

'Austerity' Wedding

The Royal wedding is over. Resembling an oasis of luxury in a desert of growing privations, the event shone with true regal splendour. Government representatives from many parts of the world came with the remnants of the world's monarchy to celebrate the event.

"Very great care has been taken to avoid offence against the spirit of an austere hour," wrote the "Observer". "It was typical of our Royal Family to hurt no sensibilities and to set an example of economy and moderation."

As evidence of this desire for simplicity and modesty were the royal banquets entertaining the rump of the European monarchies, and lavish expense on clothes, food, and the waste of the labour of hundreds of workers in preparation. "Inside the state rooms," wrote the "Daily Telegraph," "the scene was one of splendour, recalling pre-war days. Not since 1939 have so many tiaras and such magnificent jewels been seen at a London function. . . . Thus was displayed the "spirit of the austere hour"!

Along the route, were the posters ironically displaying the words: "WE WORK OR WANT"! What sickening hypocrisy! When the workers draw their Family Allowance of 5/- per child per week—EXCEPT THE FIRST—our "austerity" Princess will draw nearly £125 per child per week, including the first. The cost of maintaining the Royal Family is a heavy burden on taxes. The King's Civil List amounts to £140,000 a year, including "Household expenses" of £152,800 a year. The Princess receives an allowance of £15,000 a year. And while the budget has been introduced to "mop up excessive purchasing power," the income of the Princess is to be increased, and a Select Com-

mittee of the House of Commons is to examine the question of the future income of the couple.

That a Labour Government tolerates such relics of a bygone age is a betrayal of the traditional republican attitude of the Socialist movement.

Britain is the last great power to cling to constitutional monarchy. As a bulwark in the defence of capitalism it is a valuable asset to the capitalist class. The propaganda which pictures the Royal Family as a politically neutral factor in society, and a force which makes for its general stability has undoubtedly succeeded in deceiving the more backward sections of the workers.

In Italy, it was the "politically neutral" King Emmanuel who called Mussolini to power; in Greece and Spain, the Monarchy has always been linked with repression and violence. It was the King of Belgium who did not hesitate to discard so-called neutrality in favour of collaboration with the Nazis. Under similar circumstances, the British Monarchy would play a similar reactionary role in this country.

The Royal Wedding expresses once again the glaring inequalities of wealth and opportunity which exist in capitalist society, and which they personify in its naked form. It raises again the need to demand the abolition of such hereditary institutions as the Monarchy and the House of Lords, institutions which form an essential part of the general defence of capitalism and reaction.

SWING TO THE RIGHT

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allege are due to the incompetence of the Labour Government, and the restrictions on private enterprise. Those who voted Tory were deluded into believing that things would have been better had the Tories held the reins of Government. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is the Tories who are bringing pressure on the Labour leaders in Parliament to remove food subsidies, to cut the social services, and to freeze wages and really launch an all-out attack on the workers' standards.

In addition to the economic factors, the coal crisis of last year, the dollar crisis, the expulsion from Parliament of the ex-Labour M.P., G. Allighan, for corrupt practices and the censure of Walkden, M.P., for a similar offence, has left an odour around the Labour leadership, undermining the confidence of wavering elements of the middle and working class. In this atmosphere, Tory charges of nepotism on the part of the Labour Government has had a certain effect, particularly since the Labour leaders can give no effective reply.

The present difficulties, instead of impelling the Labour Government to the Left by a real offensive against capitalism, has on the contrary, impelled them to the Right, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and retreat in their own ranks. The press propaganda for a coalition; their repeated statements and hints that the Cripps-Bevin wing favour a coalition have not been effectively refuted. Among the Labour workers, there is a feeling that in the tops of the Party a genuinely coalitionist tendency exists, and this in turn, further tends to undermine the confidence of the rank and file.

Within the Labour Party, the continued inactivity over the past two years has turned to anarchy in the face of the unpopularity of the recent cuts. While the pressure from the Trade Unions has forced the Labour leaders to act with caution, the absence of any real pressure from the ranks of the Labour Party itself gives room for manoeuvring.

While the Tory machine has been conducting a great political offensive and has succeeded in mobilising a political youth movement, which, throughout the year has actively campaigned against Labour, the Labour Party has not been able to arouse an active campaigning spirit in the Party or among the youth on the basis of their present policy. Local Labour Parties carry out the minimum of propaganda-agitation activity. The Labour League of Youth hardly exists. The undoubted strengthening of the Right wing of the Labour leadership has not been countered by a corresponding and effective movement to the Left from below.

Zilliacus and the pro-Stalinist wing gain a certain response, but there is no really basic support among the more militant workers, among the more militant workers, for their policy, within the Labour Party. The "Keep Left" and "Party" are incapable of arousing an active response; it is doubtful whether they seriously want. Meanwhile, a dangerous tendency with growing support has

sprung up, with an anti-Russian and American Quisling outlook. Raymond Blackburn, M.P., George Dallas, ex-Chairman of the Labour Party, and many others are holding public meetings campaigning against "The Menace from the East."

Taken as a whole, the situation today is a very serious one for the working class and has dangerous possibilities for the future. The defeat in the elections was the first warning of the consequences of a policy of surrender to the capitalists by the Labour Party leadership. Fascism today is at present an ineffective force. But the new middle class Tory youth can readily go over to fascism in a short space of time.

In the existing conditions of world economy, no serious socialist worker believes that a utopia can be created in Britain overnight. Nevertheless, the conditions of the masses can be improved. But only on the basis of a conscious and militant offensive against capital and with the aim of introducing socialist measures whereby the technicians in direct democratic control. 33 per cent of the national income after taxation goes to the capitalists in the shape of rent, interest and profit. The major part of this portion of the national income, which is not derived from labour by hand or brain, but is purely parasitic, can be used not only to improve the lot of the working class but of the middle class as well, who are feeling the lash of capitalism.

A bold radical policy of this kind, driven forward by an inspired and determined leadership, could and would stir the fighting spirit of

the workers and would undoubtedly gain support among the middle class. But the Labour leaders have no intention of carrying out such a policy, and it is necessary to say bluntly, nor are they capable of fighting for such a policy.

It is high time for Labour workers to call a halt to the retreat in face of the capitalists. The cuts in workers' standards, the scandalous police protection given to Mosley and the fascists against the workers, the continued use of troops to break strikes, the use of the police by the Savoy employers against workers fighting for a trade union principle, these and other actions of the Labour Government can only shake the confidence further of militant sections of the Labour movement.

The only way to change the policy of the Labour leaders is by mass pressure of the rank and file. In every branch of the Labour and Trade Union movement a start must be made to create locally and nationally, committees of struggle to force the Labour leaders to begin a socialist offensive, or to replace them with elected representatives who are ready to carry out such an offensive.

The Revolutionary Communist Party assisted in getting Labour in power. At the same time, we warned of the inevitable failure of the Labour leaders to carry out a socialist programme and urged the workers to rely only on their own organised strength. Experience is bearing out the correctness of this. We are sure that future events will convince the workers that the Labour Party is incapable of overthrowing the capitalist system, and that only a mass revolutionary party basing itself on the ideas of Marx and Lenin can establish a socialist society in this and other countries.

Heard In Parliament

BY R. RALPH

Leading Labour spokesmen in Parliament have on many occasions reassured the Tories that they have no intention of abolishing the capitalist system. On the contrary, their cry, oft repeated, is "we want to make capitalism more efficient." Such speeches, needless to say, are in a somewhat different tone to those made, for instance, by the Minister of Fuel to a miners' gathering. However, it was on this note that Attlee pleaded with the Tories for national unity during the debate of October 21.

"The party opposite," he said, "unlike the party on this side of the House, seems to claim that because this party has a different point of view from them, therefore, they cannot support its efforts."

But why should the Tories want to share responsibility for the economic crisis? The "different point of view" centres round the same problem—how best to administer capitalism.

"When we were in the war," continued Attlee, "we came into the Government and we did not attempt to upset the capitalist system. We had to accept it because that was the will of the majority of the House."

But what is the "will of the majority of the House" today?—that capitalism should continue or that it should be abolished and that the first transitional stages of socialism introduced? Attlee's plea to the Tories for "unity of effort" is a clear answer to that question, which makes his talk about "not attempting to upset the capitalist system" as so much humbug, for the Labour leaders have never contemplated it—except perhaps in bad dreams.

On October 30th, a written answer by Hugh Dalton, showed how the Labour Government's benevolence to the capitalists works out in practice. It revealed that the total amount of Excess Profits Tax that has been refunded to business firms was £202,000,000, after deduction of Income Tax! This effectively explodes the myth of "equality of sacrifice", for what the Government takes from the capitalists with one hand, it gives back with the other, while ever increasing burdens are placed on the working class.

In a speech in the House of Commons on 24th October, Mr. Clement Davies, M.P., gave some interesting figures on the world situation, which he described as "in an even worse condition than

it was before the war started." He said:

At this time there are roughly 19,000,000 men in the world under arms. Forty nations are spending, in this time of economic crisis, something like £7,000 million per annum on the preparation for war, which is £2,500 million more than was being spent in 1938, before that terrible war started. Today, there are more men in uniform throughout the world than there were in 1938 and 1939, although the armed forces of Germany, Italy and Japan are now non-existent. . . . In this coming year the United States are devoting 34 per cent. of their enormous budget to military purposes; Russia, so far as we know, even on the published figures, is devoting 40 per cent.; and we in this country are devoting something like 26 per cent. of our budget to those purposes.

"One of the main causes for our troubles today is our shortage of labour. Yet at this time we have still over 1,000,000 men in our Armed Forces, and according to official figures something like 450,000 men whose whole time is occupied in providing food, clothing, munitions, and so on, for the Armed Forces. I think that figure of 450,000 is a very low estimate; I would put it at very nearly double; but taking it at 450,000, and taking our Armed Forces today at 1,200,000 it amounts to 1,650,000 men; a figure even today, in excess of the 1,500,000 people devoted to the most important matter of all, our export trade; a figure which is very nearly twice the number in the coal, 'nearby for figure far in, including the agricultural prisoners of war. In fact, two years after the end of that devastating war, we can say that today our greatest industry in this country—which is face to face with the situation described yesterday so eloquently by the right hon. and learned Gentleman—is still the military industry."

GROWING CRISIS IN FRANCE

The reshuffled Ramadier Cabinet, which was set up after the municipal electoral victory of De Gaulle is already discussing resignation and the formation of a new and "stronger Centre" Government. In the meantime De Gaulle is demanding new elections immediately and threatening "It would not do to keep legitimacy too long in abeyance."

Because of the change in foreign policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy and the presence of the mass discontent, the Stalinists have changed their "line" in France. From complete collaboration with the capitalists and active sabotage of the workers' struggles, they have placed themselves at the head of the revolt of the workers against their worsening conditions. Having used the Stalinists to stem the revolutionary wave after "liberation", the French and Italian ruling class, have now swung into the orbit of American Imperialism. This bloc of Western Europe with the United States constitutes a menacing threat for the long range war with the Soviet Union. It is this which dictated a change in line of the Communist Parties in France and Italy.

The worsening conditions of the French masses has led to a series of great strikes. The "Socialist" leaders are desperately attempting to build up a "Third Force" between the Communists and Gaullists out of the remnants of the parties which were practically wiped out at the General Election. Meanwhile, they have announced stern measures

against the danger from the Left. Their role is similar to that of the Governments in Germany before the Nazis came to power. By directing their blows against the working class, they smooth the path to power for De Gaulle.

All the so-called Liberal elements will rally to De Gaulle when faced with the choice. Already the British "Economist" world famed as a journal of Liberalism has come out decisively in favour of De Gaulle. All serious observers agree that the Ramadier or any other Government of the Centre which might follow it, can only be stop-gaps before the final solution.

In this situation, the Stalinists are not putting forward a programme of struggle, for power. They have been content to vie with the Gaullists in nationalist propaganda. The statement of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party after the municipal elections, declares the problem as: "The restoration of French independence and the preservation of Republican institutions, national sovereignty or subordination to foreigners, demo-

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Thorez Admits Errors

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moving picture, automobile, aviation and similar industries threatened with American competition more directly than others.

Just as the Stalinist policy aims to utilise the world mass movement it seeks to unleash in order to arrive at a compromise with Wall Street, the new policy of the French Stalinists aims at doing the same for a compromise with its own ruling class. Once having achieved a compromise, the phrases will be changed, and the struggle called off.

The extent to which Thorez has gone in his "self criticism" is indicative of serious unrest in the ranks of his party. The worsening economic situation drives the workers to more decisive class struggles than the splintered, partial strikes which the Stalinists have felt constrained to lead up till now. The gains made in the strikes are being wiped out by rising inflation. The threat of De Gaulle takes on a serious aspect since the elections, and brings pressure for a showdown from the right. Thus, the new turn of the Stalinists, despite its motivations, opens up a wedge in the present

situation which leads to the perspective of a decisive class battle.

The proper utilization of this wedge, so as to make a revolutionary working class solution possible, depends upon the successful intervention of a conscious vanguard with a Leninist policy. This vanguard exists in the Trotskyist Parti Communiste Internationaliste. In the current issue of its central organ the P.C.I. carried a joint manifesto with the Socialist Youth which has recently broken away from the party of Blum and Ramadier. Entitled "On the Alert against Dictatorship," the manifesto analyzes the growing danger of the de Gaulle régime, castigates the reformists of the reformists and Stalinists, and calls for the preparation of a General Strike by united front action to beat down any attempt, illegal or legal, to set up the planned Bonapartist dictatorship, and to form a government of the workers' parties based on mass control and a positive anti-capitalist programme: the establishment of a living minimum wage, the sliding scale of wages to combat inflation, workers' control of

industrial workers who have at least the trade unions to defend and improve their standards. In the absence of a revolutionary lead from the workers' organisations they will listen to the demagogic promises of the fascists who can point to the fact that they are even worse off than under the Mussolini régime. It is this which is deluding many middle class elements and civil servants into support of the tool of the very capitalism which has brought them to their miserable pass.

The middle class can be won to a bold programme of Socialist revolution. The capitalists and fascists are on the retreat today, but tomorrow they will launch a Franco movement against the Italian workers if they are given time to recover from the offensive of the workers. The spontaneous movement of the workers has been in the right direction. Instead of relying on the Government accomplices of fascism, they have warned them that unless the fascists are banned they will take the law into their own hands. But the struggle against the fascists is only part of the problem. It must be followed up by an offensive against those who breed fascism: Monopoly Capitalism and the Big Landowners. The workers are in a fighting mood. Already following on their offensive against the neo-fascist organisations, they have begun to attack the headquarters of the Government parties, and of the police protectors of the fascists!

In this situation, "Signor Togliatti," reported the "Daily Worker" of November 15, 1947, describes the situation as "very grave" and said yesterday: "The Communists will remain in the Parliamentary field as long as possible." Instead of calling on the workers to create committees of defence against fascism in every factory; and for the setting up of workers' militia to prepare to take power, Togliatti repeats the fatal advice of the workers' leaders a generation ago when faced with the same situation.

Now would be the time, when the workers are aroused and on the move, to call on them to begin the offensive to take the control of Italian Society.

Jobs for Bureaucrats

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craft, flew off to Heathrow and landed there as if nothing had happened.

But even these goings on are, of course, mild by comparison with the scandal of Lord Nathan's recent trip to the Pacific with his wife and family in a chartered plane which consumed 31,000 gallons of precious petrol and cost the taxpayer £21,000.

It becomes daily more clear that the top strata of the Labour leadership have become absorbed into the milieu of capitalist comfort, privilege and even luxury. How can such people, enjoying such living standards and conditions have any interest in destroying the economic system which bestows such favours upon them? The very thought of sweeping away the bureaucratic Control Boards and administration, and substituting workers' control is no less fearsome to the Labour bureaucrats than to the capitalists themselves.

The Labour leaders occupy their lucrative posts as a result of the struggle of the workers who built and who finance the Labour and Trade Union movement with their hard-earned pennies. But the £5,000 and £10,000 salaries of the leaders don't come into the coffers of the Labour Party.

Contrast this with the attitude of the Revolutionary Communist Party. Our Constitution speci-

fically lays down that all functionaries shall be paid skilled workers wages; that any Party member accepting a paid post in state or municipal administration as a representative of the Party, shall hand over his salary to the Party and receive only the wages of a Party official. This flows logically from our ultimate aim: the creation of a workers' government in which all delegates and officials shall be subject to election and recall and shall receive only workmen's wages. It must become a fundamental principle of the entire Labour movement.

The development of a leadership capable of leading the workers' organisations in such a struggle must begin with an immediate move to curb the aspirations of the officialdom of the movement. Throughout the Trade Unions and Labour Parties there must be a drive for officials, both in the Labour organisations and in the State apparatus to be subject to election and recall and to be paid the same wages as a skilled worker. We believe that only through such a struggle will it be possible to cleanse the workers' movement of careerism and bureaucracy and to develop a militant leadership capable of serving the interests of the working class. At the same time it is necessary to conduct a ceaseless struggle for workers' control of the nationalised enterprises. By these means the whole basis of nepotism and corruption will be swept away and the road cleared for the construction of a Socialist society and an end to the whole rotten capitalist system with its inequalities and privileges.

Italian Workers Reply to the Fascists

Following the pattern set by Mussolini after the first World War, the neo-fascists have begun a series of provocations against the working class.

In Sicily, the Fascists fired on a peaceful May Day demonstration of workers, their wives and children. The workers replied by a general strike of protest over all Italy. In the last few days in the village of Mediglia near Milan—stronghold of the working class—a member of the Uomo Qualunque ("Party of the Common Man"), one of the neo-fascist organisations formed in Italy since the collapse of Mussolini) fired on a demonstration of the workers and peasants from the shelter of his house, killing one and wounding another seriously. The workers stormed the house and immediately killed the murderer responsible.

Further provocation was the placing of a bomb in the headquarters of the Communist Party in Milan. The workers swiftly replied by a general strike in Milan AND IMMEDIATELY TOOK REPRISAL ACTION AGAINST THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE NEO-FASCIST ORGANISATIONS, the Uomo Qualunque and Movimento Sociale Italiana, which were set on fire and sacked.

But the workers were not content to remain on the defensive and with sure instinct began the counter-attack. In nearly all the cities of Italy, big and small, the workers have gone into action against the fascists. Demonstrations of over a hundred thousand in Milan, tens of thousands in other cities, have not stopped at words. Bari, Cremona, Lome, Bologna, witnessed militant attacks on the headquarters of the fascist organisations. Even in Naples and Palermo, former strongholds of reaction, the workers have gone into action. The backward South of Italy has followed the lead of the North.

Naturally, the police, who have always been conveniently absent or inactive when the fascists have attacked the workers in Italy in

the past, have been called out to protect the fascists. Troops have been called out in many towns to assist the police. Tear gas and firearms have been used against the working class.

BUT THE WORKERS HAVE SHOWN THAT FASCISM WILL NOT BE SMUGGLED INTO POWER BY THE CAPITALISTS WITHOUT A FIGHT. The terrible memory of the victory of Mussolini and the means by which he was brought to power and tyrannised over the workers for two decades, is too fresh in their minds.

Italian capitalism is in a desperate situation—far more serious than after World War I. In an article in "The Times" of November 7th, which if anything underestimates the situation, it is described thus:

"In Italy there are 1,250,000 workers without jobs. Low output in manufacture and farming has meant serious impoverishment, aggravated by inflation, bringing with it an inequality of suffering and a waste of resources. The shops are full of luxuries and there are no clothing coupons, but the average worker must spend 90% of his income on food to provide his family with 2,600 calories a head a day, whereas he spent 65% of his income before the war to provide them with 3,000 calories. The middle class, the lower salary groups, teachers and Civil servants, suffer most. To get even the present inadequate supplies of food and materials for industry, requires large imports, and the Government is happy to see one month ahead in paying for these overseas purchases."

The Government is bankrupt; the masses have reached the limits of their endurance. The middle class is disillusioned with the democracy and all the promises it made to them. Being unorganised, they are even worse off than the

PALESTINE PARTITION

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and supported in the U.N.O. by Russia!

The argument of the Russian delegate to U.N.O. that the tension between Jews and Arabs made the creation of an independent unified State impracticable, was taken directly from the lexicon of Imperialism. Instead of demanding the unification of the countries of the Arab East, which have been split up by imperialism for more than 30 years, the Stalinist bureaucracy has given support to a new partition.

Far from being a "solution" of the Palestine problem partition will only aggravate the tension between Arabs and Jews and divert the struggle of the oppressed workers and fellahen of the Arab East from a true struggle for national and social freedom into anti-Jewish, chauvinist channels. Partition of Palestine means not only a danger to the existence of the Jewish minority in that country and to the Jewish communities all over the Arab East; it is also a blow to the class struggle of the Arab Labour Movement which emerged out of the development of the war years, a blow to the agrarian revolution. It is a wedge in the heart of the Arab countries whose progress can only be guaranteed by their unification.

All these considerations have become irrelevant to the Stalinist bureaucracy, when it comes to making a diplomatic deal with Imperialism.

Divide—And Let Others Rule For You!

How to explain the recent policy of the British Government for Palestine? It was sheer imperialist hypocrisy when Mr. Creech Jones told the U.N. Committee on Palestine that "the British Government were ready to assume responsibility for giving effect to any plan agreed to by the Jews and Arabs." He wished to make the world believe that Britain had played in Palestine the role of the disinterested conciliator. But what are the facts?

A few weeks ago, on Friday, October the 24th, a Jew was arrested in Tiberias and summoned to appear in the Court on the charge of "disturbing public security"—because he had distributed leaflets of the "League for Jewish Arab Co-operation" calling for peace between Arabs and Jews!

At the same time, British officers are training the armies of the Arab States and preparing them for their "task" in Palestine. And the Zionist military force "Hagana," whose main purpose for

existence is to combat the Arab National movement, is today permitted semi-legality by the British authorities—an army which at less propitious times for the British, has been illegalised.

This does not prevent Sir Alan Cunningham, the British High Commissioner, from hypocritically "warning" Jews and Arabs that chaos and bloodshed might follow British evacuation!

British imperialism has been weakened to such a degree that it cannot afford any longer to rule every country in the Arab East directly by its military forces. Strategic readjustment has become necessary and local rulers must be found who will be ready to direct the class struggle into as much communal trouble as possible. After an education of almost 30 years under the British mandate, both the Zionist leaders and the Arab feudal lords and capitalists seem to be regarded as adequately trained for the task.

The Middle Eastern and the British working class must frustrate these malicious plans. No diplomatic deal between American Imperialism and the Stalinist bureaucracy will keep the workers of the Arab East from fighting for full unification of the Arab countries, with equal rights and autonomy for the Jews in a united Palestine. The Trotskyist groups in Egypt and Palestine will continue to expose the hidden policy of British High Commissioners and military envoys, to plunge the Arab East into communal bloodshed, British workers! Demand the withdrawal of all troops and communal warmongering military missions from the Middle East!

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cracy or fascism, these are the two aspects of this one problem."

The French Stalinists long for a coalition with the capitalists, which would orientate its foreign policy on the Eastern bloc instead of the West. In return for this they would abandon their present agitation. They are not placing the problem squarely of a struggle for workers' power and the destruction of the capitalist system as the only way out. The formation of Vigilance Committees in the factories and streets to defend the organisations and rights of the workers is a step forward. But unless it is linked to a struggle for power, can only leave the working class suspended in mid-air and lead to a terrible defeat.

A complete break with the capitalist parties and the formation of a C.P. and S.P. Government linked to the Committees of struggle, is the next step forward for the working class.