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# COMMUNIST REVIEW

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THE COMMUNIST REVIEW, a monthly theoretical journal of the Communist Party, resumed publication in March, 1946. Its aim is to combine the treatment of current political issues with the examination of more fundamental questions of Marxist theory, and in particular to enable Communists to make their contribution to Marxist theory in relation to British conditions and British experience.

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## ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

JOHN GOLLAN

TOO LOOSE TALK ABOUT AN ANGLO-AMERICAN BLOC might give a distorted picture of Anglo-American relationships today and of probable lines of development of future policy. With 60 per cent of the productive capacity of the capitalist world, the United States is the undisputed capitalist world power, aiming not only to take over the positions of Japan and Germany, but to become the controller of Europe and increasingly to gain economic supremacy in the Dominions and the Empire at the expense of Britain. The fact that the public direction of America's campaign is against the U.S.S.R. in no way changes the likelihood that Britain is being sorted out for the kill.

It is on the crucial issue of world trade that Anglo-American differences are sharpest and threaten to break out into open conflict, particularly on the so-called dollar question. While Europe is suffering from a crisis of under-production caused by the economic dislocation and ravages of the Second World War, the United States, with production in 1947 88 per cent above the 1935 average, is heading rapidly to a crisis of over-production. As internal needs meet saturation point, the issue of the American export trade is put with redoubled sharpness.

The slogans of the new American trade drive are well known: Multilateral trade, freely-convertible currencies, etc., in keeping with the U.S.A.'s production advantages and Wall Street's drive against the new democracies and State regulation of trade which has developed in practically every European country. The financial negotiations for the Anglo-American Loan Agreement were used to force concessions from the British Government to fit in with these aims. The purpose of the £937,500,000 credit was clearly stated to be "to assist the Government of the United Kingdom to assume the obligations of multilateral trade." The main concessions were the understanding and agreement that sterling would become freely convertible by July 15, 1947; that in the event of import restrictions being imposed by the British Government, the principle of non-discrimination would be applied, and that the outstanding £3,500 million sterling balances should be convertible over a period, with negotiations for cancellation of a certain proportion. Alongside the actual terms of the loan, the British Government was required to give support to the American-sponsored international trade organisation and the World Trade Charter, and consider reduction or elimination of the system of Empire

Preferences. The American concession to multilateral trade was to be reduction in U.S. tariffs.

William Clayton, of the Department of Commerce at the House of Representative Hearings, on March 26 declared that the main aim of the International Trade Organisation and Charter from the American point of view was to disrupt the State control of foreign trade, as this was "not the sort of climate in which our type of foreign trade, carried on by private business men, can expand and prosper"; and he argued that Wall Street must use its position of economic strength immediately. He pointed out the value of the American import trade to the rest of the world and that the tariff system controlled access to this market. "Therefore our tariff is our bargaining stock." Larger foreign markets for the enormous surpluses now being produced in America were essential. "That is what we are going to Geneva for," he concluded, "to bargain for a chance for American private enterprise to continue and to benefit American economy through expanded foreign trade."

Bilateral negotiations between the administration and the Republican Party in preparation for the Geneva Trade Conference resulted in the so-called "Vandenberg" Tariff, with the American negotiators at Geneva given formal power to reduce tariffs by as much as 50 per cent and the Tariff Commission ready to determine if such concessions threatened serious injury to domestic producers, and the American Government pledged to invoke the clause by which the American producer can secure the withdrawal of any reduction which seemed likely to make him meet the test of competitive costs. Commenting on this position, *The Economist* (15.3.47) declared that this arrangement "is no less pernicious than any earlier schedule approved by congressional lobbies and is the worst possible introduction to the Geneva talks next month."

*The Times* (17.3.47) in an editorial headed "The American Giant" plaintively complains, and doubts whether the Republican Party "can show the same willingness to co-operate on the economic side of foreign policy as it has shown on the political side," and goes on to state: "But the possibility of tariff concessions being banned if they lead to larger imports, which surely should be their purpose, is too menacing to be disregarded. Such a provision would introduce something very much like a veto in economic affairs as the price of American participation."

Only the first skirmishes have taken place at Geneva, but these are significant enough. Cripps dealt at length with Britain's special trade arrangements and economic connections with the Commonwealth countries on which the economic vitality of the United Kingdom

depended. The Conference, he claimed, would have to reconcile the two facts—this special arrangement "more delicately balanced than some seem to realise, judging from the suggestions for its 'direction' into new channels at short notice," and the need for development and change in the interests of progress. The essential thing for the Conference to succeed, in his view, was that America should import more goods from Britain and the rest of Europe, and in reference to the creditor position of the U.S.A. declared: "It is the hope of all that the United States, by maintaining and satisfying a demand for the products of the rest of the world, would make it possible for us to join in this great new project," the clear implication being unless this was done there wouldn't be any great new project or reduction of Empire preferences.

*The Economist* (29.3.47), in reviewing the opening stages of the Conference, demanded that the British delegates seek a major amendment of the draft Charter, "something in the nature of an escape clause for countries in Britain's present difficult position" so long as the balance of payments crisis lasts, in order that there be some exemption from the "full rigour of the principle of non-discrimination."

One of the main aims of the U.S. drive is to capture the British Empire trade, and this is the main reason for the attack on the Empire preferences. The American penetration of the British Empire markets before the Second World War is well known, and today the U.S. Press is full of statements regarding the trade drive to the Empire.

The Far East-American Council of Commerce and Industry has just added a new division to the organisation to help develop trade with India. During 1946, 181 million dollars' worth of U.S. merchandise was exported to India, nearly four times as much as before the Second World War. The President of the Council stated in an interview that the main exports' effort will be concentrated on capital goods. *The New York Herald-Tribune* (April 11) remarked that "India's weakened political ties with Britain, lessening of exchange controls within the sterling bloc, and increased Indian preference for American goods, are the principal factors expected to bring increased United States-India trade."

Britain's capacity to take counter action against the American drive is limited by her economic and manpower crisis and acute balance of payments problem. While the world is gasping out for goods, Britain, in the grip of under-production, has great difficulties in supplying the goods and on many items the goods for export are sorely needed for the re-equipment and modernisation of British industry. The volume of exports in 1946 was roughly equal to that of 1938, although greater in value. The official target for 1947 is 140 per cent of the 1938

volume, which means a 40 per cent increase on the level of 1946. While 42 per cent of Britain's imports come from the Western hemisphere, however, only 14 per cent of our exports go there, and the drain on dollars is greater than the total trade deficit of £350 millions. Only 4 per cent of our exports went to America and almost another 4 per cent to Canada; whereas 88 per cent of our exports went to the "soft-currency" areas.

U.S. exports in 1946 exceeded imports by 8,150 million dollars compared with an annual average in 1937 to 1939 of 548 millions. The December issue of the *Federal Reserve Bulletin* suggests the 1947 figure will be 5½ billions and allowing for various unilateral transfers, etc., arrives at a final excess of exports of 3½ billions, which can be financed by drafts upon the British line of credit, by the Export Import Bank, and the two Bretton Woods Agencies. Bulking large in these considerations is gold and dollar resources of 19 billions held by foreign countries in 1946 (of which some 2½ billion was held in Britain at that time). This very optimistic estimate does not answer the question of what is to happen in the future when there are little or no unilateral transfers, and dollar holdings are down to working balances. Is the U.S. likely to purchase foreign goods or services or lend to the tune of 7.8 billions a year? *The Economist* (8.3.47), trying to answer this question, stated that while there would be a growing bill in the United States for raw materials and that tourist traffic would increase, "it will take years before these trends will add many billions to the present imports." Lending will also continue, but it would not, *The Economist* concluded, reach anything like the 7.8 billion level, apart from the fact that lending leads to the contra payment for interest.

On this the present position is roughly as follows. The January *Bulletin of the Department of Commerce* calculates that an overall outside total of 10.4 billion dollars has been lent. Excluding the operations of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, debt charges will rise from 164 million in 1950 to 366 million in 1952. Other British estimates have put the total as high as 400 to 450 millions in the 1950s. With the U.S. contributions of roughly six billions to the bank and the fund added to existing loans, debt charges will be substantially above one billion. When this is put side by side with the consistent American refusal to allow substantial quantities of British and other goods to enter the U.S.A., it is clear that the position will increasingly sharpen. It should be noted also that Canada, Britain's second chief creditor, is also faced with an acute dollar problem, the net deficit in 1946 being 263 million.

*The Observer* (20.4.47) devoted an editorial to the U.S. lending

policy and the problem of repayment. Even if the U.S. were prepared to take imports, the writer declared, the volume of goods is not there, and the conclusion was drawn that the U.S. "must be ready to give some of it away."

But President Truman and Wall Street are not pursuing this policy in order to act as Santa Claus. Both in the Far East and in Europe American policy has a major object—the elimination of Britain's remaining power.

There can be no question that the U.S.A. has sought to utilise the defeat of Japan enormously to strengthen her strategic position in the Far East—not only in Japan, but also in China—while the older imperialisms, particularly Britain, faced with rising movements of national independence, have not been able to maintain their pre-war positions.

The period since VJ Day has seen McArthur and U.S. big business digging in in Japan. Raw cotton from the U.S.A. has restarted the Japanese textile industry. It has been estimated that in 1946 the U.S. supplied almost all Japanese imports and bought 70 per cent of her exports. There has been a steady stream of American businessmen to Japan since it was announced that the Zaibatsu concerns were to be dissolved, and Americans are buying into the Japanese business concerns. The whole idea is clearly one of American-backed Japanese industry driving to capture the Asiatic markets, assisting the United States in ousting competitors, in the first place, Great Britain. British banks in Japan are still not opened and the demand for equal access to Japanese trade is still not met.

U.S. political policy in Japan, with the Mikado and Japanese Government intact, has evoked repeated protests from other members of the Far Eastern Council, and, while the results of the recent Japanese elections were received with great satisfaction by McArthur, *The Times* (29.4.47) wrote that "the readiness of the electorate to be content with minor changes is perhaps disquieting."

McArthur recently demanded an early Peace Treaty and declared that Japan could not pay reparations; that the armed forces must be withdrawn and the Allied control replaced by "mild controls" by the United Nations. To make trade successful and to allow Japan to buy the three million tons of food required, he argued that trade must be taken out of the hands of the Allied control "bottleneck," and put into the hands of private traders, and once on her feet Japan could "repay to the United States her present indebtedness of 200 million dollars and all the dollars she could borrow in future."

Simultaneously with U.S. policy in Japan, the drive has been made to establish U.S. strategic and economic control in China. Four

thousand million dollars of goods have been given by the U.S. Government to Chiang in order to wage civil war; the training of the Kuomintang Army has been placed entirely in the hands of American instructors, with U.S. equipment being used throughout. A U.S. naval base is being completed at Tsing Tao. The Chinese-American Commercial Agreement, signed in November, 1946, not only makes China an American colony, but is equally designed completely to exclude Britain from the Chinese market. This treaty forbids China to discriminate against United States' goods by tariffs, quota restrictions, exchange controls, etc.; binds China to support U.S. ideas on general world trade; gives U.S. big business most-favoured-nation's rights in China for mining and internal and coastal shipping; and allows American trusts full freedom to operate throughout the whole territory of China, with United States nationals possessing the same rights as Chinese nationals. It is perhaps this background of American domination which has been the reason for the consistent editorial plea for compromise in China advanced by *The Times*, and the hope that a more democratic China in the long run would be more in British interests than the present set-up.

While the immediate reasons for the Truman speech were the increasing difficulties of British policy in Greece and the general crisis position of Britain, the new American policy will bring an enormous accession of U.S. strategic strength in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

It was preceded by the two agreements concerning the oil resources of the Middle East reached by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey on December 26, 1946. Twenty-four hours after the Truman speech the Standard Oil Company and Socony Vacuum announced that they would finance the £30 million Trans-Arabian pipeline linking the oil of the Persian Gulf with the Eastern Mediterranean.

An immediate effect of the Truman policy, while part of the drive against the U.S.S.R., is to strengthen enormously American strategic positions in the Middle East *vis-à-vis* Britain's "life-lines of the Empire." It is noteworthy that in the House and Senate hearings this point was stressed by Robert Patterson, Secretary for War.

Economically the aim of the agreement is to obtain complete American domination in Greece. Half of the 300 million dollar loan to Greece is intended for civil use. In the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives (March 24) William Clayton made perfectly clear that the loan would be administered by an American Civil Mission, and all expenditure would be subject to the control of that mission. The far-reaching nature of the control

envisaged was seen in Clayton's statement that "sound policies" would be demanded on "fiscal matters; a modern tax structure; strict husbanding and control of foreign exchange earnings of the Greek people; conservation of remaining gold resources; a restriction of unessential imports; and the expansion of Greek exports."

Alongside this, business penetration is proceeding apace. American Airways has acquired the majority of shares in the Greek Internal Airways Corporation, and it is reported that a Greek Parliamentary Commission has approved legislation for the concession of Kirki lead mines in Thrace to an American mining corporation.

The Truman speech was timed to coincide with the Moscow Conference, and subsequent developments showed that Marshall's main purpose at the Conference was to launch an attack on the agreements previously recorded at Potsdam and Crimea. On the main issues the American line was endorsed and supported by Bevin.

The Anglo-American zonal fusion solved no British problems. On the contrary, because denazification is held up, with the Junker elements in control, incompetence rampant, and with no support among the people, production in the British zone is in a parlous state. With a net loss of £38 millions in 1946 and with the financial agreement on fusion still further increasing the dollar problem for Britain, difficulties have multiplied. A partition line creates difficulties for German social democracy, Britain's main political support, while the policy of political division and German administration in the various "Landers," pursued by both America and Britain, makes the creation of a unified German administration for the West difficult.

It is noteworthy that Bevin's first step on his return from the conference was to ratify the Anglo-Polish financial agreement after a friendly discussion with the Polish Prime Minister; this was followed by the announcement that broad agreement had been reached on an Anglo-Polish Trade Treaty.

While not immediately necessary for the U.S.A., a European settlement and economic recovery and European trade is vital for Britain. Without doubt this was also connected with the discussions on the revision and strengthening of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty which took place simultaneously with the main Moscow Conference, and the resumption of the Anglo-Soviet trade talks. It was precisely the Truman speech and subsequent developments in American policy, with the support given to them by Britain, which created the difficulties on the revision of the treaty in the sense that genuine Soviet-British friendship with all that it implies and an Anglo-American bloc policy are incompatible. A strengthened Anglo-Soviet Treaty is vital for Britain's security and would be a cornerstone of a real democratic

Europe. There can be no question that the successful conclusion of these negotiations could speed an Anglo-Russian trade agreement, which is already under discussion, and could be of immense importance for the economic recovery of Britain.

America could not pursue the aggressive Truman line without the full compliance and support of Britain, but each additional step in this policy at the same time strengthens the U.S. at the expense of Britain and weakens her association with her real allies in Europe. It is this hard fact which has caused increasingly wider sections of the Labour, trade union and progressive movements to realise where the policy is leading to, while the Tory reactionaries, in the spirit of Churchill's Fulton speech, have been the most ardent supporters of the American bloc.

At the same time many bourgeois circles have for some time been seriously disturbed about the trend of events. In consistent editorials over the latter half of 1946, *The Times* pointed out that a correct British foreign policy demanded simultaneous and equal agreement of Britain both with the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.

A leading article on January 1 on this theme dealt with Britain's acute problems and touched on the difficulties of Soviet-British relations. The difficulties "of a different order" with America were then discussed. These were the need for special trading agreements of Britain with the European countries, including the U.S.S.R., as against American free trade. The result, it was claimed, if Britain fell in line with "extremes expressions" of American wishes:

"could not ultimately be other than to prejudice beyond repair British relations with not only the Soviet Union, but with the greater part of Europe; and upon these relations with Europe, as with the Commonwealth, Britain's economic wellbeing, and even her political security, will vitally depend. Co-operation with the United States must be an axiom of British policy. But the assumption that unreserved co-operation with the United States is by itself an adequate substitute for an independent policy cannot be supported, quite apart from the partisan and prejudiced considerations which have lately been advanced in this connection. Great Britain's interests are so many-sided and her present economic position so precarious that it is unlikely that any single formula, or any single alliance, will provide a key to the right path."

The case could hardly be better put.

In repeated interviews, Stalin has shown that the Soviet Union with its great resources is willing and eager to co-operate with both

Britain and the U.S.A. in the solution of the problems of world peace and economic recovery. The interview given to Stassen was an offer to the American people of what could be done if the Truman line was abandoned, just as the statement made to Marshall was a clear warning that the Truman line would fail, although negotiation and compromise could solve the problems and secure an economically integrated and democratically united Germany essential for rapid European recovery.

It should be clear from all the evidence that an Anglo-American bloc of equal partners is an impossibility. Contradictions and developments are too acute and can only result in increasing British subservience to American domination. Such domination can only enormously sharpen existing acute economic tensions, deepen the crisis of capitalism, and betray genuine British interests. There can be no road other than disaster in the attempt to re-establish the old positions of British imperialism. Neither the power to do this, nor the opportunity, are any longer there, and it is this attempt which exacerbates every aspect of the economic crisis in Britain and increases every strain on British manpower.

The only possible policy open to us is genuine Three Power co-operation, with the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. In Britain there is the unique opportunity to strike a blow for this line by increasing resistance to American "anti-Communist" policy and economic pressure, the cornerstone of which would be the successful conclusion of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty negotiations. This in itself could create a fundamental turn in the world situation, strengthen the hands of the progressive forces in the U.S.A., rally every country feeling the dollar pressure, and lay the basis for a new world settlement and the solution of Britain's problems.

## ENGLAND'S DEMOCRATIC ARMY

CHRISTOPHER HILL

THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO England had a democratic army, really democratic, so democratic that it would give our Whitehall brass-hats the creeps if anything like it existed today. This army produced ideas about politics which are still of interest today. The object of the present article is to recall the way in which this army was organised and the ideas which it produced.

It was in the middle of the English bourgeois revolution, in which

political power was transferred from the feudal landed class, with its representatives the King, the Bishops and the Peers, to the new bourgeoisie in town and country, represented especially in the House of Commons and the City of London. By 1647 the civil war against Charles I and the cavaliers had been won; two years later the King himself was to be brought to the block as "a traitor to the good people of this nation."

But winning the war had not been easy. The bourgeoisie had the longer purse; but the cavaliers were at first the better fighters. The fox-hunting, swashbuckling gentry of the outlying regions of England, with their armed retainers and dependent tenantry, were accustomed to fighting: the citizens of London and the yeomen farmers of the home counties were not. Moreover, they were organised in local militias which hated serving outside their own county. To beat the cavaliers new organisational methods were called for, and a cause to fight for: Parliament could win only by appealing to the people.

It was an East Anglian country gentleman who discovered the importance of morale. On the field of battle after a parliamentary defeat, Oliver Cromwell observed to his cousin, John Hampden: "Your troopers are most of them old decayed serving men and tapsters and such kind of fellows; and *their* troopers are gentlemen's sons. . . . You must get men of a spirit . . . that is likely to go on as far as gentlemen will go, or else I am sure you will be beaten still." Cromwell got down to class realities: in his own troop, he said, "I had rather have a plain russet-coated captain that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows, than that which you call a gentleman and is nothing else."

Many people on the Parliamentary side were frightened of arming the people, of proclaiming that the war was being fought for democratic principles; some indeed were not quite sure that they wanted to win too decisively. A tussle was needed with these reactionaries before Cromwell's ideas were adopted. But finally all were ejected from their commands who owed their position merely to social rank; and the New Model Army was created.

It was very new indeed. It was a national army, paid centrally, with a unified command and under the general direction of Parliament. It was an army of the career open to the talents. Once the lords were purged from their commands, able men from any walk of life were able to come to the top. The cavaliers jeered bitterly at the "cobblers, draymen and brewers" who officered the New Model Army. As in the higher command peers were replaced by commoners who really wanted to beat the enemy, so down through all ranks efforts were made to enrol volunteers who felt that the cause mattered. Complete freedom of discussion was allowed for the rank and file of

this army. The Rev. Richard Baxter, a conservative-minded army chaplain, was horrified at their goings on:

"I found a new face of things which I never dreamed of. I heard the plotting heads very hot upon that which intimated their intention to subvert both Church and State. . . . I perceived that they took the king for a tyrant and an enemy, and really intended absolutely to master him or to ruin him . . . They said: 'What were the lords of England but William the Conqueror's colonels, or the barons but his majors, or the knights but his captains?' . . . My life among them was a daily contending with seducers."

But though uncomfortable for chaplains, this atmosphere of free discussion must have been intoxicating for the soldiers. For centuries the English people had been kept illiterate, spoon-fed by a single State Church which persecuted "heretics." Now they were able freely to think for themselves, to discuss problems with their fellows; soon they would try to translate their thoughts into action. Because the Church had so long monopolised education, and the Bible was the only book easily accessible, men still tended to talk politics in religious language: orthodox historians speak of "religious toleration" in Cromwell's army, and of the whole bourgeois revolution, as a "Puritan Revolution." But it was far more than that. Men learn quickly in revolutions; we can see from Baxter's pained observations that the soldiers were no longer satisfied with pie in the sky: they wanted it in this world, too. Baxter shows the mix-up of politics and religion when he writes: "the thing contrived was an heretical democracy." Democracy was indeed a heresy for the ruling class and its propagandists.

Sixty years earlier a Secretary of State had dismissed the larger half of the population in the following words: "Day labourers, poor husbandmen, yea, merchants or retailers which have no free land, copy-holders and all artificers . . . have no voice nor authority in our commonwealth, and no account is made of them, but only to be ruled." That was still true in 1640. The gentlemen and merchants sitting in the House of Commons had no wish to see this changed now that *their* interests had been secured by victory over the king and the cavaliers. But here is what the men who had done the fighting thought, expressed in the dignified language of one of the New Model Army's manifestos:

"We were not a mere mercenary army, hired to serve any arbitrary power of a State, but called forth and conjured, by the several Declarations of Parliament, to the defence of our own and the people's just rights and liberties. We, by their invitation, took up arms in judgment and conscience, to preserve the nation from tyranny and oppression and,

therefore, were obliged to insist upon our rights and freedoms as commoners."

This then was the situation by the spring of 1647. The war had been won; Charles I was a prisoner, his supporters defeated and disarmed; Parliament decided it was time to get rid of these soldiers who seemed to have the extraordinary idea that they had won the war for themselves. Parliament coolly proposed to disband the army, paying some, but not all, of its arrears of wages. Some regiments were to be given the option of volunteering for a disagreeable campaign in Ireland, to suppress the revolt of the Irish people against the dictatorship of alien British landlords. Of the reforms and liberties so lavishly promised when the army was being recruited there was no word.

But this was a politically mature army. The rank and file of the cavalry sent a deputation "to know whether the officers . . . would effectually fall upon some petition in their behalfs"; if not they would act for themselves. A vast spontaneous organisation sprang up, first among the cavalry, then all through the army. Each troop or company elected delegates and then chose two or more from their own number, known as agitators, to represent the whole regiment. These drew up a petition to Parliament and then remained as a standing committee.

The movement was not at first directed against the officers, who shared the troops' interest in being paid: the agitators were anxious only lest they should sell out to Parliament. ("And therefore, brave commanders, the Lord put a spirit of courage into your hearts, that you may stand fast . . . Is it not better to die like men than to be enslaved and hanged like dogs? . . . We have been quiet and peaceable in obeying all orders and commands, yet now we have a just cause to tell you, if we be not relieved in these our grievances, we shall be forced to that which we pray God to divert.") Already political demands were being put forward "beyond the proper concernments of soldiers" about which the officers were uneasy. But for the moment they had to accept the movement. "We knew no better way to prevent such discontents from being blown up into any mutinous distemper," they said later in their defence. For the moment the army was united and the agitators were leading it.

By the end of April the regimental representatives were meeting regularly; committees and sub-committees were set up without authority from the officers, and despite their opposition. In one meeting in May "every foot soldier gave 4d. apiece towards defraying the charges," which argues a considerable degree of organisation; and 4d. was half a day's pay. The soldiers attended meetings with red ribbons tied on their left arm, to show "that we will defend the equity of our petition with our blood."

On May 15 and 16 there was a meeting between officers and representatives from the regiments; observers from nearly every troop and company also attended. All reported that the army would neither disband nor go to Ireland until its grievances were attended to: one or two colonels who tried to describe their regiments as more docile were at once corrected by their subalterns, fortified by the presence of the soldiers' delegates. Some junior officers were clearly working with the rank and file, notably Cornet Joyce, of whom more shortly.

After the meeting a report was drawn up for Parliament, signed by Fairfax, Cromwell and the other generals, saying that the army was solid in its demands: unity of the rank and file had forced the officers into line. Having thus won over Fairfax's army, the agitators sent three of their number to General Poyntz's army up in the north, generally regarded as a politically backward force. Poyntz wanted to arrest the emissaries, but dared not. They organised discussion meetings and petitions, and within just over six weeks Poyntz was arrested by agitators elected by his own troops. The northern army joined hands with Fairfax's. Odd regiments and companies in garrison towns "received orders from the agitators," upon which they expelled their officers and marched to join their fellows. Other emissaries were sent to London and other parts of the country to expound the soldiers' cause: manifestos of support began to come in from all sides.

The soldiers' delegates were now in virtual command of all the land forces in England. Hostile officers were beaten out of quarters on the agitators' initiative; and the general could do nothing about it. Fairfax was asked to order a general rendezvous; otherwise "we . . . shall be necessitated . . . to do such things ourselves." Fairfax's Council of War stated its conviction that the agitators could be as good as their word; so a rendezvous was ordered for June 5.

Two days before this the agitators had taken the offensive. Cornet Joyce had been sent to Oxford with 500 horse to seize an ammunition dump. On the way they swung aside to Holmby House, where Charles I was held as Parliament's prisoner, drove away the colonel commanding the garrison (with the help of his own troops) and seized the king. He was taken away as a hostage. Historians dispute whether Cromwell was told in advance what the agitators were going to do; but the point is that whether told or not he could not have prevented it. Joyce was, in fact, acting *against* the generals, who were rightly suspected of negotiating with the King behind the army's back. Joyce was acting as the emissary of the army, not of its generals. When Charles I asked to see his commission he pointed to the 5,000 grim troopers lined up around the King.

At the rendezvous on June 5, at the agitators' demand, a General

Council of the Army was set up, composed of the generals plus two officers and two other ranks "to be chosen from each regiment." Henceforth this Army Council (the Russian for it would be Army Soviet) was in effective command. At the instance of the agitators the army began to move on London, where Parliament still refused to compromise. In August, the city was occupied and many of the reactionary M.P.s fled before they could be purged as the soldiers' delegates demanded.

But by now the generals were anxious to call a halt. They were now in power themselves and had got all they wanted. They "discouraged the agitators from meddling with matters which did not concern them" and began to pack the Army Council by introducing *all* the officers. Some agitators were bought off by promotion. A bourgeois historian sums up with a naïve assumption that all's fair that saves the ruling class: "To organise the army while weakening the power of the agitators by bringing them into close contact with the officers, and at the same time to obtain from the soldiers themselves authority for the pursuance of a policy of moderation, was a service worthy of Cromwell's intervention."

In October, five cavalry regiments, dissatisfied with their agitators, recalled them and replaced them by new delegates closer to the feelings of those whom they represented, thus anticipating a procedure provided for in the Soviet constitution. The new agitators put forward more definite political and economic demands—for manhood suffrage (excluding those who had collaborated with the enemy), new Parliaments every two years, and a series of economic and legal reforms to the advantage of the small man. By November 4 the representatives of 16 regiments had declared their adherence to the new proposals. A pamphlet on October 29 told the soldiers: "Ye can create new officers. Necessity knows no law."

The last meeting of the Army Council began at Putney on October 28. The agitators were supported by two civilians, Wildman and Petty, to stress their solidarity with the people of London. The question in debate was the government of England. "We have had a great war for power," said Wildman. The army had seized power from Charles I and the cavaliers. How was it to be used?

The generals argued for "continuity." They wanted the framework of the State to be altered as little as possible. Themselves mostly landowners and business men, they wished to take over the old State machine, to adapt it to their class needs, rather than decisively to transform it. The agitators and City Levellers with a clear vision of the realities of political power, saw that the rank-and-file soldiers and the common people would get nothing out of their victory over

the old order unless there were far more decisive changes. A London Leveller a year earlier had proclaimed this: "Whatever our forefathers were, or whatever they did or suffered or were enforced to yield unto, we are the men of the present age, and ought to be absolutely free from all kinds of exorbitancies, molestations or arbitrary power." The Levellers wanted to emphasize that there had been a revolutionary break, to refound the State on a more democratic basis, to proclaim and protect the rights of all citizens: not merely to let power pass from one group of exploiters to another.

"I would fain know what all the soldiers have fought for all this while," asked Colonel Rainborough, the only field officer to support the agitators; "he hath fought to enslave himself, to give power to men of riches, men of estates." "Our very laws were made by our conquerors," said Wildman: now that the old ruling class had been defeated the laws must be changed to suit the needs of the people. "The poorest he that is in England," said Rainborough, "hath a life to live as the greatest he, and therefore . . . every man that is to live under a government ought first by his own consent to put himself under that government." "That's the undeniable maxim of government," added Wildman, "that all government is in the free consent of the people."

These were revolutionary ideas in the seventeenth century. What had the generals to say in reply? Democracy, they thought, would lead to calling in question the sacred principle of private property. "If the master and servant shall be equal electors," said Colonel Rich simply, ". . . it may happen that the majority may by law . . . destroy property." So there must be no democracy. "In a general sense," said Ireton, "liberty cannot be provided for if property be preserved." And, of course, he was for property. This has been the fundamental dilemma of bourgeois democracy ever since: the more truly democratic it becomes, the greater the likelihood that the foundations of bourgeois rule will be challenged.

Once the issue between property and the people had been posed as clearly as that, the generals did not stop at talking. A few days later at another rendezvous Cromwell picked out one of the leaders of the rank and file and had him shot. Eighteen months later there was a final flare-up, and Cromwell was heard banging the Council table and shouting: "You have no other way to deal with these men but to break them in pieces. . . . If you do not break them they will break you." They were broken. Six years later Oliver told a gratified House of Commons: "It is some satisfaction, if a commonwealth . . . must needs suffer, it should rather suffer from rich men than from poor men." It has been suffering ever since.

In the seventeenth century, Leveller democracy could be broken in pieces. The capitalist system was only just beginning to develop, and had centuries of progressive constructive work before it. Because capitalism was undeveloped, so too was the working class. The rank and file of the New Model Army was composed of peasants and small craftsmen: there was none of the solidarity which the factory system forges in the proletariat. The agitators and the Levellers dreamed of a democracy of small producers because there was as yet no class which could challenge the existence of capitalism as a system; there were only isolated figures in seventeenth-century England who dreamed of a society based on communal ownership of production, on Socialism. For that, economic conditions were not ripe.

But if the agitators could not then put forward a constructive alternative, they already saw what was wrong with capitalism: its denial of the rights of common individuals, its assertion of the superiority of property rights. The Leveller leaders had a tremendous confidence that they were speaking for the people who should come after them: "Posterity we doubt not shall reap the benefit of our endeavours, whatever shall become of us." They saw, too, that united action by ordinary people was the way to overthrow the evils of capitalism. "If writings be true," said Rainborough, "there hath been many scufflings between the honest men of England and those that have tyrannised over them . . . if the people find" that the laws are not "suitable to free men as they are, I know no reason should deter men . . . from endeavouring by all means to gain anything that might be of more advantage to them than that government under which they live."

## NEW WAGES STRUCTURE FOR MINING

LEW MILES

CONSEQUENT UPON THE NATIONALISATION OF THE MINES a new wages structure became inevitable. It is important that this wages structure be as free as possible from any future source of friction, and that it should also be a model demonstrating that State enterprise is superior to the old anarchic ownership.

In a new wage agreement the following factors need to be carefully considered:

(1) The need to make nationalisation a success, by raising productivity, increasing the flow of entrants into mining, and providing

the miner with a wage compatible with his new status and responsibility in British society.

(2) That improvements and changes in the technical state of the industry are certain.

(3) The attitude of miners towards certain matters of principle—piece-work, bonus, incentive, etc.

(4) The need to take advantage of the overhaul of wage payments to produce the *simplest* possible agreement.

Although Abe Moffat lays great stress on the majority—the day-wage workers—in the industry, the minority—the pieceworkers—are equally important. The one can be the bottleneck for the other, so day-wage rates and piecework rates are equally urgent. Both need those new or added incentives for maximum output.

Basic rates must be substantial. The £6 minimum (for five-day week, and exclusive of cost-of-living bonus) is not exorbitant; it is a modest but satisfactory demand. This minimum is necessary for surface and underground lower grade.

The trend in mining is for more mechanised methods to be used in the different phases of work. Whilst most of the old skills have been kept, new skills are increasing. The fitters and electricians are becoming more numerous. In mining, as in engineering, one does see clear-cut classifications appearing—the craftsmen, the skilled and semi-skilled. This will become more and more clear. Our new structure should follow this trend, and this is the opportunity for all coalfields to adopt such a classification, scrapping the different grades in the several coalfields, and substituting a practical grading for both underground and surface.

Indeed, in South Wales (1937 Conciliation Agreement) only four grades existed in place of more before 1937.

The rates for these three grades should be: craftsmen, £7 10s.; skilled, £6 15s.; semi-skilled, £6. These rates will mean varying increases upon the minimum now existing. For instance, under the Porter minimum (excluding cost of living) these rates would mean an increase of £3 os. 8d. for the craftsman (not on piecework) and £1 16s. 8d. for the semi-skilled. Moffat's proposals would be the same increase for the lower grade, but £4 10s. 8d. increase for the highest grade.

The number of grades Moffat proposes, and some of the scales, are out of proportion. The classifying of who should and who should not be in the respective grades is bound to give some trouble, but if this could be done in the union areas, or on a regional level, then much trouble would be avoided. There would be no confusion over the use of names, e.g., repairer, whose function varies in different

coalfields. Secondly, proper consideration will be given to the technical level of the industry in a given coalfield.

Other things need to be stressed. That Grade A or the craftsman's grade is not the minimum exclusively for the coal getter. As has been intimated such workers as the repairer (in South Wales), and the leading fitters and electricians, should be given this highest rate.

The case for adult rates at 18 years of age was well put by Moffat. This means that rates need to be fixed for youth between 15 years (the youngest) and 18 years. The rates could be £3 per week at 15 years with 10s. increases each six months, until 18 when the rate will be £6 (or according to grade). Pieceworkers who have lads working with them, and for whom they are financially responsible, need to be guaranteed adequate payments, in order to compensate for increases in youth earnings.

In regard to piece rates it should be obvious that piecework payments should extend and not contract. Day-wage men have always seen the unfairness of their handling all the coal from the coal getter, and even though the pieceworker will receive 50 per cent over his basic wage, the day-wage worker's wage will be the same as normally. It is possible and necessary, when greater productive efforts are required, to give the maximum personal (at times group) incentives. Many workers, hitherto on day work, can be put on piecework. This applies to even pit-bottom personnel, and some on the surface. For instance, repairers, rippers, all traffic men, cutter men, flitters, packers, timber drawers, those unloading timber in trucks, etc., can be put on piecework, as well as the coal getter. The three rates mentioned earlier will be their bedrock.

Of course, this will leave a minority outside the influence of improved incentive, e.g., electricians, pumpsmen, onsetters, etc. These should be drawn into a bonus system whereby they would receive a certain increase according to the weekly (or daily) increase in the pit output, over a certain agreed output. In this way everyone will know that there is something extra for him, too.

There can be no fixed proportion between piecework earnings and day-wage rates. Individual (and collective) effort varies. Skill varies, too. Price lists need to be so itemised as to give the pieceworker a reasonable opportunity of earning 75 per cent over his basic rate. But this must not be the limit. If one fixes a limit on piecework, one also fixes a limit on production. There must be a careful examination of existing price lists, and new price lists produced, which show that due regard is paid to abnormal conditions.

Piece-rate lists for coal getters or colliers will need to be completely different from those existing today. Uniformity, opportunity and

satisfaction are essential. Thousands of existing lists will have to be scrapped. The old barriers of the 800 different coal owners must not be reflected in the new lists, which must offer like wages to those producing like amounts under like conditions. The principle of equality for effort must be implemented. (At the same time preserving any better rate that a given coalfield may have over the new rates.)

Such price lists will take some time to fix, but there is a wealth of information in the union, colliery and N.C.B. offices on the basis of which proposals could be made in a few months, which could outline payments for given amounts in similar seams (under approximate geological conditions). Maybe it would be necessary to draw up 30 to 50 different price lists. This will be a wonderful achievement over the four per colliery that exists now.

In their final form price lists may be simplified further by translating the detailed price for specific items into overall prices, either on the per yard forward of travel, or on the ton.

In those coalfields where the percentage of mechanisation is still very low, and where some time will elapse before radical changes are made, it will be necessary to have new price lists for the workers cutting and filling by the old methods.

This is the approach, I believe, that we should be making to the problem of wages in the industry. We should be staking good claims, but not Utopian claims.

## SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF THE NAVY

G. L.

MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN IN RECENT YEARS of "people's armies," of the interrelated problems of democracy and discipline in military forces, and of the relationship between armies and the society which has produced them.

Marxists in particular have devoted much attention to these problems, and even before the Second World War such a valuable study as Lewis Clive's *People's Army* was published. The special and somewhat different questions associated with naval forces have, however, received remarkably scant attention from progressive writers. We have heard much of "people's armies," little of "people's navies." Yet to an island nation such as our own, whose whole history is intimately bound up with the sea, and the very physical existence of

whose inhabitants depends upon sea power, the Navy is inevitably of even more moment than the Army.

In certain important respects the social composition of navies differs from that of armies, and in order to understand these differences it is necessary to trace the social development of the sea forces, both as regards the officers and the lower deck.

The Army, as a specialised body of men, was preceded by the universal tribal levy of gentile society, but the Navy had no such precursor, for the development of the ship took place at a period when gentile society was breaking down and classes evolving. Moreover, navies by their nature did not lend themselves to a gentile organisation, for they required mariners—men with a specialist skill. The creation of the British Navy coincided with the development of a specialised warrior class on land. The Danish invasions had demonstrated the utter inadequacy of the old popular levy or *fyrd*. Alfred the Great, therefore, not only fostered the class of "thegns" or professional warriors, but built the first English fleet, and, since seamanship had not been developed by the Anglo-Saxons, he was obliged to man his ships with foreign mercenaries—Frisians.

In the fleets of antiquity a distinct naval profession can scarcely be said to have existed. Ship's companies were divided into quite separate categories—the soldiers or marines who did the fighting, the mariners who sailed and navigated the ship, and the (usually servile) oarsmen who provided its main motive power. Naval battles largely resembled land battles afloat, and there was no synthesis between the sailor and fighter. This triune division remained the fundamental pattern in the Mediterranean world till the battle of Lepanto, and the admirals, from Themistocles to Don Juan of Austria, were merely generals temporarily afloat, or, as the latter was styled: "Capitan General del mar." In Northern Europe, however, a different practice was developed, which was exemplified *par excellence* by Alfred's Viking opponents. Here there was no slave economy and the warrior and the rower were one. The English Navy was based originally upon the Norse model, but as the Middle Ages progressed it was shaped by influences both from Northern and Southern Europe. The oars, which were not suited to the stormy seas of Britain, disappeared, and the Royal Navy of the feudal period had not a triple but a double division into soldiers and seamen. Since sailing ships did not use the ram, battles such as Sluys resembled land warfare even more than those of the Mediterranean, and the fleets and individual ships were officered by knights and nobles. The master, shipman and his mate merely had the function of sailing the ship to the scene of battle. The thoroughly feudal character of this organisation needs no emphasis,

although it was the bourgeoisie (especially that of the Cinque Ports) which was obliged to furnish all the ships, except for a few royally-owned "Ships of the Tower."

The rise of a true naval profession was due to the maritime revolution which went with the Renaissance and the opening up of the ocean routes. The spotlight of naval history shifted from the Mediterranean to the rougher waters of the Atlantic.

Up till this time the traditions of Mediterranean galley fighting had dominated the tactics even of the sailing ships, but now the latter began to develop their own manner of warfare. The introduction of naval ordnance turned the warship from a fighting platform into a floating battery. Gunnery was now so intimately connected with seamanship that the fighting could no longer be left to soldiers. Moreover, the development of the science of navigation added to the skill requisite in a seaman officer and gave him a correspondingly higher status. Since military officers were of the old feudal caste, while sailors were not, and were closely associated and often identical with the rising bourgeoisie, the revolution in shipbuilding and naval tactics was an important aspect of the breakdown of the feudal social order to make way for capitalism. The new naval tactics were first developed by the Dutch bourgeois in revolt against the feudal power of Spain, and by the English privateers who challenged the Spanish and Portuguese monopoly of the exploitation of the great discoveries.

The social character of these privateers needs some elucidation. At first privateering was carried on by members of the gentry, like the Tremaynes, Horseys and Cobhams, as a means of acquiring bourgeois wealth, for money had taken the place of land as the standard of affluence, and so money-making adventures superseded the land-grabbing enterprises of the feudal age. The bourgeois proper only took a hand in the game with Drake's voyage to Nombre de Dios after the defeat of Hawkins' attempt to open up peaceful commerce with the Spanish colonies. But whether waged by merchants or by squires this unofficial war was essentially bourgeois in character. The privateering influence soon made itself felt in the National Navy. John Hawkins was placed in charge of naval construction and created a fleet designed for the new form of warfare. When the marauding merged into open war with Spain, the privateer captains (Drake, Frobisher, Fenner, etc) were given commissions in the Royal Navy, and the officers and men trained in their school formed the backbone of the fleet that defeated the Armada.

It should be remembered that in personnel there was no rigid distinction between the Navy and the mercantile marine. The Queen's ships were normally laid up "in ordinary," and when commissioned

for active service were manned by seamen conscripted by Bills of impressment. The maritime revolution meant virtually that the Tudor Navy had been transferred not only from the soldier to the sailor, but from feudal to bourgeois control. The soldier now formed the less important section of the ship's company, the guns being worked by seamen. It is true that it was still *de rigueur* for the captain and the lieutenant of a warship to be "gentlemen" and not necessarily essential for them to be sailors. But in Elizabethan society seamen of bourgeois, or even lower origin (like Drake) could pay their way into the ranks of the gentry with Spanish gold. The feudal tradition, however, was not entirely broken, for the supreme command in 1588 was given not to Drake, but to Lord Howard of Effingham, a great noble whose father had been Lord High Admiral before him, while other nobles, like Lord Sheffield and Lord Thomas Howard, also had commands. The defeat of the Armada was the triumph of the new order over the old, bankrupt feudal organisation which was still maintained in the Spanish fleet. The greatest weakness of the Elizabethan system was the absence of any regular system of recruitment for officers and men, but the consequences of this did not become fully apparent until the next century.

The seventeenth century saw the passing of the heyday of the Elizabethan privateer, and the rise of the great chartered companies, notably the East India Company. These two factors made it increasingly difficult for the seaman to rise socially. He was becoming proletarianised, and the bourgeoisie were ceasing to sail their own ships as the Hawkinses had done. The effect of these changes on the Navy was seen particularly in the character of the officers. The gentle or bourgeois privateer captains were replaced by two widely-differing groups—the rough "tarpaulins"—seamen promoted from the lower deck, like Sir Christopher Myngs and Sir Cloudesley Shovel, or commissioned from the merchant service like John Benbow, and the "gentleman officers" appointed by Court influence, and who included such shining lights of Restoration literature and licence as Dorset, Rochester and Wycherley, and whose incompetence was largely responsible for such fiascos as the Four Days Battle. Pepys gives us an enlightening glimpse of the attitude of the latter group towards the former. "He says that he heard Captain Digby (my Lord of Bristol's son, a young fellow that never was but one year, if that, in the fleet) say that he did hope that he should not see a tarpaulin have the command of a ship within this twelve months."

The English revolution brought about a drastic purge of the "gentlemen" (to the great improvement of the fleet's efficiency) and high-ranking officers of the New Model Army (Blake, Deane, Monk) were

appointed "generals at sea," in which capacity they showed remarkable adaptability, but the "gentlemen" came back with Charles II. It was in his reign, however, that there appeared the germ of a truly professional system of training officers. Certain boys of good family were sent to sea as King's letter boys—a cumbrous designation soon superseded by "midshipmen." Thus was achieved a definite synthesis between the "gentlemen" and the mariners. In the seventeenth century service in the navy had been a mere episode in a "gentleman's" life, in the eighteenth century it was a career, and in the days of Smollett and Marryat the professional officer who had entered the service at twelve or thirteen had supplanted both "tarpaulin" and court favourite. The rigours and isolation of the sea life were still such that it was mostly from the lower and poorer strata of the ruling class that officers were drawn—Hawke's father was a lawyer, Nelson's a clergyman.

It is dangerous to generalise about eighteenth-century naval officers. The life seems to have had widely different effects upon different temperaments. There was the much-publicised sadistic type, such as Bligh and Colpoys. On the other hand there were many officers of humanity and culture—Nelson, Hawke and Cook were ever solicitous for their men's welfare, and Marryat carried on vigorous propaganda for better conditions (Nelson even went so far as to express his sympathy with the Spithead mutineers of 1797). The lonely, austere life, begun at such an early and impressionable age, seems to have tended to produce extremes of character, to say nothing of strongly-marked individualities like Captain Pifford, Shelley's friend and disciple, and Lord Dundonald, the *enfant terrible* of the Navy, advocate of Parliamentary reform, and successively commander of the infant fleets of three small nations struggling for independence. The Navy never became "fashionable" in the sense that guards and cavalry regiments were. Unlike the army officer, the naval officer was never an aristocratic amateur, but always a professional. The combination of professionalism and isolation explains why naval officers played such a comparatively small part in politics; as a rule they were content (like Nelson) to follow the prevailing political trend of their class without thinking much about it.

The eighteenth century produced the professional naval officer, but not the professional naval rating. Men were recruited not for a term of years, but for a single commission, and the Navy's finest seamen were still drawn (mostly against their will) from the Merchant Navy and the fishing (and smuggling) fleets. The popular legend that our wooden walls were manned by the scum of the jails does not bear examination. Crews were, it is true, "made up" with convicts who

were rated as "landsmen," but the working of a complex sailing ship demanded skilled seamen. It was still possible, though exceptional, for ratings to rise by merit to the quarterdeck, as James Cook did, and the expansion necessitated by the frequent wars of that period increased the number of such promotions.

The Royal Marines had been founded by Charles II as part of the new standing army. They replaced the soldiers hitherto carried and their role was to prevent mutiny. (Charles II could scarcely have forgotten the part played by the Navy in the English revolution.) Their role as musketeers in action was obviously an afterthought, for their original weapon was the pike. This policy of *divide et impera* bore fruit in the refusal of the marines to mutiny in 1797.

The profound changes that took place in the social composition of the Navy in the nineteenth century were brought about by the industrial revolution. Its transformation of the warship made the professional naval rating essential. The modern steam and armoured ship developed along quite different lines from the merchant steamer, and to work and fight her long training and a high degree of specialisation were requisite. Moreover, a mechanised Navy required a considerable proportion of skilled artisans. This new professional and specialised Naval personnel was drawn largely from the industrial proletariat. The engineer officers were at first on much the same standing as the tarpaulins of old. Class prejudice relegated them to a mess of their own, apart from the wardroom. Eventually, however, the engineers attained a similar status to the executive branch by a similar process to that which had synthesised the "gentleman" and the "mariner."

But long before this the Royal Navy had been conquered by the public-school system. Lads were no longer sent direct to sea as midshipmen, but to H.M.S. *Britannia* at Dartmouth, the water-borne predecessor of the present Royal Naval College. Steam and other innovations made life afloat more tolerable and less isolated, and thus more attractive to the sons of the rich. The high fees payable at Dartmouth made the quarterdeck more exclusive, and the type of training given in that establishment caused the supersession of the picturesque individualism of the eighteenth-century officer by a standard public-school type. These changes have brought about an increase of snobbery and probably widened the gulf between officers and ratings. It is perhaps not too much to say that officers of today have less understanding of their subordinates' needs and problems than had the better type of eighteenth-century officer. As for the chances of a lower-deck rating attaining high rank in the service, they have become infinitesimal.

The vast expansion necessitated by total war gave the Royal Navy

Volunteer Reserve a new importance. The regular officers were supplemented by the amateurs of the "wavy navy," who had been obliged to serve for a term on the lower deck, and such officers played a large part in the Second World War.

The Government has now announced "reforms" in the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth "to afford the opportunity of becoming a naval officer to boys of all classes." But only a thorough overhaul of the whole system can make the British Navy democratic.

## THE TEACHING OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

JOHN EAST

THE TEACHING OF POLITICAL ECONOMY at the universities has been sharply criticised by Marxists on the ground that—with certain exceptions, it is true—it ignores the Marxist approach, or mentions it only to "refute" it, and in the main is nothing more than a study of abstract "theories" about the most superficial aspects of economic life. But also in bourgeois circles there is increasing dissatisfaction with what is taught on this subject. The most recent manifestation was an article in *The Economist* (1.4.47) which pointed out that:

"First-year courses at the universities consist mainly of a treatment of the theory of value on 'classical' lines, following the Marshallian tradition, plus some analysis and description of the monetary system and the study of a period of recent economic history. . . . But technical institutions appear to have reacted against the aridity and otherworldliness of the conventional introductory economics course by introducing courses in 'commerce.' These concentrate mainly on the routine of commercial life and straightforward description of economic institutions. Neither approach to economic institutions is at all satisfactory. . . ."

A considerable correspondence in succeeding weeks agreed generally with this thesis, without throwing any fresh light on the subject.

The same problem is causing concern in America, as can be seen from articles in the *American Economic Review* of June and December, 1946. One writer, in revolt against the abstract and unreal nature of modern theory, advocates the use, in its place, of "broad historical-sociological pictures." Another, recognising both the necessity of theory and the limitations of modern economic theories, gets as far as advocating for an introductory course that "negatively, it must refrain from describing the present economy as what it is not—a self-regulating system."

The retreat from an unrealistic theorising began many years ago, and slashing attacks on academic economics have become increasingly common of recent years, as, for example, Barbara Wootton's *Lament for Economics*. Moreover, useful statistical and institutional studies have been produced with much greater frequency. Economists are realising more and more that, above all for students, their work must deal with a real world becoming increasingly complex and disordered.

The *Economist* articles drew attention to two recent books by eminent economists which attempt to resolve this dilemma, the separation between theory and practice in the teaching of economics: *The Social Framework*, by Professor Hicks, and *Income*, by Professor Pigou. Both start from the national income, its definition, size, and how it is arrived at. They deal with the factors of production in realistic terms. Thus labour is described by reference to the trend of population and the make-up of the working population; while capital is described and discussed by reference to its physical composition, magnitude, ownership, etc. Distribution is dealt with on national income lines, and problems of expenditure, both public and private, are discussed factually. In view of the claims made for this "new approach" it is worth examining, as typical, Professor Pigou's book, since it goes further than the other in its attempt to bring together theory and practice.

*Income* is in seven chapters, of which the first is a largely formal discussion of problems of definition and measurement of the national income along lines familiar to students of the Annual Budget White Papers. The following chapters deal with the factors affecting the size of the national output in real terms, both internal (technique, capital equipment, etc.) and external (foreign trade); the allocation of resources; the role of the Government in production; fluctuations in economic activity; and the distribution of private incomes.

Professor Pigou has an engaging style, and at first sight appears to have banished from the classroom the aridities of the "marginal utility" economists. In his chapter on the internal influences affecting the size of the national output, everything proceeds simply and smoothly, and looks like perfect common sense. The argument proceeds from the three factors of production, land, labour and capital, dealt with not as abstractions or algebraic symbols, but concretely as natural resources—human beings with differing skills, inborn or acquired, and mechanical equipment, buildings, etc. There is a discussion on the advantages of division of labour and specialisation, while the importance of science and the development of technique is suitably stressed. Yet nowhere in the chapter is there the slightest hint of the class division in capitalist society. In fact, the economic

system is as much an "eternal category" as in the world of Jevons or Marshall. The "propensity to truck, barter or exchange" is trotted out. Competition is treated as the norm, and monopoly as an aberration, dealt with in an aside. Capital is no more than machine tools and factories, and not the relationship between a small class owning those tools and factories and a large class owning nothing but their ability to work. It is true that the facts as to the ownership of capital are revealed later in the book, but the significance of these factors, if any, escapes the author. It follows, of course, that since the class division in society is not sufficiently important to be worth mentioning, the most vital factor in the explanation of the size and distribution of the national income is entirely absent.

So far, then, apart from the manner of expression, there is little advance on the traditional textbook. The next chapter, on the external influences affecting the size of the national income, is a little better, as the discussion is carried on with the aid of up-to-date factual and statistical material. But here again, although there is reference to the fact that while before the Second World War more than a quarter of Britain's imports were obtained free, as interest on overseas investments, these imports must now be paid for by additional exports, there is no explanation of how and why Britain could live partly on others and now cannot do so. There is no explanation, in fact, of the mechanics of monopoly capitalism and imperialism, and of the consequent distortion and degeneration of Britain's economic system. Still less is there any discussion of the real problem facing Britain in the sphere of foreign trade, how to free ourselves from dependence on the dollar, to import from and export to Eastern Europe, and to raise the standard of living and thus increase the purchasing power of the colonial territories. Once more, there is little advance on the pure "free-trade" theory of the traditional textbook, with its natural corollary, the multilateral system, which is the perfect background for American imperialism.

The next chapter, after setting out the facts about the allocation of the working population and economic resources among industries and occupations, poses the question:

"By what influences and in what manner is it brought about that the working population of a country is allocated among different occupations in the way in which at any time it is allocated; and how are the differences between the ways in which it is allocated at different times accounted for?" (p. 55.)

The answer runs in terms of our old friends the marginal theory of value and the law of supply and demand. Once again Professor Pigou avoids in an engaging manner the abstractions of the textbook.

There is none of Jevons' algebra, or Marshall's geometry, or the "indifference curves" still found necessary by Dr. Benham in his introductory textbook *Economics* in use in the first year at most universities. Summing up the influences on the supply side, Pigou writes:

"Men of similar inborn quality . . . tend so to allocate themselves among occupations that nobody would gain by shifting out of the occupation where he is into another one. This entails that net advantages—roughly the rates of pay—tend to be similar in different occupations for kinds of work that require equally expensive training; and where the work of one occupation needs more training than that of another, to be higher in the former in a degree more or less corresponding to the extra cost of training there." (p. 62.)

So that is the reason why David Jones from the Rhondda Valley becomes a miner rather than a city stockbroker! And why Jane Robinson works in a Burnley weaving shed and cannot ride in the Row each morning! Once more we are back in a classless society, and all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. But let us be fair to the Professor—he says: "These tendencies only work themselves out very imperfectly and sometimes very slowly." David and Jane may yet get there!

The analysis on the demand side is equally trite, equally blind to the realities of a class society. It is enough, perhaps, to quote from the passage on the determination of women's wages a real gem: "Apart from friction, traditional prejudice and so on, equal pay for equal work tends—we must emphasise, tends—to be established." (pp. 68-9). Evidently the Royal Commission was wasting its time.

The next chapter, on the role of Government in production, requires little comment. The treatment is along familiar lines and somewhat cursory. To do Professor Pigou justice, he has always been a benevolent advocate of certain types of State intervention, in the spheres of the public utilities, for example. But his basic assumptions are the same as those of most of the older members of his fraternity. Capitalism is capitalism, and by and large, you should leave it alone. Consequently Socialism is something outside his ken and the product of an oriental dictatorship. But what is really missing from this chapter is a realistic discussion on economic controls and economic planning. Public utility economics and the "trust-busting" approach to monopoly are not of great interest today and it is significant that the younger economists, even in the academic field, are pursuing more realistically the role of Government in economic life.

Professor Pigou next turns to the problem of industrial fluctuations. Nowadays no textbook is regarded as complete without a chapter on

this subject, and this, at least, may be counted as advance towards realism. But the treatment here is very superficial. There is no marked preference for any particular theory or explanation. We are told that there is something wrong with the monetary system; businessmen are given to exaggerated swings of optimism and pessimism; and the rate at which inventions appear or are exploited varies. It is true that in 1945, when the book was written, shortage of demand seemed remote, while professional economists notoriously suffer from short memories. Nevertheless, no explanation of economic fluctuations which ignores the basic capitalist contradiction between the drive to expand production and restricted consuming power (whatever the terminology used) can hope to be realistic.

Perhaps Professor Pigou's answer is to be found in the passage where he says: "At the present time people are much more interested in practical schemes for improving the employment situation than in the diagnosis of causes." (p. 94.) Such is no doubt the case. But the proper diagnosis must come before the cure. The cure which Professor Pigou finds most attractive lies in the stabilisation policy advocated in the Coalition Government's White Paper on Employment Policy. After a warning against placing exaggerated hopes in the Beveridge approach (which he identifies with expanded monetary outlay), he goes on:

"If, as experience shows to be likely, upward tendencies in the demand for labour call into play associated upward tendencies in money rates of wages, the benefit to employment might well turn out to be a good deal less than was expected. Wage earners might, in effect, choose better money wage rates instead of better employment. Up to a point they might enjoy something of both. But beyond a point it is impossible for them to get both except at the risk of bringing into play a spiral of monetary inflation so rapid as to threaten serious social evils." (p. 99.)

At the end of the vicious circle—the vicious spiral! So much for the new realism. After a display of vulgar eclecticism we end up with the old recipe, that wages must not be raised.

The last chapter, on the distribution of private incomes, for all its comparative wealth of statistical illustration, follows the familiar lines of the "marginal productivity" theory, which says very little more than that if a factor of production were paid less than its worth in any given occupation, it would either move elsewhere or get more (and vice versa); the implication being that the distribution of incomes is generally just. Professor Pigou takes note of modern trends towards greater equality, and has two significant observations to make. The first, in discussing these trends, is: "This reaction against the older views is, no doubt, justified. It may, how-

ever, be carried too far." (p. 116.) The second is "that consumption in terms of actual stuff is distributed less unevenly than money expenditure on consumption." (p. 117.)

*Income*, therefore, emerges from scrutiny as nothing new, but the old story in new garb. But it would be wrong to impute to Professor Pigou any sinister motives. On the contrary, he is a liberal-minded economist who in the practical field has performed much valuable service. The plain truth is that he is rooted in the standard bourgeois theoretical approach and that along this path there is no solution. It is something to recognise the divergence between theory and practice, but much more is necessary.

This dilemma does not exist for Marxism. The practical problems of the real world are necessarily always its subject matter. It uses a theory which, because it is drawn from the basic realities, is both profound and true, to solve those problems. Nowhere more than in the field of practical economy does it illustrate the truth of its own dictum, the unity of theory and practice.

Of recent years, the influence of Marxism on some non-Marxist political economists has had its effect in the field of statistical studies relating to the standard of living, the distribution of income, industry and economic planning. Moreover the trend of a school of modern economists, that associated with the name of the late Lord Keynes, has been in the direction of conclusions in certain fields not dissimilar from those of Marx.

Marxists must take note of these trends. Moreover, they can claim no monopoly of truth. They cannot claim to have said the last word on any aspect of political economy and there is infinite scope for further application and development of Marxist theory. But it is with the aid of the approach of Marxist political economy that the economic systems in the world today are to be explained, changed, or developed. It follows, therefore, that there must be real development in both the quantity and quality of the teaching of Marxist political economy.

The dilemma of bourgeois economics, the growing recognition of its divorce of theory from practice, and the knowledge that Marxism alone can resolve the dilemma, represents a challenge to Marxist political economists. Never has there been so great a need for them, and never has there been such an opportunity. Now is the time for greater attendance at the schools, for more study groups and classes, for more and better syllabuses and teaching material. Above all, there is need for more study of the works of Marx and the great Marxists themselves.