

The Week

A NEWS ANALYSIS FOR SOCIALISTS
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- "POPS" MAKE MILLIONS
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THE UNIONS MUST FIGHT

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THE UNIONS MUST FIGHT

The speeches of Messrs. Wilson, Gunter and Callaghan over the weekend have received widespread publicity and comment so we do not have to report upon them factually. However, it is necessary to say something on their significance for the labour and trade union movement. It is, of course, always necessary to bear in mind that such speeches are made for the consumption of foreign bankers as much as anything else. They cannot be taken as policy decisions in and of themselves but they are important indications of Cabinet thinking. The fact that throughout these speeches the sharp edge was turned towards the "excessively high wage increases" and not towards the rocketing profits of banking interests shows that Mr. Wilson's team approaches these problems from precisely the same standpoint as the Tories.

The first^{thing}/to note is that there is a lot^{of}/nonsense being spoken about wages and prices. The Economist (hardly a journal which would distort figures in the interests of the trade unions) gave the following figures in its December 25th issue, page 1,436:

	Month	Index 1958=100	Percentage change from		
			Previous Month	Three Months Ago	Twelve months Ago.
Production	October	131	+ $\frac{1}{2}$	Nil	+1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Productivity	October	126	+ $\frac{1}{2}$	Nil	+2
Wage rates (weekly)	November	130.9	+0.5	+1.0	+4.9
Retail prices	November	122.5	+0.4	+0.6	+4.4

What comes out of these figures is (1) far from the 8% freely banded about, wage rates have only increased just under 5% (the difference between this figure and that of the Chancellor is that earnings have gone up more - this being due^{to}/more overtime, piece-work earnings, etc.); (2) that anyway the increase in wage rates is only just the skin of one's nose ahead of the increase in the cost of living; and (3) productivity has increased far more than the increase in the purchasing power of wage rates 2% as against 0.5% - (4.9% - 4.4%).

Thus we see that the attack on the trade unions is dishonest as well as being anti-working class. The unions must fight this attack tooth and nail, they must throw back these figures in the face of the Government and not be intimidated by the press propaganda. Any other course will lead to disaster.

The following report, which appeared in Motor Transport, January 7th., is disturbing:-

"Despite protests by the Trade Unions, the Transport Holding Company and Union Cartage Company Ltd. are pressing on with the merger between B.R.S. (Meat Haulage) Ltd. and Union Cartage Co. Ltd.... Strong efforts by the unions to halt the merger, including a confrontation with Mr. Tom Fraser, when Minister of Transport, have had no effect. The Minister made it clear that this was an administrative matter with which he was not prepared to interfere.

"The signs are that opposition to the merger is particularly strong among the clerical staff. A joint meeting last month between clerks enrolled in the Transport and General Worker's Union and the Transport Salaried Staffs Association decided that the B.R.S. staff would not move over to the new company. The Union have asked the B.R.S. management either to find the staff alternative jobs within B.R.S. or to serve redundancy notices, with appropriate compensation. Some redundancy notices, I understand, are to be served today. The same problems do not arise with Union Cartage Staff, since under the deal Union Cartage, with a two thirds holding, has control, but negotiations to get staff to move from south London to east London are likely to prove difficult."

This report shows that the Government is allowing a measure of de-nationalisation in road transport in the face of union opposition. The Government has not changed the composition of transport one iota since it came to power. The same clique of motor industry big wigs sit on the boards of the nationalised concerns as under the Tories; the 1966 appointments show no change, e.g. the London Transport Board. The merger of the meat haulage section of the B.R.S. with a private enterprise firm is in effect de-nationalisation, since the private firm will have a two thirds holding. That the Labour Minister of Transport should ignore the protests of the B.R.S. employees, who prefer redundancy to working for the private enterprise firm, is disgraceful. Send protests to Barbara Castle, if it is not too late - some of the redundancy notices were due on January 7th. according to the report.

T.G.W.U. BOYCOTTS "VAUX" BEER

From a special correspondent

The Transport and General Workers' Union is taking a unique form of industrial action by asking its 80,000 members in the Northern region to boycott Vaux Beers. The areas affected are Northumberland, Durham, North Riding of Yorkshire, Cumberland and Westmoreland. The dispute began when 80 draymen at Vaux and Associated Breweries, of Sunderland, refused to work overtime in protest against the employment of non-union labour. They were dismissed, and later the firm refused to reinstate all but a few of them.

Mr. Jack Dawson, the union's commercial transport secretary said last Friday, "If our members respond as we expect, Vaux sales will be affected considerably." He added that he thought the beer ban would take some time to take effect as there was a time-lag in informing members. Officials of working men's clubs in the Jarrow, Hebburn and Boldon area are being recommended by their association to boycott Vaux beer. The firm has confirmed that they have received letters from several clubs on the question. It is to be hoped that any readers of The Week living in the area will do their best to publicise the boycott.

Recently in ASSET we conducted some research into the whole question of how long it should take and how long it does take for a resisted claim to exhaust the terms of the procedure agreement and be eventually settled. This enquiry was, we believe, the first of its nature to be conducted by a British trade union (at least in a self critical sense).

Most members know and understand the terms of the procedure agreement existing between ASSET and the Engineering Employers' Federation. They know that it consists of three basic stages: domestic (in the factory) local (at district level) and national (with the Federation representatives in London). One would assume from this that three stages means three meetings - and three meetings, three sets of discussions, all of which should take a comparatively short length of time in which to occur. It is of course, from ASSET's point of view, desirable that negotiations should be successfully concluded in the shortest possible time. This is due to many understandable reasons: for example, if a member was summarily dismissed or demoted, the situation would require immediate action, for if the matter were allowed to drag on and on the position of the member would seriously deteriorate. Similarly, when members within a grade, make a claim for a salary increase, it is obvious that they wish to obtain a satisfactory settlement, as soon as possible, so they can begin to enjoy the extra as soon as possible.

The results of the enquiry frankly bothered us. Far from being a straightforward series of negotiations passing through three stages of the procedure agreement, we found that the average length of time a 'resisted' claim takes from the moment it is initially raised by a grade or group at domestic level, until it exhausts the procedure and is settled (sometimes) is nine months. There are, of course, exceptions to this. Some take only a few weeks and some take longer than a year.

The reasons for the delays are many and varied. Often at domestic level discussions, local ASSET representatives agree to repeated adjournments and resumptions of meetings, without ever reaching or approaching a satisfactory conclusion. This can, and does, in many cases, last for several months. At national level too, meetings are frequently delayed, but it is hard to blame anyone because the meetings have to be arranged with the consent of four parties - the national officers of the Engineering Employers' Federation; the national officials of ASSET; representatives of the firm involved; and representatives of the local employers association involved. It must also be remembered that the national officials of the E.E.F. negotiate with representatives of all engineering trade unions, manual and non manual. As we have already pointed out, one of the main objectives should be to try to conclude the negotiations, successfully, in the shortest possible time. By consulting the 'critical path' for a salary claim chart we can locate unnecessary delays and thereby take action to reduce or eliminate them.

*From ASSET Journal 1965 Issue 5.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS' CONFERENCE - AN IMPORTANT CORRECTION

In the report of the Young Socialists conference carried in Vol. 4 No. 22 it was stated that the delegate from Woodside, Glasgow, called for Britain to join the Warsaw Pact.

This was not so and we apologise to comrade Ian Mooney, the delegate concerned, for this error.

By and large the left has repudiated Richard Gott, the candidate of the Radical Alliance in the forthcoming by-election in Hull North. This, I believe to be a profoundly mistaken decision, and I should like to set out my reasons for saying this.

A. The iniquities of the Labour Government require no cataloguing for the readers of The Week, I am sure. The only dispute is over the extent and manner of our opposition. The Labour left claims that we should fight through the Labour Party. All well and good. The question then arises: how much fighting has the left done, how effective has it been, and what further forms of struggle does the left intend to employ? The answers are: the left has mounted belated and limited campaigns over Vietnam, immigration and wages policy, it has barely raised the issues of nuclear weapons, colonial policy and steel nationalisation; the left has had no perceptible influence on any critical issue; the left is not prepared to go beyond the lobbying and declamatory techniques it has employed so far. The Parliamentary left has not even tried to use its most effective weapon - the threat to vote against the Government. The reasons for the failure of the Labour left are complex, but obviously include: (a) the personal defection of some of its former leaders beguiled by the fruits of office; (b) a self-imposed restraint stemming from a ritualistic adhesion to the Labour metaphysic (absolute priority of the necessity of placing and maintaining Labour in office, necessity for loyalty to the Labour Party because it is the only mass party of the working class, etc.); (c) a collapse of morale and nerve brought on by the recurrent failures of the left in the last few years; (d) the decline of effective pressures from the independent left (CND, New Left, etc.) I see not the slightest chance that any of these factors will cease to operate so long as we remain imprisoned in the strategic formula of the orthodox left.

R. It is by now surely clear that we cannot expect the Labour Party as at present constituted to bring us to socialism. The Labour Movement does, obviously, contain a socialist nucleus but this has been paralysed by its own theoretical and strategic weaknesses and its capitulation to the Labour metaphysic. At its most effective all that it has been able to do is to prevent the most outrageous betrayals of principle by the Labour leadership. Its effectiveness has increased in periods when it has allied itself with independent radical and socialist movements and when it has been emboldened by such alliances into launching a head-on attack on the right. The late fifties and early sixties saw the beginnings of a loose-knit alliance between the Labour left and a new independent left which culminated in a temporary defeat of the Labour old guard, to a revitalisation of socialist thought and analysis, to the mobilisation of large numbers of the normally apolitical, to a great widening of the terms of political debate in this country and to the enhancement and diversification of the channels of democratic activity in this country. In this situation there was some hope a genuine growth of mass socialist consciousness and the crystallisation of a popular socialist movement. These hopes and achievements have by now largely been dissipated and we are rapidly moving back to a situation where a truncated "loyal" left is fighting for its very existence on the wings of Labour movement. The time has come for us once again to break out of these constricting quarters and to try again to construct a movement of popular dissent both to challenge the Labour Party and radicalise its left and to lay the foundations of a new socialist movement.

Continued over/

Should we support Gott continued/

C. Irrespective of these long term considerations we have an immediate duty to offer challenge to the Government on Vietnam, nuclear weapons and alliances, immigration, anti-trade union legislation, etc. No better way of making this challenge exists than to threaten the Government's precarious majority by electoral intervention. Gott's candidature at Hull ensures that at least the major issues of foreign policy will be debated and that national publicity will be focused upon them. (It's noteworthy that none of the other candidates intended to make foreign policy an issue at all until Gott intervened.) Gott's vote may or may not be derisory - this is not the most important test of the correctness of his stand. Instead his accomplishments have to be judged by (a) the extent to which he makes Vietnam, etc, live issues in the campaign and by the effectiveness with which he counters the Con-Lib-Lab consensus on these issues; (b) the extent to which he reinvigorates and strengthens the independent left in the Hull area.

This overall strategy is obviously open to serious criticisms. To the objection that the vote for Gott may keep the Labour candidate out, I can only say that there appears to me to be more over-riding priorities than the addition of a staunch Wilsonite to the corpus of docile lobby-fodder which at present constitutes the back bench Labour Party. If the Government is endangered by this intervention so much the better. We wish to give it a fright - it has given us some bad frights recently. (In any case socialists must seriously consider whether the long-term prospects for socialism in this country are improved or worsened by the retention of a reactionary Labour Government.) To the objection that the local Labour has refused to back Gott and is now thoroughly alienated from the independent left one must counter the question: and just how effective has the local Labour left been in raising and fighting upon the issues which Gott intends to bring forward? We know the answer. There is no reason why we should be fooled by the illusions of the local Labour left as to their own past, present and future impact in the Hull Labour Party.

The final objection is that if Gott's vote is very low, it will be interpreted as signifying the slightness of the opposition to the Government. This may be so (on the other hand it could be argued that those with an essential interest in the results of the Hull by-election will know that there has been a conflict of loyalty and that many disaffected socialist nonetheless voted Labour). Certainly Gott's vote will indicate the extent of open socialist opposition to the Labour Government in Hull North and it will be the only indication of local dissatisfaction at the election. So long as the orthodox left offers us nothing but ringing declarations - mere verbal militancy - then those who really wish to oppose must look to Gott for their salvation.

NOTTINGHAM C.S.E. DRAWS UP ITS PROGRAMME

The Nottingham C.S.E., at its first general meeting, discussed and adopted a programme for January and February. The first meeting on "Incomes Policy and the Trade Unions" will take the form of a Brains Trust. Among the panel will be Lionel Jacobs, chairman of the Trades Council and Executive member of A.S.S.E.T.; George Cornes, Divisional Organiser D.A.T.A.; and Tony Topham, editor Humberside Voice. It will be held on ^{Friday} 21st January at 7.30 p.m. The next meeting will feature Dr. John Daniels, the well known educational expert, speaking on "Beyond the Comprehensive School". This will be on Friday, February 4th at 7.30 p.m. Both meetings are at the Peoples Hall. There will be no meeting on Friday February 18th, because the C.S.E. is supporting the meeting of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation on British-Vietnamese Solidarity.

The intervention of the Radical Alliance in the Hull by-election poses very sharply the dilemma of the left of the Labour Party. Yet it would be wrong if ^{we} reacted to this dilemma as Richard Gott would have us do. Tony Topham indicated the real alternative in this situation, that the defeat of the Labour Government at this stage will not open the way to a more radical Government but one that is even more reactionary than the present one. This is not a case of supporting the lesser evil (for shades of difference are so fine as to be almost negligible) but rather one of assessing possible developments. The reactionary initiatives of the Labour Government will be exploited by a Tory administration tenfold if they are returned in a situation where the Labour movement is not only divided but disorientated.

This brings me to what I think is the heart of this dispute. The Radical Alliance is repeating the mistakes that the left has made since 1945. This is, that they choose to fight on a foreign policy question. Richard Gott wrote: "It does not matter much whether steel is nationalised this year or in 1970, it will come eventually". Nothing could be more wrong. It is precisely because there has been no move towards an extension of public ownership or workers' control that the Labour Government not only does, but must, pursue its abominable Vietnam policy. The publication of the so-called "National Plan" makes this abundantly clear. What we are faced with is not some sort of Labour Government that has somehow lost its way. Rather we are faced with a Government that has consciously chosen to impose neo-capitalist solutions to Britain's problems. Such a commitment carries with it a corollary of commitment to imperialism abroad, and specifically to the U.S. paymasters. Let me emphasise, it is not a question of straightening out Labour's foreign policy and then proceeding to socialist measures at home. The exact reverse is the truth of the matter.

Lenin once talked about the main enemy being at home, this is even more true today. The unspeakable Vietnam policy, the shufflings and convolutions on Rhodesia by Wilson, etc, are the effects of their commitment to preserving capitalism at home (the cause). Therefore, whilst not for one moment ceasing to protest against and condemn these policies, the left should at the same time see that Vietnam cannot be viewed in isolation. It is not merely that the working class is not so responsive on foreign policy, but that it is necessary to have a correct order of priorities so that the objectives become obtainable. The struggle in Vietnam is our struggle, there can be no dichotomy for socialists on this issue. However, precisely because it is our struggle it is imperative that we do more than verbally solidarise with it. How we take action is of crucial importance if we wish to defeat imperialism.

I would say that if the Labour Government is to fall it must do so in a way that does not disorient the working class, particularly the left of the Labour movement. It is true that we should constantly point out that Wilson's "East of Suez" policy imposes a still crippling arms burden on the economy, and support for the U.S. genocidal war in Vietnam is bound up in this. But it is also necessary to show that the imposition of an "incomes policy" is a part of this. International solidarity is more than a moral sentiment, it is a vital part of the fight for socialism in Britain, and it is on that basis that the working class will be moved. As Tony Topham said there are no short cuts in this struggle. It may assuage our consciences to follow the Radical Alliance, but will it teach anyone the real lessons of this Labour Government, i.e., the main enemy is at home? I think not.

The smear in Charles Van Gelderen's comment on the North Hull Election represents a markedly different attitude from that of The Week and of Humber-side Voice. You express your hopes for co-operation between Radical Alliance and other sections of the left, and Voice has acknowledged that we have introduced a new dimension of socialist strategy at this critical time. Van Gelderen's assertion that the impatience of R.A. may lead us to follow Oswald Moseley's path can hardly contribute to the dialogue about strategy that the left so needs at this time. Furthermore, if he has paid attention to the platform of R.A. (I enclose a copy of one of our brochures*) he will see that our concern is with weapons of mass destruction, poverty and racialism. Hardly a satisfactory start for a neo fascist party, is it Cmde. Van Gelderen? He would do well to remember that to use such arguments can lead to a situation where phrases such as 'imperialist lackey' and 'Monarcho - fascist jackal' begins to fly and that their currency belongs to a time nearer in history than does his parallel. Additionally, if one is expected to take up positions in relation to 'fascist' politics then the Labour Party's Immigration Bill and its support for a bloody war in the Far East give it more than a head start over the R.A.

Of course, we realise that overseas and home policies are connected but if socialism is about priorities, then, on any reckoning, the war in Vietnam and the possible invasion of Neutral Cambodia and Laos this week must at least take temporal priority over the nationalisation of steel. All political struggle is based on decisions of this nature and if the left were to insist that the same weight of struggle were to be given at the same time to, say, abortion law reform, as to Wilson's possible support for the bombing of China, then we should indeed be campaigning on a fool's paradise. It is for this reason that R.A. is not operating as a new political party but as a specific electoral pressure group on the most important current issues. For Van Gelderen to complain that this is inadequate is merely to indulge in a discredited game of Aunt Sally.

There are a number of patronising arguments in Van Gelderen's article - some of which are becoming monotonously repetitive. (Surely David Boulton should have copyrighted the adjective 'derisory' - his royalties would have been enormous!) I would particularly take issue with his last comment that 'the working class of Hull will surely be true to themselves and vote solidly labour.' To pose the arguments in these terms is merely to reproduce Leninist confusions about 'class' and 'party' that have bedevilled British politics of the left for too long. To see the issue in these terms is to remove morality from the scene and to deny the role of socialist ideas in the struggle. R.A.'s intervention has introduced a new dimension into the dialogue and one can respect the position of comrades like Tony Topham and John Saville, who have made their decisions against R.A. while, as Tony Topham wrote recently, listening with respect to our election campaign as socialists and humanists. It is in these terms that the arguments need to be conducted - not by the stale mechanical slogans of the forties and early 50s that divorce socialism from humanism.

*Brochure obtainable from: David Laing, Secretary, Radical Alliance,
55, Finlay Street, Fulham, S.W.6.

The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, in association with other interested organisations and journals, is engaged in a campaign to promote solidarity between the people of Britain and South Vietnam. This campaign started in December with the very successful meeting in London to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the formation of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam. This is to be followed by a series of provincial meetings and will culminate in a solidarity conference in London to be held the week end of March 26/27th.

The campaign will be quite distinct from any other campaign on Vietnam. It has the aim of setting up an organisation to promote solidarity between the peoples of South Vietnam and Britain, which will have its own structure, organisation and journal.

The campaign, which is committed to the victory of the N.L.F., will seek to organise the maximum material and political support for the struggle of the South Vietnamese people against American aggression and against America's quislings in that country. It will, of course, campaign against the war in Vietnam but on the basis of there being only one desirable end to that war: the complete withdrawal of American forces and the ending of U.S. interference in the internal affairs of Vietnam. The campaign will base itself on the five points put forward by the N.L.F. as a basis for ending the war.

A committee has been set up to co-ordinate the work, a brochure explaining the aims of the campaign is under preparation and a series of these on the Vietnam War are being written. The committee is most anxious to hear from anyone who wishes to support the campaign and they should write at once to:

Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation,
3 & 4, Shavers Place,
Haymarket,
London S.W. 1.

Telephone: WHI 4200 & 4209.

BERTRAND RUSSELL PEACE FOUNDATION BENEFIT PERFORMANCE

There will be a benefit performance for the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation on January 29th (Saturday) of

Alan Sillitoe's

S A T U R D A Y N I G H T and S U N D A Y M O R N I N G

starring: TOM BELL
 JOAN HEAL
 JUNE RITCHIE

At The Prince of Wales Theatre, Coventry St. London W.1.

Tickets are priced 30/-, 21/- and 12/6d

Available from: 27, Argyll Mansions, King's Rd., London S.W. 3.
 T.N. FLA 1451;

The proceeds will go to the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign.

The maximum help is required in selling these tickets and assistance would be most welcome contact FLA 1451.

A LETTER FROM VIETNAM

"Dear Sirs,

Kindly receive our best thanks for your support for our struggle against the U.S. imperialists' aggression.

"We should be grateful if you would be kind enough to introduce our publications to your readers.

"Please forward to us your periodical in exchange for the newspaper Vietnam Courier and the Review Vietnamese Studies.

"With anticipated thanks for your helpful co-operation.....

XUNHASABA"

Editorial note: we are to make arrangements for these two journals to be distributed and will shortly be making an announcement giving details.

WEST GERMAN "AID" TO SOUTH VIETNAMESE PUPPETS by Dave Windsor

The tie up between West German and U.S. policy in the Far East was demonstrated early this month when a Bonn spokesman announced that the amount of economic "aid" promised by West Germany to the puppet South Vietnamese clique surpassed 96 million marks (approx. £8,600,000). The sum includes 85 million marks for capital aid and 7.9 million marks for technical aid.

The Bonn Government spokesman declared at the same time, that West Germany was next only to the United States in the amount of economic "aid" accorded to the puppet South Vietnamese regime. He indicated that in the future, the Bonn Government would make a very close study on the question of strengthening its "aid" to Vietnam

HUMPHREYS GETS "WARM" WELCOME IN HONOLULU from an American reader

Some 150 Honolulu people demonstrated on January 2nd against the U.S. war of aggression in Vietnam, when U.S. Vice President Hubert H. Humphreys stopped off at Honolulu after his trip to the Far East. Humphreys was on his way back to Washington after a series of activities in Japan, the Philippines, Taiwan and South Korea, involving the scheme to further widen the U.S. war of aggression in Vietnam.

On the same night, as he was boasting in a speech at the University of Hawaii that President Lyndon Johnson "is building peace", several hundred people demonstrated outside the auditorium in protest.

40,000 SIGN LETTER OF PROTEST AGAINST U.S. AGGRESSION from a Swedish reader

More than 40,000 people and organisations in Sweden have signed a letter of protest against U.S. aggression in Vietnam. The letter was handed in to the American Embassy in Stockholm last week. The letter demanded the immediate cessation of all acts of aggression by the Americans in Vietnam. The letter is part of a big campaign by various organisations incensed by the arrogant attitude of the U.S. imperialists. I hope to send further reports of their activities to your journal

THE JOHN PALMER CASE

The following letter has been sent to many Socialist newspapers:-

Last June, our General Management Committee re-selected John Palmer as Prospective Labour candidate for North West Croydon, with only one vote against. He had been our candidate for the previous election and had received the wholehearted support of the constituency in what was a tough but successful fight- we cut the Tory majority from 10,000 to 5,000. John Palmer made it clear throughout the campaign that he was a full blooded socialist, that he was a unilateralist, that he opposed immigration controls, that he supported comprehensive public ownership under worker's control of the 'commanding heights' of the economy, and that he was opposed to anti trade union legislation from any Government. In this, he had the active support of all our Labour workers.

After two interviews with the National Executive's Organisation Sub Committee in the past few months, John Palmer's candidature has not been endorsed by the N.E.C. This is thought to be probably unique since it a case of a candidate who has previously fought an election. The N.E.C. has not even deigned to give North West Croydon a solitary reason for its action and has refused to receive a deputation from the Parties officers.. As the whole Labour Movement faces a critical period and as rank and file militants see Labour leaders prepared to ignore socialist principles on so many issues, it is vital that every constituency party in the country raises its voice in protest about what has happened in Croydon, lest it become a precedent, whenever left wing candidates are selected, who do not find favour with the powers that be at Transport House. John Palmer is not connected with any proscribed organisation. He has worked hard for the Labour Party. All he demands is the right to speak out in public on such issues as Vietnam and trade union legislation. We appeal to all constituencies to send resolutions to the N.E.C. condemning its action and to send copies to the North-West Croydon Constituency Labour Party's Secretary.

Announcement FOR READERS IN THE MANCHESTER AREA From Colin Barker.

MANCHESTER SOCIALIST CONFERENCE

meeting on

IMMIGRATION

Speakers:

Hamza Alavi (Vice-Chairman, Campaign Against Racial Discrimination.)

Paul Foot (Editor, 'Labour Worker' and author of recent Penguin Special, 'Race and Immigration in British Politics.')

A.E.U. Offices, 120, Rusholme Rd, near All Saints, Manchester 13. at 2.30. p.m.
Sunday 30th Jan. All welcome.

We shall be holding a second conference on 'Incomes Policy', on Sunday, 27th February, and a third on the 'National Plan on Sunday 27th March.

Newsweek, January 10th. reports that, "In more than a dozen cities.... earnest young members of the New Left, with considerable assistance from veterans of the old, have set up 'free universities' as yet another way to proclaim their alienation from the established community. 'The American University has been emasculated,' explains the catalogue of the Free University of New York. 'Students have been systematically dehumanised, deemed incompetent to regulate their own lives, socially, politically, and academically.'

The movement began 'in late 1964 at the Berkely campus of the University of California during the Free Speech Movement revolt.... the F.S.M. urged sympathetic instructors to join in a 'free university within a university' offering informal classes in such subjects as techniques of civil disobedience..... 'While some of the universities are little more than radical discussion groups, several are based on the central New Left idea of 'counter institution'- setting up a protest organisation parallel to an established one, in order to expose and eventually change it. In free universities, most courses are based on subjects or approaches not usually found in regular schools.....

'The unincorporated university, Uninc U, in the University of Colorado in Boulder is one such counter institution.... Founded by five students, Uninc U, this spring, will offer more than 40 six week seminars, taught primarily by regular faculty members and graduate students. More than 300 students, most of them also C.U. students, enrolled last fall in Uninc U. in such courses as 'the changing shape of the American family' and 'the God question in Christian Perspective'.....

'Marxism is standard fare, Allen Zac, 27, a student at Los Angeles New Left School, argues that it is useful 'to hear Marxism taught by some one who professes to be a Marxist'..... 'Practically all the schools report plans for enlarged curriculums and student bodies this spring, but it's doubtful that total enrolment will exceed 3,000....'

INCOMES POLICY WILL HIT POORER REGIONS

from a Nottingham reader

In a paper at the annual conference of the Institute of British Geographers, two geographers, Mr. B.E. Coates, of Sheffield University, and Mr. E.M. Rawstron, of Queen Mary College, presented a paper which said that the Government's incomes would perpetuate present regional imbalance. Presented on January 5th, the paper said: "If its policy of limiting the overall annual rate of increase in wages and salaries to a selected figure of, say $3\frac{1}{2}\%$, was applied evenly throughout the country, it would tend to confirm the and perpetuate the present regional imbalance in personal incomes...."

The paper went on to say that only a greater degree of geographical equality of income would rectify the imbalance. The authors pointed out that the highest wages and salaries were to be found in the area stretching from Derbyshire, Leicestershire and the West Midlands, to Essex and Surrey. "Lowest wages are still to be found in the more isolated parts of England and Wales, in much of Scotland and all of Northern Ireland," they declared. "The striking change in England on the 1959-60 figures was the building up of an area of high average incomes between London and the Midlands. The above average rate of growth of incomes in the South-East and parts of the Midlands in the 1950s, compared with the rest of the U.K., was because of sustained pressure on the labour force...." the paper pointed out.

Ken Coates' latest contribution to the discussion of Yugoslavia expands his arguments considerably. Points of difference on matters of fact and interpretation remain, however. A further note may help us toward that "clinical objectivity" which we all find so elusive. The points can be summarised as follows:

1. Politics. It is surely a fundamental proposition of marxist method and indeed of most sociologists that basic interest divisions within a social structure will tend to be reflectedⁱⁿ its political structure. These differences of interest exist in Yugoslavia clustering around the foci of the peasantry, the different nationalities and religious groups, complicated by unequal levels of economic development. The historical experience of the area is characterised by its instability and fragmentation. Fratricidal killing took place only 25 years ago (see, for instance, Dedijer, "The Beloved Land"). None of us wishes to see the Yugoslav experiment collapse on these divisions. My assessment of the situation is that it is still too early for the formation of any institutionalised opposition, whether it take party or faction form. I would suggest that at present the most important area for pressure is in the field of individual liberty to criticise and publish. The Mihailovic affair, and the earlier suppression of Perspektive (a small cultural/political review) are matters of concern, for example. Of course, this assessment is arguable.
2. Differentials. As I stressed, in 1961 the high differentials were being paid to directors, but to engineers and chemists. Kolaja's figures do not refute my general contention, since his research, although published this year, was carried out during summer, 1959, i.e., just about the time legal restrictions were being relaxed. Kolaja's book is very inadequate in other respects, incidentally. With regard to differentials between firms, I still contend that this is a necessary corollary of any meaningful workers' self-management, at least in the conditions of the foreseeable future. Taxation policy and indeed economic reforms will keep the differentials within bounds, though I agree the problem needs continuous care in any society, or new "enterprise elites" may emerge.
3. Bureaucrats. Of course, planning staff are not the only bureaucrats; my reference to the decrease in their numbers did not intend to imply this. But it would seem theoretically that massive planning apparatus would indicate a bureaucratised society in the sociological usage of the term, and the reduction in size in Yugoslavia is, I should have thought, of significance. What evidence is there that the powers of the "factory managers and industrial personnel" (presumably "administrative personnel" is meant) have increased since the market was introduced? However great it now is, the Directors I spoke to unanimously felt their powers had been reduced in favour of the workers since the administrative period.
4. Economic Reform. Ken Coates devotes most of his rejoinder to the set of economic reforms promulgated in July. The expectation is that "250,000 unskilled workers are to be dismissed", there will be a "25% cut in the living standards of precisely the lowest paid group." The objectivity is less than clinical here. Readers of the Week who are interested in the detailed rationale of the reforms - and a between-the-lines idea of the intense inner differences of opinion they provoked - are referred to Mijalko Todorovic's address to the 2nd Plenum of the Central Committee of the League of Communists, "Current Tasks in the Development of the Economic

Continued over/

A further comment on Yugoslavia continued

System and Social-economic Relations" (Socialist Thought and Practice, No. 19, 1965, pp. 13-51). Basically the argument is that (a) certain, state-determined, prices, especially in agriculture, minerals and housing have been kept so low that the economy has become unbalanced, requiring constant administrative intervention, and (b) this has been accentuated by a tendency for both personal incomes and investment to rise faster than productivity.

The sources of this are to be sought in planning failures, "In point of fact the roots of the present...difficulties in the economic and social sphere should be sought precisely in the fact that we failed to take appropriate measures in good time." The reforms mean a big shake-up - "almost revolutionary" (p. 46). Generally it is estimated that prices will rise by about 23%. But workers' councils will have about 20% more incomes to distribute through accompanying tax reform. The 3% difference presumably reflects factor (b). Firms in difficulties will receive communal and Republic aid to reorganise and become more efficient, and Federal aid will be given to more backward regions. The only people who might suffer severe cuts in living standard are those on fixed incomes, especially pensions, and we shall expect aid to be given to them when the reforms begin to be effected in January. The League of Communists has, "Particular obligations...(to) workers and working organisations with low incomes" (P.43)

Another article in the same issue illustrates the extent that price policy was affecting the economy. The example given is for copper. Raw copper prices were kept artificially low, and there were no funds for investment. They will be increased 2/3rds to the world level. The increased investment this will permit will in 4 years reduce imports sufficiently to save annually an amount of foreign exchange equal to 50% of all receipts from foreign tourists in Yugoslavia, for this one item. Copper manufacturers will have to absorb some of the higher cost, and pass on some. But once a balance is achieved, new price relationships will be healthy. (Jakic p. 141-5).

All in all, the aim of the reforms is to increase productivity, remove market instability and the necessity for administrative intervention in the price system, "a constant source of bureaucratic tendencies" (Todorovic, p.32). If the reforms lead to what Ken Coates says they will - and there is no evidence that this will be the result - they will have failed.

None of this seems to me to provide evidence of the trends to "bureaucratic anarchy" (still undefined), or fragmentation that concerns Ken Coates. On the contrary, it is an attempt to develop further the framework within which workers' self-management can be exercised, in the general setting of a developing economy and international trade relationships.

AN APPEAL FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER TO AN UNKNOWN SUBSCRIBER

Will the reader who sent a postal order for £2 as subscription renewal purchased at Kensington High St. Post Office and numbered Y3/35 837763 identify himself or herself as no name and address was included with the remittance.

'POPS' MAKE MILLIONS

We take this item from the January issue of Labour Research* This analysis is yet another example of the high standard consistently maintained by L.R.D.

Nothing is quite as simple as it appears on the surface, and this is particularly true of the record industry. The only predictable facts that emerge are high profits. The profits of the companies shown below come almost entirely from the sale of production of gramophone records - the companies are subsidiaries of parent companies set up to operate the record side of the business.

<u>Company</u>	<u>Year to</u>	<u>Trading Profits</u>	<u>dividend</u>
		£000	£000
E.M.I. Records	Jan 30, 1964	3,446	1,495
	1965	2,595	1,400
Decca Records Co.	Mar 31 1963	412*	796
	1964	2,170	796
Phillips Records	Apr 30, 1963	87	--
	1964	246	31
Pye Records	Jun 30, 1963	66+	--
	1964	445	107
C.B.S. Records	Dec 31 1963	77	--
	1964	31	--
New Musical Express	Feb 28 1964	167=	25
	1965	164	10

*Before adding tax refund of £692,572; +15months; =17months.

After this, nothing remains simple. Philips is owned by the Dutch firm Philips' Gloeilampenfabrikan, NV; CBS records is owned by the Columbia Broadcasting Corporation of America, although EMI own the Columbia record label; Pye records is owned half by Associated Television, a quarter by Pye of Cambridge, and a quarter by Caledonian Investments (Part owners of British & Commonwealth Shipping Co. The five record companies above account for most of the 'pop' labels, although independent companies successfully exist in the more specialised fields like folk music, with 'Topic' EMI Records have among their labels Capitol, Columbia, Encore, HMV, Liberty, MGM, Parlophone; Decca Records own Atlantic, Argo, Brunswick, Decca, RCA-Victor, Telefunken and Vogue; Pye Records own Cameo- Parkway, Colpix, Pye, Picadilly, Reprise; Phillips Records own Caedmon, Fontana and Riverside; CBS Records own CBS, Oriole, Embassy, Realm and Time Oriole.....

The price structure of a record is similar for all the large record companies. The manufacturer sells the 45r.p.m. record to the wholesaler for 2/11, the wholesaler to the retailer at 3/10, the retailer to the public at 6/8. The manufacturer out of his 2/11 must pay 11d tax and any production costs, artist's fees, royalties etc. The record companies have applied for permission to continue maintaining the selling price on records and so far the case as not been heard. However the record companies are zealous in their efforts to enforce resale price maintenance particularly against the competition of record clubs and long playing records, that are appearing at prices as low as 10/6.

"Mrs E Cohen, a widow, submitted to the High Court yesterday to a perpetual injunction being made against her restraining her from selling at her stall in Romford Market cut price gramophone records and record tapes supplied by EMI records.....Mr. D.J. Nicholls, for the Broadcasting Company, said the records, which had been registered under the Resale Price Act, were supplied on condition that they were sold at a recommended price. Mrs Cohen had been selling records at below recommended prices, and had continued to do so despite giving an assurance that she would not." (Financial Times 8.12.65.).....

* Available from L.R.D. 78, Blackfriars Rd., London S.E.1. price 1/9 p.p.