Hugh Gaitskell: Study of A Man, His Party

(Editor's note: Britain's labor party held its annual conference in Brighton, England. It attempted to find a formula for victory in the next national election, which must be held before the fall of 1964, but might be called sooner. Labor's chances ride on the man who leads the party and who, in victory, would be Britain's next prime minister—Hugh Gaitskell. This is a study of the man and his party.)

By RICHARD H. GROWALD
United Press International

London – (UPI) – The elderly Victorian lady threw up her hands when she read the letter from her nephew at Oxford university.

Hugh Todd Naylor Gaitskell, then a bookish student who enjoyed the ivory tower life of the ancient university in the mid-1920's, had written his aunt: "Henceforth, my future is with the working classes."

His aunt replied in a letter: "I do not know what England is coming to."

At that time Britian was in the last stages of its first labor party socialist government. Labor party leader Hugh Gaitskell and his fellow socialists began their 1962 convention recently in high hopes of returning to power.

Called A Traitor

Like President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Gaitskell has been called a traitor to his class. Gaitskell was born April 9, 1906, the son of a Colonial civil servant.

While the baby Gaitskell nestled in a crib in India where his father served, the Labor party also was in its infancy, feeling its way into national British politics in a time of penny beer, Edwardian pomp and circumstance, 12-hour work days and gaslight.

Gaitskell grew up during World War I. The postwar surge for "a better world," the decline of the once mighty Liberal party and a booming labor union movement produced the first Labor government while Gaitskell studied economics and philosophy at Oxford. Ramsay MacDonald's Socialists enacted little socialism and went out of office. But the young Gaitskell had glimpsed a new future, and wrote of it to his aunt.

The Conservatives were back in power. Big, burly, tough Ernest Bevin–later to be a foreign secretary but now the ham-fisted labor leader–helped direct a general strike that began in the mine fields and spread across the nation.

Drove Leaders' Cars

Many of Gaitskell's fellow students joined the volunteer brigades (led by Winston Churchill) who manned the strike-hit food and fuel services. Not young Gaitskell. He drove the strike leaders' cars and passed out strike literature.

The general strike failed. Gaitskell and others said labor needed more education to outthink and outsmart the Tories. After being graduated with honors Gaitskell stumped the grubby Midland minefields for two years, lecturing miners on profit and loss, social justice, capitalism, socialism and the ways and means of economic change.

"We regard the distribution of the wealth and income of this country as profoundly unfair," Gaitskell was to say later. But at this time he shied from active politics and became an economics professor at London university.

Gaitskell, ever the scholar, took an American Rockefeller fellowship and travelled to Vienna where he watched a semi-Facist government destroy by artillery fire a socialist movement. Gaitskell came home to London a little more interested in politics.

Economic Advisor

He became an economic advisor to the union leaders. He began helping their battle to heave the Communists from posts of power within the union movement. Gaitskell was a backroom brain. Then came World War II.

Churchill summoned the Laborites into his Coalition government. Gaitskill was put to work assessing scattered spy data on German economic operations. He ended the war as Chief of Price Control. But one London wartime night when the German planes did not come, Gaitskell talked with an old friend until 3 a.m.

The friend was Hugh Dalton, a Labor party giant, who talked and talked, hoping to convince his young, tousled-haired friend to "go active" in politics. Characteristically, Gaitskell asked time to think it over. He did and he went active.

The post-V-E-Day elections brought a Labor landslide. It also brought Gaitskell into Parliament, and he rose spectacularly.

In less than two years under Prime Minister Clement (now Earl) Attlee, Gaitskell became Minister of Fuel and Power in postwar austerity Britain.

It was a measure of his success that he became a frequent target of Winston Churchill.

Gaitskell stood up in the House of Commons and tried to tell the nation to use less of the country's scarce fuel supply. Save on bath water, he said. "I've never had a great many baths, and I don't think it makes much difference to health," Gaitskell said.

Churchill rose and sent even the Labor benches into roars of laughter by replying, "When Ministers of the Crown speak like this, they have no need to wonder why they are getting increasingly into bad odor."

Feuding Blossoms

Attlee's austerity grated on many Britons who wondered if they indeed had won the war. The ready acceptance that Socialism would bring prosperity for all was challenged. Inside the Labor party feuding blossomed. Aneurin Bevan called for more and more socialism. Gaitskell sided with the more cautious Attlee.

Attlee shocked the old timers when he appointed Gaitskell Chancellor of The Exchequer (or treasury secretary) in 1950. Gaitskell was the youngest chancellor in 50 years. And he sparked a Grand Canyon split in the party when he ruthlessly held down welfare spending to spend more on rearmament in a world of rising communism.

Nye Bevan quit the cabinet and called Gaitskell "a desiccated adding machine." In a few months the whole government fell when Churchill's Tories rode back into power in 1951.

For four more years Attlee remained in Commons but finally took an earldom. Bevan and Herbert Morrison, the old party warhorse, became favorites to succeed Attlee as the opposition party leader. The party picked Gaitskell.

Patch Up Feuding

Gaitskell managed to patch up the party feuding before the October 1959 general election and campaigned strenuously. But the Conservatives told prosperous Britons "You never had it so good." and scored their biggest victory in a generation. In defeat, the Labor party knives came out for Gaitskell.

Bevan died and his former followers accused Gaitskell of being "soft" on capitolism. Gaitskell reckoned the old image of socialism was a loser at the polls. He tried and failed to get the party to dump its almost sacred pledge to nationalize basic industries. Gaitskell was in deep trouble.

Then along came Frank Cousins.

Cousins is a dedicated union leader whose heart belongs to old-fashioned socialism. And Cousins became an advocate of banning the bomb. The partnership of the egghead socialist left and Cousins' powerful union following produced the anti-Gaitskell party convention two years ago. After a stormy day, the delegates voted in favor of throwing U.S. bases out of Britain and of Britain dumping her nuclear weapons. At that moment Gaitskell showed a new "image."

Gone was the tweedy professor. Gaitskell rose before the convention, shook his fist, pounded the podium and shouted he would "fight, fight, fight, and fight again" to reverse the party decision.

He organized commando squads throughout the party. Going over the heads of union leaders, he convinced the man in the ranks that Britain must remain staunchly pro-Western, and a nuclear weapons partner. At last year's party convention, he defeated and dumped the ban the bomb resolutions.

In doing so, Gaitskell became leader of the party in fact as well as name. More than anything else, his triumph is credited with probably dooming the ban-the-bomb movement in Britain.

Meanwhile, "Tory prosperity" had begun to lose some of its shine. Macmillan's recent "Little Austerity" program lost the Tories much support.

Still Must Strive

Gaitskell believes Labor still must strive for wider support. As the average British working man has gone from bicycle to automobile, he apparently has become less interested in militant socialism. Some Laborites openly regard socialism as a politically dirty word.

The fight goes on in the party and the leftwing by no means has surrendered to Gaitskell's modern labor philosophy – more state planning and less emphasis on nationalization.

Now there is the added complicating factor of the uproar over whether Britain should enter the European Common Market, which the conservative leadership thinks it should. The lines even within Labor's ranks are not clear-cut on the Market issue.

Despite it all, Labor this year senses that its turn may be coming again in Britain. The challenge to Gaitskell is to channel the party's undoubted strength in the electorate or, as one Labor party authority put it:

"The problem is whether Hugh can convince the people that socialism is for good times as well as bad."

Dennis the Menace

"...AN' PLEASE TRY TO STOP MR. WILSON'S WINDOWS FROM BREAKIN' SO EASY."

Inspection Unnecessary

Irv Lichtenstein Keeps His Bargain To Play Russian Records on Radio

By DICK WEST

Washington – (UPI) – Negotiations between Nikita Khrushchev and Irv Lichtenstein are on the bring. It is not clear, however, what they are on the brink of.

West

All that can be said with certainty is that Lichtenstein feels he has gone as far as he can go. The next move is up to Khrushchev, who may have gone farther than he can go.

Lichtenstein, I should explain for those of you who came in late, is a local radio station executive and do-it-yourself diplomat. I assume you know who Khrushchev is.

Last month, by-passing such traditional diplomatic channels as the United Nations, the State Department and David Susskind, Lichtenstein wrote a letter to Khrushchev proposing a cultural exchange.

He said he would have his disc jockeys at station WWDC broadcast Russia's 10 most popular songs if Radio Moscow would, in turn, broadcast America's 10 top tunes.

Subsequently, Lichtenstein received 10 recordings from Moscow, which were duly aired. I heard some of them and they sounded like they needed airing.

Meanwhile, in keeping with established international precautionary principles, Lichtenstein had his engineers monitor Radio Moscow to see if Khrushchev was carrying out the other end of the exchange.

This week, having received no evidence that the U.S. tunes were being played in the the Soviet capital, Lichtenstein suspended broadcasting of the Russian records.

He was careful, however, to leave the door open for future negotiations. He offered to accept at face value a certification from Khrushchev that the Soviets had been playing our songs.

"We don't think that 'on-site inspection' poses any problem in this case," Lichtenstein said.

In other words, he waived the right to send a team of disc jockeys to Moscow to make certain the Russians were complying with the exchange agreement.

Lichtenstein may be criticized in some quarters for having made such a concession, but I think the latest scientific information will show that on-the-spot inspection no longer is necessary to detect popular music.

If "Limbo Rock," the No. 3 U.S. tune, were played anywhere in the Soviet Union, the shock waves would be recorded on seismographs throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Liz Taylor's Film Faces Seizure

Rome–(UPI) – Elizabeth Taylor's film "Cleopatra" faced seizure today if it crosses the borders of Italy–where it was made—according to a Rome court ruling.

The labor section of the Tribunal of Rome issued a "precautionary sequestration" order against the still unreleased picture which cost an estimated $35 million.

The ruling is connected with a labor dispute by a group of film technicians who claim they were illegally laid off by Twentieth Century Fox, the film's producers.

Claiming five months loss of wages, the workers got the court order to attach the film whenever it returns here for viewing.

Cannon Beach Bowling Alley Leveled by Fire

Cannon Beach – (UPI) – A one-story building housing the Cannon Beach bowling alley was leveled by flames early Tuesday.

Damage was estimated at between $25,000 and $30,000. Cause of the fire was not known.

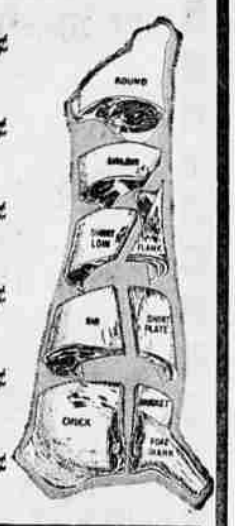
Try
Crescent Instant Minced Garlic

Ready to use right from the jar. Uniform flavor and lasting freshness. Ideal for Italian and other dishes that call for minced garlic. One-eighth teaspoon is equal to 1 small clove of garlic.

CRESCENT
Spice Merchants Since 1883

CHRYSTAL MEATS
The House of Personal Service
4th and Fir Phone 772-7315

Pork Steak Lean Center Cut lb. 49¢
Rib Steak lb. 69¢
Corned Beef Morris' Own lb. 69¢
Beef Stew Cubes Lean lb. 69¢
Veal Shoulder Steaks lb. 59¢
T-Bone Steaks Aged, Well Trimmed lb. 95¢



Special – Thurs., Fri., & Sat. Only
Klamath Fed
LOCKER BEEF Half or Whole 47c lb
CUT – WRAPPED – QUICK FROZEN – FREE

BIG FAMILY ORDER
25 lbs. BEEF ONLY $12.98

BIGGEST REACH

99 Million Consumers Read a Daily Newspaper Each Weekday

These readers make up the largest audience available to any advertiser in any medium. A recent study* of this national newspaper audience shows that it includes 80 per cent of all men and women over 21 . . . and 72 per cent of all teenagers, age 15 and over. This huge and consistent readership can be depended upon by advertisers because the daily newspaper is a habit with most people . . . an established part of their everyday lives. For the national advertiser, this amounts to almost the **total** market for **any** product. For the local advertiser, this massive readership symbolizes the local reach of his own local newspaper – into almost 9 out of 10 homes every day. No matter what the product or service an advertiser wants to sell, more people can read about it in the pages of the daily newspaper.

*"The Daily Newspaper And It's Reading Public," Audits and Surveys Co., Inc.

Printed in the interest of more effective advertising by Medford Mail Tribune