A property owning democracy', says the propaganda! But thousands upon thousands of workers who live in the sort of properties on which they stick these posters know only too well that as far as they are concerned these are utterly empty claims.

The number of homeless goes up and up; there are over 1,000 families at present in the care of the LCC. Overcrowding remains as bad as ever; 80,000 families in London live more than 1½ people to a room; 30% share a lavatory and 37% have no hot water tap. Rents go up and up, working people are evicted into the streets and 'Rachmanism' goes on.

Yet for some there is no housing problem. For rents of £20 a week and above there are plenty of flats available and many of these 'luxury' dwellings lie empty for months. For the rest of us we must make do with slogans and phoney statistics. 1,000 houses a day they claim—what lies, last year they built 818 a day and the year before 836! Even these miserable figures disguise the real extent of the Tories failure to build homes for working people. They have systematically promoted private speculative building for the stockbroker market at the expense of local council building. Between 1953 and 1961 the number of houses being built by local councils was more than halved, the number built by private speculators went up nearly three times.

Despite soaring rents since the Tory Rent Act, private developers are

not interested in providing accommodation for letting. Mr. Norman Macrae of the *Economist* put it bluntly in a recent pamphlet for the 'Property Council', 'The provision of new private housing space for renting is forced by controls (sic) to be not merely a declining industry, but almost a vanished one'.

The Rent Act gave the landlords the 'green light' for legal robbery, rents were pushed up and up or the tenants evicted and the properties sold. According to a recent report 10,000 houses annually are removed from the stock of rented houses to be sold to private owner occupiers. So much for the Tory claim that the Rent Act would provide more rented accommodation! The new motive behind it can be easily deduced from a quick look at the rent income of London's biggest landlords.

London County Freehold and Leasehold:

1957—£2,033,000

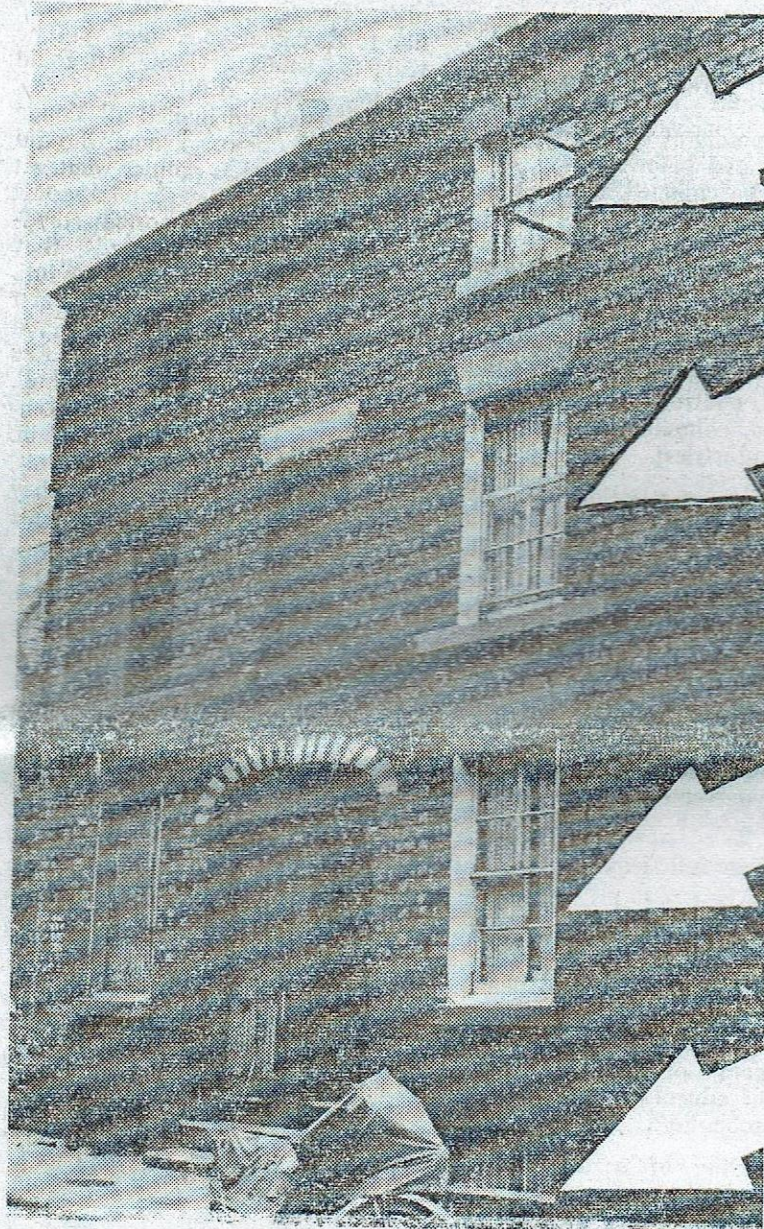
1962—£3,931,000

Peachy Property Corporation:

1959—£1,082,000

1963—£2,440,000

How about the slogan 'a property owning democracy'. To see just how real this prospect is for the average worker I went along to a large building society office and asked whether it would be possible for me to buy a £3,000 house. 'If it was a modern house you would need to earn at least £19-£20 a week basic; if an older house it would mean more'—was the answer. What a hope—even if you could buy a decent house for £3,000. Here again



Contrasts in 'Booming Britain'

Above: Overcrowded slum in Liverpool

Below: Housing as it could be for all

vast fortunes are being made out of people's basic need for a home to live in. If you borrow £3,000 over 25 years you will finally pay back £6,000 — £3,000 profit for the moneylenders. They tell us to be patient, to wait, and one day we shall get a decent home. In the meantime we can rot in our slums.

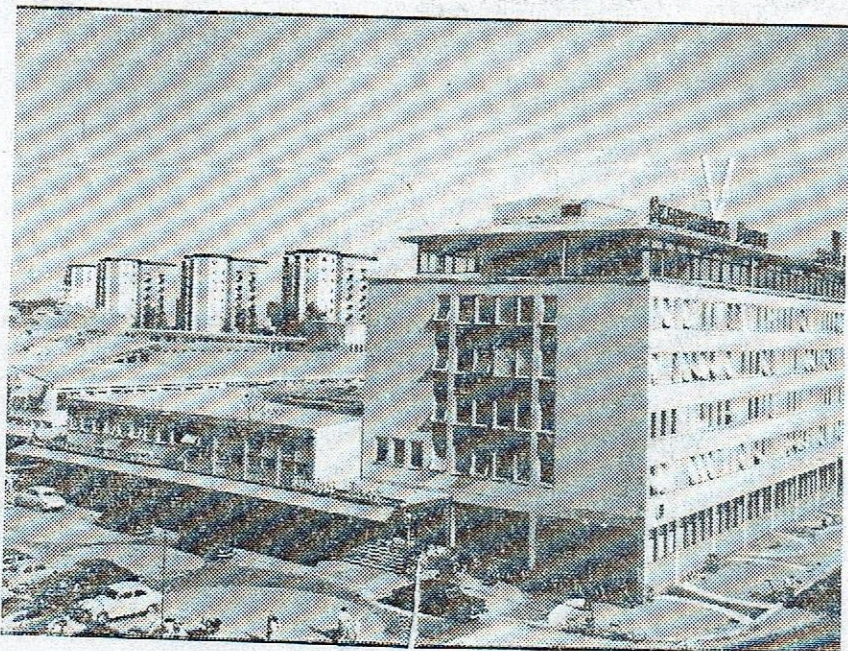
We are finished with waiting. Waiting while our children suffer from overcrowding. Waiting while marriages break up and lives are ruined all because it doesn't pay big business to provide decent housing.

We won't wait because we know there is an answer to the housing problem here and now—the socialist answer.

Every homeless family could be housed tomorrow—by taking over the thousands of unoccupied properties (the 1961 census showed that over 20,000 houses in London were unoccupied), and a good start made in reducing overcrowding. Add to that the office blocks that lie un-

used for years and could make excellent flats, and we see that the 'housing problem' is not really a problem at all. Housing must be taken out of the hands of the profiteers and speculators and made a social service. The building industry must be taken over by the community under workers' control; how long must we continue with lengthening housing lists while building workers are on the dole. All rented property should be taken over by local councils. For centuries landlords have lived off the backs of the workers, today they are doing better than ever—landlordism must be abolished for good.

In the age of the sputnik and £2,000 million defence bills we cannot accept that overcrowding, the lack of basic sanitation, slums, and 'Rachmanism' are in anyway 'necessary'. We have the raw material, we have the land, we have the labour—what stops us building houses for all but the greed of capital.



YOUNG GUARD

Liberty and Fraternity

a true story

'Young Guard' is an open and democratic paper produced and financed entirely by Young Socialists. Its editorial policy is generally representative of the Young Socialist movement and its pages open to young people of all opinions.

It is run by its readers who hold regular readers' meetings wherever there is support and elect representatives to an editorial board which meets quarterly. This editorial board elects the editor and assistant editors necessary to produce the paper.

'Young Guard' is financed by its supporters who contribute up to 2/6 monthly towards the printing costs.

Our basic points of editorial policy are enumerated below.

These can be changed at any time that the readers decide.

OUR AIMS

The return of a Labour Government, nationalization under workers' control of the banks, insurance companies, land and major industries;

Unilateral renunciation of all nuclear weapons and the withdrawal from NATO and all existing military alliances;

The self-determination of the colonial peoples and the withdrawal of all British troops from overseas;

An internationalist policy based on co-operation with genuine labour movements throughout the world;

Votes and full legal rights at 18;

Three-year apprenticeships, full trade union rights and the ending of blind-alley employment; free access to the highest educational facilities for all and the replacement of the tripartite system of education by comprehensive schooling;

The building of a democratic Young Socialist movement within the Labour Party pledged to achieve the above programme working in conjunction with young socialists from other countries.

EDITOR

Angus Macdonald
11 Kelross Rd., London, N.5.

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Circulation and Business

Martin Wright
329 Malden Rd., New Malden, Surrey.

Printed and Published by
A. Macdonald, 11 Kelross Rd., London, N.5.

Keep Left is a Young Socialist paper notable because of the ban placed on it by Transport House two years ago. This ban rightly angered the supporters of *Keep Left* and from that day to this they demanded their freedom to dissent. On the night of February 11th after the Young Socialist lobby of Parliament they held a meeting, as is their custom, in opposition to the official YS meeting in Central Hall. That night The Cadres, as KL activists like to be called, took many of The Kids to Dennison House but could not get enough to fill it.

A KL leaflet had invited all Young Socialists to come; so some who did not agree with KL politics went. At Dennison House they found a crowd of *Young Guard* supporters standing outside. The stewards, they were told, had said the hall was full. The locked out comrades at first believed this, but were bewildered when Cadres with Kids in tow flowed freely in and out of the hall. The more curious of these comrades again asked to be allowed in. The stewards, old even for Cadres, would not let them in because they had not come far enough. Some

Ginger Group

'Make CND unilateralist'. That is the aim of a group of active CNDers disturbed by recent policy trends in the peace movement. In a leaflet 'An Appeal to Unilateralists' they outline a five-point plan to re-energise CND. Point 1 says: 'The people of every country must demand that their country withdraw unilaterally from all nuclear alliances'. It goes on to call for opposition to NATO, Polaris and conscription, and criticises failure to implement CND conference resolutions.

A leaflet will be distributed on the Easter March and a meeting held in London three weeks later.

ADS AND SODS

STUDIES ON THE LEFT: A Journal of Research, Social Theory and Review. Present number includes Lukacs and Deutscher on Sino-Soviet Dispute. \$1 for single copies from PO Box 33, Planetarium Sta., New York, NY 10024.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM: Theoretical Marxist Quarterly Price 2/6 from Mike Kidron, 47 Fitzroy Rd., London, N.W.1. Spring issue includes: United Nations

SOUTH AFRICA FREEDOM NEWS — Free — from African National Congress, 3 Collingham Gdns., London, S.W.5.

THE COLLABORATORS. An exposé of the British Businesses which underwrite apartheid. A mine of information for 2/- from A-A, 15 Endsleigh St., London, W.C.1.

SOCIALIST SONGSTERS need The 'Protest' song book. 'Songs of Hope and Survival'. A collection of Trade Union, CND, and traditional Labour songs. 3,000 sold and still going strong! 1/- each, from Hackney YS, 14a Graham Rd., London, E.8.

from beyond London protested that this was not true, but the stewards did not reply, for they were busy kicking and punching two girls. The girls, who had tried to sneak in, were thrown on to the pavement.

The angry stewards then threatened to get the police and take the insistent comrades to court. Dislike of the police combined with memories of *Keep Left's* propensity for writ serving and the comrades joined the girls on the pavement. Most then stood for an hour and a half hoping to be allowed in. They hoped in vain, but others more stealthy did gain entry.

Once inside, one lad produced some *Young Guards*. Immediately he was warned that if he did not conceal them there would be unfortunate consequences. The lad left hurriedly.

Another comrade, a robust young lady, pushed through the guards and burst into the hall crying a point of order. Roger Protz was telling the people how he had been banned and was urging them to continue the fight against the suppression of *Keep Left*. At this apt moment the young lady asked why they had banned

Wilson Supports Vietnam War

Harold Wilson is reported from Washington as having come out in support of the American war of repression in South Vietnam, though he opposes extending aggression to North Vietnam. This statement is all the more astonishing since even US observers now admit that the stooge coup d'étatist dictatorship lacks all popular support and that the US cause is lost.

The Vietnamese peasants have fought the most heroic battles for 20 years against overwhelming material odds and imperialist

Young Guard. People in the audience shouted 'answer,' 'shame,' 'let them in,' and forced the platform to reply. The leadership told the meeting that they did not know what was happening outside the door.

By now the meeting was almost over, and when it ended The Cadres streamed out cursing and abusing the sellers of *Young Guard* who stood about. But they were also glad, for they had succeeded in keeping out heretics who might have confused The Kids. Another decisive step had been taken in the fight to end the ban on *Keep Left*.

But the comrades who had been locked out went home saddened. Thinking perhaps of how they had fought for two years to defend *Keep Left's* right to dissent; pondering possibly on the irony of it—but very, very conscious of how little they have in common with such fanatics.

Compiled from reports submitted by June Lester, Hackney Central YS, and Dave Percival, North-West Croydon YS.

wealth. It is to be hoped they soon achieve peace, independence and social progress. The best safeguard of their independence after victory is not ostracism but friendly trade and aid from a Labour Britain. Wilson has made a poor start.

APOLOGY

In the report from Newcastle which was published in the December edition of *Young Guard* certain allegations and statements were made which the Northern Regional Youth Officer, Mr. Geoff Foster, claims are untrue. I would like to unreservedly apologise for unsubstantiated statements which I made in good faith concerning the actions of the Northern Regional Youth Officer last November.

Rates for Advertisements: Young Socialist Branches and Federations, and other Labour Party Sections—free insertion. Otherwise, 6d. per word (Min. 5/-) prepaid. Series Discount 5% for four or more consecutive insertions. Box Nos. 1/- extra.

Send your copy early to Mike Tatch, 10 Powell House, Lower Clapton, London, E.5. To reach the Young Socialists—Advertise in 'Young Guard'!

'DURHAM LEFT': Published by the Labour Club and Socialist Society of Durham University. No. 4 on sale now. Articles on Morality and the Labour Party, Labour Theory of Value, Workers' Control in Practice, etc. 1/- post free from Mike Newman, Hatfield College, Durham City.

THE WEEK—A News Analysis for Socialists. A regular service of information mailed weekly to Socialists throughout the country providing up to the minute reports on events of importance to Socialists. Editors: Ken Coates, Robin Blackburn. Contributors and correspondents throughout the world. Send foolscap s.a.e. to **The Week**, 54 Park Road, Lenton, Nottingham, for sample copy.

LABOUR WORKER: The Marxist Monthly that consistently fights for workers' control and red blooded Socialism. Price 6d. From Paul Foot, 10 Kersland St., Glasgow, W.2.

NALSO STILL NEEDS YOU! If you are a student as well as being a Socialist, you should join the National Association of Labour Student Organisations. Contact Julian Atkinson, 34 Crown Wood Way, London, S.E.9.

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VOTES FOR YOUTH Campaign still going strong. Write to John Horsfield for Petitions, Speakers and details of meetings. 7 Spring Gardens, Wallington, Surrey.

VIEWS: A Quarterly Review of Politics. 79/81 Gracechurch St., London, E.C.3. 4/-.

Chris
Torrance
writes about

Poetry

POETRY FROM THE LEFT
EDITED BY KEN GEERING *

An artist cannot make a worse mistake than to shackle his art to an ideological platform, and this, I regret to say, is the mistake many of the poets represented in this collection have made. Freedom of expression and language have been hemmed in, checked, and channeled into the stale corridors of the dialectic. For instance, such empty shouts as Geoff Richman's '... His [the poet's] voice has their [the workers'] pungent accent/His tales create their hopes and cares/Fifty million fists will grip in agreement/When he shouts at them, "the future's ours"'. It's not the poet's job to propagandise for ideologies; thousands of political hacks are paid to churn out this sort of utopian 'the revolution is coming' stuff to the workers every day. The poet is more often a philosopher, probing into the very nature of, not just the reasons for, the sickness and turmoil of human nature itself, no matter what political flag flies from the rooftops.

The sentiments of these poets are beyond doubt completely sincere, the construction of most of the poems good, the language and imagery sometimes brilliant. But the overall effect is overpoweringly one of heady visions of the future and much flag saluting and 'calling to arms'. 'His [Grimau's] fire that one day surely will destroy all the enemies of the people' (Nancy Farris 'For Madam Grimau'), or '... this strength and bond/Of our great party reaching round the earth.' (Elfrida B. Smith 'Comrades'). Far too many of these poems are supposedly of reality but in fact miss this reality: the reality of the always evident disparity between the ideological bleating and stepladder climbing cavorting of the politicians themselves and the fact that the people always suffer repression whatever political colour state is in power at the time.

In case my biased views are going to be interpreted as being all against this collection I must hasten to point out that this 48 page duplicated collection is beautifully produced and laid out, excelling Geering's already high standards, and that a tremendous amount of work has obviously gone into the book.

* 3/10d. post paid from
Ken Geering, Densbarn,
Lindfield, Sussex, or
from left-wing bookshops.

and Jazz

Inter-University Jazz Federation
1964 Annual Jazz Band Competition Finals—Fairfield Halls, Croydon, 29th February, 1964.

From the high-and-mighty echelons of scholarly Oxford and Cambridge descended no pin-striped imitators of the MJQ or even a shadow of a pseudo jazzman for the Finals of this brilliantly textured Jazz Band Competition. Instead, all 'Redbrick' University groups worked hard for the honours that were duly awarded to them at this concert.

There were avant guardists, mainstreamers, a big band, and a trad band playing the most ancient and cobwebby music I have ever heard outside of a waxed cylinder. Many of the musicians either slavishly imitated the innovations of Mingus and Coltrane or were content to cruise along on the comfortable crest of the mainstream wave. The most astute and brilliant imitator was soprano/tenorist Evan Parker featured with the 'Best Medium-sized Combo' prizewinners, the Al Caine Quartet. Parker was backed by an intense rhythm section dominated by the towering prowess and technical ability of bassist Wal Haffenden.

White jazz musicians in the States, being so much nearer the source of creative activity, are much more likely than their isolated British counterparts to be able to formulate a style of their own and even attempt a few innovations. But in this green and sacred land of ours, even in the whole of Europe itself, there does not seem to be one jazz musician of giant's stature comparable to such as Parker, Gillespie, Monk, Mingus, or Coltrane. Europe's only jazz giant was the dazzling Django Rheinhardt, whose lightning improvisations and romantic personality can now only be heard on disc.

Just what is the aspiring young jazzman to attempt here? Like Evan Parker, he can slave away to capture 'Trane's every nuance, every breath of life almost (and he succeeded) or like the Dave Holdsworth Three, he can try to develop an already conceived idea, as trumpeter Dave Holdsworth and his sidekicks on bass and drums did with the

Mingus composition 'Folk Forms No. 1'. Or like pianist Lynton Naith leading the 'Best Small Group' prizewinners the University of Sussex Jazz Trio he can attempt any of the agonising and soul-searching experiments that make true art what it is.

But of all the fresh young sounds that were heard there was one which surely original, surely passionate, surely played by a player who was a veritable poet of his instrument. This player was the cool, unmoving alto saxist Tony Murdoch with the University of Sussex Jazz Quartet who thought, prowled and probed his way through three of the most inspiring solos I have ever heard from the horn of a British jazz musician. He is a searcher, seeker of that blinding flare of feeling that every now and then surpasses the mere exercise of good technique. Yes, he was the only true original at the concert, and yet a panel of Judges consisting of no less than Charles Fox, Harold Pendleton, Peter Clayton, Bill le Sage and Paddy McKiernan saw fit to pass him over without a mention.

This 4-hour concert was stimulating and full of incident, a rewarding experience, for it revealed one artist of rare stature and several musicians and groups who will fertilise the jazz of the future if only they will give themselves the chance.

Tito Restores Strike Rights

Speaking at a recent meeting of the Yugoslav National Assembly, the chairman of that organisation's commission for social control, Mr. Pashko Romac, announced that strikes were legal. The ruling had to be given because of a series of stoppages in various parts of the country, including protests against increases in train fares. Justifying the ruling, Romac said that investigations had shown that stoppages of work did not have a political motive and that they did not threaten the social system.

FROM WHERE
I STAND

FIANNA

British troops quit Cyprus! British forces scam from Africa! Who would have thought that so soon after Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and Cyprus received their 'political independence' that we should be making the demands that Imperialist forces return home again. Yet this should be the demand of the whole Labour movement at the moment. The strengthening of a NATO base in Cyprus must be prevented at all costs and the Tories foothold back in East Africa must be dislodged.

Talking about Cyprus I am somewhat disappointed at the meek showing of the Cypriot 'left', principally AKEL, which claims allegiance to neither Greece nor Turkey. Hiding behind Makarios's robes and prating about UN intervention is no policy. A UN force may be far preferable to a NATO one but best of all would be action by Cypriot workers against the bosses of Ankara, Athens AND London.

Nearer at home some of the gilt appears to be crumbling from the Common Market ginger bread. Remember the propaganda of the far Right for entry? Looking at the growing economic crises throughout the Six and the plans to install a full-blown wage freeze, we can see that the Common Market no more than the Commonwealth, can provide no easy ready-made way out of the workers' problems and struggles under capitalism.

'The leadership have prostituted the concepts of democracy.'... 'Gollan and company have made the CP into the lickspittles of Krushev.'... 'These so called socialists seem more concerned with preserving the wretched privileges of their own clique than leading the working class against capitalism'. Extracts *Keep Left? Solidarity?* No, the testimony of ex members of the Communist Party in the new Journal of the 'anti-revisionists' *Vanguard*.

'Nineteen Yorkshire Young Socialist branches banned.' 'YS Federation closed down,' headlines in the *Daily Telegraph*. Once again the machine men have had their way and the energies of the Labour movement will once again have to be deflected from fighting the Tories to defending the right of Young Socialists to their views and the right to propagate them. Do the regional LP officials feel that they can spare the time from the fight against the Tories to turn on the YS?

Incidental intelligency: Did you read of the youth interviewed by the British Medical Association committee inquiring into VD and associated diseases. Asked what would he do if nuclear war was imminent he replied 'go to bed with Brenda.' It looks as if the four minute warning may have its uses after all.

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EASTER DIARY

BRIGHTON

Friday 27th 7.45 p.m.

TRIBUNE MEETING

"A Labour Policy
for Youth"

Speakers:

Gus Macdonald (*Young Guard*)
Janet Dugdale (National Committee)
Bill Withnall (Cheltenham YS)
Chairman: Max Madden
PAVILION THEATRE

Saturday 28th 6.00 p.m.

YOUNG GUARD PUBLIC MEETING

"A Socialist Policy
for Youth"

Speakers:

John Palmer (Esher YS)
Dave Peers (Newcastle YS)
Chris Davison (Hackney YS)
Chairman: Gus Macdonald
FINAL DETAILS AT
CONFERENCE

Saturday, Sunday, Monday

4TH YS CONFERENCE

AT THE CORN EXCHANGE

LONDON

Friday 27th 10.30 a.m.

March on Ruislip Base

Assemble Marble Arch

Sunday 29th 2 p.m.

YCND MASS RALLY

on Clapham Common

Monday 30th 12 p.m.

CND MARCH

Assemble Hyde Park
and Kennington Park
for march on
Trafalgar Square

Wembley Sth YS
bow st. runners
(rythmn & blues)
COPELAND SCHOOL
High Road, Wembley
3s. 6s. single,
6s. double
April 18th 7.30-11 pm
tickets: A. Griggs,
3, Clifton Way,
Alperton, Middlesex.

BRIGHTON CHALLENGE TO YOUNG SOCIALISTS

Militant and responsible—that's how we describe the vast majority of the 166 resolutions and 49 amendments on the agenda for the 4th YS Annual Conference at Brighton. 13 branches condemn the leadership's right-slip on immigration and only Baron's Court and Romford fold under the pressure of widespread ignorance and call for a restriction on immigrants entering Britain.

The prevalent uneasiness over the Party's attitude to the reintroduction of conscription has moved eight branches to oppose unanimously this possibility; and still on defence, another three call for withdrawal from NATO. Considering the height of feeling aroused by defence in recent years, it is surprising, and disappointing, to find only three resolutions on the subject.

Efficient organising on the Right is reflected by the unusually large number of resolutions on the United Nations. (See page 7). Eleven give full support to the UN and a further three favour the establishment of a UN 'Peace' Force. But hostile amendments indicate that this subject will be vigorously debated.

Education, unemployment and wage restraint are also well covered, but the real heavyweights are housing and nationalization. Vast extensions of public ownership are recommended in land, rented property and the building industry. Prompted by the Rachman scandal and the worsening of housing conditions in the big cities, 23 branches have combined to demand powerful action from the next Labour Government. Michael Stewart, the shadow Minister of Housing, will be told in no uncertain manner that 400,000 houses a year will not do. For the Socialist breakthrough of the housing bottleneck read our front page article.

The massive increases in nationalisation demanded by 14 resolutions show how high this demand comes in the list of youth's priorities. But the enthusiasm for state ownership is tempered by the realisation that by itself it has proved inadequate; only democracy in production through workers' control can transform a society to socialism.

This two page survey maps "Young Guard's" position in some of the great debates before Conference. We hope that our arguments will convince the majority of delegates that their position is, like ours, firmly on the left.

Immigration

Last November a shocked movement realised that the Parliamentary Labour Party was not, as they had believed, unconditionally opposed to the 1961 Commonwealth Immigration Act. Apparently with prejudice so widespread and an election so imminent they could not, as one MP put it, 'Provide the Tories with the slogan. If you want a nigger neighbour—vote Labour'. And by 85 votes to 8 the PLP decided to support the continuance of the Act for one year, provided the Tories agreed to consult Commonwealth countries with a view to their enforcing, voluntarily, migration control. The eight opponents who favoured unconditional retention of the Act were reported as including Gerry Reynolds (Islington N.), Dick Marsh (Greenwich), and Frank McLeary (Bradford E.).

When the Tories rejected this suggestion, then, and only then, did Labour in the House vote against the notorious Immigration Act which it opposed so vehemently on November 16th, 1961.

For power-hungry politicians it is a self-evident truth that 91% of the electorate cannot be wrong, and the Opinion Polls showed that many are in favour of the Act. 91% of the British people insecure, fearful, prejudiced, or just plain misinformed. What a tragic indictment of a mass party's failure to implant tolerance, a belief in brotherhood, or a simple bloody fact in the minds of the electorate. Yet what an armoury of facts we have to fight with.

How many of those who blame the housing shortage on immigration

know that between 1952 and 1961 only 80,000 more people came into Britain than left? How many realise that only 1% of the population is coloured? Are they aware of the dismally slow development in the building industry?

Some claim that there are no racist undertones to the Immigration Act. This does not explain why the century long flood of Irish immigrants was never blocked. Even the 1961 Act did not affect the Irish, although they still account for a majority of all immigrants. Another point—30% of all coloured people who applied for an entry permit were refused compared with only 1.3% of all whites.

Since the beginning of the industrial age the double-edged fear of redundancy and eviction has chopped and savaged defiant unions of workers into disarray. Insecurity is the agent which has made 'divide and rule' the most reliable maxim in the handbook of management. And what more obvious dividing issue than the colour of a man's skin—yet the basic absurdity of racism is shown also physiologically; for the pigment which divides us, melanine, is scarcely plentiful enough in a negro to cover a sixpence. While the workers are deluded into believing that their enemy is in their own class then the power of the rulers will never be seriously challenged. Harold Wilson has said on television in the face of all these facts, 'We recognise there must be some control'. The YS Conference must make it clear that Wilson does not speak for the youth of the Labour Party.

Conscription

With the absurdity of an independent British deterrent so apparent, the Labour Party has rejected the temptation of pre-election jingoism and come out in support of strengthening conventional forces. To succeed in this they will have to be more resourceful than the Tories for in spite of increased pay, army manpower strength still sags below the 190,000 minimum. And this during the reappearance of that most effective of recruiting sergeants, unemployment. If Labour fulfils its promise and provides full employment then it is highly unlikely that even the present recruitment rate will be maintained.

This has given rise to widespread rumour that Labour is planning some form of conscription to ensure that the army is large enough to plug the gap left by the abandoned bomb. These rumours are strengthened by the knowledge that Labour in 1946 became the first government to introduce conscription in peacetime.

Although Wilson has publicly denied these rumours, Barbara Castle, with the politicians' facility for making a virtue of necessity, stated at the Skegness Rally that if the choice lies between a British H-Bomb and conscription, then the latter is the safer and more moral course.

For us as international socialists the choice is not between a foreign policy based on the threat of mass murder and one based on the effi-

Education

Education today aims at producing exam. passers and hard workers who can quickly master technical skills. Young people are taught to obey authority and accept the half-truths and clichés of a debased society.

The present tripartite system of education tends to produce a managerial elite over a semi-educated mass capable only of performing the menial jobs which are a growing by-product of technical progress.

Real changes in the education system can only come through a truly democratic society which accepts that education is about developing individual talents for the pursuit of a fuller life.

This will not be an overnight job, but Labour can hasten the transition



YS NEWS AND VIEWS

ciency of professional killers. The maintenance of a 'Thin Red Line' etched by the blood of East African soldiers and Brunei socialists is not our concern. Irrespective of which party is in power, the British troops in Aden, Malaysia and Germany have the same primary role: to protect British investment.

Many of us, too young to remember, have read how Attlee's Government in 1945 sent in troops to smash the Indonesian Nationalists in a vain attempt to restore Dutch Imperialism. Murders, beatings and mass reprisals in Africa, Asia and the Middle East brought shame on British Labour. And the blood-stained policy of Ernest Bevin in Greece established the crypto-fascist regime which oppresses that land. Those home-based troops were saved from boredom by a brisk line in strike breaking which began in the London docks only six days after Labour assumed power.

The unanimous condemnation of conscription contained in the resolutions is certain to be echoed by the conference. Let Castle and Wilson be warned—any betrayal of election assurances and the YS will resist conscription as militantly as they resisted nuclear insanity. Our aim will be to disrupt the recruiting offices and to make a socialist 'conshie' of every eligible youth. For a socialist imprisonment is preferable to murdering a fellow-worker in the interest of British Imperialism—or the Black Bourgeoisie.

by taking the following steps immediately on assuming power:

- (1) Abolition of the tripartite system, comprehensive schooling for all.
- (2) Ending religious instruction in schools.
- (3) Increased pay for teachers and more Teacher Training Colleges.
- (4) Teachers-Parents Association should replace the present Board of Governors system.

Although none of the conference resolutions contain all these points the Watford YS proposals are the most comprehensive and should be supported by the conference delegates.

Each Easter for the last three years the Young Socialists have elected a National Committee of eleven to vanguard campaigns, co-ordinate activity, and attempt to influence the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party. For a team of singleminded enthusiasts this would be a formidable task; so not unnaturally it has proved to be beyond the capabilities of successive Committees.

Past Conferences of the YS have been notable for their factional bitterness, poor debate and leftist policies; all of which characteristics, with the exception of the last, have been reflected consistently by successive Committees.

The ineffectiveness of the Committee is understandable. Meeting only quarterly, weakened by infighting; they are no match for an incomparably stronger and more resourceful opponent. And though the NEC usually tolerates the sniping from the left with bad grace they can be ruthless. Not surprisingly, the mortality rate is high among left-wing Committee Men.

Although all four on the first Committee of 1961, (two Keep Left and two Young Guard supporters) survived an unproductive year; they were saved only by their minority position.

Easter 1962 produced a solid left majority with four Young Guardians and three Keep Lefters, but they were never given a chance even to meet. Four members were suspended almost immediately, and three later expelled. Four other left-wingers resigned in protest and the vacant seats were filled by Transport House sympathisers.

John Robertson, this year's chairman, has been publicly fingered by Scottish Labour Party officials in recent months and threatened with expulsion. But all the casualties in the front line are not inflicted by the right-wing; some just wilt in the political hothouse. This year's North-West representative, 17-year-old John Hinks, is apparently a recent victim. Booted out of the ETU Conference for alleged 'Trotskyist associations'; Young John also distinguished himself recently by repeating the words 'youth unemployment' thirty-seven times in an eight minute speech. A few months back he vanished from the scene and stopped attending National Committee meetings, to

the consternation of his comrades.

Yet despite the occupational hazards there is no shortage of candidates for the job. This year sixty-seven aspirants compete for the eleven regional positions. In this brief survey of the election scene, we sketch in some background and indulge, foolishly no doubt, in a few predictions.

London and Middx.

Another fierce battle this year. Blend, Gibson and O'Regan will withdraw to give the sitting member Sheila Torrance a clear run again and McEldowney will withdraw in favour of Sawbridge.

Sheila Torrance will top the first ballot with about 24 votes but Chris Davidson, the left-wing unilateralist from Hackney and Ben Sawbridge (Less radical but also unilateralist) with some 15 votes a piece represent the independent left-bloc, which is the strongest of the three. When one of these two is eliminated the other will win on the combined vote.

Glen Barnham, an ex-KLer now working at Transport House, carries the right-wing ticket and should gather a dozen votes.

Northern

Last year Walter Hobson was returned virtually unopposed because of the failure of the unilateralist Left to put up a candidate. This has now been remedied by the nomination of Dave Peers of Newcastle East YS; a militant opponent of all bombs and a supporter of Workers' Control.

Some of Hobson's supporters are so worried by this threat that they have tried to smear Peers with allegations that he has done a deal with the right. If this tactic boomerangs then Hobson's followers can

be blamed for sabotaging their candidate's chances.

North West

The disappearance of John Hinks has forced the workers' bomb merchants to look for another candidate to maintain their present majority. Anthony Byrne is from Wigan YS; the branch which the now expelled Liz Thomson once represented; and if he can command the same support as Mrs. Thomson he should be elected.

If however he withdraws in favour

of any other candidate it can be assumed that the other will get the bloc vote majority.

South West

With right-wing Waldron standing down, the field here is wide open. Bradley of Bath is reputed to be left-wing as is Vango of Torquay; although whether the latter is opposed to all bombs, or just Capitalist ones, must be established in advance. Toomey of Gloucester is not the most political of candidates and though he may get a few votes he will not win.

Eastern

Janet Dugdale of Norwich North is attempting to be re-elected for her fourth successive term. Although she has five male challengers attempting to unseat her it looks as though the only man capable of doing this is Father Time. We, of course, are much too gallant to even pose the question. 'What age is the lady?'

Scotland

The opponents of John Robertson of Kilmarnock are disorganised and the decline in the influence of the unilateralist Left means that his position will not be seriously challenged. Since Robertson's co-thinkers like Clark of Rutherglen and Dempsey of Bridgeton are only precautions against John's expulsion by the right-wing and with the politics of McCallum of Govan so sectarian, it seems probable that his majority of last year will be increased upon.

East Midlands

Evans again seems a probable result here. A sitting member of the majority, Evans will have no serious opposition from a unilateralist Left which is jaded and unorganised. Disappointing when one remembers that only two years ago they had a majority here. Vincent Walker of Nottingham Central is the most Left-wing of the three contenders but his brand of Marxism is so weird that he can expect little support. Besides, Vincent is a refugee from Gorbals' unemployment who has only been a year in Nottingham; hardly long enough to establish himself, and his politics, over the breadth of the Region.

Continued on page 7

Class Violence

Comrades,
The distinction between 'violence' and 'non-violence', as usually put, has very little meaning. Where is the real difference between loss caused by arson or by boycott, by sabotage or strike action. Between violence by us or that permitted by our inaction.
More usually we can distinguish action which attempts to reconcile differences by negotiation and compromise; that which seeks to wrest concessions from the enemy by pressure; and that which seeks to wrest power itself from the enemy.

what the hell comrade

As socialists we are ultimately interested in the working class achieving the third of these.
'Violence' or 'non-violence' will be appropriate in different circumstances. The measurement of good faith lies in support for mass action, not in support for violence as such. In practice violence often repels or frightens all but a minority of thugs and martyrs. Strikes, demonstrations and fraternisation are more common class weapons than terrorism.
The boundary of 'violence' is unclear and sometimes militant action faced with physical opposition must fight physically or retreat. In these cases to advocate 'non-violence' means to retreat to the conference table and mass apathy. 'Violence' may be necessary but to advocate it for its own sake is naive. Revolutions have usually been bloodless compared with counter-revolution, war or poverty.
Constance Lever
Hampstead YS.

LEFT REACTION

Comrades,
Roger Rosewall offers up one of the most hackneyed YG incantations when he asserts, 'For it is only when the workers decide to fight as a class that socialism can ever be achieved'.
Many left-wing Young Socialists are agreed with YG in opposing the Labour Party's reverence for the present economic, social and parliamentary system, and 'recognise Harold Wilson for an exceedingly adept opportunist who seeks not to change the present structure of society, but to more efficiently administer it.
Socialism indeed entails a fundamentally new social order, but to declare that this must wait for the advent of the Revolutionary Proletariat is a shibboleth of pessimism and reaction. How little it differs from the old lady who considers politics a futile pursuit because only on Christ's return can a better Society be instituted.
In this context we must view the function of the approaching YS Conference. Is it to be swayed by a 'highly organised campaign to swing the delegates behind the LP election policy' or is it to declare a Labour Government is no better than the Tories and that Socialism must wait upon the Revolutionary Proletariat?
Or can we make clear demands and constructive proposals for specific socialist legislation which would bring pressure to bear on the parliamentary party and show them that the Young Socialists won't stand for any backsliding. It's up to you Comrades.
Willie Lomax
Aylesbury YS.

ABOVE REPROACH?

Comrades,
Readers may have seen Mr. Underhill's references in *New Advance* to the distorted reports which can be found in *Young Guard*, one of my reports being used as an example. In reply to a letter I sent him regarding this, Mr. Underhill explained: 'The point of my remarks was not so much as to criticise the individuals whose names were appended to various reports but the attitude of *Young Guard* which is only too ready to publish criticisms of the official organisation.'
Perhaps our comrade regards the 'official organisation' as being above criticism.
Pat Filsell

Race Bill Dilemma

Comrades,
The Baron's Court resolution to YS Conference must have been a shock to many readers—just as it was to some members of the branch! It was chosen at a poorer-than-averagely attended meeting, but in perfectly constitutional circumstances, and after full and fair debate.
It triumphed over militant resolutions on nationalisation and South Africa, though some of those who voted for it at the time now seem to regret their choice.
Normally, the members who put it forward are progressive—unilateralists, and so on—and their intentions

were certainly honourable, but the resolution does appear to fly in the face of general YS and Labour opinion on the immigration issue.
The proposers stressed that they were not in favour of any sort of colour discrimination, that they were mainly motivated by the extra demand which immigration creates on scarce housing, and that they believed that Asian and West Indian immigrants would prefer to be able to take jobs in their native lands.
Strong objections were put forward to this resolution, and the others were advocated with force, but the result of the voting is indicated there on the Conference Agenda.
I, as branch delegate to Conference, am in the unholy position of taking with me a resolution that I argued against.
Ben Sawbridge
Baron's Court YS.

Stop the In-Fighting

Comrades,
The YS Conference will, as usual, provide an excellent Socialist youth programme, but this on its own will achieve nothing. It is essential that individual YS members refrain from the type of incessant internal fighting which has sickened many Young Socialists. Things have got to the ridiculous stage where potential recruits are advised not to join this branch or that by members of the various factions.
Certain comrades have become so involved in internal disputes that they are practically incapable of communicating with ordinary workers. In the Glasgow area, some have retreated into complete cynicism, doing nothing to build their branches and waiting for Christ knows what to help the advance to Socialism. Whatever one thinks of the Glasgow Federation

officers, at least they try, and have managed to resurrect a few moribund branches.
Our branch has political differences with other Young Socialists. We realise that complete political clarity is essential but we refuse to go out of our way to make cheap jibes or to devote our lives to proving the class nature of the Soviet Union.
Our hopes for the YS Conference then, are that comrades will recognise the fact that the Left in the YS cannot afford to continue to conduct their arguments as at present.
We must regain the outward-looking approach necessary for the building of a mass youth movement. The alternative is a tiny, fragmented organisation influencing nobody.
Peter Bain
Clydebank YS.

J.P. HITS BACK

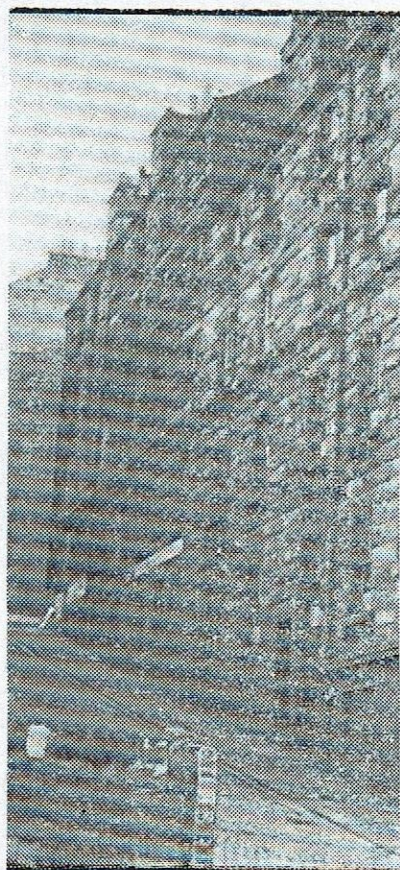
Comrades,
Vic Vanni's letter in the last issue of YG has done more to confuse the issue with the SPGB than anything I wrote. This issue is best illustrated as follows. To call for reforms, say the SPGB, is bad because they are 'illusory' and 'take the minds of the workers off the fight for socialism'. But, they state, this does not apply to the struggle for higher wages, which the SPGB will support. Thus we have the position that the SPGB will support employed workers fighting for a higher income, but will condemn anyone fighting for a higher income for retired workers, (pensions), although they are the most poverty stricken section of the working class. Indeed a prominent SPGB member said recently that to call for higher pensions is incompatible with membership of the SPGB. Enough said?
With regard to Richard Hyman. I am amazed at his naive assumption that the Tories and the capitalist class are demanding wage 'restraint' so that the workers can draw higher 'real' wages. Indeed the whole object of the operation is to hold 'real' wages down (see NIC, FBI, etc.). Of course we should demand control over investment and open books, but this can only take place in the context of a struggle against the right of the employers to limit what 'portion of the national cake' they will give the workers.
John Palmer
Esher YS.

RECONSTITUTE THE HOME LOANS BOARD

Comrades,
I would like to develop something that Chris Arthur mentioned in his review of the Penguin Special *Housing*, viz. the creation of an efficient State building agency. The need for this can easily be shown.
(1) With interest rates on the open market at 6 to 7 per cent, the cost of building a council house is almost

two-thirds interest charges. Consequently rents are high, even with subsidies, and fewer houses are built than ought to be.
(2) During the 1945-51 Labour Government, councils could obtain low interest rates (3%) from the Public Works Loans Board. Because of this, and restrictions on private building, three-fifths of new houses were built by local authorities. Since the Loans Board was abolished by the Tories, the situation has been reversed; two thirds of new houses are privately built for sale at prices out of the range of most working men's wages.
The result is that while there are plenty of houses for the well-to-do; manual and clerical workers, particularly the young, cannot get council or rented accommodation at reasonable prices.
The resolutions down for YS Conference show that Young Socialists feel stronger about this than about any other subject. They should make sure that the resolutions passed calling for the reconstitution of the Loans Board giving interest free loans, the nationalisation of the building and building supply industries, and the repeal of the Rent Act.
These measures are not going to solve the housing problem (See Engels) but they will go some way to helping places like Liverpool make inroads into the slums, and give more working class people a decent place to live.

Fred Lindop
St Pancras South YS.



Ulster Tyranny

Comrades,
The position in N. Ireland is probably well known to many of your readers. There we have a statelet whose right-wing Tory rulers behave in the best Verwoerd, Salazar style. Trade Unions are opposed, elections rigged, publications are banned, the police are armed, Habeus Corpus indefinitely suspended. In fact they have introduced legislation that even outdoes South African Fascists—the famous Special Powers Act which enables the Government to imprison men without charge or trial. And all this exists side by side with the worst social and unemployment conditions in the British Isles.
If a Labour Government comes to power it will be expected to sanction and finance this regime. British troops will be expected to bolster it up. I hope your readers will join the growing body that suggests Labour should refuse to do this.
Eugene McEldowney
Fulham YS.

The United Nations

World's One Hope for Peace

says Willie Lomax Aylesbury YS

Although Young Socialists have been foremost in the fight for unilateralism and neutralism, they have not concentrated to any extent on the way in which world peace is to be maintained if ever achieved. Believing that the world can and must live in peace, we have tended to neglect the cardinal issue of ultimate power and its location in a disarmed world.

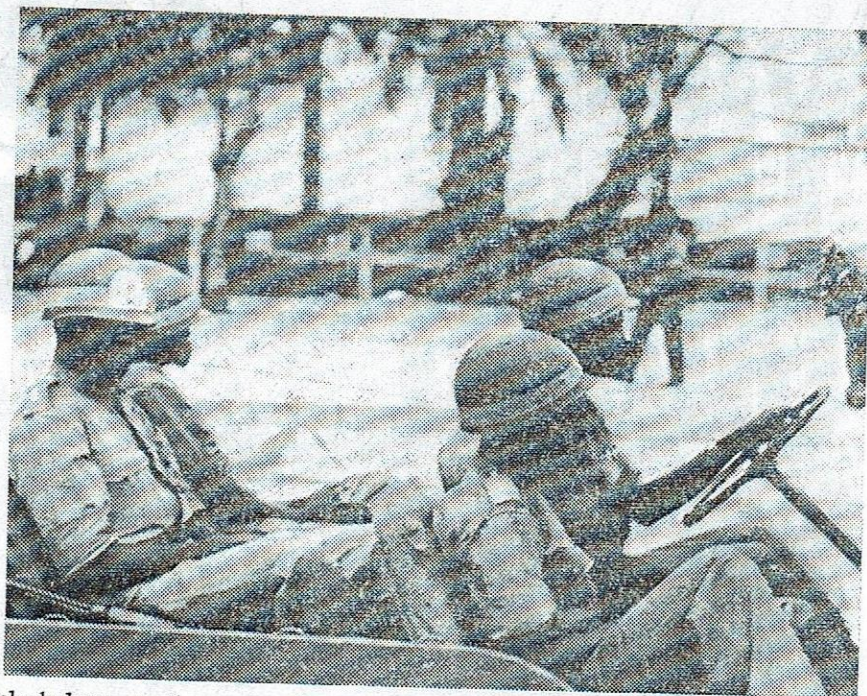
Nevertheless, Bertrand Russell has acknowledged that 'General disarmament, though immensely important and desirable, would not, if achieved, be enough in itself to ensure a stable peace', and John Strachey has argued for 'the concept of some sort of world authority, exercising a degree at least of coercive power, as indispensable if disarmament is to get very far'.

It is one of the many paradoxes of Marxism that, though completely internationalist in theory, it is in practice the most unyielding champion of national sovereignty. Marx correctly saw that a totally disarmed world of sovereign nation states is but a fallacious ideal, but naively supposed that the revolution would itself effect the transcending of national sovereignty, and that in the post revolutionary era internationalism and world unification would be automatically achieved. However, the revolution has come and gone, yet China is still China, Poland still Poland, and the USSR still very much Russia—the nation-state has

survived on into the revolutionary epoch. This is but one example of Marx's naively idealistic belief that economic organisation was the sole determinant of a community's behaviour, and the recent Sino-Soviet conflict clearly shows that Communist as well as capitalist states are motivated in the main by nationalistic competition for wealth and power.

Thus the Marxian elixir has failed once more, and the problem of world peace still confronts us as ever before. Its intensity is only brought home when it is realised that the very conditions, of military and ideological division and the imminent danger of war, which make international order so desirable, also make it so difficult to achieve. Nor have we time to wait for the inevitable development of history to unite the world; catastrophe is too close.

The international anarchy in which present nations live means that each must look after itself, and it is obviously inconceivable that such states could ever wholly deprive themselves of the means of doing so without the assurance of some impartial world authority which could maintain the peace. On this ground the Healyite's 'workers bomb' sounds at first defensible; of course, Socialist countries must have every possible means of defending themselves against their capitalist contenders. This argument, however,



only belongs to the pre-nuclear age. Then it could be argued that the class struggle deserved absolute primacy, but with the advent of nuclear weapons the class struggle must be subordinated to the overriding aim of preventing nuclear war, without which nothing else can be achieved. Nor could any workers' bomb ever defend any workers' state, for nuclear weapons are neither a national deterrent nor defence.

Thus we come back to the central problems. The possibility of world war must be eliminated in our lifetime, but disarmament itself is not enough; if a permanent peace is to be ensured states cannot be left to carry on in their present nationalistic fashion; the idea of a powerless, stateless, yet peaceful world is a naive dream—somewhere, somehow there will have to be a centre of power wielded by somebody. Meanwhile the defeatism of contemporary Marxists in arguing that disarmament and peace cannot be achieved (and would not be desirable if they could) until the last capitalist state is eliminated just will not do. The prevention of nuclear war must take priority over all other aims.

Nor should we dissent over the exact form or constitution of this world authority; we must fight for socialism within it—not against it, and at the moment the United Nations is our only hope. It alone

looks capable of creating a community of interest of all nations, and the strengthening of its organisation, its power and authority, must take priority over nationalistic or ideological considerations.

Of course the UN has, in the past, operated as a 'tool' of the West—in Korea, Indo-China, Vietnam, Congo, etc.—but this was because, in the 'fifties and early 'sixties, it could not have been independent of both sides and still maintained any authority. However, with the increasing representation of the newly independent non-aligned nations it can no longer be a 'tool' of either East or West, for its neutral members can ensure that its decisions are fair and unbiased, and for fear of alienating these nations, both East and West will have to accept its authority.

For these reasons Young Socialists must insist that support of the United Nations as a first step towards effective world government be made the overriding aim of a socialist foreign policy.

After heated discussion the 'Young Guard' editorial board, like its readers, is still divided on the United Nations; although the majority are highly critical. In keeping with our readers' meeting decision we are continuing the controversy in the coming months. If you feel you can help resolve this problem your contribution will be welcome.

Who killed Kennedy?

Ross Pritchard Islington North YS

As the initial shock of the Kennedy assassination wears off and lurid news-presentation fades into a black-white documentary, the mysteries surrounding the crime must be examined closely.

Oswald, the alleged assassin, has been presented as a maniacal marxist talking machine. A recent *Daily Mail* photograph showed a rifle-toting Oswald brandishing *The Militant*, paper of the Socialist Workers' Party.

Very convenient for the fanatic anti-reds of the FBI who stated 'Lee Oswald was undoubtedly the assassin'. But was he?

The FBI maintain,

- Oswald fired three shots.
- The rifle was an Italian carbine.
- The shots were fired from the Texas Book Depository after the President's car had passed.

There is some doubt on the first point concerning the number of bullets fired. First reports said that bullets had been found in Kennedy and in Connolly, another in the car and one in the stretcher which took Kennedy to hospital. A fifth reported to have been found on the verge where the car was, deepens the mystery, for it is impossible for one man to fire five shots in the time taken by the assassin.



The conflict of evidence on the second point is even more startling. The policeman who found the gun on the floor of the warehouse swore that the rifle was a 7.65 Mauser; an easily identifiable make. Oswald's palmprint was also said to be on the gun. The police officially confirmed this as the murder weapon on November 22nd. When this did not tie in with the discovery on the 23rd of Oswald's mail-order purchase of an Italian carbine, the police changed their story to say that the gun was in fact a carbine. Witnesses have stated that the shots came from the warehouse; but other

witnesses swear that the shooting came from a nearby over-pass. This story is backed by the police broadcasts following the shooting which said 'All firing appears to be coming from the over-pass'. The local radio station reported that police were seen on the over-pass pursuing two men. And to make the President's wounds consistent with the warehouse story he would have had to have his head turned around 180 degrees.

All these factors cast doubt upon Oswald's guilt and show the actions of the FBI in a very sinister light. If Oswald was such a rabid Marxist, why was he not under the same surveillance as other progressives in Dallas. Why was he able to get a passport (never an easy job for a leftist) within one day. Why did Cuba and Russia refuse him entry. Why did he have the name of the local FBI agent, along with his secret address and telephone number, in his possession. Why has the windshield of Kennedy's car been kept hidden when the bullet-holes in it could prove from which direction the shots came.

All these questions must be answered. Taken with the admission of the US Central Intelligence Agency that they employ a band of professional assassins, they raise grave doubts as to the role of the secret service in this affair. It is quite possible that Oswald was an FBI informer who was framed to protect the extreme right in Texas.

If this is so, and Professor Brienberg of Berkeley University, California, recently suggested that it might be, then it will be a warning to all socialists that in a capitalist system the State is never neutral.

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West Midlands

Roger Page, the present right-wing member, is not standing for re-election this year. Just as well, for he would not have been re-elected. The image he reflected on the region was much resented and he would have been strenuously, and successfully, opposed by a majority of branches. Rumour has it that a left-winger will be elected; but whether that means anything by West-Midlands standards remains to be seen. It should be McFarlane or Charlton.

Wales

We end this article on a note of certainty. Peter McCallum a left-winger from Swansea will be the Welsh representative. Reason—Fox, the present right-winger, is not going again; and Peter is the only comrade nominated for the vacancy.

Psephology is an inaccurate science, and we are inaccurate psephologists: This knowledge may help disperse the pessimism evoked by these predictions. Perhaps the YS will confound us and return a rational, left-wing committee. I certainly hope so.

YOUNG GUARD

SOCIALISM CAN END WAR

Not Home's Way

On the 26th and 27th February our worthy representatives in the House of Commons conducted a two-day debate on the subject of 'defence'. It makes tedious reading. There was little difference in approach between both sides, and the concern of every honourable member of the House, it seems, was that Britain should be well enough 'defended' against her (unspecified) enemies. On two points, however, there were differences.

First, various MP's from different constituencies seemed worried that their own areas should land the juicy defence orders which Peter Thorneycroft, the Defence Minister, was throwing around. Hawker Siddeley were lucky (cheers from some); Harland and Short's were not (boos).

Second, there was the much-debated topic of the 'independent deterrent'. The Tories defence policy is quite clear. It is aptly summarised by Sir Alec Douglas Home's carefully-selected quotation from that famous poet, Rudyard Kipling, which he used in a speech at Newcastle on 3rd March:

'England's on the anvil—hear the hammers ring; Clanging from the Severn to the Tyne'.

Note the subtle inclusion of 'the Tyne' which no doubt warmed the hearts of many a Newcastle Tory.

Now, if England is to remain on the anvil, and the clanging and the hammering is to continue on the Severn and the Tyne, then, clearly, England must be defended. Never once in her history—not since the Angles and the Saxons anyway—has she seen the camp fires of the invader. Thus the plea for 'an independent deterrent'.

Unfortunately, this deterrence is somewhat more complicated than it was in the days when Sir Alec's ancestors handed out bows and arrows to forelock-tugging ghillies.

Today defence is a luxury which has to be paid for—in money of course, but also in huge scientific and technological resources. Great chunks of capital must be found before even an attempt can be made to maintain a nuclear force which will 'convince' the Russians (or the Chinese). So far has this process gone that only two countries have the scientific or financial resources to keep in the nuclear arms race . . . the USA and Russia. Yet Home and his fellow chauvinists of the Tory Party are desperate to maintain the status of Britain.

The solution to the dilemma is obvious. To buy the independent deterrent from the USA. True, it will not be ready for five years. But of course until then the V-bombers are a perfectly credible deterrent.

Then all of a sudden on a sunny day in 1965 the Russians and the Chinese and even the Americans will stop believing in the V-bomber force. Luckily by then there will be a brand new deterrent for them to believe in—Polaris.

I nearly said Skybolt. I would have been a year out of date. Skybolt USED TO BE the future deterrent. But the Americans scrapped it. It was obsolete. Naturally claims Sir Alec, that will not happen to Polaris. So sure is he that he has increased his order from four submarines to five (at £70 million each instead of the original estimate of £50 million).

The fantastic idiocy of the independent deterrent argument is difficult to credit . . . even from Tories. But like everything else it has a more sinister reason than any stated wish to defend the country by credible deterrents. It allows the Tories, with some skill, to appeal to all the backward chauvinistic elements of the British electorate. 'We are being stripped of our defences. Remember 1939. . .'

No one need point out exactly where Sir Alec stood in 1939.

says Paul Foot of Woodside Glasgow Not Harold's Way

Labour launched happily into attacking these arguments. But before long some of the more intelligent Tories began to ask awkward questions. What, for instance, would Mr. Healey do about the Polaris submarines which were being built? Mr. Healey did not know. But he thought they might be converted into 'hunter-killers'.

What was going to happen to the TSR 2—the British bomb-carrying aeroplane of the future? Mr. Wilson is not sure. But perhaps they might be converted into fighter planes (at which role they are utterly useless).

The trouble with Labour's argument is that while they want to abandon Britain's independent deterrent, they wish to maintain her defences at the same rate as at present. The fantastic figure of £2,000 million on defence which has almost been reached does not worry the official Labour Party in the least. They want to 'make their contribution' to the Western Alliance, cost what it may. The revolting

process of the Cold War, the whole terrifying accent upon war and preparation for war will not be altered by Labour in the slightest degree.

Did I say 'official Labour'? I was wrong. I was perhaps slipping back into the old, old days when the Labour Party used to argue about defence. Nowadays of course that kind of activity is in extremely bad taste. Wilson is the best Labour leader since Keir Hardie. No one should rock the boat.

The best Labour leader since Keir Hardie, however, is still in favour of continuing with the Cold War. He is passionately in support of the NATO alliance. Far from opposing the militarism inherent in American capitalism, he is pleased as punch because Johnson likes him better than Sir Alec. The substantial, basic arguments used against Gaitskell on the subject of defence are just as valid as they ever were. Yet the 'Left' remains mute, and the boat is rocking crazily.

But by Opposing All the H-Bombs

For socialists, the key to the argument about bombs and bases lies in economics. The lunatic system of capitalism is, as we are constantly being told, not subject to slumps and booms as it was in the Bad Old Days. "Keynesian" economics have saved the day for Big Business.

Yet it was Keynes himself who said that the ideal solution for capitalism was to pay millions of men wages for digging holes and filling them up again. In this way, the terrible contradictions which arose when almost all workers were engaged in the business of producing things they want to buy or use are avoided. The gap between wages and prices is filled.

We do not have anyone filling in holes, as far as I know. Yet in Britain there are two million workers helping to build Blue Streaks and Blue Steels and HS 114's and Polares and Early Warning Stations; there are men writing pamphlets on what to do when the bomb drops in your back garden; there are soldiers rushing about beating up wogs in Cyprus and South East Asia. They are all being paid (some of them very well). The gap between wages and prices is

being filled . . . not completely . . . and not for ever. For as less and less workers are needed to produce more and more expensive weapons, the gap grows slowly bigger and bigger.

All this underlines the madness of capitalism. The system survives—why? Because it is devoting 10% of its resources to the means of destruction. With the Cold War we get all the idiotic propaganda used to split workers in different countries from each other and to distract them from their common enemy . . . all the illogical, abstract nationalism that we have had in past wars . . . and more. Thus the 'main aim' of the British Labour Party according to its greatest leader since Keir Hardie is 'to make Britain great'. What fatuous rubbish!

The Cold War and all its works has nothing to do with progress for working people. We oppose all bombs and all bases. We fight to get complete renunciation of nuclear weapons by Britain. Our voice is isolated, for the time being. It will before long become a common slogan in the Labour Movement once again. Meanwhile, to the struggle for peace and socialism two valuable years are lost.



"Humour him Hamish — he's bomb-happy"