

END THIS BI-PARTISANSHIP!

WILLIAM GALLACHER

WHEN I was in the House of Commons I used to look on Mr. Harold Macmillan as an outstanding example of portentous, placid, bourgeois culture. When he spoke, or even as he sat, his superiority to the rabble on the other side was too obvious to be hidden. I used to compare him, in my mind, with some of those on the opposite Front Bench who patented and monopolised the resounding, palatable phrase 'our social revolution'. Macmillan's superiority was openly aggressive; theirs, they being on the side of the rabble, loftily concealed. But they had one thing in common: hatred of Communism—which in its essence is fear of the working class. Whatever the difference of language, Macmillan and these representatives are all committed to the task of saving capitalist society from the very real menace of the working class inspired and led by the Communist Party.

But capitalist society is in anything but a healthy condition. Far, far from it. Decay, dry-rot, or whatever you may care to call it, has eaten deep into its foundations. Where now is that 'far-flung Empire', the 'greatest Empire the World has ever seen'? Going down into the limbo of forgotten history; while new great world-changing forces are marching forward as the guardians of the future. But the representatives of the old order never willingly give up. They will hang on to the last—till the workers, strong and resolute, drive them off the stage.

In the meantime they can only keep going by forcing down the standard of living of the working class and by the goodwill of their more powerful competitors across the Western ocean. This provides us with an amazing exhibition of bourgeois bluster and bourgeois servility. Macmillan is the strong man who leads a strong government that intends to take a strong line to save the £ (they mean: to save capitalism), even though it should mean an open battle with the trade unions. Thorneycroft and Hailsham (whose head has got blown up higher than the sputniks since his recent promotion) have been his principal buglemen on this, their preparedness for war against the unions. Actually all this bluster is based on the calculation that right-wing labour leaders and the majority of the General Council are as much afraid of working class action as they themselves and can be relied on to do all in their

power to hold the workers back. It is only the strength of the workers' resistance which can defeat this calculation.

Here we have Macmillan, the strong man of the Tory party, ready to sacrifice the well-being of the people to save his own parasitic class. Higher rents which means a cut in the household budget; higher bank rate which means fewer homes, schools, hospitals, health services, higher prices and higher rates, and heavier debts for local authorities. Along with all this a quite definite instruction to employers not to grant any more wage increases. Isn't it time the workers took a hand and cleared this gang of blatant capitalist class representatives out of the House of Commons? It can be done if we take the task up in earnest. In the factories, in the local labour parties, trade union branches and district committees, with mass public demonstrations, such a ferment can be aroused as will force a general election that will put paid for all time to the bombast.

But see this big, bold bourgeois Macmillan when Eisenhower, representing the much bigger bourgeoisie of America, gives a whistle. Dropping everything he goes rushing off in the same servile manner as he expects the leaders of the Labour Party to adopt towards him. Can you imagine, this oh, so superior, spokesman of the British ruling class sending a reply to Eisenhower, 'I'm very, very busy at the moment. If you want to see me, take a few days away from golf, jump into a 'plane and I'll be waiting for you'. He hasn't got the guts. The Americans can spit in his eye and he rubs it off and, with a sycophantic smile, comes back for more.

When they went into Suez they looked to Dulles and Co. helping them out as they so docilely were driven into the American war in Korea. But the big Oil Moguls of America were more concerned with getting Britain out of the Middle East than getting them back in. So Dulles said 'Come out' and they came out. Then Dulles 'added insult to injury' when he jeeringly said 'If I were a young American lad going to war in the Middle East, I wouldn't want a British soldier on one side of me and a French soldier on the other, I'd feel safer without them.' That should have finished any self-respecting British bourgeois with the Americans. But in these days self-respect is at a discount. Their one concern is to save their own class system and their own class power. For this hopeless cause they will not only sacrifice the people, they sacrifice their manhood and, let this be clearly understood, they will sacrifice the country. That is what is involved in the servile scurrying to

Washington at the command of Eisenhower, the rubber-stamp or stooge of the big monopoly capitalists of America. So Macmillan, the stooge of a stooge, returns to Britain after his panic flight to a panic meeting in Washington, and immediately his government makes what is tantamount to a declaration of war on the trade unions, and he himself babbles about the necessity of giving up some of our independence. What a laugh that is! What independence has there been since Churchill's despicable speech at Fulton, Missouri, in 1946? None whatever. Some 100 Labour members of parliament signed a protest against that speech and sent it to Attlee, as Prime Minister, expecting him to repudiate what Churchill had said. But, backed by Ernest Bevin, Attlee remained dumb and by his silence endorsed the Fulton speech.

Britain is now an occupied country and, as was made evident by what happened in connection with the Suez adventure, the American troops aren't here to benefit Britain. Britain has become a forward base for American war policy, a satellite, yes, but an expendable satellite. Truly shocking that such a betrayal could take place without the organised working class rising in protest. Only the servility of the right-wing leaders of the labour movement made it possible. It is behind these Macmillan and his cronies shelter. Without their aid the parasitic bourgeoisie would be at the mercy of the working class. It was such 'leaders' of the working class who saved them at the time of the General Strike. They saved them again by diverting the great socialist surge of 1945 into safe channels: 'our Socialist Revolution'. While the country was being handed over to American occupation.

At the N.A.T.O. parliamentary conference, an American general speaks of all their H-bomb bases being on the alert—ready to bomb and destroy the first Workers' Republic. This general and the big monopoly capitalists of America, whom he represents, would desire above all things, if only they had the power, to destroy and banish Socialism off the face of the earth; and sitting there unprotesting is George Brown, M.P., a professed Socialist. He is there representing and speaking for the Labour Party, representing and speaking for Bevan and Frank Cousins, aye, and for Zilliacus who has so little respect for the Communist Party because of its size and so pleased with being in the Labour Party because it is so big.

But where is it going? What is it doing? These are questions the answers to which determine the strength or weakness of a party, and at present on that ground the Labour Party is weak, deplorably

weak. Macmillan is a menace to the people, he is a menace to Britain. The Labour Party has the task to fight him. How can it, if it also accepts American domination and all that arises therefrom, instead of fighting for the progressive foreign policy decisions of the Brighton Labour Party Conference?

The time has come to end this betrayal of the working class and of the country. Socialist self-respect, Socialist integrity calls for action to remove the Macmillan government. But that is not enough. The bi-partisan foreign policy of the Labour Party and the Tories must go with Macmillan, and with their going American troops and American domination must also go. In their place a new expanding Socialist policy at home, directed towards an ever-increasing standard of living, and a foreign policy of friendship with the Soviet Union based on an end to the Cold War and the genuine pursuit of lasting peace.

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

HUNGER MARCH DAYS

Fifteen hundred men and women marched from all parts of the country to London to present a One Million Signature Petition demanding the abolition of the means test, return of the 10 per cent. benefit cuts, abolition of the Anomalies Bill, return of the cuts in social services. Everywhere they went they were enthusiastically acclaimed by the massed thousands of workers. . . . The National Government conducted a well-organised and determined campaign against the march. Every capitalist newspaper turned its 'guns' against the marchers. All the threadbare stunts, Communist Riot, Moscow Gold, etc., were brought out—but in vain. The marchers steadily closed in on London, reaching millions of workers on the way and carrying the message of revolt into every hamlet. . . . The Government mobilised the largest force of police on record. Lord Trenchard, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, warned the populace to keep away from the marchers. Sir Charles Biron, on the bench at Bow Street, informed the public that 'it was their duty to assist the police in carrying out its duty on pain of being arrested for not doing so'. But the solidarity of the working class with the marchers grew by leaps and bounds.

From *The Struggles of the Unemployed*,
by Pat Devine, December, 1932.