

THE

Week

A news analysis for socialists 9d. No. 10

THE WEEK

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS

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EDITORS' LETTER

We are pleased to be able to report a good response to our appeal for financial assistance and that plans for the first, sample, printed issue are going ahead. For the latter we will need to know as soon as possible what bulk orders (over and above normal orders) readers want to make for that issue. In particular, we want to know of comrades going to conferences, etc. We have already made arrangements with delegates going to Young Socialist conference to have that covered (although we would be pleased to hear from any other people who are attending), so please write in at your earliest.

Another reminder, a fair proportion of our readers are from Universities and with the Easter Vac. being near we would like to be able to feel that we have all the vacation addresses. Please write if you want your copy of The Week sending to your home address.

The Raleigh strike leaflet, which is included for information, should be placed in the hands of any AEU members. We have more copies should they be needed.

SUPPORT ABERDEEN LABOUR COUNCIL

This week we are giving over most of our editorial page to a news item. We make no apology because we consider that the issue of the Aberdeen Labour Council's action in boycotting South African goods is one of extreme importance. We see many examples of electoral opportunism so what could be more refreshing and inspiring than to see a principled political stand being taken on a matter which concerns a country thousands of miles away? It is up to the left wing to give maximum support to Aberdeen and to Councillor Bob Hughes (who is under a vicious personal attack which may cost him his livelihood) by sending messages of support, etc. But more than that let Aberdeen's example be a catalyst to all other Labour Councils taking similar action. Everyone speaks against Apartheid - here is an opportunity of doing something.

THE ABERDEEN BOYCOTT

from Robert Gray & Alec Bagley

The Labour Town Council in Aberdeen has recently become the 13th in Britain to boycott South African goods, following the lead of such ship-building towns as Newcastle, South Shields, West Hartlepool, Hull, Gt. Yarmouth, and Liverpool, and others including a number of London ones.

In Aberdeen, however, there has been a vicious reaction to the boycott, far more so than anywhere else, and the problem of local unemployment is clearly one of the axes the Apartheid business apologists have chosen to grind in their attempt to discredit and undermine the Labour Council, at the same time making Aberdeen into a test-case of opposition to Anti-Apartheid.

The ostensible reason for the outcry is that the boycott threatens workers' livelihood, especially with regard to a South African order for trawlers. The Chamber of Commerce has emerged as the unlikely champion of insecure shipyard workers after a resolution taken last week; while the unions support the boycott so far. In fact there is little reason for thinking the order will be cancelled - unless at the behest of Apartheid's business apologists to 'teach those interfering socialists a lesson.' The order is a contract between two private firms, and it is presumably in the interests of both that it should stand. On February 29th an MCF meeting was held to discuss how the local issue fits into the general pattern of Apartheid and the tactics of its apologists.

The sudden announcement of the boycott was, perhaps, somewhat inept, especially as it has in no way been a recent issue: it is the result of a ceaseless campaign by Bob Hughes during the past 2 years. (he was committed as a candidate to the boycott and since then has only just got the matter through). The opposition to it is a piece of hysterical diversion to obscure the real issues, including Government responsibility for the chronic difficulties of our shipyards. Local organised labour is beginning to rally behind the boycott; the March Trades Council will be decisive.

The outcry of the Thomson owned local press, plus local Tories' antics may have had some success with ordinary citizens. It is to be hoped that the trade unions and the council will not be stampeded into changing their attitude, and that local socialists, in fighting for the boycott, will launch a strong counter-attack, making clear the real issue of business support for South African fascism, and the sad effects of Tory economic policy on Scotland's great shipbuilding industry.

ED. note: next issue will contain more material on this question.



LIFE'S BETTER WITH THE CONSERVATIVES



EAST MIDLANDS LABOUR PARTY MEETS


by Alec Acheson

The East Midlands Regional Labour Party 'briefing' meeting was held in Leicester at the Boot and Shoe Union Hall on February 22nd with Wedgwood Benn at the main speaker. The meeting highlighted some of the differences in the party between the Gaitskell and Wilson regimes. True it was a regional not a local meeting, the Boot and Shoe Hall is smallish, yet the rapport between platform and floor has not been seen since the peak years of "Nye" - and the same lessons have to be learned again. Over 300 packed into the Trade Hall, there was hardly standing room left. Questions and discussion were on a reasonable level, and questioners were obviously anxious that the Labour Party be prepared for office. But a grim reminder of the past sat brooding on Benn's right hand - Dowden, still the Chief Whip and some time stiletto man for Gaitskell.

Benn spelled out the FIVE TASKS of a Labour Government. As in 1959 immense expenditure was envisaged, nearly everything would have something extra spent on it, all to be paid for by "increased productivity". Although questioned on a national plan and priorities, Benn gave no categorical assurance that the Labour Shadow Cabinet was preparing an overall plan, or that they had any concrete conclusions on the mechanics of how a planned economy should operate. Benn has an excellent platform manner, he puts it over with virile charm and modesty. A golden era is just round the corner and everything in the garden (including urban land development control) will be lovely without anyone getting badly hurt except perhaps land and property sharks. That there would be difficulties and that there are knotty problems was acknowledged. But one came away with the feeling that with a less radical and fundamental programme than 1945, the rank and file will be marched up the hill and down again. Because after the dismal and sterile years of Gaitskell the rank and file are in danger of letting their enthusiasm for the peppy Wilson leadership lead them into an uncritical and over-tolerant approval of a programme of social reforms not buttressed and reinforced with the planned controls and machinery to enforce it.

LABOUR NOT TO REPEAL COLOUR BAR BILL - GEORGE BROWN

When interviewed by the Oxford paper Cherwell (February 12 issue) George Brown, in reply to a question as to whether Labour would repeal the Commonwealth Immigration Act, said: "This would not be constructive. You can never put a situation back to where it was by simple repeal. The situation had changed now, and people might come in their thousands in fear that it might be enforced again. He also said that, "it would be idle to pretend that there is no feeling against coloured people in areas which are under pressure - usually Labour areas - where there is a bad housing shortage, few jobs and so forth...."



INDUSTRIAL week

LANCASHIRE FEDERATION OF TRADES COUNCILS MILITANT from Alan Rooney

The Annual Conference of the Lancashire Federation of Trades Councils was held in the Lord Mayor's Parlour, Manchester Town Hall, on Saturday, February 29th. Ellis Smith, M.P., was re-elected unopposed as President for 3 years, a resolution to the effect that the President hold office for one year only being defeated. Two resolutions on rail closures were passed, and a call was made for more regional T.U. liaison to fight rail closures. The Government was slated on unemployment in a successful resolution from Liverpool T.C. and N.I.C. was denounced in Manchester and Salford's successful resolution.

Hot discussion took place on the call contained in a resolution from Altrincham and Sale for the TUC to withdraw its members from the NEDC. Despite strong opposition the resolution was carried. Also successful was a resolution from Stockport expressing firm opposition to any form of salary or wage restraint. The U.S. State Department was condemned in another successful resolution from Altrincham and Sale for trying to prevent the sale of British buses to Cuba. The new committee which was elected has a left wing majority.

FORD'S STEWARDS TO ISSUE 10,000 NEWS SHEETS

At their meeting on February 26th, the Ford's shop stewards decided to issue 10,000 copies of a news sheet detailing various items recently discussed with the management. These include such things as compulsory overtime, holidays and possible redundancies. Explaining the decision, one of the stewards said that now meetings in the factory are banned we have a problem of communication with the men we represent.

NATIONALISATION UNPOPULAR

by Chris Arthur

According to the latest Gallup Poll less than half Labour supporters are in favour of the renationalisation of steel, and only a quarter are in favour of more nationalisation. These figures are an indication of the damage done by a long period of right-wing leadership of the Labour movement. The case for nationalisation has gone by default. The figures will undoubtedly be used by the right as an argument for further retreats on this front which would produce a yet further decrease in mass socialist consciousness and the vicious circle will continue. The only way to combat the present series of scurrilous anti-nationalisation ads is a counter attack in terms of the necessity to replace the irresponsible power of the few by popular control.

RALEIGH STRIKE AT CRUCIAL STAGE: The mere 14-vote majority for continuing the strike at Raleigh by AEU members is an indication of the difficult position the strikers are in. Getting no real support from the leadership of the AEU (the latter didn't even discuss the call for the blacking of Raleigh tools) they must rely on the rest of the Labour movement to back them. A good example has been set by the Executive of the Nottingham City Labour Party, which at its last meeting donated £5 to the strike fund. A move is afoot to establish a solidarity committee from the Labour Party, Co-ops, unions, etc. to appeal for support.

UNION OFFICIALS ISSUE EASTER APPEAL

A group of union officials in the North West region have issued a an appeal to trade unionists to support the 1964 Easter March on London. They argue: "...Trade Unions have played a prominent part in the struggle to maintain peace and secure the abolition of nuclear weapons. While Britain maintains its heavy arms bill trades unionists will experience the greatest difficulty is securing decent wages and raising living standards...."

The signatories are: H. Batley, District Secretary Plumbers T.U.; E. Church, Divisional Secretary AUBPW; G. Crompton, District Organiser AUBPW; E. Frow, District Secretary AEU; C. Goddard, Vice President Manchester NUR; P. Jackson, District Official NUFTO; J. Madden, District Organiser AUBPW; Harry Smith, President Stockport Trades Council; J.W. Tocker, District President Stockport AEU; and R. Wright, District Secretary Stockport AEU.

MARPLES' FORTUNE

Recently a reader in the Sunday Express took up Mr. Marples on his statement that he wished he were as rich as a Beattie. The paper gave the following reply to the query as to how rich Marples is:

"According to officials records, Mr. Marples is the largest shareholder in about 10 property companies, some of which have converted big Victorian mansions into flats. Up to four years ago, when he sold out for an estimated £200,000, he also controlled Marples Ridgway, the bridge and roadmaking firm. Guesses of his total wealth range from £500,000 to the round million."

SCHOOLS CND BULLETIN NUMBER TWO PUBLISHED

The second issue of Schools Bulletin which, according its inside cover, is produced by and for young people at schools and tech. who support CND, has appeared. It has articles on the scandal of 'defence' expenditure, the second conference of Schools CND, problems of Schools CND and how to tackle them, the Easter demonstration, Project 67 (a scheme for international youth holidays), etc. The journal can be obtained from: The Youth Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, 14, Tib Lane, Manchester 2.

'VOICE' DAY SCHOOL PRODUCTIVE

from Bill Vester

Although attendance was below expectation, the day school held by Voice on Sunday, February 23rd, in London, proved valuable. The audience included trade unionists and parliamentary candidates. Several trade union students from Ruskin College were present. In the morning John Hughes spoke on the economic problems facing a Labour Government, and Stephen Swingler, M.P., followed with some observations on the situation facing Labour left-wingers following the General Election. One of the results of the afternoon discussion was a decision to form a study group on Parliamentary reform - a subject the Labour Party had neglected badly according to Stephen Swingler.

NALSO OPPOSITION TO CONSCRIPTION

At the last Officers' meeting of NALSO held on February 9th the following resolution was passed unanimously:

"We, officers of NALSO declare our unalterable opposition to the re-introduction of conscription in any form and deplore suggestions that the Labour Party might be willing to introduce a selective form of conscription."

OXFORD STUDENTS FOR MALTA FREEDOM from Ken Tarbuck (Oxford)

On February 18th, the First Year Students, Ruskin College, Oxford, adopted a statement on the question of Malta. Addressed to the Secretary of State, Duncan Sandys, the statement begins: "We learn with utmost regret and concern, through the medium of the press as regards general information and from a Maltese brother student for more specific details that, whilst you have decided as spokesman of the British Government, to impose independence on Malta by May of this year, you are completely ignoring the repeated appeals of the Malta Labour Movement for free and democratic elections to be held before independence..."

The statement outlines the anti-democratic role of the island's Catholic Hierarchy which spares no effort to interfere in elections and mount a general campaign against the Maltese Labour Party. The students conclude by calling upon Sandys to allow the Maltese people to be allowed to make up their own minds as per the proposals of the Maltese Labour Party. The statement was circulated to the press.

WOMEN STUDENTS AT LEICESTER PETITION AGAINST RESTRICTIONS

Following an article in the university newspaper, Ripple, which called upon women students to revolt against "outdated and fuddy-duddy" regulations governing women students a petition on the question has been organised. The petition protests against the 10.30 curfew on visitors at their halls of residence and demands that women students have the rights and freedoms as men students in hall.

A CRITICAL LETTER

I disagree with your editorial views on Cyprus. The proposed 'panacea' is an abstraction derived from a priori rules and takes no account of the concrete situation.

The call for working class solidarity is utopian in the situation. Its achievement will take a long, long time and without outside intervention now there will be an intra-class, inter-racial bloodbath.

The issues of the bases is a red herring with respect to this. While it explains Britain's interest, their removal would not help to solve the present strife.

The least evil here is UNO intervention which may stabilise the situation enough to allow working class solidarity to develop.

If British imperialism does not like UNO forces so much the better.

Chris Arthur.

Ed. Note: an editorial reply will appear in the next issue; whilst we cannot give a lot of space to polemics, other readers views are welcome on this very thorny problem.



MORE INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENT

According to figures issued by the New York Stock Exchange on February 26th, institutional investors now own 20% of all the stocks listed on the Exchange compared with a mere 12.7% in 1949. At the end of 1963 non-insured pension funds headed the list of institutional holders of listed issues with \$23,400m. worth of stock, compared with \$500m. in 1949. Other large holders included: mutual funds with \$19,000m; non-life insurance companies with \$8,700m.; foundations with \$8,000m.; other non-profit institutions with \$5,900m; life insurance companies with \$5,300m.; and college and university endowments with \$4,000m. These figures are a further indication of the concentration of U.S. monopoly capitalism.

SCHOOL BOYCOTT IN BOSTON

Boston has joined New York, Cincinnati (Ohio), Cambridge (Maryland), and Chester (Penns.) in having a boycott of schools in protest against the restriction of Negro children to inferior schools. More than ten thousand American Negro and white children boycotted schools on February 26th and attended "freedom schools" set up for the day. This was the city's second school boycott in eight months, the first took place last June when 8,000 children participated.

SORRY PLIGHT OF THE AMERICAN INDIANS from Stan Mills

In a report issued last week by the U.S. Public Health Service the terrible conditions under which the majority of American Indians live were exposed. This authority is in charge of the welfare of some 340,000 Indians who live in 250 federal reserves in 23 states. The death rate for the American people as a whole is much higher than that of the Indians - the average age at which people die in the U.S. as a whole is 63, the average Indian dies at 43. Indians have 4 times as high a death rate from T.B. and 3 times as high a death rate from influenza and pneumonia as other Americans. Indians have 5 times much gonorrhoea, 20 times as much meningitis and 100 times as much dysentery as the rest of the American population.

The reasons for these figures are easy to find. More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the families on some reservations have no source of pure water for drinking and household use. They haul their water from ditches which are often used by livestock and badly polluted. Most Indians have either no, or very inferior, toilet facilities. The American Indians also suffer from various restrictions, lower wages, and inferior educational opportunities. Not a few Indians have been inspired into activity by the rising struggle of the American Negroes.

YOUTH TO MARCH IN BRUSSELSBased on Peace News report

The 1964 "Anti-Atomic March of Belgian Youth" will take place in Brussels on March 15th. The marchers will carry slogans demanding: "No Atomic Arms in Belgium", "No Atomic Arms for the Belgian Army", "End all Nuclear Tests", "Use military expenditure for social needs", "Destroy all nuclear stockpiles", etc. This year the Young Catholic Workers Move^{ment} has joined the organising committee. In consequence, the Young Socialists, who are the only group on the Committee who support unilateral disarmament and withdrawal from NATO are even more in the minority. The march committee have appealed to unilateralists in Britain and other countries to join in the march. People interested should contact: Angela Aspinwall, 43, Gordon Mansions, Torrington Place London W.C. 1. for details.

'CHRISTIAN' TRADE UNIONS IN FRANCE MAY DROP RELIGIOUS TAG

Meeting in Paris on February 25th, the confederal council of the CFTC (Confederation Francaise des Travailleurs Chretiens) adopted a resolution in favour of deleting the religious reference in its title. This is expected to be approved at an extraordinary Congress in November. The CFTC is the second largest trade union federation in France (the CGT which is affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions being the largest) and the move is, in a distorted way, a reflection of the reawaking militancy of the French working class.

THE LORENZ KNORR CASE

We have received from the Defence Committee for Victims of Nazi Persecution material concerning the case of one Lornoz Knorr. In May last year a court in Solingen heard proceedings brought by former Hitler generals and ex-Minister Strauss against this man who is a well-known anti-fascist and Federal Secretary of the Socialist Youth Movement for many years. He was charged because he had drawn attention to the fact that many of Western Germany's generals were war criminals and had been close collaborators of Hitler. The bill of indictment was signed by an Attorney General whose name is on the list of war criminals. Beyond doubt the Attorney General had taken part in passing savage sentences at the German Special Court in Prague during the Nazi occupation. It was only after Lorenz Knorr had informed the international press about this fact that this man was dismissed from public office.

Lorenz Knorr has entered an appeal against the verdict of a fine of 300 DM or, alternatively, to 30 days imprisonment. This appeal is to be held soon. Anti-nazis see this trial as part of the resurgence of Nazism in Germany, in that it is an attempt to silence a man who is well-known for his exposures of ex-Nazis in high office. Anyone wanting further details should write to the committee's secretary: Mrs. B. Dalos, 12, First Avenue, Gillingham, Kent.

SWEDISH COMMUNIST APPEALS FOR RELEASE OF HEINZ BRANDT

Among the many new appeals to Walter Ulbricht for the release of Heinz Brandt, the left-wing trade unionist who was jailed during a visit to the Soviet Zone of Berlin, has been one from K. Johansson, a well-known member of the Swedish C.P. Johansson is now the secretary of the Swedish Committee for the struggle against neo-nazism and racial offences.

THIRD WORLD WEEK



NATIONALIST ORGANISATIONS UNITE IN SOUTH WEST AFRICA

The two South West African nationalist organisations - SWAPO (South West Africa Peoples Organisation) and SWANU (South West African National Union) have formed a united front to be known as SWANLIF (South West African National Liberation Front). The National Executive of SWAPO hailed the achievement and urged that it extended to include as many organisations as possible to constitute an Anti-South Africa United Front. The National Executive also introduced some changes in the programme of SWAPO. These involve the organisation's attitude towards UNO, the nationalisation of foreign industries and the land of South West Africa.

The previous aims of involving UN trusteeship in South West Africa and UN presence in the country are now deleted from the programme. "We demand nothing less than full national sovereignty and independence NOW!" the Committee said. The new programme now speaks of state-controlled industries receiving priority, and of foreign investment being allowed only if it invests in industries controlled by the state. It also includes land reform in its aims.

INDIAN BUDGET - MORE FOR THE RICH AND MORE FOR 'DEFENCE' by J. Holman.

The principle features of the Indian Budget, presented by Mr. T.T. Krishnamachari, were vastly increased defence expenditure (nearly 1/3 of total expenditure), new taxation incentives for foreign investment, and a reduction in personal taxes. The minister laid special stress on the private sector of the economy, saying it must be established on "an enduring basis in the space assigned to it, to attract individual savings and to develop managerial skills.

In the field of company taxation, which naturally affects foreign investment, the main concessions were to replace the super-profits tax by a surtax; a reduction in the standard rate of corporate tax for certain industries, and a reduction of the intercorporate dividend tax. There will be a general reduction in rates of personal taxation for both Indians and foreigners, and changes are also announced for personal capital gains. Total revenue was estimated at £1570m., and expenditure at £1530m. Defence expenditure, however, will reach £539m.

VENEZUELAN GUERRILLAS ATTACK U.S. OIL INSTALLATIONS from Hsinhua

On the evening of February 26th, Venezuelan guerillas set fire to 5 crude oil reservoirs belonging to the U.S. Mene Grande Oil Corporation in Anzoategi State, causing a loss of about \$200,000. It was the 6th time the firm's property had been attacked. On the 17th, more than \$1m. ^{damage} was done to the El Tigre oilfield of the same corporation when 15 reservoirs and other equipment was blown up in dynamite attacks.

MONTRÉAL NEW LEFT JOINS QUÉBEC SOCIALIST PARTY by R. Brock (Montreal)

Addressing the annual meeting of the Montreal New Left Association, Jean-Marie Bedard, first vice-president of the PSQ (Quebec Socialist Party), answered arguments of the leadership of the New Democratic Party against having a separate workers party in Quebec. He quoted James Connolly to stress the theoretical justification for an independent and autonomous party by citing the decision taken by the Irish socialists at a time when Ireland was still part of the United Kingdom. In forming the Irish Socialist Republican Party Connolly opted for real internationalism based upon a free association of the two peoples.

He went on to say that "if there is no formula like that of the PSQ the wholly progressive nationalism of the French-Canadian proletariat (a nationalism which has a class content because the means of production and distribution in Quebec are owned by Anglo-American and Canadian capitalists) can be channelled into some Fascist or semi-fascist organization, such as the Social Credit party.." Bedard also made it clear that the differences between the leadership of the NDP and the PSQ involve far more than the national question. In an obvious reference to the expulsion of the NDP youth in Ontario and Vancouver, he said that the PSQ is open to everyone who believes in a socialist party for Quebec, "and in this it is much better than the NDP..."

After his speech, the New Left Association decided with only one vote against to become the "Section Nouvelle Gauche" of the PSQ.
Ed. note: material will appear in later issues on the differences between the NDP and the PSQ.

NEW SOVIET PRICE SYSTEM UNDER DISCUSSION based on Financial Times report

A new Soviet system of inter-industrial prices is to be introduced from next January 1. The new prices will reflect the real cost of items used in industry more accurately than do the present prices. This move on prices comes at a time when the whole question of how best to stimulate the economy to produce those things which are most needed has once again been subjected to fairly widespread public discussion. The ideas aired in the "profit motive" controversy in the autumn of 1962 have once again been brought out into the open. One of the leading advocates of the "profit motive," Professor I. Malyshev, has been writing in the press. He now enjoys the authority of his official post as deputy head of the Central Statistical Administration of the USSR.

It is now generally admitted that the present Soviet system of setting gross output (whether measured in weight or in roubles) as the chief criterion of industrial success, is unsatisfactory. Under this system, there is a tendency for factories to produce unwanted goods and to disregard costs (in the past a saucepan factory has been quoted which produced only large, heavy saucepans when weight was the criterion, and small expensive ones when price was). The dispute now going on is about what system should replace the gross output method. A Tatar official, Mr. Tabeev, first secretary of the Tatar regional committee of the C.P., has proposed a criterion..called "normative value of processing". Under this system a factory has a target for the amount of its own work that has to be put into production in a given period to be called added value.

MONOPOLIES GROW IN JAPAN

by a special correspondent

There is a growing concentration of capital in Japan which is bringing in its wake important changes in class structure. The paper Sankei Shimbun, in February, reported that the number of small businesses taken over by bigger ones had risen from 440 in 1960 to 715 in 1962. Between April, 1963, and January this year 779 such firms were taken over, and it is expected that the figure will exceed 900 by March which will be more than double the 1960 figure. According to the Japanese journal, The Economist, most of the firms have had a capital of less than 5 million yen (less than £5,000).

The process has been most marked in shipbuilding. To increase the competitive position of the industry the Government is giving a subsidy of 10,000 million yen (nearly £10 million) in the present financial year. This is over 4 and half times last year's figure. To encourage concentration, the Government is confining the subsidy to the 6 biggest combines. These have been formed out of 95 smaller firms. Banks are also merging. The Japanese journal, Diamond, reported that the Sumitomi bank is to merge with Kawawuchi bank. This follows the merger of the Daiichi and Asahi banks. Thus 4 of the biggest banks have merged into 2 units.

The anti-monopoly laws are no longer enforced. According to official statistics, cartels have been formed in 283 trades. The Economist has remarked that 2 or 3 years ago there were not more than 4 Japanese concerns which ranked among the biggest in the capitalist world but today there are 14. On the other hand small firms are in a precarious position. In January this year there were 198 cases of bankruptcy with a total debt of 28,200 million yen (over £27 million). The Government's tight money policy and the various regulations under the small business basic law and the small business modernisation law have greatly contributed to this process.

The concentration of capital has produced changes in class structure. According to Government statistics, the number of capitalists and landlords rose from 800,000 to 860,000 between 1959 and 1962. In the same period the number of petty bourgeoisie shrank from 21,750,000 to 19,440,000, whilst the number of workers rose from 20,540,000 to nearly 24 million. Thus the working class now forms the majority of the working population. Although more than half the workers still work in small or medium enterprises the proportion employed in big firms is increasing.

In the countryside the decrease in the number of peasants accounted for most of the decline in the number of petty bourgeoisie, the number declining from 14,500,000 in 1959 to some 12 million in 1962. The composition of the peasantry has also changed, in this period the percentage of poor peasants rose from 65% to 75%; that of the middle peasants dropped from 30% to 20%; and that of the rich peasants remained at 5%. As can be seen the decline of the middle peasants was very big, from 4,350,000 to 2,410,000, i.e., nearly a 50% decrease within 3 years. Other important changes were the increase the number of very rich from 12,000 to 15,000 and an increase in the armed forces from 280,000 to 430,000, in the last three years.

THE GROWING ECONOMIC ROLE OF THE STATE by Pat Jordan

Public expenditure, i.e., all expenditure by the central Government, the National Insurance fund, local authority expenditure, capital expenditure of the nationalised industries and the public corporations, reached a total of nearly £11,000m., the equivalent of 44% of the Gross National Product (GNP). It must be noted that even after 11 years of Tory rule the percentage of the GNP accounted for by public expenditure has changed very little. In 1952, after 6 years of Labour rule, public expenditure amounted to 45% of the GNP. Between 1952 and 1957 there was a slow decline in the proportion of the GNP absorbed by public expenditure, reaching its lowest post-war point in 1957 at 40.5%. But this was largely due to the decrease in defence expenditure and since then the figure has gradually risen.

The Plowden Committee looked at the figures over a longer period. They showed that in 1870, Growth Supply Expenditure stood at 4% of the GNP, by 1910 it had risen to 6%, in 1930 it had reached 12% and was 15% in 1938. This indicates how the growth has taken place irrespective of which political party was in the seat of Government. Plans announced by the Tories in recent months would indicate that the tendency will continue. Proposals arising from Beoching, Buchanan, Newsome and Robbins envisage an annual increase in Government expenditure of over 4%, or nearly £2,000m. in absolute terms.

The importance of the public sector can be expressed in other ways. Economic Trends, December, 1962, calculated that nearly one quarter of all employment in Britain is in the public sector. This compares with 7% in 1911 and 10% in 1930. The article gave actual figures of employment as (figures in thousands) Central Government 1,776, local government 1,782 and public corporations as 2,196; making a total of 5,754 out of a total working population of 25 million. Under Tory rule there have been reductions in the number of civil servants and measures of denationalisation, even so the drop in the number employed by the public sector has been merely from 24.6% in 1957 to 23.1% in 1962. Wages and salaries from public sources amount to 28% of all wages and salaries, or £4,833m. out of a total of £17,074m.

In addition, the Government controls decisions concerning the disposal of social benefits and other public grants which amount to a further £1,980m. The two items: wages and salaries, and Grants and benefits, together amount to £6,812m. or 28% of all total personal incomes. As well controlling the nearly half the national income, being the biggest single employer, the Government is the biggest single landlord (owning about one quarter of all existing houses) and being responsible for the building of some 60% of all new dwellings since 1945.

This brief survey reveals how 'rotten ripe' British society is for the social ownership of the means of production. Despite the fact the working class has not yet expropriated the bourgeoisie, the laws of political economy still operate. The figures are an expression of the inexorable tendency towards socialisation - what is lacking is the political, democratic and social corollary - in a word - socialism.

M. C. F.

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