

The Week

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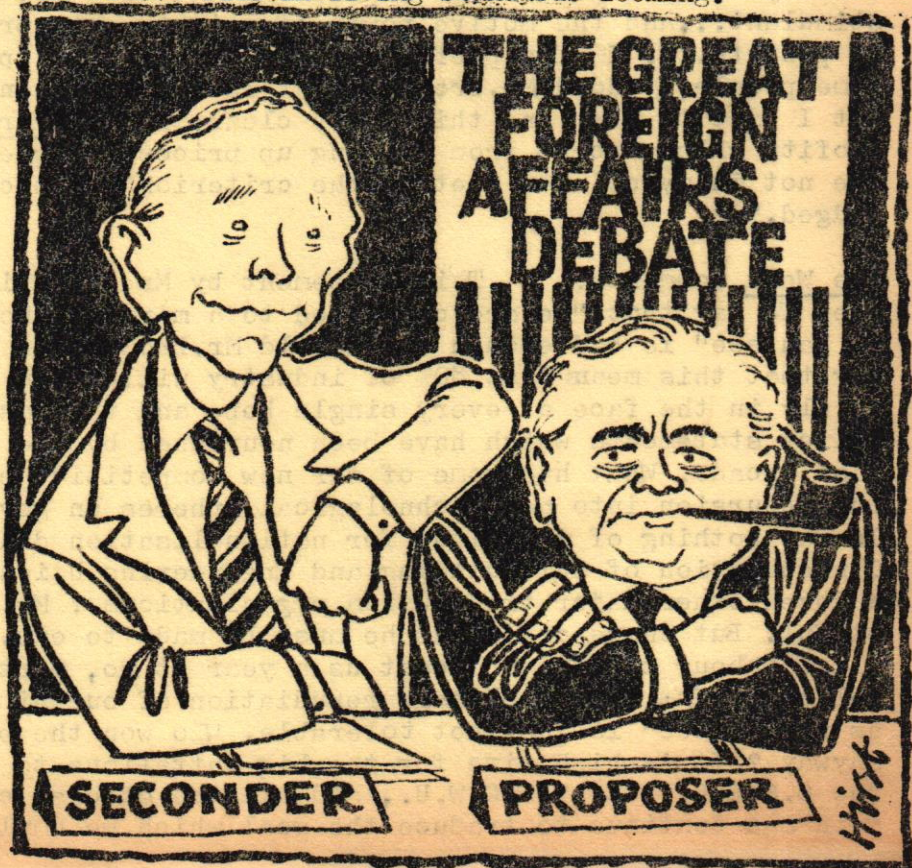
A news analysis for socialists

BIG JIM'S "CONFIDENCE" TRICK

The Budget was meant, according to Mr. Callaghan, to do three things: to help the balance of payments, restore confidence in the pound by foreign creditors and clear the way for the incomes policy. We will, next week, analyse the Budget in detail but it is necessary to make an immediate comment on its general line.

For the mass of the people this Budget amounts to a reduction in their purchasing power of some £164 million (£217 million in a full year). Including the cost of the extra postal charges, the bulk of which will also fall on the ordinary people, this is the equivalent to a wage cut of £250 million. Against this the extra capital gains tax is supposed to bring in £12 million (some City experts say that it will bring in virtually nothing this year) and the cuts in tax allowances for businessmen's entertainment and cars will bring in £35 million.

The Government's foreign policy makes it impossible for it to cut arms expenditure, and because it has not got the perspective of waging an aggressive socialist policy at home it has to rely on the credit of foreign bankers. The Week has constantly warned that reforms at home are impossible with a reactionary foreign policy - now we see cuts in living standards looming.



A NEW CLAUSE FOUR BATTLE

The Financial Times, on Monday, carried the following alarming report :-

"Businessmen have more hope of making money or making progress under a Labour Government than before, declares Mr. George Brown, Minister of Economic Affairs, in this month's issue of The Director. In answering questions put by Mr. Eric Foster, the editor, Mr. Brown declares: "Without any question at all, private enterprise should be allowed to earn its profits."

But Mr. Brown accuses directors of being unwilling to give him the same support in public as they do in private. "Those directors whom I have met," he says, "clearly agree with me about what ought to be done, at least so far as running the nation's economy is concerned... There is one difference between us, When I say what I am saying now, it is called socialistic - and that's exactly what prevents businessmen saying it in public. In private we seem to agree wholly... Well, I think it's about time some of them acknowledged this in public. After all, I'm willing to get myself in trouble from time to time with my left wing. Why shouldn't some of them risk getting into trouble with their right wings?"

Mr. Brown acknowledges that profit making still has an important role to play. "We - and by we in this answer I mean the British public and not the Labour Party - are going to run a mixed economy as far ahead as we can see. And on the basis of our present proposals for nationalisation, that means that something like 80 per cent of the economy will be private enterprise. That being so, it needs its own stimulant... and the motive power of private enterprise quite clearly is profits.... If its profits end up in too big a private income for some people," added Mr. Brown, "that is for the Chancellor to deal with. But I want to make one thing very clear: I mean earning profits. Profits which accrue from putting up prices irrespective of the need... are not in my opinion meeting the criterion by which they ought to be judged."

The Week comments: This statement by Mr. Brown is a truly remarkable one. To say that "we are committed to a mixed economy as far ahead as we can see" is bad enough - who told Mr. Brown this? But to go on to say that this means that 80% of industry will be in private hands is to fly in the face of every single hope and the vast majority of policy statements which have been nourished by the Labour Party in the last decade. What has come of our new competitive public enterprises? Our incursion into new technological spheres on government initiative? To say nothing of the plans for nationalisation drawn up by the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, U.S.D.A.W., and a dozen other major trade union organisations? Mr. Brown has spilt a bibful. But these are words he must be made to eat. Compromises which allow Labour to win, and cost us a year or so, party supporters might tolerate. But this wholesale repudiation of our aims for "as far ahead as we can see" is just not tolerable. Who won the battle of Clause IV, anyway? It is high time for the big battalions to speak. We appeal to the C.S.E.U., the T. & G.W.U., and all the others: can you let this vain man continue to traduce the goal which we employ him to pursue?

HOUSING BILL WANTS TIGHTENING UP

From a Parliamentary correspondent

Mr. Frank Allaun, speaking in the debate on the Government's new Rent Bill, said that he feared that unscrupulous landlords aided by skilful lawyers will drive a coach through Clause 22. This is the Clause which deals with the way a "fair rent" should be worked out. It says that the age, character, locality and state of repair of the house shall be taken into account. Mr. Allaun pointed out that landlords had already driven a wedge since December into the Protection from Eviction Bill.

He added that he hoped that members of the Government and Labour M.P.s will do everything to tighten up Clause 22 so that tenants are not made vulnerable in the way that they might otherwise be. Mr. Allaun, who is recognised as being an expert on housing and a champion of tenant's rights, said that the 1957 Tory Rent act was known to millions as the "Landlords Charter". This Bill must become known as the "Tenants' charter."

It is to be hoped that rank and file members of the Labour Party will back up the efforts of Mr. Allaun and others in this field. Local Labour Parties could do much by sponsoring tenants' associations which would counter the landlords with lawyers of their own.

1960 CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE ISSUE PROGRAMME

from J.D. Exham

The 1960 Campaign Committee have issued an attractive leaflet containing their programme for strengthening the London Cooperative Society. Entitled "Against the Price Raisers" it begins:

"Throughout the past year, and especially in recent months, the cost of food and all other goods has risen sharply. The huge monopolies are using their power to make prices soar. Price rings and secret agreements hit hardest at the most defenceless sections of the community -- housewives with young families, the old folk and the sick -- while profits and dividends grow faster and faster. THE "1960" COMMITTEE DECLARES WAR ON PRICE RAISERS, AND COMES OUT STRONGLY FOR THE DEFENCE OF L.C.S. MEMBERS AND OF ALL CONSUMERS.

"London Cooperative Society Board, with its "1960" Committee majority, has already given a lead on this vital question. While the price of private manufacturers' goods have gone up, in some cases twice and three times, those of the L.C.S. branded goods have been kept and will be kept at the lowest possible level, and offer the finest value for money....." The leaflet then outlines the "1960" Committee's programme covering such questions as "Capital Control", "Staff Relations", "National Unity", etc.

It gives details of the "1960" Committee's candidates in forthcoming Spring elections which are being held on Saturday, May 1st, at coop shops, and at members' meetings Monday to Friday, April 26th to 30th. The slate is:

For President: Mr. Harry Clayden
 For Management Committee: Mr. R. J. Fletcher;
 Mr. G. McCowan;
 Mr. W.E. Stone;
 Mr. F.S. Wade; and
 Mrs. N.E. Willis.

ANTI-VIETNAM WAR RALLY IN MANCHESTER by Alan Rooney.

About 350 people attended a protest meeting on Vietnam in Manchester last Sunday, organised by the Movement for Colonial Freedom and Labour Peace Fellowship.

Sydney Silverman, MP, introduced the meeting as Chairman. He made clear that he did not think the 100 per cent support which the Labour Government was giving to United States actions in Vietnam spoke for the British people. He felt that the present concern in Britain over the Far East is as great now as was concern over Europe before the Second World War. He described the Vietnam war as "The War of Johnson's Folly", adding that "it was impossible to know what the Americans think they are doing." As for the morality of U.S. action he had this to say :- "There is no-one in the world, with the possible exception of the British Foreign Secretary who thinks that the American action is right..."

Mr. Silverman, like all the speakers, urged the Labour Government to take independent peace initiatives. Britain should do this despite our financial dependence on the United States. He posed the question - "You don't have to lick the moneylenders' boots every morning, do you?"

Stan Orme, MP, indicated the concerns of the 104 MPs who have signed motions on Vietnam, pointing out that they do respond to pressure from their constituents. He urged everyone to extend the campaign for British peace initiatives in Vietnam throughout the country. He was worried about Labour's 'East of Suez' policy, with its military strategy of bases and 50,000 troops in Malaysia. He was worried too about British bombers in Asia. Were they equipped with nuclear weapons? When will Labour abandon the independent 'deterrent'? Mr. Orme opposed the idea of Britain attempting to set up "nuclear umbrellas over vast areas of the earth". Labour may very well be getting so involved with an ever increasing arms bill that it would lose support in the country (as the Korean War brought the last Labour Government down). "We cannot allow foreign policy to become the Achilles Heel of the Labour Government again." Britain could not take an independent peace initiative, "tied to the coat tails of America". We should work to strengthen the United Nations and, as socialists, condemn colonial actions in South East Asia.

Paul Rose, MP, one of the new Labour MPs, said that he had, "fought the last election on an independent initiative for peace" policy, adding that as far as Vietnam was concerned, "I am profoundly disappointed and shocked at the one-sided speeches in the House". It was still Britain's duty to act independently despite "economic fetters" with America. In this respect he welcomed the action of the 17 non-aligned nations.

Frank Allain, MP, put out the most urgent message - we may very well be on the brink of World War Three. It appeared to him that American and Russian planes could soon be in direct confrontation in Vietnam and there were rumours from Washington that America may be considering the use of nuclear weapons on China. Two fanatics has blown up the American Embassy in Saigon; who was to say that two American fanatics could not

Anti-Vietnam War Rally in Manchester - continued

bomb Peking from a Polaris submarine in the China Seas? Mr. Allaun also stressed Britain's involvement on Vietnam: Britain is training South Vietnamese government troops in Malaysia and Brigadier Thompson is in South Vietnam on a "police" mission. He didn't accept that Britain could not speak out in condemnation of American actions in Vietnam because of the 3,000 million dollar loan that the Labour Government received last November. His appeal that everyone should work to make this year's CND Easter March as effective as possible was met with applause.

Another speaker, Hugh Scornlon, of the Amalgamated Engineering Union Executive, emphasised the anti-colonial nature of the Vietnam crisis. He was convinced that the history of our time shows that military expenditure does not hold back progressive political forces around the world. When he came to the Labour Government's position on Vietnam he accused Harold Wilson of "double-dealing", quoting the speech he made on Vietnam as leader of the opposition last June and contrasting this with his recent remarks as Prime Minister. It was factually incorrect for Mr. Wilson to say that the present Vietnam crisis had been caused by North Vietnamese 'infiltration'. John Forrester, Manchester district organiser of the Draughtsmen's Union, spoke about his Union's opposition to American policy in Vietnam. He suggested that the United Nations should deal with the Vietnam crisis.

The meeting ended with the audience unanimously accepting Sidney Silverman's comprehensive resolution which has been sent to the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary.

BRISTOL SOUTH C.L.P. TELEGRAMS MR. WILSON

by Tom Nicholls

At its last meeting the Bristol South C.L.P. decided to send a telegram to Mr. Wilson expressing deep concern at "the grave threat to world peace created by the presence of American troops in South Vietnam and the American air raids on North Vietnam." This move is significant in that that it is the first protest on Vietnam from an official Labour Party organisation in Bristol. It is believed that motions on Vietnam are also coming up in Bristol West and Bristol North West.

Bristol South is not generally considered a left wing constituency and its M.P., Mr. Will Wilkins, has a reputation for being one of the safest and most conventional of Labour M.P.s. Bristol E.T.U. has also sent a protest to Mr. Wilson. There was a 24 hour vigil on the College Green from Saturday mid day to Sunday mid day in protest against the disregard of the danger of war arising from the Vietnam situation. A letter has been sent to the local press signed by 21 Labour Party activists; the signatures included councillors, ward secretaries and one alderman.

LONDON LABOUR PROPOSALS by a correspondent.

At the London Labour Party's Annual Conference last week-end nearly all resolutions, most of them progressive, were carried with the Executive's recommendation.

Most surprising was the action of the E.C. in putting down an emergency resolution calling for the abolition of the City of London with the Government's first amendments to the London Government Act. This was moved by Richard Fletcher - who was re-elected to the T.U. section of the E.C. - and carried unanimously. Hugh Jenkins - who was also re-elected - explained how his bill was blocked by the Government, but no explanation of this was given by Bob Mellish, the Chairman of the Conference - who is also the Minister responsible for London Government!

Excellent though Bob Mellish's performance was, delegates were asking whether it was proper that he should (or could) act simultaneously for the London Labour Party and the Government when the two were in disagreement.

Conference re-affirmed its opposition to the London Government Act and pressed for early amendment: supported fully comprehensive education without streaming: called for review of the structure of the London Transport Board: deplored colour discrimination in the police and fire services: and demanded the rating of empty property. An excellent resolution on Municipal Building called for increased use of direct labour and the setting up of socially-owned housing component factories. Moved by ASSET, their delegate asked what had happened to the National Construction Corporation promised by Arthur Sheffield for the N.E.C. at the 1963 national conference of the Labour Party. Bob Mellish did not reply to this, but the point is being followed up by ASSET.

A new-comer to the Executive was Illyd Harrington - whose selection as parliamentary candidate at Dover was set aside recently by the N.E.C.

RECENT LONDON CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY RESOLUTIONS from a special correspondent.

The Bank of England. "That this meeting of the L.C.S. Political Committee wholeheartedly condemns recent statements of members of the Board of Directors of the Bank of England which constitute nothing less than an arbitrary power of Parliament and the Cabinet to decide Britain's economic policy and the power vested in them by the will of the people."

-submitted to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Governor of the Bank of England.

Vietnam. "The Political Committee of the London Co-operative Society is gravely concerned at the danger of the war in S.Vietnam spreading to other areas of S.E.Asia. It is convinced that the duty of all the powers concerned is to negotiate an end to the fighting and a settlement on the basis of the Geneva agreements. We appeal to the British Government to use its influence to secure immediate negotiations and a political settlement. We appeal to the Government of the United States to accept that the problems in this area can only be solved by negotiations and we appeal to all other powers concerned, including Soviet Union and China, to support all efforts for a peaceful solution."

EAST LONDON DISARMAMENT WEEK

by Len Nicholas

As preparation for the Easter March and nuclear disarmament, the Peace Movement of East London has organised an "East London Disarmament Week". The following activities are due and all readers of the Week will be welcome to take part:

- Friday, 9th April: 7.30 p.m. A "Host 'N' Annie" Brotherhood Hall, South Chingford. Singers: ve Peacock and the Far Country Three.
- Saturday, 10th April: 2.30pm. March from Barking Town Hall to Whitechapel Market.
- 5.00pm. Rally in Whitechapel Market at end of the march.
- Sunday, 11th April; 2.30pm. Poster parade. Assemble at the "Napier Arms" in Woodford New Road, Walthamstow.
- Tuesday, 13th April: 7.30pm. Public Meeting on Vietnam at East Ham Labour Hall. Speakers: Stan Newens, M.P. and Dr. Joan Carrit.

Further information from: Bill Evett, 14 Haig Road, Plaistow, London E.13.
Pat Allan, 35 Northfield Ave., East Ham, London E.6.
(Phone: GRA 8139)

HULL LABOUR MOVEMENT'S PRESSURES ON VIETNAM

by Tony Topham.

East Hull Labour Party carried a resolution calling on the government to take an independent initiative for peace. The City Party Executive took emergency action in sending a resolution to the Prime Minister asking him to initiate action inline with the 1954 Geneva Convention. The Hull Trades Council's resolution on the subject, sent to the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and Hull's three Labour M.P.s reads in part: "this Trades Council represents those sections of the Labour movement which fought long and hard for the defeat of the Tory government. We believed that the result of that defeat would be a new and virile socialist foreign policy. Instead, to our disgust, we find ourselves trailing behind the representatives of the most brutal and predatory capitalist state in the world, with whom we have nothing in common." The West Hull Young Socialists resolved that Jim Johnson, West Hull's M.P., should identify himself with the signatories of the left wing resolution calling for independent government action on Vietnam, or failing that, for him to resign his position as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Ministry of Land and Natural Resources, following the example set by Frank Allaun. North Hull's M.P., Henry Solomons, though by no means a left winger, has signed the House of Commons motion demanding a debate on Alec Douglas Home's "craven core" speech.

M.C.F., C.N.D., and the Labour Peace Fellowship in the town have formed a joint standing committee to co ordinate protest action: they are planning a second march through the town, following the successful demonstration of last month, and an all night vigil in the town centre.

SOUTH AFRICA NEWS from a South African correspondent.

Compulsory Whipping from a recent editorial in The Cape Times.

In the 10 years since compulsory corporal punishment has been in force the number of whipping has climbed steadily, nauseatingly and uselessly. During this decade 850,000 lashes have been delivered to 170,000 miscreants, that is, at the rate of 85,000 a year to 1,000 recipients. The latest statistics available show the figures to be approximately up to average—slightly fewer strokes were delivered upon just about the same number of bodies. We are glad, therefore, that Mr. Vorster and his advisers have read the Message of these grim figures. Perhaps the Minister will also ask his officials to reflect upon another steadily climbing figure which he announced at the same time the daily average number of people held in South African prisons. It is now 70,000. A year ago it was 66,000. Ten years ago it was 35,000, and five years before that 25,000. This is very near a 200 per cent increase in 16 years, and our population has hardly risen 20 per cent.

Poverty Wages from a recent editorial in the Rand Daily Mail.

It is not often that a single fact can tell a massive story but there was a case of it this week. At the annual meeting of the Bantu Wages and Productivity Association in Johannesburg, it was reported that more than 45 per cent of African workers in commerce and industry were still being paid less than the accepted poverty datum level of R48 a month.

This is a startling, damning revelation, fully supporting the complaints of people such as Dr. Edgar Brookes and Mrs. Helen Suzman recently that the current boom is largely a White man's boom and that non-Whites are only marginally sharing in it.

The worst offender is the mining industry whose 558,000 African workers according to the latest figures earned just under R8m a month, or the princely figure of R14 a man for one of the hardest, dirtiest and by no means least dangerous jobs anywhere. It is true that the industry houses, feeds and clothes its workers, takes care of their health and recreation, and generally tries to be a good employer in all respects; other than pay. It is a subject the industry prefers not to discuss, and we can understand why.

In other sections of commerce and industry also there are trends, slow and faltering, towards better scales of pay for non whites. But these latest figures show how far the move has yet to go and how urgent is the overall problem..... This is an indefensible situation, especially in a period of prosperity. It is precisely at such a time that far greater efforts should be made to raise the earnings of our basic labour force to acceptable, civilised levels.....

Editorial note: One Rand equals 10 shillings sterling.

SARTRE CANCELS VISIT TO U.S.

by George Saunders

In protest against the U.S. war in Vietnam, Jean Paul Sartre, the famous French philosopher and writer, has cancelled his speaking engagements in the U.S. In a March 17 cablegram, Sartre stated: "The politics of violence practised in Vietnam by the U.S. government, with the approval of the majority of the American people, constitute for me a major obstacle to my coming to the United States."

Sartre had been scheduled to give five lectures on ethics and history at Cornell University April 7-14 and to speak at the Poetry Centre in New York City April 25.

Sartre's action has a certain value in that it publicizes one more protest against Washington's brinkmanship in Vietnam. Undoubtedly it shocked some Americans into realization that the outside world blames them too for the Johnson administration's aggression in Vietnam. On the other hand, Sartre's action is subject to criticism. On the basis of a Gallup poll, which does not necessarily reflect the true sentiments of the population and which, in any case, is not permanent, he despairs of the American people. If a majority of the Americans do support the war in Vietnam, it is because of their almost total brainwashing by government, press, television etc. If they can be told the true story about that war and the U.S. role in it, many will be convinced it is criminal and will oppose it. To abandon the American people to the Washington warmakers and their propaganda hirelings amounts to giving up a battle before it has been fought out.

Sartre could have registered a far more telling protest by coming here and speaking out against the Vietnam war. That would have brought him attacks by the capitalist press and possibly cancellation of his visa. But it would certainly have helped awaken Americans to the enormity of their government's crimes in Vietnam and strengthened the opposition which already exists here.

Perhaps Sartre is unaware of the emphatic opposition already expressed by U.S. student and faculty groups; of the slogans raised by civil-rights demonstrators in the recent massive demonstrations - "Out of Saigon, into Selma"; of the protests by peace groups and radical organisations. Perhaps he did not know that his visit would have coincided with the April 17 March on Washington to End the War in Vietnam, called by Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and supported by many youth, faculty, peace groups, and others.

Sartre opposed France's dirty wars in Vietnam and Algeria; he denounced the Kremlin's suppression of the Hungarian Revolution; he defends the Cuban Revolution. His protest against the war in Vietnam adds to that honourable record. Delivered in person in the U.S., his protest would have had an even greater effect.

THE WEEK OVER EASTER

The Week will be taking part in the Easter March in a big way.

Will be marching under our own banner and we are preparing a number of placards with suitable slogans.

We shall have two vans, a loudspeaker and a duplicators in action.

Supporters of The Week should assemble at Walters Ash, Naphill, on Saturday morning at 9.30 p.

The following meetings are arranged:

Saturday: lunchtime meeting at Loudwater at 12.45.

Sunday: lunchtime meeting (details next week)

Sunday: Evening meeting (details next week)

Monday: lunch time meeting at Hyde Park Exhibition Site 12.45.

Other activities are planned and will be announced via the loudspeaker and duplicator.

Needless to say we will need all the help we can for this big programme. Please return the forms if you have not already done so.

This Week's issue

The editorial committee took the decision to duplicate this issue because of the shortage of funds, and the need to make an all out effort over Easter. Please fill in the Banker's form enclosed if you wish to help us to avoid this in future.

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