

UNIVERSITIES AND LEFT REVIEW

EDITORS: Stuart Hall, Gabriel Pearson, Ralph Samuel, Charles Taylor

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Universities and Left Review is a calculated risk. And since the success or failure of this venture depends on the degree of frankness which can be assumed between editors, writers and readers, it is proper that the nature of the risk, and the character of the venture, should be discussed in this first editorial.

The post-war decade was one in which declining political orthodoxies held sway. Every political concept became a weapon in the cold war of ideas, every idea had its label, every person had his place in the political spectrum, every form of political action appeared—in someone's eyes—a polite treason. To recommend the admission of China to the U.N. was to invite the opprobrium of "fellow-traveller": to say that the character of contemporary capitalism had changed, was to be ranked as a "Keynsian liberal" or worse. Between the high citadel of Stalinist Russia, and the "welfare-state—no-further" jungle of the mixed economy, there seemed to be nothing but an arid waste.

In these tight compartmentalised worlds, buttressed by bans and proscriptions, suspicions and fears, supported by texts from Lenin and Stalin, mottos from Burke and Bagehot, protected by massive armies with nuclear stockpiles and mutually exclusive military pacts, British socialism suffered moral and intellectual eclipse.

For most Labour theorists in this period discussion of socialism was equated with the claim that the Welfare State was British Socialism, realised: witness the *New Fabian Essays* (1952). Most Marxist discussion of socialism became the fabrication of slogans and definitions calculated to evade every crucial problem posed for socialists by the degeneration of the Soviet Revolution. It was inevitable that the post-war generation should identify socialism, at worst with the barbarities of Stalinist Russia, at best with the low-pressure society of Welfare Britain: a society in which creative, popular and intellectual initiative was at low ebb, bureaucracy—particularly in administration, Trade Unions, and the nationalised industries—at full flood. The debate between those who clung to the slogans of the thirties and those who embraced the new orthodoxies of Welfare Britain, a debate which evaded the critical problems and the main frustrations of post-war society, appeared monstrously irrelevant to the post-war generation. Its very irrelevance flattered their apathy.. Given the feeble level of political controversy, and its internecine character, who could argue with the young intellectuals, when they said—they are still saying it,

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with something of relief and something of regret—that politics was not "about them".

Nevertheless, the age of orthodoxies has, once again, been outstripped by historical events. Hard as we try, we cannot turn back the course of events which forced de-Stalinisation on the Stalinists. Hungary is there to point the moral, and adorn that tale. Much as we would like, we cannot think our way round Suez back to that comfortable womb-world in which conservatives and socialists still held hands. The thaw is on: but the landscape is still littered with the remnants and the ruins from the political ice-age. Even after the certainties of Stalinism and Conservatism have collapsed the old orthodoxies have enough momentum left to wreck the world.

The pressing need, now, is that socialist intellectuals" should face the damage which Stalinism and Welfare Capitalism have done to socialist values. There are hopeful signs that this is beginning to be done. In recent Labour Party "re-thinking", and particularly with the publication of G. D. H. Cole's *Is This Socialism!* and John Strachey's *Contemporary Capitalism* there have been some significant departures from the complacency of much post-war Labour thinking. Such re-thinking must go on—and must begin at the beginning—with a clear, contemporary analysis of what the facts about contemporary capitalist society really are. For the Marxist left, there has been the tremendous upheaval caused by the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party—an upheaval whose nature is discussed by Isaac Deutscher, K. A. Jelenski and E. P. Thompson in this issue.

The informing belief

The narrow gap left by the Marxism of the thirties in British intellectual life is now an open, gaping void. Kingsley Amis, in his pamphlet *Socialism and the Intellectuals*, has voiced—admittedly in a somewhat disconnected and romantic manner—the objections felt by most young intellectuals to participation in the labour movement. The replies—that of the *New Statesman*, claiming that the demonstrations of November 4th marked the end of an era, or that of *Reynolds News* readers pointing to the mere than marginal poverty which has survived into Welfare Britain—are simply not good enough. Political movements are more than simple reflexes to particular issues or sets of issues: a "sustained socialist movement must be informed by the belief that the moral imagination can still intervene creatively in human history.

What is needed, therefore, is the regeneration of the whole tradition of free, open, critical debate. The socialist tradition ought to be the most fruitful and the most stringent of the intellectual traditions: a tradition of thought and action, alive to the realities of our contemporary world and sensitive to the pressures of the ideals of equality and social justice which have distinguished it in the past. Only in this way, can the socialist movement draw into its orbit the vigorous, and active minds of the community, and symbolise through itself the intellectual and political ferment of a generation.

Young people, have defected from active political engagement, not because, as they sometimes say, "there is nothing left to do" but because the tradition of socialist thinking failed to focus in any creative way the gigantic problems which do, in fact, remain. Stalinism bred a fear whose consequence has been that whole areas of contemporary life have fallen beyond the reach of our "political" commitment. Literature, art, are our feeling for the quality of life and the community in an industrial society—these have all been consigned to some a-political limbo. And yet, the paradox is that when socialist values lose their relevance for the total scale of man's activities, they lose their 'political' point as well. They become expendable. Without universal applicability, socialism is open to the persistent erosive pressure from dogma and compromise: it is slowly nibbled to death.

Those who feel that the values of a capitalist society are bankrupt, that the social inequalities upon which the system batters are an affront to the potentialities of the individual, have before them a problem, more intricate and more difficult than any which has previously has been posed. That is the problem of how to change contemporary society so as to make it more democratic and more egalitarian, and yet how to prevent it degenerating into totalitarianism. This is only one problem among many—a 'political*' problem, in the narrow sense, and yet one which demands the energies, the 'engagement' of more people of the highest intellectual capacity, than have ever been recruited to politics before in this country. This is the central problem, today, for the Labour Party, as such, it is our problem.

This is the breach, the beach-head, a small area of which *Universities and Left Review* is attempting to occupy. It proposes to do this in two ways. In the first place, by inviting contributions from well-known authorities and less well-known writers—contributions which try to make some new mark in the interplay of socialist ideas, contributions which offer their values and premises openly, inviting, not passive assent, but serious, critical attention. The second way is to take socialism at full stretch—as relevant only in so far as it is relevant to the full scale of man's activities: significant only in so far as it is judged significantly by people who, through their several particular interests, are working towards common ground. That is the common ground of a genuinely free and genuinely socialist society. We hope that these people will become our regular readers, contributors, and financial supporters, that if in the London Area, they will try to take part in the Left Review Club, and that they will give us that active support and assistance without which every part-time journal must collapse.

This journal has no political 'line' to offer: it cannot have, for it seeks to provide a forum where the different fruitful traditions of socialist discussion are free to meet in open controversy. It tries to reach beyond any narrow sectional appeal in the search for new ideas and new writers. Can we bridge the gap between the Thirties and the Fifties? Do new ideas, new writers and new readers in fact exist? This is the calculated risk we take. If this *Review* can attract serious attention and avoid the bankruptcy of labels and pigeon-holes, it will have achieved the purpose for which it has been started.

THE EDITORS

STUART HALL, 25, West Indian Rhodes Scholar, read English at Merton College, Oxford; now completing a thesis on The Novels of Henry James.

GABRIEL PEARSON: 24, graduated from Balliol College, Oxford with a First in English Literature, 1955; now working on a thesis on Charles Dickens. Edited *Oxford Poetry*, 1956.

RALPH SAMUEL, 22, came up to Balliol College, Oxford, as Domus Exhibitioner and graduated in 1956 with a First in Modern History: now at L.S.E., writing a thesis on the dockers of London, Bristol and Liverpool, 1871 to the founding of the T.G.W.U.

CHARLES TAYLOR, 27, Canadian Rhodes Scholar, graduated with Firsts in History (McGill University) and Politics, Philosophy and Economics (Balliol College, Oxford); John Locke Prize in philosophy, Oxford 1956; completing a thesis on the theory of alienation, from Hegel to the Existentialists; Elected Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, 1956.

BUSINESS MANAGER:

RODERICK PRINCE, scholar of Magdalen College, Oxford.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS:

LINDSAY ANDERSON has made several documentaries, including *Thursday's Children*, (awarded an Oscar in 1953; is now at work on his first full-length film; freelance film critic, has reported the Cannes and Venice festivals for the *Observer*, and has written frequently in *Sight and Sound* and *New Statesman*.

MICHAEL ARMSTRONG, 23, graduated from Wadham College, Oxford in Classics, now specialising in educational psychology; Former chairman of the Oxford Labour Club.

CLAUDE BOURDET, a leader of the French Resistance, founder and Editor of *France Observateur*, the leading French left weekly (circulation 130,000).

G. D. H. COLE, Professor Cole's two most recent books are *The Post-War Condition of Britain* and the *Case For Industrial Partnership*. Until recently Chairman of the Fabian Society, Professor Cole founded and is now President of the International Society for Socialist Studies.

BASIL DAVIDSON, for long Chairman of the Union of Democratic Control; author of numerous pamphlets on foreign affairs and author of several books on Afro-Asian affairs (*China Daybreak*, *African Awakening*, etc.).

ISAAC DEUTSCHER, author of *Soviet Trade Unions* (1950), *Stalin: A Political Biography* (1949), *Heretics And Renegades* (1955), *Russia After Stalin* (1953), *The Prophet Armed* (1954); is at present * completing the second volume of his life of Trotsky, *The Prophet Unarmed*; major articles published in such left-wing journals as *Esprit*, *Temps Modernes*, *Partisan Review*, *Dissett*.

H. D. DICKINSON is Professor of Economics at Bristol University. Since the war has published numerous articles and reviews, of which the most interesting for non-specialists are those on Problems of Economic Calculation in a Socialist Economy in the *Review of Economic Studies*.

PETER DE FRANCA studied art at the Slade and in Belgium; art critic, broadcaster; teaches at St. Martin's School of Art; a leading realist painter, he has exhibited at the Adams Gallery (1956), and has an exhibition due at Milan this Easter.

E. J. HOBSBAWM, Lecturer at Birkbeck College, London; author of several important articles in the *Economic History Review*, reinterpreting Nineteenth Century labour movement history; Assistant Editor of *Past and Present*, author of *Labour's Formative Years*.

K. A. JELENSKI, Polish journalist now living in Paris, has written frequently on many aspects of Eastern European affairs, including recent events, for several French journals, and also for *Encounter*.

D. GREGORY; JONES, 33, graduated from the Architectural Association, 1950; town planner, Housing Division of the L.C.C., is now working on the L.C.C. Brandon Estate project; Lecturer for WEA.

JOHN MACKINTOSH, Graduate of Balliol College, Oxford, studied in the U.S.A., now Lecturer in History, University of Edinburgh; specialises in history of the British labour movement.

ROGER MORGAN, former Chairman of the Cambridge Labour Club, is now completing a thesis on the German Labour Movement and the First International.

DAVID MARQUAND, undergraduate, scholar of Magdalen College, Oxford, joint winner, Gibbs Prize, 1956; Chairman of Oxford Labour Club.

RICHARD PEAR, Lecturer in Politics at L.S.E., has lectured in the U.S.A.; joint author of *English Social Differences*.

JOAN ROBINSON. Among many important economic works Joan Robinson has published *The Rate of Interest*, *Essays in the theory of Employment* and *The Economics of Imperfect Competition*. She is reader in Economics at Cambridge University.

E. P. THOMPSON, 32, Extra-Mural Lecturer at Leeds University, author of *William Morris, Romantic to Revolutionary*, co-editor with John Saville of *The Reasoner* (opposition journal in the Communist Party); left the Party during the Soviet intervention in Hungary, after being suspended for publishing the journal; is now preparing the *New Reasoner*.

GRAEME SHANKLAND, studied architecture at Cambridge before the war, and afterwards at the Architectural Association; town planner with the L.C.C., associated with the South Bank project, lectures at the A.A. on Nineteenth Century architecture; broadcaster on Swedish and Polish architecture.

About this Journal

* **IN CHARACTER AND APPEAL**, this journal has expanded "outrageously"! A journal of socialist theory; a journal of left arts criticism; a journal of university opinion; a journal for left-wingers of the post-war generations; a medium for international socialist exchange: U & LR looks like becoming, in miniature, something of all these. So far, our 2,500 subscriptions—from Rhondda and Clydeside, Hampstead and Cannonbury and Bayswater, from Nicosia and Djakarata, from Poznan and Chicago—indicate a splendidly varied readership. Varied in generations. Varied in political sympathies. Varied, too, we assume in what they expect from U & LR. So perhaps we should make some things clear.

We do not offer another political platform of the left. We don't think that would be nearly as valuable as the sort of forum for left ideas so lacking on the British left today. It's in order to provide this, that we are not tying ourselves to any organization. But that isn't because we want to make a fetish, an orthodoxy of unorthodoxy, or because we see some special merit in staying outside the Labour Party and the labour movement. On the contrary!

Socialist intellectuals, we believe, must treat in **detail** those academic and aesthetic problems which impinge most directly upon socialist thought. The journal will be more useful to those of its readers active in the labour movement if it covers in detail the range it has chosen for itself.

* **SIGHT AND SOUND** regularly produces some of the most stimulating criticism of the cinema. We are therefore particularly glad to publish here an article so controversial as Lindsay Anderson's. But if this controversy is to have the influence it deserves, it will have to be rooted in the detailed treatment of the cinema. We intend in future to print studies of the British documentary, of the Italian realist school, and of outstanding contemporary films.

* **IN THIS ISSUE**, Peter de Francia extends the discussion of "critical commitment" to the difficult sphere of the visual arts. There are a host of problems here: the differences between realist painters and realist critics, the aesthetic terms in which critical commitment can be conceived, the forms and techniques by which the artist's commitment can be realised. Whether abstraction or expressionism are less "committed" than social realism is still an open question.

* **WE ARE FORTUNATE** to have secured the regular help and advice of Basil Davidson and Thomas Hodgkin on colonial affairs, John Berger, Michael Ayrton, Benedict Nicholson and Peter de Francia on the visual arts, and Lindsay Anderson on the cinema.

ir **A JOURNAL OF THE LEFT** must give special attention to the colonial and ex-colonial world. We apologise for the inadequate space given in this issue to the problems of colonial liberation movements. In future issues we shall try to remedy this.

* **FOR FRENCH**, Italian and American socialists, the analysis of de-Stalinization has been based on Isaac Deutscher's work, (see, for example, the articles by Marcel Peju in **Temps Modernes** and Lelio Basso in **Mondo Operalo**). We hope that our publication of **Russia In Transition** will help to remedy the lack of theoretical grounding evident in much British discussion of this subject.

* **THIS JOURNAL** will be of value only if discussion develops around the main themes of each issue. That's why we welcome correspondence and discussion. The second issue will carry a large number of readers' letters (250 to 1000 words).

* **TO MAINTAIN THE PRESENT SIZE**, to carry a large discussion section, to cover the same range of subjects, we need financial support. Left wing journals have tended to disappear before now for lack of attention to finance. To

ensure financial stability, we shall have to double our number of subscribers. We hope that readers will help us to achieve the target we set ourselves—**£400 by mid-April**. To win a really large number of new subscribers we have to continue advertising. To do this we need donations urgently. Donations should be sent to the Business Manager, Magdalen College Oxford. Readers can also help the journal by using the enclosed circular to win new subscribers.

Georgi Lukacs is one of the most distinguished men of letters in Europe—Marxist philosopher, scholar, critic. He has been an active Socialist since 1919. He played a major role in the Hungarian Revolution, and was a member of the Nagy government. He is now under restraint in Rumania. Wolfgang Harden is a brilliant, young philosopher, who has played a leading part in the attempt to liberalise the East German regime. This month he was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment for his "activities". These two men are distinguished Socialists, men of imagination and courage. Their detention is a willful, unjustifiable tyranny. This journal gives its wholehearted support to every effort to help secure their immediate release.

The Editor apologises to authors and readers for the following errata.

ERRATA:

- p. 1, col. 2: In a few copies the authorship of **English Social Differences** is wrongly attributed to R. Pear.
- p. 9, col. 1, line 2: free **social** relations.
- p. 9, end of col. 3: Robespierre for Robsepierre.
- p. 9, col. 2, line 38 should read 'It increased enormously the potential political capacities . . .'
- p. 10, col. 1, line 9: initiators for imitators.
- p. 10, line 28: after 'modified it' add footnote: "Trotsky made the original predictions in 1926-9. In this essay the term Thermidor is used as Trotsky used it at first to signify a veiled counter-revolution, the originators of which belong to the party of the revolution and are unaware of the consequences of their action. A critical survey of Trotsky's use of the term will be found in **The Prophet Unarmed**, the forthcoming and concluding volume of my biography of Trotsky.
- p. 11, col. 1, line 23: for role read rule.
- p. 36, col. 1, line 14: delete line 14 "a commander . . etc."
- p. 53, col. 2, line 40: delete line 40.
- p. 54, line 13: delete asterisk.
- p. 54, line 28: for Lyonel read Lionel.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

In addition to those reviewed in this issue, the following books have been received and will be reviewed in the next issue.

- DOROTHY MARSHALL
The English People in the Eighteenth Century
(Longmans, 30s.)
- W. MACMAHON BALL
Nationalism and Communism in East Asia
(Cambridge University Press, 30s.)
- PAUL EINZIG
The Economic Consequences of Automation
(Seeker & Warburg, 21s.)
- GEORGE F. KENNAN
Russia Leaves the War
(Faber & Faber, 50s.)
- DONA TORR
Tom Mann and His Times
(Lawrence & Wishart, 21s.)
- ED. J. SAVILLE
Democracy and the Labour Movement
(Lawrence & Wishart, 30s.)
- A. L. MORGAN AND GEORGE TATE
A History of the British Labour Movement
(Lawrence & Wishart, 15s.)
- MARGARET SCHLAUCH
Modern English and American Poetry
(Watts, 21s.)
- C. WRIGHT MILLS
The Power Elite
(Oxford University Press, 36s.)
- E. P. THOMPSON
William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary
(Lawrence & Wishart, 50s.)
- S. LILLEY
Automation
(Lawrence & Wishart, 21s.)
- A. J. TOYNBEE
An Historian's Approach to Religion
(Oxford University Press, 21s.)
- J. MCCORMICK
Catastrophe and Imagination
(Longmans, 25s.)
- ED. T. MCKITTERICK AND K. YOUNGER
Fabian International Essays
(Hogarth Press, 18s.)
- EMRYS HUGHES
Keir Hardie
(Allen & Unwin, 18s.)
- MORRIS GINSBERG
Essays in Sociology and Social Philosophy
1. *On the Diversity of Morals*
2. *Reason and Unreason in Society*
(Heinemann, 25s. and 21s.)

RAYMOND ARON

German Sociology

(Heinemann, 18s.)

MUHSIN MAHDI

Ibn Kaldun's Philosophy of History

(Allen & Unwin, 25s.)

The following have been postponed to the second issue for space reasons.

ARTICLES

BRIAN MANNING

The Teaching of History in the Universities

RALPH SAMUEL

The Liquidation of the Thirties

ROBERT CASSEN

Science and the Humanities

REVIEWS AND REVIEW ARTICLES

HENRY COLLINS

Strachey and Marxism

PHILIP ABRAMS, MORRIS GINSBERG

Essays in Sociology and Social Philosophy

ROBIN FAIRLIE, C. A. R. CROSLAND

The Future of Socialism

CHIMEN ABRAMSKY, JOHN BRAY

The Voyage to Utopia

ALAN MUMFORD, C. WRIGHT MILLS

The Power Elite

UNIVERSITIES & LEFT REVIEW CLUB

The Club will hold twenty-four meetings a year. At each Club meeting the author of one of the articles in the current issue will re-introduce the subject; the greater part of the evening will then be taken up with readers' discussion and criticism. The Club is designed to focus discussion arising from each issue. It will help to create a close relation between the journal and its readers, apart from providing discussions interesting in themselves.

Club meetings will be held in comfortable and informal surroundings in the Royal Hotel, Woburn Place, London, W.C.1.

Coffee, beer and spirits will be available.

All readers in the London area are invited to join. Admission to meetings is one shilling for members and two shillings for non-members.

The first series of Club meetings will be held every Thursday, from 4th April, except for Thursday, 18th April.

The first series will include discussions introduced by Isaac Deutscher, G. D. H. Cole, Eric Hobsbawm, Lindsay Anderson and Peter de Francia, E. P. Thompson, Graeme Shankland and David Gregory Jones.

All readers in the London area are invited to join the Club now. Membership cards, five shillings for a year, and further information can be obtained from the Hon. Treasurer, 19 Carlingford Road, London, N.W.3.

DISSENT

Readers of this magazine will be interested in DISSENT, an independent Socialist quarterly published in U.S.A. Winter 1957 includes: C. Wright Mills answers critics of "Power Elite", G. L. Arnold on British Socialism, Irving Howe, Benno Sarel and much else. Editors include Irving Howe, Lewis Coser, Norman Mailer, Erich Fromm, Sid Lens and A. J. Muste, and amongst other recent contributors have been Isaac Deutscher, Ignazio Silone, Czeslaw Milocz, Harvey Swados and Richard Hofstadter.

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